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P.O. BOX 250, LEWISBURG, PA
CARE NEWSLETTER
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Recent Events

11th Annual Unity Jam: Stop the Hate Rally



More than 250 people took a stand against hate and discrimination in Hufnagle Park on Monday, September 21.

Members of the Lewisburg community and students from Bucknell University and area high schools came together on the evening of September 21st for a Unity Jam. The rally was held to promote nonviolence and healing and to raise a unified voice against hate-inspired violence.

The eleventh annual event was inspired by two hate crimes committed in 1998, one against James Byrd, a black man, who was tortured and killed by white supremacists and the other against Matthew Shepard, a gay college student who was beaten and killed, the victim of discrimination.

According to Jessica Hess, director of Multicultural Student Services at Bucknell, "Being together and hearing some of the ways we can combat hatred and ignorance are important." Lewisburg Area School District Superintendent Mark DiRocco and Lewisburg Mayor Judy Wagner both addressed the need to promote peaceful and respectful behavior in our daily lives. Diann Baxley of SVWIT challenged the gathering to connect with their outrage about violence perpetrated against women and girls to fuel taking a unified community stand against domestic violence and sexual assault. A huge thank you to the Folk Justice Band for the music and technical support for the evening.

As reported in the *Daily item*, Harvey Edwards and his acting troupe from Selinsgrove Area High School ended the night with a brief presentation about how words can hurt. The students acted out a skit then remained in character while members of the audience asked questions about the actors' manner of speaking to each other. The presentation showed how students can deal with hateful speech and rise above it.



Sponsors for the Unity Jam included community organizations such as the Center for Non-violent Living, Congregation Beth El in Sunbury, CARE, Heiter Community Center, Saint John's United Church of Christ, Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church, Susquehanna Valley Women in Transition and Barry Stopfel of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Susquehanna Valley as well as Bucknell's Multicultural Center and various departments at the university.

LGBT & Friends Dance & Surrender Dorothy A Couple of Reflections...

The LGBT & Friends Dance on September 12 was a blast. One hundred forty people attended. Most of the attendees found this event worthwhile and asked for more social gatherings in the Valley. Some said that they haven't had so much fun in a very long time because of the lack of visibility and support in the area. One person said, "It is difficult to find people just like you due to the social stigma and isolation that is attributed to this population in the community." This individual was indeed happy that there was a room filled with friends. Fortunately, the views of the world are changing, although slowly. As an old friend of mine said, "Change is gradual, and it occurs in small increments." Let's take a look at the Civil Rights Movement and Women's Right to Vote. The changes these movements spurred were indeed gradual, but they happened and are still happening. Sure we are still struggling for equality in many areas, but the mission continues to make this a better world for us and those that follow.

El baile de LGBT y Amigos en 9/12/09 fue una explosión. Fue asistido bien por 140 participantes. Los asistentes encontraron que este evento valió la pena y pidieron mas reuniones sociales en el valle. Algunos de las personas indicados que ellos no han gozado en muchísimo tiempo a causa de la falta de visibilidad y apoyo en el área. Una persona noto que "es difícil de encontrar a personas como usted debido al estigma y aislamiento que es atribuido con esta población en la comunidad. Éste individuo estaba verdaderamente feliz que habia un cuarto lleno de amistad. Afortunadamente, el vistas del mundo cambian aunque lentamente. Cuando un amigo mío por mucho tiempo indico,"Cambio es gradual y ocurre en pequeños incrementos." Echemos una mirada al Movimiento Civil de Derechós y el Derecho de Votar para Mujeres. Los cambios en estos movimientos espuelarán verdaderamente graduals pero ocurrirón. Seguro nosotros todavía luchemos para la igualdad en tantas áreas pero, la misión continuar para hacer éste mundo mejor para todos que nos siguen.

Margie Torres

Surrender Dorothy Draws Large Crowd

About 140 people turned out for Surrender Dorothy, the first of many CARE events supporting the GLBT community and its allies. The dance, held on September 12th at the Lewisburg Club, drew attendees from all over Pennsylvania.

DJ Mark of Chaos Entertainment provided non-stop music for dancers, who filled the dance floor the entire evening. Snacks and an open bar were provided.

"The gathering was a complete success," said Cynthia Peltier, a member of CARE's board and a dance organizer. "It brought people together who may feel isolated as GLBTs and demonstrated that the larger community is very supportive."

The dance also served as a fundraiser for CARE raising \$413 in donations. Future events will be held in Lewisburg to maintain the momentum that this great event started.

Rhonda Miller

LGBT Dialogue September 13, 4-6 pm, Heiter Community Center

Nineteen people attended the LGBT Dialogue on September 13, including CARE members and members of the community.

Cindy Peltier welcomed everyone and explained the events and discussions that led up to this program. Cindy talked about past activities and efforts by CARE to address GLBT issues in the Valley. Josh Ripple talked about the article published in the *Daily Item* in June, and his experiences dealing with local students and schools.

The group also discussed the GLBT & Friends dance held the night before at the



Lewisburg Club. The group agreed it was a great success!! CARE organized and sponsored the event, charged \$5 admission, and ended up making a little money for CARE. The two bartenders commented that it was one of the best events they had worked in the area.

There was some discussion about how the transgender community is different from the GLB communities. Several transgendered people talked about their experience in the Valley, and how even GLB folks don't always understand the concerns and experiences of transgendered people. They presented a realistic picture of how hard it is to be in a minority that cannot "pass" in central Pa.

The attendees discussed why they had come to the discussion, their backgrounds, and their experiences living here. The group included people who are gay, lesbian, transgendered, and heterosexual; Hispanic, Jewish, and multi-ethnic; and some who have moved here from metropolitan areas.

Upcoming Events in the Community

Sunday, October 4th at 2:30 pm at the Campus Theater Documentary *Out in the Silence*

As part of the documentary series at the Campus Theater, the film, *Out in the Silence* will be shown on Sunday, October 4th at 2:30 pm. There is also a talkback time with filmmakers Joe Wilson and Dean Hamer after the showing. Admission is free.

The website is <http://wpsu.org/outinthesilence>. The site has the following synopsis:

"Following the story of a small American town confronting a firestorm of controversy ignited by a same-sex wedding announcement in the local newspaper, this gripping documentary illustrates the challenges of being an outsider in a conservative rural community and the change that is possible when courageous people break the silence and search for common ground." (That small American town is Oil City, PA.)

Sunday, November 1st at 5:30 pm at Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church in Lewisburg *White Privilege: A Public Issues Forum*

The public is invited to participate in a public issues forum entitled "White Privilege: A Dialogue on Racial & Interethnic Difference in the Central Susquehanna Valley."

The forum will be held on Sunday, November 1, in the Hall of All Peoples at the Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church (42 South Third Street, Lewisburg) beginning at 5:30 pm with a light supper (sandwiches and snacks).

Babbette Faison, convener of CARE's Task Force on African American Concerns, and Margie Torres, convener of CARE's Task Force on Hispanic American Concerns, have collaborated with the Social Concerns Committee of Beaver UMC in securing special guests to participate in the forum.

Following supper and a brief DVD on the topic, those attending will break into small groups to discuss the meaning and effects of white privilege and to explore ways to counter its effects in the home, school, workplace, etc. During the final segment of the forum, the groups will converge to share their findings.

To reach the Hall of All Peoples, enter the church through the door on the south side. From the foyer, go down to the basement by elevator or stairway, then through double doors to the Hall. For further information, call Doug Sturm at 524-4035.

Friday, November 20, 8:00 pm at Bucknell's Weis Center Stage Performance of *To Kill a Mockingbird*

On Friday, November 20 *To Kill a Mockingbird*, an acclaimed stage adaptation of Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-Winning Novel by the Montana Repertory Theatre, will be presented at the Weis Center for the Performing Arts at Bucknell University. This story, still taught in U.S. high schools, is an enduring tale of race, the law, and the fight for social justice in America. For tickets and information, call 570-577-1000, or visit the



From the desk of Doug Sturm...

The nasty persistence of “white culture”

Very recently, Rosalind Moore, a friend of CARE, sent me a hard-hitting column by Andrew Manis published in the *Macon Telegraph* following the election of Barack Obama. Noting reports of “school children from Maine to California...talking about wanting to assassinate Obama,” Manis launches into a critique of “White Americans’...ridiculous obsession with skin color.”

Manis asks, “How long before we white people realize we can’t make our nation, much less the whole world, look like us?...How long until we white people get over the demonic conviction that white skin makes us superior? How long before we white people get over our bitter resentments about being demoted to the status of equality with non-whites?...How long before we [start] living out the true meaning of our creeds, both civil and religious, that all men and women are created equal and that red and yellow, black and white are all precious in God’s sight?”

As might be expected, Manis’s column has been subjected to an unending string of negative reactions on the internet (and some praise), but his impatience with the inexcusable persistence of racism in white culture should be applauded. He is himself white, as am I. Given our heritage, we have a special obligation to join in the struggle to surmount all the ways, personal and institutional, in which white culture entails the subjugation of non-whites to a status of inferiority. Given what many see as the noisy and threatening resurgence of racism in the United States, there’s much to be done.

Incidentally, Rosalind Hamilton-Moore, formerly of Milton, now resides in Florida. We wish her well in her new home.

Anger in the service of justice

The Henry Louis Gates affair last July set off a noisy controversy that has since quieted down. Yet a judgment by Bob Herbert, in his August 1st column in the *New York Times* affirmed a conclusion that bears remembering and repeating: “Anger Has Its Place.”

In response to the fracas over Gates’ (an African American professor) breaking into his own house, he was arrested for “loud and tumultuous behavior in a public space,” in short, disorderly behavior, because he talked back to the officer.

Herbert states that the “wrong lesson” for minorities to draw from this event is “that the proper response if you think you are being unfairly targeted by the police because of your race is to chill.”

Herbert would, in contrast, have us recognize that “Black people are constantly being stopped, searched, harassed, publicly humiliated, assaulted, arrested and sometimes killed by police officers in this country for no good reason.” Given that pattern of actions, the most important lesson to draw is that “Black people need to roar out their anger at such treatment, lift up their voices, and demand change. Anyone counseling a less militant approach is counseling self-defeat.”

For their part, “most whites do not want to hear about racial problems.” To “chill out” simply serves the wants of the white community.

Herbert counsels, in contrast, that ordinary black Americans need to yell, scream, demonstrate, lobby, march, and bring legal suit in the face of prejudicial treatment as a matter of righteous indignation.

So, what is the “American Way?”

“Rather than everyone here having to learn Chinese...do you think it would behoove you and your citizens to adopt a name that’s easier for Americans to deal with?”

A comment by “Texas sState Representativ Betty Brown in an exchange with Organization of Chinese American representative Ramey Ko during an April



7th House Elections Committee hearing on voter identity legislation” cited in the latest issue of the *Intelligence Report* (Fall 2009), published by the Southern Poverty Law Center.