GLF ON TV: Mother Bans "Sesame Street"

The nice people at WXXI, Channel 21, learned of Rochester GLF through a press release concerning our July 4th Independence Day dance. They wasted no time in contacting us and requesting that three of our members appear on their Wednesday evening talk show, "Call 21," on July 14th.

R.J. Alcalá, Jim Fishman, and Karen Hagberg were selected to appear. The show was aired live from 7:30 to 8:30PM. People watching were able to call in questions which were presented to the panel by the moderator, Barry Goldfarb.

The questions that reached the panel during the show enabled the panel to cover a wide range of topics: the purpose of Gay Liberation in general, oppressive laws, the involvement of organized religion with Gay Liberation, as well as many more personal questions concerning our own experiences as Gay people. One person called from St. Catherines, Ontario to ask if we believed that New York State laws would ever become as tolerant as those in Canada. The people at the station were very pleased with the general response to the show. They received 129 calls that evening. This was the second largest response in the history of the show (a Black Panther holds the record).

Of the 129 questions received, there was time to answer only 32. About 80% of the total number of questions were representative of a cross-section of society's curiosity concerning the lives of Gay people. As to be expected, 20% of the questions demonstrated the anxiety and fear of the ignorant toward homosexuals. Mothers wanted to know how not to make their children Gay. Men expressed outrage at having been propositioned at some time in their lives by other men (although they don't deem it outrageous that they, themselves, have been taught to proposition women at every opportunity). Some people were simply appalled that homosexuality, such a "forbidden" topic of conversation, would appear on their own television screens. (The program director at Channel 21 observed that people forget that there is an "off" as well as an "on" switch to their receivers!)
TV SHOW (continued)

One indignant mother informed the station that she would no longer allow her children to watch "Sesame Street" or any other program on Channel 21.

In its effort to bring honest and accurate information to the community at large, GLF will provide a panel of speakers to interested groups. Arrangements may be made through the GLF office. We are looking forward to increased public speaking activity throughout the coming year.

Lollipops for Security

On July 18 the meeting topic was Gay Marriage. After a discussion of a questionnaire concerning Gay relationships (in which the consensus overwhelmingly disagreed with the stereotype that Gay people don't want long-term relationships), there followed a lively discussion of various aspects of the topic. From the discussion, it was clear that our organization is composed of an amazingly broad spectrum of opinions and backgrounds. Somehow, from a rather unstructured format, some really fine insights and a feeling of true communication made this one of the most exciting meetings yet. It was attended by about fifty members.

July 25th's meeting started with a pot-luck supper at 5:15PM. A wide variety of food and people showed up for the occasion. The regular meeting started at 7:30PM, the topic being Emotional Security for Gays. After a dramatic reading from The Boys In the Band (which the group decided was not an accurate statement of Gay life and feelings), emotional security was passed out in the form of Tootsie Roll Pops. The discussion centered on the many ways in which straight society makes it difficult for Gays to achieve emotional security. The group was unanimous in feeling that GLF had given its members a sense of community that they had never felt before and had helped them develop as human beings.

In the business portion of the meeting, a decision was made to hold a regional Gay festival in mid-October in connection with the first anniversary of our organization. A committee to plan the weekend-long event will be formed within the next week. Also, the group decided to retain Sunday evening as the meeting night, rather than switch back to Saturday night, as had been suggested. The meeting was attended by about 65 people, including ten visitors from the Syracuse Gay Freedom League, and ended with the traditional "huzz-out."

NOTICES

The 24 Hour Stores of Rochester have been sponsoring ads on WBBF which perpetuate the already overworked stereotype of the lisping "faggot." A letter writing campaign has been initiated by members of GLF in an attempt to make the store management aware of our feelings and stop the ads before further action is considered. Letters protesting the ads should be sent to:

Carl Patterson
The Food Tree
264 Park Ave.
Rochester, N.Y. 14607

and to:

WBBF
850 Midtown Tower
Rochester, N.Y. 14604

At the time of this printing, several GLF members have gone to visit Mr. Patterson, who is manager of the 24 Hour Store chain, but he has been out of town.
NOTICES (continued)

**WARNING!**

The GLF office has just been informed that during the course of the summer several of our brothers have been victims of attempted entrapment by groups of youths who attempt to solicit the attentions of people in the various parks around Rochester. We have been given specific information concerning one of these incidents.

A group of five boys in their early teens tried to attract a man who was in the park. He ignored their antics. When he drove away, however, the children took down his license number, and they reported an "improper advance" to the park authorities, backing up their tale with an automobile license number. Poor Man-in-the-Park now has an official complaint filed against him. Until the children of Rochester find a better sport, it seems advisable that we beware of whom we "play games with in the park. One hopes that the Rochester police, who have been very helpful to Gays who have been similarly victimized, will help put a halt to this activity.

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A talent show is being planned in connection with the regional Gay festival in mid-October. This could be your break to stardom! All types of talent skits, drag, you name it. Help will also be needed with lighting and other technical matters. If interested, leave a message for Björn at the GLF office.

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The next office staff meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, August 8. Time and place to be announced. All present office staff members and any who wish to join should attend.

Summer GLF meetings are held every Sunday evening at 7:30PM in the Frederick Douglass Building Lounge at the University of Rochester.

So far this summer, we have discussed such topics as VD, transvestism, Gay marriage, emotional security. We have also had one visiting speaker, Laud Humphries, had a dance on July 4th, and participated in the Christopher St. Liberation Day march in New York.

Future summer meeting topics are:

Aug. 1: PLEASE TOUCH-names and yogi to increase trust and warmth in the group.
Aug. 8: WHERE THE ACTION IS IN ROCHESTER-to develop an orientation tour for Gays new to city.
Aug. 15: GAY BAR-owners will be present.
Aug. 29: WOMEN'S LIBERATION
Sept. 5: PICNIC-details to be announced.
Sept. 12: SEX EDUCATION FOR GAYS
Sept. 19: GAY UTOPIA-What do we finally want to achieve in GLF.

For the Aug. 1 meeting, wear old clothes. We'll be on the floor.

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New Consciousness-Raising (C-R) groups are continually forming. A C-R group is a group of about seven people who meet regularly to share with each other their feelings and experiences as Gay people. They allow members to get to know each other in a way which is impossible in large general meetings or social events. The C-R groups now in existence are like "families" to many of the members. If you would like more information on C-R groups, see Brian.