



The newsletter of Men of All Colors Together Philadelphia

December 2007

Challenger

Christmas Dinner

**Pot Luck
December 25
2:00 PM to
7:00 PM
at Joshua's
Farm**



Christmas doesn't get much better than this. Be sure to join the festivities, atmosphere and great company, so pack up your best Christmas dish and make it to the country.

Give Aaron at 215-544-6038 a call to let him know what you will be bringing.

See the directions on page 4.

On the first night of Hanukkah,
my true love said to me -
"Let's buy wind-power for
E-lec-tri-city!"

On the fourth night of Hanukkah,
my rabbi said to me -
"Car-pool tonight!
Give the Breath of Life
a chance to catch new breath
when we gather to chant of our delight!"

On the eighth night of Hanukkah,
My granddaughter said to me:
"Sit down and write!
our Senators should know that I need to grow
and that means we should cut the CO2!"

The Eight Days of Hanukkah: Eight Actions to Heal the Earth through the Green Menorah Covenant

On Hanukkah, we are taught not only to light the menorah night by night, but to publicize the miracle, to

See EIGHT DAYS on page 3

STRATEGIC PLANNING

I proposed to the Membership meeting in October that a Strategic Planning session should take place to see if the leaders, the Steering Committee, are on target with what the Membership wants or not. They voted 9 or 10 yeses, and two abstentions (one was a new person there for the first time). Then the Steering Committee decided how to carry this out.

I asked Ron Sy and Tyrone Harvey if they would be willing to Co-facilitate this event. They both agreed. Both agreed that we might want to have one session with the Steering Committee, then the following session with the Membership. This will happened beginning in February. The facilitators said that given the two-months advance notice, that all Steering Committee members should be present for their session. They will also be present for the Membership session.

You will hear more about this in the January issue after Ron and Tyrone have the details worked out. It promises to be a thought provoking two sessions hopefully revitalizing our chapter.

Kwanzaa Pot Luck

**at Jerry & Al's
December 29
7:30 pm to 11:00 pm**



We take this time to celebrate all seven days of Kwanzaa – UMOJA (unity), KUJICHAGULIA (self-determination), UJIMA (collective work & responsibility),

UJAMAA (cooperative economics), NIA (purpose), KUUMBA (creativity) and IMANI (faith). Come join us as we partake in a meal and a little African-American history.

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

Sam F.	12/01	Ronald S.	12/05
Tyrone H.	12/09	Christopher B.	12/15

Directions to John Speer's home

FROM Center City, take the Schuylkill Expressway to City Ave (US 1) south. Follow City Ave. to West Chester Pike (PA3), turn right onto West Chester Pike (The apartment complex is about 15 miles along West Chester Pike). Follow West Chester Pike crossing Rt. 252 and Rt. 352 (at 352 there is a sign saying "West Chester – 4 miles" John's place is 2 miles past this point). Westtown Way is at a traffic light at the bottom of the hill with a Midas shop on the right. Cross Westtown Way (you will be making a U-turn at the third light). As you go up the hill from

Westtown Way stay in the center lane. The second light is at Goshen Meadows Apts. on the right and Rose Hill Apts. on the left. After this light get into the left turn lane at the third light (Ellis Lane on the right and Falcon Lane on the left) make a U-turn at this light. After making the U-turn you will see a white Avis sign, then a white Racquet Club sign. The driveway is between these two signs.

FROM Interstate 476, exit at Upper Darby at West Chester Pike (PA 3), west toward West Chester. Follow the directions above.

FROM US 202, exit at West Chester Pike (PA 3), east toward Newtown Square. At the light at Falcon Lane on the right and Ellis Lane on the left look for the white Avis sign, then a white Racquet Club sign. The driveway is between these signs.

Phone number is 610-429-5265 if you are lost.

Address – 1308 West Chester Pike, Apt. L-1

Directions to Jerry & Al's

From New Jersey / New York / Pennsylvania Via Turnpike:
Take the NJ Turnpike (North or South) to Exit 10 (route 287/
Metuchen / Edison Township). Once you pay the toll, follow
signs for route 287 north. Take 287 north to exit 2B, 27 south,
New Brunswick. At the 3rd light on 27 south, turn right. This is
Talmadge road, and your landmark is the Clairon Hotel on your
left, Pine Manor on your right. Follow Talmadge road until your
3rd light. At this light, make a right into "Village Gate at
Edison" (Orosz Blvd.). Continue around the bend to the end of
the complex. The pool is on your left - PARK HERE or
anywhere along the OUTGOING side of Orosz Blvd. (opposite
side of the road you drove in on). Follow the signs once you
park to 92 Kelly drive.

Via the Garden State Parkway:

Take the GSP south to exit 129 (440 / 287 / 9) and follow the
signs for route 440 south, which will turn into 287 north.
Follow the 287 north directions above. From the northbound
side, below the Driscoll bridge, take the first exit off the bridge
(exit 127) and follow to 440 south, which turns into 287 north.
Phone 732-906-7870 if you're lost

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turn our individual actions outward for the rest of the world to
see and to be inspired by. So we invite you to join, this
Hanukkah, in The Shalom Center's Green Menorah Covenant
for taking action - personal, communal, and political - to heal the
earth from the global climate crisis. After lighting your menorah
each evening, dedicate yourself to making the changes in your
life that will allow our limited sources of energy to last for as
long as they're needed, and with minimal impact on our climate.

No single action will solve the global climate crisis, just as no
one of us alone can make enough of a difference. Yet, if we act
on as many of the areas below as possible, and act together, a
seemingly small group of people can overcome a seemingly
intractable crisis. We can, as in days of old, turn this time of
darkness into one of light.

Day 1: Personal/Household: Call your electric-power utility to
switch to wind-powered electricity. (For each home, 100% wind-
power reduces CO2 emissions the same as not driving 20,000
miles in one year.)

Day 2: Synagogue, Hillel, or JCC: Urge your congregation or
community building to switch to wind-powered electricity.

Day 3. Your network of friends, IM buddies, and members of
civic or professional groups you belong to: Connect with people
like newspaper editors, real-estate developers, architects,
bankers, etc. to urge them to strengthen the green factor in all
their decisions, speeches, and actions.

Day 4 (which this year is Shabbat). Automobile: If possible,
choose today or one other day a week to not use your car at all.
Other days, lessen driving. Shop on-line. Cluster errands.
Carpool. Don't idle engine beyond 20 seconds.

See EIGHT DAYS on page 5

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

But yesterday, Yes!

Continued from NOVEMBER newsletter

I thought that perhaps the reason I wasn't interested was because
it hadn't happened yet so one of the first things I tried when we
dated was to have sex with her. Well I guess the first time is the
charm as they say because soon after I found out she was
pregnant. I told her I loved her and asked for her hand in
marriage. We were married and seven months later our first son
was born. The following January we moved to Arizona to be
near her best friend. The move to Arizona brought many
challenges. We separated and came back together again, had
two more children, a second son and a daughter, lost everything
and I struggled with why we're not more intimate. After three



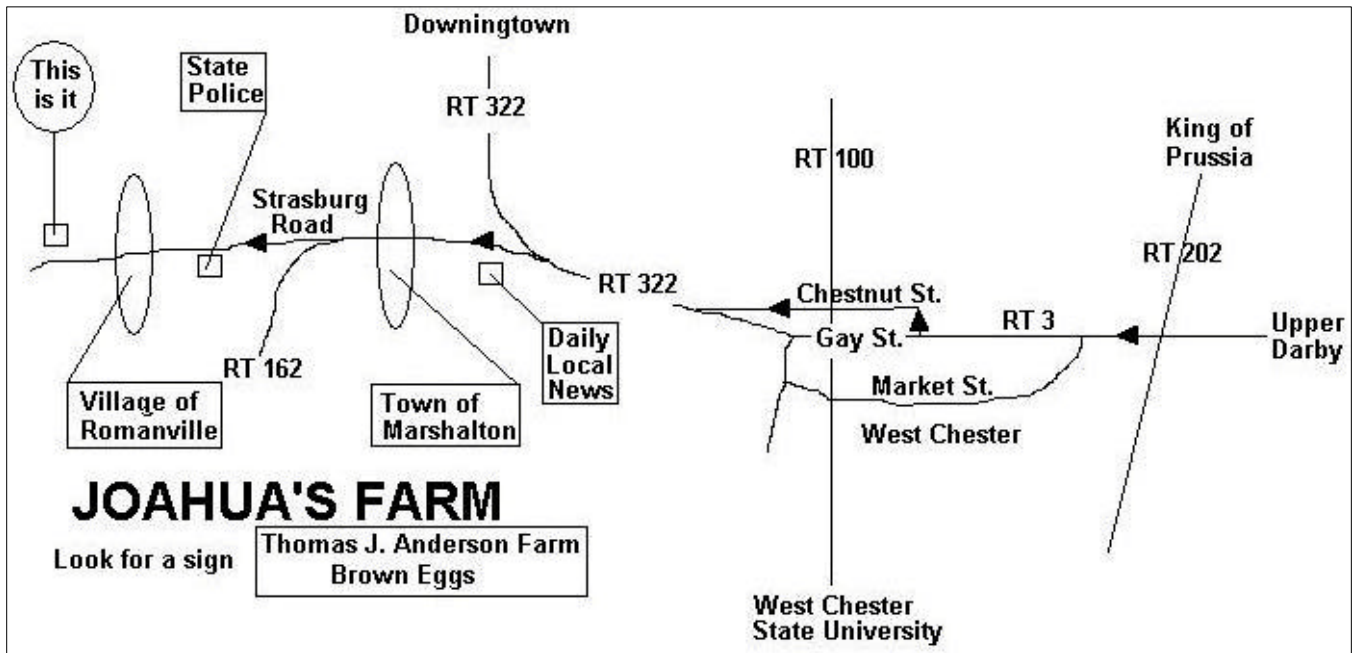
years in Arizona we
moved back east to be
nearer family. Over
the next 20 years I
worked to find out
what was wrong with
me that kept my wife
and I from being
intimate more often.
A fear of having more
children brought me to

have a vasectomy. When that didn't fix the problem I sought a
therapist. Each step seemed to help for a short time but there
was still an underlying problem I could not face. Often I
contemplated suicide but the only thing that held me from going
through with it was the fear that my family would not be taken
care of after I was gone. I tried to find a way to make it look
like an accident so my wife and children would be taken care of
financially. I couldn't talk to anyone in my family and God
didn't seem to want to help. Little did I know that God was
carrying me all this time. I was a lone again even though I was
living in a small house with two dogs, two cats, three grown
children and a wife. Finally, after 23 years of marriage my wife
could not take the physical neglect any longer and she walked
out. I was depressed, lonely and still looking for the reasons for
our marriage failure.

After all these years the only thing I could come up with for my
lack of intimacy with her was, I was gay. Now, with my wife
gone, the kids grown, I was alone with my fears. Could being
gay be my problem? I had come to this cross road many times
before but always made a turn in another direction. "There was
no way I could be gay," was my thought but now at that life
intersection again it was time to look down that road.

Other things were happening around me. My Mom, who had
been sick with emphysema for years, had just been diagnosed
with Lung Cancer, Dad was in denial and the family was shaken
to the core. Watching her struggle day to day as she was
consumed by this malignancy was not easy. It took a toll on us

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THE PILL continued from page 3

all. My questions of self worth and sexuality had to wait. The family came first. Saying good-bye to the mortar that held our family together, our Mother, was hard.

After her passing, I realized how frail life is and that no one is promised more than this moment. God has promised that those who believe in Christ will live an eternal life. I knew where my mother had gone but would I ever see her again? I was still struggling with my sexuality and was afraid that I might be gay. If that was my choice in life, then I was condemned to hell for my sin of homosexuality. There had to be another answer. I searched my soul.

It was months before I could bring myself to say out loud the words, "I'm afraid I'm gay." I walked into my therapist's office sat down and started to speak. As I opened my mouth to tell her my fear I started crying hysterically. I couldn't control my emotions as I told her how I was afraid I was gay. She didn't know how to handle my confession. I caught her totally off guard because I had not allowed myself to open up like that before. She offered to locate a doctor that could help for our next session. But a strange thing happened, as I was able to say those words aloud, they became real. I was gay! I started my own search.

See the JANUARY newsletter for the conclusion of this story

CONVENTION 2009?

Nat and Tony, the national cochairs, asked Nate and I if we could ask the chapter to host the 2009 or 2010 convention; they would hope that we could host the 2009 since the Toronto location has not seen anyone step forth to cochairs it. We said that the membership would have to OK it; that we would tell the Steering Committee about it; and that we felt that at least ¾ of the membership would have to agree, just as in 1999. We said that we would get back to them as soon as we could. I talked with Bob Williams, the chair of our last convention and asked him if he would act as a consultant. He said no, but would consider

Directions to Joshua's farm

Take Rt-202 to Rt-3 west toward West Chester. Follow Rt-3 to the right and to the left. Turn right onto Rt-322 and left onto Rt-162. Where Rt-162 bares to the left, continue going gayly forward on Strasburg Road. Pass State Police Facility on left, through the Village of Romanville. The farm is on the right, look for the sign "Thomas Anderson Brown Eggs"
 Address: 2057 West Strasburg Road
 Phone: 610-486-0774

arranging for the hotel site with bids. Aaron suggested that if the hotel rooms in Philly are prohibitive, he should try Atlantic City. Aaron and Tyrone said that they would "consider" being Convention Cochairs when I asked them. We need this info to determine if we should continue, should the membership vote in favor of it.

The Steering Committee supports the idea, and a non-binding vote was taken at the Membership meeting in November with ten of the 12 present voting in favor; one was a first time person who did not vote. The other member said he needed more information on it.

We will take an "official" vote at the December Membership meeting and get back to the National Association with the results of the vote. Even though a simple majority is needed for the vote to be passed, we feel that if we do not get at least ¾ in favor, it is not enthusiastically endorsed and should not go forward.

So we hope that you all will come out and tell us how you feel. The last convention was very successful and we shared in the profit. Certainly, those mentioned as "considering" are not the only ones that will be involved. There are many things that need to be done, not the least is fundraising. We worked very hard for the last convention and it was a lot of fun. It can help put our name out there again as we would cooperate with other regional organizations as we did before. So, get on down to the Center and vote on Friday, December 21. The momentum is building; help us along!

John Speer

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Day 5: Workplace or College: Urge the top officials to arrange an energy audit. Check with utility company about getting one free or at low-cost.

Day 6: Town/City: Urge town/city officials to require greening of buildings through ordinances and executive orders. Creating change is often easier on the local level!

Day 7: State: Urge state representatives to reduce subsidies for highways, increase them for mass transit.

Day 8: National: Urge your Senators to strengthen and pass the Lieberman-Warner "America's Climate Security Act." For easy addressing and a model letter to send them, go to – salsa.democracynaction.org/o/602/t/4181/campaign.jsp?campaign_KEY=21544

Make our planet's Hanukkah a happy one!

Summary of NABWMT Retreat on Nov. 2-4, 2007

The National Association of Black & White Men Together (NABWMT) just completed a National Weekend Retreat in Pittsburgh, the site of their national office. This was in response to a "mandate" approved by the members at the General Membership meeting in Convention in Cleveland, Ohio in August, supporting a National Retreat to review and bring the association from a 1980 twentieth century organization into a twenty-first century one.

The session was moderated by Roland Stringfellow and composed of members as well as board members. Everyone agreed that changes needed to be made to keep it a relevant organization. The Bush-Mallon Institute for Social Justice was seen as the flagship of the association.

Virtually all aspects of the association were on the table including



the location of the national office, having an executive director, the structure, vision, values and mission, as well as the name. The diversity and age of the membership were also discussed.

This was just the beginning of a year-long process to upgrade the 27 year old association. There will be a review by the membership of the results of the Retreat by mail, and more chance for input. At the 2008 Convention, more discussion and final approval by the General Membership will take place.

After that, an exciting more relevant organization will serve the membership and the larger LGBT community. Below is a rendition of the final flip charts that we did on Sunday morning. This gives a snapshot of the retreats activities. Nate and I are available to answer any questions you might have.

John Speer and Nate O'Neal

World AIDS Day

December 1, 2007

AIDS Fund is proud to co-sponsor two special events in Philadelphia in commemoration of World AIDS Day on Saturday, December 1, 2007. World AIDS Day is observed every year to remember and honor the over 25 million people worldwide that have been lost to the AIDS pandemic and to continue to educate our communities about the impact of HIV disease.

AIDS Memorial Quilt Display

AIDS Fund and The William Way Community Center will host panels from the AIDS Memorial Quilt from 11AM - 6PM on Saturday, December 1 in the Ballroom at the William Way Community Center, 1315 Spruce Street, Center City Philadelphia.

"Commemorate. Educate. Re-dedicate." World AIDS Day Event

AIDS Fund in conjunction with the Sapphire Fund and Broad Street Ministry will collaborate with over 20 local organizations to present a World AIDS Day Event that will combine artistic performances, visual art displays, and commemorative ceremonies with FREE HIV counseling and rapid tests. Rapid HIV tests provide a result in 20 minutes. Information about HIV and AIDS services in the Philadelphia region will also be available. The event will take place from 1 - 4PM on Saturday, December 1 at Broad Street Ministry, 315 S. Broad Street.

Until It's Over

Puerto Rico's AIDS Care in Disarray Over Funds

By Erik Eckholm

SAN JUAN, P.R. — His emaciated body advertises the damage wreaked by the AIDS virus. But over the last year, Rolando

Rolando Warren González, at his shelter in Loiza, P.R., said he has had six two-week periods with no H.I.V. medicines in the last year.

Warren González, 41, a former steel band member, has faced an extra challenge to his survival.

From the shelter where he lives in Loiza in Puerto Rico's impoverished northeast, Mr. González travels an hour and a half by bus to reach the government clinic where he receives his "cocktail" of antiviral drugs.

"But sometimes I go, and they just don't have the medicines," he said.

Six times in the last year, he said, he has suffered two-week periods with no drugs, undercutting the life-prolonging benefits of modern therapies against H.I.V., the AIDS virus.

Accounts like his — and worse — are repeated across this

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DISARRAY continued from page 5

tropical territory of the United States, where hundreds of H.I.V. and AIDS patients are not receiving vital medical care, say a host of doctors, community groups and patients.

The disarray in treatment reflects a stew of problems. An overstretched health care budget is accentuated by rivalries between the commonwealth and the San Juan city governments, which run separate AIDS programs.

But federal officials and many local doctors say the main culprit is the island's poor management of the available money provided for AIDS care under the Ryan White Act, amounting to \$53 million last year.

Clinics have not received drugs on time, and private groups that assist AIDS patients are often reimbursed six months late or more, causing some to cut services or even shut down.

In sharp rebukes to the Puerto Rico Health Department and the City of San Juan, federal officials have put the AIDS grants under unusually tight review and even threatened to halt some federal money. Because of disorganization, the officials say, the island has often failed to spend all its Ryan White aid, losing access to \$6.5 million over the last five years.

Adding questions, in December the F.B.I. raided four San Juan Health Department offices, seizing 400 boxes of documents in a criminal investigation into possible misuse of Ryan White grants.

Officials here deny misusing funds. They did have to establish a waiting list for new patients needing drug treatment in the fall, but say that any lapses in care have been brief and that their main worry, in an era when treating a single AIDS patient can cost more than \$25,000 a year, is a shortage of money.

At a time when patients live longer and drug costs soar, the challenge is daunting. But doctors and patients here say the government has made poor use of its money. "The state of H.I.V. treatment here is a catastrophe," said Dr. José Varga Vidot, director of Community Initiative, a private group in San Juan that provides primary care to 1,600 patients including drug addicts, prostitutes and homeless people.

Dr. Varga Vidot said he knew of at least 75 people who were unable to obtain all their drugs from government clinics for up to a month.

In relation to its population of 3.9 million, Puerto Rico has the fifth-highest concentration of AIDS cases of states and territories, with 12,000 patients and estimates that as many more are infected with H.I.V. but are not yet ill.

About half the patients were infected from shared heroin needles, posing special challenges because many are isolated and penniless.

Although no studies have tried to link the spotty care with mortality, according to the latest comparative national data, 580 patients died here in 2003, indicating a mortality rate higher than that in states like New York known for good AIDS care.

A majority of H.I.V. and AIDS patients are covered by the Puerto Rican version of Medicaid, known as Health Reform. That financially struggling program does not cover some crucial drugs.

The \$53 million provided under the Ryan White law is supposed to fill the gaps.

As a territory, "we don't get what we need," said Health Secretary Rosa Pérez-Perdomo.

Federal aid to the Medicaid program here is capped at \$240 million, meeting 13 percent of the overall budget, Dr. Pérez-Perdomo said. On the mainland, poorer states receive up to 75 percent of their Medicaid money from Washington, giving them more leeway in treating low-income AIDS patients.

Giovanni's Room

– Our Community Book and more Store

We need your business. It's up to you, of course, whether you find our goods and services useful to you, but you may not know that:

1. Giovanni's Room has the largest inventory of English-language books and movies in our specialties in the Eastern United States and probably in the world. Where the chain stores may, at their best, have a couple of hundred titles, we have thousands. Too, our inventory gives you the chance to browse, to find things you didn't know existed.
2. We have vastly greater experience with the books, movies, and magazines we stock than any other store on the continent. Our staff has more than 80 years' experience working here, so we are more likely to know about anything you are interested in than any other bookseller.
3. We are a rich source of information about the region and its LGBT communities.
4. Our Internet presence makes much of the store available online. Our weekly emails of new arrivals comprise the most complete and up to date information on new LGBT books and movies any where on the worldwide web.
5. Our mail order department is at least as good as any of its competitors, getting you what you want quickly and at a fair price.

Hi this is Stevie... Hi everybody it's me again.

I hope everybody is well. Here's the news, we have 56 members so far. We had a very interesting month of November; hopefully December will be even more interesting. I'm only going to talk to you about what I know and this is what I know about. The New members Pot Luck went very well. We welcomed six new members, two of them showed up at the party, which was wonderful. Larry D. and Bill N. were happy to be there and had a great time. They promised to be good members and support what the group is doing. I didn't go to the Jaded Lounge did any of you go? We try to go to support the Jaded Lounge and to support Ron Sy. If you can, you should try to go, they put on a great show and you will have a wonderful time. Speaking about support, Christopher Blandford is getting out of the hospital and going back to rehab. Art and I were in Giovanni's Room this weekend and saw Gary

See STEVIE on page 7

STEVIE continued from page 6

Hines he gave us the news about Chris. If you haven't visited him or called him, he would love to see or hear from you. I'm curious about the Thanksgiving potluck at the Rainbow Social Club. For those of you that went, e-mail me and let me know how things went. Our potluck for Thanksgiving went very well. We had eight members with plenty of food to go around. I made my famous Carrot Cake and Lenny made some wonderful Macaroni & Cheese, that's just to name some of the food. Then of course, after dinner we had entertainment. John McNeill gave us a present, a DVD of Tyler Perry's play "I can do bad all by myself". His famous character Madea carried on as she always does. Funny, funny stuff, wonderful music, dramatic acting, and a lovely story about Madea's family. I like all of Tyler Perry's stories. They are all good. So that was our Thanksgiving, it went very well. The general meeting I thought went very well also. You all know we had the editor of the PGN there. Her name is Sarah Blazucki and she is the new editor. We asked about Marco, who was the last editor of the paper and all she said was that they had a disagreement and he quit. I think there is more to that story but if we need to know we'll know but I'm not going to investigate that. I think what's happening with her is more important. We talked about the history between our group and the paper and we told her what we thought about the paper. It's a white, rich man's paper. By the look on her face, I think she heard that before but she didn't say. She listened very carefully and took notes. I gave her information about the group. We talked about AuCourant and the relationship we had with that paper. She said she is trying to change stuff around. I remember her saying that she checked a lot of different organization and she wants to make the paper more about the community, which was nice, but I was a little surprising because they never said that before. Everybody was interested in what she was talking about and glad she came to the meeting. I think it will help with publicity for our organization. I think this is going to be something for the Steering Committee as well as the whole organization to work on. I mean, do you want to work with the PGN or do you think it's a waste of time? In my opinion, all the help we can get is good. Now maybe this is a new beginning, it has to start somewhere. I'm really curious to see how much power she is going to have. I mean you know, when you are dealing with organizations, people and communities, power always comes up. I remember in the 80's going to a workshop that MACT/NY put on, the topic was "Power, Power, who's got the Power". Maybe this is the conversation that we need to have. I think 2008 is going to be a real interesting and productive year. Seeds are being planted now let's see what grows.

We've been living in Pennsylvania now going on 15 years. We live in Norristown and for the new members that might not know, Jerry Mallon; our founder use to live here. We live five blocks away from where he used to live. I think about Jerry a lot. I really miss him. He was really a wonderful person. I always wondered what he would do about this organization now if he had lived. 27 years ago, getting involved with a group like this was easy because it was new, there was nothing else around like it and it was a chance for white and black men to get together. At the time, all there was in the community was the

Weight Loss Program

A guy calls a company and orders their 5-day, 10lb. weight loss program. The next day, there's a knock on the door and there stands before him a voluptuous, athletic, 19 year old babe dressed in nothing but a pair of Nike running shoes and a sign around her neck. She introduces herself as representative of the weight loss company. The sign reads: "If you can catch me, you can have me." Without a second thought, he takes off after her. A few miles later, huffing and puffing, he finally catches her and has his way with her. The same girl shows up for the next four days and the same thing happens.

On the fifth day, he weighs himself and is delighted to find he has lost 10lb. as promised. He then calls the company and orders their 5-day/20 pound program.

The next day there's a knock at the door and there stands the most stunning, beautiful, sexy woman he has ever seen in his life. She is wearing nothing but Reebok running shoes and a sign around her neck that reads: "If you catch me you can have me."

Well, he's out the door after her like a shot! This girl is in excellent shape and it takes him a while to catch her but when he does, it's definitely worth every muscle cramp and wheeze, so for the next four days, the same routine happens. Much to his delight, on the fifth day he weighs himself only to discover that he has lost another 20lb. as promised.

He decides to go for broke and calls the company to order the 7-day/50 pound program. "Are you sure?" asks the representative on the phone. "This is our most rigorous program." "Absolutely," he replies, "I haven't felt this good in years."

The next day there's a knock at the door; and when he opens it he finds this huge, muscular, 7ft man standing there wearing nothing but pink running shoes and a sign around his neck that reads:

"I'm Francis. If I catch you, you're mine..."

bars. I'm wondering if this group started now, what would it look like. Don't get me wrong, I love Philadelphia and the community here but Pennsylvania is a conservative state. How do we have a group like this in a conservative community? So many of the chapters we have in the United States are different because their cities are different. I mean New York City is a very good example of diversity. You can judge that by the community center. You can judge most communities by their community center. If we are to change, I don't want to change ourselves out of existence. I love the idea of having a retreat like the National had in Pittsburgh. I guess "retreat" is the new word for it. They use to be called Regionals. I think we should work on trying to do that again, whether you call them Retreats or Regionals. I know I mentioned this before but I thought it was worth mentioning again. I want you all to think about that. The anniversary committee is being formed now and elections will be coming up in a couple of months. I'm not sure whether it will be in March or April. I just find it very interesting as well as a challenge having an organization like this in a conservative city. Remember, we just found out at

See STEVIE on page 8

DECEMBER 2007

- Friday 07** **Steering Committee meeting**
7:30 PM to 9:00 PM
 at John Speer's home
 See directions on page 2
- Friday 14** **The Jaded Lounge**
11:00 PM to 1:00 AM
 at the 12th AirCommand
- Saturday 15** **Queer Asian Holiday Pot Luck**
12:00 noon to 2:00 PM
 at William Way Community Center
 RSVR to Khanh Le at 267-243-7074
 or khanh.85@gmail.com
- Friday 21** **General Meeting**
7:30 PM to 10:00 PM
 at William Way Community Center
- Tuesday 25** **MACT/P's Christmas Dinner Pot Luck**
3:00 PM to 7:00 PM
 at Joshua's Farm
 See details on page 1 and directions on page 4
- Saturday 29** **Kwanzaa Pot Luck**
7:30 PM to 11:00 PM
 at Jerry and Al's
 See details on page 1 and directions on page 3

JANUARY 2008

- Friday 04**
 Steering Committee meeting
 7:30 to 9:00 PM
 at Art & Stevie's
- Friday 18**
 General Meeting
 7:30 PM to 10:00 PM
- Saturday 19**
 Winter Pot Luck
 We have invited The Rainbow Social Club to join us
 at Jerry Winokur's
 7:30 PM to 11:00 PM

STEVIE continued from page 7

convention in Cleveland that they have a big Transgender leadership and I didn't even know that. I'm saying that we don't really have that kind of leadership here but who knows. I'm just thinking out loud about all kinds of workshops and discussions like Theatre of Understandings. I probably brought this up before but I'm talking to the new leaders of this organization right now. I thought about this a lot in November because of the New Member's potluck and the new blood in the group. So, I thought this time I would write about it.

Well, I guess that's it for now. Have a happy holiday everybody and we'll be seeing you at Joshua's Farm for the Christmas Pot Luck. Let's not forget about our annual Kwanzaa at Jerry and Al's. I guess that's it for now. Happy New Year everybody. Stay positive and stay strong. Stevie

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 215-223-1688
 Steve Gilmour 610-355-0832
 Lenny Stanton Relay 1-800-654-5988
 Phone 215-222-5035

Email address:

ajmartin-chester@juno.com

Web site:

<http://www.mactphila.org>

The newsletter is always looking for articles but please get them to me by the 15th of the month. As the editor, I reserve the right to edit submissions to reduce the possibility of outing persons. Otherwise articles will be printed as written. Send to Challenger Editor, 627 Hamilton St., Norristown, PA 19401-4234 or E-mail to ajmartin-chester@juno.com