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Title: *Last Meeting Minutes of the PA Rural Gay Caucus*

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THE PENNSYLVANIA RURAL GAY CAUCUS

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The July meeting of the Pennsylvania Rural Gay Caucus will be held on Saturday July 15th at 1:00 P. M. in the Friend's Meeting House, 6th and Herr Streets in Harrisburg. The main item on the agenda is the agenda item of state wide organization. Please note there will be a meeting of the Goals Committee one hour before the regularly scheduled meeting of the Caucus. The purpose of this meeting will be to outline a proposal for goals to be undertaken by a state-wide organization. Any person who has input on what the gays in this state should be doing in the future should attend.

June Minutes PRGC/(Gay Support Network)/Pa. Election Strategy Group

On June 3rd, the Pa. Rural Gay Caucus was convened by Gary Norton, Co-Chairperson, at 6th and Herr Sts. in Harrisburg. As directed by a resolution on the previous (open) meeting, this meeting would be a joint meeting of those interested in exploring the formation of a state-wide group (meeting as the Caucus), and those interested in developing a gay support strategy for the up-coming gubernatorial and legislative elections in Pennsylvania. Before the group split into their respective groups, Mary Nancarrow, Co-Chair of the Caucus announced her resignation from that post to the group. At the request of a Caucus member, the group gave a hearty round of applause to Mary in thanks for her dedicated work in the Caucus.

Then this group split into their respective meetings. The legislative group went downstairs while the state-wide discussion group stayed upstairs in the Main meeting room of the Friends Meeting House. (I stayed with the group discussing the state-wide network). This group attacked the problem of organizing a state-wide group with many detailed proposals recapitulating the discussion of the meeting before this one. But, a motion was generated out of this discussion "that the group gathered here become a state-wide network apart from the Caucus", and the motion duly carried. This Network went on to discuss its proposed goals. Four goals were projected: the establishment of a state-wide telephone tree, state-wide lobbying or other political action, the dissemination of gay-supportive literature and information, and the establishment of a gay state-wide switchboard. Discussion then concerned itself with tactics to broaden the support base of the network and tactics to achieve its proposed goals. Out of this discussion came general agreement that three committees convene immediately to address these three items: development of projected network goals, the writing of a news-release about the present meeting, and the third to discuss the establish a state-wide telephone tree (not to supplant the state-wide mailing list but to supplement it.)

At this point the group meeting to organize strategy for the elections in Pennsylvania joined the other (our) group. Before giving reports, the groups jointly established July 15th as the next meeting date.

Following are the minutes of the election strategy meeting submitted to the Caucus by Tony Sylvestre who chaired that meeting.

"The November, 1978 election will be especially important for the gay community. A new governor will be elected who will certainly have much to say about the continuation of the Council for Sexual Minorities, the executive order forbidding discrimination against gays, repeal of the "sodomy statutes", and other important gay related issues. The races for local, state, and federal legislative seats will, of course, be important also.

Members of the meeting developed a strategy for the elections which is outlined below.

1. Mary Nancarrow and others will develop a questionnaire to be sent to the candidates for Governor. They will also develop questions to be sent to local groups so that they can send them to candidates for legislative seats.

2. Send a delegation to meet with the candidates in the beginning of August. The delegation will consist of leaders of gay and non-gay but supportive groups.

3. Help organize a coalition of minority groups such as NOW, and the Gray Panthers to send a questionnaire and delegation to the candidates on issues of concern to minority groups.

4. Meet at the Rural Gay Caucus meeting on September 9, Saturday to discuss the candidates responses and the strategy for the election.

VOTER REGISTRATION - It was strongly agreed that to have an affect, gays have to be registered and vote. Regional coordinators will be asked to volunteer to work on voter registration. The various drives will be run according to the community needs and resources. Persons wishing to coordinate voter registration should call Tony (814-237-0211.)

Regional coordinators will also distribute information on the candidates to local gays."

After the report of the election strategy group, people from that group joined those in the newly-formed Network as its members broke into the three committees mentioned before. After separate, rather lengthy discussions, two committees gave a report on their recommendations. (The third committee on the news release consisted of only three persons who decided that the release should be deferred until the end of the day in order to adequately assess the day's meetings. No specific recommendations were submitted by the goals committee, but members decided to meet one hour before the July 15th meeting (at noon). The telephone tree committee did submit specific recommendations. It was recommended that at least two people and/or organizations act as contact persons for a state-wide telephone tree in the following cities: Pittsburgh, Phila., Harrisburg, and State College (possibly Lancaster and Allentown/Bethlehem too.) As this particular structure was being set up, a consensus was forming that everyone present should be willing to act as contacts in this system. A list of names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the persons attending was distributed to everyone present. The meeting adjourned after several announcements concerning celebrations of Gay Pride happening throughout the summer in Pa. and elsewhere. (A meeting of the Conference Planning Committee for '79 followed.

Respectfully submitted by,

Robert Woods, Secretary to the Rural Gay Caucus