



MACT Information Bulletin

Men of All Colors Together/New York, Inc.

P.O. Box 907, Ansonia Station, New York 10023
212/330-7678

April 1998

Volume 17 Number 10

Cruisin' Time Comin'

MACT/NY's Annual Sunset Cruise, the premier Pride Week cruise event, will sail this year on Tuesday, June 23, 7:30 PM to 10:30 PM. Cost is \$20 pre-purchased, \$25 purchased at the pier. Group rates may be arranged for parties of ten or more. We will embark from Circle Line Pier 83, West 42nd Street, Manhattan, at the Hudson River. Attendees may bring their own food or purchase food on the boat. This is a significant source of revenue for MACT, the price is dirt cheap, and tickets may be purchased from any board member. The names of the board members bear repetition and here they are

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|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Phillip Brathwaite | Michael Cecilian |
| Arthur McLean | Mark Peters (co-chair) |
| Stanley M. Reed (co-chair) | Roddy Shillingford |
| Gregory Terry | Scott Wing (sec'y-treas) |
| Tom Wirth. | |

Pigeonhole one of us (Stanley, for example, in the photo at the right, aka "Superman") at any MACT meeting and we'll gladly sell you tickets.

Come She Will, Friday Meetings

April 3: "Will Racism Still Be Around in 1998?—Part II" This is a continuation of a previous, well-attended, and provocative consciousness-raising session on racism in today's world. Are racism and bigotry on the way out or are they on the increase in insidious and subtle ways?

Come add your two cents or listen and, perhaps, learn. Gregory Terry and Arthur McLean, co-chairs.

April 17: "Safe Sex, aka 'Dildo Night.'" Despite advances in AIDS treatment, there is still no cure or working vaccine for HIV. Our vigilance in the practice and promotion of safe sex must remain firm, along with our

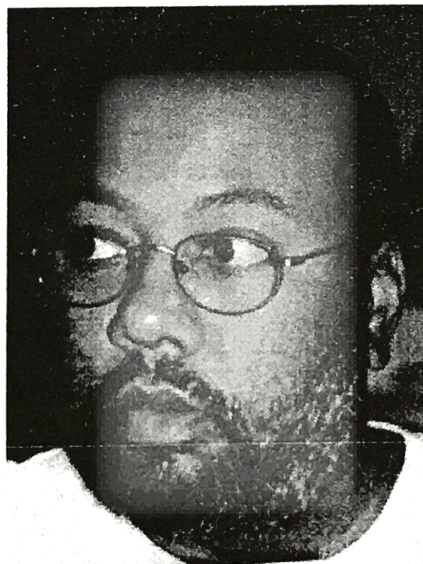
tummies and other parts of the anatomy. Like David Byrne sheepishly said in a wonderful public service announcement, "I love Latex!" It is rather sexy. I'm getting turned just thinking about it... Oh, sorry! The session will be led by Don Ransom, former MACT/NY member (let's try to get him to rejoin!) and current PACT member in Newark. Don takes part in Project Fire reach-out efforts in Newark's housing projects, promoting and teaching the practice of safe sex. His co-chair is Tom Wirth.

April 24: "Bulletin Mailing" Moisten your tongue and sharpen your wit as we join together to get this rag in the mail.

Social Gatherings for the Cruellest Month

Saturday, April 4, 8 PM: "Boys Life II" Video Night. If you missed the run of these four shorts at the Quad Cinema last year, don't miss it again! Including the hilarious Academy award-winning short "Trevor," written by James Lecesne (Emory in the recent "Boys in the Band" revival) and featuring such actors as Vincent D'Onofrio ("Men in Black," "The Player," and "Ed Wood"), Eileen Brennan ("Private Benjamin" and "Little Mary Sunshine"), and Mary Beth Hurt ("The Diaries of Jean Seberg"), these gay-themed films are little gems. Hosted by Mark Peters in his Park Slope boudoir, 139 Sixth Avenue, Apartment 4, Brooklyn. "D" train to Seventh Avenue, 2 or 3 to Bergen Street. For further info and to RSVP call (718) 399-8497. (Editor's note: At press time I was unable to locate a copy. If I'm still unable to do so by 4/4, I'll substitute Boys Life I.)

Sunday, April 19, 1 PM: "New Members' Brunch" Chez Scott, Phillip and Vernon, 235 Seaman Avenue, #3G, Manhattan ("A" train to 207th Street). Join us as we fete our new victims, er, members with a convivial, tasty brunch. New members, come as you are. Old members,



call Scott, Phillip or Vernon with your potluck contribution. All attendees, RSVP, at (212) 942-9145.

We Will Hit Them on the Beaches...

We have an annual tradition with MACT/Philadelphia of conjoint summer outings at Sandy Hook Beach in New Jersey. This season's dates are May 23, June 20, July 18, August 15 and September 12, all Saturdays. Fun-in-the-sun-ers will congregate at the clothing optional section around 11 or 11:30 AM. For more information, call Stevie Martin-Chester of MACT/Philly at (610) 277-6595, or look for more details on car pools and public transportation in next month's Bulletin.

Prison Reform

by Bill Burns

The March 6 evening on prison issues brought us an informative panel of activists from the Riverside Church Prison Ministry. It was organized by MACT/NY board member Arthur McLean, who is involved in a similar project at his East Harlem Methodist church.

The panelists used last summer's "riot" at the Mohawk Correctional Facility upstate as a way to approach a number of intertwined issues. Inmates at Mohawk organized a peaceful demonstration questioning yet another alleged suicide, this time of a 22-year-old inmate who was being kept in solitary confinement. An incident between a white guard and a black inmate then offered an occasion for the guard to beat the inmate into unconsciousness. The guard is said to be one of a group of white correction officers who wear tattoos of black babies with ropes around their necks. Finally another argument between an inmate and guard escalated into a full scale clash between the two sides. The retaliation against prisoners was so severe that Assemblyman Daniel Feldman, chair of the Assembly's Correction Committee has called for a federal investigation of the incident, after the Department of Corrections refused to allow him to interview prisoners or prison personnel. (The prison guards' union is now financing a campaign to defeat Feldman in the next election.) The Corrections Commissioner has declared the riot proof that the legislature must approve the proposed \$835 million prison construction budget.

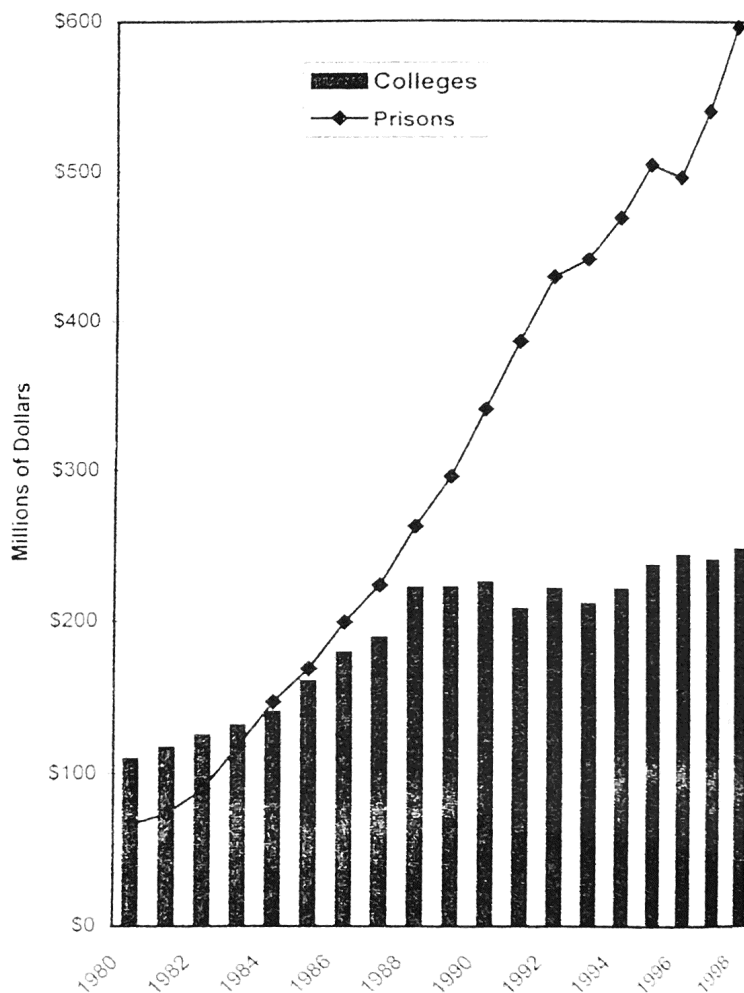
The panelists made it clear that they were not opposed to the idea of punishment of crime. Nevertheless, affirming the inmates' humanity, they feel that prisoners have a right to be governed by clear and consistent rules that cannot be broken arbitrarily by corrupt and racist cor-

rection personnel. The panelists also emphasized the need and rightness of rehabilitation. Most inmates will be released eventually and must be helped to become peaceful and law-abiding citizens. In this area the panelists brought up disturbing developments such as the ending of higher education programs for prisoners and the plans for ending parole endorsed by Giuliani and Pataki.

The figures for New York State present a sorry picture of racism, wrongheadedness, and misplaced priorities. At present 50% of inmates are African-American, 35% are Latino and the large majority come from the 10 poorest neighborhoods in New York City. Most of these inmates are incarcerated upstate, far from their families. The guards, reflecting upstate rural demographics, are overwhelmingly white. There are reports of explicitly racist and fascist movements among the guards (although anyone who has, for instance, seen the movie

NEW JERSEY STATE SUPPORT: COLLEGES VS. PRISONS

(Excluding Central Administration and Juvenile Facilities)



In 1980, support for prisons in New Jersey was less than 2/3 of support for the State Colleges. Support for Prisons has now grown to well over twice the support for the colleges, and the trend is continuing.

"The Keeper" knows that people of any race can be corrupted by having great power over others). The fact that prisons often provide the only nonfarm source of work in large areas upstate builds a constituency for the "prison-industrial complex." And when prisons are built there is a demand for prisoners to fill them.

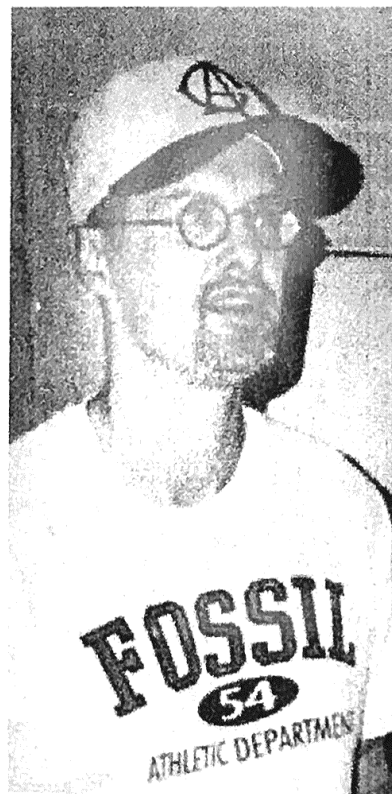
46% of state prisoners attend the sixteen worst schools in New York City. Nevertheless, while the state education budget is frozen at \$400 million, the state prison operating budget has been increased to \$476 million. The graph that accompanies this article (provided courtesy of Tom Wirth from the publication of his union, The Council of New Jersey State College Locals, A.F.T./AFL-CIO) illustrates a similar trend in New Jersey.

Throughout the evening the perverse effects of the Rockefeller drug laws kept coming up. Passed in 1973, they are responsible for much of the growth in the prison population from 33,000 then to 70,000 now. In their present, reduced, version they provide for a mandatory fifteen year sentence for anyone found possessing at least four ounces or selling at least two ounces of certain drugs, no matter what prior record they may or may not have. In most of these convictions neither violence nor gun possession was involved.

Both the church projects mentioned at the beginning of this article are involved in support work for individual prisoners. Acknowledging the difficulties that some people have gotten into in their relations with prisoners—feeling that they were being conned or exploited, for instance—they advise working through groups like theirs. This approach provides a place through which people can correspond without providing home addresses or phone numbers. It also provides opportunities for aid to prisoners' families where the individual supporter does not feel as heavy a weight of personal responsibility. Panelists were able to point to significant successes through this approach. [Part two of this article will appear next month]

Art

David Heitholt (right) is an artist and MACT/NY member. Currently, David attends graduate school, and is studying database design, bolstering skills for his "day job." I saw some of David's work at his Kwanzaa gathering some time ago and



liked it. His recent work includes much focus on the nude, particularly the male physique, and expresses a nice mixture of both artistic and homo-erotic appreciation of men's bodies. I hope you'll agree. Examples of his work are interspersed throughout this bulletin.

SAGE Conference

On May 1 and 2, Friday and Saturday, SAGE, Senior Action in a Gay Environment, Inc., will be hosting a conference entitled "Expanding the Family Portrait: Gays and Lesbians Growing Older." This conference will bring heightened attention to the important issues of gay and lesbian aging—an issue and population that is often overlooked by service providers, researchers, and even members of the gay and lesbian community. The event is held in collaboration with the Ravazzin Center for Social Research in Aging and will be held at Fordham University's Lincoln Center campus. 300-400 attendees are expected from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. The conference will provide professional training to service providers regarding the unique issues faced by senior lesbians and gay men, and will seek to initiate a vigorous debate on these issues and heighten our awareness of them.

Keynote speakers and presenters include:

Dr. Robert N. Butler, Pulitzer Prize-winning author, founding Director of the National Institute on Aging and Director of the International Longevity Center.

Phylis Lyon and Del Martin, authors, lesbian activists and founders of the Daughters of Bilitis, and OLOC (Older Lesbians Organizing for Change).

SAGE has provided us with a number of brochures for the event and these can be picked up at any MACT Friday night meeting. MACT/NY is an official participating organization.

The Homosexual Exception

Phillip Brathwaite provided me with a copy of a sermon by the Reverend William A. Greenlaw, Rector at the Church of the Holy Apostles, New York City. It was given on February 15, 1998. Herewith are excerpts:

Last Sunday in the *New York Times Magazine*, there was a very disturbing article by Professor Alan Wolfe of Boston University. It was entitled, "The Homosexual Exception," and the subheading of the article said it all: "A new study shows that suburban Americans are surprisingly tolerant—of everyone but gay men and lesbians."

Wolfe has been holding in-depth interviews with Americans in Tulsa, Atlanta, San Diego, and Boston. Some of his conclusions are fascinating. There seems to be an almost schizoid character to American social beliefs, at least in those Wolfe interviewed. There

is an abiding belief in God, country, and family—a long-ing for the days when, as he puts it, “morality was absolute and virtue predominant.” Yet at the same time Wolfe perceives a growing tolerance to much of the diversity that characterizes our land—of racial integration, many women’s issues, acceptance of religious minorities and protecting and respecting their freedom. A real sense of multiculturalism. Of somehow struggling to be both an absolutist and a relativist at the same time.

Except. Professor Wolfe writes: “The furthest most people were willing to go in the direction of toleration [of gay people] was to say that while they did not like homosexuality, gay people deserved respect because all people deserve respect. Four times as many people we spoke with condemned homosexuals as were willing to offer them positive acceptance. Some simply refused to discuss the subject, as if the mere mention of the word would violate their religious beliefs. Others responded with nervous laughter or an obvious desire to change the subject as quickly as possible.” Or the words “abnormal,” “immoral,” “sinful,” “unacceptable,” “sick,” “unhealthy,” “untrustworthy,” “mentally ill,” “wrong,” “perverted,” or “mentally deficient” were used in talking about it.

Wolfe offers a possible hypothesis about why Americans treat the idea of sexual preference differently than gender or race. And

that may turn on the very phrase he himself uses: “sexual preference” as opposed to orientation. For those most hostile to homosexuality were precisely those who believed it to be a matter of conscious choice rather than something one discovers about oneself...

But now, let’s switch gears completely. Instead of the all-too-usual “immoral,” “sinful,” “sick,” “perverted,” try “loving,” “filled with the spirit,” “beautiful,” “of God,” “grace-filled.” I am of course speaking of

— what happened in this very church yesterday afternoon, as April Martin and Susan Alexander, had their twenty year relationship of love and fidelity blessed and celebrated and joyously affirmed...

Who could have called this event “divisive,” “abhorrent,” “perverted,” or even “political”? What kind of a world do we live in when the softness and tenderness and love and beauty and joy that characterized yesterday so strongly, could be considered divisive or political?

... We still very much live in the world described so aptly by Professor Wolfe... The poor are still poor. The hungry are still hungry in spite of the work of the soup kitchen. And gay men and lesbians are still spoken of like no one else in our society. Just this past week, the voters of Maine overturned a statute protecting the civil rights of gay men and lesbians...

There is nothing our society would like better, nothing much of our church would like better, than for the church and for countless individuals within it to be or to remain closeted. One of the most powerful things this community can do is to not unwittingly play that game, but rather to let the world and our larger church know something of the reality that exists here....

Pen Pal Sought

MACT/NY has received another request for a pen pal correspondent. This time our writer is from Brazil. He specifically requests a bald “American black man.” This Brazilian tells us that he is 27 and a Gemini. His name and address are



Valter Aparecido Teixeira
 Rua Clarissa, 497 Jd. Eliana
 Sao Paul/SP - Brasil
 CEP: 04851-070

Theatrical Notes

by Scott Wing

I was fortunate to be able to see "The Diary Of Anne Frank," a play by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett. The current interpretation is newly adapted by Wendy Kesselman. Having read this story as a teenager many years ago in school I had preconceived notions about the show that were completely dispelled by the interpretation and performance of the various actors. Linda Lavin and Harris Yulin as Mrs. and Mr. Van Daan were exceptional. They conveyed the stress and frustration of their condition and inability to do anything about it better than the rest of the cast. I found myself identifying with them in a very painful way. Natalie Portman as Anne Frank and Jonathan Kaplan as Peter Van Daan seemed to grow into their parts as the show proceeded. In the first act Ms. Portman actually seemed too silly and too foolish. Mr. Kaplan portrayed his character as an old man walking by leaning forward as if he was not able to straighten his back. He was not convincing. Later they each matured into their respective characters. All in all the show was a good one and I was glad that this revival was available to me.

Growing up in the 50's and 60's the satirical interpretation of "Jackie, An American Life," written and directed by Gip Hoppe, brought back many memories that I have not thought about for some time. Margaret Colin plays Jacqueline Kennedy with sen-

sitivity while the ever present "fixed" smile seems to convey a "tongue in cheek" interpretation. I would hope that the Kennedy family would be able

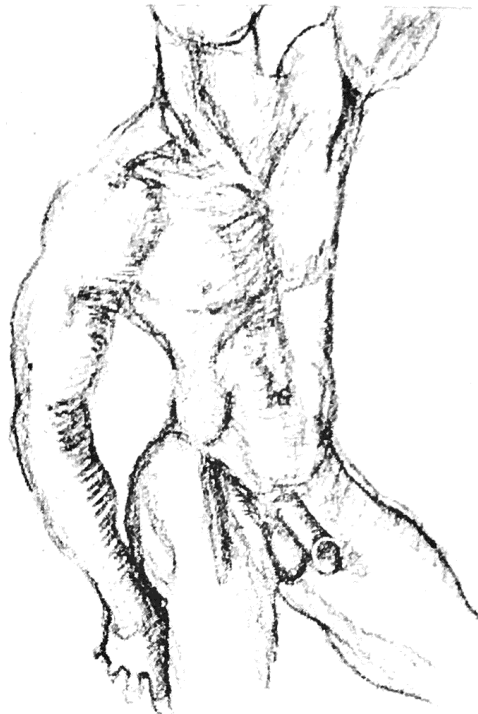
to laugh at themselves after seeing this show. It certainly did not denigrate any of them or the others portrayed as part of "Jackie's" life. Rather it gently poked fun at them and had everyone laughing throughout the play. Costumes, scenery, appliances, furniture and hand held accoutrements were excellent. See this show if you can.

Off and on over the years I have heard about the Leopold and Loeb murder trial in Chicago during the 1920's. This story as portrayed by Jason Bowcutt as Nathan Leopold, Jr., and Michael Solomon as Richard Loeb, portrays a segment of 1920's privileged society, indulged

teenaged sons and their private personal relationship. They are obviously attracted to each other and yet forbidden by the current "rules" of their society from having a relationship other than as best friends. Their determination that they are "super" men and that they were exempt from the rules of society in general make this an appealing and gripping show. "Never the Sinner" by John Logan presented at the John Houseman Theater is well worth an evening out.

My first visit to The Sylvia & Danny Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College gave me to opportunity to see and hear Ruby Dee in her one woman show called "My One Good Nerve: A Visit with Ruby Dee." This show, directed by Charles Nelson Reilly, allows Ms. Dee to read and perform material that she herself has written. During the course of her almost two hour performance she covers her life, her interests and some of her fifty year marriage to Ossie Davis through a few of her short stories, humor and poetry.

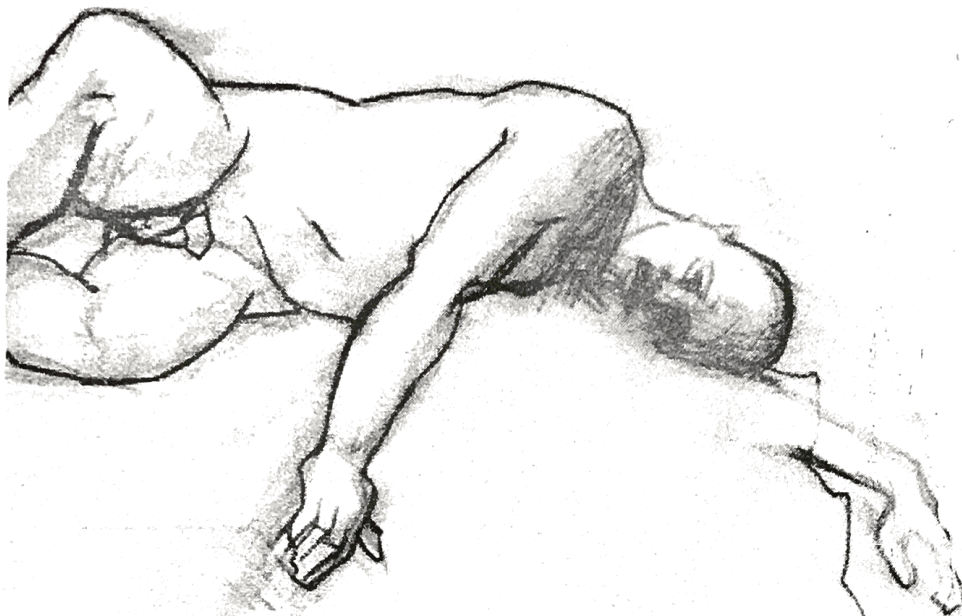
If you missed Ruby Dee (the show closed on March 8) she is working on Volume II of "My One Good Nerve."



Those Who Forget the Past...

The April 1993 issue of the MACT/NY Bulletin is missing from my packet of bulletins. If anyone can provide me with a copy, I will excerpt it in a later issue.

In April 1988, we had a formal sit-down fund-raising dinner, celebrated Seder, and co-hosted a fashion show with Body Positive at Tracks. Tony Glover and Bill Burns co-chaired a Friday night entitled "Martin,



Your Blood Runs Red Through Soweto." James Credle and Stu Gross co-chaired "The Coming of Jesse!" about MACT's participation with the Rainbow Coalition to bring the Rev. Jesse Jackson to speak at the Center. There was a facilitation exercise in cooperation and trust and a C/R session on Gender Identity and Dynamics. Co-chairs for these events were Stephen Pagel, Steve Harper, David Perkins, and James Toms. The Bulletin announced the naming of the Charles Angel/People of Color Room at the Center and there was a report on the room's renovation. Social events included an outing to see The Dance Theatre of Harlem as well as Lavender Light. The organization reported being in the red, financially, but had just been granted tax exempt status. Finally, there was a story on the First National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Conference, held in February in Los Angeles.

April 1983 was GMHC's AIDS Awareness month and BWMT/NY's Friday Night Meetings focused on health issues. Henry Weimhoff announced his resignation as co-chair of the International Association and took a leave of absence from BWMT/NY (he was a founding member) due to personal and professional reasons. There was a report on the ongoing search for space. A C/R session focused on racial, ethnic and sexual stereotypes in our relationships. There were reports on the Eastern Region Network meeting, on BWMT/DC, and

3, Friday, 8 PM, Racism C/R session, Part II, at the Center
 4, Saturday, 8 PM, Video Night, "Boys Life II," at Mark Peters', 139 Sixth Ave., #3, Brooklyn, (718) 399-8497
 10, Friday, 7:30 PM, Board meeting, at Scott Wing's

17, Friday, 8 PM, Safe Sex presentation, at the Center

19, Sunday, 1 PM, New Members' brunch, at 235 Seaman Ave., #3G, Manhattan, RSVP, (212) 942-9145

24, Friday, 8 PM, Bulletin Mailing, at the Center

May 1-2, Friday and Saturday, Expanding the

Family Portrait: Gays and Lesbians Growing Older, at Fordham University's Lincoln Center campus, sponsored by SACE

May 23, Saturday, 1 AM, First Sandy Hook Beach outing

MACT/NY Calendar for April

Grupo Gay de Bahia. BWMT/NY had a talent night, there was a review on the film "Say Amen, Somebody!" and an announcement of a tribute to Paul Robeson at Carnegie Hall.

Contributors:

Mark Peters, Editor-Publisher

Phillip Brathwaite, Bill Burns, Sevie Martin-Chester, Rev. William A. Greenlaw, David Hetholt, Scott Wing

Submissions for the May newsletter are due Friday, April 17. Bring your contribution to any MACT meeting. You may also call Mark Peters at (212) 476-3703 (voice mail), send a submission to 139 Sixth Avenue, #4, Brooklyn, NY 11217, or e-mail him at mpet@macconnect.com. Submissions are preferred on disk via e-mail, or typed if you don't have access to a computer. Short articles may be dictated to Mark's voice mail.