

GSV -- THE POST- CONFERENCE LULL

Time for an update on what's going on with Gay Spirit Visions -- which we will call GSV from now on (see below). In addition to the usual post-Conference hangover we've been doing some long-range planning, which is pretty exciting.

1. Thanks for helping make our **Sixth Annual Celebrating Gay Spirit Visions Conference** such a success. We had 126 people in attendance -- 6 more than our previously announced limit of 120 -- and for the first time, we had to turn people away. Deciding to do that was one of the hardest decisions we've ever made -- we want **EVERYONE** to be there, but that's becoming impossible, as so many people discover us. Please remember for next year -- **REGISTER EARLY!!!**

In limiting attendance, we used a modified version of "First come, first served," and turned no one away for lack of funds, as is our custom. We made over \$7,500, which we will use as seed money for next year and for other related events throughout the year, and over \$700 was contributed to the **Raven Wolfdancer Scholarship Fund**. If you have suggestions for a fairer way to limit attendance, let us know.

One of the high points of this year's conference for us was when Stepping Stone, our corporate alter-ego, presented *the mountain* with a \$1,000 contribution in GSV's name, presenting us with a **life-time membership** and helping *the mountain* to further its mission of supporting groups like us. See **Magic Boy's** article for more conference details.

And *the mountain* still has debt to

retire from digging its new well. Please consider giving back to this place which has given *so much* to us by becoming a *mountain member*. Call (704) 526-5838 for more info.

2. At our November meeting, we **decided to incorporate**. This was made necessary by Stepping Stone's decision earlier this year to sell Running Water and end their sponsorship of us.

And so, after much thought and process, we have decided to create our own Decatur, GA version of Stepping Stone, called **The Council of Trusted Elders of Gay Spirit Visions, Inc.** Our intention for this entity is that it will sign our contracts, manage our money, answer your letters, and otherwise mind its own business. Council elections will be done by lottery from GSV planners who have been to at least two conferences.

We've also chosen to formalize our Planning Committee structure, so that there's a simple procedure for officially joining the Planning Committee (now called GSV) and committing to be a part of our process. GSV will continue to handle all issues and oversee all events produced under our banner. We're really excited by this structure, which reflects our commitment to run our process by consensus and allows GSV to continue much as it has for the last four years. If you're interested, we'd be glad to discuss this process with you, in excruciating detail, if you'd like.

And we hereby reissue our request from a previous newsletter -- one of our missions is to **help other conferences like ours come into being**. If you are interested in taking us up on that offer, please get in touch. We could provide seed money, expertise, and a 600-name mailing list of men who might come. As the tragic assassination of Yitzhak Rabin shows, there is never enough **Safe & Sacred Space** for love and peace in

CORRECTION
THE POTLUCK IS SATURDAY,
JAN. 13
(not Jan. 16)

DATES TO REMEMBER

(AFMH = Atlanta Friends Meeting House, 701 W. Howard Ave., Decatur.)

Dec. 21 (approx): incorporation submitted for The Council of Trusted Elders of Gay Spirit Visions, Inc.

Jan. 13, 10:00am: GSV monthly meeting, Council lottery. AFMH.

Jan. 16: 7:30pm: GSV POTLUCK, Miguel Molina's house, **1452 Funston.** From I-20 take Boulevard exit. Go S. ~ 1.5 mi. Left on Custer Ave. (Traffic light at intersection; Texaco on left.) Go two blocks; Right on Funston; Park on street. Lost? Call Miguel at 404-627-3903.

Feb 10., 10:00am: GSV monthly meeting. AFMH.

Feb. 24, Noon - 4:00pm: An afternoon of workshops & spiritual exploration. U. U. Cong. 1911 Cliff Valley Way, NE.

March 9, 10:00am: GSV monthly meeting. AFMH.

March 23 -- Sweat Lodge at Rocco and Peter's, Asheville, NC.

April 6 -- Spring Conference. AFMH.

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this world. Let us know how we can help you create more of it.

Also printed elsewhere in this issue are two versions of our **mission statement**: one from Sam, from last year, and one from me, this year, for GSV bylaws.

Please let us know if you have a different version -- we'd love to see it.

3. We now have a **Program Committee** that has been charged with creating more events for men who want to gather year-round. So far, they have finalized plans for a **potluck at Miguel Molina's house in Atlanta on January 13 -- ALL ARE INVITED --** and are working on other events, including, (1) a camping trip to work on restoring the

to create a **Leadership Retreat** for men who actively lead groups and workshops. This event may or may not be GSV-sponsored -- call if interested.

5. For the first time in six years, we are **purging our mailing list** of old and incorrect addresses. Enclosed in this newsletter is a postcard for you to return if you want to remain on our mailing list. Our address is **GSV, P.O. Box 339, Decatur GA 30031-0339**. Or

...the two words that have guided us through the potentially treacherous waters of organizational process -- Intention and Spirit.

artist's house **Pasaquan** in Buena Vista, GA, (2) a **sweat lodge** (on the weekend of March 23) at Peter and Rocco's farm in Mars Hill, NC, (3) bringing "Queer Spirits" author **Will Roscoe** to Atlanta to speak, (4) bringing **David Sereda** to Atlanta to sing, and (5) demonstrating a big presence at **Atlanta's Gay Pride** event this year.

If planning these or other events interests you, or if you have ideas or suggestions, PLEASE contact us. We need your help to make our vision -- monthly events, quarterly guest speakers, perhaps a second conference every year -- a reality.

Much of our planning is starting to shift from our regular Saturday meetings to committee meetings, scheduled at various times. Two ongoing committees are forming for next year -- (a) the **Publications & Publicity Committee**, which will produce this newsletter, a book from our first six years of conferences, and fliers and press kits for our events, and (b) the aforementioned **Program Committee**, which will plan our annual Spring event, other events, and perhaps to create rituals for these events. Later in the year, a **Conference Planning Committee** will form. Call if you're interested in working here.

4. Related events: A group of men who wanted to pursue **Mark Thompson's "Dark Eros"** work is bringing Mark to Atlanta next year, perhaps as soon as March. This is NOT a GSV event, but call if you want info.

And **John Stowe** and **Jonathan Lerner** are chairing a group that wants

you can call **(404) 292-8567**, or send an E-mail message to **BEARSEKR@AOL.COM**. Use any of these addresses to share any suggestions, concerns or opinions you might have.

Let me end by calling to your attention the two words that have guided us through the potentially treacherous waters of organizational process -- Intention and Spirit. It is clear to us that our entire process rotates on this axis. When we express the intention to do something and commit resources to it, and then step aside and let spirit take over, things tend to work out as they are supposed to. And while they don't always go as we had expected, how much more could you really ask for?

For GSV & in spirit,
Al Cotton

BROTHERS, TAKE A BREATH!

by **Magic Boy/Todd Kinney**

It's **Magic Boy** here, coming to you from mystical Ponce de Leon Court. What a powerful weekend I experienced up at the Mountain for the

coming out of my cocoon as the Elder that lies within me. I will try to tell the story of our journey, although words cannot do it justice.

The conference began with the **Fire Starting Ceremony**. With everyone gathered around the fire pit, **Treewalker** placed the ceremonial logs in a teepee-shape in the Native American tradition. He then lit the flame and shared with us the history of ritual fires and fire bridges. The warmth from the fire sent us off on the spiritual journey we were embarking on.

Friday morning, I awoke to the sun, picked the **Dolphin medicine card**, and prayed to **Great Spirit** to guide us with love. Then it was on to the **Opening Ritual**, where we smudged and anointed each other, and declared *the mountain* our **Safe Space** for the weekend. The **Ritual Guide, Bernhard**, proclaimed, "Come in you **Gay Men, Faggots and Faeries; Poofers and Queens** and boys called **Mary. Scouts and Flute Players, Shamans and Hunters; Walks-Between Priests of Father Earth and Mother Sky.**" At the same time, our **Sand Artist -- King --** was creating a **Sand Mandala** that would become the focus of the **Temple**. Being involved in this ritual was one of the most spiritually inspiring experiences that I have shared with a tribe of brothers in my life -- HO!

Small groups then met together. Thank you **Chase/Skywalker** for leading the **T.E. Lawrence group** -- the love and support that we shared with one another was a gift I will treasure forever. The **Heart Circle** was next on the agenda. It was wonderful to be able to hold the **Talking Stick** again. With its energy swirling inside me, I stood and proclaimed myself "**Magic Boy, Warrior of Skirts.**"

Friday night, both **Mark Thompson** and **Malcolm Boyd** shared their life's journeys with us. Mark also did a guided meditation, where we traveled

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sixth annual **Celebrating Gay Spirit Visions** conference. I felt as if I were transformed with the spirit of butterfly,

into a cave and searched for the **Elder** within. **Malcolm** gave us tools to live by. I took my thoughts to bed and sur-

rendered them to the Dreamtime.

Saturday morning began with Andrew Ramer's keynote. He brought us back to the cave, this time helping us to become the Elder we had envisioned the night before. I recommend that you go back to that place from time to time and learn the lessons it has to offer.

The rest of the day was filled with workshops ranging from "Body Electric" to "Exploring Ancient Archetypes" and "Lust, Love and Latex." Treewalker and I were lucky enough to do Mark Thompson's "Dark Eros" workshop -- I don't think any of us could sit still after that one. The whole *mountain* turned out for David Sereda's concert. "Deardra's" voice was as sweet and pure as a songbird, mesmerizing everyone present. And a big SSSSSSS to Raphael Sabatini for his work on the Talent Show, which is always one of the big events of the weekend. This year's was no exception -- Mystique, Dancing Dolphin, and even Randy's song he wrote just for us. Thank you, Freddy Mercury.

I wasn't ready for the whirlwind of emotions of the closing Heart Circle. We cried, laughed, and told our stories. No four-hour Heart Circle this year -- thank you, brothers, for being respectful. Then we all gathered for the Closing Ritual. Hand in hand, we looked into each other's eyes, sang our Ritual Songs, and gathered up the Sand Mandala. The weekend was over.

Finally, let me thank all you shoppers -- Magic Boy's Skirt Boutique became an entity in and of itself. Thirty skirts in all were given away, and I hope you're *still* enjoying them. Remember, a skirt is not a girl thing or a guy thing -- it's a Walks-Between Thing. I encourage all of you brothers to try one on and feel the healing powers it brings. If you need assistance, Magic Boy's is always open -- by appointment only, of course.

So that was GSV VI in a nutshell -- I hope everyone's journey was as wonderful as mine. Be happy, my brothers, and let the light of life guide your soul -- 143.

TO LIFE

by Malcolm Boyd

(The following is from Malcolm's keynote address at the fall conference.)

In closing tonight, out of my wisdom as an Elder, I've composed a few guides to living, and I share them with you in all sincerity. I hope they may be helpful to you.

- Cultivate simplicity. When you use words, have them say what you mean. If there's a key to your mystery, let people have it so they can understand you. Act in fresh,

mysterious street you have long wondered or dreamed about. Imagine a lamppost and dream colors, forms, patterns.

- Be open and vulnerable -- it's better than to close in on oneself. Don't worry about what other people think -- most of them are thinking about themselves. I remember as a kid, I'd have a pimple with pus in it on my face and think everybody's looking at it, nobody's looking at it.
- In love, hold nothing back. Give yourself completely, generously

If there's a key to your mystery, let people have it.

spontaneous, freeing ways.

- Break a heavy silence. Place on paper a letter that's long been written in your mind. Speak to someone who appears forbidding. Ask the hard question. Even try to do what is clearly impossible for you.
- Forgive. When you don't the loss of your energy in harboring resentment and hate is incalculable. Do not be destroyed by your own inability or refusal to forgive.
- Risk everything. What is there to save? In this world of present shock and constant change, security is the most ironic illusion, so why sell your soul?

Understand the meaning of the failure of success -- what appears to be failure often is the best teacher we have. Trappings of success have a way of masking unhappiness and absence of fulfillment. I know people who live in hell, but they have to get over the next three years of doing this for success, and then after that everything is going to be all right, but of course it isn't going to be all right because they're changing.

In your imagination, walk up the

accept the other without reservation. Nurture love with kindness, spices and gratitude, and don't limit love. Be sure to include friendship and cultivate it.

- Find a quiet place, at least within you, take three deep breaths, exhale them slowly and quiet the mind. If you're at ease with yourself, others can be at ease with you, too.
- Since no one is an island, quit acting like one. Reach out for help, ask for it and humbly admit your need. When help is given, do not act as if you are strong. Accept it tenderly.
- Recognize that personal and social spheres of life have been thrust together, forcing a new kind of wholeness upon us. We have the opportunity to make our lives, our common life, the best anyone ever knew. Even to become what humankind always wished and strove for through all the ages of darkness and all the epiphanies of light.
- And finally, make a clear decision. Drop the other shoe. Strip and dive into the water. Get on with it. Our lives are brief, measured by a few decades. Do

you realize how few decades we have? We don't really start til we're 20. There aren't many decades. While we're here, our lives can either be unhappy, self-destructive, unproductive and lacking fire, or celebratory, loving, creative, and filled with spiritual energy.

To life. To life. To life.

ELDER MMMMMAGIC

by Andrew Ramer

(From Anrew's keynote address at the fall conference.)

I want to read some words that come from Maggie Kuhn, who was one of the founders of the Gray Panthers. This is what she said about five roles that Elders play -- there's a little hum to it; you'll notice that all of these are mmmmmm words -- she says "They are Mentors who teach the young; Mediators who resolve civil, racial and intergenerational conflict; Monitors of public bodies who serve as watchdogs of city hall and Congress; Mobilizers of social change; and Motivators of society who urge people away from self interest and toward the public good.

All of those, I think, echo into the question that John Stowe asked in the Heart Circle, which was, "When we heal the gay part of our selves and reclaim our power, what do we do with it, and what do we do with our lives?" I think that these words talk to us about that, that we become all of these M-things -- Mentor, Mediator, Monitor, Mobilizer, Motivator. And we do this in our Tribe, and we do this in connection to other communities and other tribes. And that's what I love so much about your invitation to us, Malcolm, to remember that there are other -- I don't like this word, but -- "Minority Peoples" who are our allies, that we step out when we see or hear something that's happening in other people's communities, that we participate in the bigger community as gay men, so that we stand in solidarity with African-Americans, with Latin-Americans, with Asian-Americans, with other minority groups.

THE ELDER'S SHADOW

by Mark Thompson

(From Mark's keynote address at the fall conference.)

....But there are many facets to any archetype, and rather than further speak about the healthy and good I want to address the damaged and potentially destructive. Whether we want to admit it or not, I think it's the negative face of the Elder Within that is the one we first meet. Let me tell you how I first encountered mine.

One Saturday afternoon, about thirty years ago, my mother surprised me by pulling up a chair in front of the

much like myself; in pursuit of an inef-fable one thing as surely as he was being pursued by something else. Maybe they were the same. But there was Uncle Elliott to consider; waspish and uptight, more concerned with the outward appearances of things than what was going on inside. Here, in one old movie suspiciously watched, were the polarities of my own character revealed. Could my mother have possibly known what she was doing?

As the movie progressed throughout the afternoon, I could feel a mounting horror as Elliott's character took shape and unfolded. True to Maugham's text, Webb played the part of a supercilious old queen with elan. "It may have escaped your notice," he

It was the dark side of being gay; emotionally crippled, socially lethal, and undeniably sad.

television set and asking me to sit down. Usually during this time of day she was commanding me to go outside and be "like the other boys," rather than hiding out in my room with a book. While my father was long resigned over my lack of athletic prowess, my mother remained disgusted by it. Still, here she was, inviting me to watch a movie in broad daylight.

The movie was *The Razor's Edge*, the 1946 adaptation of W. Somerset Maugham's best-selling novel starring Tyrone Power as the soul-searching protagonist, Gene Tierney as his shunned fiancée, and Clifton Webb as her effete uncle Elliott. Obviously, the picture had made a big impact on my mother when she was young, and now she wanted to share it with me. I dutifully did as my mother asked, and with a slight, almost conspiratorial smile, she left the room.

The Razor's Edge was long and turgid in spots, and I remember little of it from that viewing other than it touched some secret inner place in an inexplicable way. Certainly, I recognized myself in the asexual hero; a young, idealistic seeker, a loner if there ever was one. It was obvious to me that day that the handsome Larry was a gay man

haughtily informs a friend at one point in the drama, "but I am not an ordinary man." Yet despite his bravado and polished charm, Elliott contained a fulsomeness that made me cringe. It was the dark side of being gay; emotionally crippled, socially lethal, and undeniably sad.

When the movie's end credits finally rolled, I knew my mother had done me a great service, although not the one she had probably intended. In her mind, I was Larry: a sexual enigma; a self-sacrificing caretaker of woeful others; a soft man easily manipulated. But as night fell, I realized that it was Elliott who lived most heatedly inside; sexually frustrated; defended and selfish of his own neurotic concerns; brittle, even false, if always resilient and nobody's fool.

Like many gay boys, I had been made old before my time. I was like Elliott by the time I was fifteen, constantly protecting myself and others from the truth of who I really was. Seeing *The Razor's Edge* that day helped me to begin sorting through the good and bad qualities of both characters and integrate what was worth saving back into my being. You see, Larry and Elliott were but opposite faces of the same

inner figure; the archetype of my gay manhood, with all of its complexity, pain, and bright promise. It would no longer suffice to stay lumpish and unaware of my own inner quest. It was time to come down from the edge of the blade and proceed in the invention of my own life.

Most of us in this room were precocious young things, eager learners and good with old people, kind of like the Patrick Dennis character in Auntie Mame who knows how to stir the perfect martini by age twelve. It sounds fun, but much of that glibness was meant to disguise the sadness and feelings of displacement inside. Few of us were properly mirrored growing up, a pernicious form of abuse if there ever was one. As a result, most of us here, in effect, are orphans. And that wounded little boy, whose childhood was stolen, lives within each one of us still.

This is how I believe the Elder within was first summoned: as a compensatory act, a means to isolate and protect what precious little of our true selves was left. And having been so powerfully awakened he continues to live aggressively within, cloaking himself behind many masks. We all possess "old souls" in this room. There is a facet of my inner Elder that will always look and act like Clifton Webb playing uncle Elliott. But thankfully, over the years, other dimensions of this archetype have developed as well. One of them is speaking to you now.

MISSION STATEMENTS

A Statement of Gay Spirit Visions

Whereas, the spirit-energies which are the life in this earth are abundant, and they follow manifold and diverse paths; and

Whereas, we are not simply men, nor women, but rather we are men-loving men; and

Whereas, in all past human societies we have always held a special status, whether sacred or shunned; and

Whereas, our present societies do not acknowledge any place for us, but

often seek to discount us, and lead us to discount one another;

Therefore, we pledge ourselves to holding a sacred space: a space kept sacred for men-loving men, as fire-keepers, as shamans, berdaches, and faeries; as poets and philosophers, as dreamers, dancers, and mentors; as tricksters and as lovers; by all the countless many names through which we may understand ourselves, so do we hold this sacred space.

Furthermore, we hold this sacred space for our own nurture:

First, for the nurture of our constant visioning process, and our fellowship in it;

Second, to bring together the wisdom and insights of our many ancients and elders, for them to nurture us;

Third, for the nurture of those men-loving men who seek to join us, to be warmed by the ancient fire, that they may in turn kindle and stoke the flame.

Finally, we hold this space for healing:

For healing ourselves;

For healing one another; and

For offering our healing energy, as it may be taken, in healing the Earth, and making whole again humankind and the other kinds who are the Life within Her, for we are altogether the Earth.

Epameinondas S. H. Coppock

November 30, 1994

Al's Mission Statement

GSV is a group of gay men centered in Decatur, Georgia and the surrounding metropolitan Atlanta area, with a mission of creating and increasing the amount of sacred space in the world, specifically space where we as gay men feel safe in exploring our spiritual gifts and can work to heal the wounds that have prevented us from expressing our spiritual gifts more openly and fully. Our current projects include the organization and nurturing of a gay male spirituality conference called Celebrating Gay Spirit Visions, the creation of more, different and similar events in Atlanta, providing support and seed money for other such events in other locations, as men in those loca-

tions request such support, and in otherwise disseminating those things created by our process and our organizers. We are a group that operates from consensus.

A PLACE TO WORSHIP

by Dandelion

Second in a series

The first step in spiritual practice is choosing a path, or tradition, to follow. Next one must make a place to worship. For most of us an altar is an appropriate focus for our spiritual rituals. Altars may be temporary or may have a permanent place in your home. They need not be large or elaborate but I think it is important, if possible, to make room for a permanent ritual space. As the saying goes: Out of sight, out of mind; having a permanent altar makes regular spiritual practice easier and more convenient and just the existence and sight of an altar can bring more spiritual mindfulness into your life.

An altar could be as small as part of a shelf in a book case or as large as a small cabinet. Generally a small end table or bedside table is a nice size, especially if it has drawers or a cabinet underneath to hold supplies and ritual tools that are not going to remain on display. My own altar is a small occasional table, I keep a rosewood chest underneath it for storage. This is also convenient for transporting my altar to other places. The size of your altar may be partially dependent on the implements required for your chosen form of worship.

The type of objects on your altar will largely be determined by your spiritual path while their form and design should be determined by your own taste and aesthetic sensibility. A good place to begin is with a cloth. An altar cloth can be made of any material you choose, though most traditions prefer natural fibers. You might want to have a number of different cloths, in a variety of colors or designs, each appropriate to certain seasons or ritual uses. The main cloth on my altar is a square of Point de Fines lace. The hundreds of tinny hand-tied knots

remind me of the many interwoven experiences that make up my life; we are each an individual tapestry of experience and, at the same time, threads in a larger tapestry of community.

A pair of candle sticks is also appropriate to most traditions and if you pursue ritual candle magic you will need about half a dozen smaller candle holders in addition to the larger main pair for the altar. A container for burning incense is also good. This may range from a simple joss stick holder to an abalone shell with a turkey feather fan for burning sage in a Native American ritual, or a brass filigree holder for the charcoal briquettes used to burn traditional powdered incense, perhaps with chains attached so that it can be lifted up and swung to disperse the smoke as in Catholic or Anglican worship. You might also include such things a chalice for ritual offerings of wine or water, crystals and stones with personal or ritual significance, a brazier or cauldron for burning, icons or votive figures, a vase for flowers, or a plate for offerings of food, among other things.

As mentioned before, the design of ritual objects and tools should be carefully considered for any symbolic significance they might have and for their ability to aide you in finding a spiritual frame of mind. One person's altar might be a simple stone slab with plain glass candle holders, an abalone shell and few crystals, while another might be a baroque collection of painted figurines and elaborate metal work. Being an eclectic Faerie spirit my altar varies from an ornate cloisonne enamel brazier from India, to a Zuni fox fetish, to a small well worn plastic toy dog whose personal significance could be the subject of a whole column.

Reserve your ritual objects exclusively for ritual use, and treat them reverently. However, don't forget that they are only symbolic. Whatever power exists in your spiritual practice comes from your own heart and the Mind of the Divine. The ritual objects you use are merely physical manifestations of your spiritual intent, but carefully chosen and properly used they can be a great help in focusing your mind and inspiring your worship.

NEW TALES FOR OLD FAIRIES

by John R. Stowe

When you were little, did your parents read you fairy tales? Did you ever notice how they never talked about real fairies -- you know, fairies who threw like girls or were soft (or hard!) for the other boys. In fact, growing up, did you even hear one positive story about boys loving other boys? I bet not. I sure didn't.

Last week, I changed that. I read Peter Cashorali's new book, *Fairy Tales*. The tales are updated, totally Gay, and very funny. Meet Rumpelstiltskin, who poses a riddle about HIV while counseling his charge to let the angry young prince spank him. Enjoy the exploits of

Black kids who see only WASPS on TV, in books, even their Bibles.

When I came out, twenty years ago last month, I *still* had almost *no* image of Gayness other than as shadowy, dirty perversion. That most of us came out at all is a measure of just how deeply seated our Gay nature is.

Things have changed since then. I *hope* young Gay people today have more positive role models to inspire them. You know, though, the only way they get those images is by OUR creating them.

We have some healing to do. The scarcity of role models, especially for Gay men who would live strong, spiritually fulfilling lives, can be a blessing. We get to define ourselves as we, not others, would have us.

What does that mean? First, it means examining the beliefs you hold

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a boy named Romaine, who lets down his long hair so his princely lover can reach the tower. Follow the exploits of talking animals, steadfast hairdressers, bad personal trainers, and prince after lovelorn prince. Silly magic, this, and powerful medicine.

Reading, I was surprised to find a lump in my throat after just a few pages. These tales are not for kids, but they reached a kid place in me. They seemed to fill a hole I never knew existed, a place where I needed the world to show me who I was. And the world didn't deliver.

I remember other times I've noticed this same emptiness -- like the first time I saw two men kiss on stage, or the time one of my early lovers sang "Yesterday" and changed the word "she" to "he." It cracked me up, then, and blew me away. Now, it makes me realize just how subtly wounding it is to grow up without a place in the cultural mythology. I get an inkling of what it must be like for Jewish children inundated by Santa Claus; or

about yourself. See what you might be denying yourself because of being Gay? Is it intimacy? Openness? Happiness? A fulfilling career?

Second, make a list of your role models growing up. Were they positive? Did they support you in being Gay? Make another list, this one of people you know now, including yourself, you wish you'd known then. Imagine a meeting in which your little boy learns love and support from these new mentors.

We are pioneers here, role models for ourselves, each other, and all the Gay boys who follow. Each one of us has steps to take. What are *your* dreams? Go for them! What's the next step in *your* coming out journey? Take it! Dare to reach new heights, to seek fulfillment and happiness. Dare to show your beautiful self to others. Together, we empower ourselves.

Now that's what I call a fairy tale with a happy ending.