

notes from SASG

Fostering personal development - Embracing queer identities - Cultivating community strength

Spring 2003

Volume 03, Issue

SASG's Zoning Issue Is Finally Resolved!!

On Tuesday morning, May 20th, I went for the last time to the City of Seattle Department of Construction and Land Use (DCLU). After about 18 months of trips to "Bureaucracy Land," several thousand dollars, a lot of paperwork, and the drawing up of numerous architectural plans (many thanks to **Cathy** and **Rich Gaspar** for providing **Caroline Lee** from their staff to do the plans for us!), we have finally received the permit that states that SASG has a special zoning exemption and can continue to exist at 303 17th Avenue East. What a relief!!

Tim Jenkins, Board President, had the honor of pulling the bright yellow "Notice of Proposed Land Use Action" sign out of our front yard.

About the only good thing that came out of this enormous hassle was the magnificent response in support of SASG that came from many of you, our group members and volunteers, as well as from other friends in the community and many of our good neighbors. Last December the City called for community input regarding our appeal and about 70-80 letters were received, only one of which spoke against our application. I had the pleasure of receiving copies of many of those letters and it warmed my heart to read all your kind and supportive words. One letter stood out from the beginning, written by Cheryl Fontaine. She began her letter to the City by claiming she felt she was "being called to define and justify the life of angels."

To all of you who wrote letters, who sent e-mails, who inquired about our progress over the last 18 months, my deep personal thanks.

Susan Dunshee

"Shindiggy on down!"

By now most of you have likely heard of SASG's ongoing casual social event for queer/lesbian/bisexual women and their friends, *Saturday Shindig*. Recently I interviewed **George**, *Shindig's* host, and **Tonya**, one of her fabulous co-hosts, to get the inside scoop on this increasingly popular event.

Enjoy, Airen

Question: What is *Saturday Shindig* to you?

George: "It's certainly an alternative to spending a Saturday night in a bar. It's a place to meet people without pressure. Also, on a personal note, it just gets me in such a great mood!"

Tonya: "It's an escape...and something to attend at which I know that I can be myself and have fun."

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Q: "Why do you think *Shindig* gets such rave reviews?"

G: "I think that people like the variety of activities. I don't remember us ever having two nights that have been the same. Also, it seems that attendees really enjoy our field trips about town."

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Q: "I've received, via e-mail and phone calls, lots of kudos for you, as the host, George. Why is that?"

G: (laughs) "'Cause I'm cute...and single!"

T: "Yeah, I think that's it, and she's always got a smile on her face."

G: "Actually, I really try to keep in touch, over e-mail, with people who attend, keeping them in the know about opportunities to connect that aren't necessarily on *Shindig* evenings."

Saturday Shindig is held on the 2nd & 4th Saturdays of each month, from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

For the scoop on upcoming *Shindigs*, please e-mail George at shindig@sasg.org.

Shindiggy on down to join these cool gals soon!

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Are you Queer/LGBTQ and a PARENT?

If you are, then one of SASG's upcoming support groups might be a great fit for you!

Airen Lydick, one of SASG's Programming Managers, is hoping to start an on-going, weekly support group for *Queer/LGBTQ folks who parent in any capacity*, beginning in early Fall 2003.

If you think you might be interested in joining such a group, please contact Airen at airen@sasg.org or

SASG is currently seeking new Board members. If you think you may be interested in such an opportunity, please speak with Susan, our Executive Director.

For the latest on SASG,
check out our fabulous
new website:

www.sasg.org

Meet the newest members of SASG's Board of Directors:

Greg Hunicutt joined the Board of Directors a year ago and recently co-chaired SASG's *Spring Fancy* with Vinnie Diana. Hunicutt is adamant about SASG "being an incredible safety net and soul-strengthener" when times were tough for him in the late '90's. He served as the American Heart Association's communications director in the Northwest prior to going on disability last summer. Hunicutt moved to Seattle five years ago from Texas, and he has also lived in Florida, Georgia, New Jersey, and Virginia. He's a sea kayaker and loves to fall asleep at the symphony.

Adele Peters-Johnson has been on the SASG Board of Directors since Spring of 2002. She comes to the Board with a history of volunteer work in the AIDS community, beginning in 1989. Her volunteer experience spans across a variety of events and organizations, with time spent as the Media Chair for the *NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt* display in 1991 being the most life-changing and impacting of all. Her commitment to this cause comes from her passion to heighten the visibility of AIDS issues within the greater community and from her personal dedication to realizing better lives for friends living with AIDS. Her commitment to SASG stems from her years of witnessing SASG's outstanding support of friends facing the challenges of HIV/AIDS and her recognition that the agency provided vital support that was not available anywhere else.

I was born 62 years ago in New Haven, Connecticut as Vincenzo Antonio Gennaro Diana. My first language was Italian, and well into college I had no English for many common household objects and expressions. The experience has left me feeling slightly foreign and out of step with mainstream America. After college (degrees in Classical Languages, Ancient Near Eastern Cultures, Aesthetics, and Political Philosophy), I traveled through the U.S. and Canada (with 3 dogs and a lover) for a couple of years in a VW camper – earning my father's affectionate disgust as an "overeducated Hobo," an opinion further reinforced when I repeated the experience in Europe several years later. I have been a 2nd grade teacher, a college instructor, a landscaper, a florist, a case worker for social services, a middle management corporate drone, and a house husband. I love to read, to play with friendly dogs, and to try to understand people.

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PRIDE POWER UP

GET REAL! That's right, *Random Acts of Kindness & Creative Potluck*, two of SASG's newest groups were taken to task right away in planning SASG's Pride festivities for 2003. We've put together a schedule of events that you're going to love. **Join us Sundays by 5:00 p.m.** to execute this mighty plan for connection thru Pride.

We got things rolling by designing a **parade display** that captures the energy of our community at SASG. "*BONFIRE*" emerged as the pictorial representation of programming at SASG. Look for our huge bonfire emerging from the SASG float. We are psyched for a wicked display that may feature some additional surprises with your help.

Then, look forward to joining us for events on the official SASG Pride schedule. We'll kick the festivities off at **Friday Feast, June 27th at 5:00 p.m.** Then, join *Urban Hikers* for a double dose on Friday at 6:00 p.m. and *again* on Saturday at 6:00 p.m. as we head to Volunteer Park for a free, fun movie. Pride Sunday means we get to march with the SASG team.

Following the Pride festival, we'll head back to the SASG house to carpool to Golden Gardens for *Gaymes/Bonfire BBQ*, brought to you by *Random Acts of Kindness & Creative Potluck*.

Then, start your "Post Pride Power Up" with *Queer Conversations* or your pick of superior SASG groups and keep it going with the "Fierce Fourth Feast" Bonfire BBQ at Alki. We won't stop until you've got pride.... now and all year.

GET REAL @ SASG. connection thru community ... community thru connection
mail T@sasg.org to march with SASG and/or help the house Sundays at 5:00 p.m. @ SASG.

GET READY, GET SET, . . . GET REAL!

With its youth-friendly campaign, *Get Real* is the root from which all programming targeting Queer men and people infected/affected by HIV/AIDS grows. Looking at the tree of programs that I tend to, you'll notice all the great groups you've grown to love: *HIV/AIDS and AIDS, HIV Negative Gay/Bisexual Men, Mothers, Hep C, Bailey Alums, 40+ Gay/Bisexual Men, Project POZ, Shoulders, Multiple Loss*, and others. Then, you'd spot the blossoming new groups like *Random Acts of Kindness, Creative Potluck*, and *Urban Hikers*. In these new groups, the emphasis is on connecting. Next, you'll spot the budding of another wave of programs, including *Bonfire* and *Gaymes* where all queers get the chance to come together for fun at Golden Gardens (then Alki on July 4th) for games of all sorts, followed by a roaring bonfire where you can toast marshmallows and score new relationships. Come Fridays for *Urban Hikers*; then return Sundays for your chance to connect through volunteering together and creating at *Random Acts of Kindness* and *Creative Potluck*. You'll plan for *Gaymes* and *Bonfire* together because you don't want to miss it!

Watch for additional branches taking shape via *Love Thy Yummy Tummy* and *Mommy's Dearest*, coming this summer, and see T today to be part of *POZ Outlook* where you get your shot at shaping the future of programming focusing on people with HIV/AIDS. All for you at the House you love....

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Upcoming SASG Volunteer Birthdays

June

- 5 Niki Whiting
- 8 Nikki Plaid
- 17 Ryan Wilde

July

- 2 Tim Jenkins
Scott Heartfield
- 7 Joel Davis
- 8 Randy Royall

August

- 21 Daniel Williams
- 26 George Wheeler
- 30 Kerb Lydick

If you are an SASG volunteer and your birthday is missing from the above list, please inform Airen. Thank you, and happy birthdays to all!

SASG Has A New Annual Fundraiser!!

On Sunday, May 18th, SASG held a wine-tasting event which was billed as “*Spring Fancy...Posh Wines from Here, There, and Everywhere.*” By all accounts from those present, it was a big success! We have Board members **Vinnie Diana** and **Greg Hunicutt** to thank for that.

Vinnie and Greg put in hundreds of hours since the beginning of the year procuring the wine itself (all generously donated by **R. H. Phillips-Hogue**), the wonderful auction items, the fabulous flower arrangements by **Raul Ramiriz** (every single one of which turned into an auction item and was snatched up by guests), and the elegant hors d’oeuvres (courtesy of **St. Clouds Restaurant** in Madrona, **the Sea Wolf Saloon** on Capitol Hill, **Changes Bar & Grill** in Wallingford, and the culinary talents of **Pat Donahue**, Community Volunteer Extraordinaire, who was also very instrumental in helping us find the sponsors and donors who made this event possible).

The heavenly sound of a harp playing on the stairwell landing was supplied by **Geri Howe**, harpist/vocalist and loving volunteer in the hospice community.

Special volunteers deserving our thanks for extraordinary efforts on the day of the event are **Carol Horowitz**, **Anthony Andersen**, **Adele Peters-Johnson**, **Jim Cannon**, **Tim Jenkins**, and SASG’s own amazing all-around volunteers **Mark & Thomas**.

Lavish auction items were donated by **R.H. Phillips-Hogue**, **La Vassar Florists** in West Seattle, **Travelers**, “**A Shop Full of India on Capitol Hill**,” and the **Seattle Theatre Group**. **Bargreen Ellingston Foodservice Supply & Design** generously contributed the wine glasses for the event.

For all of you who missed it this year, we hope you’ll attend next year. And in the meantime, if you get the chance, please thank our sponsors and donors by purchasing their products. Also, if you have the opportunity, please thank them in person for supporting SASG.

Susan Dunshee

notes from SASG is our quarterly newsletter. Issues will be distributed seasonally as follows: Winter (January-March), Spring (April-June), Summer (July-September), and Fall (October-December). The inclusion of persons’ names in this newsletter in no way identifies their sexual orientations, gender identities, or HIV statuses. Please direct your ideas for, feedback on, or questions about the newsletter to **Airen Lydick**, SASG Programming Manager/Volunteer Coordinator: 206.322.2437, airen@sasg.org