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SPEAKERS

Speaker 10, Speaker 7, Speaker 3, Speaker 8, Speaker 6, Speaker 4, Speaker 9, Speaker 5

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Speaker 3 00:01

Well, that's kind of brings us right to what I wanted to talk about. Looks like, what we need to do is, as the public is getting more involved in your, your groups, groups like yours groups like the National groups, some of the other groups that I've heard of, and you're, I felt like when we were talking about this a little while ago that I had misunderstood something about your group. It started in August, but then it kind of had some troubles getting off the ground. And, and I was afraid that it was literally Yes, I was afraid that it was literally going to not make it. But hearing from you guys and talking to Charles, it's obviously had its resurgence. What would you encourage I mean, this is a group for people who want to do something or participate in that change. And to get out get involved with you had one--

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Speaker 6 00:56

I think, a real quick synopsis. We had our first meeting in July. And again, it came after the July decisions from the White House came down. And frankly, all the national organizations in trying to overturn the ban had practically killed themselves doing it financially, organizationally, in every, in every way. And people were exhausted. And when that when the orders came out, and the decisions were made. It was very tough for new groups such as ours, in the wake of that decision, to tell people, Hey, we can still do something. And we've regrouped. We've we've had a lot of brainstorming sessions. And we've come up with an excellent constitution and bylaws which we've outlined some of our goals and objectives. But strokes, in sense of various things. We're not always Sunday's it's not always we have to overturn the ban. Recently, we had some other activities that were meant to support the community. And so we look at many things.

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Speaker 3 02:14

Yeah, I was reading about one of these things that you did you put together baskets for the VA?

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Speaker 6 02:20

Correct.

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Speaker 3 02:20

I know that Charles came by the care center, and we dug out to all kinds of audiences to help and there's some other things that you're wanting to get involved in, in the community.

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Speaker 6 02:33

You know, I will cite an example that challenges that national group the gay lesbian bisexual Veterans of America, which is our parent group that we're affiliated with. We are by name the Texas gay veterans of Houston. There are three other state groups. And we have chosen that name basically, because it's shorter, and it's a little easier to get people's attention. We've done a lot of different things. We found out that one group in Boston had a lot of success because they started a buddy program at the local VA hospital, and have endeared themselves with that support to the local VA people who I think David can enlighten us more about that we've learned that they are the largest AIDS caretaker in America, through the VA network. Wonderful.

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Speaker 7 03:35

Yeah, well, a lot of people don't realize it. But the Veterans Administration, combined that with the active duty military, as the largest AIDS care provider in the world,

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Speaker 3 03:45

I believe me, I know, I work for an adult care center and at least two thirds of the men there are veterans who go out to the VA.

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Speaker 7 03:53

Sure, it's a tremendous problem.

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Speaker 3 03:56

And they talk about, you know, the difficulties. I had a man telling me one day he went to a podiatrist who had 60 clients in the day he saw 60 people, and I wondered how, how we could get any care when his doctor saw 60 people in a day. And he said that there were just so many people. This particular fungus had HIV. And he said there were just so many people that the man just barely had time to even look at them. So tell me, I've got a question. And then we're gonna go to a short break. Jimmy's sitting here waving. And but my question is, do you need to be a veteran to belong to your group?

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Speaker 6 04:39

No. We accept both veterans and those who support our general goals and objectives. We have a membership, what we call associate membership, to carry all the other things. We also have corporate memberships for great, wonderful people that want to help us out and get us going,

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Speaker 3 05:01

There are some rather large people in--

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Speaker 6 05:04

The national goal for the our parent group is to have 1000 members, at which point from what we understand, we will be recognized or can be recognized by the Veterans Administration, on the same level of the VFW, and other regular veterans groups.

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Speaker 7 05:22

All these other veterans. What that does, what that allows us to do is it gives us official recognition with the Veterans Administration, we're entitled to office space, we are not subject to the local administrators biases, as far as office space, and just function attending official functions. They're at the hospital or at the VA cemetery and stuff like that. So it'd be tremendous recognition for us if we can achieve. And we're approximately 60% there.

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Speaker 6 05:52

Great. Stand up and be counted, we're being counted for a very positive goal.

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Speaker 7 05:57

Right now we are having problems getting office space at the DA, we don't have that official recognition to say, hey, you know, this intention to show that we have to be respected, we are entitled office space, we don't have that yet. And I'm not saying that the VA is slam that door on us yet. They haven't. You know, to be fair to them, they have not done that. But it certainly, if we get that official recognition and battle, that door will be closed.

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Speaker 5 06:23

And while we don't have a large active duty contingent around the immediate Houston areas, I personally have been an ex-reservist, that there will be reserve and National Guard personnel who will also join our group.

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Speaker 3 06:37

Well, I promise you we have some veterans out there listen to that until After Hours. And I'm promising you that some of them will get a hold of you. You heard that I'm promising them now don't let me down. To get a hold of you a little bit later we'll pick up a phone number. And we'll talk a little bit about what you want to do with your group and what kind of activities you want to get into and what people might be able to help you with. After we take this little short break you're listening to After Hours, a continuing can tradition KPFT Houston 90.1 FM, and Jimmy's gonna play look hard for you

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Speaker 8 07:24

I was killed one said everybody's got the blues. I know I have. You will have to if you tune into KPFT every Friday night for the of the clock blues show from eight to 10pm Whether you like BB King, Eric Clapton, Albert King, Elmore, James Stevie Ray Vaughan or local talent, this is a show for you. In addition to music, we feature interviews with local, regional and national artists, as well as specialists in some of the blues greats. Remember, that's every Friday night at 8pm for two hours of down and dirty blues here on World Radio 90.1 FM KPFT Houston.

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Speaker 9 08:20

Music politics and the underground culture. It's all that in a bag of chips when you tune it to Bob the political Hip Hop magazine for the radio. Every Thursday morning at 1am hosted and produced by the renegade chive collective on KPFT 90.1 FM World Radio.

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Speaker 10 08:55

KPFT is January on our membership drive is just around the corner. Starting on Friday, January the seventh through Friday, January the 21st KPFT we'll be needing your help answering our pledge lines. So if you would like to answer the phone during your favorite show, or have some free time, call me, Annie, at 526-4000 and sign up for our January on-air membership drive. It starts on January the seventh and runs through Friday January the 21st. So when you've done returning those unwanted gifts, come on down to KPFT and answer our pledge lines.

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Speaker 3 09:45

Okay, we're back and we've got David Paul and Lee and they're with the Texas gay vets Houston. And we've been talking a little about their organization and a little about the court system what their organization has to be there for, what's going on in this country as far as people in the military, gay people in the military. And while we were while you were away, we were still here. While you were away, we talked about some of the things that we want to talk about. And one of them was the diversity amongst volunteer, participants. Volunteers, remember membership, there we go, I'm lost for words here, membership, the diversity amongst your membership. And Paul, you are from which branch of the service?

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Speaker 6 10:29

I was in the army, I was with the Air Defense Artillery.

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Speaker 3 10:32

What was your rank?

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Speaker 6 10:33

I left the Army as a captain.

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Speaker 3 10:37

Was that something? I mean, when you were in the army, as a captain, did you want to go on to make it a career and-

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Speaker 6 10:43

Basically, it was a two fold decision. Number one, I realized that the military was not I was not born a soldier. And I felt that I did not want to go on for a full career to be general or something. And the other problem is that I needed to do a command to be in the service for a longer period of time. And I could not, in any good conscience, have a command where I knew that I would have the duty to throw others people out, due to their sexuality. When in my case, I was a homosexual. And so therefore, I chose easy way out, and I got out while ago and was good.

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Speaker 3 11:26

I admire that.

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Speaker 6 11:31

Well, y problem is that I went to West Point, and they teach you that the Honor Code, and as a, any gay person knows, you end up covering your tracks along the way, at least when you're coming out, it's when you're gonna get married, you know, blah, blah, blah. And they are lies. And you have society demands that you lie. And yet on the other hands, you go to a school where they demand that you don't, and it is a very tough line to walk on. And it's a lot of mental stress. And I chose to cut the line and I, I served my six years

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Speaker 3 12:16

WHICH IS A HOMOPHOBIC SCAM

which is a requirement for

 Speaker 6 12:17

Five years was my requirement plus a year reserve, fully six years of active reserve.

 Speaker 3 12:22

Which is insane paying back your schooling.

 Speaker 6 12:25

And then I severed the ties completely, because I didn't want reserve duty at all, even though when I tried to go in for reserves later, they would have let me go in. But I chose the easy way out. And now I am a I also am a member of the service academy, gay and lesbian alumni group headquartered in Virginia, and we have several service academy alumni in the area, to other fellow West Pointers in the Houston area. And we were all in the March on Washington in April. And we marched in front of the White House singing Go Army cheers against the beat Navy cheers and all that. It was really incredible. We didn't know what else to say. So we just go Army.

 Speaker 3 13:13

You hear that Houston? There gay people at West Point, you can bet they're everywhere.

 Speaker 6 13:20

I was I was recently talking to someone who just recently got out of the service from West Point from the military, but it was serving in the army, and they have insisted that probably the situation is worse now under the new doctrine. witch hunts continue to happen more severe than they were in the past. commanders have at their own discretion, even though the papers might say one way, commanders are given a free rein to find people and kick them out. And it's it's getting kind of ugly. They're even going to a concept of possible other alternatives and getting people that have have gotten out and finding people that got out under say, honorable discharges, but got out because they were gay and needed to sever that before damage occurred and bringing them together. So on a national basis, people are looking for those type of individuals also, to just stand up and be counted.

 Speaker 3 14:27

That's frightening.

 Speaker 6 14:28

And it takes tremendous courage. In any case, whether you have an honorable discharge, which which I hang proudly in my room in my home. Or any other case, we have one member of our group that has a dishonorable, just had a dishonorable discharge from World War Two, a bomber pilot with a purple heart and a silver star who was lucky enough to have his discharge overturned and to get an honorable discharge.

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Speaker 7 15:01

Let me briefly mentioned you mentioned, if there are people out there with this honorable or general discharges, we will go out of our way to help them upgrade their discharges. I mean, that's one of our functions, we take that very seriously. There are certain procedures, we know how to do it. If we don't know how to do it, we know how to get a hold of people who do know how to do it. So we want to help people in that regard as well.

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Speaker 6 15:24

And when you're looking for a job, it helps to have an honorable discharge as opposed to anything else.

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Speaker 3 15:30

People say it doesn't matter, it does matter. What about you, Lee? What branch of service were you in?

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Speaker 5 15:36

Well, I was a reserve commissioned officer, with the rank of captain at the time that I received my honorable discharge at my personal request. I had to resign my commission in order to receive that discharge. At no time was the military ever aware of my sexual orientation, it never had any bearing on the quality or any effect whatsoever on my service. But unfortunately, if you or your situation becomes known to anyone who is in the service, then they are also at risk for retribution by the, by the service, because in any event, if you are aware of somebody who's breaking military regulations, and you fail to report that then you are also--

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Speaker 3 16:23

Broken another regulation.

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Speaker 5 16:24

You've broken another regulation. So one of the things that I did prior to joining the army was to state that I was never going to make an attempt to learn of anyone else who was gay in the military. And as a matter of fact, I didn't until I got my honorable discharge. And that is to

the military. And as a matter of fact, I didn't until I got my honorable discharge. And that is to say, afterwards, I found other gay people. And the reason I did that was I didn't want to be placed in the position of being asked to say who else might be if something should come up. And I would go before the authorities--

 Speaker 3 16:58

I'm very familiar with that situation.

 Speaker 5 17:01

And this, this is really very unfortunate, because it means that that people are extremely isolated, they really and literally have nowhere to turn if they need to discuss this matter, unless it's somebody who is functionally outside of the service that they're in. And when you're in the service, the service is everything, it's your life. And you can't get away from it 24 hours a day. I recently served in a on the General Staff of a major US Army Reserve Command. And in that capacity, I could see that my own path would become more and more complicated, because the higher you went in rank and responsibility, the more intertwined became your service commitment with your own life. And I personally wanted to be able to have a home life to have a lover, if you will, and not to have to be constantly hiding that or trying some subterfuge to keep it quiet. That's a kind of a psychological stress that people won't be able to relate to unless they've actually gone through it. And yet, that's what all of the people in the military who are who are gay experience at the present time, and it's terribly, terribly stressful. And yet there are many, many of us who are capable of dealing with this successfully and continually. And I think it's just extraordinarily remarkable that they that they can do that. I think it it bespeaks strength of character, which is far, far above the average.

 Speaker 3 18:45

Commitment and loyalty to this country, wanting to serve that bad that they would hold back a major part of their life. All their life. Really.

 Speaker 5 18:54

Yeah. And when you're in the military, that is your commitment, you are committed to the mission. What goes on, you know, after hours is you just don't think about it, you have your mission, you get it done. And you go forward from there. A lot of people don't realize that I, in the recent talk that you hear in the newspapers, and so on, so forth, particularly when Clinton announced that he was going to lift the ban, there was a lot of complaints about people saying, Oh, we don't want gays in the service, no, our privacy is going to be worse or whatever. And I always thought that those arguments are really rather specious because a gay person in the service, if, under under most normal circumstances is simply not going to make it known for obvious reasons. And, and so in that respect, I think the service as far as the privacy issue is concerned is exactly analogous to what you find in high school physical education classes. And anybody who's gone through high school in the United States, I guarantee you that that you have had a gay classmate, and you have undoubtedly probably showered in front of that classmate and so on so forth.

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Speaker 3 20:07

And totally unaware.

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Speaker 5 20:08

And totally unaware of it. And the same situation pertains in the military. It is simply not an issue that arises when you come in from the field, your objective is to get clean.

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Speaker 3 20:21

I saw an editorial in the local paper here that went on and on about this was big, fat cat sitting in his Washington chair, and was on and on about gays and military, gays in military and his little secretary over on his left saying He's just worried that there are going to be men who are going to be looking at the men in military just worried that they're going to be men looking at them, like they've been looking at women for 1000 years.

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Speaker 5 20:49

That's really true.

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Speaker 3 20:50

Even that is not the case. Because when you are at work, and I know, when you're at work, you're at work. That's right. It's not as easy as it is in corporate life to flirt around with people in your job, because of the rank, and because of the discipline involved. So it's not like that, and I can attest to that. David, what did you do when you were in a service?

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Speaker 7 21:14

Well, I was in the Air Force for 11 years, and nine months, I had no intentions of leaving, they were going to force me. Forced me out, they did but they were going to force me out, I was going to do 20 because frankly, I was good at what I did. And I enjoyed what I did. Initially, there's a little side story to my, my discharge. I didn't know this at the time. But approximately eight years in my career, I'd been investigated once. I didn't know this at the time. And my commander essentially threw it in the trash. I didn't know this, I found this out afterwards. And then, four years later, I got reinvestigated. And it was as simple as they asked me the question, and I didn't lie. And I was prepared for the consequences, I received an honorable discharge and all that. And my process went relatively smoothly, because I had a very supportive commander. But like Lee was saying, you know, you develop coping mechanisms and stuff like that. And essentially, the first five or six years of my career, I mean, I went through great lengths to, to hide my sexual orientation, if you will. I mean, in many girlfriends, the whole nine yards, go bar hopping with the guys at certain centers. But I realized that was killing me. But

also realized that I was determined to do 20, because I enjoyed very much what I was doing. So essentially, I came out to myself and realized that I was prepared to pay the consequences. If that happened, I didn't go out of my way to advertise or anything else, but I wasn't gonna lie to myself, I wasn't gonna lie to anyone who might have asked that question. And over the course of years, three or four people, closer friends of mine would eventually ask that question. And I never lied to them. I told him the truth. Now, to make a very long story short, one of those people eventually turned around, and it haunted me, he betrayed me, in essence, so. But I was prepared to pay the consequences.

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Speaker 3 23:13

They asked me when I when they were giving me the drill, if I had named and promised me, you know, a special compensation if I would give other names. And frankly, I told him to kiss ass, because I was not, I didn't I couldn't do for somebody else, what had been done to me.

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Speaker 7 23:31

I had been initially asked to name names. And like I said, my commander was very supportive. He was retiring in five or six months, so he had nothing to lose. And he basically told the investigating service to back off, that he was not forcing me to do that. And, and they did back off. So I didn't, I was never put in that position of having to name names. And frankly, I'd like to say that I would have never dropped a dime, but no one knows what they would do. You know, when they're up for 24 or 48 hours, and you're--

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Speaker 3 24:03

and that's how it was?

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Speaker 7 24:04

Yeah, absolutely. It was in the next stage--

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Speaker 3 24:07

--right out of movies, because I know I was in I was involved in--

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Speaker 7 24:10

That stuff still goes on today. Even under the new policy, it still can go on.

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Speaker 3 24:14

The three and four people coming in and telling me they were this person in that person. And

all of them having a new clean pad and a nice sharp pencil, and just waiting for me to slip. And after hours and hours and hours and hours, they would ask me if I was hungry. I mean, like, no, of course not. I've only been here eight and a half hours. I'm not hungry. And then wouldn't want me to answer other questions. And it was it was it was, I really felt violated. And and I don't know, I don't want to compare it to rape. Because I've not experienced that experience. But in my mind, I felt raped by the process, an invasion of my privacy, and, and and loss of control of my body. And my, and all freedoms, it was really, I went, I think about it. And when I refer to it, I refer to it as a metaphorical raping. But that's what it felt like to me. And, uh--

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Speaker 5 25:10

My own situation that was somewhat similar was, I was in a training brigade at Fort Knox. This is the location where Murray's movie Stripes was made.

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Speaker 3 25:25

more of my father's life.

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Speaker 5 25:28

And one of the new recruits was being administratively discharged. This is something that means he was kind of in the service for a little while, but not enough to actually qualify for discharge, just, you know, basically a paper way out. And I remember the brigade adjutant, bringing this paperwork into me, I was functioning as assistant edge at that time. And he handed it to me and said, Here, you need to process this. And just at that moment, another officer who had been working there much longer than I had, oh, it says, I'm going to take care of that. And then he ripped literally ripped it out of my hands. But it caused me a great deal of consternation, because I knew intuitively that, that I could not have gone through with that paperwork without making my being gay known. And that, of course, would have been the end of my career. And that's really so unfortunate, because the four of us here represent at least 40 man years of training, experience. I mean, this is a cost to the nation, the nation doesn't realize how costly it is to keep gays out of the service, to throw them out when they're in there. And so on and so forth.

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Speaker 3 26:42

Somebody did something in Newsweek, I think, three months ago that we're talking about the the money that is thrown away chasing after, you know, absolutely harmless homosexuals is not the way harmless homosexual acts, as I beg your pardon. I'm not harmless. But the point was that they were spending buku bucks on getting, you know, the training that goes on, and then moving people around the world, and then finding out they're gay and having to move them back around the world. And, and the people that spend their whole day hunting down home, the homosexual hunters. And I mean, you know, I've often wondered, what kind of person can do that consistently? Hunt down homosexuals. I mean, can I mean, I just can't believe that, the odds are that homophobes, all homophobes get that job? Surely there are some decent people with that job.

 Speaker 5 27:33

Do you think they have bag limits?

 Speaker 3 27:37

Is it the end of the month.

 Speaker 6 27:39

Miss McCarthy was put out of business, so they had to do something else.

 Speaker 3 27:42

Yes. Thank God. Well, but, gentlemen, it has been a real pleasure for you to come down here and talk to me. And I know that we are going to connect a lot with this group in the future, why don't you tell me when and where and how we can get in touch with you.

 Speaker 6 27:58

Our next meeting is scheduled for January 8, that's a Saturday, to be a time yet determined, we will be published in the new voice or the twit exactly the time. If you need to get a hold of us for whatever reason, you need to, you have a discharge needs to be upgraded. Or you need a support of any of any nature or have some ideas on how we can make a better effort in the community. Well, you can you can call us at either 3593720 or

 Speaker 7 28:36

7809917.

 Speaker 3 28:39

And we'll give you those numbers in a little while again, if you didn't get them right now, I promise. And if you want to read more about their group, there is a large article in the voice this week.

 Speaker 5 28:51

I personally hope that more people come and become a part of our group because I think the nation as well as the local community needs to know about the character of our service, what we've done, how we've done it, and and really how much of an important contribution we have

made to the security and the protection of our nation.

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Speaker 7 29:12

I want to make a special appeal to all our lesbian listeners out there. They are, they get, they received 75% of all discharges for homosexuality, but yet make only 10% of the population. So we know they're out there. We haven't been very successful in recruiting lesbians into our organization. We certainly want to fix that problem. So we really, really really want to get a hold of our lesbian viewers.

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Speaker 3 29:43

I'm glad you said that.

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Speaker 6 29:45

There was about at least one Marine lady from Austin once you've must know she we met her out in front of JR's is one night on the bathroom one afternoon when we were out recruiting, letting people know that we were our group existed it. And I know she's out there. So I know there are people there.

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Speaker 3 30:04

And that was something that, you know, you brought that up, I wanted to tell you, there were a lot of lesbians who had been in the service, who were very upset about the veterans groups in Washington who threw a fit about the Vietnam Memorial of the women. And they were real upset. And I know, I talked to several, who were just livid at the nerve of these men to to deliberately, not by accident anymore, not by oversight anymore, but to deliberately take away the women's involvement in Vietnam. Yeah. And I think if you talk about that a little bit here in town around your group, I think you'll, you'll ferret out those lesbians out there because they were really upset.

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Speaker 6 30:49

Oh, Margaret Corbin started the Revolutionary War. That's right. And General Vaughn, General von Steuben, who we understand that, in a historical perspective, was probably one of the first general officers in the American army, recruited from Prussia to help train our troops was, was a game person. And throughout history, we have helped this nation defend America.

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Speaker 3 31:20

Gay people have been great warriors throughout the history of the Union, I mean, the history of the world.

S Speaker 5 31:25

And there's no question about it. Under the present circumstances, the military could not put forth a credible effort in any mission without the support of the women members of the military.

S Speaker 7 31:35

Our founder of our, our founder of our national organization is a lesbian, Miriam Binchwell. Hello, our regional our Southwest Regional coordinator is a lesbian. So this is this is a an organization that wants to encompass all.

S Speaker 3 31:49

Okay. Okay, out there. Okay, out there, you women, you hear this? These are men are telling you, they need your support. He needs you to be part of this organization, with sitting on your butt saying I don't like what's happening. Get out there, get involved with these men help them do that what you know, is right.

S Speaker 5 32:07

And I was going I was gonna make a special appeal also to any Aggies who may be out there.

S Speaker 3 32:13

And we know that they're there. I run into them to venture in the venture with their boots on us, right. I wanted to close this little piece by telling you a couple of weeks ago, I caught a short comedy show on Comedy Central where they had all gay and lesbian. A one lesbian comic came out. And she was talking about, she didn't understand this stuff about the military. She didn't understand about why gay people wanted to go off and be in war anyway. And that she just wanted these guys to go over there and fight their war and stand up for our rights. And then she kind of leaned into the camera and she said, yeah, you go on over there and fight for our rights. We'll stay here and take care of your wives. And I thought to myself, next time somebody tells me that, that's what I'm gonna say, that's alright. We'll stay home and take care of your wife. It's a real pleasure meeting you and I would really appreciate it. If in any future you would like to come down and talk about anything new or pressing coming up, or any organizational things you need support with for you to come down and we will talk. A real pleasure.

S Speaker 5 33:24

It has been.

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Speaker 4 34:23

All right, all right. All right. What is this daddy fondling Santa Claus? How rude. Even I even have my limits here. Hi, this is Jimmy. And while we won't be doing an exact QMZ this week, because we've got a lot of good stuff. I want to mix and match straight and gay alike, friends of the gay and lesbian and bisexual and transgender community. I just just want to play a whole bunch of good fun stuff. Funny stuff, maybe some serious stuff thrown in. Reach back to the 60s for some girl group stuff. Oh but I want to start out with some dykes, yes I do. Venus Envy and my favorite song off of their "I'll be a Homo for Christmas" is the 12 Gays of Christmas.