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volume 1 number 3

board of hbggayswitchboard
GSH

HARRISBURG GAY SWITCHBOARD
presents



THAT
RABBIT

a unique theatrical experience

ANNIVERSARY PARTY, APRIL 26

The Gay Switchboard's 6th Anniversary will be celebrated at a dinner party the evening of the 26th of April, Sunday at 7 o'clock at the Box Office Restaurant. The menu will be baked stuffed chicken breast, soup, salad, two vegetables, rolls & butter, desert and beverage. The cost per person is \$8.50.

All members and friends are welcome. Tickets are now available from active members of the Switchboard or by writing the Board at Box 872, Harrisburg, 17108. The deadline for reservations is Wednesday, April 22.

The Switchboard, is for you. Please plan to attend.

April 11, the Switchboard offers "That Rabbit", a unique theatrical experience. It's a one man show of delightful tales about the cleverest rabbit ever to live. He was created in poverty and discrimination by a group of people Hungry for freedom. He is **alive** and 'captivating'. You will be richer having shared this rabbit's wisdom.

The Switchboard is selling tickets for \$2 in advance, \$3 at the door. All proceeds benefit the Gay Switchboard of Harrisburg so mark your calendars and plan to sit back and enjoy a genuine joyful production of unique theatre. The performance will begin at 8PM at the Friends Meeting House, 6th & Herr Sts.



Please send me _____ tickets @ \$8.50 each

The Gay Switchboard's 6th Anniversary Party at
The Box Office Restaurant - April 26: 7PM
2nd & Harris Streets

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PENNSMEN'S NIGHT

The Pennsmen are planning an evening for you. This April 22nd, Wednesday eve, at the La Rose Rouge, 400 N. 2nd St., Harrisburg.

The evening with the Pennsmen begins at 9 o'clock and will include a "Leather Fashion Show" for your entertainment. Mark your calendars now for an evening with the Pennsmen, April 22.

JOANN FARR OUTSTANDING

February 21, a warm and dynamic speaker visited Harrisburg as the guest of Dignity/Cent. Pa.. Her topic was "Sexuality & Intimacy". Joann Farr, of the University of Pa., was that guest speaker that radiated a certain warmth throughout her remarks.

Visibly evident was the speaker's stated conviction that membership within the human race was the most important 'organization' to which she belonged. And to belong very comfortably to that organization, sharing love is vital.

Joann, never appeared as a haughty psychologist to the audience. She took her shoes off before the group. It was spontaneous and a statement that said, "I'm human!"

Humanity, to Joann Farr, is being yourself and not the person that you think others will like. For if you succeed in convincing people that you are that great pretender, what is it that you have gained? You cannot be yourself. Others do not know the 'real' you. And there is no possibility for intimacy.

After sharing that information, Joann asked, "Why is it when we need love and intimacy, that we don't get it?"

She answered the question quietly, "...we're afraid."

Afraid to make love; afraid to be a love object; afraid we are repulsive; afraid we are not beautiful; afraid that we are stupid; afraid we don't fit in... The list is endless.

Essentially, we are paralyzed by the fear of rejection. So afraid, that we cannot disclose our real selves to others. And that is where the great pretender is given birth.

Fear that no one could possibly love the real me, results in shallow, unrewarding acquaintances with other people. That fear forbids warm, close, intimate relationships.

On the subject of sexual intimacy, Joann declared the use of another human being as a sex object is 'sick'.

"The only sick sexual behavior I know about", Joann said.

"For intimacy is not reducable to sexual scoring. Sex without intimacy is like a diploma without an education. Only the former is more painful."

One picture that the speaker painted was very striking. The use of a person for sex is making 'a masturbatory toilet out of another human being'. That illustration alone must communicate to us the problems with, and created by, impersonal sexual relations.

Caring in a relationship means allowing another human being the freedom to be whoever they are. Even if that freedom would mean that they will grow away from us instead of towards us.

She illustrated such freedom by likening relationships to 'gently cupped hands'. They carefully carry the precious beach sand home. Squeezing it tightly, it runs away. Exposing its delicate grains to a careless wind, it disappears. Only gently cupped hands will protect it. Relationships are just as delicate.

The speaker was extraordinary and left her audience a wealthier people. Thanks, Joann, for sharing your love with us.



a reference:

U.S. Senators (Pa.)

Sen. Arlen Specter (R)
253 Russell Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-221-4254

Sen. H. John Heinz, III (R)
143 Russell Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-221-6324

Area Representatives by County:

Dauphin & Lebanon (No. of line
between Palmyra-Myerstown)

Rep. Allen E. Ertel (D)
1030 Longworth House Off. Bldg.
Wash. - 202-225-4315
Hsbg. - 717-561-8963

Cumberland (E. of Carlisle),
Adams & York

Rep. William Goodling (R)
109 Cannon Bldg.
Wash. - 202-225-5836
York - 717-261-8308

Cumberland (Carlisle & W.),
Juniata, Snyder & Perry

Rep. Bud Shuster (R)
2155 Rayburn Bldg.
Wash. - 202-255-2131
Chamb'bg. - 717-261-8308

Lancaster & Lebanon (So. &
including line between
Palmyra-Myerstown)

Rep. Robt. Walker (R)
1028 Longworth House Off. Bldg.
Wash. - 202-255-2111
Lanc. - 717-393-0666

all representative's addresses
end with:

Washington, D.C. 20515

WHAT'S GOING ON?

One of the many advantages of living in the United States today is that it offers all citizens the opportunity to participate in the operation of its government. All too often, however, we fail to become a meaningful part of this process and may be unaware that our very existence is compromised. Sometimes it is because we do not know where to start or who to voice our feelings to, sometimes we do not have the information which we require to develop a rational and intelligent response and, sometimes we just lack the courage or are perhaps apathetic.

In this and future issues of the GSH Newsletter we shall attempt to provide you with up to date and accurate information. In each issue we plan to reprint a piece of pending legislation (as it appears in Congress or the State Legislature) so that you can study and evaluate it for yourselves, develop a point of view and then, hopefully, express that point of view to your legislator. It is only through this process of intelligent and rational communication to our legislators that we can make our existence as Gay Americans known as well as ensuring our place in society as responsible, healthy and productive citizens.

We, here at the Switchboard, can provide you with the knowledge as to whom to contact and where to go, and, we can provide you with the basic information regarding the issues. It is, however, up to you to display the courage and concern by expressing yourselves and providing the positive image which the Gay Community is constantly in need of.

In keeping with this philosophy, we are providing the names, addresses and telephone numbers for your Federal Congressional legislators (by county) in Central PA. Please take a moment to become familiar with this information and then detach it and keep it handy among your addresses as a reference for whenever it is needed.

In the next issue of the Newsletter we intend to print House Concurrent Resolution 166, proposed by Rep. McDonald, in its entirety. This is the anti-gay bill which you may have read about or heard your friends discussing. We think you will be interested and concerned over what it says as well as what it proposes. We also hope that you will want to express your opinion regarding it to your appropriate legislator. In any case, you will come away better educated on the issue.

In closing, we would like to make it clear that our intent is not to politicize but, rather, to educate. Legislation which is reprinted in the GSH Newsletter will be printed exactly as it is published in Congress. Comments regarding such legislation will be restricted to explanations and not interpretations. The Switchboard passes on the responsibility of interpretation and action to you, the reader.

In the meantime, take care and enjoy—

SAM

LIBRARY MISSING BOOKS

The Gay Switchboard's Library is in need of reference books. Most of our books are novels, only a few are good resource books. In reviewing the present library, several important books were found to be missing; among them, *I Have More Fun With You Than Anyone* and *On Being Different*. The second is by Merle Miller and the first we are uncertain as to the author. If you have borrowed books from the library and forgotten to get them back please check your own collections and return them as soon as possible.

We have a tight budget and can ill afford the purchase of books formerly in our own library in addition to those new publications you'll be reading about in our book review section. Thank you for returning any books you might have borrowed and, of course, we are always pleased to receive any old/new donated books.

'Comment' — the editor

"Where seldom is heard a discouraging word. . . ."

That's a line from "Home, Home on the Range". I used to sing it as a kid and never really thought about what a treasury is in those words.

"Where seldom is heard . . . a discouraging word"

Discouragement is easily afforded by most of us. There is no risks involved. We play safe and encourage others not to risk. I have found that the encouragement of others is far more rewarding. It makes them feel good about what they are doing or wish to do and I feel better, too. Positiveness (new word), like fresh air!

I'm not sure how discouraging words began. I am sure they were full of good intentions, but even cowboys hated dealing with them. Discouraging words produce little coffee-cups like the one that says, "Aw, Paw, quit you're complainin'". Cute. But complaining, discouraging, bitching, are all negatives that quell life.

Encouragement is vital. That positive air that we will succeed, we will go forward and we only ever do that by risking ourselves. I see a lot of people sitting back (free to do that mind you) and I think, "Okay, maybe they are afraid and maybe words of encouragement would motivate them to action; to risking themselves".

Home, home on the range. Where the deer and the antelope play. Where seldom

FEBRUARY, A RECORD!

One hundred and eighty two calls were received by the GAY Switchboard in the month of FEB! Bar information and general 'rap' calls led the categories with 23% and 21% respectively.

Of a total of 20 evenings of service, 18 were covered or a 90% service record. Nine volunteers staffed the Board in FEB! We did it again and we'll keep trying to do it better and better.

HISTORY

In 1979, the Switchboard was having a good year. The following article is a historic retrieval from the annals of *Women's News* (4/79)

"And now we are six."

"The Gay Switchboard of Harrisburg celebrates its 4th anniversary this April. Its birth was the result of a small group of gay men and women concerned with the trials that faced every gay person. This group united their energies and finances in an effort to bring information and understanding to the community.

In this, the 4th anniversary, the Gay Switchboard appears to be on solid ground. In April, 1975, the Gay Switchboard was housed in a small room that lacked heating facilities but was well air conditioned with cracks in the walls and ceilings. Volunteers sat by the phone with umbrellas on rainy nights and brought cups of hot coffee on those bitter wintry eves.

Today, the Switchboard is comfortably housed in a building providing both heating and the conventional air conditioning. A library has been instituted through the contributions of members and friends. A variety of gay literature has been collected to assist volunteers in expanding their knowledge about the gay community. There are many areas of related information concerning the bisexual, the transvestite, the transsexual, and other areas of concern.

Volunteers are trained in an extensive six week program and are instructed not to make judgmental statements, but rather to help callers to identify their problem and establish the possible solutions to each. The selection of 'the' solution is always left to the caller. Volunteers are interested in helping callers deal with their problems themselves, and not to 'solve problems' for them.

Being gay has been a frightening and lonely thing for millions of men and women. Dealing with the problems they encounter has formerly and usually been a solo act. The Gay Switchboard has provided a listening ear and another human being who is supportive. They continue today, hoping to make such fear a thing of the past."