



# The newsletter of Men of All Colors Together Philadelphia

## January 2008

# Challenger

### Winter Pot Luck Saturday, January 19 at Jerry Winokur's 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM



We have invited the Rainbow Social Club to join us for this pot luck. We have been at many off their functions and this is

the first time we have invited them to one of ours. So breakout your best recipe and get on over here for a great time.

See directions on page 3

### Would I take the pill? The pill to make me heterosexual! No and Yes!

But yesterday, Yes!

Continued from the DECEMBER newsletter

I found Metropolitan Community Church of New Haven. Perhaps this was the place. Perhaps they might know how God could have made this mistake with me. The advertisement in the paper said, "they had a special outreach to gay and lesbian people," but I did not want to be gay I wanted to be a Christian. I thought I couldn't be both.

That first time going to church was difficult because I had no idea who or what to expect. I sat in the back, knowing that if I felt uncomfortable I could slip out the door. As service started I could feel the presents of God. How could that be? This was a "gay" church! God couldn't be here! I cried throughout the service.

I felt a need to be honest with my family and friends about my sexuality and had to find a way to tell my Mom. I went to talk with my mother. I had to tell her I was gay. Her grave sight was still barren. It was

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**A Few Words From Stevie...** Hope everybody is having a nice holiday and hope 2008 will be full of joy and peace. I also hope that we have a productive year for this organization. This is just going to be just a quick summary and some quick news about what is going on. We have 61 members as of right now. One of our members, Christopher Blandford is back in the hospital. John Speer, John McNeill and myself went to see him. He was weak and asleep most of the time. Chuck also said the same thing when he visited him. There will be more information about him in the next newsletter and we will probable e-mail everybody sooner than that. We are working on reorganizing of the organization. We are also beginning to work on the anniversary for 2008, it is going to be the first weekend in May. We are also working on the NABWMT convention for 2009. This organization voted to have it here at the last General Meeting. You will be hearing all about this in coming months. This is it for right now. Hope to see you all at the General Meeting January 18<sup>th</sup> as well as all the other events we are having this month. I hope Santa was good to everybody. I would also like to wish everybody a happy Kwanzaa. So that's my summary. Stevie

### HATE CRIMES IN BLACK AND WHITE

by Jasmyne Cannick

Reprinted from The Advocate, November 6, 2007

The death of 29-year-old New Yorker Michael Sandy, resulting from a beating by a group of white men who had intentionally lured him to a parking lot, was cold, calculated, and brutal. Chat messages between Sandy and the men

**It could  
have been  
you, it  
could have  
been me**

were reportedly found on his home computer, and a printout from his computer showing directions to Plumb Beach, a popular cruising area in Brooklyn, was found in his car.

Sandy was robbed and beaten by three men. He

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# Membership Application

If you are not a member of MACT/Philadelphia, why not join us?

Please fill out and mail this form to:  
 MACT/Philadelphia, PO Box 42257, Philadelphia, PA 19101  
 Make check payable to **MACT/Philadelphia**

**Take a \$5 discount on full year membership when you become a member of the NABWMT**

Renewal / Full year – couple  \$45 – individual  \$30 (July 1 through June 30)  
 Individual (10/1 – 6/30)  \$22.50 – Individual (1/1 – 6/30)  \$15  
 Individual (3/1 – 6/30)  \$7.50

Name (1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Second Person \_\_\_\_\_  
 Of couple (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Birthday (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Periodically we use images of our members in the newsletter and on our website.  
 Please indicate below your willingness to allow these images to be used.

**Group Picture YES / NO      Single Picture YES / NO**

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

Unless checked  applicant's name will be added to our Membership directory that is sent to all MACT/P members.

Members are encouraged to join one or more committees.  
 Please circle your committee choices

**Membership ♦ Rap/CR ♦ Social ♦ Newsletter ♦  
 Political Action ♦ Health Education**

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Men of All Colors Together Philadelphia, is a gay multiracial, multicultural organization committed to fostering supportive environments wherein racial, social and cultural barriers can be overcome and the goal of human equality realized. To these ends, Men of All Colors Together Philadelphia, engages in educational, political, cultural and social activities as a means of dealing with racism, sexism, homophobia, heterosexism, HIV/AIDS, ageism, ableism, classism, and other inequities in our communities and in our lives.

# Happy Birthday

James C.      01/09      John O.      01/15  
 Jeff K.      01/30

### Directions to Art and Stevie's

Take I-76 West toward Valley Forge to I-476 North  
 Follow I-476 North toward Plymouth Meeting to Exit 18B, Norristown. At the end of the ramp turn right and then right again at the light onto Ridge Pike (Lukoil on far right corner)  
 Follow Ridge Pike into Norristown (it becomes Main Street in town). Continue on Main Street over railroad tracks, up the hill...pass A-Plus on left  
 At the traffic light with CVS on far left corner turn right onto Hamilton Street. Cross Airy Street (traffic light), continue to stop sign at Marshall Street (St. Francis of Assisi on far right corner). Cross Marshall Street, our house is the seventh building on the left. Come up the walk on the right side of the building and enter on the side

627 Hamilton Street, Apt. A, 610-277-6595

### Public transportation:

From Center City take the R6 to the end, Elm Street Station and call us from the platform. or Take the Market line to 69<sup>th</sup> Street and take the 100 High Speed Line to Norristown Transportation Center. Call us from the station. We are only 5-10 minutes away. In either case be sure to let us know where you are.

## NABWMT Convention 2009 In Philadelphia

### Get involved !

**Help make this the best convention  
 the NA has had since 1999**

**Call Aaron at 215-848-8532 to  
 find out what you can do**



Directions to Jerry Winokur's: Take Roosevelt Blvd. (route 1 north) from I-76. Continue up Roosevelt Blvd. about six (6) miles and turn left onto Bustleton Ave.

Continue up Bustleton Ave. past Cottman Ave., past Rhawn Ave. and past the Philadelphia Gas Co. You'll pass Jack's Deli on your left and about one-half block further make a right onto Mower St. About 100 feet turn right and continue onto Caster Ave. (which becomes Evarts St.) Then turn left onto Tolbut St. Jerry's house is the 3<sup>rd</sup> from the corner on the left. Come up the walk on the left side of the building.

Public Transportation: Take the Market-Frankfort line to the end (Frankfort and Bridge or Bridge and Pratt)... then take the #58 bus to Bustleton and Mower. At Mower, walk the same route as above.

Address: 8524 Tolbut St., Philadelphia

Phone: 215-745-3043

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managed to break free but was chased onto the Belt Parkway, where he was struck by a car and severely injured. He never regained consciousness and died on Friday, October 13, 2006---a day after turning 29---when his family removed him from the respirator that had kept him alive for five days after the attack.

It's been just over a year since the death of Michael Sandy, an interior designer for Ikea. The trial of the three men accused in his killing is coming to an end with a startling admission from one that he too is gay. But in the beginning, relatively little was said by gay groups and even less was said by black civil rights groups about Sandy's death. One national gay group said that Sandy's death was a local issue, so they were yielding its management to local organizations.

But tell me this: When Matthew Shepard was murdered, was his death viewed as a local issue? If my memory serves me correctly, the world stopped because white gays across the country made Shepard's death a nationwide issue for the media, politicians, and community groups.

Why didn't Sandy's death merit the same response?

In the spirit of all things being equal, if Michael Sandy had been heterosexual, would that have brought out black America's reverends Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton? If Sandy had been straight, would that have made it OK for the NAACP to get involved and for other black civil rights groups to take notice and speak out on hate crimes?

But this is The Advocate, not Ebony magazine, so chances are that the readers of this column are white and gay, not black and straight. So I'll continue with my first point. It's no secret that gay America suffers from denial when it comes to issues of race. Whether we admit it or not, gay groups react differently to hate crimes involving white victims versus those involving nonwhite victims. It's not an easy fact to swallow, but one look at the silence surrounding the death of Michael Sandy and the disparity is clear to see.

Unfortunately, chances are that we will continue to see hate crimes committed against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender

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## Profiles in Patriotism James Credle Some Kind of Hero

by Denny Meyer



James Credle took a bullet a long ago in a jungle in Vietnam. He fell to the ground, got up, and continued to help evacuate other injured soldiers. He was a medic. "It was in Tay Ninh Province, down below Saigon near the rubber plantations. We were doing a lot of S & D (search and destroy) missions," He told me. "We were going thru jungle trying to evac. a severely injured soldier; we were cutting our way thru jungle to get to the air evac. location; and bullets began to fly past us, we ducked down to ground, when it stopped we resumed. That happened three times. The fourth time, I was hit. I was patched up and we continued onward. Later, of course, I had to join him on the med evac. helicopter."

It doesn't sound like much, does it? Unless, of course, you're on a rescue mission in a jungle thousands of miles from home surrounded by Viet Cong guerrillas trying to kill you.

James Credle was drafted into the US Army and served from 1965 to 1967, leaving as a Spec. 4 Medic. He received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star with V for Valor, the Vietnamese Cross for Gallantry, and an Army Commendation Medal among other awards for his service. He happens to be a gay American and a black American. Neither of those has anything to do with being a hero nor with being qualified and able to serve in our nation's armed forces. In 1948 President Truman integrated black Americans into our armed forces by executive order, prohibiting racial discrimination in our military and recognizing the courage and valor of black Americans who have served in World War II and since. And yet, this brave proud American soldier could have been dishonorably discharged due to the discriminatory policy against gay Americans serving in our armed forces, despite his heroism in combat in Vietnam. Today, under the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy, those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan still must hide who they are if they are gay. Gay American service members are still discharged today, at the rate of two per day, despite heroism and critical skills, simply because of a policy that selects them for discrimination. And every year, some 3500 gay American service members simply do not reenlist because of the unbearable burden of serving in silence; a full brigade of trained, skilled soldiers lost each year.

When he was drafted, James Credle knew that he was gay, but said nothing--in essence volunteering when he could have avoided serving. "I didn't think about not serving," he said. "I was working at a Veterans hospital in Lyons, New Jersey, helping mostly WWI, WWII, Korean War, and newly hospitalized Vietnam vets; I heard all their stories, I knew what to expect. I knew about the reality of being in a war. I went, it was the right thing to do." He was 20 years old at the time. In Vietnam, as it is today in Iraq, he was able to be open with those around him. When mortars and bullets are flying, no one

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still winter and the grass had not started to grow. I knelt in the soil next to her grave with a rose in one hand and started talking to her. All I could manage was to say how much I loved and missed her. I placed the rose next to the stone and went home.

Weeks went by as I worked toward answers to my life and where it was going now that I finally could say that I was gay. I had to find a way to tell my Mom about being gay. I wished there were a way she could have been told before she died but that hadn't happened. I found myself at her grave once again. With rose in hand I knelt in front of the stone that represented her life. I confessed the sin to her. "Mom," I said, "I'm gay!" At that moment there was stillness in the air and then a whisper of wind. I could feel her presents, her touch, her voice came to me. She said, "I know you are gay and God loves you, for I have seen the book and on the last day, when the seventh trump sounds your name will be called. Today, all of heaven is rejoicing because you have finally confessed to be the person you were born to be." Tears rolled down my cheeks as her voice faded. I knew I was not a mistake. I kissed the rose and laid it down. I still had so much to learn but now I knew, I could be a Christian and gay. I sat and cried, for the joy overwhelmed me. That Sunday at church, I stood and witnessed of my newfound freedom in Christ. I had been freed of what the world had taught me was sin.

Metropolitan Community Church of New Haven became my hiding place from the world, a sanctuary where I could be my whole self. I couldn't get enough of the teaching and music. The first time I saw Stevie he was singing in church. I was impressed with his voice and the feeling he put into the music. Even though I was not looking for a relationship I was drawn to him. The following Sunday I decided to ask him if he needed a ride home. I didn't get the chance because he took off right after church.

I became more involved in the New Haven MCC and sought involvement in the gay community. I joined a group, which was active in combating racism and homophobia, Men of All Colors Together Connecticut. I noticed a name in their literature, Stevie M., could this be the same Stevie Martin I saw at church. The following Sunday, after service I quickly moved across the church to catch Stevie before he could disappear. He was not



leaving immediately because he was selling raffle tickets and as I approached he offered one to me. My question was answered when I saw the ticket; it was a fundraiser for MACT/CT. Stevie was surprised at my reaction when I said, "Oh your Stevie M."

After purchasing a ticket from him I waited for a time to talk.

He suggested we go somewhere else because the church is too busy and it's hard to have a lengthy conversation. We decided to go to a dinner nearby for tea, coffee and conversation. Our conversation was as if we had known each other for years. Coffee and tea, lead to sharing a Chefs Salad and the time flew, one hour became four and more. We left the diner and I drove Stevie home. It was late and since he lived with his

Grandfather, we stayed in the car to continue talking. A kiss good night brought feelings neither of us expected. Stevie knew we were falling in love and that I was feeling confused about my feelings because I had never really been in love before but he also knew we were becoming best friends.

The only time we could see each other because of my work schedule was after church but we talked on the phone everyday. I was finally able to adjust my work schedule so that we could see each other more often. At Christmas we became engaged and a few months later I asked him to move in with me. Things were getting difficult because I had been laid-off and the prospects of finding a job near our home were looking dim. God's promise to those who believe is that all our needs will be provided in God's own time. Well, as the money was running low a job offer came out of nowhere. If I accepted the position it would require relocating to Pennsylvania. At the job interview God told me the position was mine. All I needed to do was believe. Not only did God give me a job with an employer that would provide same-gender health benefits but God moved us to a home in a neighborhood of wonderful accepting people.

Time moves so quickly and before we knew it a year had past in the Philadelphia area. We were making plans for a Holy Union ceremony officiated by the founder of The Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, the Rev. Troy Perry. Rev. Perry was coming to Philadelphia on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the denomination to celebrate the joining of twenty-five couples. We were asked to gather in a semi-circle near the base of the steps to the Philadelphia Art Museum. Rev. Perry explained how the exchange of vows would take place and began the Union celebration. I don't remember the others involved, it was as if Stevie and I were the only couple there. As instructed, I told Stevie how much and why I loved him, he did the same. We exchanged rings and were pronounced a couple and we kissed. Stepping forward, we asked Rev. Perry to bless a broom we had brought and our union, which he did gladly. We placed the broom in front of us then with feet planted together on one side of the broom we jumped, landing flat-footed on the other side. It was then that we realized there were others watching. There must have been sixty people standing around cheering for us. The following day a co-worker gave me videotape of our ceremony from channel 29 news. Stevie and I had kissed on TV before Roseanne ever had the thought.

## Black robbers

a true story...

On a recent weekend in Atlantic City, a woman won a bucketful of quarters at a slot machine. She took a break from the slots for dinner with her husband in the hotel dining room. But first she wanted to stash the quarters in her room. "I'll be right back and we'll go to eat," she told her husband and carried the coin-laden bucket to the elevator.

As she was about to walk into the elevator she noticed two men already aboard. Both were black. One of them was tall...very tall...an intimidating figure. The woman froze. Her first thought was: "These two are going to rob me." Her next thought was: "Don't be a bigot; they look like perfectly nice gentlemen." But

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people. But if all hate crimes are considered equally horrible, then our response has got to be the same across the board whether the victim is white, black, or brown.

And to my brothers and sisters reading this, it is our responsibility as same-gender-loving people to call attention to tragedies like the case of Michael Sandy. It was no mistake that the deaths of Matthew Shepard and Brandon Teena went on to make international news---there was a community of folks to make sure of it. We owe it to the Michael Sandys of the world to hold not only straight blacks and gay whites accountable but ourselves as well. Michael Sandy could have been any one of us, and he was all of us.

Michael Sandy's death is just one example of a tragedy the gay majority slept through. He deserved better from all of us. No one hate crime is more important than another. While Matthew Shepard's death was unquestionably terrible, so was Sandy's.

Remember, it could have been you; it could have been me.

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cares if the man next to him happens to be of a different race or sexual orientation or both. At times like that, he said, "we anticipate that we might not come back, we're open with each other, it might be the last chance we have to relate honestly with another human being."

And yet, while serving in Vietnam as a young man of 20, he began to understand the meaning of discrimination against others. "While I was in Vietnam, in 1967, I saw the area where I lived in Newark burning during the 1967 Newark riots-'rebellion'. I was fighting for my country and saw my home burning due to police brutality. I began to more deeply understand how it feels to be treated as less than human. And often, in war, we kill others when we consider them to be less than human; on both sides. I call on those who understand racism to realize how they condemn their own children and others for being gay. How dare they claim that as the right path?"

James Credle grew up in the south, in North Carolina, where he saw 'White Only' water fountains and toilets, where he had to sit outside eating his lunch from a paper bag, where he was bussed past white Pamlico County 'High' school to what was the black Pamlico County 'Training' School. "In the military, as a gay person, all of that impacted on my experience. I came to better understand the world."

Sadly, he saw racial conflict within our own armed forces while he was serving. "Many vets of color were dishonorably discharged. Even now, forty years later, some are homeless or in prison." He explained that many were unable to overcome double discrimination when they tried to transition back to civilian life. Vietnam vets were not welcomed home as heroes and black vets returned home to the same employment discrimination they faced before having served their nation. "At that time," Mr. Credle said, "people used the bible to condone racism; now they use it to condone heterosexism. Both use power to put people on a lower level than themselves. It has been empowerment by race and now

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racial stereotypes are powerful, and fear immobilized her.

She stood and stared at the two men. She felt anxious, flustered and ashamed. She hoped they didn't read her mind but gosh, they had to know what she was thinking!!!

Her hesitation about joining them in the elevator was all too obvious now. Her face was flushed. She couldn't just stand there, so with a mighty effort of will she picked up one foot and stepped forward and followed with the other foot and was on the elevator.

Avoiding eye contact, she turned around stiffly and faced the elevator doors as they closed. A second passed, and then another second, and then another. Her fear increased!

The elevator didn't move. Panic consumed her. "My God," she thought, "I'm trapped and about to be robbed!" Her heart plummeted. Perspiration poured from every pore.

Then one of the men said, "Hit the floor."

Instinct told her to do what they told her. The bucket of quarters flew upwards as she threw out her arms and collapsed on the elevator floor. A shower of coins rained down on her. Take my money and spare me, she prayed.

More seconds passed. She heard one of the men say politely, "Ma'am, if you'll just tell us what floor you're going to, we'll push the button."

The one who said it had a little trouble getting the words out. He was trying mightily to hold in a belly laugh. The woman lifted her head and looked up at the two men. They reached down to help her up. Confused, she struggled to her feet.

"When I told my friend here to hit the floor," said the average sized one, "I meant that he should hit the elevator button for our floor. I didn't mean for you to hit the floor, ma'am." He spoke genially. He bit his lip. It was obvious he was having a hard time not laughing.

The woman thought: "My God, what a spectacle I've made of myself." She was too humiliated to speak. She wanted to blurt out an apology, but words failed her. How do you apologize to two perfectly respectable gentlemen for behaving as though they were going to rob you? She didn't know what to say.

The three of them gathered up the strewn quarters and refilled her bucket. When the elevator arrived at her floor they then insisted on walking her to her room. She seemed a little unsteady on her feet, and they were afraid she might not make it down the corridor. At her door they bid her a good evening.

As she slipped into her room she could hear them roaring with laughter as they walked back to the elevator. The woman brushed herself off. She pulled herself together and went downstairs for dinner with her husband.

The next morning flowers were delivered to her room - a dozen yellow roses. Attached to EACH rose was a crisp one hundred dollar bill.

The card said:

"Thanks for the best laugh we've had in years"

signed: Eddie Murphy & Michael Jordan

# JANUARY 2008

- Friday 04**      **Steering Committee meeting**  
**7:30 PM to 9:00 PM**  
 at Art and Stevie's  
 See directions on page 2
- Friday 11**      **The Jaded Lounge**  
**11:00 PM to 1:00 AM**  
 at the 12th AirCommand
- Friday 18**      **General Meeting**  
**7:30 PM to 10:00 PM**  
 at William Way Community Center
- Saturday 19**    **Winter Pot Luck**  
**6:00 PM to 10:00 PM**  
 at Jerry Winokur's  
 See details on page 1 and directions on page 3

# FEBRUARY 2008

- Friday 01**  
 Steering Committee meeting  
 7:30 to 9:00 PM
- Friday 15**  
 General Meeting  
 7:30 PM to 10:00 PM
- Saturday 16**  
**Red** Party Pot Luck  
 at Ken and Steve's  
 7:30 PM to 11:00 PM

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its discriminatory empowerment by sexuality." He believes that it is important to challenge people to think about their bigotry, "in order to create a different world, not recreating the mess we came from."

After his service in Vietnam, he went back to work at the VA hospital, and studied sociology at Rutgers University, under the GI bill, graduating third in his class. He became a counselor for veterans, working at Rutgers for 37 years becoming Director of the Office of Veterans Affairs, and later, the Assistant Dean of Students.

Over the nearly four decades following his experience in Vietnam, he was a founding member of the National Association for Black Veterans, a founding member of New Jersey & National Veteran Programs Administrators, Vice Chair of the New Jersey Agent Orange Commission, and the Executive Director of the National Council of Churches' Veterans in Prisons program (serving 23 programs around the US, developing programs to assist veterans in prison; and developing a 'discharge upgrade project'). He was also a founding member and co-chair of the National Association of Black and White Men Together, and its New York affiliate Men of All Colors Together/New York.

Currently, he is a founding member of the Newark Pride Alliance, following the murder of Sakia Gunn, which is seeking to create a community center and safe spaces in Newark for LGBT people; and strives to build community understanding to alleviate abusive bias and discrimination against the LGBTIQ and Two-Spirited community.

## Men of All Colors Together Philadelphia

PO Box 42257  
 Philadelphia, PA 19101

### 2007-2008 STEERING COMMITTEE

- Co-chairs  
 Aaron Libson            215-455-6038  
 Nate O'Neal            215-848-8532
- Recording Secretary  
 Ron Cropper            215-806-5016
- Corresponding Secretary  
 Patrick Lewis            302-762-6166
- Treasurer  
 Corbett Klein            609-530-1726
- NA Reps.  
 Nate O'Neal            215-848-8532  
 John Speer            610-429-5265
- Social Chair  
 Steering Committee
- Political Action  
 Steering Committee
- Membership Chair  
 Stevie Martin-Chester    610-277-6595
- Newsletter Editor  
 Arthur Martin-Chester    610-277-6595
- Members-At-Large  
 Sam Fisher            215-542-8665  
 Ron Sy            215-563-2420  
 Bob Hooks            215-765-2882  
 Steve Gilmour            610-355-0832  
 Lenny Stanton            Relay 1-800-654-5988  
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Web site:  
<http://www.mactphila.org>

"In my upbringing there was no place for anger," he said, "that's a luxury. My parents had 14 children, in our home there was no place for anger; it was more about trying to live another day. As in Vietnam, when the bullets were flying, there was no time for protest. We were busy trying to save lives. If you're still alive, later, then you can protest."

Guided by his rearing and his realization, during combat in Vietnam, that conflict was dehumanizing, he devoted his efforts for nearly 40 years to creating change for the better. He's some kind of hero.