INSIDEOUT

The Newsletter of Blind Friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (BFLAG)

Summer 2005 Convention Edition



BFLAG is affiliated with the American Council of the Blind and is dedicated to facilitating the free exchange of ideas, opinions and information relative to matters of concern to blind people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Visit us at www.bflag.org

INSIDEOUT is published in, October, March, and June. Material to be published of interest to the membership is welcome. All material to be included must be received prior to the first of the month of publication. Items for publication should be sent to inside--out@earthlink.net.

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Ask Dottie

REVIEW OF BOB VICKERY'S "manjack", TRUE AUDIO EROTICA Letters to the Editor BFLAG's Board of Directors From The President's Desk By Connie David

As I sit writing this, our convention is only 5-1/2 weeks away. Preparations are moving along nicely, and this promises to be our best convention ever. But then you probably know that, especially if you have completed your registration.

In the last newsletter I told you that we had several positions available on our board. I just want to take this opportunity to again ask you to think about pursuing a position. We have 3 at large positions available, as well as the secretary position. Some of the people currently in those positions are planning to run again, but this does not mean that they are an automatic shoe in for these positions. We are looking for people with good fund-raising skills. We are looking for someone who is interested in helping us develop our member base. We need a secretary who can keep track of everything we do, and help keep us on track. We have some very good people in these positions currently, but there is always room for improvement.

You don't have to make up your mind before the convention. If you are coming to Las Vegas, talk to board members. Find out what is really involved. If you are not able to come to Las Vegas, and you are interested in a board position but need more information, please send an e-mail to president@bflag.org. I will try to give you any information you need to assist you in making your decision.

We are a fun bunch of people, and we try to have a good time even while working. So even if you have never served on a board before, but you have the skills we need, please consider throwing your hat into the ring for our July elections.

2005 AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND NATIONAL CONVENTION

Date: July 2-9, 2005 at The Riviera Hotel and Casino Las Vegas, Nevada For reservations call, 1-800-634-6753 702 734-5110

Register on-line by following the "convention" link at: www.acb.org

BFLAG'S 2005 Las Vegas CONVENTION PROGRAM:

THURSDAY June 30th

4:00 pm BFLAG program for the Las Vegas Gay Youth Group "The Center" 943 E Sahara suite B-25 LV NV 89104

FRIDAY July 1st

Evening
BEER BUST to benefit BFLAG
The Rainbow Lounge Pay at the door
900 E Karen #H-102
Las Vegas, NV 89109

SATURDAY July 2nd

NOON

BFLAG'S SUITE OPENS

2:00 pm

VOLUNTEER WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION BFLAG SUITE

6:00 pm

BOARD OF DIRECTORS DINNER MEETING The Rainbow Lounge 900 E Karen #H-102 Las Vegas, NV 89109

SUNDAY July 3rd

10:00 am

BOARD OF DIRECTORS BRUNCH MEETING BFLAG'S suite

2:00 pm

VIVA LAS VEGAS Welcome Party
BFLAG'S SUITE
FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS OR \$10 AT THE door

2:00 PM

Mugs, Shirts and tickets are available for a donation and will be available as long as they last. BFLAG'S SUITE

10:00 pm

BFLAG SOCIAL/SUPPORT GET TOGETHER
BFLAG'S SUITE
FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS OR \$5 DONATION at the door

MONDAY July 4th

6:30 am

Continental Breakfast get together FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS OR \$5 DONATION at the door

2:00 pm

NABS/CCLVI/BFLAG JOINT PROGRAM
"SAFE SEX and RELATED ISSUES"
Conference Center Room #105
NO CHARGE

7:00 pm BFLAG'S ANNUAL MEETING BFLAG'S SUITE OPEN TO ALL 9:30 pm BFLAG Pizza SOCIAL GET TOGETHER BFLAG'S SUITE Free to all who attend the ANNUAL meeting \$5 DONATION AT THE DOOR

TUESDAY July 5th

6:30 am
Continental Breakfast get together
BFLAG'S SUITE
FREE WITH BFLAG PASS or \$5 DONATION at the door

2:00 PM
"Legal issues of Domestic Partners"
conference room #105 FREE

4:30 pm BFLAG Board Meeting BFLAG'S SUITE OPEN TO ALL

10:00 pm BFLAG SOCIAL/SUPPORT GET TOGETHER FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS or \$5 DONATION at the door BFLAG'S SUITE

WEDNESDAY July 6th

6:30 am
Continental Breakfast get together
FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS or \$5 DONATION at the door
BFLAG'S SUITE

1:00 pm Roller Coaster Extravaganza Meet in BFLAG suite by ticket only

6:30 pm
"AN EVENING AT LA CAGE"
MEET IN BFLAG'S SUITE
by ticket only

10:00 pm BFLAG SOCIAL/SUPPORT GET TOGETHER BFLAG'S SUITE FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS or \$5 DONATION at the door

THURSDAY July 7th

6:30 am

Continental Breakfast get together

BFLAG'S SUITE

FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS or \$5 DONATION at the door

1:00 pm

Pool party & picnic

"THE BLUE MOON"

Meet in THE BFLAG suite

by ticket only

NOTE: This is a men's event

1:00 pm

Women's event to be planned while in Las Vegas

5:00 pm

BFLAG DINNER & Boat Ride on Lake Mead

Meet in BFLAG'S SUITE

by ticket only

10:00 pm

BFLAG SOCIAL/SUPPORT GET TOGETHER

BFLAG'S SUITE

FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS or \$5 DONATION at the door

FRIDAY July 8th

6:30 am

Continental Breakfast get together

BFLAG'S SUITE

FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS or \$5 DONATION at the door

3:00 pm

BFLAG Board Meeting

BFLAG'S SUITE

Open to all

10:00 pm

BFLAG'S Farewell & Recognition Party

BFLAG'S SUITE

FREE WITH A BFLAG PASS or \$10 DONATION at the door

Refreshments and fellowship will be available in the suite throughout the week. BFLAG mugs, shirts and tickets to all events will be on sale in the suite as long as they last.

We prefer all members' register for BFLAG events through BFLAG. However, you can register for MOST BFLAG events when you register with ACB. Register with BFLAG by logging on to www. BFLAG.org or call Butch at 410-254-1972. All BFLAG events are open to everyone and we encourage members to bring friends to join in the fun.

As of this time, it appears as though we will have a LIVE stream of our programs at the convention on the web. A link to the stream will be on our web site at BFLAG.org around July 1st.

BFLAG REWARDS FOR DONATIONS:

During the Convention, BFLAG is offering a fantastic rewards program for making very reasonable donations to BFLAG. Here is how it will work.

- 1 Fr a \$5.00 donation you will receive a towel with the FLAG/ACB logo on it.
- For a \$10.00 Donation you will receive a mug with the BFLAG convention logo on it.
- For a \$15.00 donation you will receive a T-shirt with the BFLAG/ACB logo on it.
- 4 For multiple donations you will receive multiple rewards.

Patches and pins will be available for a \$5.00 donation. Donations and sales can ONLY be made in the BFLAG suite.

After the convention ALL items will be for sale via the BFLAG web site at a cost to be determined plus the cost of shipping.

AN ACB CONVENTION PROGRAM NOTE

Dr. Charlie Arehart, Pastor, Metropolitan Community Church, will offer the morning invocation on July 6, 2005.

Annual Membership Meeting Agenda July 4, 2005

Minutes from 2004 Convention
Treasurer's report
BFLAG History from The History of ACB
Year at a glance
Constitutional amendment
resolution
Elections
Thank you to outgoing board members
Other new business

Proposed Resolution 2005-1

Title: LOCAL BFLAG ACTIVITIES

Submitted by: Butch Arnold

Whereas the constitutional purpose of BFLAG is to provide for the betterment of the lives of those who are visually impaired and who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

- A. Through a membership organization primarily of visually impaired persons who accept and affirm the purposes of BFLAG.
- B. By providing a forum for the views and concerns of visually impaired persons interested in issues facing those who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.
- C. By providing information about publications of interest to members that are produced in accessible format and by encouraging the production of such material in accessible format.
- D. By facilitating the free exchange of ideas, opinions and information relative to matters of concern to blind people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
- E. By seeking to assure adequate services to those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender by agencies and institutions serving the blind.

Therefore be it resolved this 4th day of July 2005 the members of BFLAG at their annual meeting do hereby authorize and encourage BFLAG members in any and all geographic areas to socialize and work together to further the mission and purpose of BFLAG in accordance with the BFLAG constitution. It is understood and agreed to that all such groups will report to the BFLAG board on a regular basis, which will be determined by the board. Any and all fundraising done by these groups must be approved and authorized by the BFLAG board in ADVANCE and must be in full compliance with all IRS and local laws with regards to 501[c][3] organizations.

The ABC's of Surviving In Las Vegas:

By: Marianne Sussman and Connie David (reprint)

Las Vegas is one hot city, especially in the summer. Temperatures are usually above 100 degrees, and the sun shines bright and hot. The pavement is probably hot enough to fry an egg on; although that is one thing we don't think we'll try. One saving grace: low humidity.

If you are planning to come to Las Vegas in July, here are a few things about which you might want to know and/or think.

Due to the serious heat, dehydration for both humans and dogs is something to actively avoid. Always be sure to drink enough liquid. Water is a really good liquid to drink. Caffeine and alcohol may cause your body to dehydrate faster, so be sure to drink lots of water as well. If you are bringing a guide dog, it is very

important to carry water and a water bowl for the dog. It is often a long distance between hotels, so be prepared to need water on what might be considered a short walk. Places may look close together on a map, but that is very deceptive.

Speaking of dogs, it is a good idea to bring booties for your dog. Even a few minutes on the hot pavement can cause damage to your dog's feet. Please keep that in mind, even when walking what may seem only a short distance. It's true that putting on and taking off booties can be a pain, but it is well worth the extra few minutes it may take to protect their feet.

Las Vegas Boulevard is known as The Strip. It is a very activity-filled place. There are always crowds of people. Many times those people are drinking out of cups and bottles as they walk. Yes, this is legal on the Strip. However, not everyone disposes of his or her bottles appropriately. Broken glass from carelessly tossed bottles can be a hazard. Another reason for booties on dogs. It may not completely stop an injury, but it may help to minimize the damage.

In some places along the Strip, the sidewalks are very narrow. This is usually due to construction. In some places, the sidewalk may be no more that 3 or so feet wide and they have lots of traffic signs planted in the sidewalk. If one were to step off the curb, one would be immediately thrust into very busy traffic. This is not to scare anyone, but to help you plan. Just be prepared to take it slow and carefully at times when walking the Strip.

Be sure to allow plenty of time for checking out of the hotel to return home. The lines at the check out desks are usually long. Also, unless you are using the shuttle service, which you can schedule to pick you up, the wait for a taxi could be a long one.

If you are traveling alone through the airport and require assistance from airport personnel, there could be further delays. When you arrive at the airport, you will be assigned a number. This number places you in a queue for assistance. You will be assisted to your gate when your number comes up. The wait may be long, so allow for extra time.

There are tons of things to do in Las Vegas. If you are at all into gambling, be sure to find the Player's Club at each casino you visit. When you sign up for a free Club Card, you can earn points as you gamble. These points are redeemable for a variety of things. These may vary from casino to casino. Some clubs give free hats and other gifts just for signing up. And hey, if you gamble enough, who knows what freebees you might be able to get.

So as you pack your bags, remember the water bottle, dog booties and water dish, and don't forget the sun block. Bring a busload of patience, especially if you have a difficult time in crowds, and get ready to have a great time.

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3A ENTERPRISES

Name BFLAG's newsletter contest!

"InsideOut" is the working name of BFLAG's newsletter. \$25 is yours if BFLAG's Board of Directors selects your name for the newsletter. The winner will be announced at our 2005 Convention in Las Vegas. You need not be present to win. Forward your entry to:

inside--out@earthlink.net no later than July 1, 2005 Good Luck!

About the convention hotel Description by: Las Vegas Hotels

Rat Pack nostalgia with bawdy shows, Vegas fun Half-mile from the Convention Center and one mile from Fashion Show Mall, this Strip hotel provides traditional Las Vegas fun.

Bearing its nostalgic name, the Riviera provides classic dining and the traditional Las Vegas trinity of comedy, music, and showgirls.

Attractions include an extra-large casino, a quiet pool, a steakhouse, and all-you-can-eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner buffets.

Location

The Strip, Las Vegas

This 3-mile section of Las Vegas Boulevard is the city's bustling primary tourist destination. Impressive casino resorts house major attractions, dining, shopping, nightlife, and entertainment venues. The Guggenheim museums, the Forum Shops, and Cirque du Soliel are here, along with most of the best hotels, offering one-stop vacationing.

Las Vegas hotels - Riviera Hotel And Casino - map

Property amenities

Las Vegas hotels - Riviera Hotel And Casino

An extensive shopping arcade includes high-tech video games, magic shop, candle store, chocolate shop, and a store that sells Russian folk art. The spa has a fitness center, exfoliation treatments, and massages and even provides for inroom massages. An on-site wedding chapel, Riviera Royale, provides a range of wedding options—from a standard ceremony to elaborate packages that include a wedding coordinator.

What to expect: Endowed with a name invoking the Rat Pack Era, the Riviera keeps ties with its past while offering modern services at moderate prices. It emphasizes grace rather than flash, attracting adult guests seeking pleasure without having to endure crowds of sightseers surging through the casino and public areas.

Amenity highlights: In a tranquil, sunny courtyard bordered by a lush grass sunning area, a large pool furnishes hot-weather relief. For pampering, a spa offers a fitness center, massage, body treatments, tanning facility, a women's sauna, and a men's steam room. Shoppers have an arcade to explore. Tennis players enjoy two complimentary lighted courts.

Insider tip: Like all other Las Vegas casinos, the Riviera offers free membership in a player's club that rewards gaming play with points redeemable for cash and comps. Unlike most casinos, however, here players don't have to line up to obtain their rewards at a desk but can utilize ATM-like kiosks.

Kristofer's - Frequently honored as Las Vegas's best, this all-you-can-eat buffet restaurant offers various international food stations for lunch and dinner, including Italian, American, and Middle Eastern, along with salad/soup stations and a vast dessert station.

Ristorante Italiano - Casual ambience and Northern Italian cuisine featuring myriad pasta choices.

Rik ' Shaw - Elegant ambience and traditional Cantonese cuisine.

World's Fare Buffet - Breakfast, lunch, and dinner buffets. Roast baron of beef for dinner. Champagne brunch buffet on weekends.

Kady's Coffee Shop - Open 24 hours for light snacks and full meals. Overlooking pool.

Mardi Gras Food Court - Burger King, Pizza Hut, Krispy Kreme donuts, Cold Stone ice cream, cheese steaks, sub sandwiches, Asian fast food, and Mexican fast food.

Hound Doggie's - 1950's-style snack bar.

Entertainment

Twice nightly in its own showroom, the acclaimed, high-tech, adults-only production Splash entertains with special effects, ice skaters, motorcycle daredevils, dancers, jugglers, acrobats, and showgirls topped by spectacular headdresses.

Like its long-running siblings in New York and Los Angeles, La Cage brings down the house nightly (except Tuesdays) with a combination of comedy and female impersonators. Frank Marino stars as Joan Rivers.

The bawdy revue Crazy Girls features topless dancers, comedy, and music twice nightly (except Mondays). International comedians entertain at the Riviera

Comedy Club. The romantic Le Bistro offers classic lounge acts such as Sinatra prote'ge'e Marlene Ricci, Neil Diamond impersonator Jay White, comedy hypnotist Dr. Scott Lewis, and Elvis impersonator Trent Carlini along with a rock-'n'-roll revue.

The casino supplies 125,000 square feet of craps, blackjack, roulette, baccarat, keno, pai gow poker, slots, video poker, and Caribbean poker. The Nickel Town room contains some 330 low-cost slots. A race-and-sports book features individual televisions at each seat.

Riviera Player's Club offers free membership cards that rewards table-game and slot play with cash and comp rooms, meals, shows, and services.

Vegas as a second language:

Every part of the world has its own language and Las Vegas is no exception. Here are some hints to make the local lingo more understandable.

Dark

No show; as in Dark Sundays means no shows on Sunday.

Tip

Same as a toke.

Toke

Same as a gratuity.

Comp

Short for free or complimentary.

RFB comp

The casino is impressed with a credit rating and has ordered that a customer be given free room, food and beverage (RFB) during a hotel stay.

In red

A comped customer's name usually appears "in red" on a maitre d's reservation chart.

High roller

A customer with the reputation of wagering large sums of money in the casino.

Marker

An IOU owed the casino by a gambler allowed by the hotel to play on credit.

Coupons

Redeemable for nearly everything from a free meal to a free pull on a slot machine. (Ask the hotel whether it has a coupon book.)

Shooter

A gambler who is rolling the dice on a craps table.

Shoe

A container from which several decks of cards are dealt on the Baccarat and blackjack tables which prevents the dealer from holding cards.

Stickman

The dealer who moves the dice around on a craps table with a hook-shaped stick.

Drop box

A locked box located on live gambling tables where dealers deposit paper money.

Boxman

The craps table dealer who sits over the drop box and supervises bets and payoffs.

Pit boss

A casino boss who oversees numerous table dealers.

Limit

The least or maximum bet accepted at a gambling table.

Spoon

One device used by slot machine cheaters.

Hit me

A phrase used by blackjack players who want another card from the dealer. Usually used in connection with a hand signal.

Eye in the sky

A one-way mirror surveillance in the casino area. Be sure to smile! Mirrors or dark glass that circles casino ceilings conceals people who are assigned to watch the casino action to prevent cheating by players or dealers. There are also cameras behind the decorative looking glass.

ASK DOTTIE:

Dear Dottie:

Nearly six months ago, Alicia and I ended our relationship of 4 years. Shortly after our breakup, Alicia met another woman and insisted that I join them on many of their dates. Unfortunately, following dinner last Saturday with the three of us and following the girlfriend sucking down nearly two bottles of Pinot Noir, on my way from the Ladies room, I overheard a rather heated exchange between the two of them. The only statement I clearly heard was the girlfriend saying that she was not happy with my being involved in their social life. She went on to say that the only reason Alicia bothers to invite me along is because she feels guilty for "dumping the poor blind girl". As hurtful as it was to hear this, I can't say that I had not entertained similar thoughts. Alicia has now invited me to attend a concert with the two of them, which she and I have made an annual event over the years. I don't know whether I should accept the invitation or not.

Dumped in Des Moines

Dear Dumped:

Listen derling, from where I sit, the new girlfriend has all the markings of a monumental mess. Between you, Dottie, and the fence post, that relationship is in serious trouble, as the girlfriend appears to be more taken by a lovely varietal from the Napa Valley as opposed to Alicia, if you get Dottie's drift.

Confront Alicia and let her know what you overheard and ask if it's true. If following this discussion if both of you continue to be interested in spending time together, suggest that the two of you do so absent of the train wreck of a girlfriend. Smooches!

Dear Dottie:

This year will be the first time that the rather conservative community in which I live will hold a Gay Lesbian Pride Parade. An old friend, who is coordinating the parade, has asked that I lead one of the contingents in the parade. While I'm out to my close circle of friends, I am selective with whom I come out to. While I don't have a problem with being gay, I do have a problem with relinquishing my personal privacy by marching in the parade.

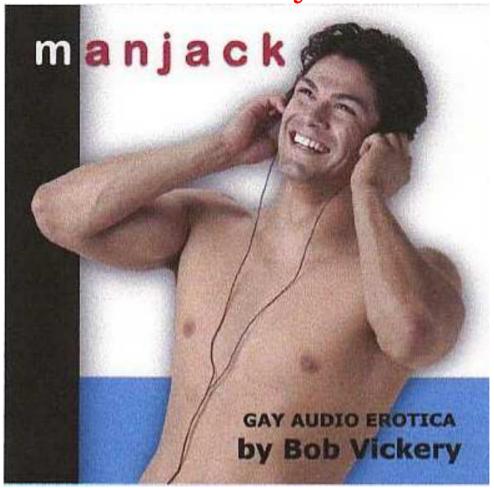
Sitting on the sideline in Smith Town

Dear Sitting:

Coming out is a highly individualized process. There is no right or wrong way to do it. Largely, the decision to come out is dependent upon a range of factors such as, perceived support or rejection, family dynamics, cultural and religious considerations, and the existence or absence of a social support network. At the end of the day, only you can and/or should decide how and if you share this part of yourself with the larger public.

Dottie wishes you the best on your journey.

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Manjack retails for \$16.95. For further information (and sample video clip) Visit:

www.quartermoonpress.com

REVIEW OF BOB VICKERY'S "manjack", TRUE AUDIO EROTICA

By The Roving Critic

"Manjack" an audio double CD set that contains 6 erotic gay stories written by Bob Vickery. Each is from a view of "the first person" and told with an accent and diction that gives the listener a feeling of being in the room of the action. Each story can be enjoyed over and over. You can pick the track you want to hear and listen to one or all the stories in one sitting. Each story is quite different and will appeal to almost any gay listener. You can imagine you are there and you will want to hear more. For a price of under \$18 FOR THE 2 CD set it is a bargain and well worth it for the hours of enjoyment any listener will spend listening over and over. It's the closest thing I have seen to a good porn magazine in an accessible format. My only hope is that Bob Vickery or others will produce more "Gay Erotica" like this. Bob Vickery has been writing such erotica for quite a while and should be commended for his new approach that makes his literature available to those who either can't read the typically small print of such books or want to use their hands for something other than reading the stories in Braille.

TO THE EDITOR:

Editor:

Thank you very much for the Spring edition of InsideOut. I found the articles regarding domestic partners to be very informative. I also look forward to the "Ask Dottie" column in each issue. Keep up the good work.

Editor:

I found the BFLAG registration form in the Spring issue of InsideOut to be completely inadequate. The form did not include enough detail for me to make an informed decision regarding registering for activities. I am also concerned about the overall expense of the BFLAG program.

Editor:

Who is Dottie? Does she have a phone number? I'd like to solicit her advice outside of the covers of InsideOut.

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