

GLBTF NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL TASK FORCE OF THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES ROUND TABLE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

From the Editor:

Hello, everyone. As you will see with the information contained in this newsletter, the GLBTF Task Force has been hard at work.

Perhaps the most important of all our work lately is our effort to become a formally recognized Round Table within ALA. We began petitioning ALA members at Midwinter to get the 100 signatures necessary for consideration.

As many of you know, from the committee meetings and past letters in this newsletter from the co-chairs, the GLBTF is seeking this organizational change for many reasons, including our desire to have more input and control over our affairs within ALA. Please sign and send the enclosed petition. It is needed ASAP. Your support is appreciated.

Book awards were announced at Midwinter. Our breakfast committee is hard at work with the arrangements. Authors Michael Cunningham and Sarah Schulman and Kyle Scafide, publisher of the New Orleans' gay newspaper 'Impact' are scheduled to speak.

Also in this issue:

- * Book Award Winner's Announced
- * Annual Book Award Breakfast
Reservation Form
- * Bylaw Changes
- * Election Committee Formed
- * Committee Members Needed

See you at annual!

M. Callaghan "Cal" Zunt
Newsletter Editor

Book Award Breakfast Reservation Form

Join with librarians, publishers, authors and readers to honor the 1999 winners of the oldest gay, lesbian and bisexual book awards in the United States. The awards breakfast is a fundraiser to endow the Book Awards and to ensure their future. The breakfast will feature a full sit-down breakfast, doorprizes, and giveaways.

This year's award winners Michael Cunningham, Sarah Schulman, and publisher Kyle Scafide of the gay newspaper, 'Impact' will be the featured speakers.

Date: Saturday, June
Location: To be Announced.
Tickets: \$35, if received before June 1
\$45 after June 1

After June 1, tickets *must* be purchased through the ALA Meal Ticket Office at the Conference. There will be *no* ticket sales at the door.

Please complete the following information:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State/Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
Email _____

Number of tickets _____
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Make check payable to: ALA/SRRT/GLBTF
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You will receive confirmation of your order via email within two-three weeks. If you do not receive a confirmation, please contact: Ellen Bosman at 219-980-6947 or via email at: ebosman@indiana.edu.

FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Michael Miller, Male Co-Chair

Midwinter was indeed another busy conference for us all. As Shari has pointed out, the new Elections committee and the Task Force to Round Table Ad Hoc committees are up and running. I'd like to cover a few of these areas a little bit more in-depth. At the social, the steering committee formally introduced the TF plan of petitioning ALA Council for Round Table status. Elsewhere in this newsletter please find and read the petition. If you are in agreement with it, tear out the form, sign it and send it to the address listed. We officially need one hundred signatures to present a petition. Let's go for more. The form will also appear on the GLBTF www site and ALA members of any orientation can sign on. We'll announce the availability on glbtf-l and gay-libn. Spread the word, we want to move upward to becoming a more central player within the Association and this is how we can do it.

Look at Steve Russo's entry in this newsletter for specific information needed if you want to run for the various TF at Annual or ALA committees for next year. Male co-chair and Fundraiser/Treasurer positions will be elected at annual. Appointments (or reappointments) for the Elections, Breakfast Planning, Book Award, and the External Relations Committees will be finalized at Annual's Membership Meeting as per the TF Bylaws. Finally, the TF still needs to complete the revision of its Bylaws. Last annual we provided the proposed changes via the newsletter.

Please find those proposed changes which we're yet approved in this issue and be prepared to discuss them (and hopefully approve them) at the membership meeting in New Orleans. (The bylaws are also available via the GLBTF www site). One last thing. Year 2000 is our 30th anniversary. Please send any suggestions for BIG name speakers to me at m.miller@brooklynpubliclibrary.org. If anyone can help me break down the seven degrees of separation between us and say...Rosie O'Donnell or Babs :) send me the info. Happy Spring to You!

Michael

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Shari Clifton, Female Co-Chair

Well, as yet another successful Midwinter meeting came to a close for the GLBTF I left Philadelphia feeling energized for the work that lies ahead.

The new Fundraising and Elections committees are moving ahead, petitions are circulating for the move to Round Table status and final revisions to the GLBTF bylaws should be completed shortly. The conference wasn't all work as a wonderful time was had by all at the Midwinter Social, held at the beautifully restored William Way Center, which serves at the GLBT center for Philadelphia. Thanks to the efforts of Steve Russo for coordinating this event. Although the Read Aloud in Philadelphia was the first I had ever attended I thoroughly enjoyed my role as spectator and plan to make this a "must do event" on future conference calendars.

Chet Mulawka and his committee have almost completed program plans for this year's Annual Conference in New Orleans and under Victor Schill's leadership exciting possibilities are being explored for the 30th Anniversary Celebration of the GLBTF in Chicago, 2000. Kenn Bicknell and the External Relations Committee have done an outstanding job of coordinating the GLBTF response to a variety of issues and those opportunities will continue to arise.

Still looking for your niche in becoming involved with the GLBTF? Opportunities to make a contribution continually arise so don't hesitate to express your interest

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About GLBTF Newsletter

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GLBTF Newsletter (ISSN 1045-2893) is an official publication of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Task Force of the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association. It appears quarterly in March, June, September and December. Subscriptions are \$10 per year in the U.S.; \$15 for other countries. Send change of address to the editorial address.

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Letters to the editor, correspondence to the above address care of:

GLBTF Newsletter Editor -
M. Callaghan "Cal" Zunt
or via email at: cal.zunt@cpl.org

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to myself, my co-chair or any committee chair that you'd like to play a more active role. It is encouraging to know that the volunteer form on the GLBTF web site is seeing quite a bit of activity these days and the task force is working to standardize the procedures by which we respond to those volunteers. Like any organization the potential of the GLBTF is only realized through the commitment and involvement of its members. Join us!

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Election Committee Formed

At Midwinter, the Steering Committee instituted an Elections Committee. Its duties and responsibilities are based on discussions that were begun at last year's Annual and continued at Midwinter. The Committee is responsible for submitting two names to the membership for vacancies in the co-chair, secretary, and treasurer positions; conducting the elections at Annual; and assisting TF members who are running for SRRT and ALA Council positions.

A draft of the bylaws that need to be revised in light of instituting this new committee are the following:

Proposed bylaws re: Elections Committee

- 1) add under section V, "Standing Committees," paragraph 2, sentence 2, after "External Relations Committee" the following: and the Elections Committee
- 2) add this "Elections Committee" subsection under section V, "Standing Committees," after the section on the Clearinghouse/Website Committee:

In addition to the activities listed under the "Duties of the committee coordinators." the Elections Committee, under the guidance of its Coordinator, is responsible for:

- soliciting nominations for upcoming TF positions to be filled
- selecting the names of two candidates for each position to be filled
- securing biographical information from all TF candidates for publication in the TF newsletter and distribution at the Annual Membership Meeting
- preparing a ballot for the Annual Membership Meeting
- determining eligibility of voters
- overseeing the election at the Annual Membership Meeting
- announcing the winners of the TF elections
- supporting TF members who are seeking election to SRRT and ALA Council positions by: (a) soliciting biographical information from them and distributing this information through the TF newsletter, at TF meetings, etc. ;and (b) sponsoring a "meet the candidates" forum at Midwinter for TF members seeking election to SRRT and ALA Council.

The Elections Committee will adhere to all sections of the bylaws, especially section IV, "Officers," subsections "Elections" and "Qualifications." In selecting nominees for vacancies, the committee will consider geographical diversity, and representation from academic, public, school, and special libraries.

The nature of how the Committee may/should assist candidates for SRRT and ALA Council needs further discussion. Steve Russo chairs the Committee. If you have comments or suggestions, contact Steve via email at: stevrus@aol.com.

GLBTF WEBSITE !!!

You can reach us on the World Wide Web at:
http://isd.usc.edu/~trimmer/ala_hp.html

Bylaw Changes

The following bylaw changes have been suggested. For further information or comments, please contact the co-chairs.

Section II. VOTING STATUS:

Existing text: Voting status is defined by membership in the American Library Association Social Responsibilities Round Table.

Suggested substitution: Members of the American Library Association Social Responsibilities Round Table are eligible to vote in Task Force elections.

Existing text: Nonvoting individuals:

Any voting individual or other person or organization who wants to remain informed of the Task Force's activities may do so by subscribing to the Task Force newsletter. Non-voting individuals shall not hold office, participate in Task Force decisions, or vote in Task Force elections.

Suggested substitution: Leave the first sentence as is. Move the second sentence up to follow the colon after "Nonvoting individuals:." Drop the clause about not being able to participate in TF decisions.

Section V. COMMITTEES:

Existing text: Whenever possible, a committee coordinator will be selected after consultation with other committee members and will have preferably acted in an apprentice capacity during the preceding year.

Suggested substitution: Whenever possible, a committee coordinator will be selected after s/he has served in an apprentice capacity during the preceding year, and after consultation with other committee members.

Existing text: ... by the end of the Steering Committee I during the Midwinter conference; ...

Suggested substitution: ... by the end of the Steering Committee I meeting

Existing text: ... submitting publicity and website content and information to the Newsletter Editor, the Clearinghouse/Website Coordinator as appropriate; ...

Suggested substitution: ... to the Newsletter Editor and/or to the Clearinghouse/Website ...

Section VI. FINANCES:

Existing text: The Co-Chairs will present the approved budget to the Task Force membership during the midwinter meeting.

Suggested substitution: Drop the word membership, since we no longer have membership meetings at Midwinter.

Section IX. AMENDING THE BYLAWS:

Existing text: ... provided that the proposed amendment has been announced at a previous meeting or has been published in an issue of the Task Force newsletter. ...

Suggested substitution: ... or has been published in an issue of the Task Force newsletter and/or on the Task Force Website. ...

Book Award Committee seeks members

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Task Force Book Award Committee is seeking energetic and hard working members to serve on the 1999/2000-2000/2001 committee. The Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Book Award is presented to English language works published the year prior to the announcement date.

We have eight committee slots to fill (total committee members number 14). The committee is structured equally between women and men. Transgender applicants are welcome. The committee also strives informally to obtain diversity in terms of where committee members live geographically and in what kind of library or library organization they work.

There are some obligations and commitments for members. BAC members must be or become members of ALA/SRRT. Appointment to the committee is for a period of two years (for this appointment, formally following ALA annual 1999 through ALA annual 2001). Committee members also need to commit to attending the ALA MID-WINTER conferences in 2000 (San Antonio) and 2001 (Washington DC).

I really must stress the importance of attendance at the mid-winter conferences, since this is the time when we discuss the finalists in person and select our two winners. (Attendance at the annuals is, of course, helpful as well). Finally, committee members may NOT publish reviews of g/l/b/t books while they are serving on the committee.

This committee requires a significant amount of time and energy--probably more than most other ALA committee positions. Responsibilities include reading many works of g/l/b/t literature and non-fiction published annually; participating in an active (closed) electronic discussion list; collecting reviews of nominated titles from magazines and journals; requesting review copies from non-mainstream publishers; and nominating titles (calls for nominations are submitted to the community-at-large, but committee nominations account for at least half the nominees).

There may be other tasks that come up during the year as well. (Various of these responsibilities are divided up according to interest/willingness after the new committee roster is in place and we get underway).

If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact me (we'd like to have the new committee in place by early April, to begin assigning duties, alerting publishers to the new roster etc.) Please include some brief information about yourself (position, present and past library/organization job affiliations), and summarize your reading interests and g/l/b/t literature strengths. Also let me know if you have any questions.

I look forward to hearing from you.

David Garnes, Incoming Chair
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Winners of ALA's Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Book Awards Announced

The Hours, written by Michael Cunningham and published by Farrar, Straus, and Giroux was named the winner of the American Library Association's Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Book Award for Literature. Incoming Book Award Committee Chair, David Garnes (University of Connecticut) describes this novel as a "wonderful exploration of the human condition."

Stagestruck: Theatre, AIDS, and the Marketing of Gay America by Sarah Schulman and published by Duke University Press was named the winner of the Nonfiction Award. "Schulman's work is a provocative statement about the commodification of gay and lesbian culture, especially in the area of theater arts," said Book Award Chair Faye Chadwell (University of Oregon).

Other finalists for the Literature Award included *An Arrow's Flight* by Mark Merlis (St. Martin's); *Bending the Landscape: Original Gay and Lesbian Writing, Vol. 1: Science Fiction*, edited by Nicola Griffith and Stephen Pagel (Overlook Press); *Switch* by Carol Guess (Calyx) and *Imagine Being More Afraid of Freedom Than of Slavery*, by Pamela Sneed (Henry Holt).

The other Nonfiction Award finalists were: *A Fragile Union* by Joan Nestle (Cleis Press); *The Truth That Never Hurts: Writings on Race, Gender, and Freedom* by Barbara Smith (Rutgers University Press); *The Other Side of Silence: Men's Lives and Gay Identities - A Twentieth Century History* by John Loughery (Henry Holt); and *Strong Women, Deep Closets: Lesbians and Homophobia in Sport* by Pat Griffin (Human Kinetics).

The winning authors will be honored in June 1999 at the Fourth Annual Gala Breakfast for the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Book Award during

the ALA's Annual Conference in New Orleans, LA.

The Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Book Award is sponsored by the Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Task Force of the American Library Association. A committee of 14 public, academic, and special librarians made the award selections. Established in 1971, the awards are given annually to authors of books of exceptional merit that examine the lesbian, gay and/or bisexual experience.

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Volunteer with the GLBFT !!!

Join us! We are always looking for energetic committee members. Interested candidates must be members of SRRT, and of course ALA. Please mail/email your nominations to the GLBTF at the ALA address on the back of this newsletter, or attend our meetings during conference and see if you would like to volunteer. We look forward to working with you!

Book Reviews

Reviews are a regular feature of the GLBTF Newsletter. If you would like to be a reviewer or receive reviewing guidelines, please contact:

Barbara R. Stevens
GLBTF Book Review Editor
Email: stevenbr@uwec.edu
715-836-2522 or Fax 715-836-2902

Billy's Boy, By Patricia Nell Warren. Wildcat Press, 1997. (ISBN 0-9641099-3-X; paper)

It is not necessary to have read Patricia Nell Warren's landmark novels *The Front Runner* and *Harlan's Race* to enjoy the latest book in her series--*Billy's Boy*. This third novel stands on its own and continues to trace gay family life through the eyes of Harlan's son, William.

One could say that this is a YA novel, written from the point of view of 12-14 year old William, but I would also recommend it to the parents, teachers, counselors, or any adults who work with gay - or questioning - youth. The fact that William is so young might put older adolescents off at first, but the story matures very quickly when William falls in love with the boy next door.

The story is quite complex, and covers almost every issue facing youth in the 90's: heterosexism, homophobic violence at school, runaways, artificial insemination, institutionalization, sexual identity, religious intolerance, AIDS, racism, prostitution, drug abuse, bulimia, divorce, and suicide. It is also a textbook study in the support systems that are available to gay youth today.

Warren's empathy for gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual kids really shines through in *Billy's Boy*. The characters are very convincing and I found myself really caring about what happened to them. This is a book that will frighten some adults--yet the issues that the adolescents in *Billy's Boy* struggle with are very real. *Billy's Boy* is well-written and a good read that ends on a promising note. I'm looking forward to checking out Patricia Nell Warren's first two books in this series!

--Reviewed by Arla A. Jones, Librarian,
Lawrence High School, Lawrence, KS

Strong Women, Deep Closets, by Pat Griffin. Human Kinetics, 1998. (ISBN 0-88011-729-X; paper) \$19.95

If anyone has ever doubted that homophobia and fear of lesbians affects the opportunities for all women athletes, they will view women in sports from a new perspective by the time they finish reading this book. Pat Griffin draws on her extensive experience as an athlete and coach as a basis to examine how men have frequently feared strong women--especially the female athlete. She is also able to reflect upon her own journey out of the closet to identify the issues often faced by lesbians in sports when they seek to claim their identity and yet remain competitive athletes.

Central to the discussion is the role of sport in society and how it is used to reinforce the heterosexual roles expected of males. Only with this as a backdrop is it possible to begin to understand how women in sport can be seen as interlopers.

Since they have already crossed the line into the masculine domain, women's presence can best be countered by challenging their femininity and heterosexuality. Griffin looks at the lives of historical figures in women's sport and shows how this challenge has been used repeatedly. She then discusses the effects on all women in sports--especially those who are indeed lesbian.

This work is particularly effective when Griffin uses the words of the athletes and coaches to convey the impact of their experiences. It tackles a topic that is long overdue for discussion. It should be required reading for every athletic director and used in the education of every prospective coach. *Strong Women, Deep Closets* is recommended for all college and university library collections, for large public libraries, and for professional collections in all athletic departments.

Lesbian Travels: a Literary Companion, edited by Lucy Jane Bledsoe. Whereabouts Press, 1998. (ISBN: 1-883513-07-3; paper) \$14.95.

Bledsoe states "Being a lesbian, a sexual border-crosser, allows me this outsider's perspective within my own country, which in turn, opens me up to unique insights when I travel across other borders." This premise becomes the central theme for this anthology of insights gained by eighteen writers as they explored new geographical areas and confronted those boundaries created by the mind in the form of stereotype and expectations.

While *Lesbian Travels* is definitely not a travel guide in the usual sense, it will definitely appeal to the reader who loves to travel. By the time they have visited Mexico with Audre Lorde, Tokyo with Marianne Dresser, Paraguay with Sara Grossman, and numerous other locations with other writers, no traveler will ever view her own experiences in quite the same way. Indeed, as in life itself, the perspective and interaction of the observer influence what one learns from travel.

This work belongs in the personal collection of every lesbian who dreams of travelling. It also would be a valuable addition to travel collections in public libraries. However, it should not be limited to such collections, but, also deserves a place in all collections that support women studies programs or literary study of autobiography.

To Be Continued, edited by Michele Karlsberg and Karen X. Tulchinsky. Firebrand Books, 1998. (ISBN: 1-56341-104-0; paper) \$11.95.

This collection of new stories from eleven well-known, lesbian writers is an example of how an intriguing idea may backfire and ultimately prove irritating to the reader. Although each of these stories is described as being complete in itself while "begging to be continued," the reality is that many of them seem unfinished. Since each of the stories contained in this volume is "... to be continued" in volume two of the collection, the reader will eventually learn how each story ends. Although this provides a novel approach to the two-volume anthology, it does a disservice to the individual stories that are entertaining in their semi-finished state and promise to be excellent when finished.

This work belongs in short story collections as well as collections of lesbian literature. The idea of "continuation" has merit and should not be discarded; however, it might be advantageous to publish the two parts of the stories together. Failing that, the time between publication of the two volumes should be shortened.

--Reviewed by Barbara Stevens.

Attention GLBTF Members!
Is your GLBTF Newsletter Subscription Current?
Will You Be Moving Soon? Please Report Address Changes!

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Please note that your payment of the \$10 annual SRRT/GLBTF membership fee does not include subscription to the GLBTF Newsletter. You must pay a separate \$10 subscription fee; \$15 for all other countries) to receive the GLBTF Newsletter.

Send a check or money order and this form to American Library Association, SRRT/GLBTF, Office of Library Outreach Services, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.

The GLBTF Newsletter Committee maintains the subscriber address list. It is confidential and not release to ALA. Subscription questions should be forwarded to the newsletter editor.

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Enclosed is a check for \$10, payable to ALA/SRRT/GLBTF for a one-year subscription.

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VOLUNTEERS Yes, I would like to volunteer! Please call me! _____

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