

LAAPIS

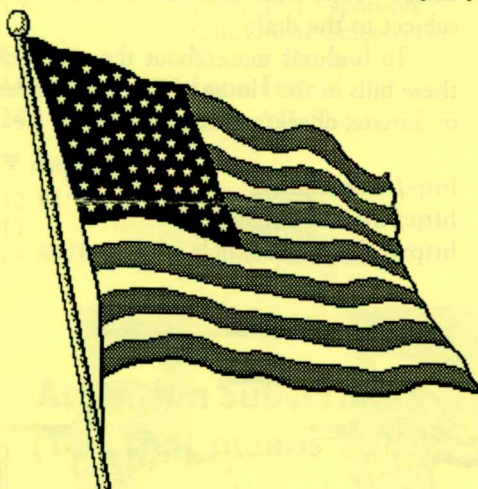
VOLUME THREE NUMBER TWELVE ▼ JULY 1996

Immigration Equality: What You Need to Know

by the folks at Immigration Equality

What do immigration issues have to do with being gay and lesbian? What affects gay immigrants also impacts all the people who know and love them.

There are basically four ways to legally immigrate to this country: marriage, employment, family sponsorship, and asylum. Because no state in the U.S. allows same-sex couples to legally marry, the avenue of using marriage as an immigration tool is denied to gays and lesbians. There are many bi-national couples living in the U.S. where one member is an U.S. citizen or permanent resident and the other is not. Often, these couples must spend long periods of time living thousands of miles apart and spend thousands of dollars visiting each other in order to maintain their relationship. For these couples, the inability to



get married is not just a matter of societal approval or financial benefits; it is absolutely necessary for them to be able to live together in the same country.

Because the marriage avenue is denied to gay and lesbian immigrants, the other avenues become more important. However, there are other ways that sexual orientation complicates the issue. For example, in family sponsorship, relatives who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents can petition the government (i.e. "sponsor") to allow you to immigrate to the U.S. In most cases, the application process takes several years. What happens if the family members find out you are gay or lesbian and terminate the application process? Then the gay or lesbian immigrant is left with almost no recourse.

The final immigration avenue for gays and lesbians is asylum. Asylum can be granted to applicants who have a well-founded fear of persecution based on membership in a particular social group. In many countries around the world, being gay (or HIV +) can be reasons for arrest, beatings, or worse. It wasn't until 1994 that Janet Reno made it possible for the INS to consider gays or lesbians as members of a

please turn to page 3

**SAVE THE DATE!
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July 14, 1996

is the next LAAPIS
General Meeting
and Potluck (bring food)
at Teri O's new pad.
808 Tularosa Drive, #3
Los Angeles

(See What's Hot for directions)

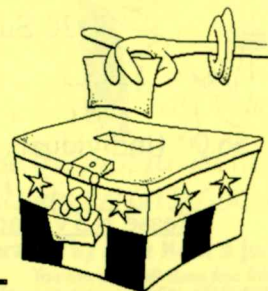
Agenda:

Board Meeting is at 12 PM
(Members are welcome)

General Meeting is at 1 PM

Issues to be discussed:

Changes in
Mission Statement,
Immigration Equality,
NEW Newsletter format,
and
LAAPIS Board elections
(It's Almost Time to VOTE!)



Inside

This HOT Pride Issue

- ▼ A trip to Dodger Stadium
(Go Nomo!)
- ▼ Out On the Screen
- ▼ Ice skating in the summer?
(Heck! Why not?)
- ▼ Party with LAAPIS at CSW!
- ▼ Are you (WO)man enough to be
a VOLUNTEER?
- ▼ The Sukie Yak Show:
Asian American Dyke Talk Show
(What else?)

Check it Out!