The State in the Bedroom:
Sodomy Laws in the United States

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Homosexual Acts May Be Reduced to Misdemeanor

By JEFF ELLIS
Managing Editor

Proposed revisions in the Tennessee Criminal Code which would specifically ban homosexual acts and would reduce such "crimes" from a felony to a Class C misdemeanor will likely be considered by both houses of the state legislature when they reconvene in January.

Sue B. Cain, executive director of the Tennessee Sentencing Commission, said the proposed changes in the criminal code have been filed with the judiciary committees in both the state senate and house of representatives.

A subcommittee of the Commission, after two and a half years of deliberation, last month directed its proposals to the legislature. The commission, according to subcommittee chair David Raybin, was simply following the mandate of state lawmakers to "modernize [the] archaic language" that now exists in the criminal code.

Under the Commission's proposals, the state's crimes against nature statute would be rewritten to eliminate language regarding heterosexual acts but would specifically criminalize all sexual acts between two persons of the same sex.

"The revision would eliminate crimes against nature, but it does leave homosexual sex acts as a crime," Cain said.

Since the crimes against nature statute has rarely been invoked against heterosexuals, the subcommittee members said the legislature should make the law more specific if they are attempting to enforce the ban on homosexual acts.

If the revision is adopted by the legislature, Tennessee will join five other states which specifically classify homosexual acts as criminal.

Homosexual acts are considered misdemeanors in Texas, Arkansas and Kansas. Montana and Nevada statutes classify such acts as felonies. More than half of the United States classify sodomy or crimes against nature as felonies.

The proposed changes in the Tennessee code would downgrade homosexual sex acts from a felony (punishable by a prison term of 5 to 15 years and a fine not to exceed $10,000) to a Class C misdemeanor (punishable by a jail term of not more than 30 days, a fine of not more than $50, or both).

"I think the proposed changes are definitely for the better as is exemplified by the changes in the penalties prescribed," Cain said.

The revision calls for the penalties to be leveled against a person charged with an act of sexual penetration with a person of the same gender, according to the Commission's report.

"Our report has been filed with the judiciary committees of the state legislature. From there the legislators must decide the route it will take," Cain said. "It is our hope that it doesn't get bogged down in a study committee. After two and a half years, we feel the criminal code has been studied enough."

Cain said the reduction of homosexual "crimes" from a felony to a misdemeanor indicates the Commission's desire to "rid the criminal code of archaic language."

"If we're going to debate the issue we shouldn't be using words that don't mean anything," Raybin, a Nashville attorney, said.

Some Capitol Hill sources, however, privately have said the Commission's harsh language regarding homosexual acts are not necessarily surprising, alluding to Raybin's "hang 'em high" reputation.

"Individual members of the committee felt strongly one way or another about the issue," continued on page 4.

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Churches Try to Switch Off Gay Cable Network/Nashville

By STUART DIVIN
Editor

Gay Cable Network/Nashville (GCN/Nashville) is once again under fire for its lesbian and gay content.

Fundamentalist churches, led by the charismatic-evangelical Belmont Church, have mounted an organized drive to attempt to force Community Access Television (CAT) to drop the program.

Just before the program's Nashville premier, Metro Councilmember George Arminsead touched off a storm of protest when he threatened to have CAT's charter amended to prevent it from showing GCN.

At that time, he told Tennessean television columnist Richard Schweid, "We're gonna have a problem with this movie about queers," adding that anything other than heterosexual sex was "sick and depraved."

CAT refused to drop the program, citing its policy of providing air time to any citizen who meets the station's guidelines.

The churches have asked their members to phone the CAT offices to voice their displeasure with the program. Some, as noted in the Belmont Church bulletin, have also asked members to drop their cable service in an attempt to gain leverage with Viacom, the operator of Nashville's cable system.

The move to force CAT to drop the program does not seem likely to succeed, according to CAT's executive director Elliot Mitchell, who has repeatedly pointed out that the station's charter requires it to make cable time available to any citizen so long as the program offered is not obscene, of commercial content or in promotion of a lottery.

In an interview Thursday morning at press time, Mitchell said, "We are not trying to single out GCN; it's just another program."

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CAT Board to Meet; Assault on GCN Reported

By STUART DIVIN
Editor

Fundamentalist churches attempting to have Gay Cable Network/Nashville (GCN) removed from the schedule of Community Access Television (CAT-Nashville Cable Channel 35) were reported to be organizing a protest action at last night's annual CAT Board of Directors meeting.

Reports were widely circulated mid-week that the churches planned to attempt to pack the meeting in order to pressure the Board to drop GCN from the schedule. The Board planned to meet to elect two new directors. Only station members could vote in the election, according to the station's charter, and the cutoff date for new members eligible to vote in the election passed thirty days before the election.

At press time GCN spokesperson Diane Easter urged members of the lesbian and gay community and supporters to attend the meeting to show support for the show.

She also asked that supporters phone their Metro Councilmember to express support for GCN and CAT, to counter an anticipated move by the churches to deluge the Council with calls asking that CAT funding be cut to punish the station for airing GCN.
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It's Official: MTSU Lambda Association Recognized

By JEFF ELIS
Managing Editor

Administrators at Murfreesboro's Middle Tennessee State University Monday granted official recognition to a support group formed last month by a group of lesbian and gay students at the institution.

MTSU Lambda Association was given official student organization status Monday, according to the group's newly-elected president, Dan Webster.

"We're very pleased to have gotten the official word. Now we can proceed with the plans we've already made for the coming months," he said.

The somewhat low-key announcement came in the form of a memorandum - issued from the office of Vice President for Student Affairs Robert LaLance.

Announcement of the group's formation and its recognition came in the wake of a series of articles which appeared in the campus newspaper, Sidelines, Webster said.

AIDS-Afraid School Board Settles for $1.1 Million

From STAFF REPORTS

The Arcadia, Florida school board that barred three boys who had tested positive for the HIV antibody settled with the children's family for $1.1 million. The board had denied the boys the right to attend school because of their HIV status. A national furor erupted over the decision, bringing notoriety to the small town and increasing difficulties to the family.

The Bays left Arcadia after arsonists destroyed their home in late August, 1987.

Kitty Dukakis Visits Memphis

From STAFF REPORTS

Kitty Dukakis, the political activist who is married to Democratic Presidential nominee Michael Dukakis, paid a short visit to Memphis last Saturday as part of a get-out-the-vote program.

Dukakis met with over 400 supporters at a Petroleum Club lunch in her honor hosted by 9th District U.S. Representative Harold Ford and former Tennessee Public Service Commissioner Jane Eskind.

In her stump speech to the cheering crowd, Dukakis emphasized her husband's commitment to "women's issues" such as child care and the Equal Rights Amendment.

Dukakis is well-known for her personal commitment to AIDS issues.

In September, she outlined an extensive federal AIDS policy program to the second national AIDS Conference in San Francisco, including an executive order banning discrimination against people with AIDS, ARC, or those who are HIV positive; fair pricing for AZT and other AIDS-effective drugs; universal health care legislation; and increased funding for AIDS research, education and services.

Bush Says No to Homo Foster Parents

From STAFF REPORTS

Vice President George Bush, the Republican nominee for President, has said that he does not think that lesbians and gay men are appropriate choices for foster parents.

"I just don't favor that. I think a child should be placed in a home...with a mother and a father, and this in my view is the way it ought to be. Much more love in a situation like that, lasting love," Bush said.

The remarks came at a Michigan press conference in response to a question about Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis' controversial decision to deny foster children to gay men and lesbians in Massachusetts.

Come out and play.

This Halloween season, Dare staffers will be roaming through Halloween parties at your favorite haunts looking for the most playful costumes. We'll be armed with pairs of tickets to either Tennessee Repertory Theatre's "Taming of the Shrew" or Circle Players' "Dracula." Judges' decisions are final. Tickets compliments of Dare, because we want you to come out and play.
...Sentencing Commission continued from page 1

Raybin said, but were unable to eliminate the statute. Instead, he said, the state legislature will have to act in order to decriminalize homosexual acts.

"There is no reason at all why the Tennessee Sentencing Commission and the state legislature should take the step of reducing the crime from a felony to a misdemeanor without taking the next step and removing it from the books completely," said Sue Hyde of the Washington-based National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF).

"To reduce it to a misdemeanor, I think, for most lesbians and gay men does not reduce the sting of the state's inappropriate role in our private lives. Gay men and lesbians have the same inalienable rights to private consensual sex acts as do heterosexuals," Hyde said.

Consideration of the Commission's report is not likely until well into the legislature's 1989 session. Only after the Judiciary Committees route the report to a particular committee will its various points be acted upon.

Various points in the Commission's report have come under fire from several diverse groups, including the Tennessee Sheriff's Association, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and the Tennessee Gay and Lesbian Alliance (T-GALA). Other proposed changes would reduce sentences for certain crimes and would eliminate mandatory jail terms for people charged with driving under the influence (DUI).

Reduction in mandatory sentences would help to alleviate prison over-crowding in the state, Raybin said. Tennessee is currently under federal court order to reduce its inmate populations in the state's existing correction facilities.

"In regard to homosexual acts, the Commission's logic had nothing to do with reducing inmate population, but instead had to do with the continued stigmatization of gay men and lesbians in Tennessee," NGLTF's Hyde said.

...fundamentalists attack GCN

continued from page 1

time, Mitchell told Dare that "the tide has turned. Since the story appeared in the Tennessee, we've had a large number of phone calls in support of our position.

"It's important that people contact their representatives on the [Metro Nashville] Council. Many of those calling to complain about the show, when we can finally make them understand that we could not drop the show even if we wanted to because of our charter, many of those people then say that they will talk to their Councilman," Mitchell said.

While it is not likely that the Council would move to change the CAT charter, Mitchell said that the Council could cut the station's funding in retaliation for its airing of the program.

"In the end, they [the Council] will probably vote the way they're told to by voters calling them," he said.

If the Council were to try to interfere with the station's independence in programming, Mitchell predicted a fracas that would attract national attention.

"I'm pretty sure the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] would be on it like white on rice...it would be national news. This would set Nashville's boomtown [status] back ten years," he predicted.

The hour-long weekly program, produced in New York City, has segments on such things as current public affairs, health issues for lesbians and gay men, and entertainment news.

Diane Easter, spokesperson for GCN/Nashville, said in a phone interview that the group's leadership was rallying support for the show and for CAT to counter the pressure brought by the fundamentalist churches.

Easter asked members of the lesbian and gay community and supporters to phone station management and Viacom to express support for the show. At press time, 67 phone calls about the program had been received by CAT, 1 in favor of GCN and 35 opposed, according to Mitchell.

Easter said that she did not think it likely that the station would withdraw air time from the program, citing strong support from station management on First Amendment grounds, but said that the group would not back away from a confrontation if the station's policy were to be changed.

"If they do, we'll be talking with our attorneys," she said.

Catholic Cardinal Nixes Homophobic Violence

By STUART BIVIN

The New York Times

New York City's John Cardinal O'Connor, long a critic of fierce political stances against homosexual rights, has denounced sexual orientation-motivated assaults and violence. According to The New York Times, O'Connor said in a sermon at St. Patrick's Cathedral that, "[a]nyone who does such a thing thinking it is justified by church teaching about homosexual behavior is grossly ignorant of what the church actually teaches."

However, he continued by saying, "Since I have been the Archbishop of New York I have tried in every way I know how to make clear the church's teaching on homosexuality. The church teaches that homosexual behavior is sinful. As in every other situation, however, the church never condemns the sinner, only the sin. Some people seem to get this all mixed up. They take it upon themselves to condemn the sinner."

"I wish I had language strong enough to condemn this kind of cruelty. Anyone who performs such actions in the belief that he or she is in some way helping society is utterly stupid," O'Connor added.

The Cardinal then directly spoke to those who might commit such acts: "You do an evil thing. Whatever you pretend to be, do not pretend to be Christians."
By JAAN STURGIS

Staff Writer

What a busy two weeks! And have I heard some juicy things...

On Oct. 16, I had a little gathering of my friends to celebrate my, uh, 29th birthday. It was a festive affair and attendees came from as far away as Bowling Green in the K-Y state.

Prominent party goers included Frank Ashe, Alan Jewell, James Holland, Bud Blackwell, Alan Coates, everyone's friend Tammy Wil- land, Dr. Kirkpatrick, Tim Roberts, Billy Isaacs, Matt Nelson, Dana Blickweld and Jim Hoobler.

Most thoughtfull gift? Well, it was a toss up between Bud Blackwell's Queen-size panty hose (I think he remembered the party on Holly Street recently and was shocked by my bare legs) and Alan Coates' name plate, "Miss Sturgis, QQ" (Quality Queen, of course). I think that everyone had a good time, but Tammy and I certainly did dominate the conversation.

Have you ever known Queens who were speechless? Well, it truly was a sight to behold.

When I was out and about recently, I met a young man named Jon Aucion. Claims he was seeing the Parthenon when he was doing "Miss Sturgis, QQ" (Quality Queen, of course). I think that everyone had a good time, but Tammy and I certainly did dominate the conversation.

And what do you think Jon Aucion? Well, he says he's been to a lesbian wedding lately. Greg Heiser, TSU's junior professor of philosophy, has had them giving Gay 101 lectures to his ethics classes. Not only are there classes on the main and downtown campuses, but Paul and Penny have ventured to the Women's Prison, where they discovered a large number of lesbians.

Shy and uneventful Diane Easter spilled her guts when she quietly whispered into the telephone that she'd been attending a lesbian wedding here in Nashville. The wedding goes spray painted slogs on the newweds car which read "Getting girls" and "Girls just want to have fun!" Did you see that? In Nashville, no less.

Diane promises to be out this Saturday for GCN/Nashville at the various Halloween parties around town. Watch for her and her stealthy crew as they may even photograph you!

She may also get a chance to capture the Darreduo on tape. Seems the imposter staff will be bopping around from costume party to costume party giving out patches of tickets to either Tennessee Rep's Taming of the Shrew or Circle Players' Dracula.

The promotion, called Come Out to Play, involves running guerrilla raids on Halloween parties looking for "playful" costumes, the wearers of which will then be awarded a pair of tickets on the spot. Get it? Now some pseudo-literary person will probably make a crack about "the play's the thing," or about Ann Taylor being a Playmate or something. Sigh.

Speaking of Playmates, was that really Scott Osten (goop! I mean Gee! Scott Osten) in those pumps at the Nashville CARES Halloween party? The group's staff, volunteers, and clients were treated to some real tricks, from what we hear.

The folks at CARES, in addition to looking forward to John Bridges' benefit bash-to-end-all-bashes - the Saturday, November 5 Tragic Evening - are eagerly anticipating a benefit performance of Music of the Night at the Metro Dinner Theatre at World's End Restau- rant Friday, November 11.

Until next time, dearests, that's Sociables. If you've done anything of interest why not give me a call - 615 226-4024 (evenings). I'm dying to hear! •

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Sunday, October 30
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Aid to End AIDS Committee (ATEAC)
Box 40389, Memphis 38174
901 762-8401 or 901 458-AIDS

American Gay Atheists/Memphis
Box 41371, Memphis 38174

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
Hedy Weinberg, Director
Box 120160, Nashville 37212
615 256-7028
Lesbian & Gay Anti-Violence Hotline
615 256-7028

Black and White Men Together
Box 41773, Memphis 38174
901 327-3753 or 901 452-5894 or 901 726-1461

Conductors
Box 40261, Nashville 37204

Feminist Book Circle
Box 120372, Nashville 37212
298-9931

Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition, Inc. of
Memphis
Box 40982, Memphis 38174

Gay Alternative (radio show)
Box 41773, Memphis 38174

Gay Athletic Association
Box 22914, Memphis 38122
901 744-7312

Gay Cable Network/Nashville
Box 22011, Nashville 37202
615 254-8250

Gay Women's Social Group
901 324-6949 or 901 377-73123

Human Response Council
901 275-5336

Kinship (Seventh Day Adventists)
Box 171135, Memphis 38187
901 754-6160

Memphis Center for Reproductive Health
1462 Poplar Ave, Memphis 38104
901 274-3550

Memphis Gay Coalition
Box 3038, Memphis 38173
901 324-GAYS

Memphis Lambda Center
241 North Cleveland, Memphis
901 276-7379

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Tennessee Rep Tries Fluorescent Shrew

From STAFF REPORTS

William Shakespeare may just rock and roll over in his grave.

Tennessee Repertory Theatre, Nashville's professional troupe in its fourth year of residence at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC), has taken the Bard's farcical classic, The Taming of the Shrew, and set it in 1969.

One of Shakespeare's most popular and enduring comedies, The Taming of the Shrew is a boisterous, rowdy farce surrounding the age-old combative characteristics of heterosexual men and women. Often termed "The Original Battle of the Sexes," Shakespeare's Shrew concerns the continuing attempts of young Petruchio to tame, and eventually marry, the ill-humored Katherina.

Interspersed throughout this on-going war of wits and words is Shakespeare's spirited use of mistaken identities and unexpected subplots, taking the audience on a rollercoaster ride of unabridged comedy.

Tennessee Rep will utilize may of the elements of the Sixties Era in staging this production, including Sgt. Pepper-like costumes of the times (complete with bellbottoms and lovebeads), a kaleidoscope-painted "magic bus," and an extensive, mood-enhancing soundtrack of rock and pop songs of the psychedelic era.

New York's Becky London and Nashville's Myke Mueller head the cast as Katherina and Petruchio respectively.

London has appeared off-Broadway in Psyco Beach Party and Vampire Lesbians of Sodom, which just completed four years and 1,200 performances at the Provincetown Playhouse.

Mueller, a recipient of the Tennessee Arts Commission's Ingram Acting Fellowship Award, is a speech and theatre graduate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He is a veteran of Tennessee Rep productions, including The Pirates of Penzance, Jesus Christ Superstar, To Kill a Mockingbird, Camelot, A Midsummer Night's Dream and If I Live to See

Next Fall.

Also in TRT's Shrew are Dennis Hunt, Joe Mahowald, Denice Hicks, Cliff Jewell, Mark Cabas, Mark Delabarre, Joe Keenan, Gus Gillette, Jackie Welch, Barry Scott and Doreen Daniels.

Dare will award free pairs of tickets to Shrew and Circle Players' Dracula this weekend to Halloween partygoers as part of the newspaper's Come Out and Play promotion.

TRT's The Taming of the Shrew opened last night in the Tennessee Performing Arts Center's Polk Theatre with additional 8 p.m. performances set for Oct. 28, 29, Nov. 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Sunday matinees (2:30 p.m.) are scheduled for Oct. 30 and Nov. 6. Tickets, ranging from $8 to $16.50, are available at all ContraTik and Ticketmaster outlets. Tickets can be reserved over the telephone by calling 615 320-7172 or 615 741-2787.

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Mondo Mundane


By SHERRE DRYDEN
Entertainment Editor

Judy Grahn is well known as a poet (Work of a Common Woman) and chronicler of lesbian culture (The Highest Apple: Sappho and the Lesbian Poetic Tradition and Another Mother Tongue: Gay Words, Gay Worlds). With her first novel, Mundane's World, Grahn attempts to add to that chronicle a fictional re-visioning of women's history.

Mundane's World centers on Ernesta, pre-pubescent member of the Snake clan, daughter of the mystical Donna. Donna and her sisters (three sisters Ernesta calls Aunts One, Two and Three and brother Blueberry Jon) are the children of the “great Mundane, who is currently on a lasting journey.”

Grahn makes it unclear when and where the novel is set. Mundane’s world could be a utopian, post-nuclear holocaust future, a prehistoric past, a planet other than earth. Grahn tells us only that there are four clans in the city of Mundane, each responsible for different aspects of daily life.

Snake is the clan of transformation, balance, healing and mixtures. The Bee clan, the clan of Ernesta’s friend Jessi-ma, deals with constructions, water and the keeping of measurements.

The publisher reveals, however, that Mundane’s World is a “pre-historic” novel, and quotes Grahn: “I think of myth as our mind and of the ancient myths as our memory. For the collective minds of modern women, particularly Euro-American women, re-visioning our memories means going back in time beyond our colonizations.” Grahn fails to provide the information needed to make this connection between Mundane and the lives of modern women. Instead of fulfilling Grahn’s vision of an intensely personal document of our history, Mundane’s World is, unfortunately, just one more title in the growing list of “feminist” fantasy fiction.

Within the context of a really rather charming coming-of-age story, Grahn concentrates on two themes, the importance of mysticism and ritual and the equality of all living things, through an insistence on the essentiality of the female.

Although it is not immediately apparent, Grahn limits the human females of Mundane to one, very traditional, role — motherhood. Superficially, they play an integral part in the daily life of the community. They make buildings, weave baskets, direct ritual ceremonies.

Yet Grahn repeatedly connects the female with the color red (menstruation), with breasts, with cooking and other modes of (pro)creation. The idea of woman-as-mother is extended to non-human females. A mouse and a bush are discussed primarily in terms of maternity. The bush worries that her babies (berries) do not reach fertile ground and grow. The mouse exists only to reproduce. The mouse

Although it is not immediately apparent, Grahn limits the human females of Mundane to one, very traditional, role — motherhood. Superficially, they play an integral part in the daily life of the community. They make buildings, weave baskets, direct ritual ceremonies. Yet Grahn repeatedly connects the female with the color red (menstruation), with breasts, with cooking and other modes of (pro)creation. The idea of woman-as-mother is extended to non-human females.

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A Clear Choice for President

With the presidential election just a little more than a week away, Americans are faced with making what will probably be one of their most difficult decisions — Michael Dukakis or George Bush?

For us, the choice is clear. Michael Dukakis is the best candidate for the job.

Since the presidential sweepstakes got under way some 18 months ago — from the first rumblings of political organizing, to the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primaries, to Super Tuesday and on to the national party conventions in Atlanta and New Orleans — we have been inundated by commercials, diatribes, speeches and rhetoric.

Many among us, early on, threw our support to other candidates, and we, as lesbians and gay men, were assured of our important role in the Democratic party. When the dust settled in Atlanta in July, our choice became clear. Michael Dukakis should be elected president.

In August, amid the sultry, humid heat of the Louisiana bayou, the Republicans made their disdain for gay men and lesbians evident by the outright hostility they directed at our community. The nomination of George Bush and his running mate, hapless Indiana Senator Dan Quayle, served notice that lesbians and gay men are not welcome in the Republican party.

Our choice for president became clearer. Michael Dukakis should be elected president.

Our reception at the respective conventions of the two major political parties, however, is not the only evidence we offer in support of the candidacy of Michael Dukakis and his running mate, Texas Senator Lloyd Bentsen.

Rather, it is the Dukakis-Bentsen positions on gay and lesbian issues which illuminate our choice.

A Dukakis position paper on the concerns of gay men and lesbians states: "Every American should have the opportunity to live his or her life fully and openly and to contribute and participate in the life of our country without fear or intimidation."

"Our civil rights laws acknowledge that discrimination on the basis of factors such as race, sex, religion, age, national origin, or disability is fundamentally unfair."

"Discrimination against an individual because of his or her sexual orientation is no less unfair."

Dukakis has pledged his support of lesbian and gay civil rights legislation and has vowed to take the lead in ensuring our freedom from discrimination and hatred.

"I take great pride our nation's heritage as a refuge from persecution, a place where everyone should have the opportunity to realize their full potential without arbitrary limitations imposed on them. Intolerance and discrimination, no matter how subtle, diminishes us all, it diminishes our country," Dukakis has stated.

Further, he has pledged to set an example for other government officials and members of his administration. He reassures us, giving us hope for the future — a future that is unattainable if we continue on the current path.

On the sensitive issue of AIDS, Dukakis calls the disease "the most serious threat to the public health we have faced in our lifetime."

"Presidential leadership means setting a tone for the federal administration and for the country. I would insist as President... that the members of my administration would be sensitive to the needs of all groups in our society, including gay men and lesbians."

"I would oppose any administrative or legislative attempt to restrict the access of individuals or organizations to any government funded programs on the basis of sexual orientation. Where gays and lesbians have special needs different from the other people served by a government program I would expect sensitivity to those needs."

"Sexual orientation should not, in and of itself, be cause for denying security clearances or constitute grounds for extraordinary employment review." On the sensitive issue of AIDS, Dukakis calls the disease "the most serious threat to the public health we have faced in our lifetime."

"As president, he will work diligently, using whatever resources are necessary to prevent the spread of the virus, to find a cure, develop a vaccine and care for people with AIDS and AIDS-Related Complex (ARC)."

The Republican ticket, headed by George Bush, refuses to mention lesbians and gay men and will only skirt the issue of AIDS as a threat to the American family.

Recent polls have shown the Bush-Quayle ticket leading the Dukakis-Bentsen tandem by a sizable, but not overwhelming, margin. As a result, many people seem to have lapsed into a lackadaisical mindset toward the presidential election.

But our hope is not lost. We can make a difference. The lead enjoyed by the Republican ticket is not insurmountable. We can elect an administration that is sympathetic to our cause — the cause of justice and of freedom from bigotry and government-sponsored oppression.

On November 8, we urge you to elect Michael Dukakis our next president. It may well be the most important vote you will ever cast.
New Group for Black Lesbians

Dear Dare,

An open letter to my sisters.

Hello. After spending three months in Nashville, I've only met three gay black women here — well actually two (I already knew one of those three before I moved here).

Well, I know there are more than four of us in this town, and I'd like to put us in touch with each other! Let's pool our resources, share our interests, voice our opinions and have some fun!

We have so much to offer each other, so much to share. We are developing a Black Lesbian Support/Social Group in an effort to bring us together.

If you are interested in meeting other sisters and sharing ideas and information about places to go and things to do around town, or you just want to talk, give me a call at (615) 352-4067 (leave a message), write us c/o Nashville Metropolitan Community Church, 131 Fifteenth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37203, and/or stay tuned to Dare!!!

We're looking forward to meeting you — Les Femmes Unis!

Thanks for the space. I'll drop you a line occasionally to let you know both what kind of response we get and what's going on.

Yours,
Patrice D. Lee
Nashville

An Open Mind in the 56th District

By DEBORAH BURKS
Staff Writer

As November 8 draws near, political candidates are putting in their last, intense efforts on the campaign trail.

And with all the media coverage focused on the Presidential election, you may have forgotten about state races. Granted, most of them aren't very exciting — the majority of the available state house and senate seats are being sought by unopposed incumbents.

In Davidson County, John Hicks is seeking his fourth term in the state senate in an uncontested race. All eleven of Davidson county's state representatives are seeking reelection and, with the exception of Jan Bushing in the 56th district, none of these incumbents will face serious opposition on Election Day.

As already noted, the race for state representative in the 56th district is an exception to the other dull races — an exceptionally good candidate is running in an exceptionally hot race.

The 56th district encompasses Nashville's Green Hills, Belmont/Hillsboro area, Vanderbilt, and parts of Sylvan Park. The district has several predominantly Democratic precincts and several predominantly Republican precincts. This dichotomy is perhaps the major factor in the unpredictability of this race.

Jan Bushing, seeking to represent the 56th district for a second term in the state house, is being challenged yet again by Republican Beth Halteman. Bushing narrowly defeated Halteman two years ago, winning by only 62 votes! (Remember this when you hear that old excuse "Oh, why should I? My vote doesn't really count").

Born and raised in the 56th district, Bushing has served this community by organizing such groups as the Hillsboro/West End Neighborhood Association and Adoptive Parents of Nashville. She is also a graduate of Vanderbilt University.

During her two-year term in the state House, Bushing served on the General Welfare Committee and the State and Local Government Committee.

For her work on issues related to children and youth, she was selected as Legislator of the Year by the Tennessee Coalition on Child Abuse. Bushing sponsored legislation to provide state funds for domestic violence shelters. She also opposed the bill requiring parental consent for abortions.

Incidentally, she's the exceptionally good candidate in this race.

Bushing's opponent, Beth Halteman, is a political science professor at Belmont College. She is a graduate of David Lipscomb College and Vanderbilt University. The conservative votes associated with these colleges represent Halteman's base of support. With constituents at my alma mater, David Lipscomb University, don't expect this candidate to be open-minded.

In contrast, Bushing is an open-minded, progressive legislator whose willing to work with her constituents, even lesbians and gays.

The 56th district race is interesting and important. Watch it, but more importantly, remember to vote on November 8.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Now forming: support group for black lesbians. Les Femmes Unis, c/o MCC-Nashville, 131 15th Ave. N., Nashville, TN 37203
- Join GCN/Nashville Staff! Be at the Towne House Tea Room Nov. 2, 7pm for our volunteer meeting.

WANTED: SIXTEEN GOOD MEN who can sing and read music for gay men’s choral. For Info phone Steve Carson, 292-6606.

VANDERBILT LAMBDA’s new film series—next: “Entertaining Mr. Sloane”, 7pm Thursday, Nov. 3, in 220 Garland ($1). Be there. Or be straight.

LONG HOURS. HARD WORK. NO PAY. Dare is accepting applications for writers. Learn community-oriented journalism, and be one of the best. Dare, Box 40422, Nashville, 37204 or phone 615-292-9623.

Gay or lesbian teenagers who would like to meet others and are interested in forming a support group in Nashville: write Box 158002, Nashville 37215-0082. All correspondence held in strictest confidence.

- Male roommate wanted. Share luxury home with 2 others and are interested in forming a support group in Nashville: write Box 158002, Nashville 37215-0082. All correspondence held in strictest confidence.

- New: Business notes—a 1/32 page notice display ad at a special introductory rate. Let the community know you’re there for pennies per reader. Ann Taylor, Dare Advertising Sales Coordinator, 615 352-5823

PERSONALS

- Oh, my Mandy. Hope this birthday is the BEST one yet. God’s will and all that: Don’t worry, be happy. Love and kisses, Annie.

Hey Sweetie! I’m crazy about you, too!


- GWM, 27. 5’8”, 140. Very attractive. Smart, Creative. Witty, Student. Seeks similar high caliber guy to love. DARE DRAWER 20

REAL ESTATE

- Male roommate wanted. Share luxury home with 2 other males. $250/mo. plus utilities. 615 822-6623.

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