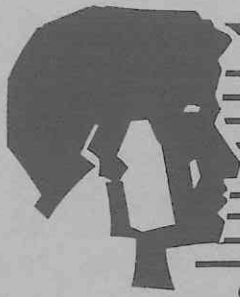


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GFC NEWS

November, 1997

GFC-Richmond • P.O. Box 8501 • Richmond • VA • 23226

President's Message

This month's column is prompted by an editorial cartoon that appeared in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. The intent of the item was to ridicule the idea of a child having two same-gender parents by ridiculing a (Hillary Clinton) suggestion that this fact of life be taught in childcare centers (and schools).

I'm sure all of you have heard of the book, Heather Has Two Mommies - even if you haven't read it. Unfortunately not enough non-gay people have read it and far too many would like to see it banned and burned.

There is a school of thought in our society that what goes unseen does not exist - and what goes unspoken also does not exist.

The opposition to Heather Has Two Mommies is based on the premise that if children do not see the existence of "Heather's" two mommies - or "Allen's" two dads - or "Amy's" single lesbian mom - or "Ben's" single gay father, they will not question or challenge their heterosexual parents' intimation that a "mommy/daddy/sister/brother" family is the only kind of family.

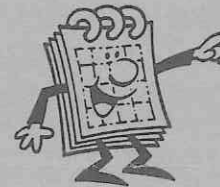
The fact of the matter is that, if more children were to learn of all the "Heathers" and "Allens" and "Amys" and "Bens" in their classrooms, their questioning might initiate the ultimate shattering of the *big lie* perpetrated by far too many preachers, pundits, and politicians.

We teach the rest of the world that we are moral and ethical people - good people - valuable citizens - only through our visibility. It is vital, if not for our own sakes than at least for our kids sakes, for us to be seen living our everyday lives openly and honestly.

I realize that not all of us can be open about ourselves at work. But I would venture that far more of us can than most of us believe. And I would suggest that more of us could be honest about ourselves within our families than believe it is safe to do so.

I know it must seem like I'm always preaching about the value of living openly as gay men. To some I must sound like a broken record. It's just that I so firmly believe that the battle against prejudice and bigotry will only be won through our visibility. In addition, we cannot be truly whole and healthy men as long as we live secretive lives. Our lives are too precious to waste living in darkness.

Upcoming Events



Mark
Your
Calendar

• November 6 Meeting

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: St. Marks Episcopal,
520 N. Boulevard

Kid's Panel - "I Know My
Dad Is Gay"

There will be a panel of several of our children to talk about what it's like to find out that their Dad is gay and what it has meant to them.

• December 4 Meeting

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: St. Marks Episcopal,
520 N. Boulevard

Brief open meeting and social. *Bring a holiday dessert to share.* Drinks provided.

• December 28 Holiday Open House

Time: 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Place: Bob Rodgers' Home, 920
W. 31st Street

Please R.S.V.P. to Bob at 230-2578 by December 20.

October Meeting Highlights

The seventh meeting of GFC-Richmond was held on Thursday, October 2, 1997. The meeting began at 7:45 p.m. at St. Marks Episcopal Church, 520 N. Boulevard, Richmond. This was the first meeting in our new location and on our new night - the first Thursday of the month. The St. Marks meeting room is more suitable for the group. St. Marks provides a more comfortable environment, as the church has openly welcomed GFC-Richmond. There were nine members present, and one father visiting the group for the first time.

Most of the evening was spent with each member and our visitor introducing themselves, talking about our kids, and relating personal experiences. There was a real sense of bonding among members during that time.

Treasurer's Report:

Approximately \$121.00 was on hand as of 10/2/97. An appeal was made for members who had not already paid the yearly dues of \$30 to do so...funds are low.

Upcoming Events:

- The Halloween Party was cancelled due to an apparent lack of interest.
- Kids Panel Discussion - A Definite Go!!! - November 6, 1997 at our next meeting. Several of our members' older children will share their experiences relating to their fathers, based on prepared questions, and address questions from the members and any other member's children who will hopefully come with their Dads to the meeting. A bonding experience!
- Past/Future Events - Since the July 4 holiday picnic and the potluck supper at Bob and Glenn's were not well attended, the members were asked to consider the types of events/social activities that more of them might want or be able to participate in. The chapter secretary suggested that the members consider going in together and joining national support groups such as the Human Rights Campaign and the Lambda Legal Defense and Educational Fund. Another idea would be a "Kids Night" when members could bring in and share photographs of their children. These and other ideas will be discussed at future meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:25 p.m.

Book Resources

The following are some books which you may find of interest.

Books For Parents

Gay Fathers
Other Side of the Closet
Outing Yourself
There's Something I've Been
Meaning To Tell You

Books For Children

Daddy's Roommate
Heather Has Two Mommies
How Would You Feel If Your
Dad Was Gay
It's Perfectly Normal
Uncle What-Is-It Is Coming To
Visit
When Sex Is The Subject

Info About GFC - Richmond

GFC-Richmond is a non-profit organization of gay fathers, their partners, children and friends. The organization is an affiliate of Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International.

The purpose of the organization is to:

- Provide a forum for members to discuss common concerns
- Encourage cooperative action and promote common interests of gay fathers and their families
- Provide opportunities for social interaction among gay fathers, their children and friends
- Promote and sponsor activities designed to present a positive image and engender positive acceptance of alternative parenting