



**THE ATHLETES
WILL BE GIVING US
THEIR BEST.**

**LET'S MAKE
SURE WE GIVE
THEM OURS.**

Thunder GAY

GAYS OF THUNDER BAY
+++++
Newsletter
August/September

Be an athletic supporter



Thunder GAY

GAYS OF THUNDER BAY
NEWSLETTER

Games Ish



Dust off the Adidas honey the marathon dance is on!

With the timely theme: "Be an Athletic Supporter", GTB is organizing the social event of the summer!

The social, to be held at the Ukrainian Labor Temple on Ogden Street, will take place August 15. It is being planned in conjunction with the Jeux Canada Summer Games, as our gay contribution to the many cultural events occurring simultaneously while the games are on.

It is expected approximately 3,000 athletes will be in the city at that time, as well as officials, tourists, visitors. Word is going out through posters and other venues of the social. Good grief! We could be swamped! Get your tickets early to be sure of a space on the dance floor! You can get them by dropping in to any one of GTB's regular Tuesday night meetings or ask any of the executive.

Get ready to boogie!



Riders of the New Age

Organizers are currently raising funds to attract a lesbian/feminist workshop to Thunder Bay. It is expected that members of the Workshop Collective who authored *Stepping Out of Line*, a workshop manual and resource guide on lesbianism and feminism will be in the city in mid-September.

The basic two-day workshop has proven to be very effective in acting as a catalyst to change women's own conditioned attitudes towards lesbianism and "to encourage women to take that changed awareness into

organized political work". In this city, according to one of the organizers, women could benefit immensely from the opportunity for creating strategies for personal and social change.

The collective of Nym Hughes, Yvonne Johnson and Yvette Perrault of Vancouver will be driving across Canada to conduct the workshops. Their manual has been highly praised as they attempt to connect lesbianism and feminism on both an emotional and intellectual level. Further information can be had from the Northern Women's Centre and GTB.

Classy talk

THUNDER BAY (Staff)

On July 24, members of GTB attended a Family Sociology class at Lakehead University.

The visit was by invitation of Janet Mayer, lecturer in the Sociology Dept. It was her second invitation to GTB to have someone come and 'guest lecture' to her students. Michael Sobota gave a brief review of gay activism and history then opened the remaining time for questions. There were about forty students in the class as well as Kim, Ernie, Terry, David, Rick and Dean. Questions put to Michael were wide-ranging and a broad dialogue was exchanged with the group.

Ms. Mayer congratulated GTB for the attendance and suggested there may be additional opportunities for speakers to come into L.U. Sociology classes in the fall. She added that a panel of three or four members might be an interesting format for class room exchange, taking some of the burden off of just one GTB representative to field all the questions.

THE RIGHT TRACK...

To the Editor:

I received your most recent newsletter with much apprehension but when I read it in full, I realized that a grassroots movement in any form may not change anything.

Just the fact that any group can express their objections to what they think is wrong with the system filled me with hope. What you are doing with your time is a worthy cause. Regardless of one's cause, organizations such as yours show that those concerned within a community are not afraid to say to the governing body, "something is wrong. It's time for a change."

Change for the sake of change is wrong whereas change for the sake of bettering things is justifiable. Your cause is right, though I don't understand it. Don't let anyone dissuade you from that cause lest you become part of the system. You are on the right track.

Name withheld.

HERE AND THERE/THEM AND US-----

Police raids of gay businesses and r-arrests of gay people are spreading across the country.

With the raids near the end of May in Edmonton and the recent additional ones in Toronto, over 400 individuals have had charges brought against them.

Starting with the massive arrests in Toronto last February (which was the largest single arrest of individuals in Canada's history, since the Quebec FLQ 'crisis' over ten years ago) police, with the support of provincial Attorneys General and at times the RCMP, are mounting an ever increasing campaign directed against gay people. Primarily, this is happening in our larger cities.

While the nature and variety of gay community life in our urban centers is rich and varied, and the number of gay people may be growing in concentration, so, for the moment, is the oppression. They are connected. To live in Toronto now as an openly gay person requires more courage and commitment daily, if you want to be an active part of the gay community and support the many efforts that are struggling against harassment and oppression.

To live in Thunder Bay now as an openly gay person requires no less courage, initially. That first great exhalation of coming out is always a courageous act. The real work, maybe the real 'life' in our lives, is what we do with ourselves after we're out. That's the focus of this particular column.

After you're out in Thunder Bay is significantly different than in Toronto, Edmonton, Montreal, etc. Our gay community here is mostly invisible and relatively few gay people are openly 'out', beyond a limited sphere of friends or acquaintances. This is changing. And I observe the rate of change increasing rapidly over the past year. The variety of gay men

and women here is probably no different than in a larger centre. What is different (now) is a genuine lack of polarization and confrontation between 'them' (mainstream straight society, the police, etc.) and 'us'. In certain areas, there is a lot of merging of our business, professional and social lives with each other. The positive and negative aspects of this 'blend' is a legitimate topic for a discussion all its own.

So coming out in Thunder Bay is entering a relatively small group of similar individuals and a broader group of gay people spread invisibly throughout the city and region. If you join Gays of Thunder Bay, you take a further step 'out' and a step forward toward building a solid and stronger gay community (and a stronger open gay presence within the city). This is in many ways still a frontier region, certainly so for gay concerns. The establishment of GTB and the adoption of its objectives point a particular way to develop a community here. One that will include many grass-roots necessities for a young community: basic information services, a phoneline, a community centre, a social club, etc. These things may be taken for granted in a larger city; here we have to start from scratch, build them, maintain them. Making our own community as interesting and supportive as we can should be the number one priority for our energy, after we're out. It is the best way we can make a contribution to the larger gay society in the province and in Canada.

The gay people in larger centres are helping us, fighting battles and oppression that has not yet surfaced here. We can help them in at least two ways: make contributions to their organizations that are carrying on the effort (Coalition For Gay Rights in Ontario, The Right To Privacy Committee, The Body Politic, The

Committee to Defend John Damien, etc.), make contributions to our own gay community, building it from within so our strong presence can be felt beyond our immediate area.

I like it here. This is where I want to be. I have ever growing friendships and connections to more and more gay individuals in supportive and nourishing ways. This is what grass-roots community building is about.

Michael Sobota

To The Editor:

My congratulations to the ever growing quality of the Thunder Gay Newsletter, so evident in each successive issue.

I enjoyed immensely P.W.'s "Cure At Last" and found stimulating Michael Sobota's column "Flaunting It" in the June issue. Such contributions promise talented vitality to the publication and thankfully expand its scope beyond the essential political reportage.

The invitation has been extended to dialogue. May the gay community respond.

Rick Taylor

"Somebody in this building is queer..."

Strange how any little remark from a straight person can send those of us who try and keep our being gay under raps, into a state of defensiveness.

I was sitting with my fellow tenants on the Victoria Day weekend drinking beer and taking in the sunshine when out of the blue one of "them" said, "You know, somebody in this building is queer. I can't figure out who it is though." That statement didn't bother me but the follow-up question sure did. "Are you the one that's gay?"

The question was such a shock and I was so fast with the answer "NO" that I knew he didn't believe me. I felt something inside that wasn't quite shame, but was closer to embarrassment. I think the reason I felt that way was because I didn't want to say no and yet I felt threatened by the statement "I can't figure out who it is though."

Why the hell would someone spend time trying to "figure out" the sexual preference of someone else? My embarrassment served some purpose, however, as I went back to my neighbor twenty minutes later and apologized for lying and told him to look no further, I was the "Queer" that lived in the same building as him.

A look of surprise came over his face, not from the fact that I would admit to him that I was gay, but from the open and honest way in which I solved his great mystery for him.

He doesn't say much to me anymore and I am not included in the drinking sessions either. Which is fine with me. It seems that I spoiled his great mystery by coming out the way I did. He won't get to point his finger at anyone because I pointed it for him. Too bad, huh?

I don't know why I'm writing about it. Just a day in the life, I guess.

Paul Winegarden

What about the ~~Social-Club~~ Community Centre?

The constitution of Gays of Thunder Bay (GTB) states that one of the objects of the group shall be:

"To provide services and facilities, including a social club, to meet the social, cultural, psychological, educational and spiritual needs of the gay community."

In recent months the most insistent complaint against GTB has been the perceived failure of the group to work toward the establishment of a social club. In this article there are two points to be made. First, we are working toward the establishment of a gay community centre rather than just a social club, and second, we are working steadily and are drawing quite close to that goal.

We have been concerned from the beginning that GTB must establish a gay community centre that is not only a social club, but a place for meetings, information, cultural activities, counselling and other needs expressed by the gay community. The Gay Community Centre will thus have a bar, dance floor, office space for GTB, office space for telephone line counselling, library, meeting space and other amenities depending on the location. We have proceeded toward this goal with caution, realizing the need for a sound financial base as well as a solid organizational and structural framework. Many clubs fail because of inadequate preliminary work, and we want the GTB Community Centre to not only meet the needs of the gay community but also be economically viable and organizationally stable.

WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

We are entering a stage of development where much of our preliminary work is now starting to come together. We have a white paper from the Club Feasibility Committee which provides a good plan to work from. We are looking at several buildings that may be suitable for us to lease. We are

exploring the procedure for incorporation. If all goes well, there may be a location selected in about a month or so. However, there are always unforeseen possibilities. So try to have patience and rather than criticize slow progress, volunteer some of your energy to make things happen faster. For those really concerned about our slow growth compare our situation to Ottawa. After their community centre was burned out, it took Gays of Ottawa two years to re-open in a new location. GTB is only 15 months old and having started from scratch, we are actually moving along at a steady pace.

We've come a long way, but there will be lots to do once we settle on a location for the Gay Community Centre. Time, money, materials, advice, ideas and support will be needed. And it will require the support of lesbians and gay men throughout the community for this undertaking to be successful. If we are all willing to contribute imagination and energy, the Gay Community Centre will soon be a reality!

David Belrose

LABOR COUNCIL APPROACHED

The Thunder Bay and District Labour Council at its regular meeting on Thursday, June 25th passed a resolution endorsing gay rights.

Following a recommendation from its Political Action Committee, the council voted to accept the human rights clause:

"... Council supports the amendment of the Ontario Human Rights Code to protect the civil and human rights of homosexual men and women ... and urges the Ontario Government to amend the Ontario Human Rights Code to include 'sexual orientation' as a ground on which discrimination is prohibited."

Oh Oh...

WHERE TO GET HELP



Thunder Bay (Special)
The Thunder Bay District Health Unit operates free venereal disease clinics for anyone in need of help or advice.

The clinics offer both diagnosis and treatment. The service is completely free. No OHIP card or number is required.

There are two clinics available, one each in the North and South Wards. In the North Ward the clinic is in St. Joseph's General Hospital, 3rd Floor, 35 N. Algoma Street. Their hours are Monday and Thurs-

day, from 4:30-6:00 p.m. In the South Ward the clinic is in the Dodick Building, 1119 Victoria Ave. East, Lower level, on Tuesdays only, from 1:30-3:00 p.m.

The clinics are closed on legal holidays.

For information at other times call 622-3961 (Thunder Bay District Health Unit) and request information about the free venereal disease clinics.

Keeping yourself healthy contributes to a healthy and happier gay community.

THUNDER BAY DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT FREE VENEREAL DISEASE CLINICS

DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

No OHIP Number Required

LOCATION AND HOURS:

North Ward

St. Joseph's General Hospital
3rd Floor - 35 N. Algoma Street
Monday & Thursday - 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

South Ward

Dodick Building
1119 Victoria Ave. East — Lower Level
Tuesday - 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

CLINICS WILL BE CLOSED ON STATUTORY HOLIDAYS

FOR INFORMATION AT OTHER TIMES CALL
622-3961 (Health Unit)

Ontario Human Rights Omission

The Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario (CGRO) has published a brief titled "Ontario Human Rights Omission".

The brief is one part of verbal and written submissions on behalf of gay men and women in Ontario to the Standing Committee on Resources Development of the Ontario Legislature. The Committee is currently hearing public submissions on Bill 7, the act to amend the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Well designed and easy to read, the brief excellently documents case after case of discrimination against gay people in Ontario over the past years. With an accumulation of statistics and facts, it becomes a searing indictment of the present government's denial of basic rights to gay people. It is a clear, concise and moving document. Copies are available for reading through the GTB office.

During the Standing Committee's sittings in June, they heard many strong submissions for inclusion of 'sexual orientation' as grounds for banning discrimination in Ontario. One of these came from Toronto civil liberties lawyer Clayton Ruby who told the committee members: "In the decade of the 1980's, a struggle for gay equality is going to bear the same kind of impact as the struggle for equal rights between blacks and whites in the United States in the 1960's. If you don't think that is true, you are fools."

It is important that the present Human Rights Commission be continually presented with evidence and cases of clear discrimination of gay people. The CGRO brief shows the impact such information can have when presented clearly and with a historical overview. To this end,

we would like to begin compiling evidence and examples of discrimination locally, here in Thunder Bay, and through-out the Northwest region. If you have experienced loss of a job, refusal of accommodation, rental of housing, harassment at work or in any public facility, or any similar instance where you feel you are being discriminated against because of

your sexual orientation, please let us know. Follow a few simple steps: if the situation lends itself to it, try to get a clear statement or indication from the discriminator that you are being abused because you are gay. Then, to the best of your ability, jot down the details of the incident. Report the information to GTB. Michael Sobota is willing to serve as the liaison person to gather and compile this documentation. Your complete privacy will be respected at all times. Nothing will be passed on or your name used without your permission. It is vitally important, however, that we begin accumulating this evidence to add to the growing material, from all across the province.

We can win this struggle if we are willing to stand together. CGRO is carrying on the effort for us with Queen's Park. Let's do our part here.

Guys Of Thunder Bay

GAYS OF THUNDER BAY is an organization of lesbians and gay men from the Thunder Bay region.

OUR MAILING ADDRESS is:

G.T.B.
P. O. Box 2155
Thunder Bay P, Ontario

OUR PHONELINE is open every Wednesday and Friday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. At other times a recording advises callers of activities. Reach the phoneline by dialing:

345-8011

All persons interested in the gay movement in this area are welcome to contact us with offers of help, donations and so on!

GTB