

# Tennessee Finalizes SEC-5 Plans <sup>9</sup>

The Fifth Southeastern Conference of Lesbians and Gay Men will be held August 1-3 in Memphis, Tennessee. Tennessee is an ERA-ratified state.

The Memphis chapter of the Tennessee Gay Coalition for Human Rights voted unanimously in a Feb. 4 meeting to host the conference.

"Planning is going very well at this point," said Bill Johnson for the Conference '80 Committee.

Johnson, in a telephone interview, said that the chosen theme for the conference -- "Aware and Active" -- reflects both a positive gay self image and a gay political awareness and activism for the 1980s.

He said one objective of the conference is to involve gays from Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Missouri as well as Southeastern states which have previously participated.

Committee member Regina Russell said, "We in Memphis, being more 'western' in our communications network than 'eastern,' feel the conference can bring together the Southeast and the Southwest to create a larger and more stable network to challenge the fundamentalist 'New Right' movement that is presently sweeping the country."

The Committee is planning for about 1000 people, though hotel convention facilities for up to 2000 are available.

Plans are being made for two keynote speakers. No woman keynoter has yet been confirmed. The Committee has confirmed Leonard Matlovich as the male keynote speaker, "to speak on a political topic," according to Johnson.

A concert is being planned for Friday evening, and a dance for Saturday evening.

Russell says several workshop topics are already on the agenda. These include: "How Not to Organize--The Pitfalls of a Beginning Group in a Conservative Area"; "Fighting Back--Answers to the 'New Right'"; "Lesbian Mothers/Gay Fathers"; and "Homosexuality and the Bible."

Many workshop topics are based on the feedback sessions and evaluation sheets from previous conferences.

When asked specifically about minority involvement in the planning, Johnson said, "Since Memphis is 40% black, it would be very irresponsible not to have blacks on the Committee. Several local blacks are involved in planning, and Billy Jones of the National Coalition of Black Gays is helping us out too."

A regional planning meeting will be held in Memphis on April 5 to plan fundraising and other activities. Johnson said that the Committee is "poorly fixed for money."

(Gay Conference, cont. p. 12)

## Women's Center Houses Agencies

Plans for the new Orange County Women's Center in Chapel Hill are underway.

The Center was started by a \$30,000 anonymous donation from a woman.

The only stipulation was to have the Center house the Battered Woman Coalition, Rape Crisis Center, and the Women's Health Counseling Service.

Some temporary programs will also be housed there, for example, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act job training program for disadvantaged women, headed by Jane Ryan.

The Board of Directors is taking suggestions for possible activities at the Center.

Possibilities include counseling groups for women, lesbian rap groups, a library and reading room, workshops, a childcare center, and an overnight shelter.

The Board of Directors is looking for one full-time person or two part-time workers to coordinate programs and to raise funds. For infor-

mation, contact Elaine Barney or Janet Cohn at 929-0471.

The Women's Health Counseling Service will be training new counselors in April. Interested persons should contact Elaine at 929-0471.

Volunteers are needed to help with publicity and fundraising for the Women's Center. Volunteers should call 967-9301.

The Center will hold an auction and an open house all day on May 4.

Donations of furnishings and other items will be accepted for the Center and for the auction. For more information, call Rachel at 967-9301.

"Not only is it good to see women making the decisions, but it is important that there is a consolidation of services to women," one woman said.

For more information, contact:  
Orange County Women's Center  
307 North Columbia Street  
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