

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Asheville, North Carolina

October, 1989

Community Liaison Organization for Support, Education, and Reform

C. L. O. S. E. R.

Celebrating 10 years of service
to the gay and lesbian community

Celebrating Our Tenth Anniversary by Bill Allen, President

In thinking about CLOSER's tenth anniversary celebration I have both a sense of pride and awe.

I believe that we all share pride in CLOSER and all that it represents. I feel that we have truly accomplished all of the things our name represents: Community Liaison Organization for Support, Education, and Reform.

I feel a sense of awe. The dictionary defines awe as 1) an emotion of mingled reverence, dread and wonder inspired by something majestic or sublime; and 2) respect tinged with fear for authority. We have all had emotions mingled with reverence through life experiences: the experience of being gay or lesbian; the experience of coming out. We have all experienced dread and wonder inspired by something majestic or sublime: the sheer numbers marching on Washington; the dread and sublime emotions at a candlelight vigil or a memorial for those that have died with AIDS. We all have respect tinged with fear when members of our gay community step out and speak out publicly in the face of authority because their beliefs demand that they do so. Involvement with CLOSER, and the lifestyles it represents, has involved, and will continue to involve, many of the descriptors in this definition.

We owe a debt of gratitude to many hard working, dedicated, brave and loving members, past and present. CLOSER is a tangible organization, real, alive, breathing. We are here to feel and to touch. To feel whatever emotion our brothers and sisters are feeling and to touch the lives of all those we come in contact with.

I personally am dedicated to do all that I can to insure these qualities of CLOSER, and with each of us helping each other, our future, CLOSER's future, is secure.