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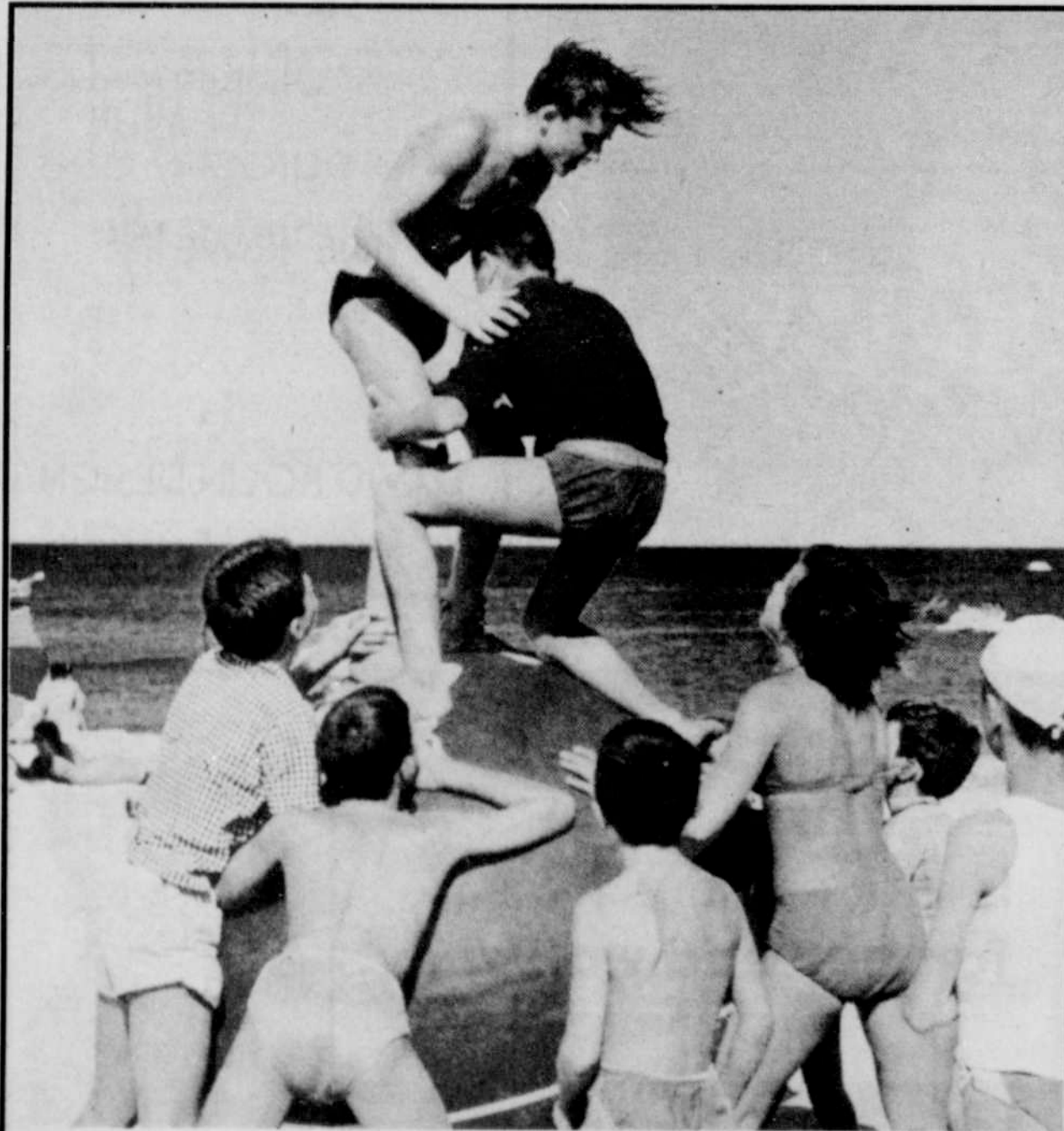
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national news

Mainstream lesbian and gay journalists meet

More than 200 lesbian and gay journalists from mainstream and gay news sources around the country met in San Francisco June 25 and 26 to talk about issues ranging from coming out at work to outing.

Aside from the fact that every major television, radio and print outlet in the nation was represented at the conference, the most notable development in the two-day event was the vast divergence of opinions.

Andrew Sullivan, the conservative editor of the *New Republic*, and Linda Villarosa, the senior editor of *Essence Magazine*, gave keynote addresses that highlighted their perspectives and goals.

Sullivan stressed the idea that those assembled should aim to be remembered not just as lesbian and gay journalists pioneering in their fields but as excellent journalists who happen to be lesbian or gay. "There is no contradiction between standing up for gay people and covering gay issues the way they should be covered, and being recognized by our peers as the professionals we are," Sullivan argued.

Villarosa, who came out to the one million readers of *Essence* only to receive the largest and most positive volume of reader response mail in the history of the magazine, pleaded with the gathering to end the whitewashing of the gay community in journalistic images.

"As a person of color, it really hurts. It angers me. Most writers take the easy way out, present the more homogenized view of our community. We have to do better about being inclusive—let's be daring about it—and find ways to cover the full spectrum of our community," Villarosa urged the plenary.

Randy Shiltz, the first out gay reporter at a mainstream newspaper, attacked the younger generation of lesbian and gay journalists for their practice of outing.

Michelangelo Signorile, the former *Outweek* and current *Advocate* columnist who is credited with starting outing, also had an opportunity to address the group and defend his tactics.

The event featured workshops on issues like the interface between the gay and lesbian press and the straight press, lesbian invisibility, the state of AIDS coverage and the double bind facing gays and lesbians of color.

Workshop participants from the mainstream media were particularly divided over the issue of advocacy. Some felt that being lesbian or gay meant they had to strive particularly diligently for objectivity around issues of sexuality, while others felt it was their job to advocate for lesbian and gay visibility through their news source.

The National Lesbian and Gay Journalist Association was founded two years ago by Leroy Aarons, former executive editor of the *Oakland Tribune*. It originally had six members; now there are 580.

Rachel Timoner

transitions

Thomas Steven Cormier

Thomas Steven Cormier of Northeast Portland died in his home Wednesday, July 15, 1992. He was 45. In the final days of his life he comforted and was comforted by his partner Dolph Schreck, his mother, Lillian Cormier, and his dear friends and former wives, Margaret Cormier and Dorothy Knowles.

Tom was asked a year ago what he would want to be remembered for when he died. He answered without hesitation: to make people laugh. He is also remembered for his remarkably gentle and sweet spirit.

Tom lived in the Haight-Ashbury district of

San Francisco in the 1960s and was the co-founder of Starflower Botanicals, a retail herb company in Eugene, Ore., in the early 1970s. During those years he lived with his former partner, Joe Brown, who died in 1989. In his last two years he worked with Dolph to build a quiet garden in which to sit.

His many interests included mysticism, politics, history, Madonna, AIDS research, Bobby and John Kennedy.

Tom taught his survivors courage, compassion, responsibility and love. His presence in their lives, though in different form, will carry them along.

Global entertainer Bobbie Callicoate dies

Bobbie Callicoate, renowned female impersonator billed as "Hotter 'n St. Helens," died from complications due to AIDS on Monday, July 20, at 6:15 pm. He was 52, having just celebrated his birthday on July 16.

Born in Hawaii, Callicoate celebrated 25 years in show business in 1990. Prior to starting his career as a traveling entertainer in San Francisco in 1965, Callicoate worked as a stockbroker.

His mother died when he was very young. His father, who died shortly after he started his career as an entertainer, said to him, "Bobbie, you'd be good at anything you set out to do."

In 1965 Callicoate aspired to be an actor. After having seen Charles Pierce, a "male actress," he decided that this was a career he wanted to pursue. He won a drag title that year that launched him into a 27-year career as an entertainer. After working Darcelle XV in Portland, Ore., in a female-impersonation revue, Callicoate decided that rather than be a part of a local house show, his niche was to travel. He contacted gay bars across the U.S. as an unknown and offered to come to their cities and perform for a \$2 cover charge at the door. He would return to many of these clubs and eventually became so popular that after his third time in any given club, he "named

his price" and got it.

Callicoate had a knack of getting to know people within minutes. After chatting with an unknown prior to showtime, everyone in the room felt like they had known him for years. By the time he hit the stage, he had audiences "eating out of his hands."

After traveling on the road alone, he eventually teamed up with Houston resident Tiffany Jones, billed as the "Texas Tornado." The two of them evolved into a two-man show that carried more punch and charisma than many full-cast drag revues. The show got rave reviews from coast to coast. One renowned New York critic described Callicoate as a "wonderful man and a great lady." Tiffany Jones died from AIDS in 1985, and Callicoate went back to his one-man format.

His career included working with big-name personalities such as Maxine Andrews (of the Andrews Sisters), Diana Ross, Katharine Hepburn, Wayland Flowers (of "Madame" fame), Rusty Warren and Liberace.

A special memorial wake will be given in his honor at Darcelle XV, 208 N Third Ave., Portland (222-5338) on Monday, Aug. 17, at 7 p.m. Everyone is invited to share memories of friends who have died from AIDS at this event. Donations for air conditioners for Our House, the hospice where Callicoate spent the last two months of his life, will be accepted.