

RMC News

A resource for men throughout North Carolina and the region

Published by the
**Raleigh
Men's
Center**
(Est. 1986)
723 W. Johnson St.,
Raleigh NC 27603-
1241
(919) 832-0509

January-March 2003

President's Message

We're back!

Happy New Year! As I write I am aware of the recent passing of the winter solstice signaling, for us in the northern hemisphere, the return of earth toward the warmth and light of the sun. With the current edition, the RMC Newsletter returns to publication after a year's absence. In its pages are reflected some of the changes and challenges Raleigh Men's Center faced during 2002, and hopefully, a bit of light and warmth for these winter days.

It seems fitting that we review the past year for RMC as we take stock of our health as an organization and look toward the future. 2002 began with an energetic new Leadership Council (LC) president, an active support group program and director, monthly programs, involvement in Wake County's Fatherhood Taskforce, active concessions fundraising at the RBC Center, and a goal of developing a stronger and more diverse community presence. April's seventh annual Spring Gathering was a success.

However, the loss of our newsletter editor and departure of the LC president due to family obligations created an information and leadership vacuum. As the year progressed, funding to continue the part-time support group program director position was not forthcoming and the position ended in September after a two-year experiment.

With the election of new LC members in July and addition of replacements for unexpected departures, the current council is strong and looking toward reviving some of the dormant activities of RMC. We

are seeking volunteers to assist in publishing a quarterly newsletter, resumption of the monthly programs, and enhancing the concessions program at the RBC Center (formerly the Entertainment and Sports Arena) so ably coordinated by Bill Switzer.

Areas of RMC focus for 2003 include increasing the effectiveness and variety of our support group structure, strengthening our community presence with greater diversity of participation in RMC activities, developing a more effective long-term marketing and funding strategy, offering special programs or events featuring local and national leaders, and development of an enlarged RMC facility. Needless to say, these are ambitious goals that will require significant work from the LC, RMC volunteers, and the community at large.

As 2003 begins I am optimistic about the future of RMC as an organization dedicated to enhancing the welfare of men in their roles as sons, fathers, partners, friends and citizens. May we all be part of bringing more light and warmth into the world in which we live.

Doug Jennette

The only devils in the world are those running around in our hearts. That is where the battle should be fought. (Mahatma Gandhi)

"If this world fell apart, you and i could not reconstruct it", by Lou Lipsitz

for Bennett

i never troubled to learn the basic principles of how my voice passes through the phone lines and into your ear. and so, the phones out, i could not even begin to imagine how to recreate the way i could call to ask you if this world had truly fallen apart, or if this was just another passing crisis.

i would have to walk over and tell you and see what you thought. that would take most of the day. and i'd have to stay the night and have supper at your house, though i'm not sure how we would cook without any power or light. fire, most likely, or eat it cold out of the garden.

millenia of human struggle and invention would be lost if it depended on us - two clueless poets collecting sticks along a dark road. men of lifelong impracticality, depending on others to do the functional things that keep the world going.

although there would be the dance you would certainly do at sunrise to lift our spirits and i would find a hollow reed and put my fingers over the holes i'd burned in it and blow.

Support Group Visits

Support groups have been one of RMC's most important programs. We now have six such groups, totaling about 45 men, that meet Tues-Thurs nights at the Center. These support groups are an excellent resource where men can discuss issues in their lives, get support in times of need, and continue on a path of personal growth and learning.

Recently Council members visited the support groups with two purposes in mind:

- To introduce ourselves and inform the support groups of the current plans and activities of the Men's Center; and,
- To find out from the groups how they are doing and whether they need any kind of help from the Leadership Council.

During these visits we passed out a short questionnaire regarding the "health" of the groups. We'll summarize the responses and report them back to you soon.

If you are interested in joining a support group, call us at (919) 832-0509.

Included with this newsletter is another survey we ask you to fill out and return. Help us to chart a course for RMC's future by returning it today.

Treasurer's Report

The Men's Center currently has cash in the bank totaling about \$7500. Our main sources of income are (in order of importance) dues from support groups and general membership, and volunteer work at the concession stand at the RBC Center (under the leadership of Bill Switzer). Our main expenses are rent for the office at 723 W. Johnson St., and, once we get it back in operation, the newsletter. At current levels of income and expense we are running in the black.

Just as a reminder, general membership dues are \$30 per year, payable by March 1, and support group dues are \$30 per quarter, due on the 1st of Jan., April, July and October.

Mike Sollins
Treasurer

Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them to become what they are capable of being. (Goethe)

The Leadership Council--Profiles

Doug Jennette, President (Raleigh)

Doug Jennette is a founding member of RMC and was the organization's first president. He has been deeply touched by the power of men in groups and changed by his association with other men through various RMC activities. He is a member of Raleigh Friends Meeting (Quakers) and enjoys reading, dancing, riding his motorcycle on the Blue Ridge Parkway, and just hanging out with his wife of 32 years, Marsha. Doug is a psychotherapist (LCSW) in private practice in Raleigh.

H – 919-832-6071
adouglas@ipass.net

Doug Lester, Vice President (Raleigh)

Doug is also a founding member of the Men's Center (established in 1986). 60 years old, he is a father of five children, ages 29 - 36, and 3 grandchildren.

"I have committed to the continuing Men's work in any way I can. I have just completed a powerful men's training in December and feel that this has given me renewed energy to do my work. My mission is to create a joyful, healthy, peaceful world while facilitating growth and healing of all men."

H – 919-676-9546
DJLester@mindspring.com

Gregory Blaine (Raleigh)

Gregory has been a member of RMC and a member of a one of RMC's support groups since 1995. He has helped organize the annual mens' gatherings each spring, and volunteers at the RBC Center concessions to help earn money for RMC. He is a self-employed painter and a musician. He co-sponsors a yearly blues workshop at RMC gatherings.

H – 919-833-5300
gregoryblaine@yahoo.com

Kelly Hanson (Cary)

Kelly is a new member of RMC. He works for D.O.S.E. (Domestic Offenders Sentenced to Education).

H – 919-465-3200
SFC2001@bellsouth.net

Jud Lawrie (Raleigh)

Jud has been involved in "men's work" since 1971 when he joined a men's consciousness-raising group in Chicago. He currently serves as Center Director of The ManKind Project/Greater Carolinas and is the father of a 13-year old son. He is hopeful that some "real synergy can be created between The ManKind Project and the Men's Center".

H – 919-518-1846
Jud@Lawrie.com

Lou Lipsitz (Chapel Hill)

"I'm a psychotherapist and poet (& father and grandfather) living in Chapel Hill. Much of my therapy and my poetry is informed by men's work. I want to see men's work reach out to a much larger group of men and women."

H – 919-942-9574
loulipsitz@earthlink.net

Mike Sollins, Treasurer (Raleigh)

"I'm an electrical engineer, though presently unemployed. My wife and I moved from Boston to Raleigh 5 years ago. I'm quite new to "men's work", but joined a support group a year and a half ago, have found it very rewarding and was pleased to be asked to serve as Treasurer for the Men's Center."

H-919-785-1490
msollins@nc.rr.com

Mike Vaio (Raleigh)

Mike is a recovering southern California trial lawyer, who now works as a personal coach, helping people find deep meaning and purpose in their lives. He's also a yogi, martial artist and mediator. He finds that his study of Eastern philosophies, coupled with his Western education in business, law and psychology, yields an integrated approach to problem-solving that is both analytical and strongly intuitive.

Frederick Whitmeyer (Stokesdale)

Frederick has been a member of RMC for eight years, on the Leadership Council for six, and is a past President of the Council. He is currently an elder, mentor, teacher and personal coach.

H - 336-427-2562
whitmeyer@mindspring.com

"Call and Answer," by Robert Bly

Tell me why it is we don't lift our voices these days
And cry over what is happening. Have you noticed
The plans are made for Iraq and the ice cap is
melting?

I say to myself: "Go on, cry. What's the sense
Of being an adult and having no voice? Cry out!
See who will answer! This is Call and Answer!"

We will have to call especially loud to reach
Our angels, who are hard of hearing; they are hiding
In the jugs of silence filled during our wars.

Have we agreed to so many wars that we can't
Escape from silence? If we don't lift our voices, we
Allow others (who are ourselves) to rob the house.

How come we've listened to the great criers-Neruda,
Akhmatova, Thoreau, Frederick Douglas-and now
We're silent as sparrows in the little bushes?

Some masters say our life lasts only seven days.
Where are we in the week? Is it Thursday yet?
Hurry, cry now! Soon Sunday night will come.

"The Cigar", by Lou Lipsitz

for R. Dean, reaching age 60

It was long ago,
but not that long.
In the barber shop,
there were spittoons around,
and when they took
you for your first haircut you sat
high in the special booster chair
and saw the men spit,
heard them talking South Dakota
farm talk: alfalfa, hogs, rain,
drought, and sudden bursts
of laughter about things you
didn't understand.

Those days your grandfather
had his favorite cigars.
He'd save them for Sundays

when he'd try to make one last
all afternoon, savoring
each puff until finally,
when there's was only a nub
left,
he utilized a toothpick and
smoked the nub down to ashes.
Ashes - nothing else!

And now, here we are
the nub of life in our hands,
all that long-cherished, dark, sweet,
tangled, intricate flavor
saved and stewed for these
final moments.
O, slow and glad be the dregs!

For those of you with an interest in men's writing,
especially poetry, check out the "creative man's magazine"
[A Man Overboard: the Thinking Man's Journal](#), at:

www.amanoverboard.net

Your creative contributions are invited.

"Dreams: Lighting Your Path to Wisdom"

The Fifth Annual Gathering of Men
Exploring Nighttime Dreams Together

Suppertime Friday, Jan. 31 until 3:00 PM, Sun., Feb. 2,
2003 at a Retreat Center near Greensboro, NC.

Led by Tom Lane. For credentials see
www.understandyourdream.com/credentials.htm

"Cost": \$175 (includes tuition, meals, snacks and lodging).
Reservation by check to Tom Lane, P.O. Box 38844,
Greensboro, NC 27438-8844

For information, financial help or to check availability,
contact Tom at 336.545.1200.

*Editor's note: this newsletter is a labor of love, not talent.
As you can see, it is not as "pretty" as past newsletters. I
claim no talent (or software) to make it pretty. Therefore,
we need someone who would be willing to take on this task
and bring proper skills to it. Who will help? Please call me.*

Jud Lawrie, 919.518.1075

Raleigh Men's Center Survey

1. What is your current involvement with the Raleigh Men's Center (RMC)? Please list specific activities, services, programs or events that you have participated in during the last year?
2. How would you change RMC to make it more valuable to you, that would encourage you to be more active?
3. Do you have any suggestions for programs, events or workshops that you would participate in if they were offered?
4. Can you recommend anyone that might offer an interesting program or workshop?
5. Are you a member of RMC? Yes _____ No _____
6. In order to reduce costs, we plan to send out more information electronically. Are you able to receive e-mail, etc.? Yes _____ No _____
7. Would you prefer to receive information:
 - By e-mail/Web?
 - By regular mail?
8. We need help. A good newsletter editor. Help with the concessions at the RBC Center that earn income for us. Help planning and coordinating events and workshops. Help responding to voice mail messages left at RMC. What would you be willing to help with?
9. Please add any other comments or suggestions that would help RMC set the direction for the coming year.

Help us keep your contact information current:

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/ZIP: _____
Home phone: _____
Work phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Thank you!

Please mail to: Raleigh Men's Center
723 W. Johnson St.
Raleigh NC 27603-1241

The Raleigh Men's Center

We opened our doors in 1986 as a non-profit, all-volunteer service organization dedicated to promoting the wholeness and well-being of men.

Many men struggle with the grief associated with separation, divorce, child custody, death, job loss, and other life stresses. Some men endure strained relationships with their spouses, children and parents. Other men experience the lack of meaningful work in their jobs, which carries its own stresses. Added to this are society's changing expectations of men, which leaves them further confused, angry or emotionally isolated.

The Men's Center grew from the desire of men in our region to be a part of the healing and growth process for each other. We provide opportunities for self-awareness, friendship, support, joyfulness, and play. We are also a place where it is safe for men to reveal their fears and pain, where they can learn to more effectively deal with conflict and anger, and where they can grow to feel their inherent power, perhaps for the first time.

The Men's Center is an important part of an expanding nationwide network of support for men that recognizes the healing power and the wisdom men find as they share their experiences with other men. We support the strengthening of men's roles as friend, son, father, husband, partner, and citizen.

For more information, contact:

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723 W. Johnson St.
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(919) 832-0509

RMC Vision and Mission

The vision of the Raleigh Men's Center is a world in which people recognize one another for who they are rather than what they do, and celebrate the spiritual connectedness of all life.

Its mission is to provide a safe place in which men support men in becoming themselves. We are committed to strengthening the valuable roles men play as friend, son, father, husband, partner and citizen. The Men's Center is committed to strengthening the individual, the family, and the community.

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Forwarding Service Requested