

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

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**Title:** PA Rural Gay Caucus Meeting Minutes

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PRGC MINUTES

The regular meeting of the PRGC was held at 3002 Marietta Ave., Lancaster, Pa. on 3-5-77. It was called to order by co-chair Joe Burns at 1:45 PM. An agenda culled from those present included (1) more on SB 83 (2) concern for Central Pa. gay youth (3) The Florida Citrus Issue. It was noted that a local legislator is supportive of 83. This was the largest attendance ever at a Caucus as there were over thirty persons present at one time or another. Mary Nancarrow arrived shortly after the agenda was taken. She gave a report on the work of the Education Committee.

The Ed. Comm. did not meet in the past month due to problems in the Dep't. of Ed. and general inability of the members to attend. The pamphlet that we have worked on so hard has been restricted to usage by interanal personnel. (At the recent meeting on the 10th, there was a glimmer of hope that the field personnel may be included but may tend to file it in the waste can.) (Date of distribution would be in June or July for internal usage.)

*Handwritten note: Hendershot reported*  
Bob Hendershot, the acting Sec. of Ed. would like to see the Department take a more active role in gay rights by implementing our recommendations. He would like to see more classes within the Dept. to train the higher echelon. He has apparently accused the Commissioners of stalling. However, the stalling may be the result of an alleged poll taken of the field personnel in which only 7 school districts wished to know more about gay issues.

Sam Deetz of Legislative Comm. said that SB 83 has now been in State Gov't for six weeks. We would like to instigate a push to have it sent to the Appropriations Comm. in the Legislature. This would result in a cost analysis of enforcement of its provisions. It is almost certain that the cost would be prohibitive, as similar studies in other states have revealed.

Sen. Lewis, of Phila., has agreed to be the main sponsor of the sodomy repeal and criminal code revision bill. People who wish to voice support for this bill may call the Gov's. Hot Line or a special # in Barry Kohn's office 237-7351 (215) (I did not get the #, Joe, perhaps you know it)

It would also be a good idea for everyone to contact their own representatives on this issue and get their support. In the event that is not possible, at least try to have them give it a "NO VOTE" rather than a "NAY". We would prefer a "YEA"!!! On Thurs. 3-10, there will be a press conference in Hsbg. centering on gay concerns. Then on 3-14 there will be a GayXXX Rights Demonstration and Lobby Day ( It got excellent coverage by the media on the noon news on radio and some local Hsbg. TV stations. It was not on any six o'clock news stations on TV but did appear with quite objective reportage on the news at eleven. Even Beaver Springs was amazed to see one of its most outrageous residents carrying signs and yelling 'GAY RIGHTS NOW') WE hope to have a good turnout for the demonstration. (I feel we did) On Sat, 3-12-77, A Legislative meeting of the Gov's. Council on Sexual Minorities will be held at 244 N. Broad St., Phila.. It will begin at 1:30 PM. Sam also ~~XXXXX~~ suggested working with local chapters of AFSCME to add the 'sexual and affectional preference' clause to union contracts. It would make an excellent bargaining tool for sexual minority groups.



## Communication Committee

Bob Woods reported on the progress made on a letter asking for support of ~~XXX~~ Lobby Day. He also outlined the operation of the telephone tree which some new members had asked about. The telephone tree ~~XXXX~~ (1) gathers group consensus in emergency situations, (2) ~~disperse~~ <sup>voting</sup> information from the co-chairpersons to the ~~general~~ membership between regular meetings and alerts non-voting members to inflammatory situations. (3) Facilitate spread of legislative and media alerts.

There will be a meeting of Communication on 3-10-77 in Allentown at Joe's.

A meeting of the Gov's. Council in Harrisburg on 3-26 at the Human Relations Bldg. More details will be given later or contact Sam Deetz.

Sue Butler has been named Convenor of the Youth Committee and gave the following report. The purpose of the committee is to help and advise on complaints of discrimination received from High School and College Youth. The complainant must be under 21, otherwise the PRGC would handle the complaint through its adult channels. Dale Masters suggested a Gay Youth of Central Pa. to have a social organization in the Harrisburg area. It would be staffed primarily by persons who are or have been affiliated with the Rural Caucus. The group, however, would be autonomous of our function and largely self-supporting. A secondary function of the G. Y. of C. P. would be to give youth a chance to say they are 'Gay and Proud of it' and help to educate their peers that there is nothing wrong with having homosexual desires, expressed or ~~XXXXXX~~ hidden.

Health Concerns committee report was given in the absence of the convenor, Ray Stickles, by the ~~xxxx~~ chair. The 1976 report of Gay concerns in Health Delivery Systems is now available. Four persons from gay organizations are now on the committee for the State. There will be a meeting this month, but no date was given.

Mary Nancarrow read the letter from Sen. McKinney supporting criminal code revision and sodomy repeal ~~XXXX~~ He is also not supportive of SB 83 in its repressive measures.  
Sam Deetz--motion

'That the Rural Caucus support the demonstration on 3-14 in Harrisburg'

'That the Rural Caucus Banner be carried in the parade to the front of the Capitol Building by members of the Caucus.'

The two motions were seconded and unanimously affirmed.

A discussion followed on the need for Lobby Day Workshops to educate new members in lobbying ~~proceed~~ procedures.

Sam then presented another motion--

'That the Rural Caucus hold a press conference on 3-10-77 on provisions of SB 83'

It was also seconded and passed unanimously.

Arnold Hutchings of Harrisburg area MCC read a letter he wrote to the Gov. and the reply he received ~~xxxx~~ from the Office of the Gov. The reply suggested that member of Pa.'s Gay Community meet with their representatives before a vote is taken on SB 83. Arnold also wrote a letter to Sen. Nolan, the prime sponsor of SB 83, decrying his inhumanity and poor concern for the economic fate of an estimated 10% of his constituency. Nolan's answer was predictable. He feels that employment ~~is~~ of gays is morally wrong.



Further discussion was heard in reference to having gay youth become more active in the area of rights. Jonathan Smith-Cousins proposed a motion that 'The Youth Committee of the Rural Gay Caucus sponsor an event to help establish a Gay Youth Center in Central Pa. (Harrisburg Area) for educational and social reasons'. After some discussion of direct vs. indirect involvement of other members of the Pa. Rural Gay Caucus and their committees the motion was seconded and affirmed. There were two abstentions. This was followed by a recess at 4:00 PM for refreshments.

The meeting was reconvened at 4:30 PM.  
(thank you again, David, for covering the discussion of Arnold's letters)

Martin Rock gave an updated version of his employment situation and a motion was received ~~from~~ from the membership that the co-chairpersons of the Rural Gay Caucus write a letter to his (Martin's) employers supporting him in his ~~xx~~ fight for continuing employment'. It was immediately seconded and unanimously accepted.

Mary Nancarrow attacked the Health Concerns Committee issue. The committee has already gone way past the time for a permanent convenor to be selected. The temporary convenor, Ray Stickles, has been more than cooperative in serving past the time two or three times. It was brought out that the Dept. of Health of Pa. and the Dept. of Justice have cases on file of discrimination against gays in health delivery systems. They include restrictions of family visitation do not apply to gay couples. Lovers are considered outsiders by the health professionals, rather than close family members. VD clinics often discriminate and dehumanize gay clients by either poking fun at your lifestyle or not giving a thorough enough exam (particularly proctos (anal exams ~~xxx~~)). A poll of those persons present showed that a lot of interest existed in keeping the Health Committee viable. A motion was received to 'table discussion of the Health Concerns Comm. until next month', and those persons who expressed a desire in working on that committee's projects will be contacted by a chair-selected convenor.

Joe Burns reported that Allentown has a Human Relations bill pending before town council. It does not include a clause covering gay rights. A representative from NOW (Nat'l Organization of Women) has suggested to the council that a gay non-discrimination ~~xxxx~~ clause be inserted. The bill will be voted on within two or three weeks. It would be helpful to have a study at hand to show the council whether gay discrimination in areas of employment and housing exists in the Allentown Area. A male and female volunteer is needed to answer classified notices in the newspapers to see if suspected ~~xxx~~ gays can obtain employment and if single same-sex couples can rent a housing.

A member ~~xxxx~~ from the Harrisburg area suggested contacting Jerry McEntee, AFSCME Pres., in Pa. re: discrimination against gays in state employment. The Council on Sexual Minorities has already done this and the AFSCME is not supportive of SB 83-type legislation. They have suggested that Local Union chapters insert a 'sexual or affectional preference' clause into their bargaining contracts to offset any anti-gay administrative action.

Sam Deetz, after passing around a bag of mutilated oranges, brought up the Florida Citrus Issue.



Anita Bryant, the Florida Sunshine Lady of ~~SunKist~~ fame, is sponsoring a campaign to "SAVE OUR CHILDREN" (from the homosexuals) and ~~repeal~~ the recently enacted Dade County Human Relations ordinances. These laws give gays equal rights under the law in housing, employment, and other areas. A conflict group has arisen in the meantime to counteract her influence with the Florida Citrus Growers Assoc. THE FCGA is also for repeal of the Human Relations statutes. The Dade County Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays, Box 33414, Miami, Fla., 33133 is in direct opposition to the Citrus Growers and Anita.

A motion was received that the Pa. Rural Gay Caucus send a letter to the Dade Co. Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays supporting their stand against Anita, et al. and another to the Florida Citrus Growers Association opposing the stand they have taken for Anita. The motion was seconded and accepted in the affirmative by unanimous consent.

Additional action and announcements:

Troy Perry, well known gay activist minister, is appearing at State College on 3-12 and 3-13.

Barry Kohn, of the Justice Dep't. will be speaking at Westchester State College on 3-9-77. He will explain the details of sodomy repeal legislation.

Shippensburg State College has passed a non-discriminatory clause, ~~in Title IX~~. It was supported by the Commonwealth Assoc. of Students and passed by the Student Senate. (Bloomsburg doesn't even have it on any ~~future~~ future agenda, but I'm working on it)

The hat was passed to help subsidize the cost of our monthly newsletter and netted \$23.

Our treasury now has a total of \$137.05.

A petition was circulated protesting the passage of or even the existence of SB 83. It was signed by everyone present

Jonathan suggested the creation of a Third World committee to institute outreach to Negro, Chicano, and Native American gays in Pa. Due to time considerations, further discussion was tabled until next meeting.

The July meeting will be on 7-9-77 at Williamsport. The address is 659 Beeber St. and a map will follow.

The meeting was ~~closed~~ closed by a motion for adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,



S. Keith Edmiston, Sec.