



CLOSER Begins 1991-92 Season

C.L.O.S.E.R. stands for Community Liaison Organization for Support, Education, and Reform, Inc. CLOSER is a gay-affirming group for gay men and lesbians which offers education on topics of interest to lesbians and gays, as well as social and psychological support. CLOSER provides a safe place for people to be themselves, without the pressures associated with other gay spots.

This year's programs begin with the Welcome Back Potluck on September 3, and include a three-part series on Recovery, a Candidates Forum (see page 1), a square dance, a game show, the popular program Profiles (interviews with lesbians and gay men), and of course monthly potlucks.

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started having lesbian socials once a month on a Sunday. We did that for awhile, and then three women got together took the responsibility for starting a real organization," McLean said.

LE TSA meets twice a month on the first and third Tuesdays. "On the first Tuesday we either have a discussion group, and it's been various topics, such as coming out, or dealing with being gay at work.... Sometimes we'll have a special program, and bring somebody in....

A rap group for gay and lesbian singles will meet again this year, with the first meeting being held on Tuesday, September 17, at 6:30 PM, before the regular program.

CLOSER's Annual Anniversary Dinner has drawn such crowds in the last few years that it was decided to spread the activities out over two meetings.

The week of October 15-22 has been designated as the Anniversary Celebration. CLOSER's twelfth anniversary will be marked with a guest speaker on October 15, and CLOSER's Service Awards (and possibly its Humanitarian Award, see page 8) will be presented at a festive Twelfth Anniversary Dinner on October 22. Mark your calendars now!

On the third Tuesday night we always have a potluck and we play games afterwards, like board games or cards," McLean reported.

Meeting size averages around eight women, and the most they ever had was 19. "We thought that was phenomenal," McLean commented.

Any woman wanting more information about the group can write LETSA at PO Box 905, Mountain Home, TN 37684. If you include your phone number, someone will call you back with the time and location of meetings. ▽

The 1991-92 officers are John Rider, President; Nancy Snead, Vice-President; Jim Fowler, Secretary; and Rick Wooley, Treasurer.

Rider, Wooley, Kisha Anderson and Kelly Finn were elected to the Board of Directors in May to serve two-year terms. When Finn moved out-of-state in June, the Board selected Dan Marshall to replace her. Fowler, Snead, Charlotte Goedsche and Betsy Mayers are serving the second and last year of their terms on the Board.

CLOSER meetings begin at 7 PM with socializing and light (non-alcoholic) refreshments. At 7:45 we gather in a circle of chairs for announcements. The program itself starts at 8 and lasts about an hour. Many people stay afterwards to talk.

CLOSER meets in the parish hall of All Souls Episcopal Church, Biltmore. CLOSER is not affiliated with All Souls, and is not a religious organization.

Many CLOSER members remember the first time they walked through the door of the Parish Hall, where all CLOSER meetings are held. Some of us were scared, for it was the first time we had ever attended a gay/lesbian group. But many of us also remember the friendly greeting that awaited us there and kept us coming back week and week.

Won't you join us? We can promise you interesting programs, some serious, some just plain fun. And we would love to greet you, be it for the first or the umpteenth time. For more information, call Joan or Dan Marshall at 277-7815. ▽

Purposes of CLOSER

"To provide, free of charge, social and psychological support services to gay men and lesbians, or to persons who are coming to terms with a gay or lesbian identity.

"To conduct, free of charge, educational programs that will increase the cultural, physical, and psychological well-being of the gay and lesbian community.

"To provide the public with accurate information about gay men and lesbians in order to reduce prejudice and the likelihood of hate-violence against gay men and lesbians."

Membership in CLOSER

"Any person who subscribes to and/or sympathizes with the purposes of the corporation and is eighteen(18) or more years old is eligible for membership. Membership shall become effective upon payment of the annual dues established by the Board of Directors."

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