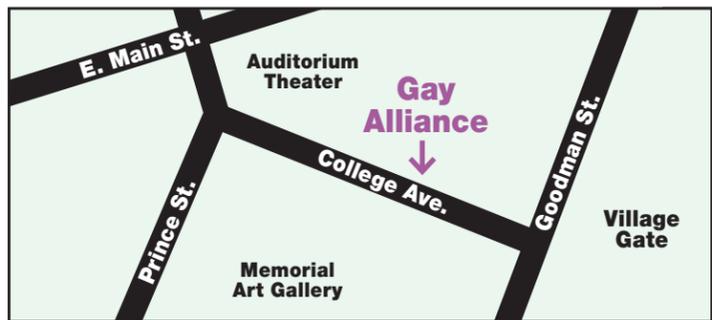


# The Empty Closet

LOCAL, STATE, NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS, INTERVIEWS, OPINION, ENTERTAINMENT, COLUMNISTS, EVENT CALENDARS, COMICS, & HEALTH RESOURCES  
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NUMBER 492 A PUBLICATION OF THE GAY ALLIANCE AUG 2015



Gay Alliance ED Scott Fearing with Scott Pellino, Ray Saucke and Jeff Myers at the sneak preview of the new office space and resource center on July 14. Photos: Bruce Gorman

## 60 attend Gay Alliance preview of new office; City issues proclamation

By Susan Jordan

The Gay Alliance held a sneak preview of the new office and LGBTQ Resource Center on July 14. Over 60 people attended the event at 100 College St., across Goodman St. from Village Gate.

The space is currently being renovated and the Alliance hopes to move from the current office in the Auditorium Center sometime during the fall. It will include a large meeting room/classroom, a gallery/program space, and the David Bohnett Cyber Center, as well as the Gay Alliance Library & Archive and staff offices.

Speakers included City Councilmember Elaine Spaul, Brighton Town Supervisor Bill Moehle, and Ray Saucke, the Alliance's landlord at the Auditorium Center and now at 100 College St.

James Smith, communications director for Mayor Lovely Warren, read the mayor's pro-

clamation of July 14 as Gay Alliance Appreciation Day. The proclamation called the Gay Alliance and its programs "an invaluable community resource" and stated that the City urges "all its citizens to be champions for LGBTQ life and culture."

Executive Director Scott Fearing talked about the organization's future goals and the need for all local LGBTQ groups to work together, including using common space.

The following day Brighton Town Supervisor Bill Moehle said on Facebook, "Congratulations to the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley on their upcoming move to their new home in NOTA. GAGV is a great community resource and I am proud to be an ally and friend as GAGV works for equality. How appropriate to hold a reception and sign a lease for this new space during Pride Week in Rochester. See you at the Parade on Saturday!"



Mayor Lovely Warren (center) joined in the Pride Parade on July 18. Photo: Jeanne Gainsburg

## The Pride is with us: thousands fill the streets for Rochester Pride 2015

By Susan Jordan

The streets were full of colorfully costumed intergalactic Pride marchers on July 18, and the sidewalks were crowded with LGBTQ people and allies of all ages and backgrounds, as Sci Fi Pride made its way down Park Avenue and on to Martin Luther King Jr. Park for the Pride Festival.

The recent Supreme Court ruling in favor of marriage equality drew a high number of parade-watchers to congratulate and cheer on the marchers. Observers estimated there were approximately 6,000 people on the streets. A record of 92 units took part.

Marching were many welcoming and affirming churches, Rochester Atheists, the Rochester Fire Department, Empire State Pride Agenda, East Coast Two Spirit Society, unions including CSEA, NYSUT, the AFL-CIO and Pride at Work (with a gigantic tractor-trailer), Trillium Health, the University of Rochester, Colgate Crozer Divinity School, the VA LGBT Support Group, social agencies including the Center for Disability Rights, LGBTQ groups and businesses including ImageOut, the Trans Alliance of Greater Rochester (TAGR), Genesee Valley Gender Variants, the Rainbow Pride Band, the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, SAGE, Outlandish, Tilt and the Bachelor Forum, and ally businesses and organizations including Roc City Roller Derby, RAPA and the Rochester Broadway Theatre League.

Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, Mayor Lovely Warren, City Council President Loretta Scott, City Council members Matt Haag, Elaine Spaul and Dana Miller and NYS Assembly member Harry Bronson all took part. Candidates for office in the Parade included Sandy Frankel



Photo: Ove Overmyer CSEA

(candidate for Monroe County Executive) and James Sheppard and Molly Clifford (candidates for Monroe County Legislature). A large contingent marched with signs for presidential candidate Bernie Sanders.

On Friday, July 17, Rainbow Riders brought the Pride colors through city neighborhoods to the flag ceremony site in MLK Jr. Park, where the Gay Alliance's 30 x 50' rainbow flag flew from the superstructure, and Mayor Warren, Harry Bronson and others spoke. Evelyn Bailey presented the Shoulders To Stand On Lifetime Achievement Award to Sue Cowell.

Winners of the Parade awards were: Muther's Favorite for Best Float unit overall to incorporate the Parade theme: Tilt (runner up: Center for Disability Rights); Stonewall Award for the most imaginative depiction of the Parade theme by a not-for-profit Float unit: Rochester SAGE; Rainbow Award for the best for-profit business Float unit portraying Pride: WNY cast of Rocky Horror of Hoopla; Community Award for the not-for-profit Walking unit (with or without a vehicle) which best exhibits community Pride: Genesee Valley Trans Groups; Ruby

Slipper Award for The most imaginative depiction of Parade theme by a Walking unit (with or without a vehicle): United Church of Christ. The judges were Tasha Brooks (Miss Gay Rochester), Judge Karen Morris, KaeLyn Rich, Sean Thody, Serena Thody and Zackary Waffle.

Both the Festival and the free Picnic on July 19 in Genesee Valley Park went on successfully, under clear if humid skies. The Roc Pride 5 K run on July 19 was a special success. Photos pages 8-11.



Rochester marriage celebration... page 7

PHOTO: SUSAN JORDAN

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The Gay Alliance is publisher of *The Empty Closet*, New York State's oldest LGBTQ newspaper.

# Perspectives

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## The Empty Closet Editor

SUSAN JORDAN



### This moment in history

Pride 2015 was very special – maybe the most important Pride in history. Many LGBTQ communities celebrated joyfully on June 28, two days after the Supreme Court decision that changed everything.

Here in Rochester, we observed Pride last month, and our Pride was also special and joyful (photos pages 8-11). Of course we celebrated on June 26 as well, among the sculptures in front of the Bachelor Forum (photos page 7), where tears, smiles and champagne flowed freely (thanks, Peter!).

Our families, marriages and love are real. They always were, but now society affirms that.

The bigots and conservative extremists are, as usual, full of anger and hate. But their prejudices are now relegated to the trash bin of history. In June 2015, the rainbow flag went up and the Confederate flag, long-time symbol of racism and intolerance, came down.

LGBTQ Americans owe a debt of gratitude to the activists of the past 40 years, who weren't afraid to stand up for equal rights, even when that put them in danger. Huge thanks go to Jim Obergefell and the other SCOTUS plaintiffs, to Mary Bonauto and all the attorneys, to groups like Freedom to Marry and Marriage Equality USA, and to our straight allies.

Thanks also to Rochester's dedicated marriage equality activists, including Anne Tischer and Bess Watts, who married symbolically in 2004.

When the Court's decision was announced on June 26, several national organizations reminded us that the struggle isn't over. While it might have been nice to have just one day to feel only joy, they did have a point. LGBTQ Americans, like all Americans, must still confront issues of "religious freedom" discrimination (next: the national LGBTQ rights bill), racism, sexism, poverty and the control of our democracy by the "entitled" elite. Anti-gay states must comply with federal law regarding our marriages and families. We must challenge the extremist Right's hate rhetoric that incites terrorist violence against us.

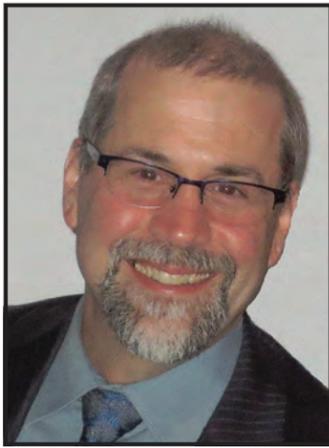
And then there's the fact that the "T" in "LGBTQ" represents a huge number of citizens who still do not have basic civil rights. In New York State, the Republican-dominated Senate refused for the eighth year to allow GENDA onto the floor for a vote. So much for democracy! The struggle for equal rights for trans, gender variant and inter-sex Americans continues.

Conservatives depict all trans women as heterosexual male Frankenstein monsters in skirts, eager to rape little girls in bathrooms. This is as valid as Nazi propaganda against Jews, or KKK propaganda against African Americans. Sadly, transphobia also exists within the LGB community, although trans people have always been there, often taking the lead, as at the Stonewall Rebellion. This reporter has met several lesbian feminists in their 60s or 70s who would have also claimed a gender variant identity 40 years ago, if that option had existed.

As we learn more about both sexual orientation and gender identity, all of us – LGBTQ and straight – need to keep growing, and working together to gain and guard our civil rights. ■

## Gay Alliance Executive Director

SCOTT FEARING



### Marriage joy overshadowed by New York shame

As supporters of marriage equality were celebrating in the streets in Rochester and through out the nation, those who pay attention to the crazy world of New York politics should have been equally upset.

The New York legislative session again ended without the passage of the Gender Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA). Every year since 2007, the NY State Assembly has voted to pass GENDA, but Republican members of the New York State Senate have refused to even allow the bill to come to the floor for a vote; it dies in committee year after year.

Passing GENDA is a no-brainer. The legislation would ensure basic human rights protections for members of the Trans communities. Simply, if GENDA was enacted, you could no longer be fired for being Trans in New York State. Further, you could not be denied dinner in a restaurant or refused a hotel room. I am heartbroken that my transgender family members, friends, neighbors and even Trans celebrities do not have these basic protections and are at risk of heinous mistreatment.

2015 and GENDA has still not passed.

People from Rochester have poured money into efforts in

Albany hoping to help, they have given countless hours to cajole politicians in Albany to do the right thing. For what?

"Wait until next year." Times nine.

Rochester Trans community activist JoAnne Metzler sent an email following the SCOTUS marriage ruling with a subject line that says it best: "Great News! Bad news! AND I'm happy AND I'm angry."

Every New York gay, lesbian and bi person who celebrated the SCOTUS decision should feel JoAnne's anger. Her anger should be their anger. Politicians in Albany have done us ALL an injustice when they allowed the legislature to go on summer vacation, while our fellow LGBTQ community members were left without basic human rights protections.

In 2003 when NYS passed SONDA (Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act), which provided basic human rights protections for gays and lesbians, Trans people were, for the sake of the win, left out -- "tossed under the bus." We should be embarrassed that cisgendered gays benefited from this dismissal of the Trans community. Beyond a massive mea culpa, we need to make Trans equality a focus of our conversations.

It is time that LGB and allied people get over their own transphobia. We need to acknowledge what we have in common. Let us create community, something that often evades us. No matter our identity, we still face challenges living out, honest, authentic lives. Why are we so quick to turn on each other, instead of offering understanding, comfort, support and assistance?

Most Trans New Yorkers were pleased to see marriage equality, but, when the celebration is over and they go back to work, they can be legally fired.

The Gay Alliance was created in 1973 in an attempt to build an alliance between our LGBTQ communities. Our identities can still divide or unify us. To be strong and effective, we need each other. ■

## THANK YOU

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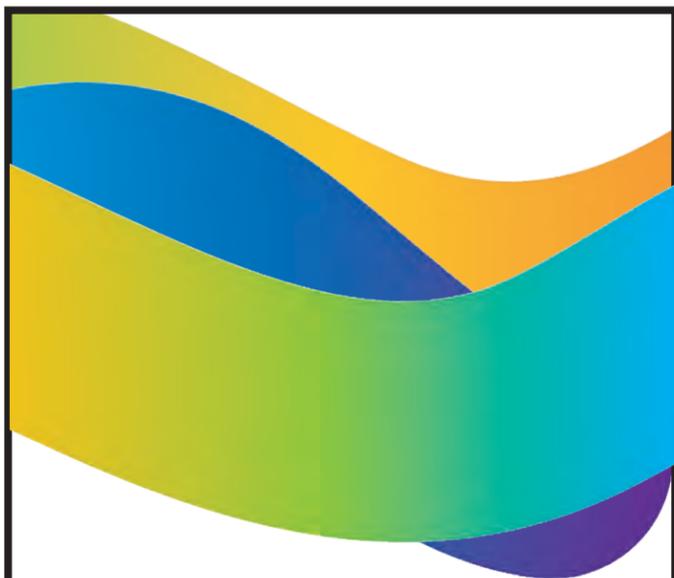
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# NewsFronts

## LOCAL AND STATE



At the forum: L-R: Scott Fearing, Cody Gardner, Pamela Barres, Bess Watts, Matt Haag. Photo: Thomas J. Morrissey

### Young Democrats forum looks at what's next for LGBTQ community

By Susan Jordan

Aaron Gallant is Legislative Analyst for NYS Assembly member Harry Bronson. He is also a member of the Young Democrats board and organized the July 2 forum, which discussed what's coming next for the LGBTQ community, after the marriage equality victory.

Gallant told *The Empty Closet*, "I was president of the Young Democrats last year and now I'm the treasurer. Everybody on the board takes different roles at different times. Our education committee chair Justin Kwasa approached me about doing a community discussion and I thought it was a great idea.

"I listened to the Supreme Court oral arguments and decided to schedule the forum for after the ruling was announced. I sensed some complacency among a lot of us in the community, which is natural after such a long, hard fight. So I wanted to focus on what comes next."

Some audience members said they would have preferred a panel made up entirely of people in their 20s; only Cody Gardner of the Victory Alliance was of that generation. Gallant commented, "I thought a lot about who I wanted to have on the panel. Important as it was to have young panelists, I thought it was also important to have activists who have been around and who know how to win – and important also to have people of different backgrounds. Bess Watts of *Pride at Work*, for instance, spoke about the connections between economic equality and gender identity/sexual orientation discrimination. Pam Barres has been a trans movement leader for many years."

So what is next? Gallant said, "The biggest conclusion I drew, at the state level, was that what comes next is GENDA. It's not the only issue but it needs to be at the center. As important as the marriage equality movement was, it wasn't the end of the line. There are gender variant brothers and sisters across the state who have no civil rights."

The Young Democrats, for ages 16-35 and with a membership of around 100, will be active in 2016. Gallant said, "Elections have consequences, and we at Young Democrats are ready to take that fight all the way."

He added, "Then there's HIV -- the battle to end the epidemic is another major issue in New York. There's the Cuomo 2020 goal – whether that's realistic is another thing, but the struggle includes getting rid of using condoms as evidence of prostitution and other antiquated laws. We need to bring the HIV discussion into 2015.

"At the federal level, there's ENDA and other anti discrimination legislation where we've made progress, but we need a national anti-discrimination protection law (EC: Now under way). Some legal analysts I've heard say we can't even be complacent about marriage equality. We can't underestimate our opponents or their cleverness in poking as many holes as they can in that decision."

Some felt that the forum was another instance of preaching to the choir. Aaron Gallant responded, "That's legitimate and I intended that, really. We've talked to people who were on the fence and would agree with most liberal issues but aren't informed about gender identity or sexual orientation. I wanted this discussion to be within the LGBTQ community and our allies who haven't been involved in the struggle but want to be going forward. The point was to talk within the family and really discuss where we are and how we go forward. I think we need to continue pressure on the political system and support candidates who will support our community."

He summed up, "Just don't be complacent. This is a multi-generational struggle. America takes a big leap forward and then a small step back. Let's celebrate – but keep in mind the importance of never giving up."

### NYC homeless youth shelter to open Bea Arthur Residence

Via press release:

On July 20, a groundbreaking ceremony took place for the Bea Arthur Residence, an 18-bed residence for homeless LGBT youth operated by the Ali Forney Center.

In 2012 the New York City Council and the Manhattan Borough President awarded \$3,300,000 for the renovation of a long vacant building owned by the New York City Department of Housing and Preservation Development. The building has now been turned over to the Ali Forney Center in partnership with Cooper

Square Committee, and renovations are beginning this month. It is anticipated that the building will begin to provide housing by the end of 2016.

The brilliant actress and "Golden Girl" Bea Arthur gave one of her final public performances as a benefit for the Ali Forney Center in 2005. She was very upset to learn that hundreds of thousands of LGBT teens were rejected by their families, and driven to homelessness. She said that she would do anything in her power to help these teens.

When she died in 2009 the Ali Forney Center learned that she had bequeathed \$300,000 to them in her will. At that time, Carl Siciliano, the Executive Director of the Ali Forney Center, pledged that the first building they owned would be named in her memory.

The groundbreaking was attended by state and city political leaders and by the staff and clients of the Ali Forney Center.

-JoeMyGod.com

### RIT symposium features Rochester trans community research on Aug. 7

Ben Eshleman will be presenting his research on the history of Rochester's transgender community at RIT's Undergraduate Research Symposium on Aug. 7.

His presentation is titled "Rochester Trans Oral History Project: Examining the suppression and resurgence of Rochester's transgender community through the 1980s to present." Continuing a project started in 2014, this research seeks to document and preserve the history of Rochester's transgender community by collecting oral histories from activists, advocates, and allies.

Though visible and thriving during the 1970s, the transgender community seems to disappear from queer spaces in the 1980s, only to resurge by the start of the new millennium. Eshleman's research explores factors that may have caused the community's suppression and examines its redevelopment and evolution into the modern transgender community.

The symposium will be held on RIT's main campus in Henrietta, and Eshleman's presentation will be included in the Social Sciences and Humanities session. Additional information on the symposium and schedule of presentations can be found at [rit.edu/research/symposium](http://rit.edu/research/symposium).

### NYS Education Dept. addresses harassment of trans students

The New York State Education Department on July 20 released official guidance for school districts across the state, a major step toward ensuring that transgender and gender nonconforming youth can access their right to an education.

The announcement is the result of years of advocacy by transgender advocates and supporters across the state, most recently a New York Civil Liberties Union report that documented the pervasive harassment faced by transgender students and prompted Governor Cuomo to demand the Education Department take immediate action to address the concern.

"We applaud the State Education Department for providing guidance so every school in the state knows how to follow the law and protect the rights of transgender and gender nonconforming youth," said NYCLU Executive Director Donna Lieberman. "Too many New York youth have faced relentless harassment and discrimination in the schools that should have nurtured them just for being who they are. We look forward to working with the state to ensure that transgender students have the same rights to an education that all kids are entitled to in New York."

The new policy clearly explains the law for school districts and directs them on how to create a supportive school environment. The guidance tells all New York public school districts they must respect the names and gender pronouns of transgender youth, protect their privacy with regard to student records, provide all students with access to restrooms and locker rooms that correspond with their gender identity, promote training and education about gender identity issues, and allow transgender and gender nonconforming students the opportunity to participate in gender-segregated activities that correspond with their gender identity.

In June, the NYCLU released a report documenting the devastating anti-transgender discrimination that has persisted since the passage of the Dignity for All Students Act five years ago, state civil rights legislation that was supposed to protect all public school students from bullying and harassment and explicitly prohibits discrimination based

on actual or perceived gender, including gender identity and gender expression. Unfortunately, until today the State Education Department failed to provide schools with guidance on how to apply the law to transgender youth. As a result, communities large and small across the state have created their own ad-hoc policies – most of which are insufficient, illegal and deeply damaging to transgender and gender nonconforming youth.

The report shows that incidents of harassment involving gender stereotypes (i.e., harassment related to a student's sex, gender or sexual orientation) were the most commonly reported incidents of harassment in public schools. During the 2012-13 school year, New York schools reported 24,478 incidents of harassment under the Dignity Act, 19 percent of which were related to gender stereotypes.

Schools' failure to follow the law does unthinkable damage to transgender students, who are among the most vulnerable of New York's youth. One national study found that a staggering 41 percent of transgender people have attempted suicide at least once. Virtually all transgender students featured in the NYCLU's report have asked to leave school or have otherwise disengaged from the school community.

One day after the report was released, Governor Cuomo wrote a letter to the State Education Department expressing his "outrage" and calling the pervasive discrimination faced by transgender students in public schools "completely unacceptable, dangerous . . . and in complete contradiction to the values of our great state." He demanded it produce a plan of action within seven business days, and conduct a review of schools' full compliance with the Dignity Act within three weeks.

The NYCLU and advocates across the state have been working closely with the State Education Department to finalize this guidance, urging it to adopt a model policy developed by the Empire Justice Center, Empire State Pride Agenda and the NYCLU, with contributions and support from organizations across the state.

The guidance issued July 20 by the Education Department mirrors the recommendations put forth in the model policy, including telling all schools to: Respect the preferred names and gender pronouns of students; Respect students' right to privacy and confidentiality in regards to maintenance of student records; Provide all students with access to restrooms and locker rooms that correspond with their gender identity, and provide private bathrooms and changing spaces to all students who desire additional privacy (although private facilities should never be forced upon any student), and provide transgender students the same opportunities to participate in gender-segregated activities as other students; Encourage the regular training of all adults working in schools to ensure they understand the range of gender identities and expressions and know what they must do to create a supportive environment for all students and finally, provide resources for school faculty

(Education continues page 6)

# NewsFronts

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL



### 1.5 million attend Madrid Pride

Last Month an estimated 1.5M attended Madrid Pride, which fell on the tenth anniversary of same-sex marriage in Spain.

The country's parliament and senate passed the law on June 30, 2005, with it coming into force three days later on July 3. Two weeks later, on July 11, Spain's first ever same-sex wedding took place when couple Emilio Menéndez and Carlos Baturín, who had been together for 30 years, married in Madrid.

The law made Spain only the third country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage, after the Netherlands and Belgium and 17 days ahead of Canada. Despite Spain's reputation as a traditionalist and religious country, 66 percent of Spaniards supported the law at the time, even amid protests from the Roman Catholic Church that it would "devalue marriage".

The law was strongly opposed by the opposition Popular Party. When conservative Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy took office in 2011, he professed his opposition to same-sex marriage, but said he would wait and see what the country's Constitutional Court would rule on the issue. The law was upheld by the court, with eight supporting votes and three against. The conservative government said it would abide by the ruling and the law would not be repealed.

Madrid will host World Pride 2017.

-JoeMyGod.com

### Poll: Nearly 70 percent of Americans support gay rights legislation

By Lydia Wheeler on *The Advocate*

Nearly 70 percent of Americans favor laws that protect gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people from discrimination in workplaces, housing and public accommodations, a number that includes nearly a quarter of Americans who oppose same-sex marriage, according to a poll the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) released July 1.

The PRRI said 75 percent of Americans incorrectly believe workplace nondiscrimination laws are already on the books.

The poll found 47 percent of Americans favor both same-sex marriage and nondiscrimination laws. Further, eight percent of Americans are in favor only of same-sex marriage but not nondiscrimination laws, and 23 percent of Americans support nondiscrimination laws but oppose gay marriage.

According to the poll, 24 percent of white evangelical Protestants support both same-sex marriage and nondiscrimination laws, with 36 percent supporting just nondiscrimination laws.

At 71 percent support, religiously-unaffiliated Americans are more likely than Americans overall, to favor both same-sex marriage and nondiscrimination laws — nearly three-times as likely as white evangelical Protestants.

### Attorney General announces full marriage benefits nationwide

"Following the Supreme Court's historic decision in Obergefell that every couple has the same right to participate in the institution of marriage, whether the partners are of the same-sex or opposite sexes, I directed Justice Department staff to work with the agencies to ensure that the ruling be given full effect across the federal government.

"Thanks to their leadership and the quick work of the Social Security Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs, today I am proud to announce that the critical programs for veterans and elderly and disabled Americans, which previously could not give effect to the marriages of couples living in states that did not recognize those marriages, will now provide federal recognition for all marriages nationwide. The agencies are currently working towards providing guidance to implement this change in law.

"Just over a year ago, Attorney General Holder announced that agencies across the federal government had implemented the Supreme Court's Windsor decision by treating married same-sex couples the same as married opposite-sex couples to the greatest extent possible under the law as it then stood. With the Supreme Court's new ruling that the Constitution requires marriage equality, we have now taken the further step of ensuring that all federal benefits will be available equally to married couples in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the US Territories. The department will continue to work across the administration to fulfill our commitment to equal treatment for all Americans, including equal access to the benefits of marriage that the Obergefell decision guarantees."

- Attorney General Loretta Lynch, via White House press release on July 8

### Marriage equality comes to Puerto Rico

The US Supreme Court in June ruled that same-sex marriage is a constitutional right in all 50 states — but the ruling did not immediately apply in Puerto Rico, which has a population of 3.5 million.

Puerto Rico Governor Alejandro Garcia Padilla had indicated that the territory will follow suit on same-sex marriage — and on July 9 the First Circuit Court of Appeals struck down its marriage ban.

A panel of three judges overturned a previous ruling upholding the ban, finding that following the US-wide ruling in Obergefell v Hodges, Puerto Rico must also adopt same-sex marriage.

District Judge Juan Perez-Gimenez was just one of two district judges to uphold a same-sex marriage ban in 2014.

In his ruling, Judge Perez-Gimenez cited a ruling from 1972 against same-sex marriage — which almost all other judges in the country agreed had been rendered

obsolete by subsequent case law — and claimed, "Recent affirmances of same-gender marriage seem to suffer from a peculiar inability to recall the principles embodied in existing marriage law."

Same-sex weddings were expected to begin in Puerto Rico on July 15.

-pinknews.uk

### US Episcopal Church votes on July 1 for same sex weddings

The US Episcopal Church voted overwhelmingly on July 1 to allow religious weddings for same-sex couples, just days after the U.S. Supreme Court legalized gay marriage nationwide.

The Episcopal News Service reported that the House of Deputies concurred with the House of Bishops' approval the day before of a canonical change and authorizing two new marriage rites with language allowing them to be used by same-sex or opposite-sex couples.

On June 30, the House of Bishops approved the resolution to eliminate language defining marriage as between a man and a woman, by a vote of 129-26 with five abstaining.

The House of Deputies, the main voting body of clergy and laypersons at the convention, on July 1 voted 173-27, with 12 abstaining.

Clergy can however decline to perform the ceremonies.

The 78th Episcopal General Convention was held in Salt Lake City.

The US Episcopal Church, which is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, has about two million members.

It became in 2012 the largest US religious denomination to approve a liturgy for clergy to use in blessing same-sex unions, including gay marriages in states where they were already legal.

In 2003, the church elected its first openly gay bishop Gene Robinson, who has since retired.

-gaystarnews.com

### Nevada is 10th state to ban discrimination in state trans health insurance plans

Nevada has become the 10th state, in addition to the District of Columbia, to prohibit discriminatory transgender exclusions in state-regulated health insurance plans.

Nevada joins a national trend of state agencies getting rid of health exclusions for transgender people. States include California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, Vermont, Washington State, and DC as well as the federal Medicare program. This announcement follows the announcement by the Office of Personnel Management that health insurance plans for federal employees may no longer maintain blanket exclusions for transi-



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tion-related care.

The bulletin, which went to all health insurance carriers, prohibits the “denial, exclusion, or limitation of benefits relating to coverage of medically necessary health care services on the basis of sex as it related to gender identity or expression. Accordingly, a carrier may not deny, exclude or limit benefits for medically necessary health care services if the medically necessary health care would be provided at current standards of care to another covered person without regard to their gender identity or expression”.

The Nevada Department of Business and Industry Division of Insurance utilized the state statute that prohibits discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation in public accommodations to prohibit transition related health-care exclusions.

“NCTE applauds Nevada Health for taking this necessary step in making sure that medically necessary transition related healthcare is accessible to transgender people,” NCTE said. “We urge people in Nevada to contact their insurance plan to ask about changes in coverage in light of this clarification of the law, and to contact trans-friendly legal organizations if they are denied transition-related care recommended by their provider. We will continue working with advocates across the country to make sure that no health insurance plan can have arbitrary exclusions against transition related care.”

—National Center for Trans Equality (NCTE)

## Caitlyn Jenner gets Arthur Ashe Courage Award, speaks up for trans youth

By Darren Wee on [gaystarnews.com](#)

Caitlyn Jenner delivered a powerful 10-minute speech at ESPY Awards on 15 July in Los Angeles that brought the former Olympian to tears.

Jenner, 65, was given a standing ovation as she walked on stage to accept the Arthur Ashe Courage Award (presented by Abby Wambach) in what was her first major public appearance as a transgender woman.

After pleading with the fashion police to go easy on her and giving a shout out to the US women’s soccer team (“Ladies, you clean up very well”), Jenner assumed a more serious tone.

The reality TV star said until a few months ago, she had never met another transgender person.

“I dealt with my situation on my own in private and that turned this journey into an already incredible education,” she said.

“It’s been eye-opening, inspiring, but also frightening.”

But Jenner said that journey is even more frightening for youths.

“All across this country, right now, all across the world, at this very moment, there are young people coming to terms with being transgender,” she said.

“They’re getting bullied, they’re getting beaten up, they’re getting murdered and they’re committing suicide.”

She then paid tribute to transgender teenagers Mercedes Williamson, who was murdered in Alabama in June, and Sam Taub, who died by suicide in Michigan in April.

Jenner said her transition had “been harder on me than anything I could ever imagine.”

“For that reason alone, trans people deserve something vital,” she said.

“They deserve your respect. And from that respect, come a more compassionate community, a more empathetic society and a better world for all of us.”

## Boy Scouts lift ban on gay, bi adult leaders

By *Trudy Ring on The Advocate*

The Boy Scouts of America has moved one step closer to ending the group’s ban on gay adults serving as employees or volunteers, with the national executive committee approving a resolution to lift the ban.

The resolution, OK’d unanimously July 10, required ratification from the national executive board, the BSA’s governing body, which considered it July 27 and ratified it. It went into effect immediately, reports Scouts for Equality, an organization that has advocated for an end to the ban.

At the BSA’s national meeting in May, its president, former Defense Secretary Robert Gates, had said the ban must end “sooner rather than later.” The group lifted its ban on gay and bisexual youth members at the beginning of 2014, but the prohibition on gay and bi adults remained.

A statement released by the BSA mentions “the rapid changes in society and increasing legal challenges at the federal, state, and local levels.” The group could face lawsuits in states with gay-inclusive nondiscrimination laws if the policy continues, and Gates has acknowledged that the policy has become increasingly difficult to defend in court, given advances in gay rights laws.

While lifting the across-the-board ban on gay and bisexual adults in scouting, the resolution does “allow each individual troop or unit to determine its own policy regarding the eligibility of openly gay or bisexual scoutmasters or other adult leaders,” according to Scouts for Equality’s summary. This means that church-sponsored troops, for instance, would not have to allow gay leaders.

It also bars regional governing councils or nontroop institutions, such as Boy Scout camps, from discriminating against employees and volunteers based on sexual orientation, and allows previously removed leaders to reapply for their positions.

Zach Wahls, executive director of Scouts for Equality, issued a statement praising the move. “For decades, the Boy Scouts of America’s ban on gay adults has



stood as a towering example of explicit, institutional homophobia in one of America’s most important and recognizable civic organizations,” said Wahls, an Eagle Scout and the son of two mothers. “While this policy change is not perfect — BSA’s religious chartering partners will be allowed to continue to discriminate against gay adults — it is difficult to overstate the importance of today’s announcement.”

The Human Rights Campaign also saw the resolution as progress but denounced the religious exemption. “The vote by the executive committee to recommend that gay, lesbian and bisexual adults be allowed to work and volunteer for the Boy Scouts is a welcome step toward erasing a stain on one of our nation’s most storied organizations,” HRC President Chad Griffin said in a prepared statement. “But writing in an exemption for troops organized by religious organizations undermines the potentially historic nature of today’s vote. As we have said countless times, half measures are unacceptable and discriminatory exemptions have no place in the Boy Scouts. It’s long overdue that BSA leaders demonstrate true leadership and embrace a full national policy of inclusion that does not discriminate against anyone because of who they are.”

## Pentagon to end ban on transgender service

On July 13, senior U.S. officials at the Pentagon told the Associated Press (AP) they are finalizing plans to lift the ban on transgender military service, “with the goal of formally ending one of the last gender or sexually-based barriers to military service.” The American Military

Partner Association, the nation’s largest organization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) military families, praised the news.

“We are thrilled the Department of Defense will finally be taking the necessary steps to allow our transgender service members to serve openly and honestly,” said AMPA President Ashley Broadway-Mack. “We look forward in anticipation to the announcement this week and being able to review the process and implementation.”

According to the AP report, the services “would have six months to assess the impact of the change and work out the details.”

In March of this year, AMPA launched an unprecedented joint report with the Transgender American Veterans Association (TAVA) highlighting the tremendous harm the outdated regulations inflict on military families. The report notes, “No one should be forced to choose between defending the country they love and being true to their authentic self. The outdated regulations serve no purpose and only dehumanize and prevent qualified and capable individuals from enlisting and serving. The ban perpetuates trauma to all those involved, both the service member and their family.”

## National Coalition for Transgender Equality

Executive Director of the NCTE Mara Keisling released the following statement: “Today’s Department of Defense announcement is a positive sign that they understand that open trans military service is desirable and inevitable. The Pentagon’s rickety system of discrimination against us is falling apart. It is in every-

(Pentagon continues page 6)



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## LOCAL AND STATE

(Education continued from page 3)

to use to educate themselves and their students.

"The steps taken today by the State Education Department are a victory for the transgender and gender nonconforming students who braved speaking out about the discrimination and harassment that has pushed many of them out of school," said NYCLU Lead Organizer Lauren Frederico, an author of the report. "New York schools should be a haven for all students. Now that schools are clearly on notice on how to follow the law, we are hopeful that today's announcement will be a turning point for transgender students in New York."

"Empire Justice Center is proud to have worked closely with NYSED and our partner advocates to develop New York's gender-inclusive guidance document, a crucial new resource that will help reduce gender-based discrimination and harassment in our state's schools," said Julia Sáenz, the Hanna S. Cohn Equal Justice Fellow at Empire Justice Center's LGBT Rights Project in Rochester. "This guidance will be particularly important for transgender and gender nonconforming students in Upstate New York where we provide services, especially the most rural counties, where there are very few supportive services for this population."

"Empire State Pride Agenda is proud to have worked in collaboration with other advocates and the New York State Department of Education to create these new guidelines, which will offer our schools a much-needed map pointing the way toward a safe and supportive educational environment for transgender students, and will help schools provide those students with the same educational opportunities as every other child," said Eoghann Renfroe, Empire State Pride Agenda manager of transgender education and advocacy. "At a time in which an epidemic of transgender teen suicide is sweeping the nation, a safe educational environment doesn't only ensure kids a chance to learn – it absolutely saves lives. As coordinator of the LGBT Health and Human Services Network, the Pride Agenda has extensive firsthand knowledge of the struggle students and schools alike have had in trying to address the needs of transgender students without a clear, statewide policy, because Network organizations have been absolutely overwhelmed with requests for help, training and guidance. We look forward to working with our partners and stakeholders to take the next steps to ensure that every child in New York has access to a safe, quality education." ■

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

(Pentagon from page 5)

one's interest that the 15,000 or so currently serving trans people be allowed to serve openly and honorably. The Pentagon knows, as we do, how this review is going to end. The National Center for Transgender Equality urges the Department of Defense to quickly end the discriminatory policy and allow trans people to serve openly and with dignity."

### Palm Center

Palm Center director Aaron Belkin offered the following statement: "The AP report is certainly welcome news, but we need to know full details, based on an official announcement by the Department of Defense, before reaching conclusions. I hope that any review process is informed by the social science research that addresses how to implement inclusive policy, as well as lessons of 18 foreign militaries that have lifted their bans on transgender personnel."

Last year, the Palm Center released a study, "Report of the Planning Commission on Transgender Military Service,"

that found that allowing transgender personnel to serve in the military "is administratively feasible and neither excessively complex nor burdensome." The authors of that study, who included three retired General Officers as well as leading scholars and experts, provided a detailed roadmap for the policy change and concluded that implementation could proceed immediately and will be successful in its execution.

### SPARTA

SPARTA, one of the leading advocates for transgender military service, hailed the Associated Press report that the Secretary of Defense will commission a Working Group to revise policies so that transgender service members may serve openly rather than in silence. The Working Group is scheduled to complete its task in six months.

"This is a tribute to the honorable military service of thousands of transgender Americans. There is much more to do, but the Secretary's clear intent to treat transgender soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines with the same dignity and on equal footing with other service members aligns with the core values of our Armed Forces," said Allyson Robinson, Army veteran and SPARTA Director of Policy. "We stand ready to provide resources to the Working Group for the regulations changes required to take care of all the troops."

"Six months is more than enough time to hammer out the details. This isn't new ground," continued Robinson. "A number of our military allies deploy transgender troops alongside American forces downrange, as do DOD contractors. Police and fire departments have managed transgender inclusion. I'm confident that our military leaders can handle this as smoothly as the repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell.'"

Transgender service members who belong to SPARTA had these reactions.

"I've always put the Air Force and my job first, and my commanders have treated me with dignity and respect," said Sr. Airman Logan Ireland. "I am grateful that there will be one clear policy so that others like me will be able to continue to serve with pride."

Airman Ireland recently attended the White House Pride Reception with his fiancée, Army Corporal Laila Villanueva, also transgender. He was allowed to attend in male uniform, a departure from current Air Force policy.

"My leaders have operated on the basis that how I do my job is what matters," echoed Army Staff Sergeant Patricia King, an infantry soldier stationed in Colorado Springs. "But until now, the policies haven't been in place to provide me or my unit the support we need, so we've improvised. This action would put the right process in motion, to give us clear guidance so I can keep doing my job, and taking care of my soldiers."

"While some people don't understand, many of my fellow soldiers have been supportive," said Army Captain Jennifer Peace, a transgender woman serving in a Stryker Brigade Combat Team. "This change allows me to continue to do my job without the additional burden of pretending I'm someone I'm not. And that makes me a better officer and leader."

### ACLU

Joshua Block, senior staff attorney in the ACLU's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and HIV Project stated, "Trans people are willing and able to serve their country, and should be able to do so while remaining true to who they are. The Pentagon announcement confirms what we have known for a long time: outdated military regulations, which automatically label trans service members as medically unfit for duty, have no basis in reality. Over the past year, service branches have allowed some individuals to serve openly without risking immediate separation, but the regulations on the books keep those service members and their commanders in a constant state of administrative limbo. Everyone has been waiting for senior officials to provide clear

(Pentagon continues page 12)

# Interview

## 2015 Pride Grand Marshal John White

*John White was unable to attend the Pride celebrations because he had to be out of state, with a family member who had been taken seriously ill. Earlier in July he spoke with Empty Closet reporter Adam Young...*

By Adam Young

Stepping up to the counter at Equal=Grounds usually involves more than just reciting your order. There is usually friendly banter with the barista that accompanies the coffee and pastries.

John White opened Equal=Grounds Coffee House on South Avenue with his business partner, NYS Assemblymember Harry B. Bronson, nine years ago. Prior to establishing Equal Grounds, the two owned the Pride Connection store. However, White always wanted to establish a coffee shop where couples and friends in the LGBT community could hang out and feel comfortable showing affection for each other, without fear of backlash.

"I think generally that the attitude here from both the customers and the employees is one that's like a second home," White said. "You can feel like you're in a very family-oriented, comfortable, safe place."

The atmosphere, complete with snarky bumper stickers scolding texting drivers and a shelf lined with board games, isn't the only source of pride White feels in the business. As a farmer himself, he makes sure the ingredients used are all fresh and local. The smoothies are made from 100 percent fruit. The desserts are locally made. The locally roasted coffee beans are brewed and prepared using a guarded process. "I wouldn't serve anything that

I wasn't especially proud of," White said.

White was asked to be Pride Grand Marshal after taking a coffee order in his shop. Although initially hesitant, he called back later that same day and said he would be honored to fill the role. White noted the stature of past Pride Grand Marshals and feels humble about taking on the job. "I'll try and behave myself and be worthy of the honor," he joked.

When White first began attending Pride years ago, he thought it was mainly about finally being able to be out in public and freely "on display" as a gay man. Now, he thinks the event is more integrated into society as an increasingly familiar summer event. He notes Pride now feels like a celebration of the progress the LGBT community has made, particularly on the heels of the Supreme Court's June 26 decision that LGBT couples have the right to marry in all 50 states.

If a closeted person is feeling unsure about going to Pride, White recommends attending the festivities as an ideal "test run" to meet other LGBT people, who may have families and therefore not appear so isolated from the mainstream. "It's a great springboard to get to where you're comfortable being yourself," White said.

As a self-described "sci-fi nerd," White loves this year's theme: "May the Pride Be With You!" He's especially fond of Star Trek, Star Wars, and The Chronicles of Riddick (though mostly for Vin Diesel). Being a bit of a social butterfly in his coffee house, White enjoys returning home to the tranquility of his farm and playing with his dogs. "It's my time to re-energize and get ready for tomorrow," White said. ■

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# Rochester celebrates marriage equality ruling on June 26

By Susan Jordan

It was a historic moment. All over the country on June 26, hundreds of thousands of LGBTQ Americans celebrated the Supreme Court's ruling that our marriages and families must be recognized. In Rochester, around 200 people of all ages, identities and backgrounds celebrated among the symbolic sculptures in front of the Bachelor Forum.

The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus sang "America the Beautiful" and "Going to the Chapel" and the crowd sang along and then made the pledge of allegiance.

Speakers included marriage equality activists Todd Plank and Anne Tischer, KaeLyn Rich of the NYCLU, NYS Assembly member Harry Bronson, Bruce Smail of The MOCHA Project, Emily Henninger of TAGR and attorney Jennifer Gravitz. Harry Bronson talked about the joyfulness of the day and noted that "religious liberty" is the Right's new excuse for homophobic discrimination. Gay Alliance Executive Director Scott Fearing reminded everyone, "Our work isn't over."



The community rallied at the Bachelor Forum on June 26. All photos this page: Susan Jordan



Judy Cranston and Sue Cowell.



Harry Bronson (with interpreter Cat Hardesty).



Anne Tischer and Bruce Smail.



The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus.



Joey G. Di Puma and Sherlea Dony.



Alan Davidson.



# Rochester Pride 2015



Sue Cowell receives the Lifetime Achievement Award at the flag ceremony on July 17. Above, Sue, center, with (L-R) RPD Chief Michael Ciminelli, Fire Chief John Schreiber, City Council members Elaine Spaul and Matt Haag, and Mayor Lovely Warren. Photo: Jill Frier



Thomas Warfield in the Pride Parade. Photo: Ove Overmyer CSEA



Rainbow Riders arrive at the Festival. Photos: Manuel Pena



Mrs. Kasha Davis with Paraders. Photo: Melora Miller



"Dangerous Situations" performed at the flag ceremony. Photo: Jill Frier



Miss Gay Pride Alicia Michaels and Mr. Gay Pride Alex Russ. Photo: Melora Miller



Photo: Jill Frier



The ImageOut float. Photo: Melora Miller



The award-winning Tilt float. Photo: Jill Frier



Thousands applauded as the Parade went by. Above: On Park Avenue. Photo: Jill Frier



Photo: Jill Frier



The Trans Alliance of Greater Rochester and Genesee Valley Gender Variants won the Community Award. Photo: Jill Frier



The Gay Alliance moving van float. Photo: Jill Frier



Rochester Pedal Tours. Photo: Jill Frier



A member of the Center for Disability Services unit. Photo: Jill Frier



Rep. Louise Slaughter. Photo: Jill Frier



Award-winning SAGE moon rock float. Photo: Jill Frier



Gay Alliance Pride volunteers. Photo: Melora Miller



Sanders for President supporters. Photo: Jill Frier



Rochester Kink Society. Photo: Jill Frier



Photo: Jill Frier



RAPA. Photo: Jill Frier



Mrs. Kasha Davis sashays down Park Ave. Photo: Jill Frier



The Pride Festival followed the Parade on July 18. Several thousand people filled Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park at Manhattan Square. Photo: Ove Overmyer CSEA



The Festival crowd. Photo: Thomas Ophardt



The Tilt float won the Muther's Favorite award. Photo: Ove Overmyer CSEA



PHOTO: JILL FRIER



Cazwell and Kasha at the Festival. Photo: Steve Levins



A new Pride event: The Roc Pride 5 K Run took place in Genesee Valley Park on July 19 before the Picnic. Photo: Jeanne Gainsburg



At the Flag Ceremony, L-R: Andreas Rau, LGBT Liaison to the Mayor's Office; NYS Rep. Harry Bronson; Mayor Lovely Warren. Photo: Susan Jordan



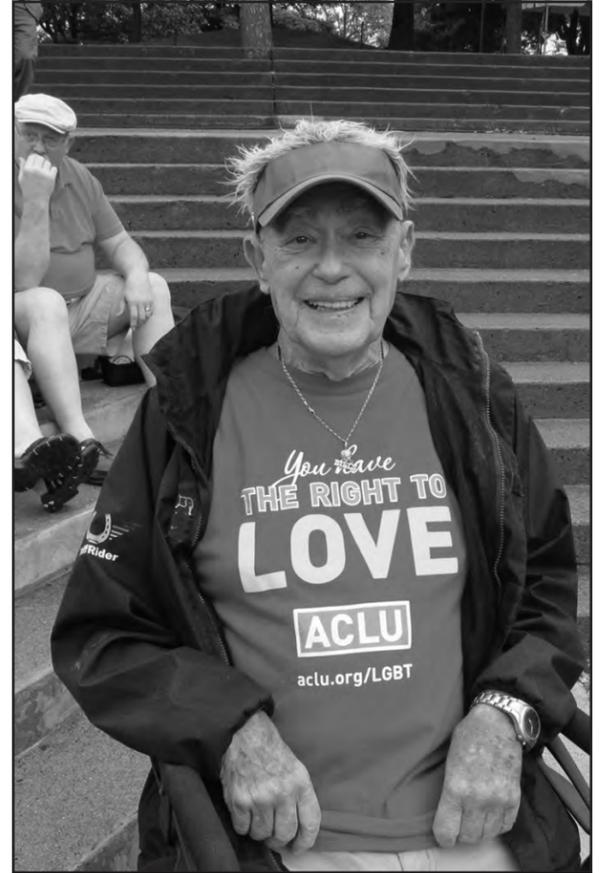
Dr. Bill Valenti and Timothy Cosgriff at the flag ceremony. Photo: Susan Jordan



Photo: Jill Frier



What's a parade without a marching band? Photo: Jill Frier



Alan Davidson in another of his amazing T-shirts. Photo: Susan Jordan



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## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

(Pentagon continued from page 11)

leadership on this issue. It sounds like that leadership is coming – and not a moment too soon.”

### American Military Partners

“We are thrilled with Secretary Carter’s announcement that the Department of Defense is finally taking steps to lift the ban on transgender military service,” said American Military Partners Association President Ashley Broadway-Mack. “All qualified Americans should be able to serve our great nation, regardless of their gender identity. Lifting the ban will dramatically improve the lives of our transgender service members and their families by allowing them to serve authentically.”

In March of this year, AMPA launched an unprecedented joint report with the Transgender American Veterans Association (TAVA) highlighting the tremendous harm the outdated regulations inflict on military families. The report notes, “No one should be forced to choose between defending the country they love and being true to their authentic self. The outdated regulations serve no purpose and only dehumanize and prevent qualified and capable individuals from enlisting and serving. The ban perpetuates trauma to all those involved, both the service member and their family.”

### The haters also chimed in:

“The Pentagon must answer whether this proposed policy makes our military more capable of performing its mission. The answer is a very clear and resounding no. This has everything to do with President Obama’s social agenda for the military, but it has nothing to do with enhancing military readiness. No new science has led to the Pentagon’s transgender study — only the politics of the Obama administration and the transgender movement. Allowing the Obama administra-

tion to use the military as a tool of social re-engineering will only undermine morale, unit cohesion, and readiness. It’s time that we allow the military to focus on its only job — defending our country against its enemies.”

- Family Research Council vice president Jerry Boykin

### Turkish group demands, kill gays on sight

LGBTI people must be “killed on sight” – that is the message displayed on new posters across the Turkish cities of Ankara and Istanbul.

The campaign, created by a group that calls itself Young Islamic Defense, demands the deaths of any gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex person. The chilling message is accompanied by a picture of proud people holding rainbow flags.

As translated by a GSN reader, the poster says: “May you see the doers of the dirty works of Lot, kill the perpetrator and the receiver on sight.”

According to Islamic tradition, Lot was the prophet of Sodom and Gomorrah who was commanded to stop the spread of “lustful and violent” acts. His messages were ignored by the people that lived there, the cities were destroyed and Lot’s wife was transformed into a pillar of salt as punishment.

Among some Muslim groups, this is seen as the Qur’an’s condemnation of homosexuality. When it was suggested that Turkey introduce same-sex marriage, former Interior Minister Efkar Ala said: “This is Lot’s people, the destruction of humanity.”

On the Young Islamic Defense’s website, they claim they organized the campaign as this year Pride coincided with the holy festival of Ramadan.

Muslim groups have opposed the posters, with local media quoting one as calling people to ignore the call to massacre a community.

“Islam is a religion of peace,” one said. “It is not a command to murder.”

At Pride in Istanbul this year, the parade was suddenly banned without any prior warning. When marchers attempted to gather, police fired water cannons, tear gas and rubber bullets.

Though homosexuality is not illegal in Turkey, the country is conservative and homophobia is widespread.

-gaystarnews.com

### Study of Twitter shows 80 percent approve of marriage equality

According to a new study by CrowdFlower [www.crowdfLOWER.com] — a data enrichment platform that collects, cleans, and labels big data — 52 percent of the 25,000 tweets posted to Twitter following the Supreme Court announcement cited “religious beliefs” as a primary cause of opposition.

Additionally, 19 percent of those tweeting cited “American values” and 15 percent cited “general disgust” as reasons for opposing.

Other notable findings in the “CrowdFlower ‘Same Sex Marriage’ Social Media Study” include:

**Support outweighed criticism 4 to 1:** Although overall Twitter sentiment was 55 percent positive, 32 percent neutral, and 13 percent negative, with neutral tweets excluded, positive opinions outweighed negative opinions 80 percent to 20 percent.

**Women were more supportive than men:**

While 86 percent of women and 72 percent of men were in favor of the Supreme Court ruling, 14 percent of women and 28 percent of men opposed it.

**The east coast had the most supporters:** Massachusetts (96 percent approval), New Jersey (87.3 percent approval), and New York (86.8 percent approval) were most vocal in their support of the Supreme

Court ruling.

**Southern states had the most opponents:** Although these three states still had more supporters than detractors, Alabama (50 percent disapproval), North Carolina (35.1 percent disapproval), and Virginia (31.5 percent disapproval) had the most naysayers.

**Overall sentiment was positive in all states:**

For all states with a significant volume of tweets, the majority of sentiment was positive.

For more details about the study methodology and results — including how CrowdFlower enables real-time sentiment analysis by cleaning and enriching big data sets — please see the official blog post: <http://www.crowdfLOWER.com/blog/same-sex-marriage>

### European Human Rights Court ruling on Italy sets precedent for 23 other countries

By Andrew Potts on gaystarnews.com

The European Court of Human Rights appears to have set a legal precedent in ruling that Italy had violated fundamental human rights by not providing legal recognition to gay and lesbian relationships that could now be used across the continent to force governments to provide some form of recognition to same-sex couples.

The court has jurisdiction over the 47 countries that have signed the European Convention on Human Rights and 23 of those still fail to provide any kind of legal status for same-sex relationships.

Those 23 countries include Eastern European anti-gay bastions such as Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey and they could now find themselves taken before the court and ordered to allow same-sex couples vehicles for registering their relationships.

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In its Italy ruling the court did not find that same-sex marriage was a human right in Europe – only that legal recognition of same-sex relationships was so it would be up to those 23 countries to choose what form any legal recognition took.

Those countries could decide on any mix of civil unions or registered partnerships short of marriage – or some form of ‘de facto’ relationship recognition where a couple are automatically deemed to be in a legal relationship after a period of cohabitation.

The verdict has been welcomed by international LGBTI rights group Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Global who said it was indicative of a growing momentum towards reform around the world.

“This ruling makes clear that same-sex partnerships deserve to be recognized, protected, and celebrated, and we urge all signatories to do so,” HRC Global deputy director Jean Freedberg said yesterday in reaction to the court’s verdict.

“From the victorious national referendum in Ireland in May to the historic ruling in the US Supreme Court last month, the momentum for equality reaches around the globe.

“By calling same-sex partnership recognition a right, the court has made clear to LGBT people across Europe that their unions matter and that their love is equal and should be treated as such.”

The verdict was also welcomed by the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) Europe Executive Board.

Paulo Corte-Real, Co-Chair of ILGA-Europe Executive Board, said:

“While the [court’s] judgment is only legally binding on Italy, it signals a significant evolution in the [court’s] approach which now affirms the right of same-sex unions to be officially recognized,” ILGA Europe board member Paulo Corte-Real said.

“The Court pointed out that 24 of the 47 Council of Europe member states provide same-sex couples with protection and recognition; this is a trend that simply cannot be ignored. It will provide LGBTI advocates in the remaining Council of Europe states who do not recognize same-sex couples with compelling arguments for protection.”

Joyce Hamilton, Co-Chair of ILGA-Europe Executive Board, added: “We really hope this judgment will speed up the process of legal recognition of same-sex unions not only in Italy, but also in other ... countries of the Council of Europe which currently do not legally acknowledge same-sex unions,” board member Joyce Hamilton said.

“We encourage politicians and law makers in those countries to reflect on the judgment and the realities of same-sex unions and to side with equality, respect and dignity for all couples.

The 47 countries under the court’s jurisdiction have a combined population of over 800 million people and the only European country that is outside its jurisdiction is Belarus.



Pastor Asher O'Callaghan (right) with Pastor Meaghan Rohrer.

## Evangelical Lutheran Church ordains out trans pastor in Denver

By Mitch Kellaway on *The Advocate*

Colorado pastor Asher O'Callaghan, the first out trans person ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's standard ordination process, says members of the church have been living examples of Christ-like love and acceptance.

Though a liberal-leaning Protestant sect, the ELCA had previously only ordained openly trans ministers outside of the regular process, according to the Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries Web site.

O'Callaghan, 28, who has been named pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Idaho Springs, Colo., told the site that he was “thrilled to be getting ordained to be a pastor and leader within the church I love.”

“The Church is changing,” O'Callaghan added. “There’s no need to choose between living life as your fullest self and belonging to a community of faith. For transgender people, this means that there are congregations who will affirm, respect, and celebrate our faith and our gender identities.”

O'Callaghan's new congregation, Zion Lutheran, is representative of some of the “revitalization” the ELCA has been going through, and has been an intentionally LGBT-friendly “Reconciling in Christ” congregation for several years, notes Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church, like many other denominations, has faced shrinking membership rolls for over a decade, and has tried more recently to cast a wider net to draw in younger congregants, single people, and families. In 2009, the ELCA voted to allow ordination of pastors in same-sex relationships, and in 2013 the church named its first openly gay bishop, Guy Erwin.

ELCA churches have benefited from practicing love for all of their congre-

gants, says Evangelical Lutheran Ministries executive director Amalia Vagts. “Asher is exactly the kind of person that our church needs. His gifts for ministry and his witness as a transgender person continue to proclaim a message that God welcomes, loves, and calls all people,” she explained.

O'Callaghan himself has shared touching stories of being accepted by the ELCA as a trans man, including having his gender transition “formally blessed” in a 2012 church naming ceremony, in stark contrast to the “other” fundamentalist church he says he grew up in.

O'Callaghan's ordination was performed July 5 at the House of All Saints and Sinners in Denver, an actively LGBT-welcoming church helmed by Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber. While O'Callaghan is the first out trans pastor to be ordained through the ELCA's standard process, he was welcomed into the fold by other pastors who came before him, including Rev. Megan Rohrer, the faith's first ordained trans pastor, who is also an author and award-winning filmmaker.

## Okla. gun group promotes event with rainbow flag target

Via *Oklahoma City's NBC affiliate:*

Organizers of an Oklahoma race are coming under fire for a picture they posted on their Facebook page. It appears they're using the LGBT rainbow flag as a shooting target. The post angered many people who took it as a direct threat to the LGBT community.

Event organizers say they did not expect the response they got and that it was all meant as a joke. The Oklahoma Run 'n Gun is a biathlon combining running and shooting. They promoted their race in Pawnee on July 18 on their Facebook page, but some are saying one post went too far.

“People got really offended and really upset and people were really feel-

ing threatened,” said Freedom Oklahoma Executive Director Troy Stevenson. The picture shows two men with rifles standing beside a rainbow flag and the caption reads “new high visibility targets on the 500 yard range.” “People took it as a threat, people felt very threatened,” said Stevenson.

Race organizers say the photo was meant to be “funny” and was posted because of complaints that less brightly-colored targets were difficult to see. Uh huh. The group has since taken down the image, saying that they are a “guns and fitness” organization, not a hate group.

-JoeMyGod.com

## Ruling could bring national protection for LGBT workers

By *Kyler Geoffroy on Towleroad.com*

A groundbreaking ruling by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regarding federal employees' claims and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 could provide nationwide protections for gay, lesbian, and bisexual workers across the country.

Buzzfeed reports:

The independent commission addressed the question of whether the ban on sex discrimination in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 bars anti-LGB discrimination in a complaint brought by a Florida-based air traffic control specialist against Transportation Sec. Anthony Foxx.

The ruling — issued without objection from any members of the five-person commission — applies to federal employees' claims directly, but it also applies to the entire EEOC, which includes its offices across the nation that take and investigate claims of discrimination in private employment. And, while only the Supreme Court could issue a definitive ruling on the interpretation, EEOC decisions are given significant deference by federal courts.

The ruling states that “sexual orientation is inherently a ‘sex-based consideration.’” In 2012, the EEOC ruled that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects transgender individuals from discrimination.

“Discrimination has no place in America, plain and simple,” said HRC President Chad Griffin in a statement. “This historic ruling by the EEOC makes clear they agree workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, much like gender identity, is illegal. While an important step, it also highlights the need for a comprehensive federal law permanently and clearly banning LGBT discrimination beyond employment to all areas of American life. Such a law would send a clear and permanent signal that discrimination against LGBT people will not be tolerated under any circumstances in this country, and we remain fully committed to making that happen.”

“We applaud the EEOC's historic (Ruling continued on page 14)



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## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

(Ruling continued from page 13)

determination that sexual orientation is inherently a sex-based consideration, and we encourage all gay men, lesbians and bisexual Americans who face harassment or discrimination on the job to consult an attorney and file Title VII sex discrimination claims with the EEOC," Tico Almeida, president of Freedom to Work said. "It's time for LGBT advocates to retire the incorrect talking point that gay Americans can get married at noon and fired at 2 p.m. without legal recourse. That kind of unlawful firing falls clearly under Title VII's ban on sex discrimination, and it is already illegal."

HRC notes that EEOC rulings are "not binding on federal courts, however they are persuasive." The Supreme Court has yet to rule on the issue.

### Gay couple sues Texas county clerk, gets marriage license

*Bloomberg reports:*

A gay couple that sued a rural Texas county clerk over a delay in the issuing of a marriage license received the certificate just hours after filing the complaint.

Jim Cato and Joe Stapleton say they won't drop their lawsuit, though, until the clerk's office agrees to issue marriage licenses to "all couples, gay and straight, without delay."

They also want their legal fees paid by the county. Cato and Stapleton were repeatedly turned away by the clerk's office in Hood County, about a half-hour southwest of the Fort Worth federal courthouse where they sued July 6. They said they were told it would take "at least three weeks," because the county needed to have paperwork reprinted in a gender-neutral fashion.

The men said they have been "waiting over 27 years to marry" and were "humiliated" by county employees' refusal. Katie Lang, the county clerk, had said she won't personally issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples because it violates her religious beliefs. She said someone else in her office would do so as soon as proper forms are supplied, according to a statement on the county clerk's website. The couple's lawyer said he provided the clerk with copies of corrected state marriage-license applications from the state's website. They were told a different form was still needed, according to the complaint. The couple's July 7 license was handwritten.

### Hearings start in lawsuit against anti-gay Ky. county clerk

No decision was made on 13 July in a federal lawsuit filed against a county clerk in Kentucky who refuses to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

US District Court Judge David Bunning heard testimony in the American Civil Liberties Union of Kentucky's lawsuit against Rowan County and its Clerk Kim Davis. But the case was continued to an undetermined future date because Davis must sign paperwork acknowledging she has received the complaint.

"We look forward to completing these proceedings at a time and date Judge Bunning sets, so that our clients may receive the relief they are entitled to," William Sharp, legal director of the ACLU of Kentucky said.

Rowan County is one of three counties in Kentucky that is attempting to keep same-gender couples from obtaining licenses. The US Supreme Court ruled last month that same-sex marriage is now legal nationwide.

The ACLU filed a class action lawsuit against Davis on behalf of four couples who her office denied licenses – two heterosexual couples and two same-sex couples.

The federal lawsuit, which alleges Davis' refusal is unconstitutional, seeks an injunction ordering Davis to begin issuing licenses.

Kentucky couple David Vincent Moore and his fiancé wanted to get married last week Davis stood in their way.

The couple's encounter with Davis, who is opposed to same-sex marriage (EC: but has been married four times herself), was captured on video and quickly went viral with more than 1.7 million views.

-JoeMyGod.com ■



### Chile issues civil union licenses; weddings start in October

*Pink News reports:*

Gay couples flocked to civil registry offices in Chile to schedule the first same-sex civil unions since they were approved in the country earlier this year.

July 9 was the first day that couples could apply for the license, after a bill approving same-sex civil unions was signed by the country's President Michelle Bachelet back in April. The first same-sex civil ceremonies will take place in October, and while the LGBT community in Chile still fights for the right to marry, many see this as the first step on the way to gaining full equal rights for same-sex couples. Many couples took to Twitter to share their joy and excitement, as well as to announce the date on which their ceremonies will take place.

-JoeMyGod.com ■

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## Fall SpeakOUT Training

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Then join us for our Fall SpeakOUT Training: Successful LGBTQ Education – a workshop focused on becoming more confident and articulate while talking with others about LGBTQ issues. Professional development for your life! Perfect for counselors, teachers, student leaders, Dignity Act Coordinators, social workers... This workshop is also the beginning part of our training for Gay Alliance Speakers Bureau volunteers.

**Friday October 2 (6-9pm) and Saturday October 3 (8:30am-5pm).** Light evening snacks, breakfast and lunch included. ASL interpretation can be made available if requested before Sept 14th. To find out more and to register, go to: [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org) and click on the SpeakOUT slide.



### Feedback from our March SpeakOUT Training

"Incredible, valuable, enriching and an experience that will translate into my professional and personal life. Excellent!"

"Rarely can I have an open discussion about hot topic issues with such generous and intelligent feedback."

"Awesome, enriching, inspiring. I can't think of anything to improve. I am so glad I took this class."

"Thank you for a weekend I will always consider as one of time well spent, and one I will look upon as a special memory maker."

100% of the participants from our March 2015 SpeakOUT Training rated the workshop and the presenters "very good to excellent!"

# Opinion



## A Trip To Be Proud Of: NYC Pride

By Lawrence Lamb

A few of us from the Rochester area decided to make a special trip to New York City this past June for the Pride parade. The parade was held on June 28 but two days before that, on June 26, the Supreme Court ruled that the U.S. Constitution provides same-sex couples the right to marry, which means by law the states cannot ban same-sex marriages and gay marriage becomes legal in all 50 states. It was a landmark decision by the Supreme Court and a historic triumph to the gay rights movement.

When we arrived in New York City on June 26, there were people all over the Village area celebrating well into the night. The crowd outside the Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street was particularly wild with excitement and the bar was packed from wall to wall. Many took self-

MARRIAGE, EQUAL RIGHTS AND FAMILIES WERE THE OBVIOUS THEMES OF THE PROUD MARCHERS, AND CHILDREN MARCHED IN RECORDED NUMBER. THE WHOLE PARADE WAS A CELEBRATION OF THE HISTORIC MOMENT RESULTING FROM YEARS OF ACTIVE FIGHTING AND SILENT CULTIVATION. IT WAS AMAZING TO SEE SO MANY GAY AND LESBIAN AND TRANSGENDER PEOPLE FORMING A FORCEFUL IMPACT THAT NO SOCIETY CAN IGNORE.

ies at that historic site on that historic day. We out-of-towners were emotionally overwhelmed by the presence of such a large and friendly LGBT community.

The forecast for the weekend wasn't favorable and rain poured that Saturday night. TV news showed that the LGBT community continued to celebrate in the rain drenched streets. Some small groups were seen holding up signs that said "God Hates Sodomites" claiming that the rain was a sign from God; God is crying! God is against gay marriage!

We returned to the hotel early to have a good night's sleep as the next day was to be a long and tiring day at the parade.

With our umbrellas and windbreakers, we headed to the PrideFest on Hudson Street. The sky was grey and it drizzled a bit but nothing could affect the colorful and festive atmosphere of the street

fair, with lines and lines of stands promoting many services courting the LGBT community. Goodies were handed out free or we had to spin a wheel to get a t-shirt or fill out a disclosure form to get some free samples. There were the usual drag queens with perfect makeup and high heels, and there were the hunks from a bank all dressed in Roman attire. The sky cleared up and more people flooded the streets of PrideFest.

An hour or two into the parade, the sun came out and the crowd thickened. The parade moved slowly through the streets of the village and the sidewalks were packed to the limit with a cheerful crowd. It was literally boobs to boobs and buns to buns! Celebrated UK actors Sir Derek Jacobi and Sir Ian McKellen (stars of the BBC series *Vicious*) were among the 2015 NYC Pride Grand Marshals. Marriage, equal rights and families were the obvious themes of the proud marchers, and children marched in record number. The whole parade was a celebration of the historic moment resulting from years of active fighting and silent cultivation. It was amazing to see so many gay and lesbian and transgender people forming a forceful impact that no society can ignore.

One thing though: in the old days when we saw a nun walking the parade in high heels, we knew that was a drag queen. Nowadays, we need to think twice!

## Trans in Prison

By Tristan Wright

Over the past few weeks, countless leaders have posed the question "What's next for the LGBTQ movement?"

Transgender people have often topped the list, citing issues like bathroom access or drivers licenses as the next battles under the pride flag. But for many transgender people, especially trans people of color, there are much more pressing issues at hand. Often overlooked in such conversations are the realities of transgender people behind bars and the systemic inequalities that led them there.

Pervasive discrimination in housing, healthcare, and employment leads transgender people into survival crimes like sex work, increasing the likelihood that they'll encounter the criminal justice system. The National Center for Transgender Equality has found that one in six trans Americans, and half of all trans people of color, are incarcerated at some point in their lives. In most cases transgender people are housed based on their genitals, with transwomen typically placed in men's facilities, and transmen placed in women's. This puts transgender inmates

at exponentially higher risk for abuse: incarcerated transwomen are 13 times more likely to be assaulted than cisgender prisoners.

My good friend and penpal Samantha, a transgender woman at a men's maximum security facility in upstate NY, has described to me some of the experiences she's had, including harassment, intimidation, and assault. At one point, fearing for her safety Samantha refused to be double bunked with another inmate.

Her fear was met with punishment: 30 days in solitary confinement. Upon exiting solitary, she again refused to double cell and was punished with 60 days in solitary, in addition to the loss of packages, commissary, and phone privileges. She was then moved to a new facility where an inmate demanded sexual favors from her. She refused, and a week later found her cell burnt out, most of her belongings lost to the flames.

The abuse Samantha and other transgender inmates experience comes from both prisoners and corrections officers. Frequently isolated in protective custody or solitary confinement, transgender inmates face a greater risk of violence from staff. A report by Solitary Watch found that, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, of all sexual violence against transwomen in prisons and jails, nearly half is committed by facility staff.

In a 2007 report on transgender people in New York State prisons, the Sylvia Rivera Law project makes several recom-

mendations for changing the criminal justice system: improved access to medical care, enhanced grievance and account-

FREQUENTLY ISOLATED IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY OR SOLITARY CONFINEMENT, TRANSGENDER INMATES FACE A GREATER RISK OF VIOLENCE FROM STAFF. A REPORT BY SOLITARY WATCH FOUND THAT, ACCORDING TO THE BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, OF ALL SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST TRANSWOMEN IN PRISONS AND JAILS, NEARLY HALF IS COMMITTED BY FACILITY STAFF.

ability procedures, and changes to policy to improve the safety of transgender prisoners like my friend Samantha.

Most importantly for the LGBTQ movement, however, the report underscores the importance of reducing the criminalization of transgender people. This means that the next step in the LGBTQ movement is far greater than bathrooms or the DMV. It means that as we work to improve the lives of those currently behind bars, we must also be addressing the systemic inequalities that lead so many transgender people – especially transgender people of color – into the criminal justice system to begin with. ■



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# Health



## William E. Belec joins Trillium Health

Trillium Health has announced that William E. Belec will become its new Chief Operating Officer and Sr. Vice President of Programs and Services on Aug. 17.

In this vital new role, Bill will be overseeing Trillium Health's expansion as the organization provides new services and barrier-free access to medical care and supportive services, and earns its designation as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC).

Bill joins Trillium from Visiting Nurse Service (VNS), an affiliate of the University of Rochester Medical Center, where he has served for more than 24 years. As the Chief Information Officer and Vice President of Operations & Business Analysis at VNS, Bill has successfully headed the overall operations of a licensed home care agency, Visiting Nurse Signature Care, as well as the Meals on Wheels Program, all while continuing his oversight of the Information Systems and Technology functions. He also served as Project Director for URMC School of Medicine & Dentistry.

Trillium says, "Bill brings to Trillium Health a rich history of service and strong

experience in strategic planning, business development, operations, program oversight and management, facilities and organizational development. In addition, Bill also brings an already established connection with our organization through his oversight of the Meals on Wheels Program, working with both our legacy AIDS Rochester organization as well as Trillium Health's current Congregate Meal Program."

Andrea DeMeo, CEO, stated, "Bill brings a skill set vitally important to our future. His experience in a community based organization and the leadership that he provided to VNS over the years is immediately transferable and I am excited about him joining our team."

## New app MyTransHealth offers doctor reviews, more information

According to Gay Times magazine, the app is a crowd-sourced program which will allow for users to read reviews on doctors and gauge how much support they may be able to provide specifically for trans-related issues.

Seeking to make waves in the subject of trans health, MyTransHealth will hopefully be able to help tackle issues like the high suicide rate amongst trans people.

## Study says bisexuals face higher health disparities

By *Elie Cruz on The Advocate*

Professors of Sociology at Rice University have found that bisexual Americans face higher health disparities than their gay, lesbian, and straight counterparts. A variety of these health issues stem from systemic socioeconomic vulnerability in the bisexual community, according to the new study.

"As a group, bisexual men and women

have higher rates of a variety of factors that can lead to poor health — things like poverty or involvement with lifestyle activities that can lead to poor health," lead author Bridget Gorman tells The Advocate. "A big thing was emotional support. When you compare relative to other groups, bisexuals reported lower rates of getting the emotional support that they felt they needed."

Bisexual respondents also reported a higher propensity for smoking and using alcohol than straight or gay counterparts — health risks that can be amplified by the higher rates of poverty among the bisexual community compared with other peers. Among gay, lesbian, and straight counterparts, researchers found members of the bisexual community were the least likely to be educated at a university level.

Gorman and her team spent years aggregating data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, a health-related phone survey conducted annually across the U.S. Comprised of co-authors Justin T. Denney, Hilary Dowdy, and Rose Anne Medeiros, Gorman's team reviewed data collected in seven states between 2005 and 2010 to suss out the health disparities among bisexual Americans. All told, the study aggregates results from "10,128 sexual minority (gay, lesbian, and bisexual) and 405,145 heterosexual adults," according to its abstract. This first set of findings were published in the July issue of the Journal of Demography, under the title "A New Piece of the Puzzle: Sexual Orientation, Gender, and Physical Health Status."

The CDC's standard reporting system generally does not distinguish between gay or lesbian and bisexual respondents, but the Rice researchers want to see more states become more proactive in asking residents how they identify. Gorman says it's important to count bisexuals separately than gays and lesbians, as "recent studies have found worse self-reported health for bisexuals compared with gay/lesbian

and heterosexual adults."

"Some research has suggested that bisexuals may be 'minorities within the minority' because they experience even greater levels of prejudice and discrimination than gays or lesbians," the study reports. "The resulting stressors and stigma experienced by bisexuals may contribute to greater health problems."

## Study: straight doctors may be biased against LGBT people

By *Raffy Ermac on The Advocate*

There may be a justifiable reason why LGBT patients don't always feel comfortable when they visit their straight doctor's office.

New findings from research conducted by the University of Washington show that health care providers may in fact harbor biases against patients of opposing sexual orientations.

According to the abstract of the study published online by the American Journal of Public Health, "implicit preferences for heterosexual people versus lesbian and gay people are pervasive among heterosexual health care providers."

Straight women in the field were found to have weaker implicit preference than straight men, and among all of the surveyed health care professionals, straight nurses "held the strongest implicit preference for heterosexual men over gay men."

The researchers looked at results from the Implicit Association Test taken among a sample of more than 200,000 medical doctors, nurses, mental health providers, and other treatment providers as well as nonproviders from May 2006 to December 2012, according to the AJPH's abstract. The medical news website PsychCentral reported that users of the test were asked to respond to statements such as "I strongly prefer straight people to gay people" and "I strongly prefer gay people to straight people." ■

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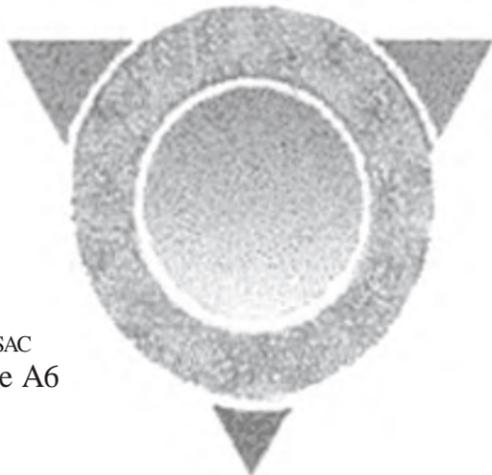
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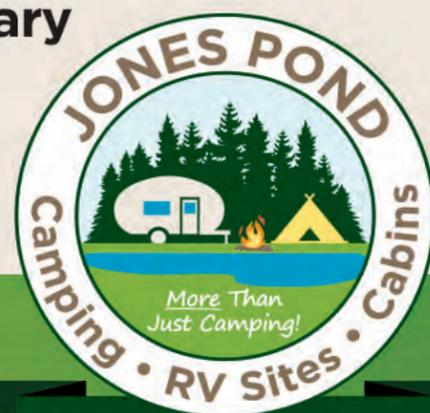


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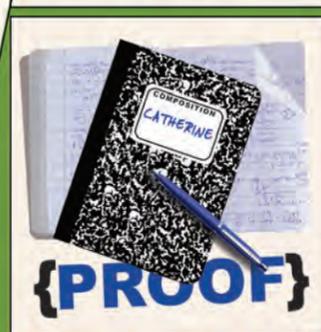
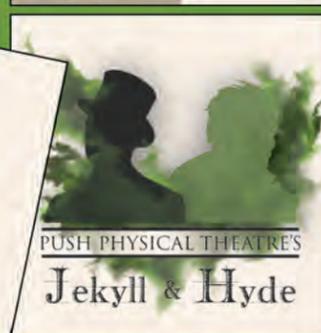
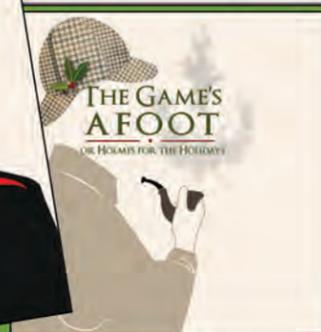
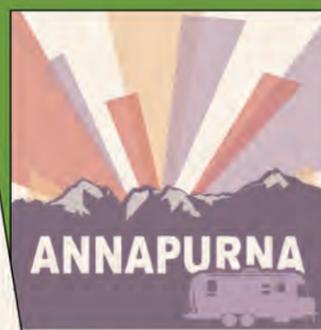
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# Shoulders to Stand On



Gary Sweet, second from left, with family at the Avenue Pub.

## Gary Sweet - A man who brought the Rochester "Cheers" to Monroe Avenue

By Evelyn Bailey

The weekend of June 12-14, Gary Sweet and The Avenue Pub celebrated 40 years of being THE oldest original owner operated bar in the same location at 522 Monroe Avenue.

Little did anyone know that this would be Gary's last Pub anniversary celebration. Shoulders to Stand on invites you to take a walk down memory lane celebrating a life lived in service to his family, customers and the community whom he loved.

In the spring of 1975, Gary Sweet bought the Avenue Pub. In many ways from that day on, Gary Sweet and The Pub were synonymous. Up until June of this year, The Pub was the oldest owner operated gay bar in the same location in Rochester -- 40 years.

Before Gary bought the Avenue Pub, Craig Heslor remembers that Gary was a night "auditor" (front-desk clerk) at the Downtown Motor Inn. Gary also worked for the US Postal Service as a mailman in Rochester, and may have delivered your mail. In an interview this June with this reporter, Gary said he worked more than one job because he had a family to support.

However, bar life was in Gary's blood. He bartended while in the military, and in 1971 tended bar for tips at Jim's on Court St. next door to Speedy's Laundry for Jim Van Allen, with whom he went to high school. Before Gary bought the bar and named it the Avenue Pub, it had been Neil's Cocktail Lounge. Gary pulled the money together to buy the bar. Years later Gary had the opportunity to buy the building. He did not but his partner Bob did. Gary and his partner Bob also had an opportunity to buy Anthony's 522, but did not. Gary says he had no intention of making the Avenue Pub a "gay" bar when he bought it, but it became the "Cheers" of Rochester, a welcoming inclusive neighborhood bar.

On June 5, 1975 at 10 a.m., about two weeks before Gary was ready to have a Grand Opening at the Avenue Pub, one of his very good customers said, "We're not waiting anymore, you are opening now!" With that he threw open the front door, set up the bar, set up the chairs and

ready or not the Avenue Pub was open for business.

It was originally a straight biker bar and the bikers tried to force Gary out of business. He was told that he would never make it on Monroe Avenue because it was in the "suburbs". All the gay bars were downtown. The first few years, Gary said in an interview a few weeks before he died, were tough -- rocks were thrown at the windows. Gary said he had trouble getting insurance because the window always needed to be replaced.

Roy Lawrence (founder of the Rochester Rams) tended bar at the Pub, until he opened the OK Corral on Charlotte St. Monroe Avenue was not gay friendly in the '70s. Gary made it a point to always welcome his customers and to get to know them. In 1977 Friar's opened and in 1979 Rosies opened on Monroe Avenue and the gay strip was born.

Relations with the police turned around in the late '70s when Midge Costanza appointed Gordon Urlacher as the Police Liaison to the Gay Community. All the bar owners in the late '70s and '80s met once a month to support each other and to talk about any issues they were having and to schedule events. Gordon Urlacher made the rounds of all the bars to assess for himself what was happening. He made himself available to the bar owners. Gary said Gordon Urlacher really changed the attitude of the police toward the gay bars (there were 14 gay bars in Rochester at one time). Gordon made it clear to his fellow officers that they "could not treat those people" that way. Gary said, "Today the police are a part of our Gay Pride Parade."

In the July 2010 issue of the EC, in an article on Jim's by Susan Jordan, Gary Sweet remembered what it was like in the '70s and early '80s. "Back then people were just partying and partying. It was the era between the end of the police raids and the beginning of HIV. It really slowed down in the early '80s when HIV was identified."

Gus Hall, a neighborhood resident, one-time employee and regular patron of the Pub, said at the 35th Anniversary celebration of the Pub, "The Avenue Pub really took off around 1977. Lines would be outside waiting to get in. Everybody knew your name. You could guess who would be sitting on which barstools at cocktail time. Gays and straights came in together."

By the mid '90s and into the next decade, AIDS had become a treatable chronic illness. Gary and the Avenue Pub with its friendly, welcoming, inclusive atmosphere came back stronger than ever. The bar culture has gone through many transformations and Gary and the Avenue Pub adapted to the changes. Today in 2015 the kitchen is open Wednesday - Sunday, there is a year-round patio with heaters, full bar, free parking, ATM and internet jukebox. Gary's daughter, Tanya Knope, continues to help with marketing and bar oversight.

Over the years Gary, through the Avenue Pub, supported a variety of local sports teams, including a champion woman's softball team, volleyball teams, a number of walks and bike rides for AIDS and cancer. In the early days, Gary allowed organizers of the Miss Gay Rochester Pageant to hold the Pageant in the building behind the Pub. Gary, as well as other bars, supported the community Picnic in July. Gary, along with other bar owners, supported the efforts of the Gay Alliance Youth Program to increase the interest of gay youth in higher education by buying a graduation cap to support tours to area colleges. Gary through The Pub has always been supportive of the Rochester Rams motorcycle club annual fundraising activities, as well as fundraising efforts for the Gay Alliance, HPA, and most recently Trillium Health.

Gary attributed his and the bar's success to his customers and staff: "They are wonderful!" Gary consistently showed his appreciation for his customers and bartenders by celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, and The Pub's milestones.

What Gus Hall wrote on a card in celebration of the 35th anniversary of the Avenue Pub summarizes Gary's relationships with his customers. Gus Hall wrote, "Twenty years ago I sat in the parking lot of the Avenue Pub scared to death of what waited for me behind the door. I'm so glad I found the courage to come inside -- I found my family."

Family is the right word. Bartender

Carolyn Zook and patrons greet you with a "Cheers" welcome when you come into the Avenue Pub. Carolyn has been a part of the Pub for 30 years, loves bartending and thinks the world of Gary Sweet. Carolyn said many of the people who came to the 40th Anniversary celebration in June, had met at the Pub, married and were still together 20 - 30 years later. She said the Tea Dance on Sunday, June 14 brought back memories of the Tea Dances in the '70s.

Gary Sweet, a loving father and grandfather, a US Air Force veteran, a former postman with the US Postal Service, enjoyed spending time with his family, loved to travel, and was the hard-working and proud owner of the Avenue Pub for 40 years. Over his lifetime, Gary received 17 awards and recognitions for his support and service to various groups and community organizations.

Shoulders To Stand On is proud to recognize Gary Sweet and his commitment to his family, his service to his country and his support of the Rochester community. Our deepest sympathy to his family, and those he touched. NO, the Avenue will never be the same, but the Shoulders of a man who created family, and a welcoming inclusive warm home at HIS Avenue Pub, will not be forgotten.

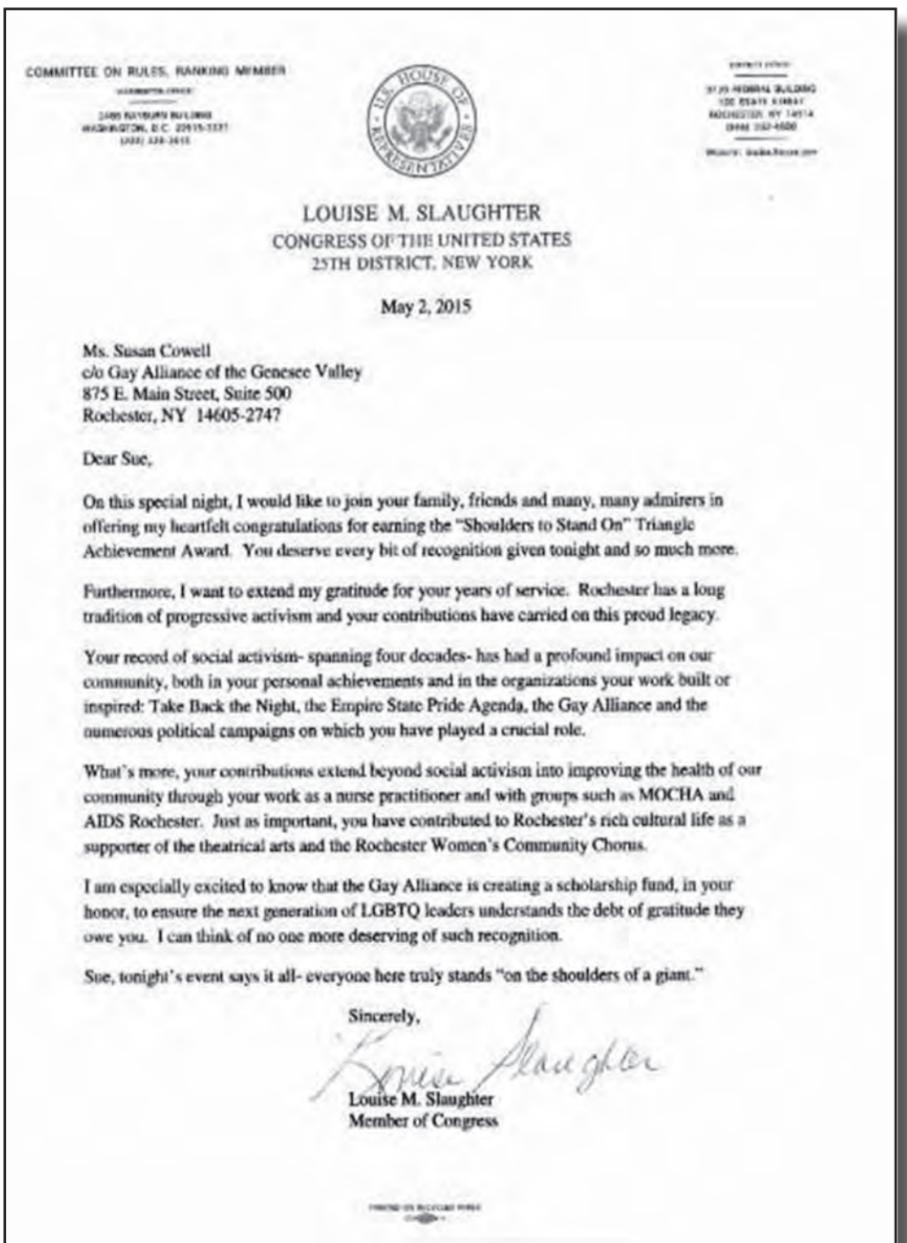
## A Community's Response To AIDS - AIDS Rochester, Inc.

By Evelyn Bailey

This month Shoulders To Stand On looks at one of the earliest grass roots responses to the AIDS crisis in New York state and in fact the country. AIDS Rochester began with a handful of people.

A little history about the legacy left to the Rochester community by a handful of people, our early pioneers in the '70s. Once you begin moving out and being visible, you can not stop. All we need to do is look at the "voices" of Rochester

(Shoulders continued on page 22)



(Shoulders continued from page 23)

who have stood before the “gates of hell” to see that the seeds of truth and justice are deeply rooted in the Rochester community.

Before the Town and then the City of Rochester was founded, the area belonged to the Iroquois Nation (Haudenosaunee). This matrilineal society, with the Great Law of Peace, ended a civil war and created a confederation of tribes whereby all had a voice, all had a vote, and all abided by the rules that governed them. This example of integrating diverse peoples into a unified whole has influenced the U.S. Constitution.

Susan B. Anthony, Frederick Douglass, Emma Goldman, Walter Rauschenbush and more embraced this legacy of inclusion, equality and justice, and brought about a diverse community that thrived because of it. Onto this 20th century “stage” walks “a giant” in our midst – Sue Cowell. Her belief in equality and justice for ALL has always been a driving force in her life.

When AIDS began to affect the Rochester community, Sue Cowell proposed a committee be formed called AIDS/Rochester, that would be a committee of the Board of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley. In an interview with The Empty Closet in May 1983, by Steve Picchi, Sue said the committee should consist of health professionals and lay people in the community who were interested in addressing different areas around the issue of AIDS. At the time Sue saw several needs: education for the general population, and the health care professionals; research to find out about AIDS; political action to mobilize governmental agencies to respond to the legal and social issues; fundraising to support these efforts.

She said that you need the health professionals to handle the education part. You need the grassroots people to do the fundraising, and you need everybody to grease the wheels of the political machine. You need the cooperation of everybody for the research because you need the involvement of the gay community. Sue made it clear that researchers could not do it without the community's help. People were needed to act as liaisons for gay closeted health professionals to come out and get involved. The spectre of AIDS was terrifying! Sue said people can deny all they want, but it was going to be a big challenge in the eighties to come up with answers.

In response to Picchi's inquiry regarding AIDS being neglected by the Federal government because it was gay related, Sue said AIDS was not being neglected 100 percent, but the effort was not there to the degree needed.

On May 1, 1983 the Rochester LGBT community rose to the occasion again. Alan Davidson, Don Scalea (who was affiliated with Strong), Sue Cowell and Tim Sally planned one of the first fundraisers in Rochester, held at Friar's on May 1 to raise money to create awareness and educate the community about AIDS. Dr. Tom Rush, and Sue Cowell were available at the event for people to talk to. Everything was donated, and \$2100 was raised. Ramon Santiago created the poster for the event.

A.I.D.S. ROCHESTER began as an ad hoc committee of several local gay activists including Alan Davidson, Tim Sally, Tim Tompkins, Sue Cowell and others, who were concerned about AIDS and the effects on the gay community. The major catalyst for uniting people was the development of the AIDS Screening Clinic at Strong Memorial Hospital in September of 1982. Dr. Tom Rush of the Infectious Disease Unit at Strong approached Sue Cowell, nurse practitioner and member of the Gay Alliance, about developing the clinic with the input of the local gay community. The purpose of the clinic was to screen gay males for signs of AIDS and provide information about the symptoms. The clinic was discontinued in April 1983 when Dr. Tom Rush and Dr. Roy Steigbigel decided to take new positions in Infectious Diseases at Stony

Brook New York to pursue the important work of AIDS research.

In June there were several meetings and discussions about the future direction of AIDS Rochester. AIDS Rochester had defined several areas continuing to need work to preserve the health and well-being of the community. It had grown from a few people to a more diverse group of people -- gay activists, health care workers, and local business people – with a structured board of directors. The need for a more organized effort resulted in AIDS Rochester becoming incorporated as a not-for-profit organization and a search for a part-time or possibly a full time executive director.

In the meantime information about AIDS and related issues was provided by trained peer counselors that staffed the Gay Alliance office. Written information was available at the Gay Alliance. A small information card was printed with local resource information and made available at local gay businesses and the Gay Alliance. The fundraising efforts resulted in donations to the Infectious Disease Unit at Strong, Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York, and local AIDS patients.

In September 1983 the CDC issued precautions for healthcare workers and allied health professionals regarding exposure to AIDS. The cause of AIDS was still unknown, but it seemed more and more likely that transmission occurred through intimate sexual contact, contaminated needles, or percutaneous inoculation of infectious blood or blood products.

In 1983, Jackie Nudd was elected president of the Gay Alliance Board. It would not be long before Jackie would be hired as the first Executive Director of AIDS/Rochester. Sue Cowell, Alan Davidson, Tom Rush, Roy Steigbigel, Tim Sally and Jackie Nudd are only a few of the courageous Shoulders upon which our community response today stands. Shoulders To Stand On is awed, humbled, grateful and proud of the grass roots efforts of so many caring individuals to fight AIDS and care for its victims here in Rochester. The story of AIDS Rochester and the history of the AIDS epidemic will continue in the next issue of The Empty Closet.

## History Corner

A Monthly Newspaper of The Gay Brotherhood of Rochester, NY, 713 Monroe Avenue, Room 4, Rochester, NY 14607, (716) 244-8640.

August, 1975 No. 52  
FOCUS

Page 1 focuses on failure of the sodomy repeal bill in this year's NY Assembly, and the beginning of the organized effort against gay rights. An editorial (p 4) discusses on Assemblyman who promised support at election time, butvoted “No” anyway. On the bright side, 3 area Assemblymen supported sodomy repeal more than ever before. Five people in four cases are challenging the anti-gay policies of the military and the D&C lends editorial support for gays in the military (p4). On the social side, there's a picnic (back cover) and a harpsichord concert. pg 9. David Klaus reports on Shirley 9 Company and various parties. Lamont Downs writes his eye-witness account of June's Gay Pride March in NYC (p9).

Do you want to read this issue of the Empty Closet?

Here is the link: <http://www.library.rochester.edu/rbscp/EmptyCloset>

On that page click on: Browse the Empty Closet issues, Go to 1975 – August  
GAY BROTHERHOOD MEETINGS

SUN. 3 AUGUST: GAY HEALTH

SUN. 10 AUGUST: PSYCHO-DRAMA/IMPROVISATIONS

SUN. 17 AUGUST: GAY BUSINESSES

SUN. 24 AUGUST: COFFEE HOUSE, informal evening

SUN. 31 AUGUST: BUSINESS MEETING, open to all ■

# Columnists

The opinions of columnists, editorial writers and other contributing writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or The Empty Closet.

## Growing Up

OMA



By Eric Bellmann

As life evolves, one looks around, perhaps back in time, in search for that most precious commodity: unconditional love. Only now do

I appreciate and value beyond words the deep bond that can exist between grandparent and grandchild. That it exists when there is no common language seems astonishing, yet it happened to me.

Oma. That is all I ever called her, the German word for grandmother. I thought that was her name. She was Anna Sara Lehmann. She came to America to live with us when I was in elementary school.

Oma was born in Dresden, Germany in 1880. She died at 81, in 1961, having returned to Dresden, which was then East Germany and under communist rule.

Oma had four children: Charlotte, known as Lotte, Joanna, Max (called Heinz) and Gertrude, the youngest, my mother.

In 1950, as best as I can recall, my mother and I took the train to New York City to meet the boat that brought my grandmother to the United States. She lived with us for five years before she returned to her homeland. Years later I understood she had not been happy here.

My grandmother did not learn to speak English. I spoke no German. In memory I understand that she was my caretaker, waiting for me when I came home from school, keeping me company until my mother came home from work.

I have inherited a sheaf of documents that catalog my family history: birth certificates, baptisms, school records, wedding announcements, the stack is thick.

I did not ask for nor want all these papers. Germans, history has revealed, place value on documentation; they're known for meticulous record keeping. Near the end of her life, my mother became obsessed, or so it seemed to me, with gathering all these papers which in some sad way formed a link with a happier past, her early life. Then they came to me, the last of our family line.

I did not like being German. I grew up in an American culture after World War II, where being German was not a good thing. Germans were the villains in movies, comic books, in playground games. In grade school, when confronted by my peers, I claimed to be Spanish.

But every day I returned home to Oma. I don't know what she thought or what she did while I was at school. I believe she was very lonely. Once home we sat mostly in silence in the kitchen. My grandmother liked to sew. She made many of her own clothes not with a machine, but by hand.

What I remember and treasure is that she sewed marvelous clothes for my doll, the very doll that marked me as different. I treasured that doll as much as I loved our three cats. To my everlasting regret, in ninth grade, entering the more adult world of high school, and as my shame deepened for playing with a doll, I placed her along with all her clothing, those gorgeous hand-stitched coats and dresses, into the blazing furnace in an attempt to purge my guilt over being who I was. I would give anything to have those doll clothes back again.

I knew nothing about my family. No one spoke about anything German, the war or the aftermath. Now, of course, I realize Oma had lived through not one but two world wars. She and her family lived through the fire bombing that devastated Dresden, then through Russian occupation. I know she was permitted to continue living in her partially ruined home, but only in the kitchen, which was large enough to serve as a cramped apartment.

Oma was not the only refugee to arrive in America. Friends, the Staubs, had their grandmother as well, she was called Mutti, German for mother. Oma and Mutti became friends. Oma learned the bus route to Mutti's house. Survivors of the unspeakable, they no doubt consoled one another, considered their life now in a foreign country.

One vivid memory I have of childhood is standing in our living room at the window, watching the bus stop at the corner, waiting for Oma, fearing she was never coming back. The tears rolled down my face until, finally, I saw her. I recall those moments as one of the most terrifying I have ever known.

Oma and her daughter, my mother, did not get along. There was a problem that no one ever explained. Years later I learned that my mother came to live in the States after she had been involved in a scandal that her family regarded as unforgivable. The only recourse was for her to leave, to emigrate, to begin again far away. Eventually she created a new life here, with a man she married and ultimately with the daughter who had been born out of wedlock, the genesis of the scandal. That is how I, the second child, born 15 years later, came to be an American.

I was a quiet child, an unhappy adolescent. I kept to myself. Each section of life, as I passed through it, was sealed off, hopefully forgotten. Time has been kind. I think reading helped. I understood things through literature that I could not fathom through human relationships. Ultimately I wanted to know more, to understand, to find acceptance. No one really wants to be alone. That is a false security.

I wish I had known more about my Grandmother, had been able to ask questions. What were their lives like? And, oh yes, what did they know?

Weirdly enough, as I began to consider my differentness, that thing that then had no name, which became my essence, my queerness, I found in the local branch library the early memoirs of Jewish children and I, in childlike fashion, identified with those who were different, those who were persecuted, Jews.

Were there Nazis in my family? Maybe. No one asked, no one told.

As time passed I became more of who I am today. Educated, blasé, with accomplishments and aches to occupy my mind. Once, visiting my sister, fifteen years my elder, I thought I would treat her and take her to see the current, wonderful film, “Cabaret”, so stylish, so well done. When the kids in the country began to sing, the kids in the brown shirts, the kids who were part of the youth group that would become Nazis, my sister, who had spent the first ten years of her life living with Oma in an idyllic Germany – the 1930s -- became so agitated, so distraught, that she fled the theater.

I was dumbfounded. It was one of the cruelest things I'd ever done, unwittingly, without any sense of her awareness of history. Confounded by the silence of my grief stricken, shame-ridden family,

I've spent a significant portion of my life looking for causes and considering their effects, how it came to be the way it was. I have been plagued with loneliness and isolation, no sense of trust and a fear that I will be abandoned. They say there is no cure for this. Then I recall my grandmother Oma, who loved me unconditionally, and I know better. It is possible to stop believing in lies.

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## Cleaning My Closet

LET'S TALK



By *Meredith Elizabeth Reiniger*

Tinkle-ring-ring. Summers of yester-years. Whether fantasy or fact, I remember that My Kidhood Days were calmer,

safer, more sweetly fun than childhoods during this twenty-first century.

In my good-old-days, our Skippy ice cream provider (always a male) peddled his wonderful white refrigerator slowly down our streets. His manual bell Peter Piper-ed across grassy lawns, onto front porches, into backyards. Magically, jingled coins, clutched in sweaty little hands, swarmed down hot sidewalks. After Mr. Marvelous stretched down to cold depths of delight, ice vapors whirled around our cherry popsicles.

Speaking of c-l-i-t-o-r-i-s, do you prefer to say "cli-tor-is" or "clit-or-is"? Have you uttered that Clitoris Word aloud since you read July's Ilcliteracy? Googled "clitoris"? Have you thrashed out details of Clitoris Conspiracies while swallowing CockTales?

In a merry sort of way, (two months ago, prior to Ilcliteracy's publication) I had contacted my Column Share group: "I would appreciate it if you would sketch a picture of a clitoris and send it to me. You may sign the drawing or not; label or not your gender, age, profession, sexual identity, questions, statements." I call that Crowd Finding, a bold request for column ideas.

A 78-year-old Advocate (cis female) responded: "Easy would not be sketching a picture of the clitoris. I did find a web site with a picture of the clitoris which may or may not be a good drawing. However, you have already proved your point to me: who knows what the clitoris looks like and who knows much information about that part of our body?"

From a middle-ish-aged, now single, lesbian: "Hell, it's been so long since I've seen one I can barely remember :)"

"I must say, you've given me some interesting research =>... I was thinking I would be one of your few friends that would have it so-called-right, being an anatomy and physiology prof and all..."

So the good professor began her search. "At first I thought WHAT?! Does my anatomy book not show this correctly?" She explained her findings to me, offering many polysyllabic specifics. Then she noted, "There appears to be some controversy." Apparently science, like society, has ideas that are not universally agreed upon.

Well, not a single picture was submitted, but after that clitoris column hit the newsstands, conversations around our crayon table were powerful. And readers' responses were interesting:

"And isn't it strange that women know less about their clitoris than any other part of their anatomy? Well, maybe there are many of us who know little about what the heart looks like, the kidneys etc. etc., but we have no trouble finding pics of those two body parts. Further, we undoubtedly would not be embarrassed to admit we went looking online for a picture of our adrenal glands."

"Oh my... At this moment, I (and probably my clitoris) am speechless, but certainly enlightened with clitoral details and history. Ever the wonderer about etymology, I opened my Webster's... to 'cli-



toris' to view the original meaning (and preferred pronunciation — tho' I cannot think of a single instance arising where I would actually need to pronounce the word) and discovered that it is derived from the Greek word for hill. So, there you have it: more clitoracy!"

The end. Or so I thought. Honestly, I had intended, for my August column, to examine the trend of contemporary stealth mosquitoes who do not buzz like the marauding maniacs of My Old Days. But I rejected that topic... for what reason? I can't put my finger on it, but my clitoris has won my full attention.

Actually, my curiosity was aroused when one of my faithful readers queried: "What will the follow-up column tell us???" Good question.

This is a call for Clitoris Liberation: we will share True Facts with our sisters; give our self and other friends the empowering book . . . O WOW: Discovering Your Ultimate Orgasm. Then we will initiate an O WOW book talk.

We will expose Realities and Lies. Here are more Historical Horrifics. (I consulted a bountiful web source kindly shared by a cis male friend, senior citizen, Advocate.)

Once upon a 19th century time, The Church convinced conventional/male doctors that no virtuous woman would even have a clitoris. Thus double-teamed, never-to-be-naked wives consented to wear bulky nightgowns with a handy hole, cut out at the genital area, facilitat-

ing poking without peeking.

Celebrating our Clitoris Liberation and spreading the word to the masses, we will wear Sophia Wallace's clit-friendly t-shirts to bed, beach, and beyond.

Also once upon a 19th century time, ecclesiastically and medically endorsed sexism ruled: orgasmic masturbation by girls was a "medical problem". (Boys never experienced Masturbation Intervention.) Correction/treatment: a girl's clitoris was amputated or cauterized; her vaginal lips were sewed closed; her ovaries were surgically removal (castration). Non-invasive option: a girl was forced to wear a miniature chastity belt. [Probably pink.]

Well, phew, that was over There, in Their Old Days, surely. But wait. 1948, USA: a clitoridectomy was performed on a five-year-old girl to stop her from exploring her genital region. OK, phew, that was in The Old, Old Days, surely. But wait. 1976: The Catholic Church defined female masturbation as "a grave moral disorder." Male masturbation was not labeled.

Time has passed. Today many of us can easily find the gift of realities about our own clitorises. But we can also become increasingly aware of current horrors. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a worldwide problem. Solutions are being offered at a not-for profit hospital in Burkina Faso (where 72.5 percent of females are FGM victims), staffed by volunteer doctors who perform restorative surgery to relieve the constant pain and to return pleasure options for victims of FGM (Clitoraid.com). Perhaps, through donations, we might 'adopt a clitoris...' "Give someone you've never met a gift she will never forget."

And we can educate those closer to home. Clitoris Liberation actions: One of us will write a children's book, Fingers in Wonderland. One clitoris bearer will design coloring books (age-specific, for toddler to teeter-er.) People joining Friends of Clitoris Liberation will educate their girl children and their boy chil-

dren about the joys of self-pleasuring. (Go inside and play with your Self.)

We all can start to talk:

Let's fill the airwaves with information about the clitoris, demanding equal time with Erectile Dysfunction.

Let our voices shout the truth... Female Genital Mutilation is a crime, not "female circumcision".

"You made me realize that, if the Dutch word for the labia is translated literally into English, it would be 'shame lips.' !!!"

Originally a Greek word, *Kleititoris*, meant "divine, famous, Goddess like."

START TODAY! Join our Clitoris Liberation Club. Buy a membership ring. Send in one box top from granola bars and real money and you can own a gold or sterling silver Clitoring, an anatomically correct finger sculpture (penelopii-jones.com).

Flash that ring. Your Clitoring will absolutely start a clitoris conversation.

[MeredithReiniger@gmail.com](mailto:MeredithReiniger@gmail.com)

## Faith Matters

THE WELCOME CHALLENGES OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY



By *Rev. Irene Monroe*

For some time now, my spouse and I have been bickering over where we should live in our retirement years. She, being a child from the South,

and me, being from the North, well, we have our tensions. I have jokingly dubbed them our "Mason-Dixon line feud."

We are not stretching our imaginations much to feel some of the same concerns our enslaved ancestors must have encountered as they considered the free states up North.

My spouse is tied to the weather of the South — a moist, subtropical climate with sultry summers. I like the four seasons of the North, but could live in autumn all year round.

During particularly heated battles, I have questioned if her desire to live in Georgia was worth living in a state that didn't recognize our marriage. Our marriage would be de facto dissolved.

Our ongoing exhaustive argument gained a new complication (in my mind, at least) with last month's historic Supreme Court ruling — *Obergefell v. Hodge* — that legalized same-sex marriage in all 50 states.

Justice Anthony M. Kennedy was once again the swing vote on this tough ruling. Kennedy wrote all recent decisions protecting LGBTQ rights, including the 2003 *Lawrence v. Texas* — which struck down sodomy laws that targeted gay men; and the 2013 *US v. Windsor* — recognizing and providing federal benefits to same-sex married couple in states where their marriages were legal. His argument last week was *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) redux, showing how these two historic struggles for marriage equality are interconnected.

Of course, I applaud the Supreme Court's decision. It would have been both wrong-hearted and wrong-headed to rule otherwise.

But with victory comes backlash. This change in law will not come easy. A movement is already afoot with a 50-state plan to pass "Religious Freedom Restoration" acts to roll back progress.

As the country battles this issue on a new front, we should hold on to Thomas Jefferson's words about how change is required for progress:

"I am not an advocate for frequent changes in laws and constitutions. But... laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance



also, and keep pace with the times.”

Same-sex marriage is of our times. And it's democracy at its best.

I understand democracy to be an ongoing process, where people are part of a participatory government working to dismantle all existing discriminatory laws truncating their full participation in society.

But democracy can only begin to work when those relegated to the fringes of society can sample what those in society take for granted as their inalienable rights. The right to marry regardless of a couple's sexual orientation or gender identity is now one of them. How wonderful to know that a same-sex couple in Mississippi has the same right to marry as someone here in Massachusetts.

Back to the challenge in my home: My spouse is all smiles now with this new ruling. She has been doing what I call “nicey nicey,” which is her way of using charm to wear down my recalcitrant stance on issues.

In celebration of Obergefell v. Hodge we went out for drinks at Legal Sea Foods in Harvard Square. While enjoying the evening summer breeze, my spouse said we could have this experience all year if we moved to a milder climate.

I snapped back and said, “I ain't moving to Georgia!”

And that's what marriage equality looks like.

## A Few Bricks Short

### SENIOR CARE



By David Hull

In some cultures of the world they revere and respect the elderly. Senior citizens are tenderly cared for by the family and honored for sharing their knowledge and wisdom with younger generations.

While in other cultures, people abandoned the elderly and infirm; leaving them alone to meet their demise – accepting death as a natural and customary part of life.

In my family, the elderly – my parents, I mean, not me, not yet anyway – are residing at a climate-controlled, security monitored assisted living center with a cable TV and internet accessibility and a private bus service. No “being abandoned to their own demise” for them!

Honestly, I never really cared about how other cultures cared for their elderly; since I was young and healthy, it didn't interest me. But things are changing and thanks to carpal tunnel and arthritic knees, I'm frequently reminded I am not so young anymore. What does the future look like for me?

Sometimes my mother gives me a little glimpse into what may be the future.

She calls me to refill the hummingbird feeder outside their apartment window. My mother calls when they run low on diet Coke in their refrigerator. She calls me when they need more Werther's Original Caramels in their candy dish. One time she called to complain that I brought her vanilla ice cream, but no chocolate sauce. “What am I supposed to do with vanilla ice cream and no chocolate sauce?”

When my mother was younger, she used to say that when she became old and elderly, she just wanted to be left alone in the woods to die so she wouldn't become a burden to her children.

“Hey, Mom,” I ask when she calls me with another request. “How would you like to go for a long nice walk in the woods?”

My mother, as oblivious as always, responded: “Oh, I can't today, dear, your father and I are going to the piano sing-a-long in the activities room at 2 o'clock.”

Their busy days are filled with Bingo games, ceramic classes and Wednesday wine tastings. Their meals are served in a dining hall with tablecloths, an aide makes their beds every morning and there is a library stocked with authors like James

Patterson, Stephen King, Janet Evanovich and Clive Cussler. Their only pressing daily appointment seems to be to get back to their apartment every evening by 7 p.m. to see Wheel of Fortune.

I stopped by to visit one afternoon. My mother informed me that I'm giving her a ride to her dentist appointment next week.

“Shouldn't you ask, rather than tell,” I reminded her. “I'm busy too. There's a whole world going on outside of this center, you know.”

“Oh, don't remind me.” She held up her hands in defense. “People are shooting each other, the ocean is being filled with poison, the Civil War has been over for 150 years, but they're still arguing about the confederate flag and now Donald Trump is trying to be President. No thanks. I want nothing to do with the world outside.”

Okay, so I still say my mother is crazy, but maybe, just maybe I can see a little more sense to her over-involvement with ceramics classes and sing-a-longs and wine tastings. The outside world that's supposedly passing her by ain't so perfect either.

I don't know if I'll be one of the elders who is respected and revered; I'll probably be more annoying and aggravating like my mother, but I do have to admit, those Wednesday wine tastings do look kind of fun!

Contact David at davidhull59@aol.com

## Queerspace

### CHANGES



By Laine DeLaney

So this month's column is going to be a bit short. There are some changes going on in my life and there will be some changes in this column to reflect that.

First, on a personal note, many of you know that I've moved back from Rochester to Buffalo. What a lot of folks may not know is that I'm planning on moving out to San Diego next. I have a plane ticket for September 15. Fear not, I'll keep writing for The Empty Closet as long as I can; this publication is still dear to my heart.

I've come to realize recently that there are a lot more facets of experience that I want to write about. The recent Supreme Court ruling is a constant reminder of my sexuality, especially when people speak of “gay” marriage, and talk about how gay couples are getting married all the time now. This is worthy of celebration, but reminded me that bisexual and pansexual people now also have the right to marry their same-sex partners – and discussing and being public about that is something that has reminded me that there's a lot of bi/pan erasure and phobia going on still too.

I'm also polyamorous, and consider being poly or mono as a genuine and important part of a person's sexuality. I'd like to explore and discuss that as well as a social issue and component of sexuality.

The concept of “queer space” has been one that's been very valuable to me on my journey. Finding spaces – especially Genesee Valley Gender Variants – that resonate with that feel of queer space, of a place where people of incredibly diverse expressions of sexuality and gender can comfortably ignore or delight in each other's identities but in any case simply treat each other as people.

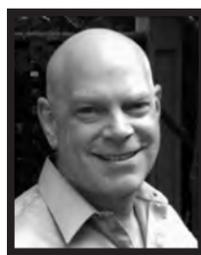
So, in keeping with my desire to expand the breadth of the column to not-just-trans issues of identity, I've decided to change the title to Queerspace. I know there are those for whom the word Queer has very negative connotations, and my apologies to those that it may upset. There is a vibrancy, open-mindedness and enthusiasm in modern Queer culture that I identify strongly with and that's something that I'd like to try and express in my writings and column.

So I've thrown some words around here, and next month I'll provide definitions and experiences to go with them.

Onward to new beginnings, fresh perspectives, and expanded scope of vision!

## Being Well

### COUNSELING 102



By John Aceto,  
LMHC

Now that I've written about what therapy is about and how it can help, I'll turn to the different kinds of therapy used by practitioners. And

there are several different professions who practice therapy: mental health counselors, social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurse practitioners to name the most common.

Practitioners of talk therapy utilize different means and philosophical approaches, so when choosing a therapist it is wise to ask what type of therapeutic model is used. There are way too many therapeutic models to explore in full in this column, so I'll break them down into categories.

The most well known is probably psychoanalysis, since it has been around the longest (I think!). Originally developed by Sigmund Freud, this approach is based on an individual's unconscious thoughts and perceptions that have developed throughout their life, and how they affect current behaviors. There are also a lot of theories on psychosexual stages of development here. Psychodynamic and Jungian therapies sprang from this well. The process is often long and can take several years to accomplish. Though it seems that not many therapists practice it en masse any longer, it forms the basis for most talk therapies.

Cognitive and Behavioral therapies were originated in the 1950s-60s by pioneers Aaron Beck and Albert Ellis respectively. These focus on the way you think (cognition) and the way you behave. There is recognition that people can change their thoughts or behaviors to overcome specific problems. Today dialectical behavioral therapy is all the rage, used to treat emotional dysregulation, chronic suicidal thoughts, and self-mutilation, complete with homework assignments.

The Humanistic approaches encompass Gestalt, Reality and Existential and Person-centered and Solution focused therapies, among others. These therapies focus on self-development, personal growth and responsibilities. They help people to recognize their strengths and focus on the “here and now”, kind of the opposite of psychoanalysis. Gestalt therapy's mantra, coined by Fritz Perls, is “the past is gone, the future is not yet, all we have is the now”.

So that's the dollar store tour of therapies, which by no means is complete. There are many therapists that subscribe to a specific mode of treatment. Others are more eclectic, taking from several models to complement their own personal style. I tend to use a blend of cognitive/behavioral and humanistic approaches, as I see them as more innovative and helpful developing the therapeutic relationship between counselor and consumer.

As always, if you have any questions contact me at AcetoCounseling@gmail.com

## What's Bothering Brandon?

### SOMETHING BORROWED, SOMETHING BLUE



By Brandon W.  
Brooks

As I sit here writing this month's article in my non-brownstone apartment that is not located in Manhattan, I contemplate my own romantic

future in an America that now allows and recognizes same-sex marriage nationwide. I don't mean to look a gift horse in the

mouth, but it took long enough.

With that being said, and ignoring the fact that we LGBT individuals have many more battles to wage other than marriage equality, I would like to address a growing concern I have. My concern is what will now happen to all the gay people who do not want to get married, or the LGBT youth entering adolescence in an environment that accepts same-sex marriage.

Will marriage, as it seems to be for straight individuals, become the expected and proscribed trajectory for all gay people? Will we now suspiciously regard our single LGBT brothers and sisters as potential threats to our own happiness, or even worse, will we greet them with pity?

I would not be truly honest with my readers if I said that I have memories of planning my wedding as a child. If anything, I had fantasies about raising children and having a well-to-do family, but not necessarily any fantasies about marriage or an actual wedding ceremony. I don't think this was because I believed in some way that I would not be able to get married due to being gay – I just don't think I'm the marrying kind.

At least for now.

But I do wonder, if I had grown up in an environment where the idea of same-sex marriage was, in a way, old hat – would I have planned and fantasized differently? Would I be desperately seeking a partner, now that I am in my late twenties, or would I have ended up in the same exact place I am today? If the possibility of happiness with someone else seemed more attainable to me, would I work harder?

I was recently privy to the planning of a dear friend's wedding and, although I could clearly see how happy both parties felt, I wondered if this planning would have the same effect on me. Sure, making a commitment to someone until the end of time in front of all of my loved ones sounds great, but will this truly be the “happiest moment of my life” as it is so commonly portrayed?

My concern is especially strong for those young LGBT kids who may be told both directly and indirectly to “marry or be alone forever”, now that same-sex marriage has been legalized across the country. So many times have I witnessed the wincing and quick polite smiles of those asked by their relatives, “Have you found that special someone, yet?” I was glad that at least being gay gave my extended family members reason to steer clear of the topic of marriage – they never asked me why I was essentially alone, or whether or not it was my choice.

I am, of course, forever grateful to now have the right and legal recognition to marry whomever I like, however the subsequent expectation to marry is not appreciated. I wonder how many of us have gotten married only to regret it later – how many of us have married because it was what we thought we ought to do?

I believe in traditional marriage – that two people marry when they love, respect and honor each other, regardless of gender. With the strikingly high and ever-growing number of marriages that end in divorce, I'd venture to guess that these people may have bought into that notion that “we marry because we ought to” and not “we marry because we want to.”

But who am I to say that? After all I am sitting here writing, alone.

It took Kate Middleton over three minutes to walk down the aisle to Prince William. I wonder how long it will take LGBT individuals to follow suit, or rather, morning dress.

Questions, comments or critique? Feel free to e-mail the author at:

brandonbrooks@mail.adelphi.edu ■

# Community

Find the friends, fun, and common interests you're looking for through the various groups listed here.

## DIGNITY-INTEGRITY

Since March 1975, Dignity-Integrity Rochester has been welcoming all who come through our doors, worshipping every week at 5 p.m. at St. Luke's and St. Simon's Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St., at the corner of Broad St. We have the following services and activities for the month of August 2015.

- 1st Sunday: Episcopal Mass, quiet
- 2nd Sunday: Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word, with music
- 3rd Sunday: Episcopal Mass/Healing Service, with music
- 4th Sunday: Roman Catholic Prayers to start the week, followed by pot luck
- 5th Sunday: Prayers to start the week

The theme for the August potluck is "Farm Fresh Foods". Support your favorite farmers market and bring your favorite dish based on the foods of the season! No opportunity to cook or shop? Don't worry, there is always enough to share. In fact, tradition has it that when we aren't cooking up a potluck supper on the fourth Sunday, we're gathering for fellowship around a tasty coffee hour and going out to a local restaurant for dinner each Sunday. Join us anytime!

**DON'T MISS THIS EVENT...**  
**AUGUST 15!** The FABULOUS 40th REUNION PICNIC is going to be great and you won't want to miss it! If you sent us a way to contact you, we've already sent out the invitations. Didn't get an invitation? There's a bit of time (RSVP due Aug. 8) so hurry if you want to be a part of the celebration! Send us your current contact information via our email, [info@di-rochester.org](mailto:info@di-rochester.org), or write to us directly at 17 S. Fitzhugh St., Rochester 14614 so we can be sure to send you an invitation!

Looking ahead to September, be sure to mark Sunday, Sept. 6 so you can join us for our annual Labor Day Picnic and Eucharist at our friends' home in Lima. This will replace the service at church. We'll also celebrate our 40th anniversary with an Episcopal Mass on Sunday, Sept. 27.

You can call the Hotline at 585-234-5092 or check our website at [www.di-rochester.org/](http://www.di-rochester.org/) for updates on services and activities.

## EMPIRE BEARS

It has been a great summer. The BEARS have been to Gay Pride in Buffalo and Rochester. Members have been at Bear Week in P-Town. And of course, we've done Bear Weekends at Jones Pond and Hillside.

In town, we meet for supper every Wednesday night at 6. Aug. 5, South Wedge Diner on Clinton; Aug. 12, Sum-

merville Grill on St. Paul; Aug. 19, Carra-bba's on W. Hen; Aug. 26, Winfield Grill on N. Winton; Sept. 2, Tap and Mallot on Gregory.

Jones Pond and Hillside both have lots of great weekends coming up in August and September. Members are regulars at both campgrounds, and can help you have a great weekend. Aggy Dune and Darienne Lake perform frequently at Jones Pond. It's a great show. The pool is heated; the café serves great meals, and the dances are great. Come on down!

## OPEN ARMS MCC

Open Arms MCC is Beyond Open and Affirming...Beyond Welcoming. We are a church for ALL.

Our 10:30 Sunday morning service is a celebration that blends traditional and contemporary worship styles. Brae Adams, our lay pastoral leader, delivers an inspirational message that connects the scriptures with everyday life.

Children are invited to participate in our Children's Moment. During the summer when Sunday school is not in session, they may then play quietly in an area of the sanctuary that is equipped with appropriate activities, allowing parents to participate in the rest of the service. Following the service, all are welcome to have coffee, snacks and conversation in the Community Center. Our Adult Sunday School is off for the summer and will resume in September.

We have now reached a point where our community garden is giving back to us. This is a "salad garden" and we have lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, radishes, etc. Congregants are encouraged to pick whatever is ready. Bring a bag and help yourself eat healthier!

Our garage sale was a big success! Many thanks to everyone who donated items, set up the tent, hauled tables, came "bright and early" Friday and Saturday to set up, worked the sale, and helped with clean-up; you are a blessing to Open Arms. Special kudos to BJ and Donna Dehmler, who hosted the sale and worked tirelessly setting up, organizing, providing food and wrapping up loose ends when the sale was done.

We have begun several recycling projects. We have a bin in the Community Center for collecting electronics recyclables such as: empty ink cartridges, empty toner cartridges, and cell phones, chargers, batteries, or cords. We are also recycling scrap metal through Metallico Rochester. Congregants, neighbors and friends can drop off recyclable metal, mention that it is for the Open Arms MCC account and the proceeds will come to us.

Our Social Justice Team continues

to support Dwayne's House, which provides clothing and monetary assistance to homeless LGBTQ youth in Jamaica. We help fund the work of our pastor emeritus, Jim Mulcahy, who ministers to our LGBTQ siblings in Eastern Europe. We also collect the change from our pockets during our services for the DUO fund (Do Unto Others). We use this fund to assist people in our neighborhood with urgent housing, medical, food or transportation needs.

Our emergency food shelf is stocked with items for neighbors who stop in looking for emergency supplies. This includes toiletries, paper goods and non-perishable foods. We also some clothing available -- socks, shoes, sneakers and shirts.

We host numerous community groups in our Community Center: AFTY (Adult Families with Trans Youth) meets the first Tuesday of each month from 5:30-6:30 p.m.; SAGE Rochester (ages 50+) meets at 11:30 on Tuesdays and Thursdays; PFLAG (Parents, Friends and Family of Lesbians, Gays, Trans, and Questioning) meets on the third Sunday of each month at 1 p.m.; and TAGR (Trans Alliance of Greater Rochester) meets at 3 on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month. Our facilities are available for rental by any community groups needing a safe and flexible meeting space.

Open Arms MCC is committed to Building Bridges and Changing Lives. You are welcome, regardless of your sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, or religious beliefs. We are located at 707 East Main St., across from the Delta Sonic. There is plenty of

free parking in front and to the side of our building. For updated information on coming events and to view our facilities, check our website: [openarmsmcc.org](http://openarmsmcc.org). Our lay pastoral leader, Brae Adams, has office hours by appointment. You can also reach us by phone at (585) 271-8478.

## ROMANS

Members of the Rochester Male Naturists (ROMANS) are excited about the upcoming gay nude camp happening towards the end of August and taking place at a beautiful campsite in the Pocono mountains.

Members can stay up to 10 days at the campground living au naturel 24 hours a day with a few hundred naked men. We eat, exercise, sleep, swim, dance and watch shows in our birthday suits, requiring only a towel or sarong to sit on and plenty of suntan lotion. There are also various workshops, yoga classes and practical demonstrations to fulfill everyone's taste and interest.

This is one of the biggest events for male nudists in the nation and happening so close to home for us living in the northeast. It's a life changing experience for many first timers and an annual ritual or pilgrimage for other gay and gay-friendly nudists. To find out more about this gay nude camp, please contact the ROMANS via email at [wnyromans@yahoo.com](mailto:wnyromans@yahoo.com) or call us at our message line 585-281-4964.

ROMANS is a social club for gay and gay-friendly male nudists over 21. More information about the club can be found at our website at [www.wnyromans.com](http://www.wnyromans.com). ■



### Rochester Kink Society

[www.rochesterkinksociety.com](http://www.rochesterkinksociety.com)  
 Email us at: [rks@rochesterkinksociety.com](mailto:rks@rochesterkinksociety.com)



Rochester Kink Society (RKS) is a social organization dedicated to providing a safe environment for alternative lifestyle and kink-oriented individuals to network, teach, learn, share, practice and discuss BDSM and related kink.

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**\*Come Join Us at Our Annual Picnic\***

*Check out our website for details*

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**RKS Monthly Munch on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – 2:30pm – 4:30pm**  
 Jay's Diner (separate room to the left)  
 2612 West Henrietta Road, Rochester, NY  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
*Check out our website for Our Calendar of Events*  
 and for the locations of  
 Our Monthly Social, Our TNG Munch, and Our Kink Classic Social

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# Arts & Entertainment



## Kasha stars in one-woman show at JCC Aug. 1

Mrs. Kasha Davis will appear in her one-woman show, "There's Always Time for a Cocktail," at JCC Hart Theatre after a hit run in NYC at the Laurie Beechman Theatre. One night only... Aug. 1 at 8 p.m.

Tickets are on sale at <http://www.jcccenterstage.org>.

JCC says, "This is not a drag show, it is a real play. The life story of little Eddie Popil's transformation from a young boy in Scranton, Pa., to 'International Celebrity Housewife,' Mrs. Kasha Davis, and a star of RuPaul's Drag Race. Join the ultimate hostess for an evening of music, stories and party games with a heartfelt story of love, acceptance and finding your own path." ■

## Bread & Water Theatre presents five plays for 2015-16 season

Artists are a peculiar lot formed in the crucible of their time to both reflect and challenge the times they live in. Bread & Water's 2015/2016 season is dedicated to the lives of artists who have shaped the 20th century with their daring, challenging and loveable works.

Over the next year, Bread & Water Theatre will produce five plays as part of their season of shows. These shows include *The Pornographer* by Kirt Shine-man, *The Dark Light* by Mercedes de Acosta, *Confessions of a Nightingale* by Charlotte Chandler and Ray Stricklyn, *Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead* by Bert Royal, and *The Seagull* by Anton Chekov.

Written during a time when stories of Sapphic love could not be expressed on the stage, Mercedes de Acosta crafted a taut drama of unrequited love, passion and vengeance mirroring her own love affairs with some of the foremost women of her time. *The Dark Light* is set in Norway at the turn of the last century. Svanhild will stop at nothing to destroy her brother's chances of success, but underneath this veneer of animosity is a dark secret and a passionate love affair that could destroy them both. (Performance dates: Oct. 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 and 31 at 7:30 p.m.; Oct. 18 and 25 at 2 p.m.)

He was one of the great twentieth cen-

tury American playwrights, and Tennessee Williams' private persona is shown to have been just as fascinating as his plays in this delightful, moving, and incisive ninety-minute drama. *Confessions of a Nightingale* is structured as an interview with a reporter, to whose unheard questions Williams responds directly to the audience as if they are doing the asking. We learn of the struggles of his early years, his first successes, the price of his fame and his later years of dissolution and decline, all in Williams' delightfully witty style. (Performance dates: Nov. 6, 7, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21 at 7:30 p.m.; Nov. 15 and 22 at 2 p.m.)

*Dog sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead* may remind some of the wonderfully loveable characters created by Charles Schultz. (Performance dates: February 26, 27, March 4, 5, 11, and 12 at 7:30 p.m.; March 6 and 13 at 2 p.m.)

A daring new play is performed on the shore of a lake. Its idealistic young author is devastated when his work is mocked by family and friends. With comic brio and keen understanding, *The Seagull* explores our insatiable human desire to live an extraordinary life. (Performance dates: March 17, 18, 25, 26, April 1 and 2 at 7:30 p.m.; March 27 and April 3 at 2 p.m.)

The 2015/2016 Season will be presented at 172 West Main St. running through April 3, 2016. Subscription tickets range from \$25-\$35 and may be purchased at [BreadandWaterTheatre.org](http://BreadandWaterTheatre.org). No patron will be turned away for an inability to pay. For more information, call (585) 271-5523. ■

## Fringe Festival announces next month's "unordinary" lineup

The fourth First Niagara Rochester Fringe Festival (Thursday, Sept. 17 – Saturday, Sept. 26) announced its complete lineup on July 14 at The Little Theatre. The 2015 Fringe will include more than 500 performances and events (up from 2014's 380) featuring all genres of art in 25+ venues in downtown Rochester, with more than 120 of them offered free of charge.

The full schedule is available and all tickets are on sale at [rochesterfringe.com](http://rochesterfringe.com).

This year's Fringe is calling itself "unordinary," and in that spirit, has commissioned Berlin's Rimini Protokoll – a ground-breaking, award-winning, site-specific theatre company – to produce its international hit, *Remote X*, for Rochester – only the second U.S. city to host the show. The first took place in New York City this past March – although it has been produced in 17 major cities around the world, including Paris, Milan, Lisbon and St. Petersburg. This "pedestrian-based, live art experience" takes 50 people (or "horde," as the show calls them) wearing headphones along a carefully planned urban route. *Remote Rochester* will have 20 performances during the 10 days of Fringe.

"A synthetic voice in the headphones directs the movements of the horde, while music turns the cityscape into a personal film, composing a soundtrack to streets, parking garages, churches and backyards," explained Fringe Producer Erica Fee. "The whole idea of this unique tour is for audiences to discover new perspectives about their city, themselves, and reality itself."

This year's big, free headliner show at Friday on the Fringe (Sept. 18, the second night of Fringe) in Martin Luther King, Jr. Park at Manhattan Square features NYC's Grounded Aerial. With more than 30 years of combined experience in choreographing, performing, and rigging extraordinary aerial events, Grounded Aerial has appeared all over the world. U.S. highlights include performances at the Spiderman II release party, Lincoln Center, and on NBC's America's Got Talent as well as its recent I Can Do That. They will perform on the side of the 21-story HSBC Plaza as well as on the park's metal sculpture (Tribute to Man) across the street.

The popular Spiegeltent returns to One Fringe Place (the festival "hub" at corner of East Main and Gibbs Streets), but this year's magical "mirror tent" is *The Aurora* from The Netherlands. The historic treasure will leave Europe for the first time to make its US debut here, as well as providing more audience capacity than the previous Magic Crystal. Inside, two world-premiere shows will run throughout Fringe. Both have been created and will be hosted by Matt and Heidi Morgan, hosts of the world-renowned Las Vegas Spiegelworld show, Absinthe. Cabinet of Wonders celebrates the eccentricities of life with comedy, contortion, aerial, feats of strength, juggling, and a one-legged tap dancer; Princess Wendy's Late Nite Tease Room features a down-and-out birthday princess in a comedy and burlesque romp for adults.

Also in the Spiegeltent, comedian (and former Brother Wease sidekick) Jamie Lissow returns to the Fringe – previously opening for both Patton Oswalt and Jay Pharoah – for one show only on Saturday, September 19 at 9:30 p.m. Silent Disco – a total sellout each year – returns at 11 p.m. on both Fridays and Saturdays, as well as its lunchtime version that debuted last year, Brown Bag Disco, at noon on Friday, Sept. 25.

The Spiegelgarten – that urban, pop-

up lounge – will be back as well, complete with fire pit, eclectic furniture, art and lighting, bar and food trucks. Free entertainment will include the return of Pedestrian Drive-In (free, outdoor movies using Silent Disco headphones). Ticketed, site-specific shows will include the return of Dashboard Dramas (taking place in four parked cars) and Bushwacked (happening in a pup tent), as well as a new addition: Hot Tub: The Musical.

Luke Kempner's award-winning impressions comedy, *Upside Downton*, comes to Rochester direct from London's West End. In this hilarious parody, he recreates more than 30 Downton Abbey and celebrity characters. The London Daily Telegraph called it a "remarkable tour de force." Performances are Friday and Saturday, Sept. 25 and 26 at 8 p.m. in Kilbourn Hall.

Free entertainment – bands, show highlights, Chalk Art, food and beverage vendors, street entertainers, etc. – will take place on Gibbs Street for two weekends this year for the first time: Saturday (3-11 p.m.) and Sunday (1-7 p.m.), Sept. 19 and 20 and Friday (5-11 p.m.) and Saturday (3-11 p.m.), Sept. 25 & 26.

While the Fringe curates the above headliners as well as all free outdoor entertainment, the vast majority of its 500+ performances and events are productions that were submitted by artists to venues by April 22, 2015, and then chosen to be presented at Fringe by those venues. Rochester's "bifurcated" Fringe adds four new venues this year: Abilene, The Strong, the new Lyric Theatre, and RAPA at School of the Arts.

Ticket prices for the venue-curated shows range from \$3-\$25 (\$10 average), set by the venues themselves. A very limited number of Fringe Fanatic Passes are available for \$190. They include all Spiegeltent shows this year as well as *Remote Rochester* – only *Upside Downton* is not included. BUY EARLY AND SAVE! Spiegeltent single tickets range from \$7 (Brown Bag Disco) to \$182 (VIP booth), increasing in price on 9/14; *Remote Rochester* tickets are \$25 (\$28 on 9/14); *Upside Downton*: \$31 (\$34 on 9/14).

Tickets are also available by phone at (585) 957-9837 (additional phone fees apply). Tickets will be available in person at the Spiegeltent Box Office (One Fringe Place, corner of Gibbs & Main Sts.) beginning Sunday, Sept. 13; and at venues (if available) starting one hour prior to performance.

More in the Sept. EC. ■



The cover of Melissa Etheridge's 2015 album "thisisme".

## Melissa Etheridge to perform at NY State Fair on Pride Day, Aug. 28

Melissa Etheridge will perform on Aug. 28 in Syracuse at the New York State Fair's first Pride Day, Aug. 28.

The Pride Day will include a ceremony and rainbow flag raising. The concert will take place in the Chevy Court.

Advance tickets are 40 percent off, and can be purchased at [www.nysfair.org](http://www.nysfair.org). ■

**Movies at a Theater Near You**

*By Merle Exit*

**BOULEVARD**, directed by Dito Montiel, was first presented at the 2014 Tribeca Film Festival. The movie, starring Robin Williams, is high drama and the last movie that Williams made.

He portrays Nolan Mack who has worked at the same bank for almost 26 years in a life of monotony. He and his wife Joy (Kathy Baker) have embraced their marriage as a convenient distraction from facing reality, each sleeping in separate rooms at this point. Then, one day, what starts as an aimless drive down an unfamiliar boulevard turns into a life-altering decision for Nolan.

When he meets a troubled young male prostitute named Leo (Roberto Aguirre) on his drive home, Nolan finds himself breaking from the confines of his old boring life and coming to terms with his closeted sexuality and determination to help the young man's life as well.

Don't expect any humor in the film and at times it may be dragged out and boring. Do expect some fine acting from Williams and Baker and praise from the LGBT community. Boulevard will be in theatres this month. Should you be looking for sexual scenes? It may surprise you.

**STILL ALICE** stars Julianne Moore. In the film, written and directed by Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland, Moore portrays a renowned linguistic professor at Columbia University, Dr. Alice Howland, who is diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's.

At first Alice does not think much is wrong after having a "senior moment" and not being able to remember the right word in a conversation. Things quickly get worse, however, when during her daily jog through the campus Alice suddenly realizes she has no idea where she is. But when she has an accident at home because she cannot remember which door leads to the bathroom, she agrees to be tested for Alzheimer's.

The film focuses not only on how Alice copes with the loss of herself, but also how her family, played by Alec Baldwin, Kristen Stewart, Kate Bosworth and Hunter Parrish, deal with the realization that Alice's memories of them will soon be gone forever. A must see movie.

**FRANK THE BASTARD** centers around Clair Defina (Rachel Miner), a 33-year old New Yorker who returns to the childhood home she and her father fled after her mother's tragic and mysterious death. Arriving in the seemingly quaint town in Maine, Clair encounters and undercurrent of secrecy and hostility, most of it linked to the local bigwig, Cyrus Gast (William Sadler), whose latest land development scheme promises to revitalize the community but is not what it appears to be.

Most of the town is intimidated by Cyrus, and when Clair starts delving into events, both present and past, she finds herself in jeopardy. As she comes face to face with a dark legacy that has been buried, literally and figuratively, for decades, she also has a series of strange encounters with the enigmatic Frank Byron (Andy Comeau), Cyrus' bastard son. In Frank, Clair ultimately finds her only ally in a battle to redeem the crimes of the past.

I found that it took a great deal for me to figure out who is who and who did what to whom. Gripping, mysterious, and full of action. OMG...Clair is running through the woods and guess what? I went hysterical! The movie is written and directed by Brad Coley. Good ending.

**Trailer is out for new lesbian film "Freeheld"**

*By Joe Morgan on gaystarnews.com*

The new trailer is out for Julianne Moore and Ellen Page's lesbian drama "Freeheld".

Following the historic Supreme Court ruling in favor of marriage equality, this film about a same-sex couple that helped pave the way is perfect timing.



Julianne Moore and Ellen Page in "Freeheld".

"Freeheld," directed by Peter Sollett, tells the true story of Laurel Hester (Moore) and Stacie Andree (Page). Laurel, a police detective, finds out she has terminal lung cancer and seeks to leave her benefits to Stacie, her partner.

Page came out shortly before filming and spoke of her experience to Entertainment Weekly earlier this year.

"To be shooting the movie so soon after coming out was some of the most joy I've ever felt on a film set, which is a tricky thing to say because we're telling a story that's incredibly tragic," she said.

"But the feeling of being out and playing someone who's gay, and someone whose courage has allowed me to live my life, that feels amazing."

The film will have a limited release on 2 October, expanding into more theaters on 16 October. ■

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**28**

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FRIDAY  
AUGUST  
**28**

Grandstand

JIM GAFFIGAN

THURSDAY  
SEPTEMBER  
**3**

Chevy Court

MEGHAN TRAINOR

THURSDAY  
SEPTEMBER  
**3**

Grandstand

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## First of Its Kind

Chuck Lundeen and John Williams have supported Nazareth throughout their 28-year relationship, from attending Arts Center performances to, in Lundeen's case, serving as an instructor. When the prospect arose to give back by creating a scholarship at a place that has given them so much, they were honored.

The Williams-Lundeen Scholarship is Nazareth's first for a student who self-identifies as part of the LGBTQ community.

"It is exciting to live in an era where inaugurating this scholarship is both possible and prudent," Williams and Lundeen say. "We are happy to know this will have a positive impact on the life of a student at Nazareth—a college very close to us for so many reasons. It is wonderful to be able to help an LGBTQ student explore the incredible experience Nazareth has to offer."

Offered beginning in fall 2015, the scholarship embodies Nazareth well—an open and accepting environment for students from all backgrounds.

.....

For more information on endowing your own Nazareth scholarship, visit [go.naz.edu/scholarships](http://go.naz.edu/scholarships) or contact Gift Officer **Sydney Bell** at [sbell9@naz.edu](mailto:sbell9@naz.edu) or at 585-389-2179.

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# GAY ALLIANCE NEWS FOR AUGUST 2015



## Volunteer of the Month: Raymond Swails

At the Gay Alliance, we are blessed with a steady crew of people who help keep our office functioning. The Volunteer of the Month for August is one of those energetic and dedicated people: Raymond Swails. Raymond is one of our ten office volunteers and in his year working

with us he has truly taken the job to heart.

Since he began working as an office volunteer in August 2014, Raymond has worked more than 200 hours in our office. He's always ready to cover a shift when someone can't make theirs. Whenever he's in the office, Raymond has everyone laughing with his light spirit and great sense of humor. He almost always arrives early for his shifts, and can consistently be relied on to complete any office tasks we ask him to do- and often he asks for more work! When visitors come to the office, Raymond is always warm and welcoming, creating a comfortable space for everyone involved.

Raymond is a Rochester native who likes the color red and tacos. He's a life-long lover of everything Beyonce- he was even president of the Beyonce fan club in high school. He started working with the Gay Alliance to learn more about his identity, his lifestyle, and that of others in the community. When Raymond's not in the office, his hobbies include church, dancing, and spending time with family.

We are deeply grateful to Raymond for the energy and dedication he brings to the Gay Alliance. Our organization simply wouldn't be the same without passionate advocates like him. It is because of his drive and dedication that we have chosen to honor Raymond Swails as Volunteer of the Month for August. ■



## Meet the Board: Jason Barnecut-Kearns

By Susan Jordan

Jason Barnecut-Kearns currently works at Xerox as VP Finance for the U.S. Channel Group. He has worked for Xerox for 21 years in various finance leadership positions and is treasurer for Xerox's LGBT employee resource group, GALAXe.

Originally from England, Jason moved to the U.S. 12 years ago on an expat assignment for Xerox. He married Bill Barnecut-Kearns in August 2014; they live in Penfield with their two Yorkies, Ethan and Sally.

Jason became involved with the Gay Alliance in 2011 when John Altieri asked him to join the board. He took on the role of chair of the Finance and Audit Committee. He said, "Having been involved with GALAXe, I was aware of the Gay Alliance, but wanted to become more involved and understand how the GAGV supported the Rochester LGBT community. Given the size of the agency, I wanted to be able to use my finance expertise to help improve the financial position of the agency and enable the agency to grow for the future."

As a Board member, Jason feels it is important that he actively support the agency, through raising funds, bringing contacts and acting as an ambassador to the community. He added, "In addition to supporting the agency as a board member, my key goal is to undertake a governance role, providing guidance and support to the Executive Director, staff and fellow board members."

"Given that the GAGV only has a small number of staff, it is important to have a board that has a diverse background of experience and is able to represent the community that it serves. We all lead busy lives (personal and working), but I believe it is important that we take some time out and focus on giving back to our community. Joining a non-profit board has given me an opportunity to become more involved in a local agency and really understand the local issues we face. Through the combination of staff, a strong board and many volunteers and allies, I have really seen the GAGV advance forward during the time I have been on the board." ■

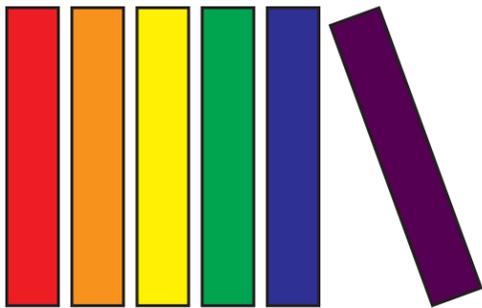
## Gay Alliance Library to close until after move

The Library & Archives of the GAGV will close to the public until the Alliance move to its new location at 100 College St.

At this time the Library is unable to accept any new donations of books, but may be able to take primary source or significant rare collections. Volunteers will attempt to honor any special requests for materials, but much of the library will be packed up for the duration of the move.

Please contact the Library with questions at [library@gayalliance.org](mailto:library@gayalliance.org) or at 585-244-8640.

GAY  
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LIBRARY  
AND  
ARCHIVES



**Hours:** Every Monday & Wednesday: 6-8 pm • 875 E. Main St. (1st floor off Prince St. lobby) • Rochester 14605 • 585 244-8640 • [GayAlliance.org](http://GayAlliance.org)

**SAGE ROCHESTER  
ANNUAL SUMMER PICNIC BASH**

**Sunday August 30, 4-9pm**

**Tay House Lodge at Cobb's Hill Park  
85 Hillside Avenue 14609**

**CATERED PICNIC, MUSIC, GAMES, BONFIRE, DANCE**

**\$10.00 Adults (\$8.00 advance), \$5.00 Children under 12**

Advance tickets \$8.00  
online at [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org) or from SAGE members

Contact Jessica Gibson at [jessielee739402@yahoo.com](mailto:jessielee739402@yahoo.com)  
or Anne Tischer (585) 426-0862 for information

# ON GARD

The **Gay Alliance on-line Resource Directory**  
The online community tool – providing local, state and national resources... twenty-four, seven! [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org)

The Gay Alliance is a non-profit agency, dedicated to cultivating a healthy, inclusive environment where Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) people are safe, thriving, and enjoying equal rights. We are a coalition of individuals and groups working to empower LGBTQ people to affirm their identities and create an atmosphere where the diversity can thrive both collectively and separately. We educate and advocate for civil rights for all and for the eradication of homophobia.

**The Gay Alliance, 875 East Main Street, Rochester, New York 14605 • Phone:** (585) 244-8640 **Fax:** (585) 244-8246  
**Website:** [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org) **E-mail:** [Info@gayalliance.org](mailto:Info@gayalliance.org) **Hours:** Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm • **Board President:** David Zona  
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**Gay Alliance**



## YOUTH

**Our Program** empowers today's teens to meet today's challenges! It provides a safe space to explore their identity, make friends, build community, gain life skills, become a leader and have fun!

**Fabulous Fridays:** 7-9pm. (Ages 13-20)

**Gender Identity Support Group:**  
Tuesdays: 5:30-6:30pm. (Ages 13-18)  
*More info: youth@gayalliance.org*

**The Gay Alliance**  
875 E. Main Street, (5th Floor)  
Auditorium Center, Rochester, NY 14605  
585-244-8640 • www.gayalliance.org

### Where Has the Education Program Been in June 2015

- Straight Talk at Exelis Inc. Geospatial Systems
- Meeting the Needs of LGBTQ Older Adults at the Alzheimer's Association Rochester & Finger Lakes Region
- Shoulder To Stand On Film and Discussion at SUNY Fredonia
- LGBTQ Outreach and Archival Process at SUNY Fredonia
- Creating Safe and Inclusive Schools at French Road Elementary
- Shoulder To Stand On Film and Discussion at the Brighton Memorial Library
- LGBTQ 101 at Pittsford Mendon High School (for 5 health classes)
- SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Certification Program at Norfolk State University in Virginia
- Shoulder To Stand On Film and Discussion at the Pittsford Library
- Creating Safe and Inclusive Schools at Holley Elementary School
- Tabling at the Deaf Fest
- SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Certification Program at Monmouth University in New Jersey
- SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Certification Program at Southern Illinois University in Illinois
- Shoulder To Stand On Film and Discussion at the Henrietta Library
- The Future of the LGBTQ Community the Bread and Water Theater

Quotes from June Evaluations

- "Best workshop ever! I'm ready to take over the world!"
- "Incredibly detailed and informational! This was hands down the most important presentation we've had all year."
- "Informative and eye-opening. Best one ever. Wonderful presentation and information. The day was more than I had expected! Wonderful opportunity for our staff."
- "Quality experience. Very conversational and welcoming. Best presentation team in my 10 years as a professional."



**LEFT:** SAGE members make Pride masks and decorations. **RIGHT:** Scott Fearing shares details about the new Gay Alliance LGBTQ Resource Center with SAGE members Reba Silterra, Pete Fedele, Jessie Gibson, (Scott Fearing), Brian Hurlbut, David Hutchinson.

## SAGE AUGUST CALENDAR

### Tuesday, August 4

10:30-11:30 Yoga with Tom; 11:30 am-2 pm brown bag lunch, games & conversation; 5 pm-7 pm SAGE HAPPY HOUR at 140 Alex Bar and Grill (140 Alexander Street, 14607). Heard any good jokes?

### Thursday, August 6

10:30am-11:30am Yoga with Tom. No afternoon program

### Saturday, August 8

5pm-8pm Saturday Night Bingo Bash - a community potluck and BINGO, Bring your friends, neighbors and family to this fun, friendly event. \$3 with token prizes. All potluck dishes welcome - salads, dessert, main dishes and appetizers!

### Tuesday, August 11

10:30am-11:30am Yoga with Tom; 11:30-12:30pm brown bag lunch; 12:45pm Tour of the new Gay Alliance and LGBTQI Resource Center. Join the gang as we explore the new center, which will soon be home for SAGE Rochester events and gatherings. Bring a friend!

### Thursday, August 13

No Yoga. 10:30am-noon, Breakfast Club at Dennys (911 Jefferson Rd, Henrietta). RSVP to Audet at (585) 287-2958 no later than Aug 10.

### Tuesday, August 18

10:30 am-11:30 Yoga with Tom, 11:30-12:30pm brown bag lunch; 12:30pm Health and wellness series with Reba Silterra RDN CDE: "Small Steps. Big Rewards. Your GAME PLAN for Preventing type 2 Diabetes - Part 1: Who is at Risk?" Free class, open to public.

### Thursday, August 20

10:30 am-11:30am Yoga with Tom, no afternoon program.

### Tuesday, August 25

10:30-11:30 Yoga with Tom, 11:30-12:30pm brown bag lunch; 12:30pm OUT for Health - walk in the Neighborhood of the Arts with the SAGE "Strollers". Lets check out Village Gate and the gardens of the Memorial Art Gallery. Perhaps we will stop at the local coffeehouse. We are walking for wellness and fun!

### Thursday, August 27

10:30 am-11:30am Yoga with Tom, No afternoon program.

### Saturday, August 30

Sage Summer Picnic Bash 2015, 4pm - 9pm, Tay House Lodge in Cobb's Hill Park (85 Hillside Ave) \$10 donation includes catered picnic food, dance music, games, fun, friends and bonfire. Bring a chair & a dessert to share if you want. We will have yard games galore and are hunting up a karaoke machine...

**SAVE THE DATE:** Halloween Party, Saturday October 31 at Lake Riley Lodge.

**NOTE:** The "Corning Excursion" is being postponed to a date in the fall when more people are available to go...

**SAGE Rochester** is a program of the Gay Alliance designed for LGBTQI people over 50. The August meetings will take place at Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St. All programs are open to the public and all are welcome. Yoga is \$5 per person and is offered every Tuesday and Thursday unless specified in calendar. All programs are subject to change and all members are responsible for their own transportation and meals. Become a SAGE member or get information at 585-244-8640. We are also on Facebook. ■

# Resources

## BISEXUALITY RESOURCES

AMBI Los Angeles; American Institute of Bisexuality (Journal of Bisexuality); Bay Area Bisexual Network; ; BiNet USA; Bisexual Organizing Project (BOP); Biversity Boston; Boston Bisexual Women's Network; ComBlne - Columbus, Ohio; Fenway Health's Bi Health Program; Los Angeles Bi Task Force; New York Area Bisexual Network; Robyn Ochs's site; The Bi Writers Association; The Bisexual Resource Center (email [brc@bire-source.net](mailto:brc@bire-source.net))

## CULTURAL

**Rochester Women's Community Chorus**  
234-4441. (See Ongoing calendar).

**Rochester Gay Men's Chorus**  
[www.thergmc.org](http://www.thergmc.org)

### Open Arms Community Center

Available for parties, events, meetings. 707 E. Main St. Parking. Accepting and welcoming of all. 271-8478.

## DEAF SERVICES

**Deaf Rainbow Network of Rochester**  
See Facebook.

**Spectrum LGBTIQ & Straight Alliance**  
RIT/NTID student group. <[SpectrumComment@groups.facebook.com](mailto:SpectrumComment@groups.facebook.com)

## ELDERS

### Gay Alliance SAGE Rochester

Many monthly get togethers, some at Open Arms MCC 707 E. Main St. 244-8640; [SAGE@gayalliance.org](mailto:SAGE@gayalliance.org)

## FAMILY

### Open Arms Community Center

Open Arms Community Center available for parties, events and meetings; 707 East Main St. Plenty of parking. We are inclusive, actively accepting, welcoming of all people. 271-8478 [openarmsmcc.org](http://openarmsmcc.org)

### CNY Fertility Center

Integrative Fertility Care. Support meetings, webinars, workshops. Information: [cbriel@cnyfertility.com](mailto:cbriel@cnyfertility.com); [www.cnyhealingarts.com](http://www.cnyhealingarts.com)

### Rochester Gay Moms' Group

Support group for lesbian mommies and wannabe mommies in Rochester and surrounding areas. Subscribe: [RochesterGayMoms-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:RochesterGayMoms-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

### Catholic Charities Community Services

1099 Jay Street, Building J (585) 339-9800, [www.ccsrochester.org](http://www.ccsrochester.org). Offers: Families in Transition services for HIV positive parents with small children, short term/long term housing assistance, employment services, supportive case management, health education and behavioral health education and peer navigation for substance abuse linkages.

### Lesbian & Gay Family Building Project

Headquartered in Binghamton and with a presence throughout Upstate NY, the Project is dedicated to helping LGBTQ people achieve their goals of building and sustaining healthy families. Claudia Stallman, Project Director, 124 Front St., Binghamton, NY 13905; 607-724-4308; e-mail: [LesGayFamBldg@aol.com](mailto:LesGayFamBldg@aol.com). Web: [www.PrideAndJoyFamilies.org](http://www.PrideAndJoyFamilies.org).

### Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)

PFLAG's threefold mission: supporting parents and family members in coming out process; educating the community; advocating on behalf of LGBT family members. [rochesterepflag@gmail.com](mailto:rochesterepflag@gmail.com); 585-993-3297.

### Adoptive Parent Support Group

Monthly potluck lunches. For information, location, call Shari, 350-2529.

### Angel Food Ministry

Box of fresh/frozen food for \$30 in advance. Menu changes monthly. For information and distribution sites, call 585 861-4815.

## HIV/AIDS

### Free testing for HIV exposure

is available from New York State Department of Health: call Rochester Area Regional Hotline at (585) 423-8081, or 1 800 962-5063. Deaf or hearing impaired people should call (585) 423-8021 (TDD.) Available from NY Dept. of Health: HIV and STD resource testing site. Rapid testing in only 10 minutes. STD testing provided by Bulls-head Clinic, 855 W. Main St., Rochester. Contact: [Narissa@Rochester.hotline](mailto:Narissa@Rochester.hotline).

### Volunteer Legal Services Project

(585) 232-3051; [www.vlsprochester.org](http://www.vlsprochester.org). 1 West Main St., Suite 500 Rochester, NY 14614. Free legal services for low-income HIV positive clients. No criminal cases. Appointments are scheduled at area medical provider locations or by calling 295-5708.

### Trillium Health

Trillium Health is the leading provider of HIV/AIDS services in Rochester and the Finger Lakes. On-site services include HIV testing and limited STD screenings, Primary and HIV Specialty Medical Care, Pharmacy, and many more. Satellite offices in Geneva and Bath. Trillium Health is also a leader in providing services and education to members of the LGBT community. Contact Information: Website: [www.trilliumhealthny.org](http://www.trilliumhealthny.org). Main Office: 259 Monroe Ave., Rochester, NY 14607; Main Phone: 585-545-7200, Health Services After Hours: 585-258-3363; Case Management After Hours (Lifeline): 585-275-5151; Fax: 585-244-6456. Finger Lakes Office: 605 W. Washington St., Geneva, NY 14456, 315-781-6303. Southern Tier Office: 122 Liberty St. Box 624, Bath, NY 14810 607-776-9166. The Health Outreach Project: 416 Central Ave., Rochester, NY 14605; 585-454-5556.

### Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley

Referrals to physicians and service agencies. (585) 244-8640; [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org).

### Victory Alliance

University of Rochester Medical Center. One of several research sites worldwide that comprise the HIV Vaccine Trials Network. Rochester site conducts research vaccine studies sponsored by National Institutes of Health (NIH). 585-756-2329; [www.vaccineunit.org](http://www.vaccineunit.org).

### Threshold

At The Community Place, 145 Parsells Ave., third floor, 585-454-7530. Provides confidential HIV, STD testing and General Health Care, ages 12-25. Sliding fee scale, no one denied, most insurances accepted. Mon., Wed., Fri. 9am-5pm; Tues., Thurs., 9am-7pm; Sat. 10am-2pm. [www.ThresholdCenter.org](http://www.ThresholdCenter.org)

### Center for Health and Behavioral Training of Monroe County

853 W. Main St., Rochester 14611. Collaboration of Monroe County Health Department and U.R. Provides year-round training in prevention and management of STDs, HIV, TB and related issues, such as domestic violence and case management. (585)753-5382 v/tty.

### Planned Parenthood of the Rochester/Syracuse Region

114 University Ave., Rochester, NY 14605; Toll-free Helpline: 1 866 600-6886. Offers confidential HIV testing and information. When you make your appointment, be sure to ask about our sliding scale fees. No one is turned away for lack of ability to pay.

### Rochester Area Task Force on AIDS

A collection of agencies providing a multiplicity of resources and services to the upstate New York community. Their offices are located through the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency, which also provides medical literature and newspaper clippings, as well as demographic and statistical data for use in developing health care services. (585) 461-3520.

### The MOCHA Center of Rochester

Our mission is to improve health and wellness in communities of color. Youth drop-in center, HIV testing, peer education, support groups, computer lab, referral services and more. 189 N. Water St., lower level. (585) 420-1400.

### Monroe County Health Department

at 855 W. Main St., offers testing and counseling for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. (585) 753-5481. Hours: M-W 8:30-5:30; R: 8:30-11 am; F 7:30-2:30.

### Strong Memorial Hospital

provides a complete range of HIV medical care, including access to experimental treatment protocols, and HIV testing. Also provides individual and group psychotherapy. Training of health care professionals also available. Infectious Disease Clinic, (585) 275-0526. Department of Psychiatry, (585) 275-3379. AIDS Training Project, (585) 275-5693.

### Planned Parenthood of Rochester and Genesee Valley

Offers testing and information (585) 546 2595.

### Rural HIV testing

Anonymous and confidential, in Allegany, Livingston, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne or Yates Counties, call 1 800 962-5063.

### Action Front Center

(Action for a Better Community.) Provides HIV, STD, viral hepatitis prevention counseling, risk reduction counseling. Tailored programs available to incarcerated, ex-offender individuals. Services for people living with HIV; case management, peer support groups, United Colors support group for MSM of color, educational groups, peer educator training and leadership development, multicultural, bilingual staff. 33 Chestnut St., 2nd floor, Rochester 14604. Office hours M-F 8:30 am-5 pm. 585-262-4330.

Check our monthly and ongoing calendar as well as the community section for more groups and events. For further information, call the Gay Alliance at 244-8640 or visit: [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org). More SAGE and Gay Alliance Youth Group info: pages 30-31.

### Anthony L. Jordan Health Center, Prevention and Primary Care.

HIV walk-in testing Tues. & Fri.; Hep C walk-in treating Weds. & Fri; Meet clinician by appointment. 82 Holland St., Rochester 14605. 585-423-2879; fax 585-423-2876. [www.jordanhealth.org](http://www.jordanhealth.org)

### CDC National STD and AIDS Hotline

1-800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) 24 hours a day. TTY service: 1-888-232-6348. E-mail address: [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov).

### Fair Housing Enforcement Project

of Monroe County 585-325-2500; 1-800-669-9777. Deals with housing discrimination on basis of race, orientation, HIV status, etc.

### Public Interest Law Office of Rochester

1 W. Main St., Suites 200 & 300. Free legal services to HIV positive persons, families. Spanish bilingual advocates available. All civil cases except divorce; no criminal cases. Ask to speak to someone in PILOR. 454-4060.

### Westside Health Services

Brown Square Health Center, 175 Lyell Ave. (254-6480); Woodward health center, 480 Genesee St. (436-3040). HIV/AIDS services, support, more.

### McCree McCuller Wellness Center at Unity Health's Connection Clinic

(585) 368-3506, 89 Genesee St., Bishop Kearney Bldg., 3rd floor. Full range of services, regardless of ability to pay. Caring, confidential and convenient.

### Geneva Community Health

601 W. Washington St., Geneva. Provides HIV testing, HIV specialty and primary care for residents of Ontario and surrounding counties. M, W, R, F 8am-8pm. 315-781-8448.

## LGBT HEALTH

### Trillium Health

See [www.trilliumhealthny.org](http://www.trilliumhealthny.org), [www.everybodys-good.com](http://www.everybodys-good.com)

### LGBT Healthy Living: Veterans

Canandaigua VA, second and fourth Tuesdays, 10-11am, Building One, 2nd floor, room 245. Matt Cokely 585-393-7115; Wanda Martinez 585-393-8265 or 585-205-3360.

### HCR Home Care

We provide a full multidisciplinary team consisting of nursing, social work, physical, occupational, and speech therapies as well as home health aides who have completed the eight-hour cultural competency program provided by the Gay Alliance. For more information, contact us at 585-272-1930 or visit us online at [HCRhealth.com](http://HCRhealth.com).

### Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley

See [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org) Resource Directory under "Health" for Gay Alliance referrals to physicians and service agencies.

### CNY Youth Group Bi-Polar Support.

Second Monday of every month. 315-428-9366.

## TRANSGENDER

### Trans Alliance of Greater Rochester (TAGR)

Support/educational group for gender variant people and allies. Last Saturday, 3-5:30pm, Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St.

### Adult Families of Trans Youth (AFTY)

First Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30pm, Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St.

### Families and Friends of Trans Adults (F2TA)

Support group for non-transgender people who are struggling with the transition of a transgender friend or loved one. Meets on second and fourth Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 pm, at Equal=Grounds, 750 South Ave. 244-8640; [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org); [info@gayalliance.org](mailto:info@gayalliance.org).

### Trans Lifeline

Hotline for transgender people experiencing crisis. Staffed by transgender people for transgender people. Trans Lifeline volunteers are ready to respond to whatever support needs callers might have. The Trans Lifeline number is (877) 565-8860. Additional info is available at [www.translifeline.org](http://www.translifeline.org).

### Empire Justice Center

Julia A. Sáenz, Esq. Hanna S. Cohn Equal Justice Fellow, Empire Justice Center, LGBT Rights Project, Telesca Center for Justice, 1 West Main Street, Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14614. (585) 295-5721 Fax (585) 454-2518, [jsaenz@empirejustice.org](mailto:jsaenz@empirejustice.org), [www.empirejustice.org](http://www.empirejustice.org).

### Volunteer Legal Services Project

(585) 232-3051; [www.vlsprochester.org](http://www.vlsprochester.org). 1 West Main St. Suite 500, Rochester, NY 14614. Free legal services for low-income clients seeking a name change. Other legal services for low-income clients include family law issues, bankruptcy, unemployment insurance hearings, wills and advance directive documents for clients with serious illnesses.

### Gay Alliance Youth Gender Identity Support Group

Tuesdays 5:30-6:30 Gay Alliance office, 5th floor. 875 E. Main St., Ages 13-18. 244-8640

### Genesee Valley Gender Variants

Thurs. 7-9pm, Equal Grounds, 750 South Ave. [GVGenderVariants@yahoo.com](mailto:GVGenderVariants@yahoo.com)

### Guys' Night Out

Trans\* group, 1pm second Saturdays at Equal=Grounds, 750 South Ave. Transmen and those identifying with trans-masculine experience (including questioning individuals) welcome. Conversations range from topics regarding family life, personal experiences with regard to medically/socially transitioning and how life is going in general. Contact Adrian at [abarholomeo@gmail.com](mailto:abarholomeo@gmail.com).

## WOMEN

### L.O.R.A Late Bloomers Group

Address: Rochester, NY; E-mail [info@loragroup.org](mailto:info@loragroup.org) Website: [www.loragroup.org](http://www.loragroup.org); L.O.R.A Late Bloomers Group is a support group offered through L.O.R.A. (Lesbians of Rochester & Allies). It is a coming out group for women of all ages and backgrounds! The group meets once a month in a safe private location! Come share your story and listen to others share. We will have a variety of topics to discuss about coming out and special guest speakers from time to time. Group Facilitator: Cathie Timian email: [ctimian@loragroup.org](mailto:ctimian@loragroup.org) or call 585.313.3037

### Highland Hospital Breast Imaging Center

500 Red Creek Drive, Rochester 14623; 585-487-3341. Specializing in breast health, diagnostic breast imaging and treatment and mammography outreach and education.

### Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester

840 University Ave.; 585-473-8177; [www.bccr.org](http://www.bccr.org); email: [info@bccr.org](mailto:info@bccr.org). Breast Cancer Coalition provides support services that include programs designed to help those coping with a recent breast cancer diagnosis and those coping with an advanced breast cancer diagnosis, such as the Advanced Breast Cancer Support Group to support women living with metastatic breast cancer. Information about breast cancer, lending library, a monthly educational program. All BCCR programs, support services free.

### Center for Community Health

(585) 224-3050. Comprehensive breast cancer screening services for uninsured and underinsured women.

### Elizabeth Wende Breast Clinic

170 Sawgrass Drive. 442-8432. Mammograms.

### Self Help for Women with Breast or Ovarian Cancer (SHARE)

Breast: 866-891-2392; Ovarian: 866-537-4273.

### Willow Domestic Violence Center

232-7353; TTY 232-1741. Shelter (women only), counseling. Lesbians, gay men welcome.

### Victim Resource Center of Wayne County

Newark N.Y. Hotline 800-456-1172; office (315)331-1171; fax (315)331-1189.

### Mary Magdalene House

Women's outreach center for HIV positive women and women at risk. 291 Lyell Ave. Open Mon-Fri. 6:30-9:30pm.

### Planned Parenthood of the Rochester/Syracuse Region

114 University Ave., Rochester, NY 14605; Toll-free Helpline: 1-866-600-6886. Planned Parenthood has led the way in providing high quality, affordable reproductive health care since 1916. All services are confidential. Accept most insurances; including Medicaid. You may qualify for low- to no-cost family planning services. When you make your appointment, ask about our sliding scale fees. No one turned away for lack of ability to pay.

### Women's Shelter

YWCA, 175 N. Clinton Ave. 546-5820.

## YOUTH

### Gay Alliance Youth Group

Fridays, 7-9 pm. Gay Alliance office, 5th floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8640; Ages 13-20. [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org)

### Gay Alliance Youth Gender Identity Support Group

Tuesdays 5:30-6:30 Gay Alliance office, 5th floor. 875 E. Main St., Ages 13-20. 244-8640

### Trevor Project

The Trevor Project offers 24/7 Lifeline with trained counselors, 1-866-488-7386; Trevor Chat, instant messaging; TrevorSpace online where youth can talk to each other, and Trevor Text, now in development, with text trained counselors for support and crisis intervention.

### CNY Youth Group Bi-Polar Support.

Second Monday of every month. 315-428-9366. ■

# Ongoing Calendar

## DAILY

**Free confidential walk-in HIV testing**  
M/W 9am-5pm, T/Th 9am-7pm, F 9am-12:30pm  
Trillium Health 259 Monroe Ave. 585-545-7200

**David Bohnett Cyber Center**  
Gay Alliance 5th floor lounge, Mon.-Thurs. 11am-3pm, Fri. 11am-1pm, 875 E. Main St. 244-8640;  
www.gayalliance.org

## MONDAYS

**L.O.R.A. Coffee Social**  
Weekly on Monday Nights, 7 pm. Equal=Grounds, 750 South Ave. Rochester. Family, Friends & Allies Welcome! Contact Person: Cathie Timian. More info: www.loragroup.org. Events: https://www.facebook.com/groups/L.O.R.A.14464/. Email: info@loragroup.org

**Rochester Historical Bowling Society**  
7pm. Clover Lanes

**Gay Alliance Library & Archives,**  
Every Mon./Wed. 6-8pm. David Bohnett Cyber Center, 5:30-7:30pm, First floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8640. Reopens after move.

**Born That Way**  
Formerly 3rd Presbyterian LGBT Support Group. First, 3rd Mondays, 7:30-9:30pm, 34 Meigs St. Carol, 482-3832 or Kaara, 654-7516.

**Frontrunners/Frontwalkers**  
Mondays, 6pm, George Eastman House parking lot. www.rochesterfrontrunners.org.

**Steps Beyond Stems**  
Crack Support Group, Mondays, 7-8pm, 289 Monroe Ave.

## TUESDAYS

**The Social Grind**  
10am-12noon and again 7:30-9pm at Equal Grounds, 750 South Ave. Email: DHutch457@aol.com for information

**Adult Families of Trans Youth (AFTY)**  
First Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30, Open Arms MCC Community Center, 707 E. Main St.

**Families and Friends of TransAdults (F2TA)**  
Support group for non-transgender people who are struggling with the transition of a transgender friend or loved one. Meets on second and fourth Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 pm, at Equal=Grounds, 750 South Ave. 244-8640; www.gayalliance.org; info@gayalliance.org

**LGBT Healthy Living**  
Veterans support. Second, fourth Tuesdays, 10-11am Canandaigua VA, bldg. 9, room 8, Library conference room. 585 463-2731, 585 205-3360.

**Testing Tuesdays at Trillium Health**  
FREE HIV Testing for everyone, STI/STD testing FREE for women and MSM. Trillium Health, 259 Monroe Ave, 5-8 pm. 585-545-7200

**Women's Community Chorus**  
Rehearsals each Tuesday, 6:30-9pm, Downtown United Pres. Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh Street. 234-4441, www.therwcc.org

**Gay Alliance Trans\* Youth Support Group**  
5:30-6:30 pm, GAGV office, 5th floor, 875 E. Main St. Ages 13-20. 244-8640. Gay Alliance

**SAGE Rochester**  
50+ Tuesdays and Thursdays, usually 10:30am at venues including Open Arms Community Center, 707 E. Main St. 244-8640. (See page 31)

**COAP Come Out and Play**  
Volleyball 5pm-dark. Indian Landing School, 702 N. Landing Rd. May 5-Autumn. coap.rochester@gmail.com

## WEDNESDAYS

**Identity Group**  
The Identity Group is for LGBT identified individuals who have a developmental disability diagnosis. The group meets Wednesdays 3-4 pm at ARC Health Services (2060 Brighton-Henrietta Townline Rd. 14623). The goal of the group is to provide a safe space to discuss identity issues, share personal experiences and increase self-esteem. The group is facilitated by Delaina Fico. LMSW. For more information, please contact Delaina Fico at dfico@arcmonroe.org or 585-271-0661 ext. 1552.

**LORA Knitting Group**  
1st & 3rd Wednesdays of the month, Equal Grounds Coffee House, 750 South Ave., Rochester. 6-8pm. Contact Person: Kerry Cater. Email: dressyfemme@aol.com

**Gay Alliance Board of Directors**  
Meets Third Wednesdays, 6pm, 875 E. Main St. 244-8640

**New Freedom New Happiness**  
AA Gay meeting, 7pm, Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. Men and women. Open.

**Support Group for Parents who have lost Children**  
First, 3rd Wednesdays, 11am-12:30pm, Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs St. Genesee Region Home Care. Free. 325-1880

**COAP Come Out and Play**  
Wednesday game nights. 7-10pm. Equal=Grounds, 750 South Ave. coap.rochester@gmail.com

**Rochester Rams General Meeting**  
2nd Wednesdays, 7:30pm, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave. www.rochesterrams.com

**Positive Warriors**  
Wednesdays, 11:30am-12:30pm. Trillium Health, 259 Monroe Ave.

**Positive Divas**  
Wednesdays, 11:30am-12:30pm. Trillium Health, 259 Monroe Ave.

**Frontrunners/Frontwalkers**  
6pm, Eastman House parking lot. www.rochesterfrontrunners.org.

**Gay Alliance Library & Archives,**  
Every Mon./Wed. 6-8pm. David Bohnett Cyber Center, 5:30-7:30pm, First floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8640. Reopens after move.

**Empire Bears**  
Every Wednesday. 6pm dinner at various venues. www.empirebears.com

## THURSDAYS

**Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gay Concerns**  
6:30pm, first Thursday. Ralph, 271-7649

**Pride at Work & AFL CIO**  
First Thursdays, 5:30pm. 1354 Buffalo Road, Rochester 14624, 426-0862.

**GLOB&L (Gays & Lesbians of Bausch & Lomb)**  
Meets every third Thursday in Area 67 conference room at the Optic Center. Voice mail: 338-8977

**Rochester Gay Men's Chorus**  
Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 6:30-9pm, 423-0650

**Out & Equal Second Thursdays**  
Social/business networking, 5:30-7:30pm. Changing venues. E-mail: fingerlakes@outand-equal.org

**Genesee Valley Gender Variants**  
7-9pm, Equal=Grounds, 750 South Ave. GV GenderVariants@yahoo.com

**SAGE Rochester**  
50+ Tuesdays and Thursdays, usually 10:30am at venues including Open Arms Community Center, 707 E. Main St. 244-8640. (See page 31)

## FRIDAYS

**Gay Men's AA meeting**  
Fridays, 7:30-8:30pm, Closed meeting. Emmanuel Baptist Church, 815 Park Ave.

**Gay Alliance Youth**  
Fridays, 7-9pm, Gay Alliance, 5th floor, 875 E. Main St., 244-8640; Ages 13-20. youth@gayalliance.org

**GLBTQI Motorcycle Group**  
Second Fridays, 5:30pm, Various locations. RochesterGLBTQIbikers@yahoo.com; 467-6456; bmdaniels@frontiernet.net.

**LORA GaYmes Night**  
Meets 4th Friday of the Month, 7-10pm, Equal Grounds Coffee House, 750 South Ave. Rochester. Contact Person: Christine O'Reilly. Email: irishfemmerochester@yahoo.com. Phone: 585.943.1320. More Info: www.loragroup.org. Events: https://www.facebook.com/groups/L.O.R.A.14464/

**Monthly LBTQ Womyns Bingo Night**  
Third Fridays, 7 pm, at Empire Bingo. Contact: Christine, IrishFemmeRochester@yahoo.com; 585-943-1320 text/talk.

## SATURDAYS

**Rochester Rams Bar Night**  
Third Saturdays, 8pm-2am, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave. 271-6930

**Sapphic Singles - Professional Women's Group**  
http://www.meetup.com/Sapphic-Singles-Rochester/. Contact: Patty: Email: pattyrdn11@gmail.com. Phone: 585.223.6743. 3rd Saturday of each month. Monthly Dinner Socials for single professional women at various locations in and around Rochester NY area! Join us!

**Trans Alliance of Greater Rochester**  
Support/educational group for gender-variant people, allies. Last Saturdays, 3-5:30pm, Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St.

**Frontrunners/Frontwalkers**  
9am, George Eastman House parking lot. www.rochesterfrontrunners.org.

**Guys Night Out**  
GNO, social group for transmen, now meets on the second Saturday of the month, @ 1pm @ Equal Grounds, 750 South Ave.

**Saturday Night Special Gay AA**  
7pm, Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd., S. Men and women. Open meeting.

**Sophia's Supper Club**  
First, third Saturdays, 25 Bernie Lane, 6:30 pm.

**Men's Cooking Group**  
Third, fourth Saturdays. 585-355-7664; mcgo-frochester@aol.com.

## SUNDAYS

**PFLAG (Parents Families & Friends of Lesbians And Gays)**  
585 993-3297; rochesterpflag@gmail.com.

**Dignity-Integrity**  
1st Sunday: 5pm Episcopal Eucharist with music; 2nd Sunday: 5pm Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word with music; 3rd Sunday: 5pm Episcopal Eucharist (quiet); 4th Sunday: 5pm Prayers to start the week, followed by potluck supper.

**Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church**  
707 E. Main St. Rochester, Services at: 10:30 am and 5:30 pm. 271-8478.

**Gay Men's Alcoholics Anonymous**  
St. Luke's/St. Simon Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. 8pm, 232-6720, Weekly. Closed meeting ■

## ROCHESTER AA/NA MEETINGS

Every week there are four regularly scheduled GLBTI AA and two inclusive NA meetings in Rochester.

## TUESDAYS

**Narcotics Anonymous**  
6-7:30pm. AIDS and Recovery 1124 Culver Road (Covenant United Methodist Church) This is an NA meeting that is open to all addicts who have a desire to stop using. Although it is not specifically a gay-oriented meeting, it is welcoming to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, as well as to anyone who is affected by HIV and AIDS.

## WEDNESDAYS

**New Freedom/New Happiness Group**  
7pm. First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. Bus riders: Take the last #18 University bus to 12 Corners. Use the stop just past the top of the hill at Hillside Ave. and before Highland Ave. Or take the #1 Park Ave. to the corner of East and Winton, then walk five minutes south (uphill) on Winton. This is an open discussion meeting. All issues - as they relate to our alcoholism/addiction and recovery - are fair game.

## FRIDAYS

**Gay Men's**  
7:30pm. Immanuel Baptist Church, 815 Park Ave.  
• Closed meeting, restricted to alcoholics and addicts  
• Men's meeting  
• Handicapped accessible  
This is a round-robin discussion meeting. If you are shy about meeting people or speaking up in a group, you will find this meeting particularly warm and inviting because everyone gets their turn to speak (or pass). As a result, this meeting often runs long, so plan on more than the usual hour.

## SATURDAYS

**Saturday Night Special**  
7pm. First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. Bus riders: The #18 University Ave. bus does not go by the church on weekend evenings. Take the #1 Park Ave. bus to the corner of East and Winton, then walk five minutes south (uphill) on Winton.  
• Open meeting, all are welcome, "straight-friendly"  
• Mixed men and women  
• Handicapped accessible, take elevator to basement  
Meeting begins with a speaker, followed by open discussion.

## SUNDAYS

**Step in the Right Direction**  
7:30-9pm. 1275 Spencerport Road (Trinity Alliance Church) This is an NA meeting that is open to all addicts who have a desire to stop using. Although it is not specifically a gay-oriented meeting, it is welcoming to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Each week features a reading from NA literature, followed by discussion.

**Rochester Gay Men**  
8pm. St. Luke/St. Simon's Episcopal Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh Street. Bus riders use the Fitzhugh Street stop on Main Street at the County Office Building and walk south one block.  
• Closed meeting, restricted to alcoholics and addicts  
• Men's meeting  
• NOT handicapped accessible  
Meeting begins with a speaker, followed by open discussion. ■

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**Liturgies:** Thursday: 7:00pm, Saturday: 5:00pm  
Sunday: 7:30am  
9:30am (at Hochstein, 50 Plymouth Avenue)

# August

## SATURDAY 1

**Lughnasad, Lammias.** Ancient Celtic fire feast of harvest. Sacred tree: hazel, tree of wisdom.

**Mrs. Kasha Davis** in her one-woman show, "There's Always Time for A Cocktail", 8 pm, JCC Hart Theatre. Tickets at <http://www.jcccenterstage.org>

## SUNDAY 2

**Dignity Integrity.** Episcopal Mass, quiet. 5 pm at St. Luke's and St. Simon's Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

## WEDNESDAY 5

**Empire Bears** at South Wedge Diner, Clinton Ave., 6 pm. More on P 25.

## FRIDAY 7

**Rochester Trans Oral History Project.** Ben Eshleman presents research at RIT symposium. [rit.edu/research/symposium](http://rit.edu/research/symposium).

**Jones Pond Mardi Gras Weekend.** JonesPond.com; 585-567-8100.

**Fight With Love.** Blackfriars Theatre revue benefits Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Aug. 7, 7pm, Aug. 8, 2 and 7pm, Aug. 9, 2pm. \$10. 454-1260. 795 E. Main St.

## SUNDAY 9

**Dignity Integrity.** Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word, with music. 5 pm at St. Luke's and St. Simon's Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

## FRIDAY 14

**Empty Closet deadline** for September. 244-9030; [susanj@gayalliance.org](mailto:susanj@gayalliance.org).

**Jones Pond Olympics Weekend.** Miss Conception live on Saturday. JonesPond.com; 585-567-8100.

## SATURDAY 15

**Dignity Integrity 40th Reunion Picnic.** RSVP due Aug. 8: send current contact information via email, [info@di-rochester.org](mailto:info@di-rochester.org), or write to DI at 17 S. Fitzhugh St., Rochester 14614.

## SUNDAY 16

**Dignity Integrity.** Episcopal Mass/Healing Service, with music. 5 pm at St. Luke's and St. Simon's Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.



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**585.464.8957**

## FRIDAY 21

**Jones Pond Vegas Weekend.** JonesPond.com; 585-567-8100.

## SUNDAY 23

**Dignity Integrity.** Roman Catholic Prayers to start the week, followed by pot luck. 5 pm at St. Luke's and St. Simon's Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

## THURSDAY 28

**Pride Day at NY State Fair.** Syracuse. Melissa Etheridge concert at Chevy Court. Pride Day starts with ceremony, flag raising at main entrance. Advance tickets 40% off at [www.nysfair.org](http://www.nysfair.org).

## FRIDAY 29

**Jones Pond Cowboy Weekend.** JonesPond.com; 585-567-8100.

## SATURDAY 30

**SAGE Summer Picnic.** 4-9pm, Tay House Lodge, Cobbs Hill Park, 85 Hillside Ave. \$10 (\$8 in advance); children under 12 \$5. Catered picnic food, music, games, bonfire, dance. Advance tickets online at [www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org) or from SAGE members.

## SUNDAY 31

**Dignity Integrity.** Prayers to start the week. 5 pm at St. Luke's and St. Simon's Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

## SEPTEMBER

## FRIDAY 5

**Jones Pond Labor Day Weekend** 25th Anniversary Celebration. JonesPond.com; 585-567-8100. ■

**DENNIS J. FOLEY, PH. D.**  
LICENSED PSYCHOLOGIST  
CLINICAL ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PSYCHIATRY  
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER MEDICAL CENTER

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- GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT
- RECOVERY ISSUES
- DEPRESSION/ANXIETY/SELF-CONCEPT

# Classified Ads

**Classified ads** are \$5 for the first 30 words; each additional 10 words is another \$1. We do not bill for classifieds, so please send or bring ad and payment to: *The Empty Closet*, 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500, Rochester, New York 14605.

**Paying by check:** checks must be made out to Gay Alliance. The deadline is the 15th of the month, for the following month's issue. We cannot accept ads over the phone. Pay when you place your ad. We will accept only ads accompanied by name and phone number. Neither will be published, but we must be able to confirm placement.

*The Empty Closet* is not responsible for financial loss or physical injury that may result from any contact with an advertiser. Advertisers must use their own box number, voice mail, e-mail or phone number. No personal home addresses or names allowed. Classified ads are not published on *The Empty Closet* page of our website. However, each issue of the paper is reproduced online in its entirety.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Children's Ministry** thriving at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church for toddlers to 'tweens. Join us for vibrant, inclusive, progressive worship on Sundays at 10:30 am, 707 E. Main St. [info@openarmsmcc.org](mailto:info@openarmsmcc.org); (585) 271-8478.

**Rochester Gay Men's Chorus** - did you (or a friend) ever sing with the Chorus? RGMC is launching an Alumni Organization! Are you interested in helping keep the RGMC vibrant for the next 33 years? Help us keep "Empowering Social Change through Choral Excellence". Please email Past President John Owen - [jowen1@rochester.rr.com](mailto:jowen1@rochester.rr.com) or call at (585) 402 0112.

## SERVICES

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**EM - JUSTIN HUBBELL**

**"SPINNY WHEEL OF DEATH"**

SO, SINCE THE HUMAN RACE IS DESTROYING ITSELF...

...THE PLAN IS TO PRESERVE OUR SPECIES BY BREEDING US IN ZOOS?

**CORRECT.**

I'M GUESSING YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT "TRANSGENDER" MEANS...?

I THINK I BROKE IT!

GOT TO BE A SWITCH OR MAYBE A LEVER OF SOME KIND SOMEWHERE IN YOU WELL



# Bed & Breakfast

**The Empty Closet** is published by the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500 Rochester, New York 14605 © 2015. All rights reserved.

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The Empty Closet does not print advertisements that contain nude drawings or photographs, nor does it print advertising that states that the person pictured in the ad is for sale, or that you will "get" that particular person if you patronize the establishment advertised. Advertisements that are explicitly racist, sexist, ageist, ableist or homophobic will be refused; advertisements from organizations that are sexist, racist, ageist, ableist or anti-gay will also be refused. All political advertisements must contain information about who placed them and a method of contact. Additionally, The Empty Closet does not print negative or "attack" advertisements, whether they relate to a product or politics and no matter in whose interest the ad is being produced. A negative advertisement is defined as one that focuses upon a rival product, or in the political area, a rival election candidate or party, in order to point out supposed flaws and to persuade the public not to buy it (or vote for him or her). The Empty Closet maintains, within legal boundaries, neutrality regarding products, political candidates and parties. However, "attack" ads that fail to provide undisputable evidence that the information in the ad is true do not further in any way the objectives and policies of the Gay Alliance or The Empty Closet, including the primary tenet that The Empty Closet's purpose is to inform the Rochester gay community and to provide an impartial forum for ideas.

**Submissions:**

For publication, submit news items, ads, photos, letters, stories, poetry, ads, photographs or art by mail or in person to The Empty Closet office by the 15th of the month. Design services for non-camera ready ads are available for a fee. 244-9030, susanj@gayalliance.org

**Publication Information:**

The Empty Closet is published 11 times a year (December and January combined) by The Empty Closet Press for the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc. Approximately 5000 copies of each issue are distributed during the first week of the month, some by mail in a plain sealed envelope. The publication of the name or photograph of any person or organization in articles is not an indication of the sexual or affectional orientation of that person or the members of that organization. For further information, please write to The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St., Rochester NY, 14605, call (585) 244-9030 or e-mail emptycloset@gagv.us.

The Empty Closet is the official publication of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc., as stated in the bylaws of that organization. Its purpose is to inform the Rochester gay community about local and national gay-related news and events; to provide a forum for ideas and creative work from the local gay community; to help promote leadership within the community, and to be a part of a national network of lesbian and gay publications that exchange ideas and seek to educate.

Part of our purpose is to maintain a middle position with respect to the entire community. We must be careful to present all viewpoints in a way that takes into consideration the views of all - women, men, people of color, young and old, and those from various walks of life.

The opinions of columnists, editorial writers and other contributing writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or The Empty Closet. The Empty Closet shall not be liable for any loss or expense that results from the publication (whether correctly or incorrectly) or omission of an ad. In the event of non-payment, your account may be assigned to a collection agency or an attorney, and will be liable for the charges paid by us to such collection agency or attorney.

**Letters to the editor:**

The opinions of columnists, editorial writers and other contributing writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or The Empty Closet. We will print letters at the editor's discretion and on a space available basis. Only one letter by the same writer in a six-month period is allowed. We will not print personal attacks on individuals, nor will we be a forum for ongoing disputes between individuals. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. We will print anonymous letters if the name and phone number are provided to the Editor; confidentiality will be respected. Submissions are due by the 15th of the month at: The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500, Rochester, NY 14605; e-mail: emptycloset@gagv.us. The online edition of EC is available at www.gayalliance.org.

## Kyle's Bed & Breakfast by Greg Fox



**Panel 1:** Kyle: "WHAT'S ALL THE HAMMERING ABOUT?"  
 Man: "DIDN'T KYLE TELL YOU?"

**Panel 2:** Man: "I'M BUILDIN' TWO NEW GUESTROOMS. KYLE N' I FIGURED OUT IF I... WHATCHAMACALLIT..."  
 Kyle: "...CONSOLIDATED ALL THE EXERCISE EQUIPMENT..."

**Panel 3:** Kyle: "...THERE'D BE ENOUGH ROOM DOWN HERE ON THE LOWER LEVEL TO ADD TWO NEW GUESTROOMS."  
 Kyle: "CONSIDERIN' HOW FULL THE HOUSE HAS BEEN LATELY, WE DEFINITELY NEED 'EM."

**Panel 4:** Kyle: "HMM... A WISE BUSINESS MOVE ON KYLE'S PART."  
 Kyle: "HOW CAN I HELP YOU?"

**Panel 5:** Kyle: "YOU... WANNA' HELP ME?"  
 Kyle: "HAHA... SERIOUSLY, PRICE?"

**Panel 6:** Kyle: "WHY DOES THAT STRIKE YOU AS HUMOROUS?"  
 Kyle: "I HELPED YOU ONCE WITH YARDWORK, DIDN'T I?"  
 Kyle: "YEAH, BUT..."

**Panel 7:** Kyle: "...CONSTRUCTION WORK'S A LOT DIFFERENT."  
 Kyle: "DID YOU EVER EVEN LIFT A HAMMER DOWN ON THE KENTUCKY MANSION?"

**Panel 8:** Kyle: "IF YOU DON'T WANT MY HELP, JUST SAY SO. YOU DON'T NEED TO RIDICULE ME."  
 Kyle: "I THOUGHT WE WERE BECOMING FRIENDS. MY MISTAKE."

**Panel 9:** Kyle: "HEY, PRICE... I WAS JUST BUSTIN' ON YOU. THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS DO."  
 Kyle: "C'MON... I'D BE GLAD TO HAVE YOUR HELP."  
 Kyle: "WHY DON'T YOU GRAB A COUPLA' THOSE TWO-BY-FOURS?"

**Panel 10:** Kyle: "WHAT'S A 'TWO-BY-FOUR'?"  
 Kyle: "HAHA. GOOD ONE."  
 Kyle: "NO, REALLY... WHAT'S A TWO-BY-FOUR?"  
 Kyle: "HOLY CRAP..."

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E-Mail - [gregfox727@gmail.com](mailto:gregfox727@gmail.com)

Facebook - [www.facebook.com/kylecomics](http://www.facebook.com/kylecomics)

**PFLAG MEETS 3RD SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH**

Meetings are at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church 707 E. Main Street, Rochester, New York 14605 from 1 to 3pm. Questions? Call: 585-993-3297 or Email: [RochesterPFLAG@gmail.com](mailto:RochesterPFLAG@gmail.com)  
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# MAY OUR THANKS BE WITH YOU



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