

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

To
TARHEEL LEATHER CLUB
For their generous donation to
help ease our financial crisis
WE APPRECIATE
YOUR ASSISTANCE

FINANCES

Stuart Norman, Budget & Finance Chair
Lenny Broberg, Treasurer

The former treasurer, Earl Resch, was relieved of his office at LIL VIII due to dereliction of duties, and the EC elected Lenny Broberg as interim treasurer. At the December 8th EC meeting, there being no response from Mr. Resch, Lenny agreed to accept the office and was elected by the EC to finish the term. Mr. Resch did return all NLA property and financial records that were in his possession. Lenny and David Scribner have been bringing the books up-to-date. Unfortunately, rumors abound that there has been another embezzlement. Now that all records have been thoroughly checked we can safely report that we can find no indication of financial improprieties.

However, the NLA is facing financial difficulties due to a falling membership base and heavy LIL expenses. Cost-cutting measures are being implemented such as a bulk mailing permit, oversight controls on ongoing EC expenses and tight financial controls on LIL. In addition, we will cease to publish "QuarterLink" and return to a simple, monthly newsletter. All records are now computerized, which will help us to keep a close watch over the day-to-day operations of NLA. We have also reset the fiscal year to coincide with the natural year.

In the next few weeks we will be implementing a membership drive. If you know former members, please encourage them to renew. Now that we have a home office and many new administrative policies and procedures in place, we expect to run a neater and leaner NLA that will be able to offer its members things of which we have only dreamed. We are striving for a balance of membership benefit and fiscal responsibility. Your patience, encouragement and support are appreciated.

We will publish a full financial statement in the next issue of "The Link"

THE NLA YEAR IN REVIEW

Sallee Huber, Co-Chair

1993 brought many changes to both NLA INTERNATIONAL and its many Chapters. On a regional level, NLA:San Diego and NLA:Austin both held very successful events, LeatherFest V and Texas Leather Pride III, which raised thousands of dollars for charity. Both Chapters are already well into the preparation of this year's events, which are expected to draw even more people than before.

The NLA sorely missed the long running May Days celebration in Seattle, but all will be glad to hear that NLA:Seattle will once again be hosting this oldest of NLA Chapter events in May of this year. The Chapter has already secured the necessary sites for the festivities.

NLA:Metro New York once again played a key part in the always successful Leather Pride activities held annually in New York and is, of course, very active in plans for Stonewall '94, Gay Games IV and, most especially, the Leather Celebration to be held in June (see article, page 6).

NLA:Houston made their mark in their superb hosting of Living In Leather VIII, as well as keeping busy in local events. The Chapter's participation was also quite noticeable at the 1994 Pantheon of Leather Awards which were held in Houston in March.

In local activity, NLA Chapters in Dallas, Portland, Columbus, Toronto, Kansas City, Vancouver BC, and Indianapolis all hosted social, educational, and fundraising events in their communities throughout the year. (If I've missed anyone, I apologize, but it HAS been a busy year for everyone!)

NLA I has been busy not only in the annual planning of LIL, but in streamlining the By-Laws, documenting the actual Policy and Procedure we operate under and forming the groundwork for us to finally apply for Not-for-Profit status in 1994.

These internal workings have taken a great deal of effort and time and are still ongoing, but if NLA is ever to achieve its potential and goals, then it is mandatory that this work be done. As an NLA "elder" and founding member once hammered into my head, "An organization that fails to plan, plans to fail."

The largest, and most significant, internal
Con't Page 4

FROM THE HOTSEAT

Albert Kraus, Co-Chair

This is the first of a planned series of articles in "The Link" during my term as your Co-Chair. The intent is two-fold: to inform and to address issues of concern to you. Even before I was installed in office I sent each Chapter a letter. I asked to meet with the officers and representatives of each Chapter. During LIL in Houston many of you took advantage of a face-to-face meeting. We have begun to develop personal working relationships that I intend to build on. Several of our affiliate organizations also asked for a meeting and I have begun closer relationships with them as well.

While the local leaders had me behind closed doors we pulled no punches. I am happy to report that both sides did a lot of talking and much more listening. Are we perfect? Neither local nor International! We are however working on the same goals. Our main task is to start working together more.

The most common question I have been asked (mainly by individuals) is: "What does National do for me?" The answer is both simple and complex. The quick and easy answer is not much. The more complex issue is what should "National" be doing for you. If you expect National to come in and "fix" local problems you will be disappointed. If you expect National to plan and operate parties and social events in your city you will be severely disappointed.

To analyze this issue we need to understand HOW the various units (Chapters, Affiliates and International) accomplish the Statement of Purpose. We also need to look at the relationship between each of these parts of the whole.

Your dues to the International Association permit you to join with others in becoming a large force with a loud voice. What do you get? You have the advantage of having a "professional" organization to serve as a watchdog for an issue that hits you hard - your sexuality. The impact of the name and size of the NLA allowed us to have a personal meeting with the British Consulate regarding the Spanner case. In the last month I have been interviewed twice. Northwestern University Department of Journalism is doing a magazine piece on alternative lifestyles. We have used this opportunity to show that we really are just ordinary normal people. Many
Con't Page 4

THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROJECT

KT Chase

Domestic violence is an issue that will touch our lives in one way or another, whether we experience it on a personal level, through family and friends or through the media. We must examine this problem and seek solutions. Face it: it happens in our community. And it has absolutely nothing to do with sex, sexuality or our sm/fetish practices. We can no longer afford to ignore this problem. We must take action and become responsible in assisting those who are abused and the abusers themselves. Every instance of abuse or violence within our community affects all of us. Simply turning our backs and ignoring this problem is not the solution.

In 1990, the NLA published its statement on domestic violence. Since then, information has been compiled, and, at LIL VIII, a committee was established to create an educational and information network for our community. Goals of this committee include creating a well-informed speakers bureau who can address our community in a positive manner. Carefully screened speakers will further domestic violence education programs throughout the country about our lifestyles and practices, defining the differences between safe, sane and consensual SM and abuse/domestic violence. The committee also aims to form support groups within our community to assist those affected and to create "safe houses" for those who need protection and support.

These goals cannot be realized without a firm commitment from our community. The Leather/SM/Fetish community is widely reputed nationally for being front-runners in disseminating information about safe sex, AIDS education and basic human rights and in rallying other minority groups behind these causes. As members and chapters of NLA International, we owe it to ourselves to address this issue. In the months to come, information will be made available from this committee to interested chapters and members. As Chair of the Domestic Violence Committee, I encourage all interested members and chapters to contact us through the International Headquarters at the address below. Confronting this issue can be an excellent focus for any chapter.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jan Hall, and all the individuals who participated with her, for compiling our much-needed data over the past three years and to thank the members of the new Domestic Violence Committee for their continued voluntary efforts and commitment.

Even as data has been coming in, we know we have only scraped the tip of this iceberg. Now we need your input more than ever. If you or someone you know in the

FROM MR AND MS NLA INTERNATIONAL

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall riots and the beginning of the current gay & lesbian rights movement. This is also a time of celebration for the leather community, because it was about 25 years ago that the "new leather" started to emerge and leather became political as we took an open stand to fight for our rights. Once again the personal became political as leather folk slowly emerged from our leather closets and claimed our rights to play and love in a safe, sane, consensual and compassionate manner.

I invite you all to join in the celebration of Stonewall 25, but I also challenge you to enlist in the political fight that will continue for many years to come. The forces of the right, those who are actively working for the disenfranchisement, the imprisonment, or the death of all Leatherfolk, are frighteningly well-organized and sadly growing in strength. They have ballot initiatives in at least 9 states that would abolish our rights. The excuses of "my vote doesn't count", "I'm not political", "I'm too busy", "that won't affect me", blah, blah, blah . . . are NOT ACCEPTABLE!!! The "right" is succeeding in the ballot box due to the apathy of our community!

THEY ARE COMING FOR US, and only we and our alliances can stop them. We must focus our efforts on building working alliances with all parts of the like-minded liberal communities. We must heal the rifts that cripple the leather community. We must work together in a united front to secure and protect our freedoms and those of our brothers and sisters.

Yes, play is essential, but we cannot play safely until all of the bullies have been banished from the dungeon.

Yours in leather,
Artemis Silverowl
Ms. NLA International 1994

scene is now or has ever been an abuser or a victim of domestic violence, and particularly if those involved have committed themselves to recovery from abusive/victim patterns, we want to hear from you. Speaking out can seem frightening, but following through is a true commitment to recovery. We will honor anonymous input, if that is the only level from which you feel comfortable involving yourself at this point. This project goes to the very heart of defining the difference between being differently pleased and engaging in criminal activity or being the victim of it. Please help us.

CONTACT:
NLA:INTERNATIONAL
Domestic Violence Committee
584 Castro Street, Suite 444
San Francisco, CA 94114-2500

As we approach the quarter century mark of the Stonewall Riots, we should look back and reflect upon the injustices that have been heaped upon our communities because of the lifestyles we have chosen to lead. Isn't it ironic that we are still fighting for the same equalities that we fought for twenty five years ago?

Although society has become somewhat more understanding and accepting of our lifestyle, our Leather/SM/Fetish family has to continue to fight "the right" for equality. The "right" has been successful in portraying us as part of a deviant group of individuals who wants preferred treatment, instead of individuals who are discriminated against because of their lifestyle.

The Leather/SM/Fetish community has always been in the forefront of the tiring fight for inclusive civil rights which would guarantee equal rights for all. These rights would demand that crimes against people based on age, color, gender or sexual preference be prosecuted as hate crimes and would make it illegal to restrict access to life's essentials to people living with disabilities.

As more of our Sisters and Brothers decide that their "closets" are a lonely place to be and they start to open those doors, it is our duty to be there to help educate them to a Safe, Sane, Consensual and Compassionate lifestyle. It is equally important that we encourage their involvement and contribution to the community in which they live. (A person doesn't have to live in the forefront; you can get a lot accomplished by working behind the scenes.) We must encourage our family members not to stand back and think that somebody else will do the work for them, because if we do, it will never get done. Finally, we must make our communities aware that if we continue to be complacent and not work for what we believe in, the doors to the closets may be nailed shut.

Mark Frazier
Mr. NLA International 1994

NLA:Dallas Presents "BEYOND VANILLA"

When you've finished your SM with the IRS, explore your fantasies with NLA:Dallas, April 15 & 16, 1994
Opening Ceremonies and Fantasy Demos - Friday April 15, 8 PM at the BRICK BAR.
Seminars, - Saturday, April 16, 9 AM - 6 PM at Dallas Gay & Lesbian Alliance Community Center
"Dungeon for Hire" following at THE BRICK BAR.
For more Info contact:
NLA:Dallas
P.O. Box 7597
Dallas, TX 75209

THE LINK 8/1 THE NLA NEEDS YOU!

Many of our members have professional skills that can be useful to the organization. If you can spare the time, THE NLA NEEDS YOU NOW! If you have felt that NLA is not offering all that it could to its members, then let us know; get involved. An organization is only as good as its members want it to be and only that when the members actively participate in it. You make the NLA!

Right now we need to start an economical membership campaign. The NLA needs someone with marketing skills who could volunteer to design and manage a membership campaign. We also need occasional legal and tax advice. Please contact the office at 415/863-2444 if you are willing to help as needed. Thanks for working to make NLA strong.

DOLLARS & SENSE

Sallee Huber

The current financial situation that NLA I faces is neither a new one, nor can it be easily solved. We are not currently as financially sound as we would want or should be, but neither are we dead!

During 1993, the monthly operating costs of NLA I increased because of the added expenses of the NLA Office and other large expenses, such as LIL and QuarterLink. However, LIL didn't bring in as much money as anticipated, and there was no significant growth in Membership. In short, our expenses essentially increased, while our income remained the same.

Throughout the year, the EC made its decisions based on the fiscal advice of our former Treasurer, who told us that all was well and that we could afford the increase in operating expense. As Officers and Members of the EC, we take responsibility in our shared decision to follow this advice and are accountable to the organization for the results.

Unfortunately, the results are that we have been forced to operate on a proverbial shoe string budget for the past several months. While there are no large outstanding bills due, we have not been able to maintain the level of services, such as the Newsletter, that we feel are necessary.

Fortunately, the problem was recognized in time to take the action needed to cut expenses and look for new methods of generating income. The EC has implemented several such steps already, but also looks to the Chapters and Membership for their help in making the NLA more fiscally sound.

The EC perhaps moved too quickly in 1993, trying to be all things for all people, and spent beyond the immediate ability of the group to raise money. This disclosure is one part of remedying the problem.

Contrary to the rumors and gossip, there has been no embezzlements or misappropriated funds, and the spending patterns

NEW NLA INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS AND EC MEMBERS

General elections for the NLA INTERNATIONAL Executive Council were held last August. KT Chase, Lenny Broberg, and Andy Anderson were elected as new members of the EC; Albert Kraus is the new Co-Chair. At the LIL VIII meeting of the EC, Bill Costomiris was subsequently appointed to fill the remaining 1 year At-Large position left vacant by Kraus' election.

At a special meeting of the EC in December, Broberg accepted the office of Treasurer; he will complete the year remaining in the term of former NLA I Treasurer, Earl Resch. Phil Swenson was appointed to fill Broberg's Member-At-Large position.

Both appointments to the EC were made to fill vacancies created by Members At-Large assuming positions as NLA I Officers. The EC feels confident in the appointments of Costomiris and Swenson given the long standing contribution both have made to the NLA. In addition, Costomiris and Swenson received the most votes during the general election after the 3 people elected.

Your designated At-Large Members of the NLA I Executive Council are then: Michael Primrose (Sidney, Australia); Stuart Norman (Greensboro, NC); Tony DeBlase (Portland, OR); Chuck Higgins (Little Rock, AR); Andy Anderson (Toronto, Ontario/Canada); KT Chase (Portland, OR); Bill Costomiris (Asheboro, NC); Phil Swenson (Los Angeles, CA).

The Officers of NLA I are: Co-Chairs, Sallee Huber (Portland, OR); Co-Chair, Albert Kraus (Chicago, IL); Secretary, Jennifer MacFarland (Los Angeles, CA); Treasurer, Lenny Broberg (San Francisco, CA).

The members of the EC stand ready and willing to talk, receive input and ideas and answer questions from NLA Members. They look forward to hearing from Members and people/groups interested in the NLA. The EC may be contacted directly through the NLA office

WASHINGTON STATE MR. LEATHER, 1994

Saturday, April 2
Neighbors Night Club
7:00 PM

A Benefit For
HANDS OFF WASHINGTON
&
SEATTLE TREATMENT EDUCATION
PROJECT (STEP)

THE LINK March 1994

Editor: Donna Shroul
Production: David Scribner

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were no different than those that have long been in place. We simply made the mistake of spending in anticipation of income which did not develop.

The EC and in particular, Lenny Broberg, Stuart Norman and David Scribner have done considerable work in re-evaluating our spending patterns and how we determine fiscal decisions. While the Membership of NLA fully deserves an accounting, we must bear in mind that the organization IS still operational and that we have taken the steps necessary to remedy the problem. As always, the books are open for inspection to all.

The NLA can and will continue to exist to fulfill the Statement of Purpose and the needs of the Leather/SM/Fetish community.

People join the NLA because they believe in its purpose and goals. We are in the NLA to join with others in doing things that a single person or club can not do, but that the NLA can and HAS done; such as, world-wide networking, actions like the Domestic Violence Committee or Spanner Project, or holding an event like LIL. Individuals can not address issues concerning our lifestyle to politicians, the media, or other organizations with the same power we garner when we join together.

Beyond money, however, it is only the individuals within a group working on such projects that make things possible. In many ways, the NLA is more broke right now in terms of "people power" than in terms of money. Many of the projects that would make a significant impact in our community have been slowed or postponed due more to a lack of people than money. Now is the time to make a renewed commitment to NLA I.

The fiscal problems we have experienced have taught us valuable lessons, and we have grown and improved from those lessons, but we are still deficit in the most vital and rare commodity of all: people. NLA I looks forward to a prosperous year. We are on our way to overcoming our problems, and we hope you will help us to maintain the strength and vitality of the organization.

of our members have for years given lectures at a variety of colleges. My second interview was with a television producer. The *Amazing America* program on the Discovery Channel wants to put us in their schedule for next year. We have only had a preliminary discussion but just think of the effect of a positive feature presentation on national television. Add this to the work currently being done by Dr. Ralph Hammond at the University of Arkansas. This is what International can do for you. These are contacts and projects that individuals and even local organizations just can't do. This is how we change attitudes, by showing the positive aspects of our culture. The International also serves as a watchdog and clearing house of information on legal and legislative matters.

Should you think that none of these activities affect you, come out from under your rock. Ask the boys from Boston, the men and women in LA or the bar-owner in Chicago. Police raids still happen. Just because you don't live in Colorado, Oregon, Cincinnati, Tampa . . . I won't give you the whole story, just the moral: and then they come for me and there is no one left to protest. We are the only group left that it is socially acceptable and legally possible to discriminate, harass and even murder.

These activities are where I should be devoting my time a Co-Chair. Unfortunately, too much time is spent putting out fires and correcting malicious rumors. The Columbus Chapter has been a great help recently in correcting misinformation currently on some of the computer bulletin board systems. Sometimes getting outsiders to understand and be tolerant is easier than getting some of our own members to cooperate.

If you still want to know what "National" can do for you, it gives you the opportunity to be part of a team creating positive change. There is a lot to do; become part of the solution.

There are several activities that each of you can do for the entire organization. If you have a problem, bring it to the attention of the right people. A barstool is not the place to air dirty laundry. Can each of us commit to keeping our disagreements in the family? We have enough enemies, we need more contributing team members. Each of you can be our eyes and ears in your local communities. Let us know what's happening, good and bad. We can spotlight your successes to the world. We can also shame some local officials by showing up their bigotry and prejudice. A big function for every member is to be the local expert on the NLA. When you hear others complain about us, challenge them. Ask them to support their position with facts. Don't let ancient history dissuade you from defending the many successes we have had. The day I become ashamed to say I am a member; I'm gone. You are our biggest asset. If you are proud to be a part of this worldwide effort, then recruit a new member. If we all can add one new

(or returning) member, we could wipe out our financial crises in one year. In two years we could be an unavoidable force that our oppressors would have to deal with. You can make it happen.

Now comes the easy part of this article. What 'International' has done wrong and where we need to improve. Making up that list would devastate the NW forests and really stimulate the paper industry. I will concentrate on our biggest failing: Lack of Communication! Our most urgent need is to market the Association to our own members. We are doing some great things, but you don't know about them. This not only is a catastrophe but inexcusable. Our members are the most important part of the Association; they are the entire reason for its existence. We need to get the scoop out to you so that you in turn can spread the word in your local communities. This is what International Level has not done. At least now we recognize the problem and are taking steps to correct it.

The main reason the "QuarterLink" has become more of a "Semi-AnnualLink" is the lack of funds. Let me correct some misinformation right now. NO MONEY IS MISSING! The rumors have been so bad I will repeat this: NO MONEY IS MISSING. No money has been lost since I have been on the EC (since October, 1990). Our problem is we have been spending more than we take in. Unlike the federal (US) government, we can no longer operate on a deficit budget. This has caused us to step back and reevaluate our priorities. The days of being all things to all people are over, at least for now. Many of us have delayed or given up reimbursement of legitimate expenses to get through this crisis.

Our most immediate reorganization of priorities is in your hands right now. We believe getting the information out on a timely basis is more important than a slick magazine. This philosophy will prevail for sometime to come. The second reason is staffing. We are in need of an editor; any volunteers? This is a chance for you to be part of the solution. The third reason is lack of materials. Surely each Chapter and Affiliate has done something since the last issue. If not, we really are in big trouble. Write up your news. This a chance to blow your own horn and challenge others to be as effective as you. At the International level we can print on toilet paper if we have to. We can stretch our time to put out a bare bones version. The one thing we can't create is your input.

What International will not do is solve local issues. This will be the topic next time. There are some definite do's and don'ts in the relationship between all of our various components. If this installment didn't upset you, wait until next time. We do need to have some frank discussion. With a mutually agreed framework we can improve our communication and cooperation. By having realistic expectations we can set our priorities and realistic goals and objectives.

undertaking of NLA INTERNATIONAL in the past year has been the opening of an actual NLA Office, serving as the core for communication and work. This was a badly needed step in making our operation more efficient and accessible to members. The NLA was simply too large to continue working out of members' homes, with no central point for information, storage of records and coordination of work.

On an external basis, NLA I can take pride in the many areas and organizations that we have worked with to help educate society about the Pansexual and Safe, Sane and Consensual nature of the Leather/SM/Fetish life. Specifically, the ongoing work of both the Domestic Violence Committee and the Spanner Project serve as excellent examples of what can be done using the NLA network.

Jan Hall and many other concerned members of the community have established guidelines, information and a definitive statement that has set a standard for action on Domestic Violence. This work has both influenced our own community and has made other communities much more aware of the issues and the difference between SM and violence.

The Spanner Project, spearheaded by Chuck Higgins, has shown how the NLA can be used to influence a situation with in-kind support. With so many worthy causes and problems, NO one group could hope to be able to support both itself and donate to every group needing funds, but the NLA is in a position to be able to help specific projects in other ways, as shown by the Spanner Project.

There are many causes that we can help support by serving as a hub for communication and information; we can especially help new groups without permanent mailing addresses, phone numbers, etc. It is my hope that NLA I may grow to be able to do more such work in the future with many different groups and causes. I believe that this is a crucial part of our Statement of Purpose and role within the greater community.

The primary reason I think these various achievements throughout the past year are important to note is that a lot of what the NLA does -- on all levels -- often goes unnoticed outside one's immediate city or area; it becomes easy to wonder just what the NLA IS doing. Because we have not been able to effectively put out an NLA I Newsletter or paper on a regular basis during this past year, we have failed to communicate our work and actions to the membership; this is not acceptable.

We hope to be able to change this situation and make the sharing of information something to be expected, not just planned. In doing so, the input of ALL NLA members and Chapters is both valuable and necessary. Please let the NLA I office know what your Chapter is doing, what is happening in your community and any questions and concerns you have. We look forward to a new, and hopefully prosperous, year in the NLA!

Whipping it up in Texas Living in Leather '93

by Susan Wright
member, NLA:Metro New York

Houston, Texas and Living in Leather...the two just seemed to go together. The day we arrived, I walked into a local boot store and the rich smell of leather from hundreds of pairs of boots was enough to put me in the mood for the rest of the weekend. Then there were all those black cowboy hats everyone seemed to be wearing with their black leather chaps. I particularly liked the way the Tops often wore them pulled down low over their eyes.

Speaking of excitement, the Texas laws (no dildoes or vibrators allowed! no open toed shoes in bars or restaurants!) didn't keep us from having plenty of fun at the Dungeon parties, which were well organized by Smartplay, Inc. of Houston, Texas. Open until 4am, the space was on the third floor of a large, well-lit warehouse and was filled with enough slings and crosses to please any avid group of Leatherfolk.

There was also a fair amount of insight and titillation to be had in the conference workshops -- such as Female Genitorture (with San Francisco's Daddy Deb's beautiful Judith modeling), Temporary Piercing (demonstrated by International Ms. Leather Amy Marie Meek), and Dancing with Whips (hosted by Bunny (sic) Meyer). Lady Cassandra of San Francisco demonstrated Watersports and had more enema equipment than most hospitals, as well as some really unique ideas such as putting a drop of peppermint into the water. She also provided dozens of toys for the Male Genitorture workshop, including a small engraver and a hard-boiled egg slicer. NLA Co-Chair Chuck Higgins, modeling at the Male Genitorture workshop, was bolted into a metal ball-masher with plastic hair clips pinched onto his penis. Marcus-Jay Wonacott, Editor of *Drummer* magazine, didn't blink an eye at the application of the electric engraver to his cock and balls, but he sure gave us a reaction when he smeared a good glob of steel blue Icy-Hot onto his penis. He started dancing back and forth, flushing red and rolling his eyes until someone offered him an ice bucket in which to dip his penis. It was priceless.

Unfortunately, the Bloodsports demonstration was called on account of legalities involving the hotel staff, but there was more than enough Bloodsports at the Dungeon parties and in the hotel rooms to satisfy even the most bloodthirsty of vampires. Saturday night at the Dungeon Party, Mistress Alexis of California, sewed the skin around her slave's cock shut, turning him into a woman. The next night, Chrysoula of New York received a cutting on her stomach of an ancient Celtic design by Al D. of Seattle, Washington. It was all so exciting that I even tried a temporary piercing on my breast...and loved it.

On Opening Ceremonies night everyone turned out in their formal wear. Person-

ally, I chose to wear my leather corset with thigh-high boots, but other people had interesting outfits, too. Lolita of TES wore a red plaid, little-girl's dress complete with pigtails and coloring book. David Weinbaum (Chairperson of the '94 Leather Celebration Committee) came as a very classy leather lady and Logger Valentine (the gifted sign-language interpreter for LIL) wore a full-dress U.S. Army uniform. After the traditional Parade of Colors, keynote speaker Peri Jude Radecic, the Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force addressed the conference. She called for more local effort on the part of our community in fighting laws that restrict our freedoms.

One of the highlights of the weekend was a fund-raiser for the Spanner Defense Fund, organized by Chuck Higgins. Ruffled off was a 4' X 3' X 3' metal cage donated by The Iron Masters. The cage was a serious piece of equipment which even had a slot in the door for slipping in a food pan. It was always fun to go by the Vendor area to see who Puppy-dog Joe had managed to lock up for demonstration purposes. At Afterglow on Sunday evening, Mistress Mir and Daddy Irwin Cane (sic) shared time inside the cage, the best! I know I wanted to crawl right in there between them. In all Chuck raised over \$1,600 for the Spanner Defense Fund.

Chuck Higgins will be missed as the Co-Chair of NLA International, but the new Co-Chair, Albert Kraus, was invested at the General Membership Meeting on Saturday evening. Albert Kraus and Sallee Mallard Huber, female Co-Chair, met with the chapters and affiliates during the weekend to discuss a new, international-wide project for combining the assets of the leather community, including organizations, clubs, bars and businesses.

Former Ms. and Mr. NLA International, K.T. Chase and Andy Anderson stepped down at the Contest Saturday night, but neither one is stepping very far -- they, along with Lenny Broberg, were elected as the new Voting Members-at-Large for the Executive Council of NLA International at the Saturday evening meeting. NLA:San Diego was voted Chapter of the Year, but Chuck Higgins made certain to point out in his speech that NLA:Metro New York earns the Phoenix Award for most spectacular comeback in 1993.

Lenny Broberg also emceed the Contest along with Queen Cougar, Ms. San Francisco Leather '93. It was difficult to decide who was more entertaining, they, or the Quintet (performing, among other things, the theme song from *Laverne and Shirley*, and the *Monster Jamboree* a cappella). Another high point of the evening was K.T. Chase's fantasy with her sweet slave Suzy (sic) Shepherd, backed by music from

NLA I is on the Internet! Our address is nlaintl@netcom.com. If you have an E-mail address, please send it to us. We're setting up electronic addresses of members in the database. You might indicate whether you want your e-address shared among members. In the near future we want to have an NLA newsletter on the Internet. By using E-mail we can speed communications among us.

We also have been working on setting up our own dedicated BBS for our membership. It will be based out of the San Francisco Office. However, David will not have the time to be the "sysop", therefore we are looking for someone who has the skills and THE INTEREST to maintain the system. The "sysop" does not have to be in the Bay area, but it would help if he/she were close by to the office. One of the items holding back the start-up of this BBS is the cost of installing a dedicated line. If anyone out there would like to help us with these costs or is interested in being the sysop, please contact David at the NLA I office at 415/863-2444.

Welcome to the Leather electronic communications Superhighway! Well, would you believe secondary roads?

Lloyd-Webber's *Phantom of the Opera*. Logger Valentine signed the lyrics for the hearing impaired members of the audience. It was delicious.

With K.T. Chase and Andy Anderson stepping down, NLA is lucky to have two new title-holders whose home state happens to be Texas -- Mr. NLA Mark Frazier, Co-Chair of NLA:Dallas, and Ms. NLA Artemis Silverowl, Co-Chair of NLA:Dallas. Both title-holders made a point of discussing the future of our community and the importance of educating the next generation of Leatherfolk. Their articulate and thoughtful insights should provide NLA with the kind of spokespeople who can make a difference in the coming year.

On a more serious note, many LIL participants volunteered to take psychological tests during the weekend in a continuing effort to try to change the **Diagnostic & Statistical Manual**. Those who donated their time are to be commended for helping our community as a whole -- because if the psychiatrists can't say we're 'sick' then no one can! We need our freedom to continue to play and explore at events like LIL.

I know I'll never forget Houston or Living in Leather VIII. And for those of you who missed it, there's always next year.

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**INTERNATIONAL
SM-LEATHER-FETISH
CELEBRATION**
June 23 — June 25, 1994
GRAND HYATT HOTEL
New York City

A sound and hardy invitation is being sent to all members of the National Leather Association to attend New York City's International SM/Leather/Fetish Celebration taking place during the Stonewall 25 Celebration, June 23 - 26th, 1994. The NLA: Metro New York Chapter is one of six Manhattan-based organizations joining forces to put on what should be the biggest event in leather since our showing at the 1993 March on Washington.

A four-day affirmation of the role of safe, sane and consensual sado-masochism and the pursuit of our freedom of sexual expression, the Celebration has been geared to attract thousands of participants and guest speakers from places as diverse as Canada, England, Australia and a cross-section of the United States. The Celebration promises as much diversity and as many attractions as one of the better Living in Leather conferences. Highlights will include a Friday evening Leather Pride Night auction to benefit Operation Spanner (among other beneficiaries) and a Saturday night Leather Dance.

With nearly all of the committee's 300 allocated hotel rooms accounted for within five months of announcing the Celebration, NLA members planning to attend are strongly advised to register with both the convention and the hotel as soon as possible. Special arrangements are now being made with a handful of smaller hotels in the area for additional rooms to be made available when the Hyatt is filled.

The committee also wishes to emphasize the unique diversity of interests and orientations to be addressed at Leather Celebration '94: "While we acknowledge our differences, together we have amazing political strength and economic power," said Steering Committee Treasurer Lolita, remarking on the unprecedented smoothness and cooperation involved in putting together and running an event of this size in New York City. "The rights we are celebrating are ones that apply to all people who are into SM, leather and fetish. We have a lot to share with one another, and we can learn a lot from one another. No one will feel left out, and we're going to have a lot of fun together!"

Further excitement about Leather Celebration '94 was generated during the recent Living in Leather VIII in Houston, Texas, where former Drummer Publisher Tony DeBlase pledged to bring portions of the national community's Leather Archives for display at the event. The display will be joining an art exhibit/steel bondage exploratorium, as well as several hands-on workshops to be set up in some of the hotel's suites. Dozens of invitations are being made between January and February to an international array of potential speakers for the over 60 seminars planned

for the event. Speakers will be offered discounts and premiums in return for sharing their views with Celebration attendees.

Additionally, Steering Committee leader David Weinbaum has been declared the Celebration's liaison to the International Stonewall 25 March and Rally on Sunday, June 26. Hence, the Leather Celebration '94 Steering Committee will also be responsible for organizing the March and Rally Leather Contingent scheduled to march past the United Nations and converge upon Central Park in what could be the largest demonstration for Safe, Sane and Consensual sexual liberty in history. The Celebration welcomes all Leatherfolk who may wish to attend other events and festivities surrounding the 25th Anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion as well as the Gay Games IV—Unity '94 Lesbian and Gay Cultural Festival. Literally millions of lesbians, gays and supporters of safe, sane and consensual sexual liberty are expected to flood the streets of the New York City that week. LC '94 will be completely accessible to the physically challenged, and the Steering Committee is offering scholarships to those who cannot afford the registration fee.

A souvenir program/guide to the Leather Celebration is now in formation. The program will contain schedules of LC'94 and area events, kinky guides to New York City, vendor advertisements and plenty of background on this historic event. The Vault/Cellblock 28 has pledged to fund 2000 sets of promotional/commemorative dog-tags which will be given to all attendees as a means of identification free of charge during on-site check-in. NLA Office Manager David Scriber has pledged that an NLA General Store Annex, as well as the opportunity to join NLA INTERNATIONAL, will be made available in the NLA: Metro New York hospitality suite at the Grand Hyatt. Chapter President Jeff Gomez would like to personally invite volunteers to help out at the suite and with other aspects of the Celebration.

For brochures (single or in bulk), hotel, vendor and program advertising rates, as well as further information on any facet of the International SM/Leather/Fetish Celebration 1994, you may write to:

Leather Celebration '94,
332 Bleecker Street, Suite 452,
New York, NY 10014.

You may also call the following sponsors: NLA Metro New York Chapter 718/597-0019 (9am to 11pm EDT, fax capable) Gay Male S/M Activists 212/727-9878 (24 hr. leave message) The Eulenspiegel Society 212/338-7022 (outgoing message only) Other participating organizations include Excelsior MC, The Defenders NY, and Lesbian Sex Mafia.

DSM III: The NLA/LIL Surveys

At Living in Leather VII in Chicago, Dr. Ralph Hammond from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock explained his theory that Safe, Sane and Consensual SM people should not be singled out as "deviant" members of society. Furthermore, he explained how he is interested in participating in the revision of the Diagnostic Manual, known as the DSM III, used by the American Psychiatric Association. At the present time, there is no differentiation between SM as we practice it in a safe, sane and consensual manner and the behavior of Jeffrey Dahmer. At LIL VII, Dr. Hammond collected data using tests such as the MMPI (Minnesota Multi-Phasic Personality Inventory) and preliminary results indicated, as per his words at his year's LIL, "You people are disappointingly normal."

Dr. Hammond requested permission to send individuals pre-registered for LIL VIII packets of testing information that could be filled out ahead of time in order to facilitate testing in Houston and to further reinforce his initial findings. Many NLA I members expressed concern that their names and addresses had been given to Dr. Hammond for this project. We would like to address those concerns.

The packets were sent by Chuck Higgins, male Co-Chair from North Little Rock, Arkansas. Neither Dr. Hammond nor his staff had a list of pre-registrants, nor did they have access to addresses. Address labels were sent to Chuck Higgins and those labels were affixed to the sealed packets before going to the post office; confidentiality was carefully maintained.

NLA apologizes for any concern and confusion regarding the handling of this program. The goal is to make a positive difference in our social and cultural environment.

Many thanks to all those who participated in the testing while at LIL VIII. NLA I will continue to support Dr. Hammond in his efforts to reclassify safe, sane and consensual SM in the DSM III. We hope to have further positive reports from him in the future.

**ATTENTION
NLA CHAPTERS**

Send your News Articles and
Event Information

TO:

**THE LINK
NLA INTERNATIONAL
584 CASTRO STREET
SUITE 444
SAN FRANCISCO, CA**

**94114-2500
OR FAX TO:
415/626-3011**

NLA SPANNER DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND

Chuck Higgins

Final touches have been applied to the legal papers which have established the "NLA Spanner Defense and Education Fund." The corporation is applying for not-for-profit status and will be a total and completely separate corporation from NLA International even though it carries the NLA initials. The purpose is to raise funds for and educate people about the Operation Spanner case in England.

What happened and why do we care about Operation Spanner? Let me explain.

In 1987, while searching some one's home as part of another investigation, the Greater Manchester Police (London, England) found four home videos showing men engaged in safe, sane and consensual SM. **That is when the nightmare began.**

In viewing these videos, the police convinced themselves that they had uncovered "snuff" films (movies in which people are murdered). The individuals concerned insisted this was a few friends enjoying themselves and in order to prove it, freely gave out the details of the others taking part. In the course of the following two years, the Police interviewed some 200 - 300 men in what they called "Operation Spanner." Forty-two were arrested. After spending the equivalent of about SIX MILLION Dollars pursuing this case, the Police came to the conclusion that no murder had been committed and found no evidence of unwillingness on the part of those in the scenes.

Not willing to let the time and expense go to waste, in October 1989, the Greater Manchester Police charged sixteen of those investigated with a variety of offenses; the main charges were assault and keeping a disorderly house (hosting the activities). In most cases, individuals who had "assaulted" their partners (the tops) were charged with assault and those who had consented to the "assault" (the bottoms) were charged with aiding and abetting the assault.

Throughout the case, the authorities accepted that: 1) the "assaults" had occurred with the full consent of all the men involved; 2) all the activities occurred in private; 3) the injuries had not been permanent nor required any medical treatment; 4) no complaint had been made to the police.

At the trial, the judge ruled that "Consent is not a defense." With this defense removed, the defendants had no choice but to plead guilty. Eight of the men were sent to prison for periods of between one and four and one half years. Others were suspended or fined.

In February 1992, the case went to the appeals court which upheld the convictions but reduced most of the sentences. The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Lane (born in 1918 and on the verge of retirement) let it be known that "The satisfying of the sado-masochistic libido does not come within the category of good reason."

In December, 1992, the appeal against conviction was heard by five Law Lords. This particular court is the British equivalent to the United States Supreme Court, the highest court in the land. The men, for

the first time, felt that the defense arguments were being listened to and considered. Before this appeal, NLA International organized a campaign to write the British Embassies and Consulates. We also protested in front of the British Consulate in Chicago during Living in Leather VII.

While we should be proud of the efforts put forth by NLA members and chapters to let the British know our outrage at the handling of Operation Spanner, perhaps we didn't do enough. Unfortunately, in March of 1993, the Law Lords ruled 3:2 that consent was no defense for sado-masochistic "assault." In their decision, the senior Law Lord described the "victims" as "youths," even though their average age was about 50.

The result of this decision has provided the Police in England a new tool with which to harass leather people. They have established a history of raiding leather bars for no apparent reason and, on another occasion, reprimanded a man that it was no longer legal for him to kiss his mistress' boots. In May 1993, the police raided the early stages of a gay party in a private house in Yorkshire. The guests were wearing a lot of rubber and leather and one wore a harness and hood. All were taken to the police station but released without charge. Leather, rubber clothing and sex toys were all confiscated, although later returned. More harassment stories abound.

Let's face it; if you think the situation in England is oppressive, how would you feel if the same situation were in your country? Outrage doesn't even come close to how many of us would feel if our rights to safe, sane and consensual behavior were taken away. But, GUESS WHAT?? Do you realize how steeped in British history and precedence many legal systems are? The legal systems of the United States, Australia and Canada, as well as several other nations, were directly based on that of England. Can you imagine how much fun the religious, fundamentalist zealots would have if there were a similar ruling in your country?

Imagine, if you will, a similar "witch hunt" taking place in the United States. Not surprisingly, the police in many cities would behave exactly as those did in London. Furthermore, without massive support from the leather community and our friends, the convictions could be very similar. The truth of the matter is, if a prosecuting attorney needs a precedent for conviction in the United States, all that attorney needs to do is to find the Spanner Conviction and BINGO!! HE WINS!!! (and we definitely lose!)

We **MUST** realize the gravity and what a disastrous potential the Operation Spanner convictions mean to each and every one of us.

THE GOOD NEWS: THERE IS HOPE.

The Spanner defendants have one more chance at acquittal, the European Court of Human Rights. This is the last hope for those convicted, and an unbelievable OPPORTUNITY for us to protect ourselves from similar court rulings. Since the House of Lords upheld the lower court decision by three to two, the expectations are

very high that the European Court would make a logical and humanitarian decision, one that WE want.

No legal appeal is without its costs. Financial costs are only one and that is where the National Leather Association is taking a strong leadership role. Such a role is of no strength without the support of the community. The total estimated cost to appeal "Spanner" is about \$160,000 US. Your Association, NLA International is committed to heading up the fund-raising efforts for HALF that amount, \$80,000 US.

We must congratulate our community to date. That is, with the fund-raising skills we have developed and honed over the past few years, raising this amount, not only from North America but also Australia, could happen within a few months, by the end of 1994 at the most.

THAT MY FRIENDS IS THE CHALLENGE!

By December 31, 1994, the goal is to have \$80,000 US in the NLA Spanner Defense and Education Fund. The Defense Fund Board consists of: **Chuck Higgins**, former Co-Chair of NLA International, from Arkansas; **Woody Bebout**, former International Mr. Drummer and attorney from Missouri; **Ian Gurnhill**, leather activist from London, formerly living in Texas; **Michael Primrose**, Board Member of NLA International from Australia; **Andy Anderson**, former Mr. NLA International and Current Board Member, NLA International, from Toronto, Canada; **Brent Lacey**, 1st Runner-up, International Mr. Leather 1993, from Australia.

This board is purposely international in scope. Funds are being deposited in a bank account in St. Louis, Missouri, and all financial records are open for inspection. The educational part of the corporation coincides with the educational goals of the group in England. Their group has three objectives:

- 1) To establish SM as a valid sexuality;
- 2) To encourage a network of SM support groups across the United Kingdom;
- 3) To raise 100,000 British pounds to support the appeal to the European Court.

FUNDRAISING REPORT — 3/15/94

LIL VIII	\$2,000
Palm Springs Leather Order of the Desert	\$1,500
Chicago Hellfire Club — Pledge	\$4,000
Peter Fisk/The 15 Association — Pledge	\$1,000
Int'l Leather Celebration, NYC	To Be Determined
NLA: San Diego/LeatherFest VI	To Be Determined

Each person reading this article needs to think how individually, or as a group, they can raise money. No fundraising efforts are too small or unappreciated. Information packets will be available at the NLA office after January 1st which will contain fundraising ideas and suggestions. In the meantime, take this project on locally and make it happen! Checks can be sent to our International Headquarters in San Francisco. Make checks out to: NLA Spanner Defense and Education Fund or NLA-SDEF. This project is truly a challenge to our community. I know we will succeed, together!

The Leather History Timeline

Tony DeBlase

"Where have we come from? How did we get here? These are but two of the questions that those of us interested in aspects of the Leather/SM/Fetish lifestyles ask. Now, thanks to many organizations, publications and other resources, we know we are not alone. We know that while those who confine themselves to 'vanilla' sexuality may think that what we do is weird, there are many others who like the same things we do. And while there are many of our compatriots who do things WE consider weird, we realize we are all in this together and each of us has the right to be a weird as we want, in whatever way we want, as long as we keep it safe, sane and consensual.

"The Leather Archives and Museum was formed in May 1992 to provide a mechanism to keep us linked to our past, so that the contributions of the thousands of other 'wierdos' who have gone before will not be lost to our collective consciousness. The Leather History Timeline project is one of the ways we are trying to accomplish this. The Timeline is a chronological listing of events important to the history of Leather/SM/Fetish sexuality.

"The primary focus is on the history of the past few decades when leather sexuality came out of its closet, but the Timeline is not limited to recent history. Any event in the history of the development, documentation, suppression, and expression of a minority form of sexuality is of legitimate interest to all of us. The timeline also includes items of interest, if not great historic significance, because they show how we have, or have not, changed in behavior or attitudes.

"The Leather History Timeline is a continuing, computer-based project conducted jointly by the Resource Center of NLA International and the Leather Archives and Museum, under the direction of Dr. Anthony F. DeBlase. The Timeline is intended to be a constantly growing, dynamic project. The first (1993) printing of the Timeline is now out-of-print. An updated second edition will be ready for International Mr. Leather in May 1994."

A sample from the Timeline will be printed in the April 1994 issue of **The Leather Journal** along with a more complete description of the project. We need input from everyone to add dates and events in all areas of interest.

If you have contributions to the Timeline database or for further information about this project, write to:

The Leather Archives and Museum
5015 N. Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60640
USA
fax: 312/878-5184

You can call the Archives at 312/878-6360. Alternatively, you may write directly to:

Dr. Anthony DeBlase
8948 Barbur Blvd. #57
Portland, OR 97219
USA

Excerpted, in part, from The Leather Journal, Issue 57, April 1994

LIVING IN LEATHER IX POSTER CONTEST

NLA International is offering a complete registration package (worth \$175) for the winning Poster design for LIVING IN LEATHER IX. This widely-attended event will take place for the first time outside of the US in Toronto, Canada, October 7-9, 1994.

The deadline for the Poster Contest entries is April 15, 1994. The winner will be announced shortly thereafter. Anyone interested in entering the poster contest should submit their name and address to request a copy of the LIL IX Logo and the Poster requirements.

NLA International's success with their annual convention has set standards by which all other similar events are measured. LIL is the largest international gathering of the pansexual Leather/SM/Fetish community every year. Once again it will feature workshops led by experts in every field as well as unparalleled entertainment, social events and play parties.

All items submitted become the property of NLA International. All entrants will be notified of the winners. Submit entries and/or inquiries to:

LIL Poster Contest
NLA International
584 Castro Street, Suite 444
San Francisco, CA 94114-2500
or Call 415/863-2444 for further information

Living in Leather and KT Chase Win Pantheon Awards

At the Pantheon of Leather Awards, sponsored by the Leather Journal, **Living in Leather VIII** was awarded **Club Event of the Year**. Staff Whip and Host Committee Chair for LIL VIII and Founder and President of NLA:Houston, Dean Walradt accepted the award for NLA International along with Artemis Silverowl, Ms. NLA International 1994, and Mark Frazier, Mr. NLA International 1994. This award shows recognition of the volunteers who were responsible for making LIL VIII an educational, entertaining and smooth-running event. Congratulations are due to the host chapter, NLA:Houston, to the LIL Committee and to all of the members of NLA who contributed to the success of this event.

Ms. NLA International 1993 KT Chase was recognized with two Pantheon of Leather Awards: **Readers' Choice (Women)** and **Woman of the Year**. KT traveled extensively as MS. NLA International. Her work on the Domestic Violence Project has been substantial, helping to educate people on the difference between Leather/SM/Fetish lifestyles and domestic violence. KT is Chair of the NLA Domestic Violence Committee and is an Member-At-Large of the Executive Council. KT served the community as International Master 1992, and she is Contest Coordinator for LIL IX. NLA I is very proud and happy that KT has been recognized for her hard work and the dedication she has shown to NLA and to the Leather/SM/Fetish community. Congratulations KT!

NLA:SEATTLE
ANNOUNCES
MAY DAY '94
"THIS IS NOT A TEST"
May 14 - 15 - 16
For Further Information
write to:
NLA:SEATTLE
1202 E. Pike, #722
Seattle, WA 98122
or Call the HOTLINE at
206/233-1015

LIVING IN LEATHER



LA VIE EN CUIR

LIVING IN LEATHER/LA VIE EN CUIR IX

OCTOBER 7 - 9, 1994
THE WESTBURY HOTEL
TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND

See the Registration package included with this copy of "The Link"
REMEMBER YOUR DOLLAR GOES FURTHER IN CANADA.

WORKSHOPS

Each year, at Living in Leather, NLA International tries to present workshops on the topics of most interest to our members. LIL workshops cover a variety topics, including social and political issues, styles and methods of play, and fetishes. We also hope to provide the opportunity for discussions which help each of us improve our daily (and play) lives.

To continue to make the LIL workshops interesting and topical, we need feedback from the members of NLA. Which workshops would you like to see at LIL IX in Toronto? What topics hold the most interest for you? Which play techniques do you want to learn about? What fetishes have we forgotten?

At LIL VIII, we asked participants to complete forms requesting specific workshop topics for LIL IX. We would like to add to this information by asking each of you to use the tear-off below to let us know which topics you would like to see at LIL IX in Toronto.

Please take a few minutes to complete this form and mail it the address below. Also, if you are interested in being a presenter at LIL IX, please let us know.

Thank you for helping to make LIL better than ever!

We're looking for a few good . . .

WORKSHOPS for LIL IX

I would like to see the following workshops at LIL IX.
Topics: _____

I am interested in being a presenter.
Topics: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____

Please mail to: NLA International
Attn: Workshop Coordinator
584 Castro Street #444
San Francisco, CA 94114

If you would like further info, please
leave a message for Donna Shrout at
415-281-0570

584 Castro Street, Suite 444
San Francisco, CA 94114-2500

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Miami, FL 33125

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