



"STRAIGHT" ANSWERS ABOUT STONEWALL 25

What is Stonewall 25?

Sunday 26, 1994 will mark the 25th anniversary of the riots that occurred at the Stonewall Bar. Many people feel that the riots were the beginning of the Gay and Lesbian liberation movement. Since 1969, we have come far in our quest for human rights, but the task is by no means over. Religious right-wing forces are working hard to erode the freedom and protection we have fought for, and gay bashing is on the rise. Around the world many of our lesbian sisters and gay brothers are persecuted, even killed, for simply being themselves.

Here at home, we are still fighting for funding to help PWA's and People with HIV, including our recent battle against City Hall's attempt to get rid of the Department of AIDS Services (DAS). That's what makes this 25th anniversary so important -- it's not just a matter of celebration, it is one of survival!

What are the events?

The entire month of June will be a celebration of Lesbian and Gay Pride. On Wednesday the 1st, Windows of the Village will official open. Merchants all along Christopher Street have donated the display space in their front windows for exhibits on the diverse aspects of our community. The NY City Public Library will open an exhibition on our struggle for equal rights. Shortly afterwards, Gay Games IV will open in New York with more competing athletes than the 1994 Winter Olympics.

So many Gay and Lesbian organizations are planning conferences, parties, demonstrations, etc. that it is impossible to list them all.

All of this will culminate on June 26th in the International March on the United Nations to Affirm the Rights of Lesbian and Gay People and the Rally in Central Park.

Is it a March or a Parade?

Whatever you call it, it is a show of strength and unity for the Gay and Lesbian community. It's "official" title is a **March**, but that distinction was made to stress the importance of standing up to our oppressors and saying we are proud of who we are, and that we will not be relegated to second class citizenship. While it is important for us to show unity, it is just as critical that we show the diversity and fierce pride within our community.

That's why it's imperative that you participate.

Has the route been decided?

New York City officials have been dragging their feet. While some people have been very enlightened, there are many more who need to see the light. Stonewall 25 negotiators have consistently asked for multiple march routes, including one starting from the Village and ending in the park. Unfortunately, the only route that the City has agreed to so far starts at 42nd Street and 1st Avenue, continues uptown to 57th Street, then left along 57th to 6th Avenue, turning right, and then up 6th Avenue into the park. This route alone is simply not acceptable. As a community we must continue to put pressure on the City to let us march up 5th Avenue and to provide us with at least an additional route. Call City Hall to demand our rights.

What time is the March?

The March will start at 11 AM on Sunday, June 26th. As soon as we complete negotiations with the city, we will be advising people on where the formation areas will be.

What about the Rally?

The Rally will start at 1 PM and continue until 7 PM on the Great Lawn in Central Park. There will be speakers and entertainers from every corner of the world, representing every color, religion, social and political persuasion of the Lesbian and Gay community.

Is that all there is?

No! As part of Stonewall 25's organizing efforts, there will four days of local and international lobbying (June 23, 24, 27 and 28). Look for further information on how you and your friends can change to course of history. In addition, the week before the March and Rally will be filled with organized Direct Actions. These may be as simple as the reading of banned Latin American poetry, or as complex as a mass same-sex wedding ceremony. Ideas for these direct actions are coming from the international community, with the Direct Action Working Group (DAWG) of Stonewall 25 coordinating.

On Monday June 27th, there will also be a Civil Disobedience at the United Nations. Exact details cannot be released yet, but look for further information just prior to the weekend.

Where do I call or go to volunteer?

In order to ensure that everyone has a safe, comfortable and fulfilling celebration it will take almost 11,000 volunteers on June 26th. That's a lot of people. We need you help. We know that many of you are already over-committed to the volunteer work that you do, but this day is so important to our future that we hope you can squeeze a few more hours of volunteers work into this June. If you can, please call Marc Rubin at () and ask him how you can assist. If that number is busy, call () and leave us a message. Someone will get back to you soon.

If you're in the neighborhood, stop by our office on the third floor of the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 West 13th Street, between 7th Avenue and Greenwich Avenue in Manhattan.