12-1-1980

Fifth Freedom, 1980-12-01

The Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier

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The Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier, "Fifth Freedom, 1980-12-01" (1980). The Fifth Freedom. 54.
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The following article is one of a series on the different aspects of Buffalo's gay community. I hope to be able to shed some light on the various groups, both for the straight community that may read the paper and the gay community that has alot to learn about its own.

The following interview was conducted with the president of Nickle City, the Leather/Levi/Bike/Western Club for Buffalo.

5th: What is the purpose of Leather/Levi Clubs?
N.C.: It is to give an alternate lifestyle to the gay bar scene, with an orientation to the leather, Levi, western, and bike dress oriented people. In the last ten years it has grown to be the largest type of club in the gay scene. It is not just in this country, either. The clubs have been formed around the world.

Those who join have similar interests and ideas as to what they enjoy in a social, as well as a sexual context. We are like a brotherhood or fraternity. Members of various clubs open their houses to other brothers as they may travel through the area. There is a great value put on the honesty of the club members. A club is responsible for the actions of its members, to the point of covering any damage or theft that may occur while a member is in another's home.

Basically, the club members do not get along with the gay community at large. They feel that there is too much phoniness and games that go on in the bars. An individual club may have a home bar that they frequent and may have bar nights at for out of town clubs.

A great premium is placed on honesty, both to yourself and to your brothers. Also there is less discussion of the type of possessions, jobs and other material scene that many gays get caught up in. There can be many different economic and social lifestyles present in a club and all of them relate on the same level. The club atmosphere is a great equalizer.

5th: How many members does Nickle City have?
N.C.: We do not put alot of importance on the number of members that we have. We look more toward quality as opposed to quantity. We have a pledge in which the new member gets to know us and we get to know more about him. In the end we accept him and he accepts us. So most clubs are small in size.

We don't expect any superman or saints, but we do expect honesty. And we base the acceptance into the club on the man, not on his possessions or the show he may put on. He may be a physically beautiful guy, but if that's all, we don't want him.

The group is as close as a family. We can confide in our brothers things that we could not tell anyone else. All we have is available for our brothers whenever they need it.

You tend to find more mature individuals into the L/L scene. There are very few 18 year old members. Most settled a person gets within himself, the more apt he is to be a part of this type of club. It is not just a social thing. It is being able to be yourself and not put up all your defenses and play games.

5th: Does N.Y.O.L.C. (New York-Ontario Leather Club) still exist?
N.C.: As far as I know they do not. Their last function was held in August 1978. So for the last two years and three months we have been the only club in the area.

There is no territory for a specific club and there could always be another club in Buffalo. In fact, we would welcome it. If there is anyone that would like to start one we would be glad to help them get started.

There are even women's L/L groups around. We would like to see a group start here, too.

5th: What types of clubs are there?
N.C.: There are Western, Bike, Leather, S&M, Levi and combination clubs. Nickle City is a combo club.

Basically the club characteristics are the same. There is some conflict between the Leather and S&M groups. Those that are into the Leather S&M scene have "earned" the things that they wear and some resent those that just wear it because they like it.

5th: What would you say is the biggest misconception about the Leather crowd?
N.C.: We are not out to bully and hassle others that aren't into our scene. We're not going to beat somebody up when we go into a bar. We are responsible people and are not into pillage and rape. Our club would be liable for any damage we did while wearing our colors.

And, too, people must realize that not everyone that wears Leather/Levi is a member of a club. There are alot of independent people, and when you leave a club you have to turn in your colors and are no longer associated with that club.

5th: Are most people that are into the L/L scene also into S&M?
N.C.: Most are in some form or another, but not all of them are. The type of club, i.e. Western, etc., and the locale would have a lot of bearing on the orientation and variations of the group. You find fewer heavy leather groups, like in Arizona because the heat and the Leather are just too much.

5th: Some guys look at it as a form of drag. How do you feel about that?
N.C.: We look at each other as a form of drag, but it's a male oriented drag. We want to be with men who look like men. We want to present the image of the man that we feel we are.

We look at those that are not members of a club to be in drag more so than those that are in it as part of a club uniform.

5th: What type of social things are planned by the clubs?
N.C.: We have what we call "runs". This is planed by a club in their home town for visiting clubs. It can be a few days to longer periods. It will include bar hopping, breakfasts, private parties (some of which are put on by the visiting clubs or another club in the city), and an awards ceremony for the group that came the farthest or had the best turnout of members. They vary as to the type of location and time of year.

Much of the money that is raised, over the cost of the run, is donated to local charities.

Cont. on pg. 10

IN THIS ISSUE:

NICKLE CITY: LEATHER/LEVI, IN THIS ISSUE..1
EDITORIAL, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR..2
ADVERTISEMENT..........................3
GAY COLORING BOOK, CAPTAIN KINK, OUR COVER.4
GAY TASK FORCE, HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW.5
SELECTIONS BY SAM, ANTIQUES & ART........6
HELP: ONE ANSWER, ATTENTION.......7
POET TREE.........................8
GAY WEDDING RESPONSE..........9
NICKLE CITY CONT., MICHAEL, N.YC KILLINGS,10
BI LINES.10
GAY DIRECTORY, WANT ADS, HELP CONT.11
ADVERTISEMENT, SANTA........12

THE FIFTH FREEDOM, VOL. 10, NO. 9 NOVEMBER 1980
EDITORIAL

Greetings of the season!

Well, where do we go now? The elections are over, the yelling and gashing of teeth has been replaced with the standard complacency and the 'normal' routine has been resumed. What next?

For gays, and most minorities, it should not be a time for giving up, but for getting up. Getting up and let Mr. Reagan and all those that will be in power that we are here and are part of this country. I think that they will listen.

Now that it is over, as a few know, I did support Mr. Reagan. What? Yes I did. I felt that maybe, just maybe, we could go forward by taking a few steps backward first. After all isn’t that what this country, and gay life, is based on? Nothing ever continues in motion in one direction without losing some momentum. This is what had happened in this country.

The biggest lesson that we should learn from this election is the amount of clout that can be gotten by working together. I think that most people outside of the Moral Majority aren’t as mad about what they are saying, as they are that they have so much power and have their act together.

Power and money, not dogs and tactics are the rub. I say we can do the same if we clean up our act, are willing to pull together and take a few chances.

It’s not up to Mr. Reagan, as to how the next 4 years go, but up to us. May your holidays be happy and gay (I do hope that those two are redundant.) We will see you again before the New Year.

Love, hugs and a warm cuddle to all of you. John

Mail all letters, subscription requests, ad copy, contributions and all other correspondence to;

THE FIFTH FREEDOM
P.O. BOX 155
ELLICOTT STATION
BUFFALO, N.Y. 14205

All Fifth Freedom staff members are volunteers. Anyone interested in working on the paper should call the Gay Hotline at (716)-881-5335, or write to the address above.

Permission is required for the reprinting of any materials appearing in The Fifth Freedom.

Letters to the Editor:

Recently I have given some thought to the question concerning "What makes or breaks a gay bar in Buffalo?"

Following my first visit to Buffalo's newest nite spot, MacArthur's Park on Elmwood in the heart of Allen-town, answers become evident. For the first time in well over a year, I felt a sense of community among gay people, I felt as if I belonged.

One of the downfalls of the once popular Mean Alice's was switching to metered shot drinks. Increasing prices and hostile employees added insult to injury.

At MacArthur's Park, I was actually greeted, yes greeted, by an attractive young bartender. This smiling blonde boy looked like something out of Blueboy. After pouring my drink, he actually thanked me. I was astounded to be treated like a real person in a Buffalo Gay Bar.

I am no stranger to the Buffalo bar scene. After conversing with several other patrons over the past week, I am able to conclude that my findings seem pretty universal. If you want a flourishing business, staff it with good-looking and good-natured help. Give people a good drink at a good price and watch your business grow.

The "new kid on the block" can offer an example to the established clubs. In a city this size, there is room for many gay bars.

Alice's, The Villa and Dominiques need only open their eyes to see and learn from this success formula.

Signed,

J.F.D.

Buffalo
Mean Alice's
buffalo's best disco bar
Luncheons Served Daily 11am to 3pm
Join Us For Our Daily Cocktail Hour 11am to 7pm
Saturday 6pm to 10

SUNDAYS IN DECEMBER

7th
GEN. MAC ARTHUR NITE
Wear Your Favorite Uniform!

14th
ALICE'S "MEAN MAN" CONTEST
COMPETITION IN SWIMSUIT & JEANS
1st PRIZE $125
2nd PRIZE $ 50
3rd PRIZE $ 25
GET YOUR APPLICATION NOW!

ALICE'S ENTERTAINMENT WEEKEND

FRI. & SAT. 19 & 20
Eddie Olson's
Rose and Friends
The Gay Magic World of Puppets
with
Rose
Harley Dee
Diana Ross
and
More!

SUN. 21
Sam Fiorello
Dance Tapestry
with
Fancy Dancing
with
Rose and Friends
and
More!

FRI. & SAT.
"Double Inflation Fighter"
1/2 Price Drinks 9 – 11 pm
$1 Bar brands after 3AM

TUESDAYS at ALICE'S
50 ¢ Nite
Bar Brands Local Beer
DR. JOHN - D.J.

SUNDAYS
$2.99
DINNER SPECIAL
6 pm till 9 pm

Please Join Us For The Best Disco Music and Light Show

NO COVER CHARGE: We Appreciate Your Patronage
CAPTAIN KINK

This is your Captain speaking. Does Joan Crawford turn you on? Have you ever wanted to get it on with the entire von Trapp family? Are you puzzled over what to wear to a flogging? Well you've come to the right place.

May I humbly introduce myself as the Amy Vanderbilt of Decadence, bringing to you each month news of the chic and sick. I am open to your feedback, but like any perpetrator of good taste, my decisions are arbitrary and final.

First on the agenda is the establishment of the "Kink of the Month Club. This feature will provide ideas on how to abuse your body in new and unique ways. This month:

It's December!
And time to remember
To wear red and green.
Let's be festive
I'll be suggestive
Try fisting with a Marine.

December's fashion finds red and green hankies in the back pocket.

Now for a little culture, a poem by your erstwhile author, entitled, "Handcuffs":

Handcuffs
In your hand
Glisten
diamond bright
Promise
the night
Violent.
Through this restraint
I become
Free
exercise fantasies
And
at least
be me.

Until next month, this is Captain Kink signing off.

OUR COVER

Our cover this month is the first of, hopefully, a long series of originals.

I came up with the idea and then had to find someone to bring it into reality. I did.

Steve Rovner is our artist and I think he did a great job. He captured just what I was looking for in my cover.

If anyone would like a print of the cover for that hard to buy for person on your list, we would like to accommodate you.

As this is our first try at lithographs, we ask you to bear with us.

If you want a print please write to us and tell us the size that you want. We can get from the cover size up to poster size. The cost will vary according to volume. We hope to get a lot of requests, so everyone will pay less.

Please send your name address and telephone number to us care of the paper. If you want it for Christmas, let us know as soon as possible. We will try our best to get it to you in time.

Please enclose a money order only for $10 and then we can get together on the balance. We will do our best to keep the costs down. Essentially, this will be a limited edition, depending on requests.

So please hurry and we hope you enjoy our cover.

Thanks Steve!
GAY TASK FORCE

There have been quite a few stories recently that gay men have been beaten in Allentown. The Media Committee of the Gay Professionals has been quietly listening for a few months now, and on November 18 formed a Task Force on Violence.

The members of the Task Force are asking that anyone with information please advise them. It is not as important that individuals be identified as it is to develop information which can be used to determine whether open season has been declared on Gays, or whether the attacks are coming from a limited group with specific plans.

The Task Force is preparing several strategies. Among consideration are: patrols of Allentown; whistle gangs; Block Parent networks; seminars on safety; meetings with public officials.

The Gay Community must be the first to take responsibility for safety of the members. This is a serious matter. Let us preserve our lifestyles. Let us help one another. Let us be aware that the best protection we have is an open sharing of experience and support.

Information can be gotten to the Task Force by calling any of these numbers: 881-5333; 886-2590; 885-3315. Or by writing: Task Force, Box 264, Buffalo, NY 14209.

Limit Ambushes By Diminishing Aloneness.

It's almost time again to close the door on another year, but before get to that last day of December, we must don our gay apparel and deck our halls. What you wear during the holiday season is entirely up to you, but I'll give you a few tips on how to deck your halls.

Boughs of holly are nice, but massive holly trees don't grow too well in this area. So boughs have to be brought in, usually at unbearably high prices. If you have evergreen trees or shrubs in your yard, or have access to them elsewhere, these can make fine boughs.

Douglas fir, pine and balsam, in that order, hold up the best. This goes for cut trees used indoors also.

All spruce, except for the blue, (at least from my experience) are the worst for cut trees or boughs. White and black spruce are abominable. If you plan to put your tree up on Christmas eve and take it down the day after, it might last, but any longer than that, forget it.

Unfortunately, these do have the most typical "Christmas tree" shape of any evergreen, but as the needles cascade off the tree and lodge forever in your shag carpet, you may regret choosing it.

Well, you have your tree and your boughs taken care of, so let's see what else we can get in your halls.

You will probably receive or purchase one or many of the seasonal flowering plants sold during the holiday season. Amaryllis, chrysanthemum, cactus, Season. Amaryllis, chrysanthemum, Christmas cactus, and of course, the good old poinsettia are among the many available.

If your nursery-greenhouse or florist is reputable, you should have no problem with insects. But if your plant is purchased from a business that doesn't look out for such things, then there could be problems. Along with your myriad of Christmas blooms you could also have a myriad of crawling, creeping, chewing and/or sucking creatures. Not at all a festive sight unless you are having a very late Halloween party.

White fly on poinsettia are a common problem. Although white goes well with the red and green of the plant, this white you don't want or need. Check for little white winged creatures all over. If you find any, call your doctor. If there are any on the plant, spray with an all purpose houseplant insect spray, or wash the leaves with a little warm water and soap.

Although I've never had them on mine, I suspect that Christmas cactus would be a likely candidate for mealy bug. You know, those cottony masses of little buggers that just love hoya's and other types of cactus. Alcohol and a cotton swab will help eliminate these pests. I'll give a more thorough treatment to insects in a column next year. Ugh! To think another year down the tubes.

Oh well, have a truly happy holiday and may you fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la right smack into the New Year.

Just a thought. The recent feeling of fear that have been going on regarding being on the streets has apparently died down. Is that because people are no longer afraid? Or have they just lost interest until it happens again? Just because we don't hear about it, doesn't mean it has gone away or been solved. Beware. And be careful.

140 Allen St. Mon.-Sat. 12 to 6 882-8200

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Someone has said that there are three classes of people: those who make things happen; those who watch things happen; and the overwhelming majority who have no idea of what is happening.

For a long time I fancied myself as one who wanted to make things happen. I wanted to be in the thick of the action, and maybe even to be the focus. This was probably one reason I chose to go to a small liberal arts college in Ohio. I did become actively involved in many projects and humane concerns, but at other times my "natural" laziness or tendency to procrastinate took over and I was again on the outside looking in.

It is personally embarrassing for me to realize that the gay liberation movement, as we know it, has developed during my adult life and that I have done very little to foster it. ("Stonewall" was only 11 years ago!) A recent program at Gay Professionals on lesbians in Buffalo in the 1940's reminded me and others that much had been done before we arrived on the scene, let alone come out of our closets. One of the interviewees in "Word is Out", George, notes that the screaming Nellie Queens provided much of the breakthrough which eventually lead to gay pride and gay liberation.

I've had experiences in the past week which allowed me to be on the "making things (begin) to happen" end of the scale. Speaking at a joint meeting of GPA and Sunshine House, I was able to answer questions from gay person's perspective, and in the process contribute to other persons' awareness of some of the joys, pains and complications associated with being gay. A similar learning experience for an ostensibly straight audience found me as a guest speaker in a social psychology class at U.B. Often social change is regarded as a gradual process that occurs only through education. My biggest gripe about my chosen career is that only rarely is there the opportunity for immediate positive feedback. As a professional educator of 21 years I continue to live in the hope that some of my students hear what I have to say, and see how I live, and that somehow that makes a difference in their lives.

Even as I write this month's column, I realize I tend to go in a cycle between being a "maker" and being a "watcher." I sometimes have gotten so burned out on specific projects that I turn around and give someone else a turn. That stepping back has provided both a rest, and the perspective of seeing how someone else is doing the job, and then I can decide if the other is doing it right or whether I could do the job better myself.

I take pride in thinking I am NOT in that "overwhelming majority who have no idea of what is happening." I am called upon as a gay man to be aware of the world around me, the personalities who are making decisions, and the institutions they are a part of. I cannot be idle and let others do it all. Anita, in a recent interview, indicated a change of heart. Others (and that includes some elected officials) have not so indicated. I cannot afford to deny myself and gay brothers and sisters our God-given and constitutional rights. How about you?

ANTIQIUES 'N ART
BY MICHAEL CALLARA

Burmese ware was patented by Frederick S. Shirley on Dec. 15, 1885 and was made at the Mount Washington Glass Co. Works until about 1895. It shaded from a light lemon-yellow to bluish-pink color. The pieces were made in a shiny finish and also with a satin coating called plumb. Burmese glass was decorated with gilded patterns and rich enameled designs. In 1886 the Mount Washington Glass Co. licensed Thomas Webb & Son of Stourbridge, England to produce Burmese ware in that country. This glassware bore an acid-etched mark on the base: Thos.-Webb-&-Sons encircled with Patented Queen's Burmeseware.

Articles made included lamps, candleholders, bowls, and vases in graduated sizes. Also included were plates, cups and saucers, pitchers and various other pieces.

Further reading— American Glass by Mckearin, George, & Helen.
HELP!: ONE ANSWER

BY G. SAX

By the time this is published holiday plans, hopes and expectations will probably have over-ridden the heightened interest and fear which resulted from the series of assaults and beatings inflicted on a few gay men in the Allentown district of the City. In any event, one of the important features of crises, their dislocating impact on daily concerns, carries a countervailing effect. These daily concerns reassure themselves; they have more staying power. Crises like fear, have to peak and wane.

The problem, or problems, which drew this temporarily increased interest remain of course. Gay people, most especially gay males, are still potential and actual victims of the energy generated by hate and fear. It is a dismal certainty that some of us will have experiences similar to those which occurred in September and October.

The awareness which waxed at that time failed, as far as I can see, to promote a substantially increased understanding of the problem. I would be pleased to be wrong about this, but that is my tentative conclusion. That problem continues irrespective of the concern felt and expressed by those with the most reason to do something about it. Discrimination and attacks against gay persons derive from the structure and texture of American society. They can’t be reasonably be viewed as incidental or individual accidents. Insistence on doing so will contribute to the problem.

The attacks which occurred in Allentown were unprovoked. But there is a sense in which to identify oneself as gay, or to identify with gay concerns, is to invite a potentially aggressive response. If America is not the most inhospitable place on earth for homosexuals, it is not a country in which they are not genuinely welcome. There are serious risks entailed in accepting a homosexual identity. It amounts to unwarrented naïvete to experience surprise when the logic of that risk is played out.

This is particularly so when the danger involved is associated with cruising. Cruising obviously increases the risk. It identifies the homosexual to those who wish to victimize him. It is by now a commonplace that danger can be an attractive element in the process. Danger, however, is not only a metaphor; it is a component of reality.

Danger is part of the structure of social reality in America for homosexuals. The social climate is still, possibly increasingly, dangerous. The recent election has brought to power a faction whose members have repeatedly expressed discomfort with, and disapproval of, us. The junior senator from this state attributed some of his problems in gaining office to a homosexual clique and has been quoted as saying that a settling of accounts may be in order.

There is a more serious obstacle to combating the peril in which gay persons can find themselves: the uncertain identity of the gay individual and the group. It is probably the single most immediate problem. Homosexuals are handicapped in their resistance when they cannot identify themselves as gay. The chief modes of resistance, individual or social, have been developed in exclusion from straight society. To follow the conventional imagery, the closet is re-entered as often as it is finally abandoned. A love which cannot speak its name in public, other than in muted tones, can never effectively challenge the restrictions upon it.

I do not mean to belittle the often cogent reasons which account for millions of divided lives, but only to point out that repression is not the soundest basis for resisting oppression.

Things are not, monochromatically bleak. In some respects they are more hopeful than ever before. It is, in fact, the increased freedom to function without crippling fear that is the greater problem. An oppressed minority which stays out of sight invites fewer reprisals.

Sooner or later it will become clear what can be done to meet these new problems, just as it will become clear that something must be done. It is already possible for some things to be done. Attacks on gay persons should be reported to the authorities whenever possible. The number of individuals making these attacks must be known. The number is appreciated there is a slight, but real, lessening of the danger. Many men have refused to do so, for reasons which must have seemed compelling at the time, but may not have sufficiently weighed the resulting danger to their brothers.

Cont. on pg. 11
POET

i walk, my eyes always following
i pass a stranger
eyes meet,
smiles greet,
tonight's the night
oh no, but not for me.
for the stranger is everything that i'd like to be
but he's not me
addresses are given
mine is the one
once inside, voices stop
for one night i am loved
or i am told so
things move fast
then they slow down
life gets back to normal
now there's a new day to discover
i walk, my eyes always following
i pass a known stranger
eyes meet
no smiles greet

THE CRUISE
David Martin

love always seems to find you
when you least expect it
whether it be a friend or a stranger
you go to your place
talk, drink and sit
then something happens
at first you're afraid
then it all comes to reality
then you observe
next you serve
things grow back to normal
and a new day is around
you never receive a phone call
just a short letter
i've found someone better

David Martin

ALONE.
I sleep alone again
It seems so many nights it's been
Like this.
Alone.
No one to ask me where I've been
Or what mood I'm in
No kiss.
Alone.
An empty bed awaits me
No person or body waits for me.
No bliss.
Alone.
Dreams and fantasy
(hopefully) come quickly to me
Alone.  

Editor
GAY WEDDING

The following letter was received in response to an article in the September 1980 issue of The Fifth Freedom.

To The Editor:

Since the Gay Community is so anxious to open up relations with the media, I think it's important that statements of anger, not be translated as truth.

I'm speaking of the so called "True Eyewitness News Account" of the Gay wedding.

The minister involved, writes that he told me before the story aired at eleven o'clock on June 30th, that he was not going to perform the wedding. But in fact, when I spoke to this particular minister, he told me he wasn't sure, that he hadn't decided yet.

The next morning, the minister called WKBN to say the wedding was off - a fact, reported on Thursday's edition of Eyewitness News at Noon. However, later in the day, I was informed by the Gay couple that the ceremony would go on with another minister performing the ceremony. I confirmed that fact with the minister involved. So that night, when the follow up story aired, the wedding was on again.

Point two, as for the minister's accusations that I did not air the fact that this was going to be a strictly religious document and that I showed a ten second clip of a lawyer that the minister claims "shed no light at all."

First in my script, and I'm quoting, I said, "While the state probably won't do anything to stop the wedding, Arthur and Michael won't have certain legal rights." I think that is as clear as I can make it.

Also, as far as the interview is concerned, the attorney stated, and I quote, "The couple isn't going to have any legal effects, like being able to claim property from each other, or being able to claim that they really are spouses under the law at all."

I think that pretty much shows the legal limits of the marriage.

As far as taking issue with airing the four second shot of the kiss, that certainly is your prerogative. That is a question of personal preference.

But if you're going to take issue with the accuracy of my reporting, then I would at least hope you would have the facts to back up your criticism.

Sincerely,

Cindy DiBiasi
Channel 7 News Reporter
WKBN TV in Buffalo

From the Minister:

I am very happy to see that Cindy DiBiasi read the article and responded to it. It shows that The Fifth Freedom is being read by members of the media.

I did not have all of the facts that she had access to, true, but I still feel that overall the article was true from the facts that I had.

Anyway let this bury 'that' wedding for good!

By the time this is printed I will have done a wedding for two women and for two gay men. Both of these were handled with sincerity and were not exploited in any way. (As, I feel, both Ms. DiBiasi and I were by the first couple.)

Both couples felt that it was important for them to have a special commitment to each other. This is what I gave to them and will continue to do for anyone that asks me to.

So do let us keep the lines of communication open and both sides will have the chance to give their version of the facts, in The Fifth Freedom, and hopefully on Channel 7 and all the other forms of the media in Buffalo.

Until the next time...

Rev John
NYC KILLINGS

The following telegram was sent to the two bars that were recently the scene of the gay killings in New York City:

To: 23rd St. 

From: NYC

Hey, we are here in Buffalo, we are appalled at the events this week. We send our love and support to all those hit by this tragedy. Let's hope that none of us suffer this way again. Our prayers to those families, friends and lovers who lost a loved one.

Mattachine Society and 5th Freedom
Gay Professionals also sent a similar telegram.

I think that it is very important that Buffalo was represented by these messages at the far end of the state.

Considering the recent atmosphere here, who knows when it could spread.

I received the following letter from the Gay Switchboard in New York City:

On behalf of us in New York, thank you and the Gay Professionals of Buffalo and the Niagara Frontier for sharing our horror and sorrow and your prayers and love. It lightens our burden.

I delivered your message to the ecumenical service for Jeorg Wenz and Vernon Kroening celebrated Monday, 24 November. It was also included along with other kind messages from the pulpit. I will tomorrow deliver copies to the men who are yet hospitalized at St Vincent's.

The November 19th Fund, to benefit the victims—there is a financial need, will accept checks c/o Washington Square Methodist Church, 135 W. 4th St., New York, NY 10012. All contributions are tax deductible.

Let's fervently hope that we never again suffer such a tragedy.

Sincerely,
Scott Edwards
Gay Switchboard

BI LINES

Dear People:

Who am I? Who is this person writing for the first time to a gay newspaper? I am someone. Maybe you passed me on the street today, or sat next to me in class. You may not have ever seen me, but I saw you. And from what I saw, I'm sure I want you to get involved with many of you.

I am bisexual. Who cares? I do for one. So far the only one. I am one of a minority, yet probably a majority, in society. Not straight, not gay. Which bar do I visit this Saturday? Gay or straight, each group says I'm not enough of the 'right' one. 'Live and let live' sounds too dull and safe when you say it. But try to live it. It could be a hell of a lot tougher than you think.

I'm out of the closet more than any of you. Sure you say you're out of the closet, but you immediately locked yourself into another one, a gay one. You play games and wear foolish masks of pride. Do you even know who you are? Really? Well if you are so confident, why hide it with the gay mystique? Be you for once. At leasttry. I'll only love you even more.

By the way, I hate your Calvin Kleins. They're too damn tight on your ass.

How about dinner Friday night? You know, wine, candlelight...huh? The Villa? Again? No—you go. I'll be fine. Yeah, sure. Catch you later.

Oh, I wish I could be different and then I think hell no! I've got the best of both worlds in me, and yet I'm called queer by both.

I stood there on the street. A hunk and a gorgeous girl passed me but opposite directions. Which one did I follow? I didn't. I can't go. I was only thirteen at that moment I began to realize just how difficult my life was going to be. So please, don't make it any harder.

We are the oppressed, not you. We are the many, not the few.

They say I'm naive. I'm not. I've had my quota of heartbreaks. But that doesn't mean a damn thing to you. If I open my mouth to tell you, you immediately top it with an experience of your own or worse yet, ignore me. What am I worth to you? Why don't you tell me the next time we dance?

Anyway—here's love on ya.

BI BI !

MICHAEL

This is for Michael. They said he was aloof like me, but I don't know how that can be. They said he was happy, but now he's dead. They said he enjoyed his gay life, but that's not what the notes said. I never met him (that I know of) and now I never will, but that doesn't mean I can't think of him—still.

How many other Michaels are out there? Do we make them that way when we don't care? If you ever feel lonely, don't think of yourself only. Think of Michael, and don't despair.

Call someone and tell them you care.

Michael Gebera
November 8, 1980

CONT. FROM PG. 1

Some of the activities that can be included in the run package are: a pin or patch, free drink passes at the local bars, lockers at the baths, and private showings in gay theatres, after hours parties and lavish dinners. Some groups even put on full dress plays.

A run can cost thousands of dollars and takes months to plan. The club has greeters stationed at the local airports, bus stations and anywhere that someone may arrive for the run. They rent rooms in hotels (sometimes taking over whole floors), there may be 100-350 people in attendance. They can take a whole restaurant over for the special dinner functions. The members homes are also open to all the visitors while they are in town. That way you get to meet and know each other on a personal level. There are also bars nights where we like to bring the L/L and other gay community groups together as a whole. Any groups in the immediate area are also invited to attend these functions. There are auctions, charity drives, picnics for the whole community.

5th: What are your colors?

N.C.: It is a bike term that is our insignia or logo. We wear it on our jackets in high esteem.

5th: What are some reasons for being kicked out of a club?

N.C.: Letting someone else wear your colors, conduct unbecoming a member while wearing your colors, lying and angring that would not be favorable to the club's image. There are others, too.

The colors are the clubs property and must be given back when you leave.

5th: What role do women have in the L/L club?

N.C.: They really do not have any. However, there are women's groups in California and Australia. We keep to ourselves, as we are basically male oriented.

5th: What one thing would you like people to learn from this article?

N.C.: We want people to realize that we are very organized. We have constitutions, by-laws and regular meetings.

We have worked for Gay Rights and legislation, have participated in marches (and have even been asked by local police departments to help keep order in gay marches), and ever buy ticket blocks to police benevolent fund functions.

We keep a low profile, because many of our members are in sensitive positions. That does not mean that we stay in the closet though. It's just that we are very recognizable in our dress and it is very hard to hide it.

There is also room for another L/L club in Buffalo and we would be glad to help anyone get it started.

If anyone would like any further information just write to us at:

SICKLE CITY-BF
P.O. BOX 397, ELLICOTT STATION,
BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14205

FIFTH FREEDOM
November 1980

MICHAEL

This is for Michael. They said he was aloof like me, but I don't know how that can be. They said he was happy, but now he's dead. They said he enjoyed his gay life, but that's not what the notes said. I never met him (that I know of) and now I never will, but that doesn't mean I can't think of him—still.

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Michael Gebera
November 8, 1980
GAY DIRECTORY

ORGANIZATIONS

MATTACHINE SOCIETY OF THE NIAGARA FRONTIER 881-5335
Temporarily without offices. Mailing Address:
P.O.Box 155, ELLICOTT STATION, BUFFALO, NY 14205
Meetings held the first and third Sundays of the month
at the Unitarian-Universalist Church, Elmwood at West Ferry. Pot Luck supper at 6:30. Meeting at 7:30. All are welcome.

THE FIFTH FREEDOM 881-5335
The paper is being produced in a private home at the present. Volunteers always needed to work on the paper.
Write: P.O.Box 155, ELLICOTT STATION, BUFFALO, NY 14205.

GAY HOTLINE 881-5335
Staffed by members of Mattachine on a part-time basis.
Hours: 6 to 10 pm. daily and all day Friday. Hours to be expanded when we get more volunteers.

GAY PROFESSIONALS 842-2750
An organization to provide support for gay people in the professions and those who seek a confidential place to meet new friends. Open to everyone. Call Tom Hammond at the above number for more information. Or write to:
GAY PROFESSIONALS-PF, P.O. BOX 264, BUFFALO, NY 14209.

A.A. FOR GAY MEN AND WOMEN 839-0388
Meets twice per week: Wednesday evening at 8:30 p.m. at the Shoreline Apts., 210 Niagara and Friday evening at 8:30 p.m. at the Ascension Church on the corner of Linwood and North Streets. For phone contact call the above number and ask for a member of the gay group. For more information write: OPEN MIND GROUP, P.O. BOX 395, ELLICOTT STATION, BUFFALO, NY 14205.

GAY RIGHTS FOR OLDER WOMEN 836-8970
Call Emma Bookstore for more details at number above.

GAY PEOPLES ALLIANCE (GPA) 831-2179
Formerly Gay Liberation Front (GLF). Coffeehouse every Friday at 9:00 p.m. (when school is open.) At 107 Townsend Hall. Office at 311 Squire Hall. Hours: M-F 10-4.
SUNYAB, 3435 Main St. Campus.

GAY YOUTH BUFFALO 836-6999 & 831-2179
All gays 21 and under. Meetings Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m. 311 Squire Hall, SUNYAB, 3435 Main St. Campus.

UB MEN'S CENTER NO PHONE
The center is open on a drop-in basis. For all gay, straight and bi-sexual men. Open M-F 12-5. 211 Townsend Hall, SUNYAB, 3435 Main St. Campus.

DIGNITY/BUFFALO 874-6139
For Gay Catholics and Christians. Call the number above for more information. Or write: P.O.BOX 75, ELLICOTT STATION, BUFFALO, NY 14205.

STUDENT ASSOCIATION FOR GAY EXPRESSION (SAGE) 878-6316

NICKLE CITY LEATHER/LEVI CLAW NO PHONE
Write: NICKLE CITY-FF, P.O. BOX 897, ELLICOTT STATION, BUFFALO, NY 14205.

FREDONIA, N.Y.
GAY AWARENESS ORGANIZATION (GAO) NO PHONE
SUNY Fredonia. Fredonia, NY 14063.
Meetings Wednesday at 7 p.m. in S-123 Campus Center.

NATIONAL

BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER (BMT) WRITE: BMT-WF
279 Collingwood
San Francisco, CA 94114

BOOKSTORES

FEMINIST FEMINIST BOOKSTORE 836-8970
Feminist and Gay books. 2474 Main St. at Greenfield St.

MARRAKESH 882-8200
Gay periodicals and Lambda jewelry. 140 Allen St.

TALKING LEAVES 837-8534

BARS AND RESTAURANTS

ALLEN RESTAURANT 881-0586
16 Allen St.

THE BETSY 855-8902
454 Pearl St.

DOMINIQUE'S 886-8694
20 Allen St.

GREENFIELD STREET RESTAURANT 836-9035
25 Greenfield Street.

MAC ARTHUR'S PARK 884-1114
153 Elmwood Ave.

MEAN ALICE'S 856-3298
729 Main St.

VILLA CAPRI 886-9469
926 Main St.

BATHS

CLUB AMHERST 835-6711
44 Almeda St.

MORGAN BATHS 852-2153
655 Main St.

NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y.

ITSY BITSY LOUNGE 282-9717
1149 Michigan

Fifth Freedom

November 1980

WANTED:

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 47, DESIRES PERMANENT RELATIONSHIP. HAVE ALOT TO OFFER THE RIGHT PERSON. MUST BE MATURE. ALL ANSWERED, WRITE: L.B. C/O THE FIFTH FREEDOM, P.O.BOX 155, ELLICOTT STATION, BUFFALO, NY. 14205.

AD RATES: $2.00 FOR FIRST 15 WORDS. EACH ADDITIONAL WORD 10%. MAIL BOXES C/O THE FIFTH FREEDOM ARE AVAILABLE.
MAC ARTHUR'S PARK
153 ELMWOOD AVE.
(betw. allen & north)

wed. NOV. 26  turkey game winners announced
thur. NOV. 27  THANKSGIVING DAY OPEN 10 PM.
               FOOD & SURPRISES

sun. DEC. 7    *CASABLANACA* A FASHION SHOW
               FASHIONS BY MARRAKESH
               SHOWTIME 4 PM  FREE ADM.

wed. DEC. 24   CHRISTMAS  IN THE PARK WITH SANTA
               * Sign up now, "win a trip to NEW YORK"*
               also turkey Raffle

thur. DEC. 25   CHRISTMAS PARTY  OPEN 10PM

wed. DEC. 31   "NEW YEARS EVE" FOOD & SURPRISES
               FREE ADM

* SIGN UP AT — A1 TRAVEL OR MAC ARTHUR'S
co-sponsored by 228 delaware
               852-1000  153 elmwood ave.
               884-1114

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