

NOGLSTP *Bulletin*

Summer 1999

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NOGLSTP, PO BOX 91803, Pasadena CA 91109, phone/fax: 626 791-7689, <http://www.noglstp.org>

Queer Fauna, Naturally

Transsexual Fish

In mid-August, the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Scientists visited the Aquarium of the Pacific. Among the fantastically colorful and diverse displays of the flora and fauna of the Pacific Ocean was one entitled "Gender-Bending Fish." Hermaphroditic Sunset Wrasses exhibit female characteristics until the wonder years, maturing into males. Environmental cues catalyze the Blackspot Angelfish to morph from female to male. Most interesting sociologically are the Redfin Anthias. This species lives in harem-style groups, with one male among many



females. When the male dies or disappears, the dominant female does what is necessary to perpetuate the group. She transmogrifies into the only male. Makes one wonder whether any of this particular species are initially males... Transsexualism in fish appears to be quite common, and has been reported in many scientific papers. Nevertheless, the LAGLS people were thrilled to know they weren't the only queers at the aquarium.

LAGLS members Shelley, Candy, and Barbara flirt with giant sea otter of unknown gender.

This Could Be You!

You can organize a NOGLSTP chapter in your hometown and have just as much fun as the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Scientists. The NOGLSTP office will even help you contact fellow technoqueers in your geographic area and assist you with publicity for your first event. You'll make new friends, you'll have a good time, you'll take pictures, you'll send them to us with your event summary, and there you are! Contact the NOGLSTP office for more information.

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Two-Daddied Vultures

The London Independent (August 2, 1999) reported that a pair of homosexual griffon vultures at Jerusalem Zoo have lovingly reared two fledglings of their endangered species.

The adult males, known as Dashik and Yehuda, built a nest last year and set-up home together. In the spirit of gay liberation, they openly and energetically mated, but failed to produce a single egg.

Then, as an experiment, Israeli zoologist Shmuel Yidov took a day-old vulture chick that had been hatched in an incubator, inserted it carefully inside a swan's egg and slipped it into the nest. Fooled, the pair took turns to sit on it and warm it until it hatched again.

Dashik and Yehuda then reared their baby. They did a great job," said the zoo's spokeswoman, Sigalit Dvir. "They shaded it on hot days, they brought it water from a pond, they fed it, they stopped it falling from the nest."

Griffon Vultures have been threatened with extinction in Israel because they ate cattle carcasses that had been poisoned by farmers to control wolves. Over the past decade, the Nature Protection Society has hand-reared 80 nestlings. Vultures generally lay only one egg a year, but if it is removed from the nest they lay a second. So the conservationists take the first egg and incubate it, and a second egg is assured.

The trouble is that hand-reared vultures find it harder to adjust to nature. They look for human beings to feed them. "It's better," Shmuel Yidov explained, "for vultures to take care of vultures." Gay or straight.

For more information about sexual diversity in nature, read *Biological Exuberance: Animal Homosexuality and Natural Diversity*, by Bruce Bagemihl, St. Martin's Press, 1999. Book review and pricing available via amazon.com.

Queer Professionals Networking

The **Sociologists LGBT Caucus** had their annual business meeting, a reception, and a community activist panel discussion at the American Statistical Association Annual Meeting in Chicago this past August. For more information about SLGBTC, visit their web page at <http://qrd.org/qrd/www/orgs/slgbtc/SLGC.html>, or write to PO Box 2133, St. Cloud N, 56302-2133.

The **Gay and Lesbian Statisticians Caucus** got together at the Annual Joint Statistical Meetings in Baltimore in early August. For more information about the GL Statistician's Caucus, email bradleyr@oplc.psb.bls.gov, or phone 202 667-0835.

The **LGBT Chemists and Allies** met for dinner at the August National American Chemical Society meeting in New Orleans, despite unsuccessful efforts to have their event announced in the meeting program issue of *C&E News*. For more information about the LGBT Chemists and Allies, look on the internet at <http://www.noglstp.org/lgbchem>.

The **Gay and Lesbian Medical Association** sponsored its 17th annual conference, themed "Taking Care of Our Whole Community", in late August in San Diego. This annual conference is regarded as the premier venue for medical education addressing the mental and physical health of the LGBT community. More information about GLMA, and lead articles from their very informative *GLMA Reporter* can be found at their website <http://www.glma.org>.

The American Public Health Association will hold its annual meeting November 7-11 in Chicago. **APHA's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Caucus** will be sponsoring 7 separate sessions at the conference addressing life cycles, conflict/violence, substance abuse, and suicide. They will also be an exhibitor at the conference. For more information about the conference, contact APHA at 202 777-2742, or visit <http://www.apha.org>.

Other Events of Interest

Pasadena Pride Festival, featuring a science and technology exhibit by JPL/NASA and NOGLSTP: September 18, 10-6, Memorial Park, Pasadena CA; coordinated by Catalyst Project, a non-profit volunteer organization which fosters community building in the San Gabriel Valley. For more information, call (818) 545-4661, visit the Catalyst Project web site at <http://www.catalystproject.org>. See accompanying article.

Out & Equal Leadership Summit: October 15-17, 1999, Atlanta, GA. For more information 415 439-4272 or <http://www.outnequal.org>

Models of Pride Conference for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth: October 23, Occidental College, Los Angeles CA. For more information 323 692-9320 or <http://www.modelsofpride.org>

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PAVILION AT PASADENA PRIDE '99 - GOING WHERE NO PRIDE FESTIVAL HAS GONE BEFORE

by Jeff Levison

Pasadena, California is world-famous as a hub for scientific achievement and technical excellence. On Saturday, September 18, 1999, the city adds a new venue to showcase this accomplishment: the Third Annual Pasadena Pride Festival celebrating the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered community of the San Gabriel Valley. For the first time, the festival will include a Science and Technology Pavilion featuring exhibits from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals. The pavilion is one of the defining elements that makes Pasadena Pride distinctive among Pride celebrations taking place throughout the country and representative of the festival's target community.

"Participation in Pasadena Pride is a natural choice for JPL as we strive to fulfill NASA's vision to inspire Americans and to benefit life on Earth," says Dr. Rudolf Danner, coordinator of the JPL exhibit at the festival. JPL, a NASA facility managed by the California Institute of Technology, is Pasadena's largest employer and offers domestic partnership benefits and a support group for its gay and lesbian employees. "To succeed," says Danner, "JPL needs to draw on talent from all parts of society."

The JPL exhibit will provide an overview of space exploration as well as describe several spacecraft missions currently underway. Information panels, scale models and spacecraft materials will illustrate the institution's efforts to visit Mars and Saturn, return comet samples to Earth, and even image planets in solar systems beyond our own.

NOGLSTP will be hosting an exhibit documenting lesbian and gay scientists of historical note. "People are always surprised to learn that there are gay scientists," says Barbara Belmont, NOGLSTP exhibit coordinator and chemist at a Los Angeles area laboratory specializing in custom chemical analysis. "Of course we are everywhere, now and historically!" The exhibit will feature portraits and bios for fourteen outstanding scientists, including Alan Turing, the father of the modern computer, and Neil Divine, who developed theories on star formation. Says Belmont, "This project is an ongoing effort to provide role models for young queer scientists and affirm scientists of all orientations."

"Prideful Past, Powerful Future," this year's international Pride theme, is incorporated in the Science and Technology Pavilion exhibits and embodied by its participants. "On the job, it's empowering to facilitate our straight colleagues' development of positive attitudes toward gay people by being role-models and successful professionals," says Rochelle Diamond, a research biologist at Caltech and NOGLSTP chair. Diamond and Belmont have been partners for 16 years. Belmont adds, "It's exciting to be ambassadors of our professions to the non-technical community, and gratifying to help explain science of all types to the gay community." Danner mentions, "As a member of the gay community, I am proud to work in an open and respecting environment and participate in the ongoing adventure to accomplish what has never been done before."

Communicable Communications

Everyone knows to be careful about contaminating their computers with viruses. And you'd think that everyone who is inclined to adult play knows how to utilize internet chat rooms to "play" safely. Apparently not. At least seven gay men who had sexual encounters with men they met through America Online's SFM4M chat room have been diagnosed with syphilis. Due to privacy policies, AOL was not able to release information to the health department about its members who had visited the chat room. In an ingenious effort to help the health department with its notification job, AOL put them in touch with PlanetOut employees, who spent two weeks visiting the chat room warning users about the syphilis outbreak.

Your Tax Dollar at Work - Queer News from the Federal Government

Executive Order 13087

On May 28, 1998, President Clinton issued Executive Order 13087 amending Section 1 of Executive Order 11478, reaffirming the Executive Branch's longstanding internal policy prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation within Executive Branch civilian employment. By issuing this Order, the President reaffirmed long-standing Office of Personnel Management (OPM) interpretation of applicable law and added sexual orientation to the list of categories for which discrimination is prohibited, which include race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap and age. As the nation's largest employer, the Federal Government sets an example for other employers in prohibiting employment decisions based on any consideration other than a person's ability to perform his or her work. The Office of Personnel Management, the federal government's human resource agency, has compiled a guide entitled "Addressing Sexual Orientation Discrimination in Federal Civilian Employment", available on the web at <http://www.opm.gov/er/address2/Guide01.htm>.

FDA's Diversity Celebration

The Food and Drug Administration will be holding its 1999 Diversity Celebration September 13-16. The theme of the event is "Embracing a Vision of Unity". Salutaris, the queer employees group at National Institutes of Health, will be presenting one of a number of seminars and discussions over the 3 day event.

Organizing at HHS

Interested people at the Department of Human Health Services got together in early September for the first time to establish a group to address gay and lesbian issues.

Spies-in-the-Sky Endorse Diversity

The Director of the National Reconnaissance Office issued a "diversity endorsement" Director's Note in June. This essay was an endorsement of diversity as a means to enhance one of the NRO's strategic goals - "To Create and Maintain a World Class NRO Work Force", and a challenge to increase the diversity of the NRO work force. "The NRO's diversity includes more than the differences in race, gender, religion, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation. It also encompasses our different values, cultures and perspectives we as individuals bring to the workplace in the accomplishment of the NRO mission."

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES?

Check your mailing label. If it says 199907-199910, it is time to renew your dues. If it says 199903-199906, or trial2, it is past time to renew or join, and this will be your final newsletter unless we hear from you. We need and appreciate your continued support. Please fill out the form below (and on the other side of this page), and return it with your check to NOGLSTP, PO Box 91803, Pasadena CA 91109. Remember to add \$5US if you are subscribing outside of the US. Thank you. You may also use this form to inform us of any address or area code changes.

cut here

Membership Form

To renew your NOGLSTP membership or become a member of NOGLSTP, support its activities, and receive a newsletter, complete this form and send it with a check or money order to:

NOGLSTP
PO BOX 91803
Pasadena CA 91109

Annual Membership Dues are:
\$15-25 (sliding scale) (tax deductible after the 1st \$10)
\$10 for students and unemployed*
*inquire about our limited free memberships to 'starving students'
\$5 extra for memberships outside of the US
(for the extra postage) (US Funds only, please!)

Renewal New Info change only

Name: _____

Address: (don't forget your zip code!)

Telephone: _____

Email/URL: _____

Technointerest or profession: _____

Latest Degree/Subject: _____

Do you want your name and phone/email printed on a membership roster to be released to other NOGLSTP members?
rYES rNO

Do you want your email/URL to be placed on the NOGLSTP web page?
rYES rNO

Don't forget to fill out the other side

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

This fall, NOGLSTP will be reconvening its Board of Directors and setting some strategic goals for the next few years. If you are interested in applying your leadership skills and vision to this organization, please take a few minutes to let us know you would like to be in the pool for consideration as a candidate for NOGLSTP's Board of Directors. You can fill out the membership form enclosed in this newsletter, or you can send an email indicating your interest to volunteer wrangler Barbara Belmont (bbelmont@access1.net).

In the spirit of sharing the joy, the NOGLSTP office seeks a new editor for the NOGLSTP Bulletin. Layout/design and desktop publish the NOGLSTP Bulletin 4 times a year. Get content from the NOGLSTP office and add your own content. Internet access is required, as well as a profound respect for deadlines and grammar/spelling. NOGLSTP will provide software if necessary. Commitment level: 6-8 hours every 3 months for one year minimum, beginning January 2000. Inquire via email to bbelmont@access1.net.

Membership/Renewal Form (continued):

Please list any other professional organizations that you belong to:

Special Techno-Interests or Expertise:

For New Members: How did you learn of NOGLSTP?

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP US WITH? (CHECK ANY THAT INTEREST YOU)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HOLD OFFICE

AAAS

FUNDRAISING

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

EDIT NEWSLETTER

PRODUCE NEWSLETTER

NEW PAMPHLET TOPICS

GRANT WRITING

G/L/B/T CAUCUS OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES (which one?)

OTHER _____

ABOUT NOGLSTP

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF GAY AND LESBIAN SCIENTISTS AND TECHNICAL PROFESSIONALS, INC., is a nation-wide organization of lesbian and gay scientists and technical professionals, regional and caucus groups, and others interested in technical matters and the gay and lesbian community. NOGLSTP's goals include dialog with professional organizations, providing information, improving our member's employment and professional environment, opposing homophobia and stereotypes, educating the gay, scientific and general communities, and fostering inter-city contacts among our members. National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals, Inc. is a tax-exempt educational organization under IRS section 501(c)3, incorporated in the State of California (TAX ID # 95-4358685). Membership dues are \$15-25 (sliding scale) annually for non-students. Student dues are \$10 annually. After the first \$10, dues are tax deductible. \$5 extra for memberships outside the US for the extra postage. Please, US dollars only. Written correspondence may be addressed to: NOGLSTP, PO BOX 91803, Pasadena CA 91109-9813. For more information, see our web page at <http://www.noglstp.org/>

1997-1998 Elected Board Members:

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Newsletter

The **NOGLSTP Bulletin** is published quarterly. Articles are encouraged and gratefully received. Handwritten, typed, and magnetic (3.5" pc-FD) may be sent to the NOGLSTP office. If you have internet access, articles may be e-mailed the NOGLSTP office c/o bbelmont@access1.net

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