

# **LGBT History Project of the LGBT Center of Central PA**

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# The Lancaster Inquirer

**Dec. 22, 7 pm.  
PTC Holiday  
Meeting starts at  
44 N. Queen St.  
and continues as  
we go out to eat.**

Volume 5, Issue 4

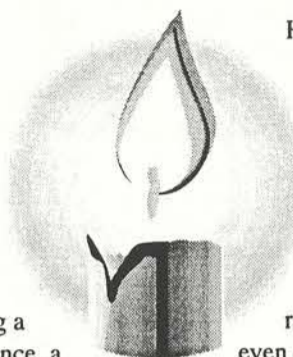
Dec. 1998

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compliments of the Pink Triangle Coalition

## Candlelight Vigil Held in City

The October murder of University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard prompted a candlelight vigil, held the evening of October 19, in Penn Square, downtown Lancaster. Co-sponsors of the event included the Alliance for Tolerance and Freedom and the Pink Triangle Coalition. Following a performance by Commit No Violence, a local drumming circle, opening remarks were given by Rev. Michael Chandler of the Community Mennonite Church. Then, for the next hour, the microphone was open to anyone who wished to express his/her feelings of grief, anger, fear, hope, and healing. Those who spoke ranged from members of academic communities to publicly-elected officials to the clergy, and included County Commissioner Ron Ford, Former City Councilwoman Billie Jo Herr, the Interfaith Alliance's Rev. Randy Riggs, and PTC members Anthony Lascoskie and Andy Spedden. Vigil attendees were given contact information for local, state and federal officials, in hopes that more people will speak to them in favor of GLBT and other equality issues, such as hate-crime legislation. In addition, a sympathy card, which will be sent to the Shepard Family, was passed around for people to sign.



Here in Lancaster, County Commissioners Paul Thibault and Terry Kauffman maintain that it's more in the public interest to defend the free-expression rights of religious extremists,

even when such expression violates our basic civil rights; Lancaster Newspapers won't let us place personal ads, won't publish our engagement/wedding notices, and won't publish openly-LGBT classified notices from us; PA Representative Mike Sturla is a co-sponsor of a bill to add "sexual orientation" to the state's hate crime law, but voted to not recognize same-sex marriages from other states and to bar such in Pennsylvania; and Lancaster City officials have yet to enforce the municipal non-discrimination ordinance which gives us basic civil rights.

These are a few examples of how inequality between GLBT and straight people is promoted, and it is such promotion that deems us as "other," paving the way for violence against us that is inadequately responded to by bias-crime legislation. That's right: hate crimes laws, while important, are superficial and reactive. So are the appearance of civility, pleas for so-called "tolerance" and the purported concern shown by public officials and social leaders. Anti-GLBT violence is symptomatic of a culture in which racism, sexism, and heterosexism are the institutionalized norms that undergird all social and economic policy, and is a logical consequence of officials' political and moral failure to establish basic civil rights protections for all people, and, where such protections do exist, failure to rigorously enforce such laws. Such laws create an equal "playing field" — to a degree — hate crimes laws do not, nor do such laws address the multi-layered causes of hatred and bigotry.

However, it is unfair to place all the

## Put a Little Bit of YOU Under Someone's Tree.

Talking Teletubbies, Glamour Shots gift certificates, blow-up furniture...having trouble deciding on the perfect gift? How about giving the best gift of all (and the cutest)—yourself. One of the healthiest ways to climb into the holiday spirit is to give a little bit of your time and your self to others in need.

The following is the IQ's quick list of community service opportunities benefiting local les-bi-gay-related organizations. You would certainly brighten the organization's spirits, as well as those of the people served, if you volunteered a few hours this season. *You better shop around...*

**The Betty Finney House** could use some Santa help...well, drivers, anyhow, to deliver donated goods to clients dealing with HIV/AIDS. Over the holidays the organization receives numerous donations which are sorted and then delivered. If you have some time to make a few deliveries, please call Jerre or John at 396-8689.

**The Alliance for Tolerance and Freedom** (which organized the recent and successful Matthew Shepard Vigil—see related story) has three immediate needs: write letters-to-the-editor to further the cause of justice and equality for all;

attend their December 15 Guest Chef Night at Marion Court Room (half of the money generated by food sales benefits the organization); and simply sign up to be on their mailing list to keep abreast of current issues and upcoming events. For more information, contact Laura Montgomery Rutt at 627-7180.

**AIDS Community Alliance (ACA)** also needs your help distributing donated items. Gift wrappers, drivers (elves), and especially someone with a generous figure and heart to be Santa are needed to package and deliver items to children affected and infected with HIV/AIDS. Contact Ann Beal at 394-3380, ext. 227. Costumes are optional, but encouraged.

**Or think PINK** this season...The Pink Triangle Coalition would like you to give us a piece of your mind at an upcoming meeting: December 22 and January 26 (always the 4th Tuesday of the month) starting at 7 p.m. at ACA, 44 N. Queen St. And if you've always wanted to pick up a fine piece of trash, join us at our next Adopt-A-Highway. Contact Mark at 397-7124 or Anthony at 291-9351. Pink is the new black this holiday season!

Discover a new meaning for comfort and joy. Give the gift that's unforgettable—YOU.

## Let Your Own Light Shine

*In My Opinion by Andy Spedden*

"Hate and prejudice are not American values," said President Bill Clinton in response to Matthew Shepard's murder. Rather hypocritical with the context of the President's own capitulation to the Department of Defense's anti-gay witch-hunts and employment discrimination policies, to the congress in its adoption of the misnamed "Defense of Marriage Act" to codify marriage as a heterosexual privilege, and in his failure to support our rights as the U.S. Supreme Court deliberated Colorado's Amendment 2, (Romer v. Evans).

"blame" on public officials. Insomuch as their actions, or lack thereof, hurts us, the silence of a majority of GLBT people in Lancaster County is complicity: if you aren't actively opposing the promotion of inequality, you're assisting. And it is due to your invisibility that there exists no GLBT community in our area. Sure, there are organizations, bars, "friendly" businesses, and even a Metropolitan Community Church, but for the most part, the GLBT groups act like islands with no bridges between them. Most GLBT Lancastrians would rather closet themselves in said spaces than pool resources, create infrastructure, and come

out as an unapologetic, assertive, caring, and nurturing community that fends for itself and looks after its own.

In our area our young and our old are inadequately cared for; our impoverished are left to heterosexist institutions; classism is rampant; and we who yearn for an open, supportive GLBT community are told, in various ways, "No. This is Lancaster." And then you wonder why your people leave the area.

It is a truism to the minority of GLBT Lancaster Countians who actively pursue progress and equality, that the greatest impediments often aren't straight bigots, but closeted GLBT people who have

**Light**

Continued on the back page.



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## In Search of the -Spot

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.

### X. RUBY PLAYS THE CLARINET

Lee poked her head out the front door, took a sniff of November front air, and then locked the 7 of Cups door on another Friday night. Eleven p.m. seemed far too early to put the beans and the tea leaves to bed but Lee understood why—why they no longer stayed open until two or even one a.m. The caffeine crowd that they once catered to didn't get it or didn't care. They just slumped on up the street leaving teenage trails of smoke behind.

To Marjorie, Felicia, and Lulu, the 7 of Cups' proprietors, it was never about volume. The business, that is. It was supposed to be about balance—a balanced clientele, a balanced beverage menu, and a balanced diet of "creative flow," as Felicia put it. So when the Joe Camel set collectively decided to mark the 7 of Cups as their territory with cigarette butts everywhere—the toilet, the front sidewalk cracks, and then the straw that broke Joe Camel's back, in the coffee mugs—the trio of owners took some steps to swing the pendulum back and reclaim the air. Ashtrays were made scarce, non-smoking customers were encouraged to complain, and then smoking was permitted only outside. Followed by the last desperate measure, scaling back hours.

The strategy worked. Wellness prevailed. A wider range of customers became repeat customers. "Finally, a cafe where you can go and have a decent cup of coffee and a decent conversation without the teen angst and nicotine. I thought I was gonna have to get the patch."

Although the place rarely looked as busy as those former Friday night underage blow-outs spilling onto East Chestnut Street sidewalks, the 7 of Cups business became much more steady with a regular stream of more mature Lancaster coffee drinkers.

"Quickly. Quick Lee! Pull those blinds. Secure a chair under the door knob before any heathens storm in for matches or something." Ruby yelled out from the kitchen pretending with her expressive voice that they were sheltering themselves from beasts. As soon as she finished her closing-time release, she stuck her reed back into her mouth so

that her end-of-the-shift ritual could continue. Ruby loved playing the clarinet.

And she played it with distinctive clarinet clarity defining *wood wind*. When she started taking lessons in fourth grade, all the other girls thought sucking on the reed was like sucking on a stick from a tree. But not Ruby. She liked it because she imagined herself making her way in the woods, sucking on some root for nutrients to heal a fever or something. At the age of 30 she still found something meditative in this whole process of getting ready to blow the first breath. Depending where her mind ended up determined what she would begin to play.

She was pretty good. And she had a passion for band up until junior high. Before moving onto the Conestoga Valley Senior High band, she quit abruptly. Ruby had a sudden self-awareness of being a gifted clarinetist. The gift she enjoyed. The label she didn't.

But she never quit playing the clarinet; and eventually she rediscovered her own private passion. Since working at the coffee house, she officially came out of the closet as a self-assured woodwind player. Many days she would slip her clarinet into her oversized fake black leather bag and then casually pull it out, snap open the case, and within minutes be mocking Kenny G. songs adding her own dramatic expressions.

While Lee hoisted the chairs upside down onto the table tops, Ruby wiped down the countertop one last time and then lifted her pear body onto the damp seat. She placed her clarinet to her lips and began blowing out that Frank Sinatra song, High Hopes.

Lee hummed along to herself as she swept the floor. After fighting with a leaf that kept ducking the broom, she bent down with her back to the storefront window. When she straightened up, she flipped her head with a start and was nose-to-nose with a face on the other side.

"Tap, tap, tap..." with a knuckle. "Hey, is that that little old ant song?" The question came from a boy of about 19 or 20 with a distinctive scar on his chin and black stained fingers which gripped a skateboard. His eyes, wide with sincerity, were framed by a full head of coiling brown hair. Thin little sideburns struggled to curl out of his cheeks.

Continued in next issue

## From the Mailbag

The following letter was sent to The Intelligencer and The Sunday News in addition to The Inquery.

Dear Editor,

**IGNORANCE**

Let's break that word down a bit.

**IGNORE.**

That is what it means.

It doesn't mean not understanding.

It doesn't mean not educated.

It means that you know and choose to **IGNORE**. Ignorance killed Matt Shepard.

Ignorance keeps prejudice alive in Lancaster. Ignorance breeds hatred and self-piety.

I read the article regarding the funeral of a slain boy in Wyoming. Signs visible to the family and friends of this boy at his funeral read: 'GOD HATES FAGS.' Let's break that sentence down...

**GOD**—A divine, loving, higher power held up by millions of hands world-wide

in different faiths.

**HATES**—A vile, disgusting word, condemned by **GOD**.

**FAGS**—A judgmental, prejudiced, slang word spoken with **HATE**.

OK, I'm a little confused...How do these three words make up a logical sentence? Will Lancaster continue to **IGNORE**? We seem to have jumped on the bandwagon to mourn for a boy we don't know in the Midwest but the vigil is over and we continue to **IGNORE**. We ignore our neighbors, family, friends, and lovers who died today from **AIDS**. We ignore the violence running rampant in Lancaster County. We ignore the prejudices against gays, lesbians, ethnic minorities, and the poverty stricken. We ignore anything that makes Lancaster 'BAD'. Can we please stop being **IGNORANT** and pay attention? Maybe, then, Lancaster will be a truly wonderful place to exist.

— David Gelatt

## 10 IQ Ways to Not Be So Darn Grinchy...

**1. START EARLY AND MOVE GRADUALLY:** If you haven't started planning for the holidays yet, don't fret. Begin today as if it was the first day of the rest of your life (Oh, no—that's another column.) Begin today. Starting is the hardest part. But it's not so hard if you begin by making a list that you can later check twice.

**2. THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY:** You know that International Male/J. Crew catalog you've fondled over and over? Well, rather than spend WAY too much of your hard-earned dollars on shipping and handling... visit local, "family"-owned/operated stores to snatch up plenty of homegrown goodies from homegrown homos. My, my.

**3. STOP, SHOP AND ROLL...** right on downtown for free parking, abandon the car, and get some delicious exercise window shopping. Make sure you take a tissue for your runny nose. Not only will you get great ideas, but also some much needed oxygen to refill your tank.

**4. MEASURING TWICE, BUT CUTTING ONCE...** can make wrapping your baubles a treat in itself. Get together with a honey pot and use some unique recyclables rather than the old ribbon curling technique: try potato prints, empty toilet paper rolls, or some bubble wrap. The judges are scoring high for presentation. You'll get a creative high for sniffing the hot glue.

**5. FEET DON'T FAIL ME NOW...** With all the holiday gaylas you've been invited to, now's the time to get in on that new swing craze. Hey, you get to wear those Patsy wingtips and Joan Crawford shoulder pads... Joan Collins, eat your sequined heart out. Swing on out to Big Mamas at Days Inn Wednesday nights. (don't forget your Gap Khakis).

**6. BETTER GET ON THE HORN...** to all your crafty friends and sleigh ride on out to A.C. Moore (for less) to pick up your supplies for that Martha Stewart Sunday. From candles to wreaths, to picture frames, to toilet paper cozies that will thrill and amaze your Aunt Agnes, a personalized giftie says *I want you so much it hurts*. And as a bonus, you can spot a herd O' hotties restocking the glue sticks (Wonder what they do with them in the break room?)

**7. STOP, LOOK AND ADMIRE ...** yourself after you've gotten your holiday hairdo. Yes, don't spend every day thinking about others. It's so overrated. Take a day and go to your favorite local hair burner. Extra stress release points for a spiral perm/pedicure combo platter. We recommend you get the gel on the side. It's more slimming.

**8. YOU REAP WHAT YOU SEW...** What you sew will be cherished by all. Handcrafted items such as pillows, designer vests, or even placements with pizzazz show your true home-ec colors. *Did you hate that class or what?* Experience the comfort and joy of working with a needle pulling thread... do I hear Julie Andrews on the hi-fi?

**9. BIG THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES...** It's not the size of the cubic zirconia, it's the clarity. Honestly folks, a well thought-out, meaningful trinket travels miles further than that pricey gift certificate to the plastic surgeon.

**10. COLD HANDS, WARM HEART...** make plans, be smart. Tis a gift to be simple, (not in the head), but in the planning. What could be simpler than an invigorating adventure in the December moonlight with friends and loved ones? Take a sleigh ride, go ice skating, build a person of snowiness, or a brisk daylight hike ending with mounds of whipped cream atop hot *coco* (and we ain't talkin' Chanel, baby).

See, with a little planning and a whole lot of lovin' in your holiday heart, you and your loved ones can celebrate the season in stress-free and sassy simplicity. ▲

## Resources

F&M College LGB's & Allies .....399-6192  
G & L Switchboard of Harrisburg.....234-0328  
Interweave (Unitarian Universalist) .....393-1733  
AIDS Community Alliance .....394-3380, 394-9900  
Millersville Allies .....872-3157  
P-FLAG of Lancaster .....299-7043  
Vision of Hope, MCC .....285-9070  
**Pink Triangle Coalition . 397-7124, 291-9351**  
Send any PTC correspondence to:  
P.O. Box 176, Lancaster, PA 17608-0176

**MISSION:** The Pink Triangle Coalition of Lancaster is a local organization whose purpose is to promote and support the lives of gay, lesbian, bi, transsexual and transgender people, and to educate the public about our community through increased visibility and awareness.

## Newsletter Staff

**Editors:** Tim Erdley, Anthony Lascoskie  
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## Thanks for your contributions:

We truly appreciate everyone who has recently helped support the efforts of the PTC. Here are a few names of those who have contributed:  
Dann Dewitt, Bob Moore, Andrew Garner, Radel & Stauffer, Susquehanna Club, Rob Leayman, Men's Covered Dish Dinner, Charlene Green, Craig McGinley, J. Douglas Byler, Beth Good and Dina Solito.  
(Please give them your thanks) ▲

## Light

Continued from the front page.  
chosen to live under varying degrees of subjugation to anti-GLBT prejudice. Such people are far less likely to demand fair and just treatment for their kind or to create community, because to do so would call attention to themselves. May Matthew Shepard's death not be in vain. May it be a wake-up call to every single GLBT person in Lancaster County who exists in the silent, closeted majority. ▲