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Date: November 1981

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

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

Gayfolio

*serving the gay and lesbian communities of
Central Pennsylvania*

Nov. 1981

Election '81 Analysis

Did the gay and lesbian vote affect the outcome?

Over a century ago a French author wrote that "every country has the government it deserves." On Election Day, Harrisburg residents evidently felt they deserved a "better" government, and voted to oust the Doutrich administration by a whopping two-to-one margin. The defeat tasted especially bitter to the Republican incumbents since they boasted a comfortable voter registration advantage.

How can we account for such an upset? Did the public perceive Mayor Doutrich as nothing more than a guttural voice uttering incoherencies under Brooke Shields eyebrows? Did Steve Reed's forceful, often caustic, politicking burn in the voters' minds the image of an inept mayor and a corrupt City Hall? Or were Reed's "Bette Davis" eyes enough? Did the debates (what debates?) earn high Nielson ratings--or any ratings? Did any of the candidates care that a large chunk of their constituency was lesbian or gay? We asked these questions and others of two long-time observers of Harrisburg's political scene. Both of our analysts are active in party politics and both major political parties are represented.

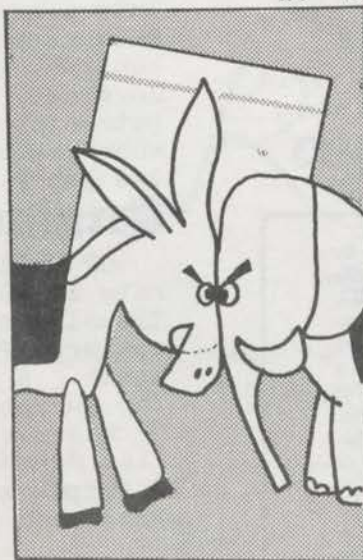
Our analysts agree that neither the mayor's alleged ineptitude, nor Reed's

politicking, nor even gay issues substantially affected the election's outcome. They maintain rather that restive residents voted to vent frustration--frustration with the decay of their city. Similar election results in other communities across the state seem to support this claim. Incumbents in general had a tough time of it in the recent elections.

We can point to staunch life-long Republicans who voted the Democratic ticket for the first time in their lives as obvious examples of frustration. Our analysts even venture to claim that the Democrats could have refrained from campaigning and still won City Hall. Our Republican analyst, in fact, maintains that some of the Democratic candidates did just that.

This frustration certainly could account for the trouncing Mayor Doutrich suffered. But how could this frustration be responsible for the defeat of each of the GOP council candidates--none of whom were incumbents, and some of whom were not unfa-

iliar to the gay/lesbian communities. Reed's team concept is credited with the Democratic sweep of City Hall. (Re-



(continued on page 4)

EDITORIAL: A need fulfilled?

There have been gay people in Harrisburg, no doubt, since the beginning of the city, but the emergence of any sizeable and noticeable gay community has been in more recent years. The last decade has seen the start, the ups and downs, sometimes the failure, sometimes the success of a number of organizations. The past year has seen an upswing in the activity and stability of most of the present groups. We have seen a growing effort of both groups and individuals to work together, thus developing a larger participation in and a growing sense of a gay community in this area.

It is for that reason that we in MCC, as well as other community leaders, have felt a growing need for a newspaper. Serious discussion on a newspaper started months ago. The present effort is being parented by MCC, but it is a community effort. Present plans are for the newspaper to become a separate entity in six months to a year.

It is a community paper. Your input and support will determine the success of this paper. Many of us believe it can be a vehicle for the cohesiveness, growth, and further development of our community.

--Gary Norton

Letters to the editor

GF will accept letters to the editor of a reasonable length. All letters must be signed and are subject to verification. Names will be withheld upon request.

gf is published on the 15th of each month by the Universal Fellowship of the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), Harrisburg Study Group, P.O. Box 3897, Harrisburg, PA 17105. Statements of fact and opinions expressed in this publication are the responsibility of authors alone and do not necessarily imply or reflect the opinions or philosophy of MCC or of the publication staff. While this publication proposes to serve the gay and lesbian communities of Central Pennsylvania, affiliation with this publication does not necessarily reflect a particular sexual or affectional preference.

ADVERTISING

Advertising rates are available upon request by writing to P.O. Box 3897, Harrisburg, PA 17105, or by calling 732-3537 weekdays between 12-4 p.m. Non-profit organizations receive a 20% discount. The advertising deadline is the 1st of each month. The publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement deemed inconsistent with the nature of this publication.

EDITORIAL: Preliminaries

I am sorely tempted to wax eloquent about community and communication and the importance of a newspaper to both. Fortunately for you, the reader, I have not allowed myself enough room to exercise this whim. So I will briefly and simply tell you what you can reasonably expect of this paper and what we would like to think we can expect of you.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

- Expect a name change in January. The November and December issues are trial balloons permitting us the luxury of a few mistakes before we launch a full-scale newspaper.
- Expect a larger publication with a greater diversity of news and features.
- Expect a complete and up-to-date calendar of gay community events.
- Expect a more attractive paper.
- Expect us to eventually ask you to subscribe to the paper.

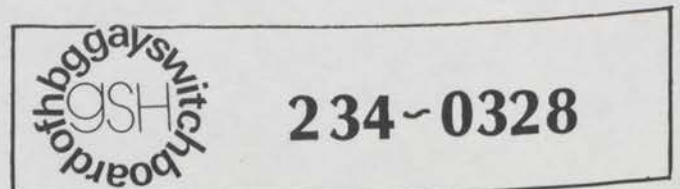
WHAT WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPECT

- We expect some of you to join us in publishing the paper. We need writers, proofreaders, photographers, artists, layout people, ad representatives, a circulation manager. . . If you are willing to assist and you want to get in on the ground floor, write us at the address listed in the box on this page or call us at 732-3537 (ask for Bill).
- This paper belongs to you. No one owns it. No one is making any money from it. Since it is your paper you have a responsibility to support it. This support can take several forms. You can keep us informed of events worthy of coverage. You can subscribe. You can patronize our advertisers and let them know you appreciate their support of the paper.

--wp.

Classifieds

GF will accept classified ads. The rate is \$2.00/3 lines and 50¢/each additional line. Mail ads to Box 3897, Harrisburg, PA 17105, by the 5th of the month. A return address must be included for purposes of verification and billing. GF reserves the right to refuse any classified deemed inappropriate for this forum. A complete policy for classifieds will be published in a later issue.



MCC Harrisburg attains study group status

For the past year, a small group under the leadership of Deacon Gary Norton has struggled to establish a MCC church in Harrisburg. The group's efforts were rewarded during the Mid-Atlantic District Conference of the Universal Fellowship of the Metropolitan Community Churches, held October 23-24, in Washington, D.C.

Since November, 1980, MCC Harrisburg has functioned as a parish extension of MCC Philadelphia. On October 22, the Harrisburg group presented its petition for Study Group status to the Board of Home Missions. The Board voted to recognize MCC Harrisburg as a separate body. Study Group status is the first step on the road to becoming a fully chartered church.

Worship services will continue to be held on Sunday evenings at 7:00, at the Friends' Meeting House, Sixth and Herr Streets, Harrisburg. Rev. Bruce Hughes began his duties as pastor for

MCC Harrisburg in early November. All are welcome at the services.

For further information on services and/or social events, call 238-3746 or write to MCC Harrisburg, P.O. Box 3897, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

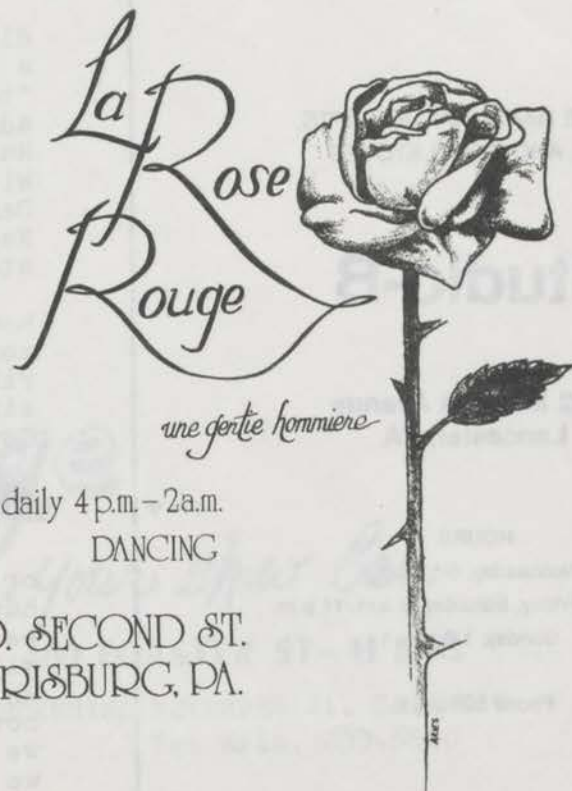
Dignity elects officers

Dignity/Central Pennsylvania recently elected officers for 1982. Bob S. will serve as president, Jeff D. as vice-president, Richard H. as secretary, Jon L. as treasurer, and Wallace S. and John F. as members-at-large.

Best wishes to the new team. May it continue the outstanding work of Dignity/Central Pennsylvania in its seventh year.

Network elections are set

The Pennsylvania Lesbian /Gay Support Network will meet Saturday, November 21, at 1 p.m. in the Friends' Meeting House, Sixth and Herr Streets. Nominations for 1982 officers will remain open until just before the balloting at the meeting.



open daily 4 p.m. - 2 a.m.

DANCING

400 NO. SECOND ST.
HARRISBURG, PA.

publicans will be left with a single vote on council in January.) By promoting the team concept for the Democrats Reed subtly invited voters to also think of the Republicans as a team--linking the Republican municipal candidates to the doomed Doutrich. (Our analysts attribute Carolyn Kramer's slightly less embarrassing loss in the City Controller race to her active campaigning and her ability to disassociate herself from the "team" to some degree. Republican voters evidently remained loyal in county-wide races since Judge Morrison won handily over challenger Natale.)

the gay vote

Did gays and lesbians vote? If so, how did they vote? Well, first our analysts point out that large numbers of gays and lesbians voted, as usual. Then they point out that it did not really matter that gays and lesbians voted in proportionately greater numbers than the larger electorate since the gay/lesbian vote mirrored the vote of the larger electorate.

While individual gays or feminists

may have supported candidates because of gay or feminist issues, such issue-oriented support was not widespread. Gays and lesbians were as frustrated as everybody else with City Hall's seeming helplessness in the face of decaying communities--and voted accordingly.

Our election scenario, then, is simple: Jane Voter and John Q. Public, frustrated with City Hall, enter the voting booth, clutch the Democratic lever, pull it, and presumably leave the polls feeling less frustrated. But will they still feel less frustrated four years from now, or will Steve Reed's mandate evaporate in the heat of pressure to deliver on campaign promises. Here our analysts break along party lines.

Our Republican friend, predictably enough, believes that Reed cannot deliver on his promise to revitalize the city. "Mostly sunny skies early in the administration, becoming overcast with the clouds of the status quo later in the administration," is the Republican forecast. He believes the most we can expect are some cosmetic changes. Our GOP analyst also predicts a Republican rally before the next mayorial election. He expects the party to rise a Phoenix from the ashes and to regain control of City Hall.

Our Democratic friend, likewise predictably enough, expects much more than a personnel facelift. He forecasts "torrential thunderstorms early in the administration to clear the air at City Hall, leading to mostly sunny skies." With new management in place and the Democratic team in control of council, Reed should be able to initiate substantive change.

Our Democratic analyst does concede, however, that Reed's promise to channel more state and federal money into Harrisburg may be difficult to fulfill since Republicans control both the Governor's Mansion and the White House.

gay concerns

The Doutrich administration's policy, or lack thereof, toward gays and lesbians, has been one of benign neglect. How can we expect the Reed administration to deal with the gay and lesbian communities? While differing in the degree of concern, both analysts suggested that "the devil we know is sometimes safer than the devil we don't."

Both analysts note that Reed has "talked out of both sides of his mouth" on gay issues. In meetings with representatives of Harrisburg's gays he has

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voiced support for our causes. However, he has also condemned Governor Thornburgh for proclaiming Gay Pride Week. His votes in the legislature on gay/lesbian related issues are public record.

That Reed will be sensitive to gay/lesbian needs, however, our Democratic friend is cautiously optimistic. He cites the fact that Reed lives in a neighborhood heavily populated by gays as a healthy sign. Let us hope that Mayor-elect Reed does not suffer from hyperopia (far-sightedness)--that he views his own community as clearly as he views others.

Jane Perkins, a councilperson-elect, lives two doors from Steve Reed, and is likewise aware of the gay/lesbian communities. Perkins has been more open in her support, and her support is considered more reliable.

Perkins has already expressed a desire to broaden the scope of the Human Relations Commission to include, among others, gays. She would also like to include a clause on non-discrimination on the basis of sexual or affectional preference in the city's union contracts. During a recent telephone conv-

versation with this writer, Perkins expressed an interest in talking with members of Harrisburg's gay/lesbian communities about a gay rights ordinance.

A final concern for gay/lesbian communities is the Democratic team's announced intent to crack down on vice. How broad is this concept of vice?

Our Democratic analyst is convinced that the crackdown will be targeted primarily at the drug traffick and at prostitution. Hustlers, whether on State or Third Streets, whether gay or straight, may be headed for the unemployment office. Our Democratic analyst assures us that indiscriminate harassment of gays and lesbians will not be tolerated by City Hall.

Whatever happens, we are either blessed by it or stuck with it for four years. But that does not mean that we cannot make our political clout felt. A gay political club recently formed (of which you will hear more in our next issue), and should be able to focus some of our concerns for City Hall.

During the next four years we will be listening carefully to what City Hall has to say. We hope City Hall will return the favor. ■

--W.O.

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AUDITIONS FOR THE GOTH SHOW BEGINNING NOVEMBER 21, SATURDAY
See Eric, 233-6800

Harrisburg MCC's pastor begins duties

Rev. Bruce Hughes, Harrisburg MCC's new pastor is not really new to Harrisburg. He has commuted since November, 1980, from MCC Philadelphia, where he has worked as minister of outreach and as chair of the board of deacons and study clergy.

Prior to his work in Philadelphia, he founded First State MCC in Delaware, pastored MCC in Princeton, NJ, and served as director of MCC Philadelphia's Cuban refugee halfway house. He has also served as chaplain to gay and lesbian Cubans at both Ft. Indiantown Gap and Ft. Chaffee, Arkansas.

Lancaster MCC meets to study

The Lancaster MCC Parish Extension will sponsor Bible study/rap group sessions on November 22 and 29 at 5 p.m. Phone 392-2729 for details.

The Lancaster Parish Extension has been looking for a church in which to hold worship services. The search may be completed by as early as December.

The Pennsmen

of

Harrisburg, York, Lancaster

Bar Night at La Rose

December 16

Christmas Charity

Before coming East, Rev. Hughes served as assistant national director of MCC's Institutional Ministries (prison) Program and as student clergyman with MC C Pomona, California.

He attended high school in Florida, junior college in California, and universities in Bangkok, Thailand (where he obtained a degree in S,E, Asian affairs), and Wiesbaden, West Germany. He is presently working on a master's degree from St. Charles Seminary in Philadelphia.

The New York native is 29 (yes, there is life before 30!) and lives with his spouse of 4½ years, Rev. Frank Crouch, in a Philadelphia suburb.

Rev. Hughes is available in Harrisburg from 7:30 p.m. Friday to 9 p.m. Sunday and by appointment at other times.

Thanksgiving dinner is set

Dignity and MCC Harrisburg will host a Thanksgiving dinner this year for members of the lesbian and gay communities. Dinner will be served at 6:00 at the Friends' Meeting House, Sixth and Herr Streets.

Turkey will be provided. Those attending the dinner are encouraged to bring a trimming of their choice.

Anyone wishing to help prepare dinner should be at the Friends' Meeting House from 3:00 on. For information call John F (652-6570) or Carl H. (533-6340).

Williamsport group forms

A group of concerned gay people in the Williamsport area met on October 9 to form the West Branch Gay Support Group.

Representatives of MCC Harrisburg and the Harrisburg Gay Switchboard attended the meeting and offered advice and support. Local members have since met several times in an effort to organize and get better acquainted.

The group sponsored a Halloween party on October 31, and a get-aquainted party on November 14.

The group has also been eagerly preparing for a group radio interview to be broadcast on station WWPA--am 1340.

Gary Norton, from Harrisburg MCC, will conduct a worship service with the Williamsport group on December 6.