

VOICES SWELL

The Newsletter of the Denison University Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Alumni/ae Association

Volume 16.1

April 2007

Homecoming, Sweet Homecoming

Nippy weather (heater-worthy). Turkey vultures soaring on rising thermals above Swasey. A football loss to Ohio Wesleyan. Teenage girls in cocktail dresses. Yes, another Homecoming at Denison.

Fourteen returning alums – many “veterans” of our GLBAA weekends and some “freshmen” as well – nurtured the camaraderie which has characterized these gatherings over the past 16 years, forming new connections and definitions of what it means to be part of the Denison family.

As usual, we had opportunities to engage in discussion with the major figures in the college leadership, connect with friends among the faculty and be impressed with the current crop of students – specifically those in Outlook.

At our traditional Saturday morning discussion about the campus climate around GLBT concerns, Outlook shared with us what had occurred during “Coming Out Week,”



One of many posters appearing on campus during “Coming Out Week”

which always seems to fall during the week of Homecoming. Happenings included chalkings on the quad, “kiss off homophobia,” the “guess who’s straight?” panel and a speaker from Equality Ohio. Very moving coming out stories were shared as well as posted around

campus, and at least one student was reported to have “come out” during the festivities. Keith Boykin, a black gay man who is a former Bill Clinton aide and author, was due on campus the following week and Outlook was involved in the program.

Transgender has become a factor on campus with the “coming out” of at least one student who publicly has so identified and several others who indicated this identity on a survey.

With the presence at our meeting of Vincent Briley, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Multicultural Affairs, there was discussion about the Black Student Union-Outlook relationship, which is basically one of informal connections and networking and a recent collaboration on an AIDS awareness panel.

President Knobel referenced the offensive chalkings of the previous year, which had created an outrage within the campus community that turned the situation into a positive one as a result of the campus-wide conversation it created. Chalkings this year were much less controversial.

Assistant Provost Keith Boone reflected on how the student profile has changed over the past 15 years or so, from an “Eastern Boarding school syndrome” that fed the fraternity system to the present, where entering students now have moved to the middle on a survey measuring liberal-conservative ideology. He shared how the college has stepped up efforts to diversify, with six faculty members-of-color recently receiving tenure. Denison is participating in The Posse Foundation’s program by which multicultural inner city students from Boston and Chicago who possess solid leadership and scholarship qualities receive full tuition scholarships and have faculty mentors. The program, in which Denison began participating in 2001, identifies student leaders often overlooked in the traditional selection process. There are currently 60 “Posse Scholars” on campus now with 10 new ones added annually.

The morning discussion revealed that an informal GLBT faculty group has been organized and that some recent human resource problems impacting GLBT faculty/staff, which had been identified in recent years, have been addressed.

Continuing a new tradition, Outlook for the second year prepared and served the Saturday evening banquet at the College Town House. Following dinner, Rachel Hughes ’07 gave a presentation, “Tolerance and Transformation: The Changing Face of Amsterdam’s Gay Community,” which was the product of her spring ’06 semester abroad in The Netherlands.



Students Ethan and Michael with Sam Thios (VP/Student Affairs) and Carrie Kortegast (Assistant Dean of Students)

It's been a very long time since most of the members of the GLBAA have been on campus at Homecoming. Homecoming this year is October 19th-20th. How about at least penciling it in now on your calendar? If you've not been back in years, you really should experience this new Denison firsthand.

Reunion Weekend GLBT Get-Together

The GLBAA will be hosting an open house during June Reunion weekend at the College Townhouse (next to the Granville Inn). Local GLBAA members are invited as well as "friends" on campus along with "reunioning" alums who we hope will be enticed by an announcement that is appearing in the college's official schedule of events. The open house is Saturday, June 2nd, from 3-5pm. For more information, contact Tom King '69 at 330/704-4729 or Thomas.king.69@denison.edu.

Denison Reunion Volunteer Opportunities

by Jim Kenny

Assistant Director of the Annual Fund

As you are probably aware, the Reunion program at Denison seeks to reach out and engage alumni celebrating a milestone anniversary of their commencement from Denison. In order to engage alumni, Denison has put together a group of alumni from each class celebrating their reunion and asked them to make calls to their classmates. The motivation is that a call from a classmate will more likely result in that alumnus coming back to campus and supporting the Reunion Gift effort.

However, in the past, the leadership for each Reunion committee has not always been truly reflective of the

diversity in the class. We are now making an intentional effort to ensure that our Reunion committees are inclusive of all members of each class. We are actively recruiting individuals from historically underrepresented groups, and we are hopeful that some alumni who identify as GLBT will join our efforts. To that end, if you are interested in serving on your Reunion Committee or if you have any questions, please contact me (kennyj@denison.edu; 740/587-6730).

Members of the Reunion Committee are asked to make about 10 calls to their classmates to encourage their attendance at Reunion Weekend and to ask them to support the Reunion Gift.

OUT AND ABOUT

What's Happening With Some GLBAA Members

🏳️ **Geoff Phillips '94** continues on as a Human Resources manager at Martin-Brower and along with his partner, Tom, has returned to live in downtown Washington, DC, in a new-build condo.

🏳️ **Pat Coffey '60** (along with partner Sandy) remain among southern California's most active retirees. They recently returned from a cruise on the Mexican Riviera, plan on spending a couple of weeks this summer in Denmark and Sweden, and remain involved in the Metropolitan Community Church in San Diego and the SD Democratic Club.

🏳️ With her M.ED in hand from Xavier University, **Amy Gard '96** has moved to Portland (the one in Oregon) where she is a teacher and after-school coordinator at the French American International School.

🏳️ **Chris Canaday '90** is spending more of his time in water than on land these days as head coach for Columbus' gay and lesbian Masters swim team, the Ohio Splash. His duties include training adults and working with members of a triathlon program. Plus he teaches private swim lessons for adults. And in his spare time he's teaching writing skills to adults, many of whom are immigrants, in the Columbus public school adult ed system.

🏳️ You'll find **Kendall Cameron '87** in Philadelphia where she is a board member of Equality Forum, an international GLBT civil rights organization based there. The group sponsors workshops and films along with national and international projects. In her spare time she is Dean of Students at Friends Select School.

🏳️ While **Stathis Orphanos** did not finish his college education at Denison (he was there in 1959), perhaps he did get at least some of his inspiration as a photographer from his days on campus. His latest work, *My Cavafy, Chance Encounters*, with a preface by Gore Vidal, contains many of the poet's homoerotic poems and Stathis' corresponding images. An upcoming work will be of the 150 elite soldiers of the Greek Presidential Guard with a preface by the country's president. You can view Stathis' work at www.orphanos.com.

🦋 From **Ali Stine '00**: "My big news? On December 20, 2006, I got married! To a man! Jordan Davis and I eloped at 1:30pm at City Hall in New York City. We met at a game of spin-the-bottle (seriously), and now live together in a very small NYC apartment, where we are writing books and trying to save money. Jordan is the father of a wonderful six year-old boy, James, and I am now a proud stepmother!"



🦋 **Jim Toy '51** was privileged to serve as a social worker/counselor for the first transgender/bisexual/lesbian/gay youth camp in Michigan last August and notes that "It was one of the most meaningful weeks of my life." The *Detroit Free Press* featured the camp in an 8/18/06 article, "NOT ALONE: Camp is a haven for gay teens; program touts acceptance, advocacy." The weeklong Camping. OUT program, created by the Triangle Foundation (a Detroit-based civil rights organization for the GLBT community), was the first-ever state-licensed camp for GLBT and allied youth in Michigan. It is one of about six in the country. Jim will serve in the same role at this year's camp.

Don't See Your Name Here?

E-mail us and tell us
what's going on in your life!

🦋 Another theater lover is doing her thing in The Big Apple. **Elizabeth Talmadge '99** is the assistant company manager for "The Pirate Queen – A New Musical" which opened on Broadway this month. She reports that though she was swamped with work leading up to opening night, she's having the time of her life.

🦋 **Tracy Moore '65** has joined the board of ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives. The archive contains written, photographic and other information on GLBTs which has been accumulated since the creation in Post-WWII 1940s Los Angeles and New York of ONE magazine (one of the first periodicals catering to the early development of a political consciousness in the lesbian and community).

QUAD HAPPENINGS The Queer Community and the Campus

New Dean of Students

The GLBAA has said good bye to a very valued friend, Sarah Westfall, who was Dean of Students until she left Denison earlier this year to accept the position as Vice President for Student Development and Dean of Students at Kalamazoo College. During her seven years on

campus Sarah was a strong supporter of the GLBAA's goal of a diverse and welcoming Denison.

Laurie Neff, a DU grad from the class of '81 and roommate of **Kim Cromwell '81** in their head resident days, has joined the college administration as Dean of Students. She had most recently served in a similar position at Randolph-Macon College and in related areas earlier at the University of Richmond. Upon graduation from Denison she was on staff for a year as Assistant to the Deans in Student Life and also completed a year-long graduate assistantship as Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Student Life. Laurie is a divorced mother of two daughters, Heather and Meredith, who will attend Granville schools in the fall.

We wish Sarah all the best and look forward to a productive association with Laurie.

An Update from Our Representative to the Alumni Council by Tom King '69

Alumni Council met October 20th-21st and heard a presentation, "The Denison Experience: Faculty, in the First Person." A DU alum who had just received tenure talked about what it's like to be part of a faculty as we shrink the student body, grow the faculty and adjust to a 3:2 teaching load (teaching three classes one term and two the next). We also had an update on the \$550 million endowment (from which 5% a year is spent), heard about the trustee meetings and discussed alumni travel programs.

We have been in conversation with Sandy Ellinger, Director of Alum Affairs, and her office concerning a possible article in the DENISON magazine that would serve to grow the GLBAA by talking about the phenomenon experienced by many GLBT alums when they discover that the campus is a much more diverse and accepting place than it was when they were undergrads.

Julie Mulroy: On the Mend

Biology prof Julie Mulroy -- who with Professor Lee Bostian of Music helped bring together the alums from 1966-1986 to found the GLBAA back in the late '80s -- has finally turned a medical corner. She reports a dramatic improvement in her health after struggling for years with an increasingly severe neurological disorder apparently caused by a reaction to toxic mold. The good news is that Julie is feeling better every day. SHE reports that her recently renovated home is on its way to being something of a showplace! As she has in the past, Julie will open her home to alums at Homecoming. Watch for the GLBAA schedule! Her home phone is 740/587-2814 (cell is 587-0477), and the address remains 5 Sheppard Place, just across North Burg from Denison's west entrance (Wyn Southgate's house, for you old-timers).

We are so relieved that she is feeling better, and -- as always -- we appreciate her dedication to the GLBAA.

Thank You, GLBAA!

The GLBAA has made a gift to Doane Library and Outlook of an annual subscription to the hard copy versions of *The Gay & Lesbian Review*, which features essays, reviews and poetry from prominent scholars, writers and commentators on events and issues of interest to the GLBT community.

Outlook a Visible Presence on Campus

by Josh Williams '07

Outlook Alumni Liaison

Once again, Outlook has had a busy and productive semester on The Hill. In February Outlook sent seven students, along with our advisor, Carrie Kortegast, to "Alphabet Soup 2007: The Midwest Bisexual, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Ally College Conference" at the University of Minnesota. Participants attended a variety of workshops with such titles as, "Being a GLBT Activist: Inside & Outside Our Movement," "Genderqueer Through the Ages" and "Red Letters and the Rainbow: Why Religious Involvement is Vital for the GLBTQ Community." Speakers and entertainers included bisexual rights activist Robyn Ochs – who we hope to bring to Denison next year – Loren Cameron (transsexual activist) and comic Margaret Cho. Not only were our members able to network with leaders of other LGBT organizations from across the country, but they also gained valuable insight into how to more effectively run a LGBT organization at Denison.

In a few short weeks we will again be observing the National Day of Silence, handing out t-shirts for all students who wish to take a vow of silence on April 18th to echo the silence that LGBT and ally students face every day. We expect over 100 students to participate this year.

At Denison's annual Relay for Life we will again sponsor an amateur drag show, giving men and women from different organizations across campus the chance to compete for the title of "Mr. and Miss Relay for Life 2007," with a cash prize in the form of a donation to the winning participants' team.

Our year will culminate with the annual professional drag show to be held on April 30th in Slayter Hall. Emceeding will be a Columbus drag queen, Anisa Love, who will bring her troupe of Columbus' finest ladies! Every year the drag show draws a huge crowd of roughly 200 students, many of whom have never seen a drag performance. Many eyes are opened to one aspect of the gay community, and the atmosphere is one of acceptance, surprise and excitement.

A Message from Kim Cromwell

So many of us were touched by Nan Nowik during our time at Denison. For me, Nan was a wonderful mentor. She had an uncanny ability to really listen, to give each one of us her full attention, and to engage about things that matter. I felt like Nan treated me as an adult -- just as I was becoming one. She took me seriously. She invited me in. She helped me to make meaning of life during a time that was sometimes tumultuous.

Over the 25 years that have passed since my graduation from Denison, I've been amazed by the number of people who have commented on the impact Nan had on their lives...even as recently as a few months ago when I heard from an alum with whom I hadn't spoken since 1981 and he brought up how often he still thinks of Nan and feels the impact of her words.

And so, in memory of Nan and the impact she had on so many of us, I've decided to create a scholarship fund in her memory -- targeting women students in need of financial assistance. The fund is called the "Cromwell Scholarship in Memory of Dr. Nan Nowik."

If you or anyone you know would like to make gifts to this fund, make a check for any amount -- payable to Denison University -- and simply earmark your gift for the "Cromwell Scholarship in Memory of Dr. Nan Nowik." Send it to Denison University, University Resources & Public Affairs, Box D, Granville, OH 43023. Of course you'll also be acknowledged by Denison for the gift, and your name will appear in Denison's annual report of donors.

Please spread the word. Thank you for considering making a gift to the fund, and for remembering Nan in any way that seems fitting. She lives on in all of us who knew her.

About VOICES SWELL

📄 VOICES SWELL, the newsletter of the Denison University Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Alumni/ae Association, is circulated to members of the association and its friends. 📧 Contributions of text, and donations toward the costs of publication and postage, are always welcome. 📖 The newsletter takes its name from lines of the Denison *Alma Mater*: "To Denison . . . In praise our voices swell" ⇔ Subjects and contributors to VOICES SWELL are gay, lesbian, bisexual and straight; in the absence of a specific statement, mention in these pages should not be taken to imply that a subject or contributor is either gay, lesbian, bisexual or straight. 📧 Mail for VOICES SWELL should be addressed to: Rick Carson, 1035 Cherry Street NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701 (voicesswell@aol.com). 📧 Anonymous submissions will be printed but should be accompanied by the name, address and telephone number of the contributor. ⚡ Fred Porcheddu '87 founded this publication; Fred, Jeff Masten '86 and Rick Carson '65 have edited previous issues, and this one was edited by Rick. ⚡ GLBAA Steering Committee members are: Rick Carson '65, Kim Cromwell '81, Tim Ewing '89, Tom King '69, Peggy Knapp '66, Jeff Masten '86, Valerie Mockus '94 and Dan Ryan '84. They may be contacted via e-mail at denisonglbaa@yahoo.com. ➡ Check out our website at www.thomasking1.com/GLBA.htm.