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JULY 1981

of h b g g a y s w i t c h
 board

THE
GAY SWITCHBOARD
 OF HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

P.O. BOX 872
 HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17108

SUMMER PICNIC

The August meeting of the Switchboard is a breather from all the heavy business of moving our office and the year long work of operating the Switchboard.

A Summer picnic is planned for Sunday, August 2nd, for everyone. The picnic begins on City Island at 6 PM in the pavilions just off the Walnut Street Bridge. It is a covered dish affair, the Switchboard will have a charcoal fire going for your favorite foods and will supply the drinks.

In case of rain the picnic will be held at John B.'s. But we ain't countin' on rain, so pack a picnic dish to share and join the Switchboard for an evening of pleasure.

How da ya drive an antique dealer crazy? Drop in and say, "WHAT'S NEW?"



We did it! In June, we broke all the records for the year. Our coverage was the best for the year (95.5%) and the calls totaled 232. Again, Bar Info. led the type calls with a whopping 31%. For the year here's the standings: and, ah keep up the GREAT work volunteers! Be--U-T-ful!

		coverage	%	#
1st	June	21 of 22	95.5	232
2nd	Feb.	18 of 20	90.0	182
3rd	Mar.	19 of 22	86.4	176
4th	Apr.	18 of 22	81.8	158
5th	May	17 of 21	80.9	207
6th	Jan.	17 of 23	73.9	164
TTL.		110 of 130	84.6	1119

SWITCHBOARD MOVES

The Switchboard moved into its present office around July 1978 That was three years, three months after our founding. Now three years later, our office moves again.

The work of moving the Switchboard was a job accomplished by a few volunteers. They carried the furniture into the new office, they painted the walls, and arranged for the telephones to be transferred before July 23rd. The move has been a smooth operation once we ironed out all the details with our landlords. The cooperation of our volunteers was an inspiration.

Now when you dial 2-3-4-0-3-2-8 you'll be speaking through a brand-new phone in a brand-new office to a "brand-new. . . ?"

SNOWFLAKES

by Steve D.

Human beings tend to gravitate toward, and associate with, other human beings who share similar attitudes, values, and beliefs. From a sociological perspective, formation of in-groups and out-groups is the phenomenon which occurs. The in-groups consist of those groups to which I can identify myself as a member, while the out-groups are those to which I do not claim membership. The gay community itself is an out-group when the point of reference is a straight person. However, when the reference point is the gay person, the gay community to that gay person is an in-group. Further analysis of the many smaller groups which compose the gay community itself, shows a similar structure. Identification of the gay community as one's in-group is limited in that the basis for identification is along the narrow dimension of sexual orientation. Formation of in- and out-groups within the gay community is an ongoing and ever present group process. For any number of reasons, there are gay people one might choose to include in one's in-group and there are gay people which one would choose to place in one's out-group. Psychologically, in-groups tell the individual "I'm OK, because you're OK." People that I include within my personal in-group are similar to me, therefore I choose to associate with them. They validate me. They give approval to me .. The message to those in my out-groups is "I'm OK, you're not OK." You're not like me, you're different and different is strange. I can't tolerate you, I'm not like you so to hell with you. But from the perspective of growth and development, one can become stifled through connections with only those who are clones of one's attitudes, values, and beliefs. A person can become enhanced via relationships with people who are different. Society needs to appreciate the uniqueness of the individual rather than stamp it out. It takes the strength of personal worth to say "I'm OK, you're OK." It takes the personal risk of listening to someone from the out-group and self disclosing to them. It takes the personal integrity to say "Hey, you're different from me, but you're a person and I'm a person, and although we're 2 different people in 2 different places, there's still a chance that we can work out some kind of relationship together." Coming from a position of feeling worthwhile and believing that other people are worthwhile, even though they're not one's carbon copy, opens

a person to a more satisfying existence. Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile wonders. But look what they can do when they stick together.

a Snake

It
topples
governments,
wrecks
marriages,
ruins
careers,
busts
reputations,
causes
heartaches,
nightmares,
indigestion,
spawns suspicion,
generates
grief,
dispatches
innocent
people
to cry in their
pillows.
Even its name
hisses.
It's called
gossip.
Office gossip,
Shop gossip.
Party gossip.
It makes
headlines
and headaches.
Before
you repeat
a story,
ask yourself:
Is it true?
Is it fair?
Is it necessary?
If not,
shut up.

A message as published
by United Technologies Corporation, Hartford, Connecticut 06101

Staff July newsletter:
Colin, editor
Chuck M.
Steve D.



— the editor

The whole time I was hiding in a closet I was terrifically angry. I thought I was angry at others' lack of understanding or because I feared they wouldn't accept me as a gay man. Now, however, I know what made me angry. And that is capsuled in a single word: "manipulation".

Manipulation is forever clothing itself in some beautiful costume that we might not know it. For to recognize it as manipulation defeats its whole purpose and sends it running.

Manipulation is forever saying "Do this or else.....". Underlying consequences carefully presented to people to throw a fear into them. I have always hated the feelings of anger that it erupted in me, but recognizing it now, makes it easier to spill cold water on those who are manipulators.

Sadly, each of us are trained manipulators. Some of us recognize it in ourselves and work to obliterate it from our lives. Others thrive ignorantly on manipulating others.

Organizations are famous manipulators. And usually the organization's representatives feel compelled to manipulate others; going to any length to insure the organization's life. And the ways of manipulating are legion -- get people to feel GUILTY for:
a. non-attendance; non-support
b. skimping or not contributing
c. not giving enough time
d. not tolerating; personal
abuse for the organization's sake!
etc. etc. ETC.

Such organizational tactics can and do work successfully. But always, always, always there are those brave and beautiful victimless people who frustrate the hell out of those manipulative organizations. Those individuals don't care to be manhandled emotionally and go right on living THEIR lives to the FULLEST.

I'm very proud of the Gay Switchboard of Harrisburg because it is the one group I feel complete freedom in her boundaries. I can never recall any heavy manipulative tactics brought to bear upon me in my 3-year association with her. I am not saying that she is perfect, but the closest thing to date. She's somethin' else!

FR. SAWDY CHALLENGES MYTHS

The Dignity/Cent. Pa. chapter celebrated its 6th anniversary July 17 with a mass and delectable foods. Father Sawdy's sermon was a classic one. The theme was 'Morality and the Gay Community'.

"If it is wrong to steal your brother's wife, it is likewise wrong to steal your brother's lover." That quotation rang throughout the message. And those words are not given much credence among many gay persons only because as Fr. Sawdy pointed out, we live the beliefs of our society concerning gays. We swallow the lies about homosexuality "hook, line and sinker" about gay people.

Gay people are NOT interested only in sex! That's a myth. It must be dispelled. The unfortunate part is that many gay people believe that to "be gay" they must conform to such ridiculous stereotypes about themselves.

It was refreshing to hear challenge to the myths. The message was excellent. The anniversary party--sensational. Congraduations, Dignity at 6, you looked grand!

FOR RACHEL.... PLEASE

Part II of God and Gays has been delayed due to a critical situation facing its author, Frank. His daughter, Rachel, is hospitalized with a serious illness. Presently she is doing well. She is only 6 years old. Frank would appreciate your prayers for her. Please also remember to send her a card. It gets lonely there.....

Rachel L.
Rm. 405 Landis Bldg.
Polyclinic Hosp.
Harrisburg, Pa. 17105

And thanks!

YOU ONLY HAVE today

THE GAY SWITCHBOARD OF HARRISBURG

Needs you

We need members or for our callers. We are strictly a referral, information and counseling service.

**How is the
Gay Switchboard funded?**

The switchboard is not funded at all. All of the monies used to run the switchboard are from individual donations, which are always urgently needed.

GSH

P.O. BOX 872
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17108

please!

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