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# Gays to convene at BCC next week

by Douglas Bailey

The fifth annual Maine Gay Symposium will be held at Bangor Community College Friday, March 31, through Sunday, April 2.

The three day event, sponsored by the Wilde-Stein Club at UMO, the Gay People's Alliance and Mainly Gay of Portland and the Maine Lesbian-Feminists, will include about 20 workshops on a

variety of gay issues, a showing of a recently released documentary film "Gay U.S.A." and a Saturday evening dinner and dance.

Diane Elze, a member of the symposium's organizing committee, said the annual event is an educational experience. "It is a place where the entire gay community can meet and share ideas, talk about where they are going and discuss gay related problems," she said.

She said past symposiums have been very successful, with over 200 people attending from New England, New York, New Jersey, and Canada.

Elze said straight people, as well as gays, attend the symposium and there are workshops that deal with gays relating to straights and vice-versa.

Among the workshops scheduled this year are "Alcoholism in the gay community," "Gays in religion" and a representative of the Clamshell Alliance, a group opposing the use of nuclear power, will speak at the general session on Friday.

The keynote speakers on Saturday's session will be Karla Jay and Allen Young. Jay and Young are co-editors of "Out of the Closets" and "After You're Out," books about gay liberation and the gay experience.

Elze said the timing of the event, coming during spring recess, was intentional.

"The conference and Institutes Division is helping to plan this event and we wanted to schedule it when school is out of session," she said. "The union at BCC is always busy and it was a good time to schedule the symposium."