

NORTH *Bi* NORTHWEST

Newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network

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Volume 21 Issue 2

Losing My Community

by Diana

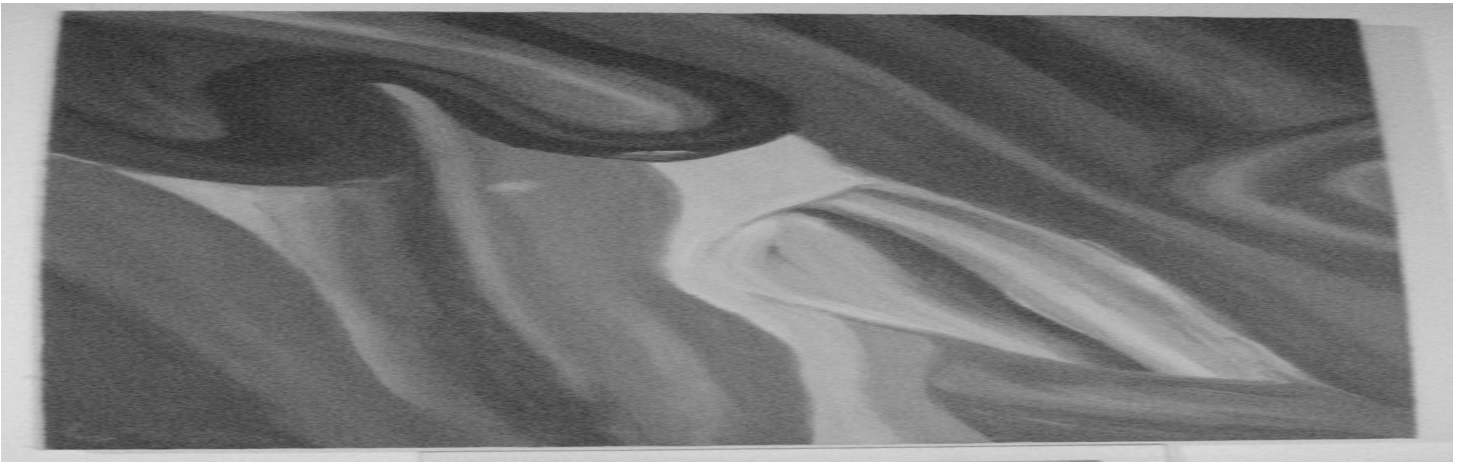
The three themes I see in my life are identity, politics and community. Identity is how I choose to present myself and its definition can change depending on context. I am bisexual, white, middle-aged and a former New Yorker or is that former Seattlelite? My politics is about influencing people and laws so they understand that I should have equal rights. I work with SBWN and PFLAG as my political outlet and come out as bisexual in queer environments to help educate the ignorant. I dislike negotiating my acceptance through outreach to groups who would rather I didn't bother but if I don't, nothing changes. My community, however seems to shrink to fit depending on my level of involvement.

I lived in Seattle, WA for 15 years and spent 10 of them involved in the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network (SBWN). I've been in Orlando, FL for 3 years and I have yet to rebuild the community I lost when I moved. While my ties to SBWN remain emotionally strong to the people I love, my ability and desire to stay involved with the group diminishes with each passing year. As my involvement diminishes so does my community. In Orlando, FL there is no identifiable bisexual community and as such I am resentfully part of the lesbian community focused exclusively on softball. I have yet to branch out and not sure how I would do so.

I have realized that my identity and my values seem constant but my politics change as it interacts with those in control of my legal status or community inclusion. My community, however, can be transient, confusing and hard to find. With no central focal point bisexual invisibility is my biggest problem.

I can choose to be a part of the lesbian community but it requires a certain amount of self suppression as the lesbians only resentfully allow bisexuals in their space. When I get ticked off at bisexual jokes and I challenge them, I am targeted for exclusion as a trouble maker. Should the gender of my partner change my ticket to the community be revoked since they would be unable to include a male partner in their pre-determined understanding the lesbian community. So, I make tradeoffs to have social support and social networks in exchange for compartmentalizing my life, bi-oppression and minority status.

I miss my community and I don't know how to recreate it here. I have all the pieces but they are not in one place. The online community is of little interest to me if I can't meet you in person but it provides bisexual books, news and gossip. PFLAG provides the acceptance I need and the political outlet to really make a difference but they are not my friends, they are my parents age or people seeking support in the chaotic mess of coming out stories. The lesbian softball community provides me with some social engagement but it's not the same. I can't talk about who I am, what I think and how I really feel without it turning into a lecture or lengthy explanation. I want back the place I could go and not have to explain my orientation or my behavior. A place I can go that doesn't feel like I'm starting over again and again. A place where I can have blue skin, a flaming split tongue and too much make up and all they ask is that I respect the space and place of others. I miss the place I can go that is both diverse and familiar so that my differences are just one of many options on a continuum of life experiences. That's what I miss the most about losing my community.



**This is the final issue of
North-Bi-Northwest in print format.**

North Bi Northwest is the quarterly newsletter of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network. It is produced by women and is feminist in content. We feature news and events pertinent to the bisexual community, as well as creative writing and artwork.



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North Bi Northwest

Editor:
Cyprienne Schroepel

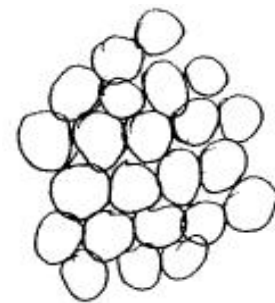
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SBWN can always use volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. Send us email or talk to a facilitator at a meeting.

North Bi Northwest is a publication of the Seattle Bisexual Women's Network



SBWN Statement of Purpose

We are a group of self-identified women from diverse backgrounds working to create a feminist bisexual support network. We promote, in both the heterosexual world, and in the lesbian/gay community, the understanding and acceptance of bisexuality as one of many valid sexual identities.

We regard ourselves as part of the community united against heterosexism and homophobia. We are dedicated to the right of all people to define their own sexuality, free from any social, political, or economic coercion. The discriminations we face based on our gender and our sexuality are not the only forms of oppression. We recognize that oppression is non-hierarchical and that none of us is free until all of us are free. We have invested ourselves in the feminist struggle to transform our culture into one free of all forms of bigotry, hatred, and exploitation.

We seek to provide a safe place for women to explore all aspects of their sexual orientation and identity. All women are welcome to attend SBWN activities. We are exclusively a women's group in order to create a safe space for women's expression and leadership. We come together to affirm ourselves and our choices.

From the Editor...

Hello all

This issue of the newsletter is late because SBWN has been going through some structural changes. Due to the loss of our regular meeting location with the closing of the Seattle LGBT Center, we are now meeting at Group Health on 15th in Capital Hill. We continue to meet on the second Tuesday evening of every month. We recently had a business meeting and made some decisions about the continuing direction and structure of the group. For all the details see the Business Meeting Notes elsewhere in this issue. We are now operating without 501c3 status. When the Center closed, SBWN made the decision to seek a new sponsor and applied to Verbena. We had been accepted and were in the process of becoming part of Verbena when they suffered some problems of their own. They suspended many activities including new group sponsorships which left SBWN without a fiscal sponsor. We will not be collecting money unless we have a specific project to fund and at that time we will solicit donations. SBWN is keeping our post office box and our website but we are letting go of our telephone number and the printed edition of our newsletter.

With great sadness I am announcing that I will no longer be editing this newsletter. This will be the last print issue of North-Bi-Northwest. SBWN intends to resume publication with web based issues of the newsletter when we have some volunteers for that project.

In this last issue we have some pictures and two personal accounts of participation in Seattle Pride. There are a couple of articles by Janice Van Cleve and a piece concerning political participation. Also included are notes from our recent business meeting and Diana has written about her experiences with bisexual community.

California has started conducting legal same-sex marriages though that may not last long due to a referendum that will probably be on the fall ballot. I wonder if any bisexuals will take advantage of this option? It only allows two person marriages so triads and poly groups are still out of luck.

This summer I did not get as many out of town visitors as last year. My younger brother and his wife surprised me by passing through. They were in Canada and came down to see me before returning to Illinois where they live. We managed to meet up for dinner, their treat. My son came along and was a great help in keeping the conversation going by talking about dog behavior and training. My brother and his wife have a dog now and they and my son exchanged lots of information. My son launched into his amazing imitation of the dog whisperer to help them with a particular problem. I was astounded to see my son assume this totally different persona and become an expert on dog behavior. My brother told us about sailing in races, well crewing actually on a

friend's boat. He does own his own boat which he sails on Lake Michigan. I had asked him about the tee shirt he was wearing from a yacht club. They were enjoying their vacation and I appreciated their spending an evening with me. My brother insisted we order dessert even though we were stuffed and already taking home some of our dinner. I ordered cheesecake to go and it was great to have that treat later.

I have had a great time being editor of this newsletter. It has been a place for me to express a lot of my creative energy for ten years. My writing, both fact and fiction, has appeared in these pages as well as photographs I have taken, drawings, paintings, doodles. I have told funny stories, expressed my outrage, tried out interviewing people, shared my good and sad times, reported on events. It's been a blast.

Thanks for the opportunity to share with you and goodbye.

Cyprienne
o H o

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Special Notice to Contributors

SBWN has entered into an agreement with EBSCO to have North-Bi-Northwest offered by subscription electronically. If you are a contributor of content, please be aware that issues of North-Bi-Northwest will be available online.

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SBWN Meeting Minutes August 12, 2008

In attendance: Lisa, Leilani, Dianna, Annemarie, Tracy, Louisa, and several attendees who are not presently on the AG

Updates: PO Box/phone/website

Tracy and Louisa will pick up mail. Louisa is looking into other mailbox options, but mailbox is currently paid through January. Mail will be brought to each business meeting and reviewed and sorted; we will try to do this during the “salon” portion of the meeting, 6:30 – 7. Ads will be tossed, publications circulated, re-donated, or tossed, and bills will be paid through group members and donations (see Treasurer/Finances below). Telephone will be discontinued.. Website and announcement list is running smoothly (thank you Diana).

Point persons: Tracy and Louisa

Meeting Site Coordination

Lisa will renew the space at GHC for the next 6 months and post information on the SBWN AG List website (and SBWNVolunteers site—see below) about how to continue this in the future.

Point person: Lisa

AG List changes/updates—the group approved changing the list to the SBWNVolunteers list.

Annemarie will assist with transitioning the AG to this list. A moderator is needed.

Lisa will post a request for a co-moderator. Once the transition is complete, the AG List /website will be kept as an archive.

Point persons: AnneMarie and Lisa

Treasurer/finances

The group agreed to go to a “cash-only economy” for now and stop maintaining a bank account and collecting money.

Tracy will contact Sheri to obtain the remaining funds, files, and records. Cash will be disbursed to Louisa for the PO Box, to Emily for Pride expenses, and to Cyprienne for newsletter production (see

below). Tracy will provide a report of the financial liquidation at the next meeting. Future expenses will be handled by donation requests and group collections.

Point person: Tracy

Newsletter

Annemarie will contact the newsletter editor to assist her with computer questions and production of a final print of the newsletter. Dianna will assist with logistics as well, and wait for communication from Annemarie and the editor on this.

Point persons: Annemarie, Dianna.

Nonprofit status/legal assistance update

Pursuit of 501c3 status and fiscal sponsorship is tabled at this time. The group does not feel we have the resources for this now, and we are functioning well enough without it.

Meeting Facilitation:

Sept 9 Louisa and Tracy

Oct 10 Annemarie

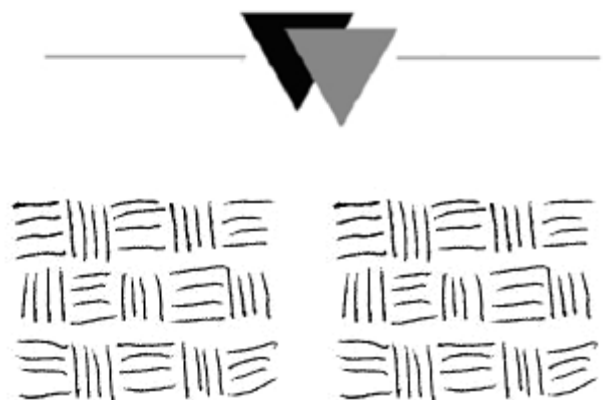
Nov 11 Lisa

Dec 9 Leilani

Jan 12 Dianna

Point person: Dianna

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PRIDE 2008

Pride Emily from Bwild
5 July 2008

We had five marchers to start, three more joined us along the parade route. Most of us doubled up on banner and poster carrying duty because we didn't have enough people. Two of our marchers were from the UW bi group, which was awesome cause I don't know what we would have done without them. Kim passed out cards for SBWN to all the appreciative girls on the sidewalk. We don't have many, if any, pictures of us because we were too busy trying to work out the logistics of carrying more things than we had people.

The only other groups we saw were those directly around us: a political group playing chipmunk music, Group Health, some pirates for something, and the only gay-owned gym in Seattle called Muscle something.

The parade route was hot, except for when we were in the shade which was quite plentiful actually, so it was a pretty nice march. Lots and lots of people were there to watch, I heard over 400,000 spectators. The Seattle Center was pretty crazy with everyone enjoying the sun, each other, and the International fountain. I took a run through the fountain myself. Cute boys walking around in their briefs, hot girls in their bikinis or tank tops, all posturing for each other. All in all, it was a wonderful day to be bi.

Emily



Pride 2008

I have missed Pride the last two years. I boycotted the dual-Pride-event-drama two years ago. Last year Henry worked weekends so I was easy to opt not to go. This was my first Pride now that it has moved to downtown Seattle, and my first ever watching. I have always volunteered at a booth or marched since my first Pride in 1994.

Henry and I started our Pride day by meeting up with our queer knitting and crocheting group. We bused in as a group from a knitter's house at a central location on Beacon Hill. This was my second ever public bus trip. Ha! The buses drop you really close to the Pride festivities downtown. We staked out a front spot for a good view of the Parade in front of Seattle's Best Coffee. We screamed, cheered, and reapplied sunscreen liberally. The temperatures reached the 90s, and queers were roasting. I applied sunscreen to two strangers and tried out my new REI 3-legged camping stool. We had the same fabulous start of Dykes on Bikes that we have every year. Seeing, hearing and feeling the hum of the motorcycles made me miss being on the bike with Henry. The floats start out a bit corporate, and this probably because you can pay a fee to get an early contingent number. After corporations the politicians, then the big non-profits, and the leather contingent came by. I was dazzled by some super fancy carnival type costumed drag queens. There were also some excellent drill teams, dancing, general merriment, and lots of good people-watching. SBWN marched but I didn't get a total head count. They marched with bi-net. They were towards the end of the parade and despite the 90 degree heat I waited to see them and cheer them on! After we screamed our excitement for SBWN, I packed up and headed to Seattle Center. I was too sun-baked to really enjoy all the potential people-watching opportunities as I passed through the crowd. At the Center, I caught up with Henry who had marched earlier with the leather contingent.

In retrospect, I can see why folks moved Pride downtown. Clearly, there's more room. It wasn't crowded on the route itself as I walked, and there's lots of space for getting a good



view of the Parade itself. The Seattle Center has the facilities for the thousands of attendees and more parking. I was annoyed however that the festival booths were spread out, and it was unclear if there was any order to their locations. My first order of business was to cool off and soak up some cool shady grass, and then later the air-conditioning of the Center House refreshed me as I watched some friends dance to country music.

Maybe next year I should march with SBWN again since I walked the whole route to get to Seattle Center or ride a float. This year was a social Pride for me. I saw several of my friends marching, bumped into friends in the crowd of on-lookers, and enjoyed hanging out my new stitching friends. The heat and sun really did me in by the end of the day. I was delighted to take a long cool bath when I got home. I managed to not get sun burnt but I didn't make any fashion statements. The price I suppose for sensibility. heh.

Happy Post-Pride,
Leilani



TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING?

by Janice Van Cleve

It was a sunny day in February and way too nice to stay indoors. The sky was blue, the temperature was 40F, and the roads were dry. I called my friend and left her a message about where I was going and then charged up into the mountains.

Its always a thrill to drive up Interstate 90 past the snarl of urban sprawl, the fog and wet of the lowlands, and the ugly rows of town houses that scar the woods over Issaquah. At North Bend, I arrived at last to the front wall of the Cascades massive ramparts of rock and earth girded in blankets of evergreen, their lofty peaks glistening white with snow. One by one I counted them off, remembering the good times I have enjoyed climbing them Little Si, Big Si, Tenerife, Mailbox, Washington, and Rattlesnake. I rounded the curve from which I could see the Buddhist monastery incongruously sequestered among Northwest firs. I passed the state patrols favorite speed trap and waved to the officer who was patiently waiting there for the next BMW too full of himself to suffer the speed limit behind us mortals. Deeper into the mountains I plunged and noted more and more snow along the sides of the road and loading down the trees up on the slopes. Finally I arrived at exit 47 and turned off for my adventure up to Annette Lake.

Annette Lake has been my destination for many winters. While in summer it has its charms, in winter it is full of challenges. Last year I marooned my car on a snow hump running up the middle of the access road and I had to dig myself out. This year the snowplows deposited their loads right at the base of the exit. Not only could I not drive up the road, I could not even cross the bridge to reach the road. So I parked at the exit and hiked in, fully armed with gaiters, yax trax, and snowshoes.

It is not a long hike in but I was surprised to discover how much snow their was. I was amazed to stand there in the parking lot at the trailhead fully five feet above the normal surface. The outhouse was buried up to the top of the door and the roof wore a towering white hat which leaned crazily above it. The gate to the access road was several feet below my own and there was no question of finding the trail.

So I followed the tracks of other intrepid souls whose snowshoes left imprints on the frosty crust. These are not always so easy to follow, as snowshoers tend to be an adventurous lot who plow independent courses, leaving many branchings between which those of us who follow them must

choose. Then again it had been several days since they passed this way. The surface was now littered with detritus from the trees which camouflaged the surface with a brown and white mottle. Adding to the disorientation was the interplay of shadows and sunbeams through the canopy. Through this confusion, I did find the bridge, the road above it, and the old railroad grade above that. I chose among the various tracks leading into the woods and started my climb.

The way went deeper and deeper into the forest. I tried to place my feet where others had before me because those footprints packed the snow enough to bear my weight. Just inches to either side and my leg would plunge in up to my thigh. Gingerly I crossed snow bridges over streams gurgling ten to twelve feet below me, reasonably confident that the snow cover was thick and sturdy enough to keep me from dropping through. Of the turnpikes and puncheons of the actual trail there was not a trace.



After about two miles the tracks grew sparser. Everywhere I turned was hemmed in by tree branches which, had my feet been standing down on the normal trail, would have been well over my head. The slope across which I was trying to make my way was too steep and crusty for snowshoes but not packed down enough for me to walk two yards without post

holing. I was finally forced to abandon my quest and find my way back to the railroad grade.

It was not even noon yet and the sky was wondrously blue. The path up the grade to the old Snoqualmie train tunnel looked inviting, so I went for it. This tunnel bores straight through solid granite a mile and a quarter to Hyak on the other side of the pass. I understand it is open for hikers to tempt its dank and drippy gloom during the summer months, but it is closed during the winter. I had never seen it, so step by crunchy step I slogged my way along the level bed. The mountains across the valley shown like dazzling bridal gowns while far below, the grunt and chug of tractor trailers toiled up the interstate to the pass. Here was adventure, exploration, exercise, incredible beauty, and wilderness all for me to enjoy! The tunnel entrance was gated as promised but it was a good place to stop and rest for a well deserved snack.

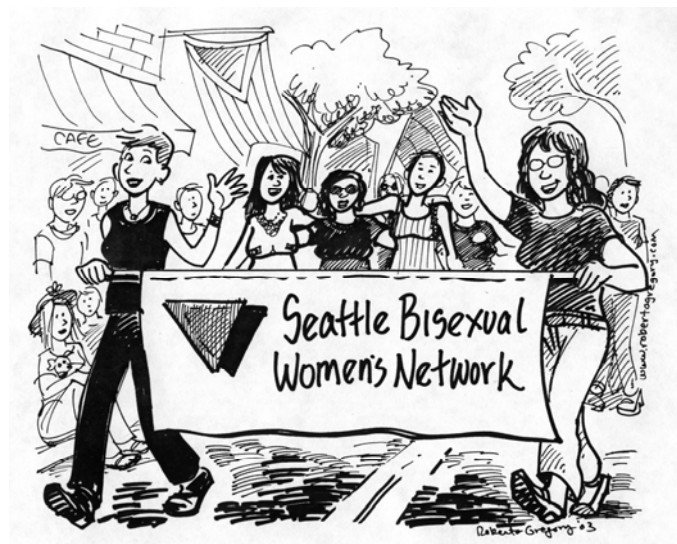
Charging back down the way I came was hot work. I stripped off my jacket and gloves which seemed like a good idea at the time. The sun was bright, the snow was white, and I was swelling with pride at my accomplishments. My muscles were limber and strong and my body was functioning in tune to my will. The chill breeze filled my lungs and swept away the heat and sweat as fast as they reached the surface of my skin underneath the thin shirt. Sitting in the car on the way home with an excellent double grande Americano laced with white chocolate and Annie Lennox on the stereo, I felt so alive! It was one of those rare moments when my mental self feels fully incorporated in my physical self.

Alas but my incorporation did not end with my victory. My physical self reacted to the chill of exposure in a very live, but unpleasant, manner. My nose filled, my throat croaked, and the strength of which I had been so proud only hours before, ebbed away leaving me achy and nosedrippy. Sleep was fitful between gasps for air and gasps for tissue. The decongestants helped but little so I resorted to my more familiar remedies mouthwash in the mornings, vitamin Cs all day, and brandy at night. Through it all I did manage one dinner party, lecturing at one wine tasting, and a religious service.

Nothing happens, however, from which a profit cannot be wrung. With time indoors and body unwilling to much exertion, I returned to exercise of the mental kind. In books and websites, articles and notes I journeyed. Footnotes gave up their secrets and little details popped out of texts with new clarity. I nearly finished a whole new chapter for my next research paper and derived a lot of enjoyment from the effort.

So it may be that one can have too much of a good thing, but there are many good things in this world. If one isn't available, surely another can be found.

Janice Van Cleve appreciates Life's grand adventures and its simple pleasures like breathing clearly. Copyright 2008.



June 2008

Last night I participated in a new form of town meeting. It was a most amazing experience. I can't say that I have ever been to a 'real' in person town meeting though I have attended something vaguely similar, a 'coffee social' with Jay Insley.

My telephone rang last evening a few hours after I returned from my day job. At first I thought it was another of the innumerable salespeople or charities seeking my money or goods or time. The voice was a recording but this was a different kind of unsolicited call. I was being invited to join a telephone conference call with a state representative from my district and several hundred of my fellow local citizens. I merely had to remain listening and I would be able to join in a virtual live town meeting while sitting in my own home.

I suppressed the annoyance at being interrupted in my nightly relaxation rituals. I hit the stop button on the vcr and the mute button on the television and sat back to listen. I figured that even without advance notice I could manage to take a few minutes to participate. I found myself fascinated as real people asked hard questions about issues affecting my own and neighboring Eastside communities, Kirkland, Redmond, Woodinville, Issaquah, the Sammamish Plateau.

After the question and the answer a voice would come on to say thanks and if anyone wanted to ask a question to press a certain button on their telephone and someone would get to them to take their information. Roger Goodman would answer each question, often starting with the statement that he couldn't affect things at the city level as he was a state legislator but he did offer suggestions on those local issues. He urged people to address their city concerns directly to their own city councils. He gave his office telephone number out and urged people to call his office. He expressed a particular interest in early childhood development with education and health care. He answered a lot of questions about transportation and development. I was happy to hear someone asking about the takeover of the plateau by massive condominium building. That woman echoed some of my own outrage at the desecration of the natural landscape.

I tried futilely to interest my son in picking up the extension and listening with me. I was impressed with the politeness and courtesy of my fellow citizens. No one yelled or spouted obscenities. I started to formulate a question of my own but other people seemed to ask about most of the issues I could come up with. I listened spellbound for nearly an hour and then suddenly it was over. A voice said "thank you for participating and we are sorry we couldn't get to all the questions" and the connection was broken.

I felt a feeling of well being and a glow of satisfaction at engaging in the local political process. And a little sad that it didn't last longer. I hope more of our politicians start using this format as it seemed very effective to me. Next time I get one of these calls I will make the effort to ask a question of my own.

Cyprienne

Reader Comments

Subject: Caucusing article in Feb,Mar,Apr newsletter Date: Fri, 28 Mar 2008 16:10:01 -0700 Dear Cyprienne, Sheri, who wrote the excellent article on caucusing in the last issue "Out And About Caucusing", ask readers for their feedback. You may send my comments on to her. Out And About Caucusing Finally! We have a box to check for us. I don't know who instigated the addition of LGBT to the Democratic Party caucus sign in form, but it is brilliant. It allows us to claim our proud position as who we are. It is just like in the 2000 census when we could finally record the fact for public record that our couples were families, too. Remember the result? Every county in the United States - every one - had at least one same sex couple brave enough to check the box. No candidate can ever say again that "There are none of those kind in my district." We are everywhere and we do vote. Congratulations to Sheri and to all who identified their sexual orientation or gender identity in the LGBT box. Coming out has always been the most powerful political act we LGBT people can make! Janice Van Cleve PCO 43/1858 43rd District Coordinator, Areas 21 & 22, Seattle, Washington.



FARESTART

by Janice Van Cleve and Dorothy Bosteder

Seattle is a great town for talking about sustainable solutions, but FareStart is actually doing something practical about it. For fifteen years, FareStart has been providing connection for homeless men and women to the community where they can achieve self-sufficiency through training and employment in the food service industry. The night we were there, we were honored to witness two graduates receive their certificates and move from a life without home or hope to real jobs and real pride in themselves and their skills. As if that alone were not enough reason to support FareStart with our business, the food was delicious, too.

Each Thursday night is Guest Chef Night, and on this particular Thursday chef Joseph Conrad of QUBE restaurant was on hand to teach the students some new tricks. The place was jammed with enthusiastic patrons and a buzz of activity generated a palpable energy in the vast multi-story dining room. Guest Chef Night features a fixed menu at a fixed price. The wine list is minimal and market priced, but very thoughtfully selected. We enjoyed a bottle of white meritage from Syncline a winery we visited in the Columbia Gorge last October which practices sustainable growing methods .

Our first course was seared sea scallops with applewood bacon and asparagus on a reduction of soy/rosemary butter. The asparagus was perfectly crisp but the scallops were a bit overcooked and tired with a consistency of potato. The reduction was so delicious, however, that we could have sopped it in plain white bread and still been very pleased.

The next course was pork tenderloin with Emergo beans and Porcini mushrooms on a sugarcane and coffee reduction. The pork was dry and salty and the beans unremarkable, but again the reduction saved the day. It was a magical blending of sweet and bitter that gave character and nuance to the entire entree. At this point we switched from white wine to a delicately flavored Eola Hills Pinot Noir which absolutely fit the pairing.

For dessert we enjoyed a flan-like Panna Cotta centered in a pool of coconut tapioca and passion fruit caramel. Good tapioca is a treat under any circumstances but contrasted with the citrus zing of the Panna Cotta, it was fabulous! We enjoyed the mouth-feel of the delicate tapioca pearls combined with the smooth texture of the Panna Cotta. The competing flavors and textures created a surprising and exciting flourish

to a delightful evening.

Service at FareStart was high caliber from the greeters at the door and the reservation takers to our server. The ratio of service personnel to patrons is much higher at FareStart than at other restaurants, which reflects its training mission. This sometimes is a bit confusing as we were greeted by one person, seated by another, served by a third, and received our wine from a fourth. Other staff brought the food to the tables and the bill was presented by yet another. This results in a little disjointedness - our wine arrived several minutes after our first course - but at all times the service was conscientious, efficient, and cheerful.

FareStart is a 501c3 nonprofit which provides training opportunities for over 300 homeless persons per year with an 80% job placement rate upon graduation. The restaurant serves lunch each weekday and the Guest Chef dinner each Thursday. In addition FareStart offers on-site catering services and prepares meals for childcare centers and homeless shelters in the Seattle area 365 days a year. In 2003, FareStart launched a barista training and education program for homeless, runaway, and street youth. FareStart is located at the head of the exciting new upbeat South Lake Union development complex on the intersection of Virginia and Seventh Avenues. For reservations call 206-267-7601. For more information, visit www.farestart.org.



Roberta Gregory
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Coming Soon: Seattle Queer Film Festival! by Anna S.

I recently had the opportunity to view two of the upcoming films in the 13th Seattle Lesbian and Gay Film Festival (www.seattlequeerfilm.org), Pageant (dir. Ron Davis and Stewart Halpern, 2008) and Steam (dir. Kyle Schickner, 2007).

Pageant followed five performers participating in the Miss Gay America female impersonator competition and each of their relationships with their friends and families. Particularly poignant was the relationship between one performer and his heterosexually-identified dance partner, though there were also some well-developed parent/child bonds.

An interesting element of the documentary was the range of gender performance by each of the men across different elements of the competition. There was a “male interview” segment, the men in their day to day lives, and then multiple performances as female impersonators. An overall guideline was that the men were to compete without hormones or alteration, and the participants were male-identified, without an exploration of a broader range of gender identity.

The film suffered from some pacing issues – some segments seemed unnecessarily drawn out, and the tension of choosing the final contestants became confusing. While there were some allusions to the drama any competition can be known for, interactions between or among performers weren’t touched on more than superficially.

The final ensemble pieces were lively and enjoyable to watch, and the development of each man’s relationship to his family and the contest was interesting to see. By the end of the film, all of the participants came away as winners.

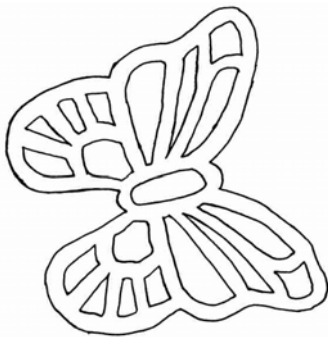
Pageant shows at 4:30PM on Saturday, October 18th at the Harvard Exit Theatre

The narrative thread uniting the three stories in Steam is the spa each character visits on a semi-weekly basis. We follow three women in different phases of their lives, each grappling with issues around loss, relationships, class, and family. Many of the scenes and themes were in turn touching and maddening, with each of the women navigating the joys and conflicts in their lives. While their situations were different from each other, common threads appeared: the starting and ending of a relationship, parent/child interactions, how money and class shape women’s choices.

The women’s body language and brief dialog in the steam room communicated the larger tensions in their lives. Unfortunately this narrative device at times came off as contrived or stilted, as almost a distraction from the overall real-world feel of the characters. The similar themes shown across the film, including managing issues of control in the development of secret or hidden relationships, were what held the stories together. Even without the interactions in the steam room, the women had a common link in the strength each of them found in opening up to new and risky experiences.

Steam shows at 7:00PM on Saturday, October 25th at the King Cat Theater

Look for Anna at the SLGFF with other women from SBWN on Friday, October 24th at 9:30PM at Northwest Film Forum for the documentary Bi the Way



Calendar

**This is the final issue of
North-Bi-Northwest in print format.**

SBWN Changes

For at least the next 6 months SBWN will be meeting at Group Health Cooperative on 15th in Capital Hill. They have graciously donated space to us. A Map, Driving and Bus Directions can be found at:

www.ghc.org/locations/medcenters/3/capitolhill_directions.jhtml

We meet in the South Building. Go down the stairs to the Atrium. Left Corner Past the Atrium Café. Room(s) A6/7 Signs will be posted in the building also.

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM. For topics check the SBWN website.

Business meetings will be held every year in June and January.



Local Groups

Seattle Bisexual Women's Network

PO Box 30645, Seattle, WA 98113-0645
<http://www.geocities.com/sbwn>
Email: sbwn@hotmail.com

Lesbian Resource Center

A community-based organization committed to advancing the status of lesbians by combating oppression and promoting empowerment, visibility, and social change. (206) 322-3953.

<http://www.lrc.net>



The Center's mission is to create a meeting place for the LGBT community to grow together, increase public understanding, and celebrate our diversity.

Queen City Community Development/ The Seattle LGBT Community Center

Office
720 7th Ave
Seattle, WA 98104
Resource Referral Line (206) 323-5428
www.seattlelgbt.org

BiNet Seattle

BiNet Seattle is a bisexual non-profit, mixed gender, social and support organization created to foster a visible community for bisexual, bi-curious people, and their partners in the Puget Sound area. <http://www.binetseattle.org>

Seattle Poly Potluck Discussion Group

<http://www.scn.org/~spg/>

We meet for a potluck meal and small group discussion afterwards every second Saturday evening during odd numbered months (January, March, May, July*, September, and November) from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at a poly-friendly location near the Queen Anne - Magnolia bridge on the west side of Queen Anne in Seattle.

Trikone Northwest

A vibrant, diverse group of individuals creating a social, supportive, educational, and political space for differently oriented South Asians and their family, friends and community. (425) 985-4376. tnw@trikone-nw.org

<http://www.trikone-nw.org>