

Annual report for 1976.

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Gay Peoples Union, inc.



Annual Report for 76

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

Gay Peoples' Union is an organization which is serving the community through the Farwell Center, in which it holds its weekly meetings. In October, G.P.U. decided to move the Hotline-for-Help into the Center under the direction of the newly formed Counseling Committee. The Library was also partially moved into the Center when locks were put on the doors to the room.

With these additions to the weekly meetings and the V.D. Examination Program we are now operating the Center on a part-time basis and have it open every night of the week giving service to the community with the volunteer help of our members. In addition, I donated and put up two bulletin boards for news and notices.

In May, an agreement was reached with the Gerald E. Meyers Foundation, that G.P.U. would buy the furniture in the Center's offices. We now own virtually all of it, with the exception of the chairs in the meeting room which are to remain with the G.E.M. Foundation. Our thanks must again be given

to Gerald Meyers for his foundation having given us use of this space rent free. Without his support of our work, we would never be as effective as we now are. With his help we have been able to help literally thousands of people each year.

At the beginning of the year the Board decided to keep trying for 501(c)(3) tax exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service. Howard Brown, our lawyer, was let go and we hired a corporate lawyer, Harry Theuerkauf. He advised us to sell the newspaper to a separate corporation. A committee of three from the Board, three from the paper, and three from the general membership was set up to work out the arrangements. The new corporation would pay G.P.U. \$500.00 and could retain the use of the name and the lambdas logo. Divestiture was completed in June but we still don't have our reapplication filed yet.

We had an inactive Board due to a lack of a quorum sometimes during the year. Chairperson, Grant Michael Fitzgerald left and was replaced by Pat Batt in summer. Later Miriam ben Shalom resigned because she could not regularly attend Board meetings. Her term will be completed by Persia Straub.

By Rick Richardi, Chairman

P R E S I D E N T ' S R E P O R T

The year 1976 has been a year of changes for G.P.U. in several ways. We had to hold special elections in the middle of the year due to the resignation of the President, Lew Drew, and the Chairman of the Board, Grant Michael Fitzgerald, and the creation of a new Secretary's position, so substantial changes occurred in operations.

After being elected, I proposed a reorientation of G.P.U.'s efforts. This received little support and generated much hostility, so I conducted a survey at two Monday meetings as to why people were attending and what they wanted to get from meetings. This helped to bring me more closely in touch with what the members were thinking. A different reorganization was then put into effect and the members have responded to it with an increased volunteer effort that has put the group on a dependable base.

A new Counseling Committee was formed which pulled together all our counseling and the Hotline-for-Help. This committee has had six weeks of

inservice training. Thus our counseling services have been up-graded while the number of volunteers has been reduced. We now have live operators on the line only during the evening hours and play a recorded message the rest of the day and night. This has allowed the addition of news and events announcements on the tape-recorded message which we hope will help to form the feeling of gay community.

The moving of the Hotline into the Farwell Center with the operators working there each night has opened the Center for drop-by use by the community. To encourage this, the members voted to lease a soda machine to install in the Center. With the meetings, bulletin boards, V.D. testing, counseling, and the library now all at the Center, it can become the type of place that can reach out into the community and attract people to use our services and facilities.

A new public relations committee was formed to handle not only speaking engagements, but also to confront homophobia whenever it seemed prudent and effective to do so. (An interesting acknowledgment of our past efforts came last spring when the association of Milwaukee broadcasters asked me to address them after having been selected as one of 200

"community leaders." They got a fast forty-five minutes of what gay liberation was all about.) Money was given--by an anonymous friend--to Roger Durand and I so that we could attend a W.C.L.U. speech given by Senator Nelson. There, we talked not only with him but also many other local state politicians in attendance. We were shown on the TV news broadcasts that evening.

This fall we began an attempt to open up the Milwaukee School District to the topic of homosexuality. We have met with school officials at Bay View High School and are trying to prod them to include homosexuality in the regular curriculum.

Members of G.P.U., working through and with the Methodists' Taskforce on Homosexuality here in Wisconsin, got some pro-gay statements approved at the annual conference. It is important to note that this was achieved only a month after the Methodist National meeting resoundingly voted down similar proposals. That shows that our year-long efforts of education and discussion were an effective way to achieve some change. It must now be pushed beyond words into actions and reality.

I have continued to act as a contact with the

black gay social groups throughout the year. This next month I will be starting a new group for men into interracial sex.

G.P.U. members served as resource people at the Febr. 10 conference at the University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee, where Ralph Blair, of New York's Homosexual Community Counseling Center, addressed over 200 people in the social service fields.

I had set up a University of Wisconsin Extension follow-up class for the fall but it did not have sufficient enrollment to go ahead, so it was given at the Farwell Center instead. The efforts to get on the Educational Telephone Network of U.W. Ext. also have not been successful as yet.

Some members attended the June 19-20 conference in Madison, Wi. on Gays and the Law. The following Monday, the featured speaker, Bruce Voeler, Director of the National Gay Task Force, spoke to our members at a regular meeting.

Another important change, planned from early in the year, became effective in summer. G.P.U. Inc. sold the assets and operations of G.P.U. News to Liberation Publications, Inc., a Wisconsin corporation

newly formed by the staff of the paper. The value was set at \$500.00 although the total value was negative because of unfulfilled subscriptions and commitments to pay for the IBM composer machine. This amount is being paid in the form of advertizing in G.P.U. News for our V.D. testing program and the organization.

This was done on the advice of our lawyer, hoping that such a divestiture would enhance our chances of gaining 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. Because of this separation, our total moneys received this year are substantially reduced from last year's. For your information, and to help in making comparisons, G.P.U. News reported \$13,322.27 income for 1976 and yet was \$710.00 short on cash flow.

After this split became effective, the lawyer went on a month's vacation which was followed by a few long trials. Then Carter won the Presidency and we decided that we would stand a better chance of success if we filed after Carter had appointed a new Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service.

Following through on that, I have written a letter to Carter explaining our and other gay groups' problem and urged him to make a pro-gay person his new Head of the I.R.S. Copies of this letter were

sent to Senators Nelson and Proxmire, Representative Reuss, The Advocate, N.G.T.F., Gay Rights National Lobby, and Frank Kamany, urging all of them also to send letters to Carter to appoint a sympathetic I.R.S. head.

Senator Nelson has promised to question whomever is nominated during their confirmation hearing before his Senate Small Business Committee. The Advocate has said it would give editorial support at the time they think would be appropriate (which had best be soon to be effective).

After becoming President, I revived the Scientific Study Committee. Headed by Roger Durand, it conducted a poll of the attitudes of candidates for public office concerning a variety of issues related to homosexuality. The results were released to the press and proved helpful in educating the voting public.

A couple other members of G.P.U. and I became deputy voter registrars, thus a new service could be offered to our members and the public at meetings.

A short-range Fund Raising Committee was formed which conducted many successful efforts reported later in this booklet. As usual we participated in the

annual Gay Pride Parade in Chicago, June 27 and both the Spring and Fall Brady Street Festivals, here in our own neighborhood.

It should be noted with sadness that the day of the Spring Brady Street turned out to be a day of loss. Jay Garland died in a motorcycle accident, June 6, after many of us had been with her during the day. She had served as our founding Vice President and on many committees. She brought many women to the group and added to our uniqueness as a co-sexual group. G.P.U. members helped with and attended the funeral.

Despite all these changes, this year as in the past, we have seen competent and experienced liberationists leave for other cities. Seldom do we get an equal number in exchange. Thus, G.P.U. has a long record of sending trained, liberated people to the rest of the country.

In order to be able to devote the volunteer time needed to instigate all these changes, I resigned from the Presidency of the Milwaukee Hotlines Council, Inc. which I had helped to organize and which has aided greatly in G.P.U. achieving recognition in the helping community and from governmental bodies.

I also declined nomination to become President of the Wisconsin Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects, and also of the Milwaukee Libertarian Party. While I have not participated actively in the other organizations, I am also a member of N.O.W., A.C.L.U. F.O.E., S.A.H., etc.

I cite all of this only to reiterate my long standing observation that the Gay Liberation Movement will never be able to become as effective as it needs to be to accomplish its goals until it does not have to depend totally upon volunteers. There are few indeed who will reorganize their lives as I have done so as to make considerable time available to do the work of gay liberation. And those few of us are not enough to get the job done.

Further, the members of G.P.U. stated overwhelmingly in the survey I conducted that they saw the need for a paid staff.

Thus, during this next year, we must all work to raise thousands of dollars so that one or two people will be able to be paid to work full time on nothing but gay liberation. If we expect to achieve the major changes in the way our society operates, then we must make that our BUSINESS on a full-time, day-to-day basis. We must have leaders who can meet

with other community leaders during the daytime of-
fice hours. The business of gay-lib is full-time,
and we must all cooperate to obtain the money to pay
for full-time leaders.

As it is now, we volunteer leaders do not even
do a good job of leading the rest of the volunteers.
And because of our time limitations we loose many
potential volunteers who need more guidance than
we have time to give them.

We are on a plateau now and have been there for
several years. If we want to improve our educa-
tional efforts, our charitable help, and our scien-
tific studies, we can only do so by making the leap
into having full-time paid leaders. Hopefully,
1977 will be the year that we achieve that goal.

Alyn W. Hess, President

RECORDING SECRETARY

In 1976 there were some changes
in the By-laws of the Corporation. In
April it was suggested that the By-Laws
be amended to read that 10% of the total
membership or 20 members be present for a
quorum, rather than 10% or 25 members be

present. It was also moved that Article 5,
Section 5 be modified to include 'program
chairman' in the duties of the Vice-president.

A motion was presented, also in the April
meeting, to create a third category of member-
ship: Associate Membership. Although this was
discussed at length during the year, there was
no final action taken by the membership.

Article II, Section I was amended to in-
crease the annual dues for active members from
\$2.00 to \$3.00.

Article V, Section I, was amended to change
the office of Secretary to Recording Secretary.
Under this same section the office of Corres-
ponding Secretary was created. These changes
then became Article 5, Section 6a, and Article
5, Section 6b of the By-laws.

Although it was moved that the duties of
'program committee head' be added to Article 5,
Section 5 of the By-laws, the motion did not carry.

An Amendment to Article 4, Section 7 regarding
Board Members' attendance at Board Meetings was made,
but the motion was tabled until the language of the
motion was clarified.

Bill Straub

G. P. U. INC. ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FISCAL 1976

by Treasurer Si Smits

	1975	1976
Cash Received		
Collection at Monday meetings	659.17	795.05
General Donations	193.76	1293.68
Membership Dues	274.00	272.00
V. D. Examination Center	3192.80	3231.44
Speakers Honorariums	138.95	45.00
Library	42.00	19.00
Donations for Public Relations	462.42	327.40
Fund Raising	288.63	1159.01
General Corporation Operations	105.00	50.04
Phone Committee, Hot line	30.00	105.28
Building Fund Donations	338.63	35.00
Counseling	.00	25.00
Donations, Safransky Fund	347.66	N/A
Interest from Savings Accounts	123.42	159.98
Total Cash Receipts	\$ 6196.44	\$ 7517.88
Cash Expenses		
Library Committee	192.90	105.07
Speakers Committee	109.54	55.00
Membership Committee	48.88	88.33
General Corporation Operations	318.14	1080.44
Phone Committee, Hot Line	67.02	426.78
Legal Services	860.00	31.60
V. D. Examination Center Operations	250.13	162.10
V. D. Examination Center Salaries	1833.29	2090.06
Public Relations	432.22	283.67
Fund Raising	26.38	19.41
Savings Account	1000.00	905.00
Federal Government, FICA, State	642.94	583.80
Corporation Assets	N/A	1841.60
Bank Service Charges	.00	17.38
Counseling Service	N/A	15.00
Total Cash Expenses	\$ 5781.44	\$ 7705.24

1* In 1975, \$235.32 was paid directly to the phone company by the Gem Foundation for the use of the V.D. Examination Center Hotline.

2* A \$9.03 mistake was made in the 1975 financial report. The figure read \$338.63, when it should have been \$347.66.

G.P.U. News figures are not included in this years report, since it separated from the Corporation in the Spring of 1976, and is now Liberation Publications Inc.

TOTAL RETAINED EARNINGS FOR 1976

Balance in savings accounts, Dec 31, 1976	\$ 3,729.29
" " checking	773.79
Total in G.P.U. Accounts	\$ 4,503.08

V. D. EXAMINATION PROGRAM

The G.P.U. V.D. Examination Center is funded from three sources: The City of Milwaukee Department of Health Grant, the G.E.M. Foundation, and G.P.U. There is further cooperation with the City V.D. laboratory which performs the actual tests on the specimens taken at the Center. The State Health Dept. provides the discreet follow-up contact of those clients whose tests show positive.

During 1976 we paid 11 examiners and the director. Operation expenses for this program were:

Salaries paid & reimbursed by city	\$2589.00
Misc. Medical supplies and phone	<u>270.93</u>
Total expenses	\$2859.93
Donations from clients and gifts	251.06

This was the second year with operations on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 8 to 11 PM. This year on alternate Tuesdays and the last Saturday of each month we provided examinations at the Club Bath thanks to Paul DeMarco.

Free V.D. examinations were provided to 687 persons this last year. They owe a special debt of thanks to our examiners for their time

and effort.

Rick Richardi, Director

STATISTICS FOR 1976

There were 11 examiners and one director.

Gross salaries	\$2589.00
Fed. Income tax withheld	288.89
State Income tax withheld	57.60
F.I.C.A.	<u>165.32</u>
Net Salaries	\$2077.19

Approximate Statistics on Tests Performed

Total number of clients	687	57/month av.
Syphilis examinations	559	47/month av.
Gonorrhea oral cultures	558	47/month av.
Gonorrhea urethral cultures	547	46/month av.
Gonorrhea rectal cultures	452	38/month av.

(These figures have not been verified by either the city or the state.)

We have not yet received the total number of positive tests which were found in the laboratory.

Marc Behar

COUNSELING COMMITTEE

This year the phone line was moved to the Farwell Center (in late Fall), which operated for seven nights a week, under the newly formed Counseling Committee. During the first part of the year we tried to continue operating a 24-hour Hot-Line for Help, but it became increasingly difficult to provide counseling by qualified counselors for all those hours. Thus the Hot-Line is staffed seven nights a week from 7 to 10:30 P.M. A recorded message, on a telephone answering machine rented from the Telephone Company, informs callers of news and events when the line is not staffed by a counselor.

Face-to-face counseling is available on Wednesday nights, and monthly meetings of bisexual men are being held at the Center. We hope to expand these special counseling meetings.

The Counseling Committee was chaired by Rick Richardi and Louis Stimac during the past year. Although it is not possible to give individual recognition to the Hot-Line volunteers,

a special vote of thanks is due them. Without their efforts we would not have been able to offer this service to the community.

In-service training sessions were held for the volunteers, and a new representative to the Hot Line Council was appointed to attend its monthly meetings. We are indebted to the Hot Line Council for its assistance. A three-day training session was provided by the Council, through which we gained greater understanding of our problems and operations.

The statistics for the year's calls received on the line are as follows:

2218 Counseling
1282 GPU and other gay organizations
3015 Bars and Bath information
247 V.D. Information
602 Referrals to other agencies/individuals
for further assistance

7364 Total

Rick Richardi

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

In the three months that I acted as Public Relations Director I was able to accomplish some major inroads, but also me with many disappointments.

Initial emphasis was placed on the media. I was able to meet with representatives of all four television stations. I was able to establish a "contact" person with The Milwaukee Journal. Written contact was made with every radio station; however, I was only able to meet with personnel from three outlets.

When it comes to television, all in all I think that industry deserves praise and credit for fairness and a willingness to offer an example of gay portrayals and gay lifestyle. This, of course, comes out of the national network. On "news", however, we have a long way to go. Network news almost never has any gay news, and local outlets aren't much better. Channel 12 did do a bit on lesbians during a week long news feature. Channel 6 had several gay related shows on the Ralph Adam Fine series, and Channel 10 has had two fine gay features.

However, the others (4 and 18) were void of any local gay programming. All said they would consider future programs. When it comes to news, it is an uphill battle.

We were unable to get Channel 12 to do much of anything about the "Kojak" episode that was objectionable to some (mostly the National Gay Task Force). The gay community believed, after the strenuous and well-publicized objections we made to a "Marcus Welby" episode two years ago, that the producers and networks would never again be so insensitive as not to realize that storylines about men molesting young boys are seen by the public as stories about gay men. The refusal of CBS to understand this point led to the approval of the "Kojak" episode. While there was overwhelming circumstantial evidence to lead the public to the gay equals child molester conclusion, I felt that perhaps NGTF had jumped the gun. Channel 12 was cooperative during the weeks of dealings with them and we were the ONLY gays in the entire country allowed to previews the show.

The Milwaukee Journal continues to see homosexuality as either hilarious or bizzare. But we have made great strides there. Run-of-the-mill arrests for gay activity are no longer reported,

gay news is reported fairly in most cases, and coverage has become more extensive. I have formed a relationship with two editors where I can now see either one with little or no notice. Both have been most helpful thus far. It should be pointed out that what they feel is newsworthy and what I feel is printable, differ somewhat, even now. But we have our foot in the door.

Radio stations are almost disastrous failures. We can not seem to even get our meetings announced on "Community Calendar" programs. Exposing prejudices also tends to make one unwelcome. It is this area where much work needs to be done, and I hope to stress this area this year. Even after members of GPU supported WFMR, we cannot get announcements on that station. Most will not even agree to a meeting and those that have still will not give us broadcast time.

In the course of three months I have sent out over 100 letters on other matter on behalf of GPU. Many praised actions taken, others took people to task. The subjects ran the gamut from a soft drink machine to be installed in the Center, to parking and jaywalking tickets

being issued to gay people on a discriminatory basis.

I was able to meet with the Captain of the Vice Squad of the Milwaukee Police Department. Our entire conversation (while informative) was "off the record".

A great deal of time was spent in getting to see political leaders on every level. However, this was mostly in regard to educating them in matters important to the gay community. As a member of other gay related committees, I also dealt with legislative problems at the same time. I was able to meet with over half of the Assembly, ten State Senators, representatives of the Governor's office, and members of our own city council.

I met with Milwaukee County health officials on several matters: hepatitis, new strains of V.D., discussed treatment of gays of Milwaukee County Hospital. I was told the practice of stamping "HOMOSEXUAL" on health records of gays would stop.

I was able to work out a system where gay prisoners would receive treatment for V.D. at the House of Correction.

With Alyn Hess, I went to school officials on behalf of a young member of GPU. This affair is still being worked out. Alyn is working with the youth

and trying to get school officials to initiate a proper educational programs to avoid such cases of harassment in the future. I am working with him in this endeavor.

I have been able to set up a liaison with Community Services, AA, WIN, and The Dewey Center, to refer gays to GPU when needed.

The functions of the former Speakers Committee have been included under Public Relations and I made the following speaking engagements on behalf of GPU:

Bryant and Straton College (2 classes)

Wisconsin Christian Group for the South Side
16th Street Community Center

UWM- 4 classes

Wisconsin Baptist Organization for the elderly
B'nai Brith Youth Organization
Wisconsin Conference for Psychiatry

Others also spoke to college classes,

Planned Parenthood seminars and the

Sexual Assault Treatment Center at Family Hospital.

I feel that we have increased the community's awareness that GPU and gay people are here and a part of the community. I hope to raise our dignity and fundamental liberties.

Roger Durand

SCIENTIFIC SURVEY COMMITTEE

We launched an ambitious survey of legislative candidates in the 1976 Fall elections. A committee of four (Jim Herman, Bill Straub, Roger Bleasdale, and Roger Durand), compiled a survey and mailed the questionnaire to every candidate vying for seats in the Assembly and Senate. Another questionnaire concerning federal laws was sent to candidates for national office.

The survey served several purposes. It advised the hundreds of thousands gay citizens of Wisconsin where candidates stand on issues affecting their lifestyle. It also showed how candidates felt toward "human rights". It was also a valuable educational tool useful in continuing desensitization of homophobic public leaders, and can be viewed as a head start for a 1977 effort to repeal the sex laws since it identified pro-gay and anti-gay legislators before they were elected.

GPU NEWS' bulk mail permit was utilized to mail the 377 questionnaires. Each had a self-addressed and stamped envelope enclosed. The postage was \$77.28; printing costs and materials were an additional \$30.00.

Results of the survey were mailed to all major (some minor) newspapers in the State, all radio stations and TV outlets. The results appeared in several newspapers and some radio broadcasts. It was ignored by the large Milwaukee media. Every homophile organization in the State received the results on candidates in their respective areas. GPU News printed the results also. Part of the postage cost was offset by a donation. Print cost was \$8.00, and the entire cost was under \$125.00.

Positive results of the project will not be known until a bill is brought to the Assembly floor. While only 12% of all candidates responded favorably in writing, another 22% have responded verbally and have indicated their colleagues were impressed by the survey. Continued State-wide gentle consciousness raising will be needed if there is to be any statutory change this year, or in years to come.

As Richard Flintrop, 56th District Representative said "I am pleased to see you directing your efforts to those issues which might 'safely' be addressed by the legislative process. Some materials coming out of other gay groups has been somewhat ignorant of political realities."

Roger Durand

FUND RAISING EVENTS

The rummage sale was held on Sunday August 29th at the Farwell Center and on Saturday and Sunday September 18 and 19 at the home of Roger Lee. Net profit \$405.60. Advertizing costs were donated by a member of GPU.

Thanks to the committee and those who donated rummage, and others without whose help the money could not have been raised. Special thanks is due Donna Coleman who donated her time, truck for transportation, and numerous articles which contributed immensely to the success of this event.

Roger Lee

There were six film showings this year, providing a modest income of about \$40 to \$70 per showing, after expenses. The dates, usually a Saturday at 8 PM, were announced at meetings. In addition a list is maintained of people who wish to be contacted regarding the showings. A donation of \$3 is requested and refreshments are furnished.

Dean S.

MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

This was an exciting year for GPU in terms of programming. During the first part of the year the weekly meetings (except for the business meetings) were somewhat loosely organized and seemed to lack direction. After the election of a new President and the corresponding selection and assignment of a Program Committee consisting of two co-chairpeople, GPU embarked on a definite pattern of featuring both formal speakers and having general and topical rap sessions. We have attempted to reach the needs of our membership through a program of presenting meeting based on suggestions from the membership at large, as well as seeking to fill those needs which seem to be evident to the Officers and Directors.

A sampling of the format and topics presented during the last half of 1976 include a Catholic nun who spoke to the group on establishing a perception of a loving God; a discussion group on our use of words/semantics; a presentation of sensitive crimes by two people from the District Attorney's office; a visit

from and discussion of topics of both national and local concern by Dr. Bruce Voeller from the NGTF; as well as a presentation and awareness session on S/M presented by two people (including a past member/officer from Chicago).

In the rap sessions we have attempted to touch upon areas of concern to our membership including such diverse subjects as stereotypes; rejection; self-awareness; governmental and legislative needs and general consciousness raising, and gay pride.

As a result of this deliberate action of "making all members a part of the group", we have seen a marked rise in attendance at the weekly meetings; with the usual number in attendance exceeding 40 and sometimes going as high as 65. Additionally, because of an increased awareness on the part of our community members relative to the "new" direction the meetings have taken, we are seeing a rise in the numbers of people who are joining GPU and becoming involved.

It is the Program Committee's intention to maintain this high degree of concern for topics of interest, and thus develop a stronger, more aware and better informed membership.

Pat Batt

Jan Casberg