

C. L. O. S. E. R. C O N N E C T I O N S

Newsletter of the Community Liaison Organization for Support, Education, and Reform

Asheville, North Carolina

October, 1988

October, 1988, is a very important month. It marks the first anniversary of the historic *March on Washington* for Lesbian and Gay Rights, held in Washington, D.C., October 11, 1987. Many of you were there, joining over half a million other marchers in the first national march for the civil rights of lesbians and gay men. It was the largest gathering of lesbians and gay men anywhere ever. Charlotte and I were not there. Although we had been gay all of our lives, at that time we had not yet become active in the lesbian and gay community, and were only vaguely aware of the March. A letter from close friends in St. Louis who had participated in the March changed that. They wrote a single-spaced six page letter about the March experience. A sample:

[Arlene, a lawyer, wrote] "At times I felt like crying during the march, and at times I did. I can't even tell you when or why, but just the overwhelming feelings that it engendered, and the awe that we are marching for our rights, our dignity, our acceptance. It's thrilling and moving at the same time. I kept thinking of the song, 'We will not, we will not be moved, we will not, we will not be moved' That's the way I felt most of the time. For Zuleyma [a biology professor] most moving was 650,000 of us singing together Holly Near's 'We are a gentle, loving people, singing for our lives...'"

The Tuesday after receiving that letter we attended our first C.L.O.S.E.R meeting, one in which March experiences were shared. It was exciting, thrilling, exhilarating, and uplifting to hear about those experiences, and to feel the tremendous power which all of you who went brought back with you. You brought back the spirit of the March, and that spirit has changed our lives and the lives of many others around you.

This month we celebrate the anniversary of that March. Let us help to keep that spirit alive and with us always. Let each of us, singly and together as a community, continue this process, so that we all can become forever free.

THANKS

Thanks to everyone who pitched in to help out at Jim and George's. It was greatly appreciated.

Special thanks, hugs, kisses and whatever to BILLIE for the lovely new C.L.O.S.E.R. sign. What a thoughtful and beautiful gift!

Thanks to Ben and David S. for arranging for our Annual Dinner guest speaker, Amy Ashworth, to come to Asheville. Our deepest appreciation, too, to their parents for donating the transportation costs from New York. The two families became friends when Ben asked Amy to speak at the First Annual Dinner, and have maintained that friendship over the years.

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