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LGBT History Project
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Carlisle, PA 17013

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The Lancaster Inquirer

**Come & Help
Sat. April 19,
Just 9-12 am
Adopt-a-High-
way Cleanup!
We need you!**

Volume 4, Issue 1

March/April 1997

E-town Note:

The 4 school board members whose terms end this year are not running for re-election!

FREE

compliments of the Pink Triangle Coalition

E-Town in the First Person

I saw them as we pulled into the driveway for Elizabethtown Middle and High Schools: the religious extremists, the freedom fighters, the media.

The freedom fighters sang *Amazing Grace* in better harmony than the extremists, and *PGN's* Scott Giordano, *Crossroads'* Eric Selvey and others interviewed people and took pictures. And then SHE arrived: she who made the E-town Area School Board (EASB) think about the legality of their anti-queer policy, and helped E-town School District residents organize for quality education—Rita Addressa, community organizer, accompanied by Linda and Laura (no, they are *not* a lesbian couple).

After a "call to order" and introductions, Linda Kinney Poss gave us our orders: stand in solidarity when she spoke during the EASB meeting, and also during the Board's vote on the policy. I caught up with friends inside the auditorium and spot-checked the crowd to see how many extremists were there, when a minister conducted the Board's regular "joining church and state" prayer. After revealing the EASB's \$6,190 expense, to "clarify" the notorious "Pro-Family" Resolution and draft the anti-queer policy, which the audience communicated its disapproval of, it was "open mike" time, aka "Citizens' Comments."

I patiently awaited my turn, making last-patiently edits to my rough draft of comments, and keeping track of how many citizens spoke in support of the Board (final tally:8). At last... my turn. I told them that the media was there because there's a definite movement against Rainbow People and discussion of our issues in America's public school systems. I told them I hadn't been bussed in for meetings by a "liberal teachers' union." I reminded them of who they were really stepping on—Queer Youth, and that I wouldn't let them.

Afterward, I resumed my seat and listened to the other speakers: E-town Area Education Association President Nancy Warble got a standing ovation for her defense of E-town's teachers, while

many teachers stood in solidarity. My friend's mom gave a rousing reminiscence of her queer teachers ("My sixth grade teacher was queer but we didn't know it had to do with sex at all... he just walked funny and brushed his hair a lot."), and the fact that more harm is done to students by straight teachers, not queer ones. The lady who doesn't "agree with alternative lifestyles" quoted Pastor Martin Niemoller, holding that unless we all stand up for each other, we'll eventually get trampled on. Mary Anne Stanley said she "nearly fell over when I walked in to see the Board sitting in front of Pink Triangles," (pyramids for an upcoming musical). And then the church ladies spoke; y'know: wash-n-set once a week, "traditional family values," etc. But it wasn't until the Pennsylvania Family Institute's Michael Geer started lying about Giovanni's Room (the Philly queer bookstore), that I got upset enough to interrupt, I wasn't the only one to do so, and he stopped his tirade.

After all was said and applauded, and a ten-minute recess (all-in-all about 3 1/2 hours) we proceeded to typical school board business: a contested press box for the football field, treasury reports, blahblah, then the notorious "Resolution Clarification" (approved 7-2, with members Robert Enck and Kathleen Weaver dissenting), followed by the equally dreadful "Instructional Policy on Sexual Orientation," aka "No Promo Homo." Long story short: motion by Weaver to specify protection from harassment based on orientation (defeated 6-3); motion by Andrew Saylor to protect students from sexual-orientation harassment" (passed 5-4); and, at long last, the anti-queer policy (passed 9-0).

I was numb, but I had to think ahead. When channel 8 asked me "What's next?", I replied, "the elections." I'd had enough of heterosexist institutions. Will there be a lawsuit? I don't know. Will queer students be harassed, and queer teachers be forced to resign? Yes and maybe. Will

E-town

Continued on back page.

PTC display returns to the Lancaster County Library

In order to promote peace and to further discussion within the Lancaster community, the PTC has hung our display, "Celebrating Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Stars," in the Lancaster County Library Windolph Room for three weeks starting on March 17. The compromise allows more people to view the display and gives them the opportunity to see "what all of the fuss was about." The purpose of the display was to educate our community—not to place the the library under such political pressure that its ability to function was threatened.

The Coalition thanks all of the brave individuals who, many times at their own expense, stood up for the display. We strongly agree with the Library Board's decision that our community window display was not promotional, as alleged, and did meet the cultural, civic and educational standards set for such displays.

The library's decision to relocate the display from the front window to a second floor room is a betrayal of the library's traditional commitment to equality and the presentation of all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times. It serves as a visible reminder that even

when lesbian and gay residents meet or exceed the standards of any good citizen, we are often denied equal treatment when we dare mention that we live in and contribute to this community.

Lesbian and gay individuals can be conservative or liberal, they are members of all religious affiliations, all races, all ethnic groups. As an organization, one of our greatest strengths comes from listening to divergent viewpoints. We feel that all forces that fear free speech, one of the basic tenets of our democracy, are doomed to ultimate failure. We urge anyone who would like further discussion about any of the issues resulting from this exhibit and its resolution to contact the PTC.

The controversy has opened many doors for the PTC. In addition to bringing greater attention to the discrimination of local les-bi-gay residents, we now have commitments from private business for future public exhibits and discussions to raise awareness during LGB History Month and Pride Celebrations.

The Lancaster County Library was vulnerable to political intrusion as a result of years of underfunding by our community.

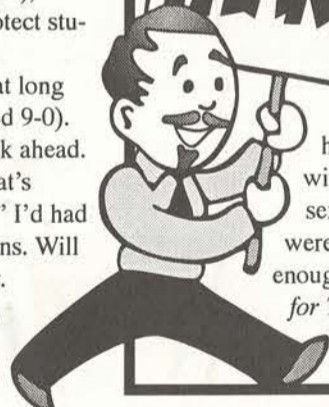
Library

Continued on back page.

Editors Pen

So often I hear local gay, lesbian, and bisexual people express their views, often unsupported, of the intolerance and homophobia of the Lancaster County straight population. For that reason I would like to say that during the past two attacks on the sexual minority community by the Lancaster County Public Library and the E-town School Board, I was proud of and grateful for all the support of the straight community which in both instances at least equaled, if not surpassed, the turn-out of the gay and lesbian community. At those moments, I wished I could have had all of those disparaging gay and lesbian people with me to witness this support. Which is not to take credit away from the local sexual minority community! Our phone tree worked and the turn-outs were wonderful. To everyone who showed up, we can't thank you enough. Special thanks is due to Laura Montgomery-Rutt of the *Alliance for Tolerance and Freedom* for all of her tremendous support. But...

WE STILL NEED YOUR HELP AND CONTRIBUTIONS!

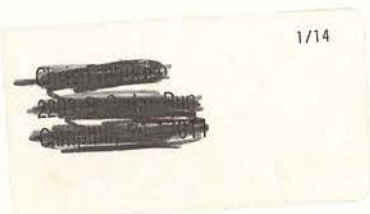


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Shopping Center
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Michael Caballero
Mark Eichelberger

The "Love" that dare not speak

Every relationship has secrets, little things that the partners keep to themselves, either because they are too personal, special, or embarrassing to share with others. Domestic violence is one of those secrets. Domestic violence holds no prejudice—there are batterers that are gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, and transgendered. While there are similarities in all batterers' behavior and reasons for battering, the differences in their sexuality create differences as to which counselors the batterers relate to and the best means of recovery for them. However, there is help out there.

Melissa Siwiec, Coordinator of Batterers' Intervention Service at Family Service Lancaster, spoke to the Pink Triangle Coalition at its January Meeting to tell us of an opportunity to set up support groups for sexual minority batterers and victims alike, if the need for such a program is evident. Melissa took on this advocacy role after hearing about the degree of abuse and lack of specific support for homosexuals from her friends and acquaintances. After researching the possibilities, Melissa found that there are very few services offered specifically for sexual minorities even on a national level. Although there are battered women's shelters that a lesbian can use, these shelters do not offer any support specific to her situation as a lesbian. A gay male victim on the other hand can only be offered a hotel room for a few nights. And there are no programs for gay men or lesbians that batter.

Melissa would like the following to happen. First and foremost, she would like to see expanded services for the victims—services that are geared toward the specific needs of the victims' sexuality. Secondly, she would like to see specific support and rehabilitation groups set-up for gay, lesbian, and bisexual batterers. Funding could become available to implement these kind of programs if the need was accurately reported and recorded. Furthermore, training must also happen for the police officers before they become involved in situations involving sexual minority batterers, because if the cases are handled correctly and the conviction rate for batterers is increased, more batterers could be court-ordered into the above mentioned rehabilitation groups.

There are two goals in publishing this article. The first is to supply a phone number to which all incidents of abuse can be reported in order to create a history and supply a log of cases necessary to rationalize creating specific support groups for gay lesbian, and bisexual batterers. That number is Family Services @ 397-5241 (please ask for Melissa Siwiec). You can report past and current events. Secondly, we wanted to spread the word about the services that are available for both batterers and victims. Although a batterers' program in Lancaster County is available only through a court order and is not gay-specific, Melissa at Family Services can put you in touch with groups in the area who can help without a court order. Victims of domestic violence can seek help at the following numbers: Lancaster Shelter for Abused Women: 299-1249, PA Legal Services: 299-0971, Domestic Violence Legal Services: 291-5826, and the Coalition Against Domestic Violence: 1-800-932-4632.

Please, let's use this information as a way to help support when needed and to pave the way for more services in the near future.

Thanks Melissa! ▲



Hollister Cole's continuing saga of life and lifeless times in this town of fruited streets. Q-Spot takes you on a Lazy Boy journey of the loves, lives, and daydreams of people, perhaps familiar — or maybe it's déjà vu.

V HOUSEMATE HUNTING AND GATHERING

"So, how long have you been looking for a new place?" Andrew blurted out for fear of more than three seconds of conversational pause. He hoped his attempt at feigning nonchalance was working. His reflection in the napkin holder told him probably not.

"Oh," Jacob began, squinting and glancing out the window to capture an answer. "I guess I started about two-and-a-half weeks ago." He made that brushstroke with his right hand that people with long hair make to position the front strands behind the ear. With some people, Andrew thought, the gesture might be pretentious. Jacob was not some people.

"I've only looked at about four or five places," Jacob continued in his medium-low, effortless voice, "but it seems like more. They're all starting to run together now. I'm forgetting which ones had big versus those narrow closets."

"Yeah, I know what you mean."

"What is the point of those narrow closets that couldn't even handle the width of a hanger?" Jacob asked, after a swallow of Jasmine tea. "They're more like shelves with a door."

Andrew laughed and offered an understanding nod of the head. "The closet issue is always tricky." As soon as he said it, Andrew realized the potential double meaning of the statement. Did he really say it? Was his subconscious playing a controlling interest in developing this script?

He quickly checked for his counterpart's reaction. Embarrassment? Knowing smirk? A wink of the eye?

"Ahh-choo!" Jacob pulled out a white cloth handkerchief and sneezed a second time into it. Hardly the reaction Andrew was hoping for. What gay man carries a cloth hanky in his pocket to actually use, anyway? Ooh. It reminded Andrew of his grandpa. For a gay man, though, a cloth handkerchief belongs on the head or peeking out one of the back pockets, though he was never really sure of the subcultural coding.

"Bless you," Andrew responded politely.

"Change-of-the-freakish-weather cold?" Ruby added, suddenly appearing at the table wielding a full pot of hot water. "I should be swapping your tea bag for chamomile." she continued while filling both cups without permission.

"Actually," Jacob finally got a chance to answer, "I think I'm allergic to some dogs."

"Oh hey, Mr. Martin. How's it goin'?" Leigh the busgirl joined the conversation after looking up at Andrew from the neighboring table she was cleaning behind Ruby.

Andrew turned his head at the sound of his name. "Oh, hi Leigh. Are you working here?"

"Uh-huh, I just started. So far, so good." She smiled at him while balling up her rag in both hands. A couple drips of liquid ran off her fingers.

"Good." Andrew smiled back. "Good to see you."

"Yeah, you, too." ▲

And with that, Ruby smiled at her customers, turned on her heel, and gently grabbed Leigh's arm at the elbow ushering her back towards the sacred land of no customers. "Leigh, see if you can help me with something in the kitchen," she said with a bit of adventure in her tone, out loud enough, she hoped, for her table to hear.

Leigh faithfully followed on the heels of Ruby to the sink. "Want me to get started on the dishes?" Leigh asked.

"Yeah, in a couple minutes," Ruby answered. Her wide eyes darted out to the customers and returned to Leigh's face. She lowered her voice to do some low-talking. Ruby was curious. Again. "You know that guy?"

Leigh looked at her, perplexed. "You mean Mr. Martin?"

"Hmm," she answered. "He looks so familiar to me. How do you know him?"

"He was one of my teachers—and my field hockey coach," Leigh answered.

"Field hockey," Ruby wrinkled her nose. "Really?"

"Yeah. He's really great. He talked me into playing goalie last year."

Ruby put her right finger on her cherubic little chin. Her eyes wandered into space. "Wow, that's a surprise. Not that you played field hockey, a goalie no less," she said turning her eyes and looking directly at Leigh. "But usually the coaches are les-bee-anns." Leigh shifted uncomfortably in her stance, her pale white cheeks turning circles of milkmaid crimson. She wasn't used to hearing the word spoken so freely in public, let alone with each syllable accentuated as if learning to say it for the first time. "This is definitely an exception to the rule."

Leigh stood there confused as Ruby pondered her self-induced mystery. "I could swear I met him before. And it certainly wasn't on the hockey field." Ruby was consistent about promoting her participation in the ranks of the physically non-active.

"You allergic to all dogs—or just poodles?" Andrew asked. They shared a laugh. Andrew felt the tension on his side of the table breaking.

"Just some dogs," Jacob answered.

"Man what a wacked-out scene that was back there."

"Yeah, talk about deceptive advertising."

"Poodles are probably my least favorite dog. It seems the fluffier they are, the meaner they can be."

"It just goes to show you," Andrew responded. "You can take the poodle out of the house, but you can never really, uh, take the poodle out of the house?"

"You don't have a dog do you? At least not a poodle?" Jacob asked.

"No, I don't. I love dogs—the ones that aren't poodles. but I've never really had the ideal place to have one."

Jacob smiled. "Well, there's one issue we wouldn't have to deal with if we were living together."

Andrew blushed at the thought. Could he actually consider living with such a sweet, long-haired man who uses cloth hankies? ▲

Resources

F&M College LGB's & Allies399-6192
G & L Switchboard of Harrisburg.....234-0328
Interweave (Unitarian Universalist)393-11733
AIDS Coalition Alliance394-3380, 394-9900
Lancaster Gay Helpline397-0691
Millersville Allies871-2241

P-Flag of Lancaster299-7043

Vision of Hope, MCC285-9070

Pink Triangle Coalition 394-6260

PTC on the web: <http://lancaster.net/community/ptc/> and http://155.68.3.11:80/CampusLife/Organizations/Allies/Gay_Lancaster/Home.html We want to hear from you!

Send any correspondence to:
P.O. Box 176, Lancaster, PA 17608-0176

Library Continued from front page.
Lancaster will not progress in the 21st century unless progressive people care enough to fund its precious institutions. Everyone who believes in the free discussion of ideas should help increase library contributions. Individuals should let the Library Board know of your support for freedom of speech and encourage them to reinstate the 40-year tradition of community window displays open to all local, nonprofit organizations. ▲

E-town Continued from front page.
the Rainbow People who sacrificed the closet to attend and/or speak at meetings be joined by closet queers in the E-town Area School District? I certainly hope so; if not, they're no less guilty of "No promo Homo." Am I still numb? Sorta'/kinda', but I'm moving forward with my ideas to bring about education reforms in Lancaster County, because my silence and complicity won't protect me, and my neutrality only helps my oppressors. Remember how school was for you and then help create changes! ▲

What's Happening

Mar. 17-Apr. 4 Celebrating Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Stars PTC window display in the Windolph Room of The Lancaster County Library on Duke St.

Sat., April 5, 8pm-1pm. "A Night to Remember," the first prom presented by MU ALLIES, Millersville University's GLB&T Activist group. \$10 for MU students and faculty, \$15 for non-MU students. In the Student Memorial Center on MU's Campus. Appetizers and desert will be served. Tickets at Destination Unknown, 211 West Orange St, Lanc., 293-0105, or through any Allies member.

Apr. 18, 19, Park City Charity Bazaar PTC Table in mall all day.

Apr. 19, Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup, 9-12am. Meet at Apria Healthcare Community Room. WE NEED YOU!

Tues., Apr. 22 and May 27, 7 pm, Pink Triangle Coalition Meetings. All welcome. at AIDS Coalition Alliance (LAP), 44 N. Queen Street Lancaster, down the hall from Isaac's Deli. ▲

Horrorscopes

ARIES (MARCH 21 – APR. 19) Business success is in your near future. Caramel holds special significance. **KEY WORD: BEAN**

TAURUS (APR. 20 – MAY 20) Friends become ultra important this month. Fiesta brings you good luck. **KEY WORD: CARROT**

GEMINI (MAY 21 – JUNE 20) Something new will enter your life soon. Paper hearts bring good news. **KEY WORD: BROCCOLI**

CANCER (JUNE 21 – JULY 22) Material success holds no meaning for you. Be careful when you walk past the bushes. **KEY WORD: SQUASH**

LEO (JULY 23 – AUG. 22) Four parties turn your life around. Be careful of the man behind the glasses. **KEY WORD: PUMPKIN**

VIRGO (AUG. 23 – SEPT. 22) It's time to concentrate on improving your health. A nostalgic evening brings a better understanding about a pressing matter. **KEY WORD: SUNFLOWER**

LIBRA (SEPT. 23 – OCT. 22) Make a decision and stick to it. Be cautious around people in acid-washed denim jeans. **KEY WORD: LIMA**

SCORPIO (OCT. 23 – NOV. 21) Help is on the way for a strange relationship. It's time to shave your head. **KEY WORD: CORN**

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22 – DEC. 21) Your calendar is full of appointments. A large dose of alternative music cures your ills. **KEY WORD: CAULIFLOWER**

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22 – JAN. 19) It's time to make a very important decision. Ruffles and frills are on the horizon. **KEY WORD: BEETS**

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20 – FEB. 18) The sun is shining on your future. The rain falls hard on a hum-drum town. **KEY WORD: TOMATO**

PISCES (FEB. 19 – MAR. 20) Time to leave the dance of your family. Surround yourself with pretty girls and pretty boys. **KEY WORD: S. POTATO.**

Newsletter Staff

Editor: Chris Mandros

Contributors: Tim Erdley, Andy Spedden, Anthony Lascoskie, Mark Stoner, Kimberli Werner