

Stepping Aside

One of CGA's problems has always been a lack of continuity and a resulting failure to pass along critical skills and knowledge to the next crew, which then wastes valuable time and energy rediscovering what works and what doesn't. This haphazard method of succession is not unique to CGA; many University groups face this problem.

Oddly enough Lambda, as CGA's newsletter, has not fared as badly as CGA itself because certain skills and information have been passed along. Lee is the latest link in this sharing, and his strenuous exertions of time, talent, and energy have been largely responsible for what we've been able to do in the last three years.

But both Lee and myself are stepping aside, and we need a new production coordinator and a new editor. We've announced this at two called meetings, and now we're going public. Our fond hope is that the next two issues will be put out by a new production coordinator and a new editor, with the help of Lee and myself. Lee will describe his job later; I'd like to say a little about mine.

The new editor needs to have a vision of what Lambda should be. Mine was that it should be as professional as possible, which eventually brought about a major change. Last year we ran out of money after the second issue. I decided that we should try to find enough advertising to completely pay for the next two issues. But if we were going to have advertising, the newsletter had to look better, so we converted from smudged mimeograph to offset printing. All of a sudden Lambda looked wonderful; although initially we had thought of advertising as only the solution to a monetary crisis, reader response has been strongly favorable. Student government agreed and funded 50% of Lambda's budget for this year. They did not cut our part of the budget at all, and CGA ended up with its largest budget to date.

You can't just have a glossy apple however; it's got to taste. Professionalism applies to quality and originality of material also. Besides the pat on the back of having articles reprinted in state and national gay magazines over the past two years, some of the articles have been notable local successes ("Three Freshmen," for example). Even though I would not like for my vision to be entirely replaced, you need your own vision -- plus the ability to encourage fellow staff, ignore impossible SAFO and student government bureaucracy when necessary, and coax and plead with reluctant printers. One thing is not necessary: high visibility. You can be as discreet as you want to be; if you've got a wonderful production coordinator, you can even be a closet editor.

The year before I became editor (1981-82), nobody cared enough about Lambda to make it a success. The vision and the energy were missing. It can happen again; a little apathy now could really hurt, especially with advertisers. Don't let that happen. Being editor is being given the chance to do something that matters, the chance to make the campus a little better.

-Bill

WANTED: Versatile, well-rounded, skilled persons Friday for newsletter production for unique (queer?) organization. Must be compulsive and meticulous, have some free time, and enjoy sniffing rubber cement. Should also be a computer head (IBM-PC, running Peachtext's file manager). Must be conversant with lesbian typographers, word processor operators on caffeine, harried printers, disorganized Postal Service employees, and budding journalists. Budget writing and business correspondence skills also helpful. Varied duties demand diplomacy, assertiveness, patience, perseverance, an eye for detail and a steady hand with an exacto knife. Persons should be able to maintain calm when articles are still being written during layout and when helpers get punchy and tell bad jokes after extended session with rubber cement.

These generalists will be entering an exciting field; job is never routine! Salary is comparable to other all-volunteer organizations (zilch!), and in fact your pocket money may be solicited at times.

Your product will be seen by 800 readers, including your fellow students, your elected student representatives, your town's elected officials, and subscribers from Cullowhee to Manteo. You will be a tool for eradicating misinformation and prejudice about lesbians and gay men. And you'll feel pride that you are creating community and culture.

Apply in person on Monday, February 27, 7:30pm, in the CGA office, 207-B Carolina Union.

-Lee