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The Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier

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FIFTH FREEDOM

NEWSLETTER of the NIAGARA FRONTIER GAY COMMUNITY
VOLUME 3, NUMBER 11 AUGUST 19, 73, BUFFALO

--INSIDE--

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FOR A COMMUNITY CENTER

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POETRY • BROOM HILDA

THE FIFTH FREEDOM IS PUBLISHED EVERY 2 WEEKS

BY

THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER, INC.
P.O. BOX (&%, ELLICOTT STATION
BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14205

ANSWERING SERVICE: (716) 684-5315

WE WELCOME RESPONSE: If you have any comments or contributions, send them to the above address, attn: Fifth Freedom.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$3.50 per year, to cover mailing expense. Send a check or money order to the above address, attn: Fifth Freedom. Be sure to include your mailing address.*

ADVERTISING RATES: 1/3 column - \$2.50; 1/3 page - \$5.00; 1/2 page - \$7.50; full page - \$15.00. To place an ad, submit copy and specify size of ad desired. Mail to above address or leave message with MSNF answering service for more information.*

*Please make all checks/m.o.'s payable to Mattachine Society.

EDITOR: Don Michaels

ART CONTRIBUTOR: Greg Bodekor

BUFFALO'S GAY COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER RE-OPENING!

The long-awaited re-opening of the Gay Services Center has arrived. We've found ourselves a new home at 45 Allen St. It's bigger, it's better and even more promising than the first Center. It's on the 2nd floor of the Franklin Bldg., corner of Allen & Franklin Sts. Right now it's being put in shape by a dedicated group of volunteers and hopefully will be ready for full operation in a couple weeks. The next issue of the Fifth Freedom will have all the details such as hours, phone numbers, scheduled activities, etc.

The desirability and viability of the location certainly can't be disputed. In the heart of Buffalo's gay 'ghetto' - Allentown - we hope to serve the real needs of a potentially active and enthusiastic gay community. That's why the lengthening of the name - from Gay Services Center to Gay Community Services Center. It just seems more apropos to the spirit that was developed through the existence of our first Center. Our experience in the first Center was that gays of all ilk and persuasion felt a genuine sense of togetherness and community there. We found that the existence of a community center brought out the enthusiasm and released the energy of countless numbers of individuals who were glad to be a part of a positive source of satisfaction and pride.

It will be a focal point for

everything that was offered by the first Center - library; rap center; arts, crafts and talents classes; counseling; meeting place for gay groups of special interests - and more. Most important is that it will be your community center. Our hope is that you will participate and contribute to the success of this center. There are tens of thousands of our gay sisters & brothers "out there" on the Niagara Frontier that are desperately seeking a positive link through which they can identify with their fellow gays. Through a well-functioning, viable Gay Community Services Center that link can be provided. It can be a refuge where we can identify ourselves as a community of sisters and brothers - where we can become an entity, instead of a restless sea of aimless individuals seeking solace in the few tawdry avenues of escape a basically hostile and antipathetic society can afford us. This is the big step forward our community needs.

The Gay Community Services Center is looking for voluntary staff members who could work anytime between 1 pm and 10 pm. There is also a great need for donations of furniture (tables, chairs, bookshelves, cushions, et. al.) and lumber for bookshelves. Contact Mattachine if you would like to donate furniture or time to the Center.

WHAT'S IN A BLOW JOB?

...A possible arrest. that's what! The Buffalo Police Department Vice Squad has been busy lately exploiting the existing discriminatory legal sanctions against gays. In other words, they've been making arrests (entrapping, we call it) for loitering/solicitation. Most of the arrests have been occurring at LaSalle (Front) Park, but other arrests have been made at those other well-known cruising spots: Park and Irving Streets, the Zoo, and outside the bars.

You can avoid getting pinched (no pun intended) by a Vice Squad cop. They've got to get you to be specific about what you have in mind if you approach them. What they want to hear is that you want to "suck cock." And they'll do just about anything to get you to say it. So, if you meet a fine-looking young stranger in one of Buffalo's scenic cruising areas, use extreme caution in how you go about putting the make on him. If he plays dumb and starts asking all sorts of questions about what you want from him or what you mean by your sly little suggestions, get suspicious. This is when your vice squad warning device should overcome your passions. If you dare risk asking him if he wants a blow-job and he says "What do you mean by a blow-job?" - for God's sake (and yours) shut up and walk away quickly. Better you should go home (or elsewhere) frustrated. At least you can find some solace in knowing that there was a good possibility that you spoiled some Vice Squad cop's perverse little game. We heard of one case recently where a Vice Squad cop offered to be the look-out for two other guys who wanted to make it in the bushes in Front Park. After they were finished, the cop flashed a badge and, you guessed it!

Promise yourself, now, that you'll always be a model of caution when cruising public places (including bars, believe it or not). Getting arrested just isn't worth that all-out attempt to fulfill your sexual appetite. You're liable to bit off more than you can chew (again no pun intended). If you are arrested for solicitation, it is likely that if you have the right lawyer and get the right judge the charges will be dismissed in the interest of justice. But don't count on it. With your luck...

At any rate, the court can fine you up to \$250 or sentence you to up to 15 days in jail, or both. Jail sentences are rarely if ever used and the extent of the fine is usually determined by the nature of your conduct and/or your past record. However, you still wind up with an arrest record and a possible conviction, which is (unfortunately) a social stigma, over which you could lose your job, happy home, etc. Whatever the case, don't go to court without an attorney, If you don't

Forster's Maurice: Toward Unity and Meaning

So often a work of fiction is an attempt to take hold of the surrounding cosmos and make it understandable and manageable. In writing Maurice (1913-14) E.M. Forster not only created a contemporary gay love story but also revealed the human need to see his life not as a waste but as an existence rich in possibilities for happiness. In the novel, both Maurice and Forster encounter a moral and hidden order in their emotional worlds.

Forster admitted that Maurice is "a character who was completely unlike myself...someone handsome, healthy, bodily attractive...." The novel begins with Maurice's painful years in preparatory school, his growing awareness of his homosexuality and his coming out in college. Throughout his precarious and aesthetic relationship with another aristocrat, Clive, Maurice still views homosexuality as a "disease," as "slipping into the abyss."

When his lover of three years suddenly decides that he is more attracted to women, Maurice is left despairing of his own future. He is obsessed with the thought that he will never have children, that he is for all practical purposes sterile. His life enters a period of external success but of deep personal loneliness. Maurice's belief that he can effect a cure through hypnotism fails, and there is a growing feeling in the novel that Maurice prefers not to be "cured".

In a night of passion, Maurice has sex with Clive's gamekeeper, Scudder. But Maurice is later repulsed by the thought that he slept with someone from a lower social class. The two meet again in London, and they realize that they do love each other: "They knew at that moment the greatest triumph ordinary man can win." It is here, moreover, that the novel becomes more than a gay love story and proves itself to be very contemporary. For Maurice understands that it is not enough to live with each other, that "we've got to fight. All the world's against us...." And Maurice, in fact, forsakes his wealth and social position, and transcends the class structure of which he was so much a part. On one level, therefore, Forster succeeded in writing a happy love story; on a second, he wrote a novel of political and social importance.

Nevertheless, Forster was writing very much for himself and the gay literary circle in which he traveled. Like Jean Genet, Forster seems to desire to take any suffering upon himself and transmute it into an

(to p. 6)

Maurice continued...

object of beauty. Both Forster and Maurice appear to overcome self-alienation and their alienation with the world. By means of the fictive process of creation, Forster allowed himself to find happiness through Maurice. In this respect the novel is a compulsive work written with a therapeutic purpose. Forster appears to convince himself (and also his readers) that a mature gay relationship can succeed, that guilt can be transcended and channeled into political awareness and action.

In a terminal note written in 1960, Forster confessed his misplaced optimism that "knowledge would bring understanding." But in writing Maurice Forster succeeded in encountering provisional unity in the cosmos and new meaning in his life as a gay male.

(Paperback editions of Maurice are available at the Norton Union Bookstore and Walden Bookstore, Main Place Mall.)

BIG DADDY'S
THE TORONTO BAR WITH BUFFALO PEOPLE

761 MAIN ST., BUF. N.Y.
OPEN EVERY DAY
8:00PM - 3:00AM

BIG DADDY'S
IS THE BAR
THAT PUT BUFFALO
ON THE MAP AGAIN

MUSIC FROM TORONTO - SAN FRANCISCO - NYC
DISC JOCKEY DANCING
DOWNTOWN LOCATION
FRIENDLY
ATMOSPHERE

WHO WAS SHE?

(Reprint from Sexuality and Homosexuality by Arno Karlen)

The first recorded homosexual voice to come from this (greek) society, and the first in the Western World, was that of Sappho of Lesbos. It was also the first recorded voice of a woman, and the first cry of romantic love. But her name and birthplace quickly became generic words for female homosexuality, not woman or love. Sappho was born around 612 B.C. in the town of Mytilene, on the island of Lesbos, off the coast of Asia Minor. Sappho had a circle of women about her who may have been friends, a lesbian coterie, a circle of poetic disciples - or, one nineteenth century theory said, students at a sort of finishing school she ran for upper class girls.

No picture of Sappho has survived that was made before her death. But she fell passionately in love with one woman after another. Her poems to and about them are direct and self-revealing like nothing before them in Greek literature. She was lyric, lustful, bitter, ecstatic and sulky by turns. It was she who first gave shape to the Western concept of romantic love.

Sappho wrote more than five hundred poems totaling twelve thousand lines. Today we have only seven hundred lines, many isolated or forming short, barely intelligible fragments. The majority describe her love for girls, though some express love for men, celebrate marriage and address lovers whose gender is unclear. There is not one direct mention of homosexual love-making.

Around A.D. 380 Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishop of Constantinople, ordered her books burned wherever they were found, calling her gynaeon pornikon erotomanes - roughly, "lewd nymphomaniac," but without specifying whether heterosexual or homosexual. Pope Gregory VII had many of her remaining books burned in 1072. By the Renaissance about all that remained were fragmentary quotations in the essays of scholiasts. Then in the nineteenth century some of her poems were found written on papyri at Fayum and Oxyrinchus in Egypt - they had been torn into strips and used as mummy wrappings. Sentences, lines, words, broke off in the middle, and the pieces did not form a complete manuscript. Sappho's surviving work was now about five per cent of the original, a small but readable body of writing - and still no concrete evidence of physical homosexuality.

Writers today assume Sappho was an active homosexual just as confidently as nineteenth-century writers made her a teacher or

(cont. on p. 14)

TORONTO GAY PRIDE WEEK CALENDAR

Fri., Aug. 17: 9:00 PM Come-out
Again, Licensed Dance**

Sat., Aug. 18: 10.00am Opening Day
Festivities for the 2nd Annual
Gay Pride Week; Baseball Game
at Riverdale Park. 1.00 pm
Bake Sale, Lunch* 2.00 pm What
We're About: Talks by the Presi-
dent and Vice-president of CHAT
3.00 pm Skit 9.00 pm Dance,
licensed/

Sun., Aug. 19: 4.00 pm Body and
Soul: Readings by CHAT members
6.00 pm Pot Luck Supper 8.00 pm
Dance - All 3 events \$1.75 or
75¢ each

Mon., Aug. 20: 7.30 pm Free Gay
Films

Tues., Aug. 21: 8.00 pm Guest
speakers Lige Clarke and Jack
Nichols, Former Editors of Gay
and authors of I Have More Fun
With You Than Anybody.

Wed., Aug. 22: 8:00 pm Sex and
Sexuality, Boys in the Band
Reconsidered, a reading of one
section followed by a discussion

Thurs., Aug. 23; 8.00 pm Sex and
Sexuality, Growing Up Female,
a film and panel discussion.

Fri., Aug. 24: TBA - Presentation
of Brief to Parliament; 9.00 pm
Dance, licensed.

Sat., Aug. 25: 10.00 am to 7.00
pm Crafts Fair (admission 50¢
and a door prize); Bake sale;
Judging of Photo contest;
Judging of Greeting Card Contest.
1.00 pm All Gay Groups meeting
at CHAT Center to begin parade
to Queens Park; Rally at Queens
Park, Speeches, Picnic. 9.00
pm Dance, licensed.

Sun., Aug. 26: 10.00 am Meet at
Ferry to go to Hanlan's Point
Pit Area # 12; Bring Swim Suits,
Food. 8.30 pm: Dance, admis-
sion 75¢

NOTE: *All events are at 201
Church Street unless otherwise
stated.

**Door prize for each dance;
\$1.50 for members, \$1.75 for
guests.

Those interested in contributing
to the Bake Sale or Pot Luck
Supper please call 862-1544.
Other organizations holding dances
are the National Gay Election
Coalition, Aug. 23 at The Manatee
and G.A.T.E. and The Body Politic
Aug. 25 at The Drill Hall.
For Further information call
N.G.E.C. 961-6496 or The Body
Politic at 364-6731.

FIRE FACTS

Since the Buffalo Gay Services Center burned down last March 23, there have been a lot of different rumors as to just how the fire started. There are still those who say, "Oh, c'mon, tell us what really happened." As if to say, "We all know that some queer-hater or carzy faggot did it." Most of us close to the center and in touch with the reality of the tragic fire have known that arson was not involved, but have had to rely on the hope that the community - gay and otherwise - trusted our version of what did happen. that fateful evening.

However, we now have "official" verification of how the fire started. The City of Buffalo Fire Department investigators have filed an official and final determination of the cause of the fire: overloads on the electrical circuit on the second floor of the building.

Investigation of the remains of the building after the fire, showed evidence that the electrical wiring had overheated resulting in the igniting of the wooden joists to which the wiring was attached.

The fire originated in the wiring between the false ceiling and the original ceiling in the library of the Gay Services Center. It was a slow rising heat that by all indications had started at least an hour before it was noticed, but was concealed due to the false ceiling. The slow rising heat eventually reached overall kindling temperatures causing a 'flashover' condition which blew out the ceiling tile and released the flames. There was evidence that the same overheating process was occurring above the ceiling in another office down the hall from the Gay Services Center, at the time the flames burst out in the Center library. The investigators discovered that 30 amp fuses were used in the electrical circuit box rather than the recommended 15 amp fuses. The 30 amp fuses offered no protection against overheating of the electrical circuit. The official report includes a verification by Iroquois Gas Co. personnel that all gas pipes running through the area of the fire had been disconnected from their source in the basement.

The length of time cited as having occurred between the start of the fire and the actual outburst of the flames corroborates reports filed by other tenants of the building that they smelled a burning - charcoal-like odor quite sometime before the flames burst. However, another report that an ambulance attendant had smelled a gasoline-like odor on Dick Witkowski's clothing was completely discredited by the Fire Department's official report. Fire investigators interviewed the ambulance attendant at the scene and he stated that there was no

(cont. on p.14)

GO-GO DANCERS

AT LAST ELEGANCE IS COMING
TO BUFFALO - 454 PEARL ST. 856-1864

SAN FRANCISCO BAR IN
DOWNTOWN BUFFALO

DANCE UNDER STARS IN
THE CAPTAINS GARDEN
ALL YEAR ROUND -
NEWEST, MOST EXCITING
SOUND SYSTEM
AVAILABLE

SO OPENING
WIND JAMMER

LOWEST PRICES IN TOWN

THE LIT KIT #4: THE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE

by Bernard

In 1892 Oscar Wilde, famed playwright, novelist and wit, wrote to his friend/lover, Lord Alfred Douglas:

My Own Boy,

Your sonnet is quite lovely, and it is a marvel that those rose-red lips of yours should have been made no less for music of song than for madness of kisses. Your slim gilt soul walks between passion and poetry. I know Hyacinthus, whom Apollo loved so madly, was you, in Greek days.

Why are you alone in London, and when do you go to Salisbury? Do go there to cool your hands in the grey twilight of Gothic things, and come here whenever you like. It is a lovely place--it only lacks you; but go to Salisbury first.

Always, with undying love,

.

The letter was used as evidence in court when Oscar Wilde was indicted on charges of "sodomy". Found guilty, he was sentenced to two years hard labor. In De Profundis (From the Depths), Wilde writes:

"Everything about my tragedy has been hideous, mean, repellent, lacking in style; our very dress makes us grotesque. We are zanies of sorrow. We are clowns whose hearts are broken. We are specially designed to appeal to the sense of humour. On November 13th, 1895, I was brought down here from London. From two o'clock till half-past two on that day I had to stand on the centre platform of Clapham Junction in convict dress, and handcuffed, for the world to look at. I had been taken out of the hospital ward without a moment's notice being given me. Of all possible objects I was the most grotesque. When people saw me they laughed. Each train as it came up swelled the audience. Nothing could exceed their amusement. That was, of course, before they knew who I was. As soon as they had been informed they laughed still more. For half an hour I stood there in the grey November rain surrounded by a jeering mob."

This from the man who until a few months earlier had been the toast of British society. (to be con't in Lit Kit #5)

The following is the continuation of a series of questions and answers about homosexuality. This series is reprinted from a booklet

distributed by GAA in New York, "20 Questions About Homosexuality." MSNF now has reprints of the booklet available locally.

QUESTION #14: IS HOMOSEXUAL LOVE DIFFERENT FROM HETEROSEXUAL LOVE?

All one needs to do is to compare the homosexual love poems of such Greek masters as Anacreon, Sappho and Theocritus with heterosexual love poems of the same period to see that the content and quality of feeling expressed is identical. All one needs to do is spend an evening with a homosexual couple to find the same qualities of commitment and tenderness, and the same problems of adjustment that are met by heterosexual couples.

How is it that such homosexual novelists as E.M. Forster and André Gide were able to write so well and accurately about heterosexual love; that heterosexual readers have been able to understand and identify, when these and other authors have written about homosexual love? How is it that homosexual and heterosexual friends have been able to advise and counsel each other in matters of the heart? The answer to these questions is that lovers, whether of the same or opposite sexes, share the same basic pleasures and difficulties. Recognition of this common humanity by both heterosexuals and homosexuals can go a long way toward solving the "homosexual problem" in America.

Con't. from page 4...

have a good attorney, call Mattachine and ask for our legal chairperson. We have several competent and reliable attorneys that can lend a helping hand.

But, remember, "an ounce of prevention" etc., etc. - don't trust a stranger that acts dumb and starts asking probing questions. Know this! If he's on your wave length, you won't have to get explicit to get what you want!

D O N ' T M I S S - -
I S S H E O R I S N ' T S H E : T R A N S S E X U A L I S M ! !

PROGRAM AT MATTACHINE SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING, SUN., AUG. 26, 8:30PM
UNITARIAN CHURCH, COR. ELMWOOD & W. FERRY

Poet's
Corner

"The rich are not like you and me"
To G.R.

If only I could have caught you
Seized you
And made you mine.
Last time we met (the final time,
I suppose) in New York
You conveyed your disinterest
very well.

In the cold of winter
We walked arm in arm through the
village.

Then, in Manhattan's snowy
corridors

You said "se acabó" ("It is
finished")

You sped off in that gigantic
rented car.

Shortly afterward, I took the
astrojet to Buff

Minus my jacket which was ripped
off at the ninth circle.

Ah, well, I shall never forget
your aristocratic hauteur.

I shall always experience reality
Through layers upon layers of
memories

Of you.

My compulsion to seek a substitute
for your memory continues.

Perhaps I aimed too high,
After all, How could

An Italian from tonawanda township
Presume to love a direct descendant
of the conquistadors?

(ANON.)

As We Are

We like to see ourselves as children
Acid trails that never end
Smiling Gayly in a summer breeze
Thornless roses that neither wilt
nor bend.

A love becomes our universe
We dream of like in all its splendor
But there comes a time
When our worlds collide
And we welcome death
As life's resurrector.

Dennis A. Donnellan

Freedom

Somehow,
the word freedom has
crept into the times
and out of the mouths of fools.

Dennis A. Donnellan

*The Fifth Freedom Poet's Corner
is intended for publishing original
poetry by gays in our
community. If you have poetry
you'd like published, please
submit to the Fifth Freedom,
c/o MSNF - address on inside
cover.

WHO WAS SHE? (con't.)

priestess innocent of "impure" love. Both parties prove that every age finds what it wants in its past. Certainly Sappho had intense love and erotic feelings for women, and probably heterosexual inclinations and activity as well. That she was a practicing homosexual is quite likely, but not certain.

BROOM HILDA



FIRE FACTS (Con't. from p. 9)

odor and that no one had made such a statement.

Dick Witkowski has retained legal help in pursuing a personal injury claim to recover damages for the severe burns he suffered in the fire. The Mattachine Society is also investigating the possibility of filing suit to recover the extensive loss in property it suffered as a result of the fire.

3PM-2AM-MON-FRI-12 NOON-2AM-SAT-SUN
 ROCHESTER 430 MAIN ST 325-9420
 ACROSS FROM THE EASTMAN THEATRE

THE FABULOUS NEW
RED CARPET LOUNGE

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
 THURS-SUN
 FEATURING: JERRY SCOTT
 EXCITING PIANO AND VOCAL STYLIST

ATMOSPHERE - MUSIC - MERRIMENT

FIT FOR A KING AND QUEEN

DISC JOCKEY - DISCOTHEQUE

FEATURING QUADRAPHONIC SOUND NIGHTLY

8PM - 3AM

SPEND SUNDAY AFTERNOON

WITH GARY - DELICIOUS BUFFET

Cocktails .75 From 2 - 8PM

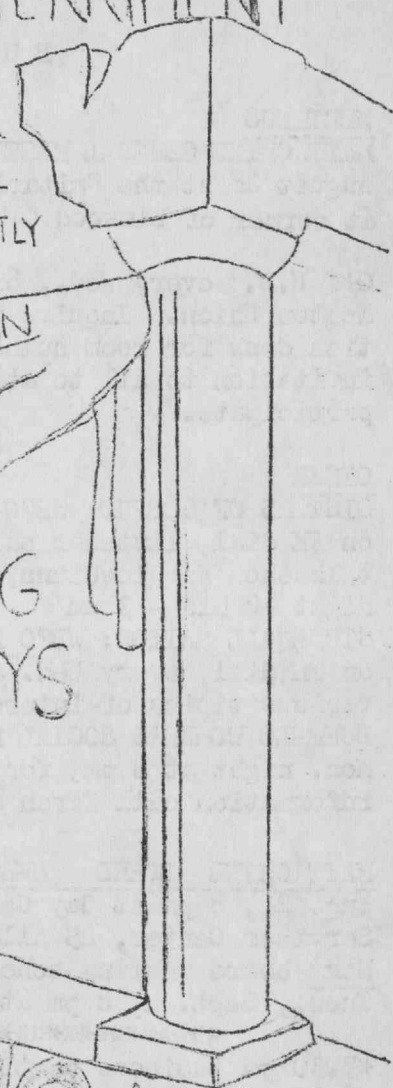
THE STAGE - WHERE BIG
THINGS ARE ALWAYS
HAPPENING

THE

STAGE

291 DELAWARE

PIGALLE



BULLETIN BOARD

MEETINGS

MATTACHINE GENERAL MEETING: Sunday, August 26 at the Unitarian Church at corner of Elmwood & W Ferry.*

GLF U.B.: every Wed., 8 pm at Norton Union. Inquire at information desk for room number. Open invitation to all to attend and participate.

OTHER

SISTERS OF SAPHO: WBFO-FM, 88.7 on FM dial; listener call-in and talk show for lesbians; every Mon. night 12 Mid - 3 am

STONEWALL NATION: WBFO FM, 88.7 on FM dial; every Wed. at 9.30 pm; various topics of interest to gays.

BUFFALO WOMEN'S SOCIAL HOUR: Every Mon. night at 8 pm; for more information call Karen at 881-0877.

MATTACHINE BOARD MEETING: Tues., Aug. 21, 8 pm at Gay Community Services Center, 45 Allen St. Next board meeting scheduled for Tues., Sept. 4, 8 pm at Center.

*7.30 pm Business meeting
8.30 pm Program: "Is She or Isn't She: Transsexualism."

All Mattachine meetings are open to members and non-members alike. Please plan to attend and participate.

GAY PRIDE WEEK TORONTO: the Community Homophile Assoc. of Toronto (CHAT) is celebrating their Gay Pride Week this year from Aug. 17-26. The following events are planned so far: Gay photography contest..Gay Picnic..Dances..Crafts Fair..Gay Movies..Gay Greeting Card Contest. See p. 8 for complete schedule or call in Toronto (416) 964-0653.

WANTED: Person to reupholster furniture, in home; for details call 884-8111.

COMING OUT! A documentary play about gay life and liberation in the USA, by Jonathan Katz. With a cast of five women and five men. Now appearing at THE NIGHT HOUSE - 249 W. 18th St., New York City. Reservations accepted: (212) 691-7359. Performances Fri., Sat., Sun., evenings at 7.30; all seats \$3,50 - group discounts available. Sponsored by Gay Activists Alliance of N.Y.

*PLEASE NOTE: Future general meetings of the Mattachine Society will be held in the Gay Community Services Center, 45 Allen St., beginning with the Sept. 9th meeting. Business meeting starting at 7:30PM, with program to follow.