

**Wayves Annual Meeting**  
**January 13, 2010**  
**7:00 – 9:30**  
**The Hub**

**Present:** Wayves Team: Raymond Taavel, Daniel MacKay, Angus Campbell, Jim Bain, Randall Perry, Val Windsor, Zabrina Way. Writer Bethana Sullivan and Special Guest: Benjie Nycum attended as well members of the general public with representatives from The Youth Project and NSRAP.

A reception was held prior to the meeting and attendees were asked to complete a survey.

**Introduction:** Raymond Taavel introduced and thanked the volunteers for planning and organizing the meeting, as well The Hub for hosting. Thanks were expressed to Chef Darren of Chives Canadian Bistro for preparing and donating the lovely assortment of hors d'oeuvres.

In an effort to include others who cannot attend in person, telepresence/ videoconference technology was used courtesy of Dan MacKay and Zabrina Way helped assist during the meeting. The theme for the meeting was introduced - Where do we go from here? Wayves is looking for ideas from the community that will reflect LGBTQII community throughout Atlantic Canada.

**Publisher:** Dan MacKay spoke briefly about the history of Wayves and introduced the Wayves Team present at the meeting. The decision making process of Wayves was explained as well as the process of producing the magazine by a few people who regularly contribute their time voluntarily. It is currently a relatively small team and more volunteers are needed to help put the paper together. Anyone can get involved as there is no requirement for 'professional' writers. There are many jobs that need some time and attention in addition to the need for more writers.

**Guest Speaker:** Benjie Nycum was introduced by Raymond Taavel as being a long time activist and advocate for the queer community, founder of Young Gay America Magazine and YGA Magazine, author of XY Survival Guide for gay youth. Benjie is also the current EGALÉ representative for Atlantic Canada.

Benjie spoke of benefiting personally and the lessons learned from the hard work of long term queer advocates. He talked about queer media activism and how it is shaping humanity. He feels there is much hope and resilience in our community and that using different forms of media can be very powerful. Effective communication requires many voices.

He remembers when Wayves was called the Gazette and when Kim Vance and Jane Kansas were involved in creating Wayves. Benjie was involved with the QAction volunteer group in San Francisco years ago and learned the effectiveness of media communication, how a small group can have a big effect, the importance of enabling voices, to listen and to recognize the diversity of our movement and community.

Benjie talked about his work with X/Y magazine and the challenge of paying for the printing but the importance of improving gay youth lives. Benjie volunteered with a gay and lesbian hotline and discovered that loneliness is experienced by many in the gay community. Through writing and publishing the XY Survival Guide, Benjie learned the importance of selling a book by occupying space next to the magazine on the rack rather than tucked away in gender studies. The efficiency of sales and distribution helped get the message out there and enabling voices of the gay and lesbian community.

Benjie also helped create a documentary entitled Jim in Bold. This film gained respect and created opportunities for Benjie to address many audiences. A change in the media format was very successful. Benjie also collaborated with others in the creation of the queer media action of the photography exhibit called 'Exuberance'.

As a representative of EGALE, Benjie got to be part of the challenges faced after the victory the legal challenges for same-sex marriage. Benjie also learned the effects of negative media issues from some local magazines and the importance of a united front. EGALE still needs support and funding from the queer community.

Where is Wayves going? Where is the community going? Queer media is needed at a local level but what is the medium? The print format is not cheap and not interactive. The queer community has come quite far but there are still important causes and concerns that need attention but there are still challenges. There are also opportunities. Public opinion is now in our favour and we have a very high power decision making ability. There have been many losses in our community, such as through suicide and AIDS. We do not want these losses to be in vain.

Wayves is at a crossroads with new challenges as well as new opportunities. We must not abandon our human capacity for doing good in the world. Wayves is positioned very well and there are opportunities and important resources that cannot be lost. Wayves can be a leader in a cultural revolution, connectivity and re-engaging the community by re-shuffling priorities and improving online capabilities. Wayves can use different media, abandon territorialization and work together with other community organizations.

**Brainstorming:** Angus Campbell facilitated the brainstorming session from 'Queer to Eternity' and reminded the group that everybody can do something.

Angus quickly reviewed some of the feedback from the surveys which indicated that folks would like to see a more glossy publication, integrating online with blog capability, improve format and journalism, more writers, remove CruiseLine ads, strengthening of relationships across Atlantic Canada. Surveyors also indicated that they liked the website, online services & resources. Members would like to see information on travel, campgrounds, regional stories, pop culture, more youth and woman oriented stories, articles on bisexuality, community organizing and stories of successful community members. Members would also to see cartoons, more photos, as well as articles on home and gardening.

Discussion then focused around events and what kinds of events should be covered in Wayves. Some felt that events that are just queer friendly were being too restrictive. There is a need to have a broader vision of our community. Gay voices need to be

heard in all aspects of community planning, visioning. Anything could be construed as being related to the queer community as we all live and work in the larger community. There are some issues of housing, health, etc that need coverage in the magazine. There must be more diversity in identifying and reaching out to other groups and organizations outside of the regular pop culture media. An example given to raise the bar is by including events on classical music and not just pop music/culture.

There needs to be easy access to a list of dependable events/resource source of information, not editorial. Wayves team pointed out that the Events section is online now. There have been some reaching out the community in organizing and supporting events such as last year's 'Gastronomy' wherein about 100 people participated. It was also noted that Gastronomy drew in supporters and advertisers and that were some real spin offs from the event. There was also a 'Town Hall' meeting in Truro in an effort to reach out to the community. Wayves is happy to help community groups but sometimes the process is complex.

The 'Events' discussion carried on with ideas around having a stronger voice leading up to events, creating opportunities for people to connect and have fun, creativity in community development, using 'World Café' style, storytelling and dialogue. Wayves currently participates in established events such as Gay Pride, Word on the Street and networking with outside organizations. There is an ongoing need to create collaborative efforts with businesses and the larger community.

The Wayves team also talked about the focus of Wayves being on the Queer Atlantic experience and is fully driven by volunteers. Wayves is the second longest running queer publication in Canada. **(CHECK WITH ANGUS, DO I HAVE THIS CORRECT?)**

Currently there is no one person dedicated to working on events, especially in Newfoundland and Labrador and Cape Breton. Anyone interested in covering events should contact Wayves.

Wayves needs to identify the population/demographic being served and whose stories are not being told. Members of our community are encouraged to write their stories. Writing skills are not needed to tell the story there are volunteers who will proofread and edit for grammar, punctuation, etc. without changing the voice of the writer.

Discussion then focused on advertising and the issues that are raised because of the back page Cruiseline ads. Community members feel that these ads alienate youth, women and are not family oriented. Because of the Cruiseline ad, some believe it is not appropriate to display Wayves in public or at home. The magazine depends upon the advertising revenue; however online publication can avoid some of these advertising issues. There was some discussion on the acceptance of men and nudity, not censoring ourselves as well as not depending upon advertising revenue for Wayves survival.

In order to publish a more glossy magazine, Wayves would need more funding. Glossy magazines are very expensive. The current format does not qualify for a lot of government funding. Grant applications and funding proposals require expertise and a lot of time for completion of the application. Hugo offered, as a NSRAP representative, to request assistance in fundraising applications.

It was also mentioned at the meeting that the provincial government is making a concerted effort to include diversity in its mandate and that the Premier's office recently held a roundtable on diversity. It should be verified if various government departments are including the queer community in its programs and planning.

**(FOLLOW-UP: FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR VALUING DIVERSITY INITIATIVE YOU CAN CONTACT:**

**CHARLIE MACDONALD, DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT, PHONE: (902) 424-6916, EMAIL: [MACDONC@GOV.NS.CA](mailto:MACDONC@GOV.NS.CA) )**

**How to get involved?**

There is no need to be a professional writer. You can be a columnist or a proofreader. Anyone can start participating in the process and we encourage youth to be involved. Wayves never re-writes but edits around. An effort is made to include different voices. Get involved and Wayves will figure out something interesting for you to do. People are also needed to take pictures at events. There is a need right now for a volunteer bookkeeper.

Wayves needs someone to check in with organizations across Atlantic Canada to strengthen relationships.

There are two parts for a story or event. Before the event, we need to tell our readers what is going to happen and afterwards letting the readers know what has happened.

There was some discussion again around the perception that women and youth content needs to be increased and improved. Wayves is trying to address these areas but find it difficult to engage members of the community.

Benjie then talked about the rules of engagement not working and that we need to be motivated to change that. Community members are not happy with the status quo and we need to get past being defensive. Maybe there needs to be more focus on effective social media communications. Wayves needs to re-write its rules of engagement. Wayves would like to know how to reach out to the community to change the perception of exclusionary content and to get more writers involved. Please talk to a team member or send an email to Wayves if interested.

Meeting wrapped up at 9:30 pm.