



The Independence

The Monthly Newsletter of Dignity/Philadelphia for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Catholics & Friends

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FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM LA PRESIDENTA

As I near the completion of my term as Dignity Philadelphia's President, I would like to express my thanks to all those that have supported and encouraged me along the way. It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve on this Steering Committee, first as secretary and then as president.



When I first assumed the office of president in 2011, we had major concerns with attendance being low. Community Life, Education and Communication Committees were dormant with no coordinators. Our Music Ministry was becoming undone. Our semiannual business meeting failed to have a quorum. I sent out 100 letters to former members inviting them to attend our September Pot Luck and not one joined us!

My goal was to get more members involved and increase our younger memberships. As our members started brainstorming, we came up with a plan. We had a computer class, we had various outings, but the most successful has been our Games Night. One of the most important things about Games Night is that it brings our community members of all ages together. I can't stress the importance of this more than anything else. To get the young involved not only opens us up to fresh ideas of spreading the Word of the Lord, it keeps us innovative and allows the future of Dignity Philadelphia to continue and flourish. But at the same time we cannot forget our senior members for they are the foundation of what Dignity Philadelphia is all about, and if we focus only on the young we lose the history and our true meaning.

One of the highlights of my time as president was to be part of the 40th Anniversary. I was honored to sit on a panel with some of the greatest people of Dignity, and then join the entire Dignity family for an awesome night of dinner and dance. It was truly exceptional to see all of those beautiful people who paved the way and helped make Dignity what it is today. Words cannot express the admiration that I feel for each of you.

I would like to congratulate the oncoming President of Dignity. I wish you well. As you take on this responsibility know that you will always have love at your side, faith under your feet and endless possibilities of what's to come.

God Bless, Joanne

THE PRESIDENT'S LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR 2013 - MICHAEL ROCKS, 1ST RECIPIENT

By Joanne R Collins

There are so many of our members that continuously dedicate themselves to what Dignity Philadelphia is all about. But there are a few that truly inspire us. These special people are the backbone of our Chapter. As I near the end of my term as President, I wanted to acknowledge this untiring, dedication and commitment. Michael is a perfect example. He came to Dignity in 1976 where he migrated to the Music Ministry and has been there ever since. He was awarded the Chapter Service Award in 1979 and the Deo Gratias Award in 1995. He served as our president from 1981 to 1983 and then again from 2003 to 2005. One of the most moving moments



Joanne Collins and recipient Michael Rocks

at Dignity for me was when Michael presented Eileen DeFranco, our first female presider, with his stole. He has played important parts in the liturgies of some of the very people that are named on our memorial panels. His presence radiates every week in the Music Ministry and when he is not here, it is truly felt. This is the inspiration and the true meaning of what this award is all about; I am honored to present the 1st President's Lifetime Achievement Award of 2013 to Michael Rocks to thank him for his strength and commitment to Dignity Philadelphia. (See criteria for the new award in this newsletter.)

MOTIONS FROM THE CINCO DE MAYO, 2013 STEERING COMMITTEE

At the May 5th meeting of the Steering Committee, the following motions were presented and voted on by the members present:

Motion 13-05-01 made by Kevin Davies; seconded by Dick O'Malley. Be it moved that D/P commend the 40th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee on a job well done and special recognition to David Kalinowski, the Chair of the committee, for his leadership in guiding the committee in a very successful and enjoyable event for everyone that attended. Passed unanimously.

Motion 13-05-02 made by Dick O'Malley; seconded by Joanne Collins. Be it moved that the Steering Committee commends the Liturgy Committee under the leadership of Michael Rocks for planning and implementing the 40th Anniversary Liturgy. Passed unanimously.

Motion 13-05-03 made by David Kalinowski; seconded by Joanne Collins. Be it moved that an ad hoc committee be created to do a fundraiser to make funds available to assist D/P members attend the DUSA biennial convention in Minneapolis, MN in July 2013, with fund distribution to be determined by the Steering Committee. Melissa Hrinko to chair, with two additional members, with gender parity. Passed unanimously.

50/50 FOR JUNE

Motion 13-05-04: Made by Kevin Davies; seconded by David Kalinowski. Be it moved that D/P select Philly Pride as the June 50/50 recipient. Passed unanimously.



PHILLY PRIDE PRESENTS, Inc. (PPP) is a group of volunteer coordinators under the leadership of an Executive Director and Senior Advisor which organizes "PrideDay" in June, "OutFest" in October. These are the only two events during which the Philadelphia Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community joins together and celebrates as a whole. PHILLY PRIDE PRESENTS is proud to be co-sponsors of the Phila. DYKE March and the Alternative Prom.

The purpose of the pride events shall be the advancement of LGBT rights through the visibility and awareness that their parades and festivals create. This purpose is achieved through the annual PrideDay parade and festival, annual National Coming Out Day Block Party (OutFest) and other forms of community outreach as may be appropriate. "Coming Out" marks the beginning of the gay self-realization process, "Pride" marks its culmination. In addition to celebrating the LGBT uniqueness, these events help thousands discover the breadth of the LGBT community in the Delaware Valley, provide avenues for education, growth and self-realization, and increase the visibility and diversity of the LGBT community.

AND SPEAKING OF PHILLY PRIDE:

PrideDay, the LGBT Parade and Festival, will be Sunday, June 9, 2013. This is their silver anniversary -- 25th year! They expect it to be the biggest and best parade and festival ever.

Dignity Philadelphia will be participating in the parade and will have a tent at Penn's Landing afterwards. Our 40th Anniversary theme – We Remember, We Celebrate, We Believe - makes this a very special occasion, and we need your help. People are needed to 1) staff the tent at Penn's Landing, and 2) we could certainly use more Dignette volunteers to walk with us during the parade. We will proudly display our new 40th Anniversary banner, show off our rainbow colors and pass out candy (with Dignity info) to the hordes of people watching the parade. Please join us in walking (or riding) thru the gayborhood and down Market Street, past the judging stand, and in singing our little Catholic hearts out. We usually sing "This little light of mine" but we can attempt any song during our trek. And you don't need to be part of the choir to join us – everyone is invited to participate; since this is our 40th year as a community, we need to show Philadelphians how proud we are to be members of Dignity; the more people the merrier! Join us in wishing Philly Pride a Happy Birthday by showing our loyalty and pride in being members of Dignity Philadelphia. We have members that are setting up the tent, and breaking it down prior to Liturgy services. We do need volunteers to staff the table and walk with us. Please see David K. or Joe T. to participate – we need your help!

SPECIAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING ON SUNDAY, MAY 12

The following motion was made by Jimmy Calnan; seconded by Jim Clay. Be it moved that the criteria for the President's Lifetime Achievement Award be approved by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Steering Committee. Passed unanimously (Education Committee not available).

As info, members of the Ad Hoc Committee: Jimmy Calnan, Joanne Collins and Kevin Davies.

PRESIDENT'S LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CRITERIA

- President's discretion on award winner.
- If offered in any year, this award to be presented at the end of a President's yearly term (preferably the end of May).
- No more than one (1) award granted at that time.
- Award in recognition of a person's long term on-going service to D/P.
- Recipient has received both the Chapter Service and Deo Gratias awards.
- Recipient is a dues paying member.

**Happy 25th Birthday To Philly Pride,
And Happy 40th Anniversary To
Dignity Philadelphia - We Are All
Proud Members Of The Philadelphia
LGBT Community!**

DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Dignity Philadelphia celebrated 40 years in existence April 27 and 28, 2013, and we partied like it was 1973! There were a total of 131 tickets sold – and the Anniversary Committee needs to be congratulated for doing a great job! The food was delicious and plentiful, the dancing was very similar to “American Bandstand” and the camaraderie of past and present members was certainly evident. The following is just a sampling of participants; special thanks to Melissa H. and Dick for contributing the pictures on this page. Also please go to our Facebook page Dignity Philadelphia for a million pictures taken by M. Viola.

At the Dinner Dance, Mummers Museum, Saturday, April 27, 2013; members and friends included:



Dessert at the Dinner Dance



Mark, Tony, Mary and Joe



Ron and Larry



Chris, Mary Ann and Marie; all from out of town who came to celebrate.



Joe T. – 1st President of Dignity Philadelphia and partner Bill Ratcliffe



Alice, Ann and Chris



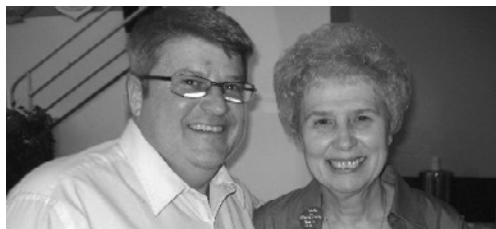
Paul, Simon and Michael Rocks reminiscing on 40 years of Dignity.



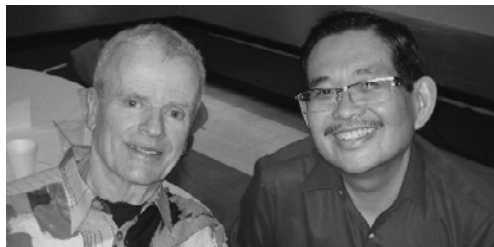
Melissa, Eleanor and Linda



Rodger B. and his partner Joe Q.



David K. and Sister Jeannine G.



Jim and Henry



Melissa and Dante – on-site registration people

**Dignity members and friends at the 40th Liturgy Mass on
April 28, 2013, included**



Jim and Marie



Paul and David



Melissa and Paul



Ann and Barbara



BJ and Erin



Our distinguished and usually shy Vice President, Linda B.

Reflection for the Month of June – Pride Month

And we have done more in the two and a half years that I've been in here than the previous 43 Presidents to uphold that principle, whether it's ending 'don't ask, don't tell,' making sure that gay and lesbian partners can visit each other in hospitals, making sure that federal benefits can be provided to same-sex couples.

- President Barack Obama

THIS AND THAT...

- + Dignity Philadelphia now has 135 members – isn't this great? Plus we have 9 Presidents.
- + As many of you know, Joe T. is a proud Mummer, and participates in a string band. For the month of June, three string bands will offer "String Band Music Under the Stars, every Thursday night starting at 8 p.m. These free concerts are at the Mummies Museum, 2nd Street @ Washington Ave. – rain or shine. All you need is your folding chairs! For June, they are featuring
 - June 6th - Duffy
 - June 13th – Aqua
 - June 20th – Avalon, and
 - June 27 – Durning

Come join us in supporting Joe at these concerts; refreshments will be available for purchasing.

- + Chris Hampton, Youth and Program Strategist for the ACLU LGBT and AIDS Project is working to gain legal protections for same sex couples in PA. Chris is looking for same-sex couples in PA who would like formal legal recognition of their relationship and would be willing to tell their stories to the public. They are looking for a diverse variety of people from different parts of the state and many walks of life. If interested, take an online survey at <http://action.aclu.org/couples> If you have questions or need more info, contact Chris in NY at aclu.org/lgbt or call 212/549-2673 (office), or 917/595-6800 (cell).

DATES WITH DIGNITY

Broad Street Ministry - on the last Wednesday of each month a group of Dignity volunteers serves dinner to about 200 homeless or food challenged people at Broad Street Ministry from 3:00 until 6:00. Join us on June 26, July 31 and August 28.

Monthly birthday cakes - near the middle of each month, we celebrate the month's birthday folks with a great cake and a sing-a-long of "Happy Birthday." Plan to sing and celebrate with us on June 16, July 14 (yes, let them eat cake!) and August 11.

Bi-monthly Games Night - on the last Friday of every other month we gather at St. Luke's to play silly games, challenge each other and share pizza and soda provided by Dignity. We play on June 28 and August 30.

July 4, Dim Sum lunch at Joy Tsin Lau, 1026 Race Street; listen for announcements or contact Rob Baker

There are plans in the works for movie nights at St. Luke's and perhaps down on the Delaware River. Stay tuned for that.

DIGNITY PHILADELPHIA IN 1998

Nineteen ninety-eight was an exhilarating year for us! Besides celebrating our 25th Anniversary, Dignity/Philadelphia was in the forefront of the Domestic Partnership legislation in City Council.

A December 1997 Steering Committee motion formally accepted the 25th Anniversary logo and the theme "Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Present and Envisioning Our Future." The dinner/dance was held at the Warwick Hotel on Saturday, May 16.

The Independence highlighted five of our former Presidents with a 25th Anniversary Interview with columns: Clyde Sams (10th President) during January; John "Scotty" Schott (9th President) during February; Michael Rocks (5th President) during March; Ann Butchart (3rd President) during April; and John Politis (founding member) in May.

Other 25th Anniversary events included sponsoring a Gay Bingo game in April and a Spring Retreat Day facilitated by Bob Nugent in May.

President Marie Summers was instrumental in the bills passed by City Council on May 8, 1998 and signed by Mayor Rendell on May 19, 1998 that comprised the city's new Domestic Partnership laws. This new legislation officially recognized long-term committed relationships between two unmarried individuals of the same gender. To qualify, lesbian and gay couples must register with Philadelphia Commission on Rights in order to be recognized as Life Partners. Couples receive a "Certificate of Life Partnership" issued by the City of Philadelphia.

Since the Archdiocese of Philadelphia was vehemently opposed to this legislation, it only magnified what efforts were needed for these bills to pass. The turning point may have been in March when it was learned that the Archdiocese was planning to conduct workshops to train parishioners to lobby against legislation in City Council. On March 10, Marie Summers, Mary Louise R. Cervone and Joe McOscar held a press conference at 64th and Buist Avenue, outside St. Barnabas Church, the site of the first workshop. Press coverage of this effort was in the PGN, Au Courant, South Philadelphia Review and the Philadelphia Inquirer. On March 18, members of Dignity went to the site of the second workshop in South Philadelphia and handed out a letter to people as they entered the meeting. Marie also participated on a panel at the Log Cabin Republican Club that same day. On March 19, Marie attended the Interfaith Working Group press conference. As an aside, Dignity/USA designates each September as Couples Month and D/P commemorates and honors the couples in D/P at a mass during the month.

If the 25th Anniversary and the Domestic Partnership legislation wasn't time consuming enough, D/P continued to do the day-to-day business that keeps our organization viable for so many people. The Liturgy Committee sponsored a lay-led Women's Liturgy on Sunday, May 1, at 4pm to offer the opportunity to "share a worship experience outside of a regular Sunday Mass." An Ad-hoc Committee was formed to investigate a new time and/or day for Sunday Liturgy. The conclusion of that survey was to keep our Sunday Liturgies at 7pm. The May Steering Committee warmly accepted the views of the members of the Dignity/Philadelphia chapter.

On a very sad note, we said goodbye to Clyde Sams who passed away September 2, 1998. D/P held a memorial service for Clyde on September 26. Family, friends and co-workers attended the service. Many of us will always remember his potlucks, Easter bonnets and upbeat mood. The September potluck was named in his honor beginning in 1998.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (weekly mass at 330 S 13th Street between Pine and Spruce Streets)

June is Pride Month

- Sunday, June 2 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Steering Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.
Investiture of New Officers
- Friday, June 7 Prayer Around the Cross, St. Luke's at 7 p.m.
upstairs
- Sunday, June 9 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
PrideDay, the LGBT Parade and Festival; 25th year!
- Friday, June 14 Flag Day
- Sunday, June 16 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Father's Day
Birthday Month Celebration – lots of cake!
Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.
- Sunday, June 23 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
- Wed., June 26 Broad Street Ministry – 3 to 6 p.m.
- Friday, June 28 Games Night at Dignity
- Sunday, June 30 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.

July is Independence Month

- Thurs., July 4 Independence Day
Dim Sum lunch at Joy Tsin Lau
- Friday, July 5 Prayer Around the Cross, St. Luke's at 7 p.m.
upstairs
- Sunday, July 7 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Steering Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.
- Sunday, July 14 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Liturgy Committee Meeting at 4:30 p.m.
Birthday Month Celebration
- Sunday, July 21 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
Mary Magdalene Eve
- Sunday, July 28 Eucharistic Liturgy, 7 p.m.
- Wed., July 31 Broad Street Ministry, 3-6 p.m.

PRAYER INTENTIONS



Please sign our Prayer Intentions book if you have anyone you would like the community to remember in our prayers.

The deadline date for submissions for the July Newsletter is June 16, 2013.

Articles published in the Dignity/Philadelphia newsletter, The Independence, are not necessarily the opinions of the Steering Committee of Dignity/Philadelphia, or of the Communications Co-chairs. Publication of names, organizations, and/or photographs in The Independence is not to be construed as any indication of the sexual orientation of such persons, employees, and/or members of organizations.

Steering Committee

- Michael Viola – President
- Larry Sutter – Vice President
- To Be Appointed – Secretary
- To Be Appointed – Treasurer
- Jim Clay/Dick O'Malley – Liturgy Committee Co-coordinators
- Jimmy Calnan/Melissa Hrinko – Community Life Committee Co-coordinators
- Michelle Perrone/Dolores Vera – Communications Co-coordinators
- David Kalinowski/Joe Toal – Education Committee Co-coordinators
- Chaplains: Barbara Gindhart and Father Ron Hoskins



The Catholic Christian Tradition in the L/G/B/T Community
Celebrate Who You Are And Embrace The Person God Calls You To Be!
Yes, I want to be a member of the Dignity family!

I am joining as a **new member** I am **renewing my membership** **Address Change**

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Numbers: cell _____ **home** _____ **work** _____

Email address: _____ to receive Dignity/Philadelphia's Newsletter (*The Independence*) and the latest news via email blasts. Your support through your dues to Dignity/USA will entitle you to voting privileges in national elections; subscriptions to the monthly Dateline and Quarterly Voice; discounted registration for biennial conventions and other Dignity/USA events; and access to Dignity News email list and chat groups.

Scholarships are available for Dignity/Philadelphia and Dignity/USA memberships. Contact the Dignity/Philadelphia Vice President for more information (vp.dignityphila@gmail.com).

The total amount of your dues and donations to both Dignity/Philadelphia and Dignity/USA may be included in one check. We will forward your Dignity/USA dues/donations and your contact information to the Dignity/USA national office.

Please enclose your check, payable to Dignity/Philadelphia, and mail to: Dignity/Philadelphia, P.O. Box 53348, Philadelphia, PA 19105.

Individual annual dues:
 Dignity/Phila \$20;
 Dignity/USA \$30
 \$ _____ **Total**

Couple's annual dues:
 Dignity/Phila \$35;
 Dignity/USA \$60
 \$ _____ **Total**