

Alice Reports

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Alice B. Toklas Memorial Democratic Club

Democratic Convention - August 11

Two Significant "Firsts" - Gay Plank in Demo Platform, Rules

"We fought and won. As a political person, I think it's terribly important. It helps legitimize our drive for equal rights." This was lesbian/activist Ginny Apuzzo's reaction to the placement of "sexual orientation" in the non-discrimination plank of the Democratic platform. Some on the platform committee fought for the specific wording outlighting gay rights.

Bill Kraus, president of the Milk Gay Democratic Club, played a significant role in pushing the gay rights plank. He told other platform committee members that the Democratic Party must recognize "that we, the gay people of this country, are also human." His address received an ovation from the platform members . . . In the end, Kraus would have preferred a more specific wording and he probably agreed with Sentinel columnist Randy Alfred who quipped, "It was more of a splinter than a plank."

Earlier, Mayor Dianne Feinstein had spoken up for including gay people in the platform. She used her influence on Carter, who she supports for re-election, in this direction. Feinstein also spoke up to the Demo Rules Committee, urging it to affirmatively seek out gay delegates in the future.

The Rules Committee did not place homosexuals in an affirmative action position, enjoyed by women and some other minorities. However, it did pass a proposal to the national convention that would promose "equal opportunity" for homosexuals to "participate in party affairs without prejudice."

Convention Has 71 Upfront Gay Delegates

One upfront gay delegate was on the convention floor at the GOP convention. A significant "first" for the Republicans.

It was a "first" in 1972 when Jim Foster, founder of the Toklas Club, addressed the entire convention to present a minority plank on gay rights. In 1976 there were four lesbian/gay delegates - Foster and Jo Daly from Toklas, Clayton Welles from Stonewall in Los Angeles, and Jean O'Leary, then co-chair of the National Gay Task Force (NYC).

An amazing 71 delegates and alternates who openly declare they are homosexuals will be at the 1980 convention. They won positions as delegates in an involved election process in which they were elected by other Democrats - mostly not gay - to attend the convention. Foster will be in attendance again, having won a statewide at-large vote by other delegates.

California's 17 delegates and 8 alternates lead the way in the national "gay" totals. Florida has 8, Texas 5, Minneapolis 5, District of Columbia 5 and New York 4.

Gay delegates from the Toklas club who will be going as Kennedy delegates are Harry Britt, Gwenn Craig, Jim Foster, Bill Kraus and Anne Kronenberg plus Mike Thistle (Milk Club). Alice member Larry Eppinette will attend as a Carter alternate.

Non-gay delegates who will be attending who are Toklas members are three for Carter: Lia Belli, Madelyn Haas Russell, Kevin Shelly and three for Kennedy: Anne Daley, Betty Lee Guimares, and Irene Caplan.

Jean O'Leary and Clayton Welles, who attended the 1976 convention with Foster, will be attending from Los Angeles.

Lesbian and gay delegates and alternates will be meeting before and during the convention. They will be making themselves known to other delegates - and to the general public through the use of the news media. They will be involved in the convention process and looking for ways to implement that process to involve themselves and gay issues of concern . . . plus an expanded role in the national Democratic party.

(Thank you to the gay National Convention Project in Washington, D.C., Toklas and Stonewall Presidents Steve Walters and Gerry Parker for assisting with this report). (Con't. on Page 2)

Alice Gears Up Fight For District Elections

by Steve Walters

The Alice membership overwhelmingly (just two dissents out of more than 200 members present) reaffirmed their commitment to district elections at our July 14 meeting.

The repeal measure, known as Proposition A, is scheduled for a vote on August 19. If passed, the supervisors who should be concentrating on the budget, will be forced to spend their time campaigning for the second time in less than a year.

This special election, which is costing the city close to \$500,000., is sponsored by a group called Citizens for a Better Government (read Terry Francois, John Barbagellata and ultra conservative Richard Ginchard, a businessman in favor of repealing all of San Francisco's affirmative action laws.)

Passage of Proposition A would mean a return to the old system of business as usual between the supervisors and the downtown special interests. Neighborhood and minority concerns would once again rate lowest priority.

Alice is taking an active role in the campaign under the leadership of Randy Stallings, who is spearheading our club's intense effort.

Voter registration, precinct walking and fund raising have been our major areas of concern.

We have been working closely with the Harvey Milk Gay Democratic Club in precinct walking and voter registration. When the chips are down the clubs find they have much in common and can work together effectively. We are being joined in the effort by the Stonewall Democratic Club.

There will be a fundraiser sponsored by the Alice Women's Caucus at Amelias - upstairs room, on Sunday, August 10 starting at 7:30 p.m.

The cost will be \$3., \$5, \$10., (or whatever you can afford) there will be a no host bar - dancing - and noshes provided by members of the Womens' Caucus.

Amelias is located on Valencia between 17th & 18th Sts. Tickets will be available at the door - or call Louise (Con't. on Page 2)