

Bi and larger

Bisexual organization launches plan to bring on more allies, contributors. See page 18

Sisterhood and s'mores

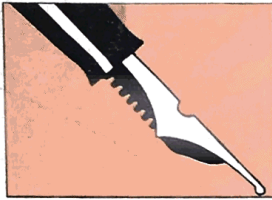


Lesbians look back at their experiences as Girl Scouts. See page 37



Herstory in print

Women who served in the Civil War are among Lesbians in new book. See page 39



The Washington Blade

SERVING THE NATION'S CAPITAL SINCE 1969

Debt threatens Consortium

City AIDS agency appeals to D.C., U.S. for help

by Lou Chibbaro Jr.

An organization that coordinates services and distributes funds for nearly all of the District's AIDS programs has a debt of more than \$312,000 and may be forced to close its doors in three months if the city or the federal government doesn't come to its aid, said leaders of the organization last week.

Officials with the District of Columbia Comprehensive AIDS Resources and Education Consortium, known as the D.C. CARE Consortium, disclosed at a March 17 meeting that they have been grappling with a budget deficit for the past year. The officials, including Valerie Papaya Mann, the Consortium's executive director, said a cumbersome book-keeping system — which they said the D.C. government set up for the group — has made it difficult for them to determine the exact cause of the debt.

"What we know is the deficit came from pro-



Valerie Papaya Mann, head of the D.C. CARE Consortium, said she is hopeful that federal officials will help the group pay its debt.

gram-related expenditures that we incurred at the request of and approval of our funders," said Jerry O'Brien, the Consortium's treasurer. Among the government agencies that fund the Consortium, O'Brien said, are the D.C. Agency

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Time on their side

Survey finds Gay people give their time more generously than money

by Peter Freiberg

Gay people surveyed in three cities last year indicated that they give less than 1 percent of their annual personal incomes to Gay groups, according to the study of Gay giving and volunteering patterns. That was the bad news.

The good news, according to the authors of the report, which surveyed 2,300 members of Gay organizations in Milwaukee, Philadelphia, and San Francisco, is that the typical Gay volunteer gives 62 percent more time — to both Gay and non-Gay organizations — than the average volunteer in the general population gives each year. And most Gay participants in the study indicated they donate their money as well as time.

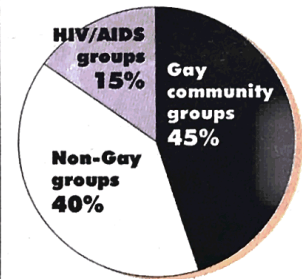
M.V. Lee Badgett, an assistant professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and co-author of the study, said the survey results help "chip away at the myth of Gay people as selfish hedonists" concerned only with the Gay community.

"What we found," said Badgett, "is that Gay people give as much to non-Gay organizations as to Gay organizations. I was surprised by this. I thought what we would see is Gay people ... giving most of [their time and money] to Gay and Lesbian organizations. ... The fact that Gay people are so invisible makes it hard to see the contributions that they make in both time and money to non-Gay organizations."

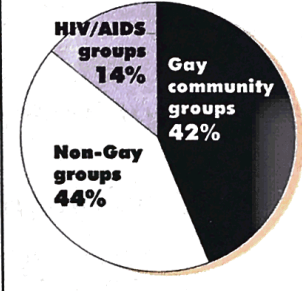
But Badgett and co-author Nancy Cunningham said the fact that those surveyed gave less than 1 percent of their incomes to Gay organizations posed danger as well as opportunity.

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Where Gay volunteers spend their time



Where Gay donors direct their money



Jailed Lesbian pardoned

Questions linger about how many Romanian Gays remain in prison

by Kai Wright

Romanian President Emil Constantinescu on March 5 pardoned a Lesbian who had been imprisoned under the country's infamous Article 200, which broadly outlaws homosexual sexual activity. The woman, Marina Cetiner, became a symbol of the persecution Romanian Gays face at the hands of law enforcement authorities when Amnesty International declared her a "prisoner of conscience" last fall. She has been imprisoned since 1995 when another woman accused her of soliciting sex.

A spokesperson for the Romanian government told the *Blade* that Cetiner is the only person imprisoned under Article 200 who has not also been convicted of committing crimes unrelated to homosexuality. Human rights groups

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Romanian President Emil Constantinescu pardoned a woman imprisoned under the anti-Gay law, but she has yet to be released.

AP Photo/Vedim Ghirina

F O R T H E

Record

GLSEN-DC (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network) (*Thu., March 19; 31 people attended*) held a chapter meeting featuring a panel of students from Sherwood High School in Montgomery County, Md., who gave a talk about their experience of forming a Gay/straight alliance at the school. Jerry Turner, science teacher at Sherwood, introduced the student speakers, crediting them with giving him the courage to be out at school. The two students, one straight and one bisexual, said they had become frustrated hearing frequent slurs against Gays in classes and in the hallways. As the slurs always went unchallenged by teachers, they decided to form the group in order to "wake people up" to the fact that there are Gay students at Sherwood who are extremely hurt such remarks. Though the group has encountered challenges and discrimination, there are now approximately 10 active core members, mostly straight, who have participated in events such as the AIDS Walk and Youth



by Cline Steib

A same-sex wedding cake by Creative Cakes Inc. at the Commitment Expo.

Pride and have sponsored a Day of Silence and a workshop on homophobia at Sherwood. For more information on GLSEN-DC, call (202) 293-3358.

Triangle Artists Group (TAG) (*Thurs., March 5; approximately 45 people attended*) met to discuss upcoming exhibits featuring TAG artists. The largest of five planned summer shows will be at the new art gallery Rivaga — an art gallery located at 17th and U streets, NW, which bills itself as a "Gay-affirming" space. The TAG show will be July 10 to Aug. 7. All TAG artists were encouraged to drop off a submission for the exhibit at Rivaga by the June 15 entry deadline. A selection committee comprised of representatives from both TAG and Rivaga will decide which pieces to include in the show. For more information about TAG, its upcoming shows, and next meeting, contact Tim Tate at (202) 546-8235.

***Gay/Lesbian Fellowship of National City Christian Church ("The Sunday Night Group")** (*Sun., March 15; nine people attended*) held its monthly social in which the fellowship

took a special tour of the church complex, guided by elder Paul Rosstead, according to communications director Charles Keener. Members learned many new details about the church's heritage, with attention to the church's special musical chimes. After the tour the fellowship gathered for a light supper prepared by chairperson Bill Knight. The fellowship meets each Sunday at 6:30 p.m. in the Wells Parlor of the church's Campbell Building. The church is located at 5 Thomas Circle (14th Street and Massachusetts Avenue, NW). For more information call Charles at (202) 462-5934 or the group's recording at (202) 797-0115, then press 555#.

Commitment Expo (*Sun., March 15; approximately 125 people attended*) was held at the Radisson Barcelo Hotel in Dupont Circle and sponsored by Bon Vivant with an admission fee of \$5 benefiting Mautner Project and Whitman-Walker Clinic. The second annual event was held to "give the Gay and Lesbian community a comfortable location to shop for their needs for a holy union," said Judy Kilkenny, director of catering at the Radisson. The expo included vendors from jewelers, party planners, financial advisers, cleaning companies, cake companies, event photographers, and travel agencies. Onlookers appeared curious but reserved for the most part. "I'm personally opposed to marriage in general, and I'm proud that we've been together for so long without anyone sanctioning it," said Amy Moore of Rockville, Md., referring to her partner of nine years, Kate Meaker, who expressed a desire for a holy union. "I do think it is important to support event specifically geared towards Gays, and there is nothing essentially female or male about getting married," she conceded with a smile. For more information call Kilkenny at (202) 293-3100.

*For the Record includes notes from reporters attending group meetings and (when identified by *) from the groups themselves.*

— Nicholas Boggs

CARE Consortium faces threat of \$312,000 debt

Continued from page 1

for HIV/AIDS and the federal government's Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The D.C. CARE Consortium was created in 1991 under a provision of the Ryan White CARE Act, which, among other things, provides federal AIDS funds for cities throughout the nation. The act calls on states and Washington, D.C., to distribute funds to "consortia" of non-profit community-based organizations and public or private health care and service agencies. These groups and agencies, in turn, provide direct services to people with AIDS.

The D.C. CARE Consortium consists of 56 local groups or agencies; all provide services to people with HIV or AIDS and at least a dozen of them provide services to Gay people with HIV or AIDS. Among the organizations serving Gay people are the Whitman-Walker Clinic, the HIV Community Coalition, Us Helping Us, Food and Friends, Clinica del Pueblo, Best of Friends, and the Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League (SMYAL). Among other things, the Consortium helps the city develop a strategic plan for addressing all facets of the AIDS epidemic; coordinates patient and client services for people with HIV through "case management" programs; and coordinates emergency housing programs for people with HIV.

Mann and members of the D.C. CARE Consortium's board of directors said they have extensive records to show that all funds that have passed from the Consortium's \$5 million annual budget have gone to the services and vendors for which the money was intended.

"We know where all of the money went," said Whitman-Walker Clinic deputy director Pat Hawkins, who serves as secretary of the Consortium's board of directors. "What we're trying to find out is exactly why we spent more money than what we had budgeted."

Hawkins and other board members said they believe much of the debt stems from

a decision by the city several years ago to assign the Consortium the task of administering the city's AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). Although ADAP is funded by the federal government, the program calls for cities to distribute those funds to people with low incomes who need AIDS drugs such as protease inhibitors. Consortium officials said bureaucratic problems associated with the D.C. Agency for HIV/AIDS (AHA) led to long delays in its disbursement of ADAP funds to the Consortium. Those delays forced the Consortium to use funds earmarked for other AIDS programs to pay for ADAP-related drugs, Consortium officials said.

"ADAP had to take priority," said Hawkins. "We knew these drugs were saving people's lives."

O'Brien, the Consortium's treasurer, said that although the Consortium apparently had been spending more money than it was taking in over the past several years, the deficit spending did not show up in audits conducted for the Consortium by an accounting firm during the past two years. O'Brien said that a complex system of funding and disbursements from AHA and other city agencies might have resulted in a nearly "incomprehensible" bookkeeping system for the Consortium.

O'Brien said that although the Consortium is currently operating under a balanced budget, the debt — which totals \$312,623 — could force it out of operation in about three months. At that time, it will have run out of cash to pay the salaries of its 10 employees and rent for its offices at 733 15th St., NW.

Executive Director Mann said she hopes officials at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will step in to help the Consortium pay its debt. An HHS representative was scheduled to meet with Consortium officials Wednesday to discuss a plan to help retire the debt. AHA director Ronald Lewis has said that if the Consortium closes its doors, the city will reassign the Consortium's programs and clients to other local community agencies.▼

Hospital settles HIV dispute

by M. Jane Taylor

George Washington University Hospital in Washington, D.C., agreed this month to an out-of-court settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice over a complaint contending that the hospital turned away a patient with HIV. According to Associated Press, the March 10 settlement included an agreement by GW not to turn away patients with HIV in the future.

The agreement stems from a complaint filed under the Americans with Disabilities Act by D.C. resident Ron Flowers, 32, who said he was denied treatment at the hospital in March 1996 because he has HIV. Flowers was admitted to the hospital after suffering two strokes, and tests revealed that a growth on his aortic valve was the likely cause. Although the appropriate treatment was open-heart surgery, said Flowers, hospital surgeons refused to oper-

ate because of his HIV status.

The hospital, which has participated in numerous AIDS-related studies, has denied Flower's allegations. According to AP, Hospital Chief Phillip Shaengold said the staff does not discriminate and suggested the dispute was a disagreement over methods of treatment.

But the hospital agreed to pay Flowers \$125,000 in compensatory damages and attorney fees. The hospital also agreed to adopt new policies on treating infectious diseases, train its staff annually in the nondiscrimination requirements of the disabilities law, and sponsor a regional symposium for surgeons on cardiothoracic surgery and HIV.

The *Blade* was unable to reach Flowers for comment. According to the report, he underwent the surgery at another local hospital and has recovered.▼