

HUB seeks comment on bylaws

New group hopes to fill gap at community's center

BY CAROL STEINEL

Sometimes new organizations seem to be reinventing the wheel. But the newest addition to Portland's group roster just wants to tie all the spokes together.

The HUB, a Coalition Tool for the Sexual Minority Community, recently crafted its statement of purpose and bylaws. What follows is a summary:

The HUB Coalition is an information network directed toward, but not limited to, the sexual minority community. It will accept and distribute information in a non-editorial manner and provide for better sharing of community resources, both human and material. All groups and individuals that are supportive of sexual minorities are invited to take part in all aspects of the HUB and its structure.

The concept for the HUB grew as a response to the state of the gay and lesbian community in Portland after the passage of Measure 8 in November, 1988. That measure struck down Governor Neil Goldschmidt's executive order banning discrimination based on sexual orientation in state hiring and services.

During the campaign against Measure 8, certain issues in the gay and lesbian community rose into sharp focus. Some of those are:

1) The gay and lesbian community in Portland has evolved into a diverse and fragmented community that includes hundreds of small special interest groups, dozens of large organizations (such as LCP or the Right to Privacy PAC) and thousands of individuals.

There is no formalized communication system among these groups and individuals, and no central meeting place.

2) Leadership in the community has usually consisted of hired directors of large organizations, random representatives who are willing to be visible and self-proclaimed leaders. As a result, the community rarely feels a sense of genuine involvement with or a responsibility to support these leaders. Much of the work done on behalf of lesbians and gay men is, in reality, done by a tiny percentage of that community.

3) The community has no single entry network to assist its members, media or other communities to find services or information.

After the passage of Measure 8, a small group of organizers began meeting informally. The group, open to any who wanted to participate, met from June 1989 to February 1990. From the ideas discussed by organizers and gathered in a community wide forum, the bylaws for the HUB have been drafted.

The HUB aims to address some of the issues in the gay and lesbian community by:

1) Networking with and serving the needs of the diverse elements of the sexual minority community (defined as gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transsexuals and transvestites).

2) Refraining from political activities and from adopting a political stance. HUB will refer political groups to each other for networking.

3) Encouraging leadership by a wide range of individuals through its organizational and board structures.

4) Distributing information between group and individual members without censorship or editing.

5) Providing membership options for small and large groups as well as individuals.

6) Maintaining a committee specifically dedicated to safeguarding the purpose of the organization.

Here is a brief summary of the bylaws:

There will be seven members on the HUB Board of Directors, serving terms of six months. The board will include one representative each from the finance, facility, information, public relations and volunteer coordination committees, plus two from the community committee.

Each representative will be elected by 75 percent of that committee's active members. Directors must have served on a committee for at least two months, and must not have served on the board for at least six months.

A HUB community forum is scheduled for Sunday, May 20, at Cafe Mocha, from 3 to 5 p.m. For more information or to see a full copy of HUB bylaws and philosophy contact Jordana Sardo, 281-5252.

Lesbian Choir member gets threatening note

Homophobia came home last month to Pacific University, a quiet campus in Forest Grove.

It began with a small announcement in the campus daily newsletter, placed there by a student who sings bass with the Portland Lesbian Choir. The item announced the choir's April 6 concert, "Women with Wings", and gave the woman's post office box as a contact for tickets.

The day of the concert, she found a note stuck in the door of her off-campus apartment.

"You live here. Your bike is blue. Your cat is grey. Your [sic] a fucking ugly tall lesbian bitch," the typed message began. "...Make no mistake. You won't live to see graduation day. We are gonna show you all you've been missing [sic]... We're gonna kill you, cut you up into little peices [sic] and show the world what happens to sick people like you ..." The note was signed "Heil".

The woman took the note to both Forest Grove and campus police, who at first advised her to keep the incident quiet.

But after discussing the matter with friends and with Pacific's Dean of Students, Meg O'Hara, she decided to spread the word in a letter mailed to every member of the choir.

More than 250 people attended a rally on campus on April 18, five days after the woman informed the choir members of the incident.

"There was a lot of rhetoric [from university officials] about supporting this woman. I want to call them on it," said Donna Red Wing, executive director of the Lesbian Community Project. "We can't let this be the end. This young woman is not safe. Until they do some work around attitudes, it's not going to change."

On the pastoral campus, which enrolls 1300 undergraduate and graduate students, the incident has become a focus for discussion and education about safety, harassment and diversity, O'Hara said.

"This is not single issue for us," she said. "This happened to a lesbian student. But it could have happened to one of our Hawaiian students. It could have happened to anyone who is seen as different or unacceptable."

Since the rally, a group of students, faculty and administrators has met twice to plan follow-up measures. Students are organizing a panel discussion with members of various minority groups, including a lesbian or gay speaker, before the end of the school year May 20. Police have not arrested anyone in connection with the note, although they do have some leads, according to O'Hara.

-Anndee Hochman

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