



MACT Information Bulletin

Men of All Colors Together/New York, Inc.

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July-August, 2006

July 30

SEA TEA!

On Sunday, July 30, MACT/NY will once again host a sailing of *SEA TEA* on the Queen Of Hearts—a triple-decker, riverboat with panoramic views of New York from anywhere on board.

This will be our second year with Sea Tea. Those who partied with us last year know that this is an event not to be missed—a worthy successor to the legendary Sunset Cruises of the past!

Tyson Cane is increasing his level of participation this year, so Tyson Cane Videos' gorgeous models will be even more in evidence, enhancing the on-board scenery—sexy, half-naked wait staff and fabulous Drag Queens! A veritable feast of “eye candy!”

The Queen of Hearts accommodates up to 500 guests. The lower deck is a magnificent dining and entertainment bar lounge where the FREE buffet is served and New York's world-renowned Drag Queens do their Thing! The second deck is home to the fabulous floating bar, where drinks are served by the sexiest shirtless bartenders ever. The top deck is a massive canopied dance floor (also known as “New York's Largest Sailing Nightclub”) where music is spun by top club DJs.

We'll sail from Pier #40. Located by the West Side Highway @ Houston Street, Pier #40 is just a few blocks south of Christopher Street. Boarding begins at 6:00 PM, with the sailing at 7:30 PM and return to shore at 10:00 PM. Tickets are only \$20 a person. This is a fabulous bargain!!

Friday Night Meetings

During our 20 years, MACT/NY has met at least once a week to work, to play and learn together. Our Friday night meetings at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center at 208 West 13th Street are the core of this schedule. Sessions begin at 8:00 P.M. During the evening we take up a collection (\$5.00 recommended) for the room rent and organizational expenses. Refreshments are served. Our schedule for July and August follows. See the accompanying articles for additional information about the programs.

Friday, July 7 @ 8:00 P.M. Video: *The Ski Trip*—the first black gay film on television.

Friday, July 14 @ 8:00 P.M. Bastille Day Party. Come celebrate France's liberation with MACT at the Center! Good food and good friends. This is partially a potluck event. Contact Phillip Brathwaite to coordinate food. (646-541-7034)

Friday, July 21 @ 8:00 PM. Restaurant Outing at the “Queen of Sheba” Restaurant. 650 Tenth Avenue, between 45th and 46th Streets. Serving traditional Ethiopian recipes, the Queen of Sheba successfully combines authentic Ethiopian cuisine and atmosphere to create a dining experience that won't
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“NO JIMMIES ALLOWED”

Sex on the Wild Side in the Contemporary Party Scene

On August 4th, MACT will host a panel and open discussion on the current sex scene, with an emphasis on private parties, “barebacking,” and safe sex issues.

A recent announcement from a gay party circuit organizer promoting an event for men of color at which condoms were to be prohibited sent shock waves through the gay community.

Historically, private clubs and parties began to appear as a primary venue for sexual activity in the gay community after the disappearance of most of the public bathhouses under pressure from the NYC Department of Health in the 1980’s. In a typical recent week, *HX* listed 47 private sex clubs, while *Next* listed 63 private clubs and parties. Many clubs appeal to specific segments of the community, as well as catering to specific tastes, and some restrict admission. A significant number of private parties cater specifically to youth of color.

Although private clubs have a wide variety of formats, including some which put a strong emphasis on condom use and low-risk behaviors, others are known to be the scene of extensive “raw” or unprotected anal sex (often referred to as “barebacking”). At an extreme, so-called “bug parties” have been reported to be a part of the current New York party scene; bug parties are sex parties at which unsafe sex with every participant at the party is encouraged, involving individuals known as “gift givers” (the infected) and “bug chasers” (those not infected). A rise in raw sex action has been reported in many venues, and sales of barebacking videos have been on the rise, a fact which is widely taken to reflect this trend.

The most recent available figures from the NYC Department of Health indicate that the rate of HIV and AIDS diagnosis in the city remains very high. Over half of new cases diagnosed are believed to be in the “MSM” (men having sex with men) category, and an even higher percentage are identified as being among African Americans. M. Tokes Osubu, Executive Director of GMAD (Gay Men of African Descent) was recently quoted in *The New York Blade* as saying “I’m sick of 18-year-olds coming in here HIV-positive. It’s got to stop.”

Many in our community have asked why there seems to have been such a dramatic shift in perceptions and a consequent change in sexual habits. There seem to be a variety of reasons

Many young people have the impression that with the appearance of new medications, infection with the virus

is no longer a serious problem, ignoring the continuing high infection and death rates and the fact that modern “cocktail” medications have in fact proven toxic to many. Renewed disagreement about the dangers of virus transmission has been sparked by studies which suggest that the virus may not be contagious when viral load counts are very low or “undetectable.” Denial, rationalizations, and misinformation are clearly rampant—for example, many men still believe that only “bottoms” run a significant risk of infection and that “tops” run little or no risk.

On the other hand, many in the community argue that long-standing private behaviors have simply emerged from the closet and become public and visible. While some deplore the role of peer pressure in encouraging unsafe sex, others feel that it is critical to provide a nonjudgmental climate for all, regardless of their sexual habits and preferences. Some feel that safety messages have tended to promote fear rather than safe practices—an atmosphere of irrational fear generates irrational behavior. Some psychologists categorize high-risk behavior as a form of anxiety disorder in which non-infected individuals fear getting HIV so greatly that they actively seek to contract it in order free themselves from worrying about potential infection. Many young people feel “I just want to forget about HIV.”

For many, condom use is a quality of life issue. The erotic appeal of raw sex and the physical sensations involved cannot be disregarded—condoms, after all, might well be termed “unnatural.” Sex is not always just about getting off, but is also about making a human connection—for many a condom is experienced as a barrier to intimacy.

AIDS is often not a primary concern, especially for young people in the poorest communities, for whom basic survival issues may be more immediately pressing. Equally, many safe-sex efforts are likely to continue to fail among those who are struggling with issues of self esteem.

Has the private party scene become the latest venue for out-of-control sex and the spread of AIDS? Guests for our discussion will include Tokes Osubu of GMAD and former MACT member Lidell Jackson, a well known figure in our community and founder and host of Jacks-of-Color (other guests to be announced). Come out on August 4th to learn more about trends in the contemporary sex scene and share your views.

Looking Forward**MACT Planning Session
to be Held in July**

The MACT Board of Directors has scheduled a special open planning session to be held on Friday, July 28th, from 8-10 pm, at the LGBT Center.

We invite members to bring their energy and share their thoughts and ideas about the MACT program. At this session, we will review the calendar for the coming year, brainstorm, and review specific programming ideas with the object of planning the best possible events for the 2006-2007 season. Our goal will be to schedule a limited number of events well in advance, while leaving some dates open so that we will be able to respond to current events and trends in the course of the season.

This session is being held in part in response the 2005 Annual Membership Meeting at which there was extensive discussion about the ways in which we might seek to revitalize the organization, attract new and younger members, and secure the future of MACT as a vital force in our community.

Historically, the Board has met once a month to work on upcoming program issues, and for the most part, events have been planned no more than one or two months in advance. Our hope is that better planning will make it possible to organize more exciting events, invite more interesting guests, and do more extensive promotion of our programs (as an example of the importance of advance planning, the LGBT Center's monthly publication, *Center Happenings*, requires that events be submitted at least six weeks in advance in order to be included – our current system has generally not made this possible).

Traditionally, Board meetings have been open to all members and have been hosted at a Director's home, primarily for reasons of economy (the Center charges rent, of course). This special session will be held at the LGBT Center in order to make it more readily accessible to members. Members may contact Ted Freed (212-569-3632 or tedfreed@hotmail.com) prior to the meeting if they have specific suggestions they would like to see included in the evening's agenda.

This is your organization. Come out on July 28th and bring your thoughts and ideas—and your enthusiasm. Your participation, as always, is critical to our success.

Summer Videos

July 7—*The Ski Trip*. Last year *The Ski Trip* debuted on the Logo network, becoming the first black gay film on television. It was produced and directed by black gays and lesbians. It also gave America a chance to see black gay men, who are otherwise barely visible on the airwaves.

Written, directed and produced by and starring Maurice Jamal, the movie centers around Corey Brown, who's dreading his 30th birthday. (Remember when that was a traumatic event in our lives?) He has also recently broken up with his boyfriend Marcus. To lift his spirits, Corey's friends decide to take him on a ski trip. While we see the characters packing, driving, lodging, dressing, drinking and even throwing snowballs, they never ski. As a matter of fact no one even brings any skis.

While stereotypes abound, it's also monumental because we're watching black and latino same gender loving people. And while you watch you will definitely recognize people you know.

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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION!
PLEASE NOTE!**

Tickets for *Sea Tea* are \$20.00 per person and include a free buffet. MACT/NY's tickets are only available in advance. The boat's host, Michael Fesco, is graciously donating a portion of MACT/NY's ticket sales to the organization. However this only applies to tickets sold in advance of the sailing. ***Under no circumstances can MACT/NY sell any tickets the day of the event at the pier. So we cannot stress enough how important it is for you to purchase your tickets as soon as possible.*** Tickets can be purchased at MACT/NY meetings or by sending a check or money order to MACT/NY, P.O. Box 237107, Ansonia Station, New York, NY 10023-7107. If you have questions, email secretary@mactny.org or call Tom Wirth at (908) 289-3714..

Summer Videos

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August 18—*Gay Sex in the 70s*. Okay let's get this out in the open (no pun intended). This film is not about having sex in your 70s but rather about the gay sexual revolution that took place in 1970s. Former ABC 20/20 producer/director and Peabody Award winning filmmaker Joseph Lovett takes an unflinching look at the exploding sex lives of gay men immediately after the Stonewall Rebellion to the first reported cases of AIDS.

Anyone who lived in New York City at that time can recall the unbridled sexual activity that went on here. One could hardly walk down the street without getting cruised which in some cases would lead to a sexual encounter. The piers, the trucks, the bathhouses, the backrooms, the parks—all are remembered fondly.

Despite the ominous specter that lay waiting for us, it was a very exciting time. In addition to broadening our sexual horizons we also began to flex our political muscle. Our openness meant that we would not let ourselves be shuttered back to the closets we busted out of. So come and join us in viewing this stimulating film.

Editor & Desktop Publisher: Tom Wirth. Contributors: Stanley Reed & Ted Freed.

Contributions to the September *Bulletin* are due August 23. Call Tom Wirth at (908) 289-3714 or send material to him at 241 Hillside Road, Elizabeth, NJ 07208. Email final copy to: fire.press@verizon.net

Friday Night Meetings

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soon be forgotten. Call Arthur McLean at (212) 923-7729 if you want to join us for a fun evening with friends.

Friday, July 28 at 8:00 P.M. Looking Forward. A discussion of organizational goals & strategies for MACT during the coming year.

Friday, August 4 @ 8:00 P.M. "On the Wild Side." A panel and an open discussion of the current sex scene.

Friday, August 11 @ 8:00 P.M. MACT/NY Board Meeting at the home of Arthur McLean, 159-34 Riverside Drive West, #7C/90. Telephone (646) 286-1344 for directions. This meeting is open to all members.

Friday, August 18 @ 8:00 P.M. Video: *Gay Sex in the 70s*. With this film & discussion, MACT/NY will be adding more heat to your summer. Coordinated by Stanley Reed.

Friday, August 25 @ 8:00 P.M. Newsletter Mailing. An evening of folding, envelope stuffing, stamping and socializing.

Special Events

Sunday, July 30. @ 6:00 P.M. MACT/NY Hosts SEA TEA! We will sail on the fabulous Queen of Hearts from Pier #40. Located by the West Side Highway @ Houston Street, Pier #40 is just a few blocks south of Christopher Street. Boarding begins at 6:00 PM, with the sailing at 7:30 PM and return to shore at 10:00 PM. Call Tom Wirth at (908) 289-3714 for information. Tickets can be obtained by mailing \$20 per ticket to MACT/NY (See the masthead on Page 1 for the address), at MACT/NY meetings or from any Board member. **Advance purchase of tickets is a must!**

Sunday, August 27 @ 2:00 P.M. Restaurant Outing—Brunch at "Spain" Restaurant at 113 West 13th Street (down the street from the Center). Celebrate the end of summer in good company! Good food, reasonable prices.