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Contact:

LGBT History Project
Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

THE PENNSYLVANIA RURAL GAY CAUCUS

P. O. Box 1501

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105

717-697-3482

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The next meeting of the Pa. Rural Gay Caucus will be held on Sat. June 3rd at the Friends (Quaker) Meeting House, 6th and Herr Streets, Harrisburg at 1:00P.M. This meeting will be one the most important ever held by gays in this state. Over seventy organizations have been invited to send representatives, several meetings will actually be held jointly. The Governor's Race Committee, led by the Walt Whitman Club of Philadelphia, and the Minorities Democratic Club in State College will be leading discussions on what measures can and must be taken in this election in November to insure continuation of the Pennsylvania Council on Sexual Minorities and to influence a concern for gay issues on the part of the Legislature. Another meeting, simultaneously will be discussing the issue of a state Gay Organization. The first steps were taken in this direction at the last meeting of the Caucus when the foundations were laid for such an organization with the motion to generate a state-wide emergency mailing list. The form for this found below. This day also is the meeting date of Dignity -Central Pennsylvania which regularly meets at the Friends meeting House on the First Saturday. Finally, the first meeting of a committee for a gay conference next year will follow the other meetings. Members of Pride '78 Planning Committee will be meeting with them to pass along funds and advice from Pride '78. No formal organization has been adopted by this new conference committee, so it may be assumed that the committee meeting will be open to all persons who are interested in helping to plan for next year.

MAY MEETING MINUTES

In Room 227 of the Student Union Building of Penn State, On May 6th, Gary Norton, co-chair, convened the Pennsylvania Rural Gay Caucus for its monthly meeting which this month specifically included an open forum for discussion of the possible formation of a state-wide gay support group. The first topic of discussion was positive and negative comment on Pride '78, sponsored jointly by the Rural Caucus and the Pennsylvania Council for Sexual Minorities. The establishment of a tentative committee for arranging another conference next year grew out of this discussion. This newly formed committee will meet following the next meeting of the Caucus on June 3rd in Harrisburg and will meet with persons who were on Pride '78 planning committee at that meeting. The next item for discussion was the sad state of affairs in Allentown where gays are pressing for a gay amendment to the Human Relations Ordinance. Allentown members reported that the city was reacting with extreme measures. The Mayor had sought to ban gay activists from participating in city-sponsored forums, City Council threatened to impose a gag-rule on all discussion of gay rights, and the President of City Council had first invited Anita Bryant to bring her campaign to Allentown, then cancelled the invitation after receiving an anonymous threat to her life and his. No action was taken by the Caucus, at the request of Allentown members who felt that to bring such help from outside at this time would result in further escalation of the city's reaction.

Discussion then centered on the main consideration of the meeting- establishment of a gay-support group state-wide. Discussion ranged widely- both elaborately and vaguely- from updating and consolidating existing gay resources, to a state-wide switchboard, to a central clearing house, but, conclusively and resolutely to the establishment of a state-wide mailing and telephone list. Two immediate uses were seen for the mailing list. One use would be the speedy dispensing of information about an emergency situation in which quick, wide-spread action would be needed by a local or state wide group. The other use would be, of course, to facilitate the establishment of a state-wide organization. A motion was entertained and duly carried "that people who attended the (Caucus) meeting and who are members of local groups be encouraged to obtain names, addresses, and telephone numbers from their fellow/sister members of local groups who would like to be on the state-wide mailing list, and to bring or mail these names to the Pa. Rural Gay Caucus. It was further moved and carried "that the other groups within the state not represented at this meeting be informed and asked to do the same. In a related move, the Caucus committed itself to contact and to ask the gay media to include a form in their newspapers which the readers could fill out and send to a central address to obtain inclusion in the state-wide mailing list. The mailing address chosen for the initial compilation of the list was that of Lehigh Valley Citizens Concerned for a

Better Community (C.G.B.C.) in Allentown because persons in that group volunteered to do the initial work. In order to defray the costs of at least the initial mailing, a motion was carried "that there would be at least a \$1.00 donation asked of whomever might like to be on the mailing list." It was noted that the Caucus Treasurer should keep a separate account of this money.

The format of the next meeting of the Caucus was established as a joint meeting of two groups. One group will discuss the legislative and gubernatorial races in Pennsylvania. The other group will discuss the formation of the state-wide support group. Following these separate discussions, both groups will join to discuss each others recommendations.

In a show of solidarity and as the final actions of the meeting, the Caucus unanimously (on all three issues) resolved that (1) the Caucus supports H.J.R 683 calling for the extension of the deadline for passage of the ERA (2) that the Caucus supports the ERA march in Washington D.C. on July 9th for the ERA extension, and (3) that the Caucus endorses all the resolutions passed by the all-conference session of Pride '78. As people were preparing to leave, Mary Nancarrow, co-chair, announced that the Pa. Dept. of Health is asking the Caucus to resupply a member of the Departments Gay Concerns Committee. A representative from the Caucus had been active for some time, but since has moved from the state.

Tony Sylvestre had invited those attending for a social hour at his apartment following the Caucus. Most persons accepted his invitation.

Respectfully submitted by,

Robert Woods, Secretary.