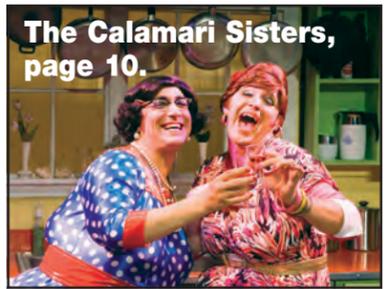


# The Empty Closet

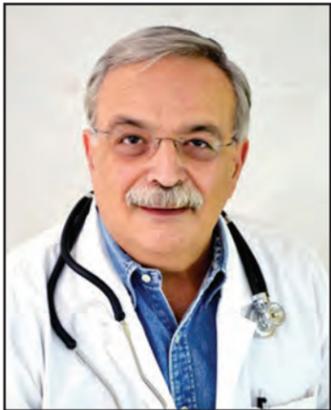
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NUMBER 493

A PUBLICATION OF THE GAY ALLIANCE

SEPTEMBER 2015



Dr. William Valenti

## Taking down AIDS in New York State: An interview with Dr. Bill Valenti

By Adam Young

Trillium Health hosted an Ending the AIDS Epidemic (EtE) Summit on Aug. 13 at their main location on Monroe Avenue to discuss local action in the statewide initiative to dramatically decrease new cases of HIV. The goal is to have new infections in the state drop from 3,000 new cases per year to 750 or below by the end of 2020, while eradicating AIDS related deaths and stigma.

According to the New York State Department of Health, New York continues to have the highest prevalence of HIV in the country.

Dr. Bill Valenti, Senior Vice President for Organizational Advancement and Staff Physician at Trillium Health, co-

founded Community Health Network, the organization that would become Trillium, in 1989. Together with the city of Rochester and the MOCHA Center, Trillium aims to educate people in understanding the importance of knowing their HIV status. "We're trying to break the back of HIV with a coordinated effort," Valenti said.

Currently Trillium and other members of the statewide EtE Task Force are combatting the number of infections in three ways: to open doors to allow sexually active people to get tested if they are unsure of their HIV status, to link HIV positive people to proper treatment and reduce their viral load, thus making transmission to others less likely, and to provide high risk HIV negative people access to Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), a prescription medication that greatly reduces an individual's likelihood of contracting HIV when combined with other safer sex practices. Valenti noted that while behavioral education has been the norm (e.g. advocating condom use), adding the medical component of PrEP may be the additional piece necessary to seriously combat the rate of HIV infections.

The main obstacles in educating and treating people, according to Valenti, are the "social determinants of health care." Factors such as poverty, partner violence, mistrust of a complicated health care system, and most of all, fear of stig-

(AIDs continues page 16)



A rally on Monroe Avenue on Aug. 6 asserted transgender and all LGBTQ peoples' right to walk down the street without verbal harassment or physical attack. Photo: Jill Frier

## Police make two arrests in Monroe Ave. trans attack; hate crime charges dropped

By Susan Jordan

Following an Aug. 6 community rally to show support for Nicole Clark, a 19-year-old trans woman who said she was attacked in the early morning hours of July 28, a second arrest



Nicole Clark. Photo: Jill Frier

was made. Dyshieka McFadden, 21, of 143 Benton St., was initially charged with assault in the third degree as a hate crime. He pleaded not guilty in Rochester City Court on Aug. 12 and was jailed on \$10,000 bail.

However, on Aug. 26, the hate crime charge was dropped, according to Empty Closet sources by the grand jury.

The first arrest was that of Abigail Hollowell, McFadden's girlfriend. She was charged with second-degree harassment, a violation, and also with driving while intoxicated, a misdemeanor.

Trans activist Shauna O'Toole told The Empty Closet on Aug. 25, "Rochester has a long history of being welcoming, accepting, and inclusive of the transgender community. This year has seen a record number of trans women of color murdered in hate crimes across the United States. Calling this assault a 'misdemeanor,' when someone went to the hospital as a result of this attack, wounds the reputation of the city. It causes us to question just how safe our city

truly is for the transgender/gender variant community."

The incident began, Nicole Clark told The Empty Closet on July 29, when a man and woman walking on the other side of Monroe Ave. started verbally harassing Clark, who was out walking with her mother. Clark described the incident to The Empty Closet: "We started to walk away. He ran up behind me and started kicking and punching me, I tried to fight back and his girlfriend jumped me. Then a friend of his came up and joined in beating me. At that point I stopped fighting, as it would just have made the damage worse."

When the attackers realized Clark's mother had called the police, they fled.

Following the attack, Clark was taken by ambulance to the hospital, where she received stitches to her face and attention to cuts and abrasions on her back, arms, and legs.

Clark had recently moved to Rochester from Pennsylvania and felt that Rochester was a safe place for LGBTQ people. "I really liked the people and decided to move," she said, add-

ing that she had had a good experience at Pride earlier in July.

Abigail Hollowell told WHEC TV that she and her boyfriend "were drunk and yelling... Nicole thought we were yelling at her but we weren't." She said Nicole Clark picked up a rock to throw at them; Clark said that she picked up the rock to defend herself.

Tim Coleman, a security guard who was working in the area that night, agreed



Dyshieka McFadden. RPD

with Hollowell that Clark had started the fight. He admitted, however, that he had not seen (Trans attack continues page 3)



## RISE Brunch to support Youth Program, Scholarship Fund on Sept. 27

Rochester Initiative for Scholarships and Education announces the launch of the RISE Fall Brunch, a fundraiser benefiting the Rochester LGBTQ Scholarship Fund and Gay Alliance Youth and Leadership Development Programming.

The brunch, which will become an annual event, is set for Sunday, Sept. 27, from noon-3 p.m., at the Rochester Yacht Club, 5555 St Paul Blvd. 14617. Tickets, sponsorship opportunities and information are available at gayalliance.org/rise.

Gay Alliance Executive Director Scott Fearing said, "The focus of the RISE brunch is young people in Rochester. This is about raising money that stays here in town to help us improve our community. It is an exciting time for the Alliance as we take the lead on creating the future of the LGBTQ communities." ■

## Shauna O'Toole, 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



### No surprise: GOP rejects LGBTQ Equality Act

The latest excuse from the GOP for blocking LGBTQ civil rights is that the Equality Act, which would establish those rights nationwide, is “too partisan.”

That’s what US Rep. Richard Hanna, R-NY says, and so does Rep. Chris Gibson, R-NY.

Hanna claims to support an anti-discrimination law, but it shouldn’t have “an overly partisan wish list”. Whatever that means.

Some Republicans preferred ENDA, intended to provide LGBTQ people with protection against employment discrimination only – and abandoned by LGBTQ activists after the Supreme Court Hobby Lobby ruling established that companies can refuse to provide contraceptive insurance coverage to female employees if the employers object on religious grounds. Heavily watered-down with religious exemptions, ENDA was much less “partisan,” conservatives say – but even with GOP co-sponsors like Hanna and Gibson, for some strange reason it never was allowed onto the Republican-dominated House floor for a vote... just like the NYS GENDA bill, providing protections to trans citizens, which Republicans have kept off the state Senate floor for eight years now....

What use is a civil rights law

if the violators are exempt?

We can now marry legally across America, and LGB New Yorkers (but not Ts) have anti-discrimination protections... but a drive over the NYS border and all of us can still be denied everything from jobs and housing to wedding cakes, because of the same old hatred, masquerading as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA).

Duncan Osborne writes in Gay City News, “In his opinion for the Supreme Court, Justice Samuel Alito said that RFRA could not be used to defend against a race discrimination claim, leaving open the question whether it could be used to defend against other kinds of discrimination claims.

“The drafters of the Equality Act have anticipated that issue, providing specifically that federal RFRA ‘shall not provide a claim concerning, or a defense to a claim under, a covered title, or provide a basis for challenging the application or enforcement of a covered title’ — ‘covered title’ referring to each of the anti-discrimination provisions in the US Code mentioned in the new bill.”

Maybe that’s the “overly partisan” part?

And what kind of bill do Congressional Republicans who oppose the SCOTUS ruling want, in order to for them to approve marriage equality? The Republican National Committee (RNC) on Aug. 18 endorsed the First Amendment Defense Act (FADA), which would prevent the federal government from acting against businesses and non-profits that discriminate against married same-sex couples. Again, the law has built-in protections for those who intend to break it.

So... a national LGBTQ civil rights bill that could gain Republican co-sponsors would also have to be ineffective in protecting the people it’s supposed to protect. Nor would it ever come up for a vote.

A completely ineffective law that never actually gets voted on – now that would be an acceptably bipartisan solution! ■

## Gay Alliance Executive Director

SCOTT FEARING



### Together we’ll call it home

A single word can be amazingly powerful. A single word can evoke a wide range of responses when it is spoken, read or heard.

Of course not all words are that powerful. The word “calendar” rarely evokes a reaction in people. That is until context comes into play. When your boss, co-worker or partner stops you and in a tone of frustration says, “Did you look at your calendar today?”

Instantly “calendar” may trigger anxiety within you of a missed meeting, birthday, or anniversary. The consequences may be unemployment, a broken promise or a broken heart.

But there are certain words that even without context can be powerful. A single word that can cause anger, fear, disappointment, joy love, frustration or compassion.

“Home” is one of those words that may trigger an emotional response. For many the word conjures up images from childhood and elicits feelings of happiness, safety, contentment.

Even people who had terrible childhood trauma often connect the word “home” with positive feelings. I have spoken with survivors of childhood sexual abuse and immigrants whose childhoods were spent in refugee camps, people who

grew up in extreme poverty or even people who spent part of their childhood homeless on the streets, who still have a positive reaction to the word home.

For many of those who did not have happy memories of a structure called home, they connect the word with other places. A special place in the woods, maybe a space where they and friends played on a river bank, an after school club or community group that they were part of.

Home is that place that you retreat to when the world gets you down. A place where you know you will be welcomed and find your sense of self. Tap your heels together and repeat three times: “There’s no place like home.”

As you learned in the July Empty Closet, the Gay Alliance is planning a move. The new location will be fully accessible and allow us to expand our community building efforts as we open the Rochester LGBTQ Resource Center.

We hope that the LGBTQ Resource Center will feel like home. Safe and welcoming for people who want to connect with the Rochester’s LGBTQ communities. A person of any age who is struggling with identity issues, family members who seek information, and students who want to learn our histories. The Resource Center will include our 7,000-volume circulating library, six computer workstations, an art gallery, and a classroom. We even dream of installing solar panels so that we can be as kind as possible to the planet we all call home.

We are currently raising funds to complete our offices and the LGBTQ Resource Center -- as we work, we remind ourselves that the new location is not just for staff, but also for the entire Rochester community. We want to create a space that we can all call “Home.” ■

## THANK YOU

THE GAY ALLIANCE APPRECIATES THE CONTINUING PARTNERSHIP OF BUSINESSES WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY WHO SUPPORT OUR MISSION AND VISION.

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PAGE ONE

(Hate crime from page 1)

what occurred before the attack took place. Other witnesses also claim that Nicole Clark initiated the violence, according to sources in the media, and the surveillance video convinced the grand jury that Clark had crossed the street to attack McFadden and Hollowell. There were no audio recordings of what the two may have said to Clark earlier.

On Aug. 6, a rally was held at the intersection of Monroe and Goodman, the location where the assault occurred. Ben Eshleman, whose Facebook event "It Was a Hate Crime" was the primary organizing tool for the rally, stated that "over 100 people representing the LGBTQ communities and other advocacy organizations showed up to bring needed attention to this crime and to increase awareness of the violence faced by members of the trans communities."

Julia Acosta presented a platform to the crowd at the rally that included a call to update New York's Hate Crimes law. "I urge changes to the New York State Penal Code § 485.05 Hate Crimes, to extend the necessary protections against hate crimes to transgender New Yorkers."

Amending the penal code language would force police and courts to recognize the reality that, although all LGBTQ people face hate violence, trans people of color are disproportionately targeted. So far in 2015, at least 15 trans women of color have been murdered across the country.

"The demonstration showed that our community can come together to support each other," continued Acosta. "There has been a lot of discussion on the struggle for LGBTQ equal rights after marriage equality. This effort provides a clear goal to ensure that this doesn't happen again."

Trans Activist Shauna O'Toole told The Empty Closet, "What I liked about the rally was the support for Nicole. (The chanting) went back and forth between Black Lives Matter and Trans Lives Matter. This is intersectionality between two marginalized groups and what I saw as a community saying 'an offense against one is an offense against all.' Regardless of race, national origin or religion, it looks like the Rochester trans community stands together." ■

For more on the national epidemic of violence against trans women of color, see **Newfronts** page 4, **Opinion** page 15.

# NewsFronts

## LOCAL AND STATE



The Eastman House Photo Finish 5K is set for Oct. 3. Photo: Christine Meleca-Voigt

### GAGV team to run in Eastman House Photo Finish

On Oct. 3 the Gay Alliance will, for the first time, have a team running in the George Eastman House Photo Finish 5K to raise funds to help with the renovation of the Gay Alliance offices and the new Rochester LGBTQ Resource Center.

The fifth annual George Eastman House Photo Finish 5K will start at 8 a.m. With a great course through Rochester's Neighborhood of the Arts, the run/walk is open to all, from competitive runners and people using wheelchairs, to casual joggers, dedicated walkers, and entire families.

Also called "The Philanthropy Challenge," the race aims to raise funds for George Eastman House as well as other nonprofit organizations that make Rochester a great place to live and work. The race is unique among Rochester running events in that George Eastman House staff and volunteers manage all event organizing, but participants may form teams to raise funds for the charities of their choice. This approach honors both George Eastman's commitment to good health and wellness, and his enduring philanthropic legacy, which continues to benefit the entire Rochester community.

Team organizer Jamie Allen

said, "The Photo Finish 5k gives our community an excellent opportunity to support the local organizations that serve us. Joining the Gay Alliance team is a wonderful way to give back to this amazing resource. Together we can raise the funds to make 100 College Avenue a beautiful new home for everyone in our community."

The goal this year is to top the mark of \$1.25 million raised for Rochester nonprofits since the event's founding nearly five years ago. The Gay Alliance says, "Please help us get there by raising funds for George Eastman House and/or the charity of your choice."

You can donate to the Gay Alliance runners here: <https://www.crowdrise.com/GAGVrenovation>

You sign up to run here: <https://www.signmeup.com/site/reg/register.aspx?fid=JL2VQH7>

### Get mediator training at Center for Dispute Settlement

Leslie Smith at the Center for Dispute Settlement says that the Center is actively recruiting LGBTQ people to become volunteer mediators with their organization.

They have scholarships available for LGBTQ people who

want to participate in their training.

Registrations must be submitted before Sept. 21 to qualify for the scholarship. 585-943-9815, (<http://www.cdsadr.org/>)

### LORA founders retire; mission for women continues

Lesbians of Rochester & Allies (L.O.R.A.) has announced the recent retirement of founders Cathie and Sue Timian (formerly of Hamlin) and the subsequent formation of its official L.O.R.A. Committee.

The committee is comprised of members Regina Altizer (Committee Chair), Samantha Lynch (Co-Chair), Heidi Kaiser (Treasurer), Jeane Kennedy (Secretary), Kerry Cater (Public Relations and Information Officer) and Committee Members Johanna Altizer, Isabelle Bartter, Susan LaBarr, Wanda Martinez, MaryAnn Moschetti, Anne Tischer, and Maria White.

Founded in 2011 as a grassroots women's organization by Cathie and Sue Timian, L.O.R.A.'s mission remains to provide a friendly space for lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning women to gather; to foster an environment that promotes women's equality and enriches the lives of all women of all races and sexualities and

to help build an inclusive and diverse community that embraces all women from all walks of life.

Over the last four years, L.O.R.A. has provided information to over 2,500 members and allies about resources, groups, activities and events. Events have included the Annual Dyke Picnic (renamed the L.O.R.A. Picnic); numerous Activity Nights including Bike Rides and L.O.R.A. Night at the Memorial Art Gallery; monthly Sunday L.O.R.A. Brunch (October through May) and, our well-attended weekly L.O.R.A. Coffee Social Nights held at Equal Grounds Coffeehouse in the South Wedge each Monday. We have also formed several social groups including the L.O.R.A. LateBloomers Group (a group for women coming out in later life) and the L.O.R.A. Knitting Group. (See Ongoing Calendar, page 33)

To further the impressive work achieved by the Timians, L.O.R.A. will expand upon its current programming and will be collecting annual membership fees (\$10 per person/year suggested donation; more if you can, less if you can't) which entitles members to discounted ticket admission to events and access to the latest information on area resources, groups, and planned activities.

Those seeking more information are asked to visit the L.O.R.A. Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/LORAWomensGroup>, L.O.R.A.'s website ([www.loragroup.org](http://www.loragroup.org)) or e-mail Regina Altizer, Chair at [info@loragroup.org](mailto:info@loragroup.org). The group also plans various fundraisers throughout the coming year and welcomes opportunities to collaborate with other LGBTQIA agencies and professionals serving the community.

### Gay man sues NYPD, says cops broke his ribs during 2014 Pride

By Darren Wee on [gaystarnews.com](http://gaystarnews.com)

A gay man is suing the New York Police Department for allegedly breaking his ribs and calling him a "faggot" at the city's Pride parade last year.

Jacob Alejandro, 25, was walking on Christopher Street at about 7:30 p.m. on 29 June 2014 when an officer forcefully pushed him to the ground "without justification," according to the suit.

"While Mr. Alejandro lay on the ground bleeding, a defendant officer yelled, in sum, 'get the fuck up you faggot,'" it reads.

"As Mr. Alejandro was on the ground, defendants violent- (Gay man continues page 6)



### Jackie Nudd, former head of GAGV and AIDS Rochester, passes in Arizona

Jacqueline (Jackie) Patricia Nudd, of Clarkdale, Arizona, a former Rochesterian, passed away on Friday, July 24.

Jackie is survived by her spouse, Mary Lou Komarek, daughter, Kathleen Sue Nudd, grandsons, Jason Nudd and Mathew Nudd, sisters, Sandra Kinney and Carol Anne

Teague, cousin, Sharon Goff, niece Carie Gardner and nephew, John Kinney.

Jackie was a caseworker for Children's Support Services in Cottonwood, a realtor for Glenarm Land Company and a paralegal for the Yavapai County Attorneys Office. She served as vice president of the Cot-

tonwood Dog Park Association, being instrumental in the Park's founding, was a CASA volunteer advocate and a volunteer in the County's Victim/Witness Program.

Before moving to Arizona, Jackie was founder and Executive Director of AIDS Rochester, Inc., served on Gov. Cuomo's

Task Force on Gay Issues, and as president of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, received the Jeff Gerson Award from the American Institute for Public Service in Recognition of Outstanding Public Service. ■

# NewsFronts

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL



Amber Monroe, Kandis Capri, Elisha Walker, Shade Shuler, Tamara Dominguez.

### Toll keeps rising in murders of trans women of color: 17 have been killed in 2015, as of Aug. 25

Activists and local media on Aug. 8 reported the murder of Amber Monroe, a Detroit transgender woman.

According to Fox 2 Detroit, the 20-year-old Wayne State University student was last seen at 6 Mile and Woodward, a well-known area to the local trans community.

"A lot of transgendered women go out there and don't have support systems or employment," transgender rights activist Julisa Abad said to Fox 2. "So they are forced to do whatever they can do to survive," Abad continued, who knew Monroe.

Police say Monroe was employed as a sex worker when her body was discovered on August 8.

"She's been shot two or three times," Abad said. "But this time she didn't make it. I've witnessed people pushed out of cars, shot, robbed — not a good environment at all."

Equality Michigan, an activist organization, posted the following statement on its Facebook page:

"We have no idea yet whether this attack was fueled by transphobia, but we do know that Amber's murder is the 12th murder of a transgender woman in the United States this year, and the 10th murder of a transgender woman of color. Transgender women, and especially transgender women of color, are disproportionately affected by violence."

-gaystarnews.com



Monica Roberts

### Trans woman launches petition to Obama for investigation of murders

A Houston transgender activist has launched a petition calling on the Obama administration to investigate the murders of transgender women of color.

Monica Roberts, who blogs at TransGriot, launched the petition Aug. 10 in the wake of the murder of Amber Monroe in Detroit, who was at least the 12th transgender person killed in the US this year. That equals the total number of transgender people murdered in the US in all of 2014.

Roberts notes that most of the victims have been transgender women of color, and many have been under 30. Her "We The People" petition must garner 100,000 signatures by Sept. 10 to get a formal response from the White House.

From the petition:

Since January 9, 2015, seventeen as of Aug. 25 Transgender women, mostly women of color, have lost their lives due to hate and Transphobia. Eight of these beautiful lives were lost in the first two months of the year. With such a high death toll, something must be done to raise awareness and end the senseless killings of a targeted, vulnerable com-

munity.

For Transgender women of color, safety is a real and warranted concern. We are asking the administration to raise awareness and take action to keep this community safe, by conducting a formal investigation of these deaths occurring across the county to the targeted community of Transgender women, particularly women of color.

Please take action to ensure this community does not have to live in fear of losing their lives to hate and violence.

On the same day that Roberts launched her petition, the 2015 transgender death toll may have risen to 13.

### Dallas trans woman of color found dead

Shade Schuler, 22, was found dead in a vacant field in Dallas, Texas, in late July, and detectives announced they are seeking tips for information about the homicide, officials at the Dallas Police Department told BuzzFeed News.

Schuler appears to have died from a gunshot wound, a source told BuzzFeed News.

As news of the homicide came to light in recent days, Schuler's death has concerned transgender advocates, who are holding a vigil on Aug. 10 to honor Schuler as a "trans woman of color whose life was taken far too soon."

Schuler appears to be the 11th transgender person of color killed in a homicide in 2015 — and the 13th transgender homicide victim overall this year (there have been seventeen as of Aug. 25 — marking the latest death in a trend that anti-violence advocates are calling an epidemic.

Nell Gaither, president of the Trans Pride Initiative in Dallas, has been following the killings around the country, but she was "shocked that it was here," she told BuzzFeed News. "When it happens where you live, it has a bigger effect."

"We are extremely alarmed by the killing of Ms. Shade Schuler, the fourth transgender woman that we know of who has been killed since the end of July," Chai Jindasurat, Co-Director of Community Organizing and Public Advocacy at the New York City Anti Violence Project, said in a statement. "In all of 2014 we documented 12 homicides of transgender women in the U.S. We have alarmingly already surpassed that number in 2015 — and it is only August."

While hate-motivated violence against LGBT people dropped 32% overall in 2014 compared with the previous year, hate-motivated violence against transgender people rose 13%, according to a report released in June by the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs.

It is unclear that Schuler identified as a woman full-time. A MySpace page for a Shade Schuler of Dallas includes photos of what appears to be the victim



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presenting as primarily as masculine, and sometimes feminine.

At the time Schuler's body was found, Schuler appeared to be presenting as female. A press release from Dallas police said Shuler was wearing a wig, a tube top with straps, and false fingernails with what appeared to be diamond studs on them with pink tips.

Dallas police did not answer questions from BuzzFeed News about whether Schuler's gender identity may have been a factor in the homicide; police have referred to Shuler exclusively as male.

### LGBT community tells Detroit police "Trans Lives Matter"

By Dawn Ennis on *The Advocate*

About 100 LGBT Detroit residents met with law enforcement officials last month and discussed what police need to do to ensure the safety of everyone, but particularly trans women of color.

The LGBT community chat was scheduled prior to the Aug. 8 murder of a 20-year-old transgender woman known as Amber Monroe, according to *The Detroit News*, and Tuesday's non-fatal shooting of a 30-year-old transgender woman, identified by police a prostitute.

But attendees, including Detroit Police Chief James Craig, U.S. Attorney Barbara McQuade, and other officials, recognized that those incidents and others gave the standing-room only gathering a sense of urgency.

"Trans lives matter," said Lilianna Reyes. "[The recent victims] could have been you. It could have been me."

Craig told those at the meeting Detroit police have logged 15 crimes against LGBT citizens so far this year — a sharp increase from 2014, when seven were reported.

"I know there are more than that," Craig said. "But people in the LGBT community often don't report crimes because there traditionally has not been a strong relationship with police. We want to change that."

Craig, who appointed an LGBT liaison officer in 2013, said he plans to establish an LGBT advisory board that would meet monthly to discuss issues.

"We have a long history of mistrust and misunderstanding with law enforcement," said Yvonne Siferd, director of victim services for Equality Michigan, an LGBT advocacy group. "So it's not going to be easy."

Fewer than 50 percent of crimes against LGBT residents are reported, according to Siferd, who said those who do report crimes are often subjected to ridicule and abuse by police officers.

Reyes addressed that challenge in speaking of a common "fear that trans people have of going to the police. We have to do better, and we have to make the police do better. Like a lot of you,

I'm nervous around a lot of police."

"We need information, and we know that the streets talk," said Craig. "The only way we're going to get information is if we have a strong relationship."

The federal prosecutor promised to use the U.S. Attorney's Office to seek justice for anyone committing crimes against gays or transgender people. "We are committed to using the tools of our office to make a better life for everyone," McQuade said. "That means everybody."

"What motivates me to be passionate about equality for everyone ... as a girl, I was called a tomboy. I saw how cruel small-minded people can be when you don't fit their stereotypes."

"We need to come together with the police and let them know the things we're going through at the hands of police," Siferd said. "It's my hope that today we can start that conversation."

The most recent local trans murder victim, Amber Monroe, 20, was a student at Michigan's Wayne State University. Although local activists told the media her name, that she was trans, and that she was fatally shot, Detroit police would only confirm the circumstances and not the victim's name to *The Advocate*. Because her legal identification listed her as male, she was misidentified by police not as a transgender woman but as a black man, denying what friends say was her authentic gender identity.

Earlier this week, Detroit police emailed *The Advocate* in response to our request for clarification of the department's policy for identifying transgender victims of crime. "Our policy states that we treat all victims equally and investigate all cases of violence as we normally do regardless of gender, appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression," Sgt. Cassandra Lewis wrote. "However, we must legally identify all persons based on what is stated on their state issued identification."

"He was observed leaving a vehicle when someone inside fired a shot, fatally wounding the victim," said Officer Nicole Kirkwood, a spokeswoman for the Detroit Police Department. Monroe died at a local hospital.

Kirkwood tells *The Advocate* detectives are now investigating the murder, which occurred at 5:05 a.m. Saturday on Woodward Avenue, west of Dakota, on Detroit's west side, a "red light district" that local activists and news media say is known as an area for sex work by trans women. That same area is where police investigated three hate crimes against trans women one year ago, including a murder, according to Detroit's WXYZ TV.

Studies have shown that trans people of color, both men and women, experience disproportionately high levels of violence, although it is significantly higher for all trans women. As *The Advocate* reported in June, the Nation-



### Trans Navy SEAL with Bronze Star blasts Huckabee for opposing transgender military service

Kristin Beck served for two decades in the US military before transitioning to female and she has a message for former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee.

"I was the best of the best ... I am twice the man that you could ever be!" the former Christopher Beck tweeted to Huckabee who does not believe transgender people should be able to serve.

"The military is not a social experiment," Huckabee said during the 6 August debate of 10 of the 17 Republicans running for president.

Huckabee had also said: "The purpose of the military is to kill people and break things. It's not to transform the culture by trying out some ideas that some people think would make us a different country and more diverse. The purpose is to protect America. I'm not sure how paying for transgender surgery for soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines makes our country safer."

Last month, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced a working group has been created to examine "the policy and readiness implications of welcoming transgender persons to serve openly."

Beck served in special operations and received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart and is now running for a congressional seat from Maryland.

She talked to *The Daily Beast* about Huckabee's comments and said, "Right now he's being derogatory and disrespectful to a huge part of the nation—with the amount of transgender people in America who have wives and husbands, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters. People who understand who we are. [Our population] could go as high as 20 to 25 million people... [These are] people he should be serving, and he doesn't care about us."

-Gay Star News; *The Daily Beast*

al Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs found 72 percent of anti-LGBTQ homicide victims are trans women and 67 per cent are trans women of color.

### RNC officially endorses anti-gay discrimination

By Dawn Ennis on *The Advocate*

A controversial bill aimed at undercutting the landmark *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision by the Supreme Court apparently now has the full support of the GOP's brain trust and piggy bank.

The Republican National Committee approved a resolution that in essence endorses discrimination against people

who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. The text of the resolution claims it aims to "protect the rights of believers to equal treatment by the government of The United States of America," according to the *Patriot Post*.

Although that website says in endorsing the First Amendment Defense Act, "the GOP is trying to ensure every American can live at peace in a pluralistic society," .... ThinkProgress points out that the bill would prevent the federal government from acting against businesses and nonprofits that discriminate against same-sex couples. This would mean that government workers could refuse to perform their duties,

(RNC continues page 6)

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## LOCAL AND STATE

(Gay man continued from page 3)

ly piled on top of him and arrested him without probable cause or reasonable suspicion to believe he had committed any crime or offense.”

According to a police complaint obtained by the New York Post, Alejandro jumped over a police barricade and flailed his arms when cops tried to arrest him.

He was charged with resisting arrest and disorderly conduct and released after 24 hours in custody. The charges have since been dismissed.

Alejandro was later diagnosed with fractured ribs, the suit claims.

“I have seen too much bias and bigotry from NYPD officers, and I hope my case makes a difference,” he said in a statement.

Alejandro is seeking unspecified damages and injunctive relief. The suit names Lieutenant Jorge Tavaréz and 10 other officers, detectives and supervisors.

Last month, another gay man sued the NYPD for \$25 million for breaking his nose and calling him a faggot after officers came to his house about a noise complaint. ■

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

(RNC from page 5)

and businesses and organizations — including those that operate with support of taxpayer money — would be free to discriminate.

The American Civil Liberties Union has called the bill “a Pandora’s Box of taxpayer-funded discrimination against same-sex couples and their children,” notes the Washington Blade....

Ellen Barrosse, RNC chair of the Conservative Steering Committee, told the conservative website The Daily Signal that neither the RNC resolution nor this bill have anything to do with discrimination but are instead “an attempt, for those of us who are people of faith, to protect religious organizations.”

The RNC resolution specifically references multiple cases in which private business owners have faced legal consequences for refusing to serve to same-sex couples, in violation of nondiscrimination laws. It also mentions several individuals who faced public scrutiny for their antigay views, suggesting that all of these people are victims of “intensifying hatred and intolerance.”

ThinkProgress wrote that “by allying with these individuals and resolving that their actions need to be ‘protected’ by ‘equal treatment by the government,’ the RNC has directly endorsed discrimination against the LGBT community.”

## L.A. trans leaders protest epidemic of anti-trans violence

By Dawn Ennis on *The Advocate*

Transgender community leaders and LGBTQ activists held a rally protesting violence against transgender and gender-nonconforming people Aug. 18 in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of east Los Angeles.

Members of the National LGBTQ Task Force, the TransLatin@ Coalition, FAMILIA: Trans and Queer Liberation Movement, the Royal Court of Los Angeles, among other groups, took part. Trans activist Jennicet Guitierrez was also on hand.

Demonstrators called for an investigation into the death of Tamara Dominguez, a transgender woman killed by a man driving an SUV, who was repeatedly ran her over near a church parking lot in Kansas City, Mo., Aug. 15. Authorities are looking into her death as a potential hate crime.

“The level of violence against transgender people, particularly transgender women of color, in this country is unconscionable and part of a national crisis,” said Stacey Long Simmons, director of public policy and government affairs for the Task Force. “Last night we learned about Tamara Dominguez, a trans woman who was murdered in Kansas City, Missouri. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ms. Dominguez’s loved ones. We call upon local authorities to undertake a swift investigation of another senseless loss. Together, we must continue to stand up against the ongoing systemic oppressions, demand justice and educate the public about the real harm caused by anti-trans violence.”

So far in 2015, 17 trans women have been reported murdered nationwide, many of them women of color.

“We are outraged by the continued murders targeting transgender women and gender-nonconforming people taking place in California and throughout the nation. We must all do more to protect everyone against violence and discrimination, regardless of who they are. We call on federal and local governments, non-profit organizations, and businesses to join us in stopping these senseless murders,” added Bamby Salcedo, president of the TransLatin@ Coalition.



## Laverne Cox declares state of emergency

By Darren Wee on *gaystarnews.com*

Laverne Cox has declared a “state of emergency” over the slaughter of transgender women of color in the US.

“We in the transgender community right now are reeling,” the Orange Is the New Black actress told Good Morning America.

“Yesterday we found out another transgender woman was murdered and that makes the total 17 known transgender women have been murdered in 2015 alone.”

“It really is a state of emergency. Your life should not be in danger simply for being who you are,” Cox said.

“I think the reasons why trans women experience so much violence has to do with employment, housing, health care, etc., so we need to make sure that trans lives matter.”

## 17th trans victim of 2015 was intentionally run over in Kansas City

By Darren Wee on *gaystarnews.com*

A transgender woman has died in Kansas City after she was repeatedly run over.

Police found Tamara Dominguez, 36, lying unresponsive in a parking lot at 3 a.m. on 15 August.

A witness told police that she had got out of a black SUV that then intentionally knocked her down, backed over her and ran over her again.

Dominguez was rushed to hospital in critical condition but died on Aug. 17.

Friends and family said they did not recognize the vehicle or know who

(17th continues page 11)



## Knesset member wants new laws honoring teenager murdered by fanatic at Jerusalem Pride

A member of Israel’s Knesset has proposed several sweeping LGBT rights bills that would legalize civil unions and ban “ex-gay” torture in the name of murdered teen Shira Banki. The Jerusalem Post reports:

MK Tzipi Livni (Zionist Union) proposed a legislative package of gay rights bills in memory of the 16-year-old who was stabbed at the Jerusalem LGBT parade, a week after she died of her wounds. The “Shira Banki bills” include establishing civil unions, requiring education for equality and tolerance, prohibiting conversion therapy – to convince gay people to be or act straight through torture – regulating surrogacy and supervising hate criminals after they’re released from prison.

Livni’s goal is to bring the proposals to a vote at the opening of the Knesset’s winter session, in October, as a legislative response to hate crimes and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people, and give the government an option to back up their condemnations of violence with actions.

“The Shira bills are meant to be a deterrent and make it clear to anyone planning a hate crime and thinking that violence and racism are the way, that their actions will be met with the advancement of equality and tolerance in Israeli society,” Livni said.

The civil unions would be “legally equal” to Israel’s religious marriages. Civil marriage is not presently available to any Israeli.

-JoeMyGod.com ■

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# Interview



PHOTO: SUSAN JORDAN

## Shauna O'Toole to declare as candidate for NYS 55th Senate seat

By Susan Jordan

Trans activist Shauna O'Toole is planning to announce her 2016 candidacy for the NYS 55th District Senate seat, as an Independent and possibly a third party candidate, running against former sportscaster and anti-gay Republican Rich Funke.

She told The Empty Closet, "I believe in the Citizen Politician. If I can have a term or two helping the people, that's great. But I am not beholden to any corporation. I'll take campaign contributions up to \$5,000 – anything over that I'll hand back."

Shauna realizes that her trans identity, along with lack of name recognition, make her a long shot. But she feels at least her candidacy will draw attention to trans and LGB rights issues, and the other social issues she cares about. Nonetheless, she is not running to make a point—she is running to win.

A scientist and former science teacher, she was inspired to run when working for her Masters in Social Work at Nazareth. She took a class in Social Work Policy and Politics, taught by Dr. Estelle Norwood Evans. Shauna said, "The object of the course was to help social workers understand how politics works, so we could use that to help us in our position, as opposed to fighting with politics. The final project for the class was to write and present a bill in a mock session of the NYS legislature. I did GENDA. All the way through the class Dr. Stella was hinting to a couple of us that it would be great if some of us went into politics."

"I found myself more a Thomas Paine than a John Adams. Then the November 2014 elections occurred and New York took a massive swing to the Right. I knew then that GENDA would never pass or even come up for a vote, and neither would the anti-conversion therapy bill (banning torture therapy for young gay and gender variant people). Raquel my wife and I had been talking about my running for office, and after the election we talked some more, and I said, 'I have to do this.'"

Shauna talked with Democratic Party officials and, she said, "They were not terribly excited about running an unknown. After I presented GENDA in class I announced to my classmates that I was running for the 55th District NYS Senate seat. I met with thunderous applause. Dr. Stella is on my campaign team as an advisor."

Shauna has also spoken with a local third party and will make her official announcement after the 2015 election in November – doing it earlier would confuse voters.

Shauna's platform (see below) includes

her position on education, which as a former teacher is significant to her. She is an opponent of Common Core. She said, "So many people are upset with Common Core. I met with Sen. Nozzolio on Equality and Justice Day in Albany; he's a conservative Republican but he works hard for his district. He mentioned that he had so many parents contact him about Common Core and something has to be done."

"No Child Left Behind was originally a Republican plan, but was supported by both sides, like Race to the Top. Both are the worst things that ever happened to education. They take away what Americans do best – that is, innovate. There's a focus only on exams and no chance for students to ask questions."

"I was 19 years in the industrial world as a scientist and 11 years as a science teacher. What you learn is, if you turn a knob and it breaks, you back up – you don't continue turning the knob. I think we should go back to having two paths in high school – college bound and trade bound. We could do more things. Now ALL students have to be made ready for college – it's a law. If we recognize post high school trade school as an internship, we could prepare kids who don't want academic education for a type of college that meets their needs. We don't need PhDs running coffee shops, etc. We need skilled people to work in trades."

"Many kids have lost confidence and faith in themselves because they didn't pass the exams. College testing creates anxiety and fear and causes students to give up because they feel they aren't smart enough. This could make working in trades and service industries failure positions – and they're NOT. These students need skills like balance sheets --- things that will keep them learning and then working."

Shauna is also, obviously, a supporter of GENDA, which would give basic civil rights protections to trans and gender

variant New Yorkers. When asked why conservatives are so obsessively opposed to equal rights for trans people, Shauna said, "My question would be, if you look through politicians' campaign finances, how much comes from religious organizations? I think there's a lot of pressure from religious conservatives who say that being trans is against their religious beliefs – although why that is, I can't say!"

She noted that Deuteronomy says it is an "abomination" for men to "don the garments of a woman" and for a woman to don male garments. "BUT the original Hebrew version says 'DOING an abomination'. A rabbi I read said that men in Biblical times were putting on women's clothes to sneak into the women's camp for adulterous affairs. That *heterosexual*

going to put up a weak candidate to challenge Funke. Many 55th voters are working class, conservative and rural. I think I can appeal to working class people. I was raised middle class but after my transition my income nowadays is less than one-tenth of what I used to have."

**Excerpt from Shauna O'Toole's platform:**

**EDUCATION:** Declare that post high school Trade Schools are college equivalents. This would allow for a two path education system. One path would be centered on academics. A second path would be centered on the skills necessary for working in the trades.

Doing this would have the following benefits. It would improve success in schools because students are learning what they need for their field. It would create a trained workforce that would be attractive to manufacturing.

**EMPLOYMENT:** A manufacturing economy earns approximately 30 percent more than a service economy. With a trained workforce, manufactures would find it relatively easy to start a facility in New York. Manufacturers would be allowed to build and produce in NYS for a short span of years with no state taxes. After five years, the manufacturer would pay taxes on its profits -- both within state and out of state. This includes profits hidden offshore.

**ENERGY:** Fossil fuels keep the United States closely tied to oil producing nations, causing the deployment of US Troops overseas. Expanding the use of solar and wind energy will reduce the cost of electrical power within NYS and will supplement the existing power grid.

**FRACKING:** Areas that have allowed hydrolic fracking of rock layers to extract fossil fuels have experienced damaged drinking water and an increase in earthquake activity. This needs to be outlawed to preserve our water systems, not just banned.

**SURROGATE PARENTHOOD:** Should be allowed within NYS. The couple who contracted the services of a surrogate womb would be listed as the birth parents immediately upon birth. The woman who carried the child would not have the right to keep the child upon birth.

**CONVERSION/REPARATIVE THERAPY:** This is a form of treatment used to make a person "un-Gay." This form of "therapy" has been denounced by the medical and social services community as quackery. This treatment needs to be outlawed with no religious exemption. Parents and others who transport minors across state lines to exercise this treatment would face charges of child abuse.

**GENDER EXPRESSION NON DISCRIMINATION ACT:** The Transgender / Gender Variant is estimated to comprise one percent of the general population. This legislation adds five words to already existing and working hate crime laws. These five words are GENDER EXPRESSION AND GENDER IDENTITY. With passage of this bill, almost 200,000 New York residents would finally be protected by law. ■

**"THIS IS NOT AN AWARENESS CAMPAIGN – I'M IN IT TO WIN. I'M IN THIS TO REPRESENT THE PEOPLE OF THE 55TH DISTRICT WITHOUT INFLUENCE BY SPECIAL INTERESTS."**

activity was the abomination – not simply wearing the clothes!"

Shauna noted that nowhere does the Old or New Testament say that people cannot change their gender. She added, "The conservatives ignore the prohibitions in Leviticus about eating pork and shellfish and wearing two different types of fabric. They aren't protesting about abominations in front of Red Lobster!" She agreed that the negative obsession with transitioning (as with homosexuality) may come from the enormous guilt, shame and neurotic fascination that our society has connected with anything sexual or related to our bodies.

Alternative energy is another issue important to Shauna. She said, "As a scientist I know climate change is real, and it's terrifying. But if you're conservative and don't believe in climate change – are you ready to send our soldiers to fight and die for oil – or would you have them do more important things we need our troops for? I'm not saying shut down power plants, but now that we're making generators in the U.S., let's start buying American-made generators. Manufacturing brings in more money than a service economy."

She concluded, "This is not an awareness campaign – I'm in it to win. I'm in this to represent the people of the 55th district without influence by special interests. I'm a citizen politician – and when I win my door will be open!"

"I think I have an honest chance. An acquaintance who follows politics in the 55th is wondering if the Democrats are

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Fosse Trilogy, photo by Cheryl Mann

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# Making the Scene



**D-I REUNION:** Dignity Integrity held its 40th reunion picnic Aug. 15. Around 70 people attended. See article on p. 25. Photos: Yu Yin



**LAKESIDE WEDDING:** Tony Perri officiated at the marriage of his longtime friends and high school buddies, Gary Rice and Richard Hasely, at their home in Olcott Beach, N.Y. on July 18. The wedding was lakeside and Gary and Richard were given away by their children. A reception followed the ceremony at their lakeside home and was attended by 100 guests. Best wishes to the happy couple!

## Scenemakers of the Month: Delphine and Carmela Calamari

The Calamari Sisters, Delphine and Carmela, will return to Rochester Oct. 8-Nov. 1 for the world premiere of their new show, "Oy Vey, It's the Calamari Sisters!" at JCC, created by Jay Falzone, Dan Lavender and Stephen Smith.

When Delphine and Carmela Calamari are hired to cater an event at a Jewish funeral home, there's no telling what they'll whip up in the kitchen. From matzoh balls to meatballs and gefilte fish to baccala, the girls try desperately to bridge the cultural gap in the only way they know how — by singing, dancing, and cooking, with memorable songs and hilarious audience interaction.

The Calamari Sisters are Rochester favorites who wow audiences and critics around the country. Their delightfully fun shows, like *Cooking with the Calamari Sisters*, *Contractions with the Calamari Sisters* and *The Calamari Sisters Big Fat Italian Wedding*, are hits from New York to Florida and everywhere in between. JCC says, "We are thrilled to present their all new World Premiere Workshop Production here at JCC CenterStage."

The sisters dared to bare all for *The Empty Closet*.

### **Favorite color?**

Delphine – Is gingham a color?

Carmela – Fire engine red. No, cherry red. How about cherry red being worn by a fireman. THAT'S my favorite color.

### **Hobbies?**

Delphine – sampling every sausage I can get my hands on.

Carmela – Kegels

### **Internet site?**

Delphine – [www.meatsoftheworld.co.uk](http://www.meatsoftheworld.co.uk)

Carmela – [www.hunkdujour.com](http://www.hunkdujour.com)

### **Halloween costume?**

Delphine – a side of beef

Carmela – a slutty witch

### **Your dream vacation?**

Delphine – Italy

Carmela – Italy

### **Death Row meal:**

Delphine – Filet mignon, sausage & peppers, prosciutto with figs, carved turkey, chicken parm, stuffed pork chops, and tiramisu.



**The Calamari Sisters are coming to JCC in October! You have been warned!**

Carmela – Tony Danza

### **The dish you make that you are famous for?**

Delphine – Our ma's secret recipe for red sauce

Carmela – Chicken a la Calamari

### **Music you're listening to right now?**

Delphine – Sinatra's "My Way"

Carmela – Britney's "Toxic"

### **Ultimate nightmare?**

Delphine – a world taken over by vegetarians

Carmela – celibacy

### **Best pick up line you've heard?**

Delphine – "Is that pork gristle on your chin?"

Carmela – "The word of the day is legs. Let's go home and spread the word."

### **What super power would you choose?**

Delphine – The ability to unhinge my jaw and distend my esophagus. There are pieces of meat that I wish I could handle but my mouth is too small. I would be so happy if I could just take those big pieces of meat. Now THAT'S a power worth having!

Carmela – The ability to duplicate myself. It would make things a lot less awkward when I double book dates.

### **Your worst habit?**

Delphine – I don't really think I have any bad habits.

Carmela – pointing out all of Delphine's bad habits.

### **TV show you're addicted to?**

Delphine – *Hell's Kitchen*

Carmela – *The Bachelor*

### **Signature dance move?**

Delphine – krunking

Carmela – twerking

### **You're a huge fan of \_\_\_\_\_?**

Delphine – Rosemary Clooney

Carmela – *The Happy Hooker*

### **Phrase you over-use?**

Delphine – "That's my two cents, take it or leave it."

Carmela – "Yes."

### **Proudest achievement?**

Delphine – Our TV show -- *Mangia Italiano* – the only all-singing, all-dancing, all-cooking cooking show around!

Carmela – Our TV show -- *Mangia Italiano* – the only all-singing, all-dancing, all-cooking cooking show around!

### **If you could have dinner with anyone (living or dead) who would it be?**

Delphine – the Pope.

Carmela – Ryan Seacrest

### **The stars who inspire you?**

Delphine – Sophia Loren, Rosemary Clooney, Elizabeth Taylor, & Ava Gardner

Carmela – Ann Margret, Isabella Rossellini, Pamela Anderson, & Monica Lewinsky

### **Motto:**

Delphine – "Just burp. There's always a little more room for another helping."

Carmela – "Dreams are like butterflies. Don't let them go 'cause they won't come back. So hold onto them tight even if it kills the butterfly."

**Expanded Performance Schedule:** Thursday, Oct. 8 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 10 at 8 p.m.; Sunday, Oct. 11 at 2 p.m.\*; Wednesday, Oct. 14 at 7 p.m.; Thursday, Oct. 15 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 17 at 2 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 17 at 8 p.m.; Sunday, Oct. 18 at 2 p.m.; Wednesday, Oct. 21 at 7 p.m.; Thursday, Oct. 22 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 24 at 2 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 24 at 8 p.m.; Sunday, Oct. 25 at 2 p.m.; Wednesday, Oct. 28 at 7 p.m.; Thursday, Oct. 29 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 31 at 8 p.m.; Sunday, Nov. 1 at 2 p.m.

\*Interpreted Performance. VIP Reserved Seating \$40/\$35 JCC Members; Reserved Seating \$29; \$27 JCC Members; \$20 Students.

**NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL**

(17th from page 6)

Dominguez might have been with.

"We understand that maybe they were arguing, but it's not fair for what he did. It ain't fair," her roommate Juan Rendon told KCTV News.

Authorities are treating the incident as an aggravated assault but said it is too early to say for sure whether the attack was a hate crime.

"I don't think it's fair somebody dies like this no matter what the problem was, what happened. Nobody has the right to kill someone," Rendon told KSBH TV. "I don't think people have their mind open, they're just close-minded. They don't understand. For some people being transsexual or transgender or gay they think it's funny."

Rendon has launched a GoFundMe campaign to send Dominguez's body to her family in Mexico.

At least 16 other transgender woman have been murdered in the US since the beginning of the year, a historic high according to the National Center for Transgender Equality.

**Sixteenth trans victim was shot in Phoenix, Az**

By Darren Wee on [gaystarnews.com](http://gaystarnews.com)

Three more murders of black transgender women were reported in August, bringing the total to 17 since the beginning of the year.

Kandis Capri, 35, was shot three to four times outside an apartment complex in Phoenix, Arizona at 11:30 p.m. on 11 August after she reportedly tried to intervene in a domestic dispute.

Local media did not initially report the incident, but the victim's family spoke to the Guardian over the weekend.

The body of another transgender

woman, Elisha Walker, 20, was found in a "crude grave" in Smithfield, North Carolina on 13 August, quotes reported.

She was reported missing in November last year and her burned out car was found two weeks later.

Twenty-three-year-old Angel Arias, a member of the Latin Kings gang, has been charged with her murder.

Another body was found lying in a field in Dallas, Texas on 29 July. But it was so decomposed police took two weeks to identify the victim as Shade Schuler, 22, from her tattoos.

Dallas police, who continue to misgender the victim, said Schuler was shot to death.

The murders of Ashton O'Hara, 25, and Amber Monroe were also reported in August.

At least 13 transgender women were murdered in 2014, all but one of whom were black or Latina.

**Russian thugs break lesbian activist's nose but can't silence her**

By Joe Morgan on [gaystarnews.com](http://gaystarnews.com)

Two thugs have learned that you can break a woman's nose, but that won't stop her from protesting for LGBTI rights.

Irina Fet, a leader in LGBTI rights in Russia, was beaten up on Aug. 16 in central Moscow. She is widely known for her protests for equality in the city.

While on her way home at the weekend, two thugs shouted at her and called her a "faggot".

The attackers then started throwing punches, kicking her and breaking her nose. They only stopped when a passerby spotted the attack and shouted. Fet called up a friend, who was thankfully near by, and helped her get home.

Fet has repeatedly called for rights for LGBTI people in Russia.

In 2009, she and her partner called for the Moscow registry office to give them

a marriage license. The couple then went to court after court to try and get it legalized. After being turned down again and again, Fet married her partner in Canada and then filed a complaint with the European Court of Human Rights.

She is known for holding posters saying: "Homosexuality is normal", as well as "I am proud of my homosexuality. Ask me about it".

This attack follows an assault on a trans man in St Petersburg the week before.

The nationwide "gay propaganda" law was enforced in Russia in June 2013.

**Anti-gay politician allegedly fakes gay sex scandal to distract from extramarital affair**

Anti-gay Michigan lawmaker and tea party politician Todd Courser concocted a convoluted gay sex scandal involving himself and a fictitious gay prostitute to reveal staffers who were extorting him with the help of what he calls the Lansing "mafia."

Courser's former aide Ben Graham claims that Courser created the gay sex scandal to direct attention away from his actual, and equally explosive, affair with fellow Michigan State Representative Cindy Gamrat.

As The Detroit News reports, Graham claims Courser asked him to create and send a fake email blast to fellow Republicans, whom Courser believed were planning to expose his relationship with Gamrat, stating that Courser was caught engaging in sex with a male prostitute behind a Lansing nightclub; Graham secretly taped Courser giving him instructions on the nature of the email that describes Courser as an "alcoholic, drug-addicted bisexual monster."

Courser fired Graham in July for not distributing the email and accused Graham of colluding with the blackmailers in

the plot against him and Gamrat. Courser apologized for his actions, stating that he acted in response to the threatening text messages he received:

"It was a fast decision on my part to do the emails. It was not my finest moment. It was the only option that I felt would be unpredicted by the blackmailer."

Fellow Republicans and colleagues are livid with Courser. Fellow Michigan Republican Sen. Rick Jones called Courser's scheme "the paranoid ravings of a man who has thrown his career away." Although asked to resign, Courser refuses to step down saying he wants to reveal corruption in the Michigan House.

Michigan state Speaker of the House Kevin Cotter ordered the House business office on Aug. 7 to conduct an investigation to see if Courser and Gamrat violated rules or committed illegal actions and called out both politicians for the ridiculous nature of the scandal:

"If this weren't so offensive, it might be funny. He sends out these ridiculously long email rants, about the so-called establishment, and uses words like mafia and cartel, but no one else did wrong here. These two representatives voluntarily engaged in the affair and they need to own up to that. There are 107 other members of the House currently serving. It's so unfair to this institution as a whole and it's so unfair that we have this type of distraction."

Both Gamrat and Courser were married with children at the time of the affair.

Right Wing Watch reports on both Gamrat and Courser's virulently anti-gay history:

Gamrat and Courser made waves earlier this year when they tried to circumvent the Supreme Court's marriage decision by introducing a bill declaring that only members of the clergy could perform marriages in Michigan. Gamrat denounced the marriage ruling as a "sad day in our nation" and blasted the court for trying to "redefine for our entire nation, mar-

(Anti-gay continues page 12)

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## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

(Anti-gay continued from page 11)

riage, the bedrock of families and society since the beginning of time.” She also warned that people who “do not embrace the homosexual lifestyle will need protections” to fend off impending persecution.

Courser has similarly alleged that LGBT rights advocates are trying to do away with freedom, maintaining that “this decision by the Supreme Court was and is an absolute tragedy for our nation and its future.” He responded to the Supreme Court ruling by announcing that we “are living in the last days” and that it “was a crushing day for those who believe in traditional marriage and traditional morality.”

Days before the decision, Courser told his supporters: “I will say that I grieve for our nation as we take one step after another to deny the diety of God and who He is. As we step further and further away from Him and His Holy word we lose His protection for ourselves, our families, our communities, our states and of course our Nation!”

-Towleroad.com

### Uganda marks Pride: “Moving forward”

Members of Uganda’s LGBTI community marked Gay Pride on Aug. 8 at the Entebbe Botanical Gardens just outside the capital, Kampala. No violent incidents occurred.

About 100 marchers holding rainbow flags and banners marched a short distance as music blared, according to media reports.

“We are here to send a message to the wider population that we do exist and we want rights like any other Ugandan,” said Moses Kimbugwe, one of the marchers. “We think this is a step moving forward.”

Just a year ago LGBTI people were at risk of long jail terms including life sentences for “aggravated homosexuality.”

For several years, Uganda attracted a storm of international condemnation after enacting one of the harshest anti-gay laws in Africa.

A constitutional court last year overturned the law because of legal technicalities. Several lawmakers have since threatened to re-introduce anti-gay laws in parliament.

LGBTI Ugandans continue to live secretive lives, as being openly gay is more than likely to attract stigma and hostility from family and society.

### Lesbian country singer blasts Trump for sexist insults to Rosie O’Donnell

By Greg Hernandez on Gay Star News

Donald Trump making a joke at the expense of Rosie O’Donnell during last week’s Republican presidential debate was bad enough to country music singer Chely Wright.

But the worst part, Wright says in a new Facebook post, is the way the Fox News audience reacted to it.

“The crowd went wild. They cheered and whooped and clapped and belly laughed – at Rosie’s expense. You saw it and I saw it. I felt a wave of nausea sweep over me and it has remained for days.

“Nearly ALL 5,000 people allowed this man – who aspires to be the leader of OUR America – to publicly bully, mock, attack Rosie O’Donnell (again– he’s been doing it for a decade and it’s bothered me for as long), but they cheered him on as he did it.”

Wright, who came out publicly as a lesbian in 2010, adds: “Shame on you, if you were in that audience and you cheered for this. Shame on you if you cheered and snickered at home. This is not a matter of the Left or the Right– this is a matter of basic decorum and decency. I saw very



Chely Wright

little of either in that moment.”

Trump’s poke at O’Donnell occurred when Fox moderator Megyn Kelly asked him about his various insults aimed at women over the years.

“You’ve called women you don’t like fat pigs, dogs, slobs and disgusting animals,” Kelly began before being interrupted by Trump who said: “Only Rosie O’Donnell.”

Kelly replied: “No it wasn’t. For the record, it was well beyond Rosie O’Donnell.”

The audience laughed.

“For the record, it was well beyond Rosie O’Donnell,” Kelly responded before continuing her question.

O’Donnell, a mother of five, has not reacted to Trump’s remark except to tweet: “Try explaining that to your kids.”

RELATED: Trump has since commented on Kelly’s menstrual condition during the interview, implying that women are erratic if not insane during menstruation and therefore their opinions are invalid. Kelly has refused to apologize “for doing journalism.”

### Man pleads guilty in Seattle hate crime

Troy Deacon Burns of Bremerton, Washington has pleaded guilty after being charged on Aug. 4 under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, according to the Justice Department.

Holding a knife raised over his head in a stabbing position, Burns approached three gay men who walking along East Pike Street in Seattle’s Capitol Hill neighborhood just after midnight on Jan. 25 and yelled “fucking faggots” as the trio crossed the street, according to a court document.

As Burns got closer, he made eye contact with them and repeated the slur yelling “Yes, fucking faggots” while holding a knife at waist level. One of the men said he heard Burns say “I’ll fucking stab you.”

The three men ran, but Burns caught up to one of them and again used a gay slur while threatening to stab him.

A friend of the men found Seattle police officers, who arrested Burns.

Police said Burns continued to yell slurs even after he was placed in the patrol car.

Burns has claimed he was under the influence of drugs and alcohol at the time of the assault and does not remember his actions, according to the Seattle Times.

A hate crime is punishable by up to 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

-Gaystarnews.com

### Jerusalem Pride killer ruled fit to stand trial

Gay Pride parade stabber Yishai Shlissel was admitted to a psychiatric ward in order to assess whether he is fit to stand trial, Channel 10 reported on Aug. 10. Shlissel, who killed one person – a 16-year-old girl – was ruled on Aug. 20 fit to stand trial.

Channel 10 reported that Shlissel had experienced a psychotic episode in 2009 and undergone extensive treatment in a special facility, and was being forced to

take medication since. (Ten years ago he stabbed Pride Parade participants and was jailed.)

It is unclear whether this was ever mentioned to investigators. Even before the parade, Shlissel was labeled by intelligence as a “danger to the event.” However, he was never summoned to report to police before or during the march and was never questioned before the fact regarding his intentions.

-JoeMyGod.com

(See related story in this section)

### Chelsea Manning gets indefinite solitary for toothpaste, Vanity Fair’s Caitlyn Jenner issue

By Joe Morgan on Gay Star News

Chelsea Manning is facing indefinite solitary confinement for being found in possession with a copy of Caitlyn Jenner’s Vanity Fair issue, according to her lawyer.

The transgender US soldier, who is currently serving a 35-year military prison sentence for leaking secrets to WikiLeaks, has allegedly been charged with four violations of custody rules.

Her lawyers have condemned them as “absurd.”

This includes “medicine misuse”, which involved having an expired tube of toothpaste, “disorderly conduct,” which meant she swept food onto the floor during dinner, keeping “prohibited property,” that’s the Vanity Fair, and “disrespect.”

It was also found Manning owned copies of “I Am Malala” and a novel featuring trans women called “A Safe Girl To Love”. It is not clear why these have been confiscated.

Manning’s lawyer Nancy Hollander called the charge relating to an expired tube of toothpaste “utterly ridiculous”. It had expired in April of this year.

Speaking to The Guardian, she added, “I’m concerned that books have been taken from her – those books came to her legally and are clearly not a security threat.”

Chase Strangio, a staff attorney who is handling Manning’s legal dispute with the US military, claimed they were trying to “silence” Manning.

“Chelsea has a growing voice in the public discussion,” he said. “It would not surprise me were these charges connected to who she is.”

### Christie vetoes trans birth certificate bill

On Aug. 10, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie vetoed a bill that would have eased access to accurate birth certificates for transgender people.

This is Governor Christie’s second veto of this legislation despite overwhelming support in the New Jersey General Assembly. In response, National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) State Policy Counsel, Arli Christian, who has worked closely with local and state advocates on this bill, issued the following statement:

“For the second time, Governor Chris Christie has elected to allow his state’s birth certificate laws to deteriorate despite the overwhelming majority of support from the New Jersey legislature to modernize. His veto on this bill keeps in place outdated and burdensome requirements that make it incredibly difficult for transgender people to get birth certificates that match who they are. Birth Certificates play an enormous role in transgender people’s ability to live their life as the person that they are. And Governor Christie has—for a second time--vetoed legislation denying that for transgender New Jerseyans.”

On Governor Christie’s first veto of this legislation in January 2014, he cited fears of fraud, deception, and abuse over the removal of the surgery requirement, demonstrating a clear lack of understanding of transgender people, and standards of gender transition. Nine states and the District of Columbia have taken action to

allow transgender people access to accurate birth certificates.

NCTE will continue advocating with Garden State Equality, Gender Rights Advocacy Association of New Jersey, ACLU of New Jersey, and other activists to ensure this bill becomes law.

### Lesbian asylum seeker set free after two months in sanctuary

By John Wright on Towleroad.com

After more than two months living in sanctuary at an Austin church, a lesbian Guatemalan immigrant is finally free to return to her partner and their food truck business.

If federal immigration agents want to send Sulma Franco back to Guatemala, they will have to get through the Rev. Chris Jimmerson and other worshippers at Austin’s First Unitarian Universalist Church.

“We will resist it. We will invite a bunch of people with their yellow T-shirts to try and stand between [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] and Sulma,” Jimmerson said, referring to gear the church’s immigrant-rights supporters wear. “This is private church property, and it’s a tradition that law enforcement, including ICE, don’t [enter].”

Immigrants seeking safe haven in U.S. churches isn’t new. The movement was in full force decades ago when Central Americans across the country sought shelter, and the effort was rebranded last year after Congress failed to pass comprehensive immigration reform and the Obama administration continued deporting people at record levels.

But Franco’s story adds a new dimension to the movement: Being a lesbian, she says, will place a target on her back if she is forced to return home. “I don’t want to go back. I’ve suffered enough there,” she said. “I’ve been discriminated against, abused and beaten up in every form because of my lifestyle.”

In early June, Sulma Franco took refuge in a makeshift apartment at Austin’s First Unitarian Universalist Church, reviving a tradition of immigrants seeking safe haven at places of worship. On Aug. 18, Franco was released under an order of supervision by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

An LGBT activist in Guatemala before fleeing the Central American country in 2009, Franco is seeking asylum in the US because she fears persecution and violence due to her sexual orientation if she’s deported. Stephanie Taylor, one of Franco’s pro bono attorneys, said her client will now be required to check in with ICE in one year.

“This is a victory, but it’s by no means a permanent victory,” Taylor told Towleroad. “It’s a small victory in a long battle that we have. Now she’s able to move forward with her underlying case without the fear of being arrested or deported.”

Accompanied by 30-40 LGBT and immigration activists, Franco traveled on Tuesday to the ICE office in San Antonio to apply for a stay of deportation. Franco was apprehensive about going inside because the last time she went to an ICE office, she was arrested and spent eight months in detention facilities before her partner was able to post bond.

This time, Franco entered the ICE office accompanied by Taylor and two ministers from the Austin church. Taylor said ICE is now processing the request for a stay of deportation, and she expects it to be granted since the agency released Franco under an order of supervision.

Taylor credits media attention and community involvement for the victory, and she hopes Franco’s case has drawn attention to the plight of LGBT asylum-seekers. According to the Center for American Progress, there were 267,000 LGBT undocumented immigrants in the US in 2013.

“ICE now knows that the community is watching, that these aren’t people that they can just arrest, deport, whisk away to



Sulma Franco

detention centers, and not have the community stand up and hold them accountable for it," Taylor said. "There are a lot of Sulmas out there, and I think it's amazing what she's been able to do in terms of shedding light on her situation."

Nina Pruneda, a spokeswoman with the ICE field office in San Antonio, said in an email that Franco has been "afforded full due process and exhausted all legal options."

After an immigration judge ruled that Franco be deported in 2012, the Board of Immigration Appeals dismissed her appeal and in February 2015, a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed an additional petition for review.

"ICE is focused on smart, effective immigration enforcement that prioritizes the removal of criminal aliens, recent border crossers and egregious immigration law violators, such as those who have been previously removed from the United States," Pruneda said.

### S. Carolina Attorney General ordered to obey the law, pay costs

*The Associated Press reports:*

A federal judge ordered South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson on Monday to pay more than \$135,000 in legal fees for a couple who challenged the state ban on same-sex marriage. Wilson must reimburse seven attorneys a total of \$130,600 for 390 hours of work, or nearly 90 percent of what they requested. Judge Richard Gergel also awarded them the full \$4,700 they sought in other court costs and fees, according to court documents.

Wilson's office is reviewing the ruling to decide what to do next, spokesman Mark Powell said. It has 28 days to respond. Gergel called the hours spent on the case reasonable and necessary.

Colleen Condon and her partner, Nichols Bleckley, sued last October to get a marriage license. At the time the case was filed, Gergel noted, South Carolina was the only state in the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to still enforce its gay marriage ban after the court found a similar ban in Virginia unconstitutional.

-JoeMyGod.com

### Ohio judge agrees to obey the law, will marry same sex couples

Ohio Judge Allen McConnell has lost his battle not to marry gay couples. The Star-Tribune reports:

Judges who perform marriages in Ohio can't refuse to marry same-sex couples on personal or moral grounds or because of religious beliefs, according to a state judicial conduct board. In addition, judges who stop performing all marriages to avoid marrying same-sex couples may be interpreted as biased and could be disqualified from any case where sexual orientation is an issue, according to an opinion by the Ohio Supreme Court's Board of Professional Conduct issued (July 31) and made public (Aug. 3).

The ruling followed a request for guidance from a Toledo judge who refused to

perform a same-sex wedding last month. Municipal Judge C. Allen McConnell said he didn't marry a same-sex couple because of his religious beliefs after the U.S. Supreme Court made gay marriage legal in all 50 states in June.

McConnell says that he will abide by the ruling.  
-JoeMyGod.com

### Texas Attorney General agrees to obey the law, avoids contempt hearing

A federal judge has canceled a contempt hearing for Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, after state officials pledged to begin issuing accurate birth and death certificates for same-sex couples.

In early August, U.S. District Judge Orlando Garcia ordered Paxton and Kirk Cole, interim commissioner of the state's health agency, to appear in court and explain why they shouldn't be held in contempt for failing to comply with the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in Obergefell v. Hodges.

The state had refused to issue an accurate death certificate to a gay widower for 40 days after the ruling, despite Garcia's order enjoining them from enforcing the state's same-sex marriage ban.

On Aug. 3, Paxton's office filed a motion seeking to quash Garcia's order requiring him and Cole to appear in court, resulting in an emergency phone conference with the judge. The Austin Statesman reports:

Lawyers for Paxton announced the policy changes during an Aug. 3 conference call with U.S. District Judge Orlando Garcia, Lane said.

"We will have new guidelines, and hopefully that is the end of litigation and no one will have to file suit to get what they are entitled to," Lane said. "Same-sex couples are entitled to the same certificates that opposite-sex couples are entitled to."

John Allen Stone-Hoskins, who filed suit to be listed as the husband on his spouse's death certificate, said he was ecstatic with the outcome.

"I'm hoping that this case is over and that this will end the discrimination by the state of Texas. That was my ultimate goal," he said. "I hate the circumstances, with James' death being the reason this went forward, but everything happens for a reason."

Stone-Hoskins added in an email:

The State has now announced that it will now, as a result of this Order and hearing, put in to place guidelines as to death and birth certificates — and Neel Lane has been appointed to review the policies and see if it covers all bases without the need of litigation by any future party!

Neel Lane has been appointed by the Court to review all policies and procedures to our satisfaction to ensure that all bases are covered, so DSHS can no longer do this to any same-sex couple, birth or death.

The judge has stayed the hearing 30 days.

More from The Texas Tribune:

In a brief filed Wednesday afternoon, Stone-Hoskins' attorneys had asked the court to dismiss Paxton's request and pursue contempt of court charges, alleging Paxton has "virtually incited" state employees to "ignore and resist" the same-sex marriage rulings.

Stone-Hoskins' attorneys added that Paxton, who they describe as the "lead cheerleader," and Cole are behind "contemptuous acts," including denying same-sex couples to both be listed on their children's birth certificates.

"Paxton and Cole's contemptuous attitude and acts have consequences far beyond the single case of John Stone-Hoskins, whose situation is hardly unique," the attorneys wrote, adding that Garcia should exercise "his inherent power of contempt" to ensure state officials abide by same-sex marriage rulings.

-Towleroad.com

### Mexico Supreme Court overturns gay adoption ban as unconstitutional

Mexico's Supreme Court ruled Aug. 11 that banning same-sex couples from adopting children violates the nation's constitution, with only one justice dissenting from the majority opinion.

The Washington Blade reports:

"The Mexican Supreme Court on Tuesday ruled a law in the state of Campeche that bans same-sex couples from adopting children is unconstitutional.

"The 9-1 decision comes against the backdrop of the debate over marriage rights for same-sex couples that continues to gain momentum in the country."

-Towleroad.com

### Kentucky school district tries to cover up omission of gay athlete from yearbook

*By Kyler Geoffroy on Towleroad.com*

The eastern Kentucky school district embroiled in a controversy surrounding the omission of a gay student athlete's yearbook photo has released a statement attempting to clear up the situation, but the athlete in question isn't buying it.

The story of Dalton Maldonado's omission from the basketball team tribute page in his high school yearbook was first picked up by OutSports this week in an article that noted that the administrators at Betsy Lane High School had "repeatedly refused to answer questions or disputed" prior claims of anti-gay harassment directed against Maldonado, the school's starting point guard.

With the story of Maldonado's yearbook omission going viral, the Floyd County Board of Education was repeatedly contacted by media outlets asking for a response.

"A district level administrator was assigned to conduct an inquiry into the allegation and report his findings directly to me," said superintendent Henry Webb in a statement. "The individual picture for the student athlete was omitted from the school's basketball section through error."

Webb noted that a "very limited" number of omissions occurred in other schools in the district with the 2014-2015 yearbook but that allegations that the district had intentionally omitted Maldonado's photo from the basketball team's tribute page were "totally false and without merit."

"To resolve these unintentional errors, I have directed that any pages where omissions occurred be reprinted as inserts," said Webb. "We teach our students that when you make a mistake that you acknowledge your error, express regret and if possible, correct your actions. We can't expect our children to learn these lessons if we don't model them."

Maldonado, however, isn't pleased with how the district is handling the situation, writing on Facebook:

"Earlier today, after receiving many good wishes and lots of support from all over the country, I received a call from the superintendent of schools. He told

me that I was in the annual fifteen times, and that they may have over looked my senior basketball picture. He went on to say that they were going to make a new annual and he hoped I knew they were so proud of me. However, here is the picture that should have been in the yearbook, along with the rest of the senior basketball players! They took OutSports' first article about my experience and swept it under the rug, as if the harassment and humiliation never happened! I refuse to let this happen again! I was a senior point guard who had played for three years, and I was even in the center of the team picture. I don't care if I was in other parts 100 times, my individual picture wasn't in there! I find it unbelievable that their 'investigation' took less than one whole school day and once again they're just letting it go! I will not stop fighting this. No one deserves this, and I'll make sure no other LGBT teen in Floyd Co. has to face this type of discrimination!"

### Ky. county clerk ordered to issue marriage licenses still refuses

On Aug. 12 Kentucky county clerk Kim Davis was ordered to issue marriage licenses to all qualified couples. Yet on Aug. 13 her office turned away two gay couples. Via the Associated Press:

A Kentucky clerk's office has turned away two gay couples seeking marriage licenses, defying a federal judge's order that dismissed her argument involving religious freedom. Hours after the judge's order to issue licenses to same-sex couples, Rowan County Clerk Kim Davis' office still turned away the two couples, one after the other, on Thursday morning. Davis has argued that her Christian beliefs prevent her from issuing licenses to same-sex couples. After the U.S. Supreme Court ruled gay marriage bans unconstitutional, Davis stopped issuing licenses to any couple, gay or straight. Five couples sued her, and U.S. District Judge David L. Bunning on Wednesday ordered her to comply with the Supreme Court's ruling. On the street Thursday, gay-rights activists held signs reading "clerk not clergy" and "obey the law."

Deputy county clerk Nathan Davis says that the conservative group Liberty Counsel has told them to defy the court while awaiting the appeal of the ruling.

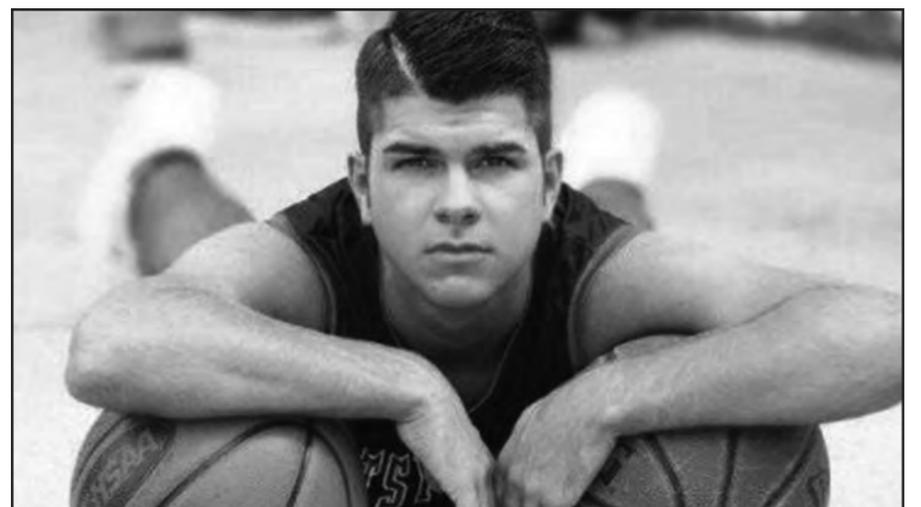
UPDATE:

On Aug. 13, deputy clerk Nathan Davis, Kim Davis' son, said the office was advised by attorneys with the Christian law firm Liberty Counsel to continue refusing same-sex couples as it appeals the order that was filed Aug. 12. They told David Moore and his partner David Ermold, who showed up as soon as the doors opened, that they were not issuing marriage licenses.

Davis' attorneys at Liberty Counsel were not available for comment. They told WKYT they were in a prayer meeting.

After being turned away by the clerk's office, the couple went to the county judge executive's office to see whether he would issue a marriage license. Moore and Ermold say he told them he didn't have the required paperwork and that

(Ky county clerk continued on page 14)



Dalton Maldonado

## NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

(Ky. county clerk from page 13)

the issue would have to be settled by the courts. When they were turned away this morning Moore and Ermold got emotional. This is not the first time Moore and Ermold, his partner of 17 years, have been denied a marriage license by the Rowan County Clerk's Office. Last month, the couple tried to get a marriage license, but Kim Davis refused to issue it. They videotaped the experience, posted it on YouTube and it eventually went viral.

"These people are cruel and this is wrong. And that's how it is," Ermold said. "That's the bottom line. She's wrong and these people are cruel to do this to us and that's how I feel."

UPDATE II: Davis has filed a motion for a stay on the order pending the resolution of her appeal to a higher court.

-JoeMyGod.com

### Historic S. Carolina Baptist church ordains gay, trans ministers

In the birthplace of the Southern Baptist Convention, no less. Christian Today reports:

While most Christian churches across the United States are strongly opposed to homosexuality and same-sex marriage, the First Baptist Church of Greenville in South Carolina has taken a totally different route: It has decided to allow not just gay unions, but also the ordination of gay and transgender ministers. The 184-year-old church, which is the home of the first Southern Baptist Convention, reached this decision after conducting a dialogue with its members for six months.

The discussions centered on the question: "Can you worship and live with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgen-

der (LGBT) community in the church?" In the end, a consensus was reached to allow homosexual unions and ministers, with each member present giving a public affirmation. Senior Minister Jim Dant said the Baptist church ultimately favored "embracing the complexities of gender identity."

Greenville Online has more about the church's history:

It was one of the original five downtown churches — Christ Church, First Presbyterian, Buncombe Street Methodist, St. Mary's Catholic, First Baptist — deeded land from the fortune of Vardry McBee, who in the mid-1800s along with his heirs plotted the future of the fledgling town's identity. William Bullein Johnson — a preacher who came to Greenville in the 1820s to lead the Greenville Female Academy — served as the chief fundraiser for what would become Greenville First Baptist in 1831, housed in a small building on the corner of Irvine Street and McBee Avenue. When the Southern Baptist Convention formed in 1845, Johnson served as its first president. Furman University, a Baptist denominational school, was born under the church's wing. The strength of the church led to the formation of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary — today one of the largest Christian seminaries in the world — in the church's former meeting house.

First Baptist is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### Gay man who sued Utah for marriage rights advances in Salt Lake City Council race

In October 2014, when the Supreme Court declined to hear several cases challenging bans on same-sex couples' marriages, Derek Kitchen and Moudi Sbeity — lead plaintiffs in the case challenging Utah's ban — won their case.

In the new year, Kitchen — with his



case over — launched a run for a seat on Salt Lake City Council. On Aug. 11, Kitchen came in first place in the non-partisan primary election — garnering double the number of votes of his nearest challenger. He will face off in November against that challenger, Nate Salazar, should the current numbers hold up once results are finalized.

Kitchen posted: "I want to offer my most heartfelt gratitude to the residents of Salt Lake City who have cast their vote for me in this election. I also want to thank the volunteers & friends who have put their time, sweat, and resources into canvassing & phone banking to get us this far. I'm feeling energized to work hard and organize for the general election campaign."

-Buzzfeed

### Michael Sam says he is leaving pro football

By Trudy Ring on *The Advocate*

Michael Sam is leaving pro football, he announced in a series of tweets on Aug. 14.

Sam, the first openly gay player to be drafted into the NFL, cited a problems in the past as his reason for leaving the Canadian Football League's Montreal Alouettes, ESPN reports.

"The last 12 months have been very difficult for me, to the point where I became concerned with my mental health," he tweeted. "Because of that I am going to step away from the game at this time. I thank the Alouettes for the opportunity and hope to be back on the field soon."

The pressure of being a pioneer likely has gotten to Sam, Cyd Zeigler of Outsports told ESPN. "When you decide to be a trailblazer, sometimes that trail gets awfully bumpy," Ziegler said. Among other things, his engagement to Vito Cammisano has reportedly ended, Zeigler noted.

Sam had left the Alouettes for two weeks in June to go home to Dallas, saying he was taking the leave for personal reasons, but when he rejoined the team at the end of the month he said he was fully committed.

He had signed with the Alouettes after being cut by the two NFL teams — the St. Louis Rams, which drafted him after his stellar college career with the University of Missouri, and the Dallas Cowboys. The defensive end sat out the Alouettes' first five games this summer but made his debut with the team August 7, although he failed to record a tackle.

Sam still has a chance to make it in pro football if he performs well on the field, but it will be harder for him now, Zeigler said: "He has to prove even more now to people who are going to doubt him."

-JoeMyGod.com

### Obama appoints first trans staff member

By Anthony Costello on *Towleroad.com*

The White House made good on its promises to tackle transgender issues and appointed its first openly transgender staff member to the Office of Presidential Personnel on Aug. 17, reports *The Wall Street Journal*.

Former trans advocacy and policy adviser for the National Center for Transgender Equality's Racial & Economic Justice Initiative Raffi Freedman-Gurspan is now taking the role of outreach and recruitment director for the president's personnel office, overseeing presidential appointments and recruiting candidates for services within the government.

Gay former Massachusetts lawmaker and Executive Director of the AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts applauded the White House's appointment of Freedman-Gurspan and lauded her achievements:

"Among her many contributions, she was instrumental in helping pass the Transgender Equal Rights Law. I am proud to see her continue to lead by example, as she takes her voice and her passion to the White House. Her hiring is a symbol of progress for the transgender community, but without a doubt I know it will be her skill and hard work that will benefit many."

Although the Obama administration already has several transgender people employed in federal government positions, Freedman-Gurspan is the first official transgender White House staffer employed by the federal government.

President Obama's appointment of Freedman-Gurspan comes at a critical time, as violent incidents against transgender people have accelerated in the month of August alone and increased overall from last year. Obama was also heckled in June at a Pride event by a transgender attendee calling for justice for deported trans individuals.

(Photo via Facebook)

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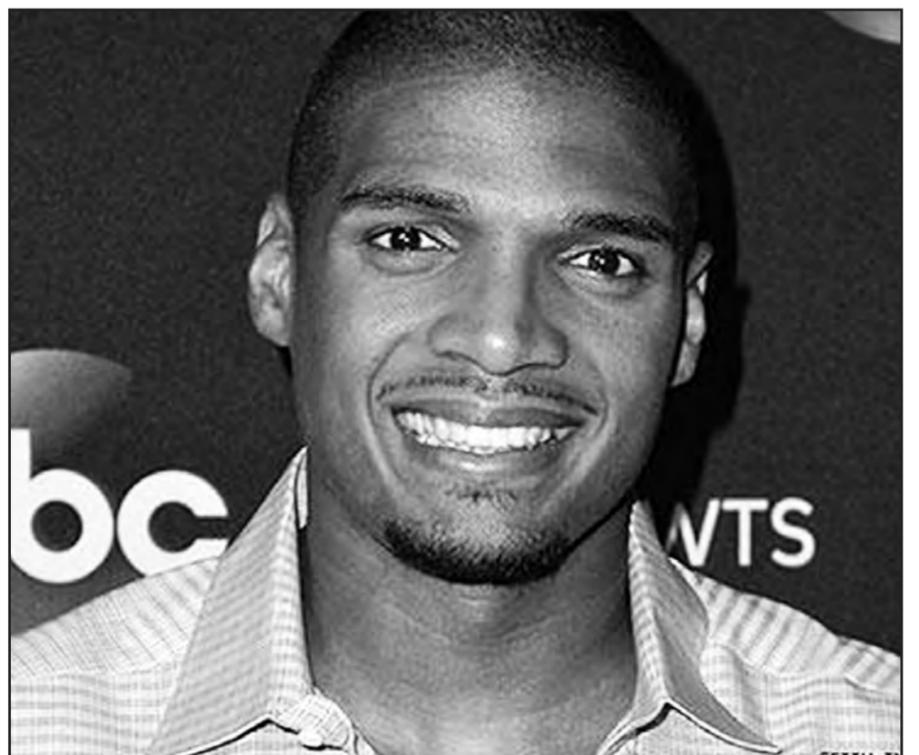
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Michael Sam

# Opinion

## A Call to Action for Islan Nettles

By Sharon Stapel, *Anti-Violence Project*

Two years ago today, Islan Nettles was attacked and, five days later, died from her injuries. Six months ago, James Dixon was indicted for her homicide. Islan's family, friends, and community members believe that she was attacked for being a transgender woman of color. James Dixon was indicted without hate crimes charges.

While criminal charges carry a lot of complexities, we know that the message that this delay, and the lack of hate crimes charges, sends to transgender women of color in New York City is: we don't see you, we don't prioritize you, we don't care about you.

Today, at AVP, we pause to reflect on Islan's life, and death, and the safety of transgender women of color everywhere, and to say: we see you, we prioritize you, we care about you.

It should be difficult to believe that in 2015 transgender people still experience extreme violence, but it's not. At AVP we've seen this trend – documented this trend – for many years now. In 2014 we documented 12 homicides of TGNC (transgender and gender nonconforming) people in the US; in 2015 we have already documented 17 homicides of TGNC people, and it's only August. Chillingly, in the week between writing this and sending this to you, we had to change the 2015 number five times - because during that week, five more transgender women of color were killed.

Transgender people describe harrowing daily fear and violence in their lives: from walking to the store, to using a bathroom in public, to being targeted by the police. The daily routines that so many of us take for granted are fraught with danger for transgender people of color – just for existing.

But it's not enough just to know, to believe this violence is an epidemic, an emergency. It's not enough to only mourn their deaths. We also have to act.

At AVP we started by talking with transgender women of color to find out how we could support them. A transgender staff member first helped us to identify a need that AVP could fill in creating transgender-specific programming in the Bronx. We worked with transgender folks in Jackson Heights to address the police profiling they experienced.

We focused our funding requests on programs that focused on the needs of transgender women of color. We worked with city agencies, including the NYPD, to create policies that mandated that TGNC people were treated with respect. We expanded our programs to 10 locations throughout the five boroughs to reach transgender women of color where

**ACT BECAUSE UNTIL ALL OF US ARE SAFE, NONE OF US ARE.**

they lived and worked, and we started two TGNC-specific support groups, one in Queens and one in the Bronx.

We advocated for the passage of the Community Safety Act because we knew that stop and frisk policies impacted transgender women of color. We advocated for District Attorneys throughout New York City to stop using condoms as "evidence" of prostitution because we knew so many transgender women of color were being profiled as sex workers – and now we're advocating for a state-wide law.

We write annual reports about the disproportionate impact of violence against TGNC communities and we highlight that information, and the ways that intersectional violence impacts TGNC New Yorkers, wherever we can. We increased our outreach, our organizing, our leadership development and our campaign development with transgender women of color and TGNC people generally. We hired transgender women of color whenever we could. We advocated for and supported TGNC-led organizations, leaders, programming and funding

Is that enough? Not by a mile.

We need to do more for the transgender women of color who are still alive, more to lift up the leadership of transgender women of color and TGNC people. We need to put resources – dollars, space, time, technical assistance – into transgender and TGNC-led work. We need to continue to call out, and prevent, this violence until every transgender person feels safe to walk to the store, use the bathroom, move about the city and their neighborhoods safely.

On the anniversary of Islan Nettles' death it's important to think about Islan and the thousands of transgender women of color who face violence every day. It's also important to take action to end it.

Today I invite you to take the first step: educate yourself about gender identity, support a TGNC-led organization with a donation, volunteer at AVP or any other organization that values the leadership of TGNC people, call out the transgender-phobic language and violence you see. Act in Islan's memory. Act for the transgender women of color who are still alive. Act because until all of us are safe, none of us are. But just act.

# From our Readers

## The Pride Parade vs. the Republican Party

To the Editor:

My partner and I have been attending or participating in Rochester's annual Gay Pride Parade since 1994, and the one held on July 18, 2015, was probably the largest one (certainly one of the longest) we have ever attended.

One thing that has struck me over the years is the glaring absence of any Republican office-holders or office-seekers. This year, we saw Rep. Louise Slaughter, NYS Assemblyperson Harry Bronson, Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren, Irondequoit Town Supervisor Adam Bello, Brighton Town Supervisor Bill Moehle, former Brighton Town Supervisor Sandra Frankel, and former Rochester Police Chief James Sheppard. And of course there were several candidates who were running for office, including James Sheppard.

These people have correctly figured out that the LGBTQ community VOTES, with a very high percentage actually casting ballots. As this past November's election choice between Louise Slaughter and Gates Town Supervisor Mark Assini demonstrates, the difference between winning or losing can come down to a few hundred, or even a few dozen, votes. For any political office holder or candidate to arbitrarily dismiss the votes of the LGBTQ community can be, and probably should be, tantamount to political suicide.

Given this reasoning, where have the likes of County Executive Maggie Brooks, Monroe County Sheriff Patrick O'Flynn and Town Supervisors like Bill Reilich been all these years? It's as though the Republican Party has an unwritten commandment: "Thou shalt have noth-

**"IT'S AS THOUGH THE REPUBLICAN PARTY HAS AN UNWRITTEN COMMANDMENT: 'THOU SHALT HAVE NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO DO WITH THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY FOR ANY REASON – PERIOD.'"**

ing whatsoever to do with the LGBTQ community for any reason -- period." This seems strange, since the long-standing Republican model of wealthy white straight men is starting to fray at the edges -- witness the presidential candidacies of Carly Fiorina (a woman), Ben Carson (an African American), Sens. Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz (Hispanic), and Gov. Bobby Jindal (an Indian-American). It's a very good thing that the model is changing -- America itself is changing (and for the better, despite what the so-called Christian right might say).

So once again, I ask the question: Where have you been, local Republican Party stalwarts? Stay on the narrow bigoted path you have always followed, and you will find yourself, along with the Whig Party and the Bullmoose Party, on the ashheap of American political history.

**Phil Darrow  
Brighton**



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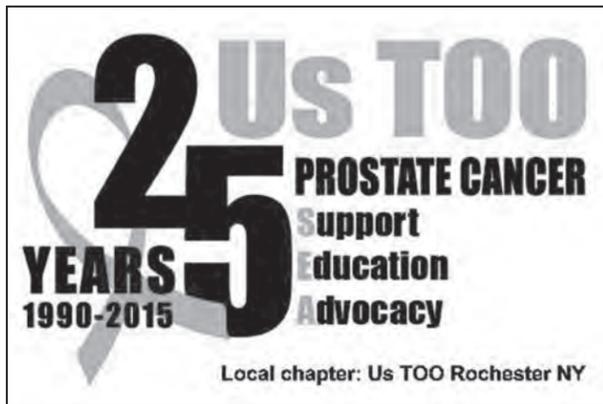
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# Health



## Us TOO plans for Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

Us TOO Rochester is another year older as the group plans for yet another National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month.

This year, the Rochester chapter collaborated with area organizations and created the "SEA-Blue for Prostate Cancer" campaign.

Here's the list of events, see Calendar page 34:

Sept. 12: CARS FOR CANCER-It's a Guy Thing! Baytowne, 1900 Empire Blvd., 8am-5pm

Sept. 20: A MAYORAL PROCLAMATION

Sept. 20: THE SEA-BLUE RIBBON WALK, Genesee Valley Park, Riverbend Shelter. 9am registration, 10:15am step-off

Sept. 23: PROSTATE CANCER SCREENING [Free for uninsured men]

Sept. 20-26: THE SEA-BLUE LIGHT PROJECT.

For information: UsTOORochesterNY@gmail.com

## Anthony Jordan Center offers free mammograms Sept. 19 for women 35, over

The Anthony Jordan Health Center, 82 Holland St., will provide free mammograms on Sept. 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The mammograms are offered to women 35 and older; assistance is available for women with high deductibles.

Call 585-487-3304 to reserve and appointment and arrange for free transportation.

The program is supported by Cancer Services Program of Monroe County and Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester.

## Trans Health Initiative Conference is coming up in Buffalo Oct. 16-17

The Pride Center of WNY, through its Trans Health Initiative, will host the fourth annual Trans Health Conference on Oct. 16-17, at Evergreen Commons, 262 Georgia St., Buffalo.

Angelica Ross, CEO TransTech Social Enterprises, will deliver the keynote speech and will be headline performer. Ari Moore is featured presenter.

The event, which brings members of the Trans community together with allies and health and human services providers, will also include Katie Ambrose, Groom Service; Tom Fronczak, LCSW-R; Salsa Sarah Haykel; Noah Lewis, Esq., Transcend Legal; Jacob Wade Marsh; Scott Turner Schofield; Raine Scott; Spectrum Transgender Group on WNY, Lynn Tranchell and Rashida Williams, LCSW-R.

Registration is free. Email JKonidis@pridecenterwny.org. For registration forms and information about the many scheduled events, see pridecenterwny.org.

## PAGE ONE

(Valenti from page 1)

matization, may discourage an individual from seeking testing and care. Trillium has attempted to combat this fear by broadcasting a message of acceptance with a non-judgmental attitude, while educating HIV negative people on how to remain negative and providing effective treatment for those who are HIV positive.

Valenti is optimistic that the state's goal of reducing new cases to 750 or below by the end of 2020 is attainable, and is excited at the prospect of actually surpassing the goal. He notes that he has witnessed polio and smallpox eradicated in his lifetime, and believes it is possible he will see the demise of HIV as well. In fact, Jonas Salk's work developing a polio vaccine is what inspired Valenti to go into medicine.

"If you have followed the science and watched the trends in HIV care over the past 30 years, if we don't get there by 2020, we're going to come awfully close," Valenti said.

In addition to HIV testing, Trillium began offering primary health care services in 2012. For more information about HIV testing, PrEP, and primary care services provided by Trillium Health, call (585) 545-7200 or visit [www.trilliumhealth.org](http://www.trilliumhealth.org). For more information about Ending the Epidemic (EtE), visit [health.ny.gov/ete](http://health.ny.gov/ete).

### Three Key Strategies to Ending the AIDS Epidemic in New York State

Reach out to people unsure of their HIV status, and provide testing for them.  
 Link HIV positive people to proper care. With treatment, their viral load may be brought down to undetectable levels, making HIV transmission to others less likely.  
 Provide high-risk HIV negative people, like men who have sex with men (MSM), access to PrEP. Combined with other safer sex methods, the risk of contracting HIV is significantly reduced.

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[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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# LGBTQ Living

Dwain's concert grand dulcimer.



## Dwain Wilder

By Susan Jordan

Meet Dwain Wilder, dulcimer-maker, librarian, poet, environmental activist and “boundary walker”.

Born in a small town in Texas, Dwain left home via the Navy, having realized by age 10 that he didn't belong there. He spent several years at the US base in Guantanamo, Cuba, doing search and rescue missions, then after the Navy went to Yale, where he deserted his lifelong love of physics for American Studies, looking at American literature as artefacts of culture.

He married into the family of a friend and worked with his friend's father, who had a workshop; one of the things he made was dulcimers, and ultimately Dwain inherited his molds, designs and self-built machinery. “So I was off,” Dwain said, “and running at a very high level of acceptance in the dulcimer world.”

Meanwhile Dwain was discovering his own gender identity. He told *The Empty Closet*, “I'm an androgyne, carrying my feminine sense while male. I am so much of a boundary walker, neither entirely in nor outside categories such as masculine/feminine (I sense gender as an ever-changing spectrum that influences how I feel about myself, the care I take of things, my choices of how to spend my time, dress, etc). In some sense I'm not trans-

gender at all, as I am not in transit: I seek to explore the whole spectrum of gender feeling as it arises. I've found wide acceptance in my communities: poetry, climate change and fossil fuels activism, folk music (I build Appalachian dulcimers for a living), and I pretty much go anywhere in some assemblage of women's and men's clothing – with a beard and mustache. I've also had some hilarious exchanges with passers-by, some initially hostile, mostly just wondering out loud what or who they were looking at!

“I identify as a heterosexual male; for me, gender is a totally different issue – or challenge or glory (from sexual orientation). It took me a long time to figure out my desire to carry my femininity as a male. I didn't realize the difference – I thought it was a calling to live as a female and so I did for long periods, and then there would be long periods when that was in abeyance and I concentrated on marrying and raising a family.

“A few years ago I realized my femininity was something I needed to investigate thoroughly. I really wanted to bare my femininity as a male, so I dressed as feminine as I could get, but with a mustache and goatee. It is the right balance for me. I express masculine and feminine spirits equally, and in deep respect for women.”

He added, “I feel I've always been a boundary walker, my perception of my gender not being a set established fact since I was five years old. I remember the glory of recognizing that, but also realizing the powerful taboo about that. I felt if I really expressed who I was I'd be hated and thrown out. I existed on the boundaries and saw how people turn away rather than dealing with the boundary and what's on the other side. I lived in the land of taboo – not acceptable to either side. It gave me a kind of vision and clarity about what's involved in sexism and racism.”

Today Dwain has a studio in his home in Penfield, in the Ellison Park area. He uses American woods to craft his dulcimers – black walnut, redwood and Sitka spruce. His smallest model takes about a month to make, while the top of the line takes six weeks. He markets through his website and goes to dulcimer festivals all over the country. He also meditates and teaches meditation to prisoners in Attica on Thursdays. “Twenty to 25 people have taken part, but we have a core group of seven to nine. Meditation gives them peace of mind and the ability to be present without being distracted by random thoughts or habits or sexist perceptions.”

Dwain is also an activist working against climate change and fracking. He has been active in Save Our Seneca Lake, working against fracking and also the unsafe storage of methane and LPG (liquid petroleum gas) in underground caverns in old salt mines in the area.

He said, “Geological faults could cause these caverns to collapse. The last collapse occurred in the late '90s, and after that a geologist's study recommended closing the mine. But eventually a company called Inergy bought the caverns, which were then empty, the previous owners having moved the gas to concrete caverns they built across the street. Inergy has now been taken over by Crestwood, who made the geologists' report a trade secret, and the EPA and DEC, the New York State official conservation body, collaborated on that. They got a permit to expand methane gas storage last September and are currently waiting for air quality certification from DEC. The Crestwood 10 went to jail in 2103.

“So we formed a group called Save Our Seneca Lake and have been blockading weekly since October 2014;

350 activists have been arrested since last year. I was sentenced to 15 days in the Schuyler Co. jail and served 10. We'll be blockading construction when they start. This has raised national awareness of how to conduct a climate protection campaign.

“People can go to [weareSenecaLake.com](http://weareSenecaLake.com) and sign the pledge to protect Seneca Lake. You don't have to risk getting arrested to participate. There's a weekly online newsletter you can get on the website. I'm now the editor, and on the WASL Council.”

Links to the FrackFreeGenesee Library. Some of the news articles under the News & Opinion (see <https://www.zotero.org/groups/frackfreegenesee/library/items/collectionKey/J86T7PBT>) would be a good place to start learning about the damage that fossil fuels do the climate, and the impact they have on human and animal health, environmental degradation, etc. ■

## I Hear Momma By Dwain Wilder

Hear momma crying?  
Singing? Down the bottom of that well?  
The well she dug to get water  
to birth you, suckle you?

She still down there, singing,  
tears of all sorts,  
clothing herself then ripping it all off.  
All of it. Then  
stitching the pieces together again  
into raiment to keep herself and you warm  
as she carries you naked  
through the world.

You thought she had stopped doing that.  
You thought she was dressed in such finery.  
But that is not the rags she has rent  
and mended daily all her life.

That glows from someplace else  
all the sacrifices she made carrying/birthing/  
carrying/birthing/carrying/birthing her loves—  
no matter how neglected you felt  
on that Tuesday forty years ago  
when she had no patience  
with you or anything else for that matter,  
there she was, in all her majesty.

And she still down the bottom  
of that well, once her own body,  
down in the guts, near your navel  
still singing, crying  
still crazy with tearing and mending  
somehow still carrying you birthing you.

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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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# Shoulders to Stand On

## A Community's Response To AIDS – AIDS Rochester, Inc. (continued)

By Evelyn Bailey

AIDS Rochester was formed in 1982 to respond to community needs regarding AIDS. In 1983, Jackie Nudd became President of AIDS Rochester. (See *obituary*, p. 3)

In April, 1983 the first local AIDS prevention literature was produced with the assistance of the local American Red Cross. In May, 1983 the first symposium for medical providers was held at the Monroe County Medical Society. Michael Gottlieb, MD, the person who identified the AIDS virus in 1981, travelled from Los Angeles to speak. In France, in May 1983, doctors at the Institute Pasteur reported that they had isolated a new virus, which they suggested might be the cause of AIDS. Federal researchers also announced they believed they had found the virus which causes AIDS.

In the fall of 1983, the AIDS Institute of the New York State Department of Health was established through special legislation. The AIDS Institute coordinated the statewide efforts of the many private agencies, health care facilities, and not-for-profit organizations involved in the delivery of programs and services related to AIDS by establishing a network of regional agencies. As a result, in November, 1983 the Rochester Area Task Force on AIDS (RATFA) was formed to co-ordinate efforts in a 9-county region.

The first co-chairs of RATFA were

Dr. William Valenti, Associate Professor of medicine at the University of Rochester and Jackie Nudd, President of AIDS Rochester. RATFA was instrumental in coordinating and preparing the funding proposal submitted to the AIDS Institute, and recommended that AIDS Rochester be funded as the education and service entity here in Rochester. As state funding was sought, in November 1983 local service providers from RATFA functioned as an advisory board to AIDS Rochester. In December, 1983 the application of AIDS Rochester to New York State as a not-for-profit corporation was approved. At the end of 1983, there were seven AIDS cases in Monroe County.

At the same time progress was being made in research, there was increasing concern and fear about transmission of the disease. San Francisco police were equipped with special masks and gloves for use when dealing with what the police called "a suspected AIDS patient." Dr. David Spencer, Commissioner of Health in New York City, reported landlords evicted individuals with AIDS and the Social Security administration interviewed patients by phone rather face to face.

Against this backdrop of fear, on November 9, 1983, Sue Cowell, Nurse Practitioner at U of R Health Services, and Kristen Kreamer, a clinical nurse specialist at the U of R Cancer Center, spoke at the Mapledale Party House as a part of an educational program of the National Cancer Institute on the Changing Risks of Cancer in which they informed those attending that there is no risk of contracting AIDS in hospital settings by delivering food trays, moving



an AIDS patient's body, shaking hands with a patient or using the same table top or counter, or from donating blood. Sue Cowell and Kristen Kreamer reminded their fellow nurses that they must help dispel the myths about AIDS.

"I think as health care workers we have the responsibility to calm the general public as far as what their risks are, and to make sure that people in the high-risk groups don't suffer from any prejudice," said Kreamer. Sue Cowell, co-founder of AIDS Rochester and RATFA, said one of the most important aspects of patient care involves attitudes. "We do have an obligation if we hear negative comments about AIDS patients to address them."

Sue also said that fear and prejudice deny AIDS patients the support they may so desperately need. Sue Cowell's uncompromising beliefs became infused in the health care delivery system wherever she worked -- U of R Health Services, the Monroe County Health Department, Planned Parenthood.

Recently I had a lengthy telephone conversation with LaRon Nelson, Ph. D., RN, who is doing research on the primary prevention of HIV and other sexually transmissible infections among social marginalized groups within African and African Diaspora communities with a current focus on adult and adolescent men who have sex with men. LaRon was one of the many recipients of Sue Cowell's patient (people) care legacy. LaRon shared with me that when he worked at the Monroe County Dept. of Public Health as associate director he constantly ran into references to Sue Cowell and her tenacious fight to obtain equal services for all who walked through the door.

LaRon summarized Sue's influence and the attitude toward patients she infused in the system by saying, "The foundation of patient treatment at the Monroe County Health Department was social justice. We needed to recognize people have other options for places to go for help. ... Our job was to treat the needs people had and to understand what role we could play in helping to meet those needs medical or other. Our approach: people were human beings ... we need to treat them with respect, dignity, compassion, and high regard .. to connect with people at their lowest point, to show them you care and provide quality service."

Even though LaRon did not actually meet Sue until December 2014, he had really known her for over 20 years. He recalls his colleagues' admiration and great respect for Sue's tenacity and per-

severance advocating for patient's rights and quality of care, for thinking outside the box, for pushing the limits of financial and people resources, always striving to make it better. Through LaRon Sue's legacy lives on. In September LaRon will be returning from Ghana, West Africa to begin his new role as CFAR Associate Director of International Research.

In January of 1984, AIDS Rochester submitted the first local grant application to the NYS AIDS Institute and received funding for \$40,000. At that point in time, Jackie Nudd became President of the Gay Alliance and President of AIDS Rochester. Jackie remained a vital member of the Task Force, and John Altieri began serving as Co-chair of the Task Force with Dr. William Valenti.

By February 1984, AIDS Rochester Inc. was an established volunteer organization interested in working with any individual concerned about AIDS. The AIDS hotline had been established, staffed by trained volunteers at the Gay Alliance. In 1984, AIDS Rochester Inc. met the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at 153 Liberty Pole Way, upstairs from Tara. Buddy Wegman, the owner of Tara, donated office and meeting space to AIDS Rochester. At the end of 1983, there were 3,064 AIDS cases and 1,292 had died. By February, 1984 12 patients with AIDS had been reported in the nine-county Rochester region.

Shoulders to Stand On recognizes with sincere gratitude and pride the legacy of Jackie Nudd who passed away last month. Shoulders To Stand On will continue A Community's Response to AIDS: History of AIDS in Rochester, NY Region in the October issue of the EC. ■

### History Corner

A Monthly Newspaper of The Gay Brotherhood of Rochester, NY  
713 Monroe Avenue, Room 4, Rochester, N Y 14607  
(716) 244-8640  
September, 1975 NO 53

FOCUS  
NEWSFEATURE: GOVERNMENT RELENTS PG. 1; DEMO PRIMARY PG. 3; LOSING A RAINBOW PG. 5; GAYS IN GENESEO PG. 6; OUT OF THE IVORY CLOSETS PG. 6; PHOTO FEATURE: GAY COMMUNITY PICNIC PG. 9; VD: THREAT OR MENACE? PG 10

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On that page click on: Browse the Empty Closet issues; Go to 1975 – September

GAY BROTHERHOOD MEETINGS

SUN 7 September: PICNIC: The Last Rose of Summer (Durand-Eastman Park). No meeting, office will be open.

SUN 14 September: GAY MUSIC featuring Bruce Jewell of WCMF's Green Thursdays

SUN 21 September: OPEN HOUSE for all area college students and the gay community.

SUN 28 September: BUSINESS MEETING, open to all.

## Joe Russo, Psy.D., CGP

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# 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

AS THE WORLD TURNS



By Eric Bellmann

Last fall, as the anticipation of winter chilled my spirit, I realized my luck was improving. Perplexed, I wondered if forces beyond my understanding were in play. Had the

planets realigned to some configuration that would prove beneficial?

I usually truck through life in a solitary style: afternoon movies alone, a few restaurants where I'm comfortable eating solo. No one needs company to read or watch TV.

Within weeks my world expanded to embrace three friends, each one in his own way meeting particular needs, providing comfort, distraction. I wouldn't have to continue my silent, familiar state of isolation.

I had meditation in common with J. That's a good base line; common experiences, mutual acquaintances, a shared ambition towards gentleness. Recovering from the loss of his wife a year earlier, J. was considering new ventures. He had a couple of welcoming attributes. He owned two cats and he liked movies. My cat strategy is the same as my small child strategy. Love other people's. Hug 'em, squeeze 'em, tickle them under the chin and then split. Affection in small doses works fine for me. No clean up, no cat hair. J. was also appreciative of my movie expertise. I compiled a list of foreign movies, documentaries, and long forgotten '40s films. Most I had seen and was willing to re-visit. J. was a whiz at finding things on Amazon or Netflix.

J. was great with anything and everything technological -- which I am not. Films we could not find online oddly turned up at the public library. Librarians read. They'll order anything that intrigues them. J. would head off to some distant branch and return with treasures. We settled down, each with a cat on lap and double featured our way through snowstorm after snowstorm. This was going to be a bearable winter. I hardly cared about the snow piled on top of my car outside his house...

M., who entered my life as a drawing model six years ago, was now gainfully employed and to my delight was less of a dick head about gay life. For the first two years of our association he never discussed his personal life. He was hot enough for me to draw him, but what he did with hotness remained a mystery. One day he blew it wide open and substituted "he" as he complained about "his friend". Easing his way out of one relationship he was up for dating.

M. is a small town guy and he had values that were less than cosmopolitan. He was, gasp, a Republican. My work was clear: educate and sophisticate. As M. sat silently while I drew, I lectured him about gay history, my experiences evolving in gay life, the works. He seemed to listen, never yawned. In time he became less daunted by some of the more colorful aspects of our community. As months turned into years, our relationship became a friendship. M. was more forthcoming, less guarded about his habits, more open to hear another take on the culture we shared. I leaped into the role of Parent/Mentor/Therapist. I wanted to listen, give advice, speak from experience, encourage and vicariously enjoy his adventures.

And we even, upon occasion, did lunch. That's mostly because M. now owns a snazzy car and loves to drive and I like to be chauffeured. He's an exercise nut, so healthier food is on the menu. I'm game for Chipotle. Turns out to be more fun eating with someone else. And I get a kick out of being seen with him, a cheesy gay man's guilt: M. is, after all a 6'4" muscular head turner.

The final and brightest star to enter orbit was S. I'd known him casually just after he finished undergraduate school and we kept in touch when he went off for more training. On his twice a year visits back he'd stop by and we'd have lunch. Nice kid. My advice, having lived forever here, was to find a location where the weather was better and set up his business in a place he imagined he could live for a long time. A job opportunity too good to pass up materialized here and we reconnected.

S. is a curious critter. Independent, curious and optimistic, also handsome and athletic, S. likes to talk, argue ideas and for all of that I am not sure why we bonded. But we did. Clearly there were points of disagreement, politics mainly. His confidence is what hooked me. He thinks things will always turn out OK. Not exactly my world view.

Gradually I admitted to myself that S. held a more complicated attraction for me that I initially understood. He was kind and reliable, never demanding. I imagined him as a child I never had, big brother I would have liked, a Dad I missed and, hold your breath, the boyfriend I dreamed of and never found. Yikes! And while I was figuring out how to manage this, my behavior started to get creepy. Neediness and a terror that he would leave; abandonment is my great fear. I behaved badly. And S. just rode through it all.

Over time, things evened out. We played miniature golf, darts in a sports bar and, as a team of two, beat half a dozen other teams in a round of trivia; he knows sports and music and I brought the depth of knowledge about all things ludicrous that only a gay man possesses.

You know truth about planets? They keep on moving. Change is the one thing you can count on. But I hadn't.

J., lonely for his former life and brave enough to consider another relationship, reconnected with an old friend and now is in the process of relocating, cats and all, even if for only during our crappy winter. There goes Netflix!

M. fell in love with someone out of town and contemplates relocating, maybe even marriage -- his dream life. There goes my baby.

True love found S. Four flops on Tinder and number 5 was the charm. He gushed with joy. I cringed. All my deep anxieties about abandonment burst forth. "Do not leave me!" I actually shrieked one day in the car as we drove to some joint for lunch in 315 land. He said I was being selfish. "Of course I am!" was my retort. Taking care of me is my job description.

Besides being clever and old and talented, turns out I also am lucky. S was lucky, too. He told the GF about me. She turned out to be smart as well as beautiful and embraced our relationship. We three get along quite well. I had a little work to do coming to terms with my feelings. There's a lot to be said for talking things through.

I used to ask S. how much he loved me on a scale of one to ten. He would laugh or groan and never answer. He told me that he and his girlfriend had figured out how to deal with my question. It would be:

question minus n. That meant every time I asked the answer would drop by one. Fourth time I asked, the answer would be 7. So, one day I asked. He said, "ten". I don't plan on asking again.

I know, the planets will continue to rotate and re-align and no one can control how things evolve or turn out. At least I can thank my lucky stars.

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## Cleaning My Closet

ME VS STUFF



By Meredith Elizabeth Reiniger

Suggested solutions: 1. Get a big dog. 2. Bury a fence one foot underground. 3. Use talcum powder.

Word Wandering: Talcum? Powder?

Do they still sell that stuff? One of my grandmothers powder-puffed her just-bathed-body on a daily basis. Yearly, she received a new, femininity-pink, round box, full of that perfumed, fly-all-over-the-room stuff. When she was post-dusted, there would be two, non-powdered foot-shapes on our bathmat.

Brain wandering: I do wonder about WHO mined that soft mineral, thinking, wow, this will be great for grandma's obligatory gift. Hey, gram, here's some magnesium silicate for your folds and cracks. Wisely, that WHO added an old-lady scent, omitted talc's mineral moniker, plopped the powder into appealing packaging, and topped it with a perky puff.

At some point, Branding Development Dudes of Powder 2 People enhanced their market share by sexualizing sweat-absorbing talcum. To lure lustful ladies and their consorts toward Puff Titillation, Powder 2 People created delightful dusts named 'Opium' and 'White Shoulders.' [Consider this: there are no powder n' puffs for men. Don't we all know a man who could benefit from a good puff?]

Problem: groundhogs. Now I don't mind sharing my acre with wildlife: a dainty doe dines on my hosta blossoms; amusing chipmunks indulge in frequent seed feasts; contortionist squirrels raid all feeder-challenges. Twitchy-nosed bunnies nibble. Bustling birds bathe. Even grackles and starlings are welcome. But! NOT voracious rodents, aka woodchucks.

Re: solution #3: for the life of me I cannot understand how spreading talcum powder will dissuade marauding woodchucks. And nowhere have I found a product specifically for *Marmota monax*. Are there any deterrents: Brown Shoulders? Powdered ifawoodchuckcouldchuck-woodhowmuchwoodwouldawoodchuck-chuck?

Complications: Even though I currently believe that Groundhog & family are 'nuisance wildlife,' New York State's Department of Beast & Fowl Preservation & Safety expects consideration of creatures who also inhabit this planet, all the

while being the best groundhogs they can be. Furthermore, it is illegal to organize a Rodent Relocation Program because families should not be separated. And believe me, I do not want to orphan that long, fur piece who scoots into my Bird Yard.

Solution #1. On the other hand, my not-big dachshund is inherently a fierce hunter. Recently, employing his badger-hunter genes, he bolted out the door and clamped onto a hog-baby's furred midriff flesh and did vigorously shake the living daylights out of that heavy-set, four-legged intruder. Such shaking looks ever so cute when, in the privacy of his own home, Vegas wildly whips the eviscerated body of a retired teddy-bear. But! I cannot bear to watch murder and mayhem in the sanctuary of my homeland. So I emptied a water dish on their heads; one waddled away; the other, nose to ground, chased the scent; I continued wailing 'noooooooooooooooooooooo ooooo nooo.' [A problem solving technique of little value, but always ready for emergencies.]

Solution #2 is an outrageous suggestion; the cost per square foot would be exorbitant. I have already invested in many linear feet of a costly but lovely, above-ground split-rail barrier to fence in my dog and to fence out rail-to-trail hikers. [Just wondering, how much would a truckload of 'Opium' cost?]

So there I was, sitting in the comfort of my home, being quite pleased with myself because I had consulted Web Wizard. After all that taxing thinking, I wanted coffee. Clearly, I needed a mini-Keurig. And yes, buy local, so I visited a brick BBB that, alas, had only large brewers. Why, I reasoned, waste time searching?

With euphoria splashing through my mind, I was swept into the 21st century. I let my fingers do the walking. Tap-tapped to Amazon. Millions do it. How hard can it be? 1. I selected a sweet little green, a-cup-at-a-time, coffee maker. 2. Order confirmed. 3. Shipping date July 8th - July 31. WHAT? A typo? A joke by a naughty computer chip?

July 31: no coffee maker. I wailed only a tad. August 1: Contacted seller who reported that post office claimed my box was undeliverable. Me: you're kidding, right? August 2, seller: USPS cannot find package; we have filed a claim; you have a full refund; here's a link to Target. No kidding. I drove one block, entered Target, purchased a mini-Keurig. Delivery time: 7 minutes.

But wait. Why July 8-July 31?? I searched the internet for information about the vendor. "Bla Bla Shop: created by a team who love art and fancy stuff." Me: a Keurig? Eureka: estimated delivery date July 8-July 31 from Bla Bla Shop, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Later, sipping coffee made by my lovely black Keurig, I decided to window-shop for a chair to complement my just-purchased groovy chair from a brick furniture store. No-driving-required Amazon was at my fingertips. I scrolled, enlarged details. Wow! Amazon has a

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wish list. A lover of lists, I pushed the wish button three times/3 chairs. I continued to stare . . . on and on . . . until my eyeballs sagged. I skipped the additional 7,654 pictures. Stood up, selected a tiny k-cup, telling Vegas, "Hey, that was some fun." Until.

Until my Kindle sent me a message: your chair will be shipped. My what?? Ship, SHIP a chair? Three chairs? Frantic, I sent multiple messages to Amazon: No! Cancel please. No, I made a mistake. I am 71 and I didn't know what I was doing. I'm on a fixed income. I can't afford that chair. I can't even afford the return costs. Cancel, oh cancel. Can you hear me? CANCEL.

I shot off so many pitiful notes that I received an email from an actual, real person assuring me that my problem was solved. I replied: I have learned my lessons. 1. Do not shop using my small Kindle screen with its teeny tiny words. 2. Read before clicking onto something. 3. Buy locally. 4. Do not make any Wish Lists.

Wish lists. I wish I could understand how a team of Malaysians decided a green Keurig is fancy stuff and how talcum powder scares away groundhogs and why they are called whistlepigs and why 'powder puff' means 'careless femininity' and what is that, anyway? I wish I knew.

Didn't I learn my lessons from wish lists unfulfilled by Santa Claus? I never did get that play house.

*MeredithReiniger@gmail.com*

**Faith Matters**  
DIS-MEMBERING  
STONEWALL



*By Rev. Irene Monroe*

"By institutionalizing memory, resisting the onset of oblivion, recalling the memory of tragedy that for long years remained hidden or unrecognized

and by assigning its proper place in the human conscience, we respond to our duty to remember."

—UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura

I am disturbed by Roland Emmerich's historical drama "Stonewall," because of its whitewashing of a historic moment turned movement. When I look back at the first night of the Stonewall Inn riots, I could have never imagined its future importance. The first night played out no differently from previous riots with Black Americans and white policemen. And so, too, it's being underreported. But I was there.

FRIDAY, JUNE 27, was the last day of school that year. And with school out, my middle-school cronies and I looked forward to a summer reprieve from rioting against Italian, Irish and Jewish public school kids for being bussed into their neighborhoods. However, the summer months in Brooklyn's African American enclaves only escalated rioting between New York's finest — the New York Police Department — and us. During this tumultuous decade of Black rage and white police raids, knee-jerk responses to each other's slights easily set the stage for a conflagration, creating both instantaneous and momentary fighting alliances in these Black communities across gangs, class, age, ethnicity and sexual orientations—against police brutality.

That night of June 27 started out no differently than any hot and humid summer Friday night in my neighborhood. Past midnight, folks with no AC or working fans in their homes were just hanging out. Some lounged on the fire escapes while others were on the stoops of their brownstones laughing and shooting the breeze. Some were in heated discussion of Black revolutionary politics, while the Holy Rollers were competing with each other over Scripture. The Jenkins boys were drumming softly on their congas

to the hot breezy mood of the night air. And directly under the street lamp was an old beat-up folding card table where the Fletchers and the Andersons, lifelong friends and neighbors, were shouting over a game of bid whist.

The sight of Dupree galloping up the block toward us abruptly interrupted the calm of the first hour of Saturday, June 28. Dupree stopped in front of the gaming table and yelled out, "The pigs across the bridge are beating up on Black faggots—right now!" Cissy Anderson, who was just moments from throwing in her hand to go to bed, let out a bloodcurdling scream that shook us and brought a momentary halt to everything. Nate Anderson grabbed his wife to comfort her and said, "Cissy, calm down."

Greenwich Village in the 1800s had housed the largest population for former slaves in the country. But gentrification forced racial relocation and led to Harlem becoming the Mecca of Black America.

When Dupree stopped in front of Mr. Fletcher's game table, he was signaling to his aunt and uncle that their son Birdie, who sang like a beautiful songbird, was more than likely in the melee across the bridge. Everyone knew Birdie was gay, and we wondered where he and his "brother-girls," as he dubbed them, had gone on the weekends when they laughed and spoke in code on Sundays about their exploits while robbing-up for choir.

Cissy detested that her eldest, Nate Turner "Birdie" Anderson, Jr., went outside the community to a white neighborhood to be himself. Nate, Sr., too, worried about his eldest son. When Birdie told his dad he was gay, his father asked him if he understood that he didn't know how to keep him safe, especially if his son wandered out of his purview. When his voice rose above Dupree's and the crowd, we were as shocked to silence as we were by Cissy's bloodcurdling scream. "My son is somewhere there and I need you all to help me find him and bring him home safely to his mother and me."

Coming out of the subway station at Christopher Street we could hear the commotion. The shoving and pushing by both protestors and police yanked three of us away from the core group; we were left to fend for ourselves.

As the momentum of the crowd pushed my small group to Waverly Place, a block away from the Stonewall, we witnessed two white cops pummeling a Black drag queen. "I should shove this stick up your ass," said one of the cops as he pulled up her dress with a nightstick in his hand. The taller of the two cops yanked off her wig and laughingly tossed it to the other cop. In spotting us, the cop who caught the wig threw it at us yelling, "You nigger fags get away!" The wig missed and landed about a foot away from us, but the cop's words hit, striking fear.

On the first night of the Stonewall Inn riots, African Americans and Latinos were the largest percentage of the protestors because we heavily frequented the bar. For Black and Latino homeless youth and young adults, who slept in nearby Christopher Park, the Stonewall Inn was their stable domicile. The Stonewall Inn being raided was nothing new. In the 1960s gay bars in the Village were routinely raided, but "Race is said to have been another factor. The decision by the police to raid the bar in the manner they did may have been influenced by the fact that most of the 'homosexuals' they would encounter were of color, and therefore even more objectionable."

The Stonewall Riot of June 27-29, 1969 in Greenwich Village started on the backs of working class African American and Latino queers who patronized that bar. Those brown and Black LGBTQ people are not only absent from the photos of that night, but have been bleached from its written history. Many LGBTQ Blacks and Latinos argue that one of the reasons for the gulf between whites and themselves is about how the dominant queer community rewrote and continues to control the narrative of Stonewall.

**A Few Bricks Short**  
FOR THE BIBLE TELLS US SO



*By David Hull*

I bet you've seen those hyper-Christian, anti-gay marriage protesters on the TV news where the folks carry all those signs:

"God doesn't like gay marriage!"

"Homosexual marriage is a sin!"

"Listen to the Bible! No gay marriage!"

I know that some people don't like the marriage equality law. I also realize there are still some losers who don't approve of interracial marriage or anti-segregation laws. Yes, prejudice is alive and well in America, but I appreciate that everyone has the right to free speech — even if they're stupid.

What is frustrating to me is those hyper-Christian, anti-gay, God-loving protestors keep bringing up specific rules from the Bible and saying the Bible is the unquestionable, indisputable word of God. OK, but they need to agree that the Bible says a whole lot of other stuff too.

For instance, the Book of Leviticus states that eating shellfish is a sin. That's right — lobster, crab, clams, shrimp, oysters, mussels — they're all hors d'oeuvres from Hell according to the unquestionable, indisputable word of God! How come I never hear these hyper-Christian, anti-gay, God-loving protestors talking (or protesting) about any of that? Why aren't those protestors lining up outside their local Red Lobster restaurant carrying signs that proclaim:

"God doesn't like shellfish"

"Oysters are a sin"

"Listen to the Bible. Shellfish are Satan Snacks!"

Leviticus also teaches us that you should never wear clothing woven of two kinds of material. Really? Even though all that war, natural disaster and famine have been ravaging the world for thousands and thousands of years, God had time to make rules that people mixing wool and linen is a sin? So, next time those hyper-Christian, anti-gay, God-loving protestors are shopping at JC Penney's and they find a rack of wrinkle-free, cotton/polyester blend dress shirts, shouldn't they start carrying signs outside the mall:

"God doesn't like wrinkle-free material"

"Iron-free dress shirts are a sin"

"Cotton/polyester blends are Satan shirts!"

After all, a sin is a sin and the Bible is the unquestionable, indisputable word of God, right?

The most incredible and unbelievable part of the Bible, to me anyway, is that the book of Leviticus enlightens us that it is acceptable to have slaves, but of course, only as long as the slaves are foreigners. However, the book of Exodus gives clear directions that fathers do have the right to sell their daughters into slavery. And the Gospel of Luke points out that slaves are our property and can be passed along to our children as an inheritance.

So, if those hyper-Christian, anti-gay, God-loving protestors are going to recite passages from the Bible that state homosexuality is a sin, and then claim that the text of the Bible is the unquestionable, indisputable word of God, then shouldn't they also shun shellfish, never wear cotton/polyester blends and support slavery?

Instead, I think they should all just pay attention to the protest sign I want to carry around:

"Just shut up — marriage equality is legal now!"

Or even better, how about the protest sign my father would want, which would say:

"Legalize gay marriage — everyone should have to suffer equally, dammit!"

Contact David at *davidhull59@aol.com*

**Being Well**  
CHOOSE GAY OR NOT?



*By John Aceto, LMHC*

I was at a social function recently and had an interesting conversation with a new acquaintance.

During our introductions he asked

about my profession, so I shared I am a therapist. He then made a statement that I must have a lot of gay men as clients. My response: "Actually, I have only two. I see several transgendered people, the rest are straight". I wondered what the assumption was. Because I'm gay I would attract gay men as clients en masse? Or gay men only seek out gay professionals as care providers? Should you pick a therapist based on gender and/or sexual orientation?

Truth be told, my dentist and doctor are gay men. And in further truth telling, I sought them out 25 years ago specifically because of their sexual orientation. At the time I just felt more comfortable with gay providers. They seemed competent and are super great guys.

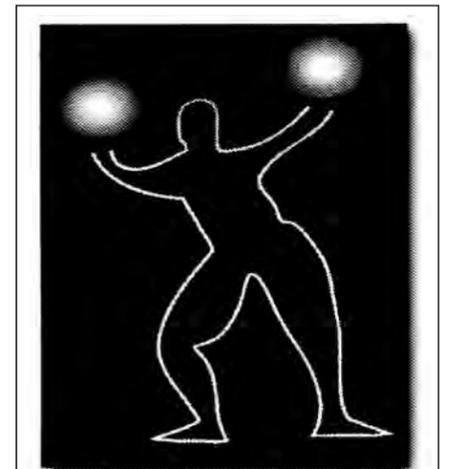
While working at the HIV Mental Health Clinic at Strong, I treated several gay men. Many of them shared that they liked the fact that I was gay, stating they didn't have to start from scratch trying to share with a straight provider what is was like growing up gay, I already knew that part. Some shared that they had tried therapy with a straight provider but never felt comfortable; they felt they were maybe being judged on some level.

The transgendered folks I currently counsel all said they sought me out because I was gay, that I would be more understanding and accepting. While that is true on both counts, they didn't know what my counseling style was like. They seemed unconcerned by this though. On a side note: in an effort to use proper pronouns and phrasing, for some reason I keep saying "trans fluid" instead of the correct term, gender fluid. It makes for some funny moments in session, and I'm working on it!

I also have been getting referrals from straight men with sexual addictions. They say they sought me out because I'm gay, telling me that I would understand their issues better. Apparently just being gay makes me a sex expert!

Don't get me wrong; I enjoy working with all of my clients. If someone feels more comfortable with me as a therapist because I'm gay, I don't have a problem with that, I embrace it. It's a testament to how far the LGBTQ community has come in becoming more accepted in our society. As for choosing a therapist, it seems the logical thing is to trust your gut, it's always right.

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



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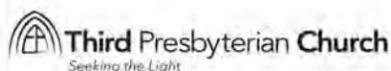

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# Fall SpeakOUT Training

**Do you strive to be more confident, more articulate and more informed about LGBTQ issues? Do you need to brush up on successful teaching methods? Would you like to become a member of the Gay Alliance Speakers Bureau?**



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!"

# 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 Street, at the corner of Broad St. We have the following services and activities for the month of September 2015.

1st Sunday: Labor Day Picnic in Lima (Mass will be held in Lima...no service at church).

2nd Sunday: Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word, with music.

3rd Sunday: Roman Catholic Prayers to start the week.

4th Sunday: 40th Anniversary Liturgy (Episcopal), followed by reception.

No service at the church on Sunday, Sept. 6, as we'll be gathering at the home of friends in Lima for our annual Labor Day Picnic. We'll gather at 4:00, have a quiet Episcopal Mass, and then share a pot luck meal. Contact us at the Hotline at 585-234-5092 or check our website at [www.dirochester.org/](http://www.dirochester.org/) for more details on the event can be found.

**NEXT BIG EVENT:** The 40th Anniversary Liturgy! Sunday, Sept. 27, at 5 p.m. This is your opportunity to worship with us as we celebrate "turning 40". Instead of our traditional 4th Sunday potluck, we're going all out and having a fabulous and fancy reception following the service. Come and celebrate with us!!

In celebration of our 40th Anniversary, a reunion picnic was held on Saturday, Aug.15. Nearly 70 past and present members attended to celebrate together. We had a special guest, one of our founders, Rev. Walt Szymanski, who traveled from Pa. to be with us and to preside at the Eucharist the next day. What a fantastic time was had by all! (Photos p. 10)

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

## EMPIRE BEARS

September is here. The summer season is winding down. The BEARS are still camping at Jones Pond, Hillside, and The Point. Great weekends still happen this month.

At home, we're getting ready for the film festival. ImageOut has its festival fair Wednesday, Sept. 9. And, as always, the Bears go out for supper every Wednesday at 6:00. 9/2 is Tap and Mallet on Gregory. 9/9 is the Old Toad. 9/16 is Carrabba's on W. Hen. 9/23 is the Winfield Grill. 9/30 is Peppermints. Movie night at the Cinema happens frequently.

Come to dinner, meet the BEARS, get on our list to find out what else we're doing.

## L.O.R.A. KNITTING GROUP

Come join us as we visit the Finger Lakes Fiber Festival -- a day of yarn, sheep, shopping and fun -- on Saturday, Sept. 19 in Hemlock, NY!

If interested, contact Kerry at [DressyFemme@aol.com](mailto:DressyFemme@aol.com). The L.O.R.A. Knitting Group will meet Wednesday Sept. 2 and 16 at Equal Grounds Coffeehouse, 750 South Ave. from 6-8 p.m.

For further information contact Kerry at (585) 224-6601.

## 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, always delivers an inspirational message that connects the scriptures with everyday life.

Children are invited to participate in our Children's Moment before heading off to Rainbow Rangers (ages 4-12) or Rainbow Sprouts (Nursery). Following the service, all are welcome to have coffee, snacks and conversation in the Community Center.

Our Adult Sunday School is starting class again on Sept. 13, studying "The Living Questions" and meets weekly at 9 a.m. This group explores what a meaningful faith can look like in today's world. Each week offers an individual lesson; new members or visitors are always welcome.

Lay pastor Brae Adams was interviewed on CNN Headline News last month after the first airing of "I am Cait", the reality show featuring Caitlyn Jenner. Brae spoke about parenting her trans child and she reminded the CNN viewers that, "It's all about love."

Our Community "salad garden" continues giving back to us and we have tomatoes, cucumbers, radishes, etc. So bring a bag and help yourself eat healthier!

We are now collecting electronics for recycling -- We have a bin from Imagine it... Fundraising through Recycling in the Community Center for items like: empty ink cartridges, empty toner cartridges, cell phones, chargers, batteries, cords.

You can also drop off your scrap metal to be recycled at Metalico Rochester and you will earn money for Open Arms. Days will be arranged for drop off at church as well. Let your neighbors and friends know they can drop off recyclable metal, too. Just mention that it is for the Open Arms MCC account and the proceeds of the recyclables will come to us.

During our services we collect the change from our pockets 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.

We also have a supply of non-perishable items in stock for when our neighbors stop in looking for emergency supplies. For example, a meal or some personal care items. If you are out shopping and can pick up one or two items it would be greatly appreciated. Some ideas for contributions are toiletries, including toothpaste, soap, paper towels, toilet paper, tampons, sanitary pads, and baby wipes. Non-perishable food items that require little preparation including pasta meals, canned meat/tuna, vegetables, and beans. Pop-top cans are also appreciated as many homeless persons do not have access to can openers. Dry food items

such as cereal, pasta and mixes. Pet food is also appreciated. We also have 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+) gets together with Tom Somerville for Yoga, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. on Tuesday and Thursday mornings (except for the 2nd Thursday of each month, when SAGE Rochester members go to Denny's for breakfast). Also on Tuesdays SAGE Rochester holds their weekly meetings starting at 11:30 a.m. and each week has a different theme or event.

PFLAG (Parents, Friends and Family of Lesbians, Gays, Trans, and Questioning) meets on the third Sunday of each month at 1 p.m. 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 on Mondays, from 12-2 p.m. You can also reach us by phone at (585) 271-8478.

## ROCHESTER BUTCH FEMME CONNECTION

The Rochester Butch Femme Connection supper club will have one event in September 2015. On Saturday, Sept. 26, we will meet at Peppermints Diner on West Henrietta Road/Route 15 in Henrietta at 7 p.m., just south of Lehigh Station Road.

For further information, contact Kerry at [DressyFemme@aol.com](mailto:DressyFemme@aol.com) or join our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/bfconnection>.

## ROCHESTER WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CHORUS

RWCC is excited for our new season to begin.

We are looking for singers and non-singing volunteers for our winter concert, which will be held at the Harley School in January, 2016. All women age 18 and older are welcome and encouraged to

sing with us regardless of any prior musical training or experience. We also have numerous opportunities for people of all genders to join us with non-singing tasks such as concert production, publicity, etc.

Our first rehearsal is Tuesday, Sept. 8. Rehearsals are held every Tuesday night from 6:30-8:45 p.m. with a short break for refreshments and announcements. New singers are encouraged to arrive at their first rehearsal between 6-6:15 for voice placement with the music director. Current members are also encouraged to arrive early for registration and music distribution. Please do come early, grab your music and visit with your friends before rehearsal starts.

New singers are accepted through the third week of rehearsals. There is a one-time \$5 folder deposit and dues range from \$50-\$90. However we do not turn singers away due to financial considerations -- we can work something out.

We rehearse at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 14614. For more chorus information, visit our web site at [www.therwcc.org](http://www.therwcc.org). Our email is [RWCCSings@gmail.com](mailto:RWCCSings@gmail.com) or call us and leave a message 585-234-4441. We can also be found on Facebook.

## ROMANS

August was a quiet month for some members of the Rochester Male Naturists (ROMANS) because there was no regular meeting.

But for those members who went to the annual nude camp in the Pocono mountains, it was a month for their annual pilgrimage to a beautiful campground where they lived day in day out with a few hundred men completely clothes free. It was a wonderful experience of the lifestyle every naturist dreamt and desired. It was a great opportunity for nudists to network with other like-minded enthusiasts from all over the world.

ROMANS members resume their monthly meeting in September and look forward to the indoor nude swims that will be held during the winter months. What is more relaxing than soaking in a hot tub when the temperature outside drops to freezing? Many members who host meetings have hot tubs at home.

For membership information, 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). ■

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# Arts & Entertainment



## On the Fringe: some highlights of the Festival

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 inimitable Mrs. Kasha Davis and Aggy Dune will bring Big Wigs, their "high energy Las Vegas style show", to the Fringe on Sept. 18 at 10:30 p.m., Sept. 19 at 5:30 p.m.; Sept. 20 at 7:30 p.m., Sept. 24 at 7:30 p.m., and Sept. 26 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets at <http://rochesterfringe.com/shows/show...> The venue is Theaterroc stage at Xerox Auditorium.

The popular Spiegelent 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 Spiegelgarten – that urban, pop-up lounge – will be back as well. ImageOut will screen *GBF* (free) at 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 21 in the Pedestrian Drive-in.

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.

Rochester's "bifurcated" Fringe adds four new venues this year: Abilene, The Strong, the new Lyric Theatre, and RAPA at School of the Arts. See the article on this page for the dance performance at RAPA, about a love triangle between women.

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 Spiegelent shows this year as well as Remote Rochester – only Upside Downton is not included. BUY EARLY AND SAVE! Spiegelent 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 Spiegelent 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. ■

## Fringe Festival dance at RAPA features piece about women's love triangle

It is rare in dance to have a piece that speaks to LGBT community, however on Sept. 19 at 5 p.m. at RAPA's main stage, 45 Prince St. there is a piece that does just that.

It is a humorous look at a love triangle between three women set to four pieces of Etta James music, with choreography by Whitley Setrakian Hill. It is a smoky, bluesy, sweet, witty piece that uses humor deftly to explore a wide range of emotions and circumstances.

The hour long concert, part of the Fringe Festival, will be

split between two companies, Loose Change Dance Collective and (Alex)andra Taylor Dance, led by artistic directors and choreographers Laurie Zabele Cawley and Alex Taylor.

Tickets are \$10 general, \$8 students and seniors, and can be purchased online: [rochesterfringe.com](http://rochesterfringe.com) (no extra booking fees); by phone: 585-957-9837 (fees apply); at the Box Office: One Fringe Place (corner of Main and Gibbs) or in person: at the venue door one hour before the start of the show. ■

## James Hansen, Heather Roffe return to Geva with MERGED III

MERGED returns to Geva Theatre Center after two years of critically acclaimed "Critic's Picks" performances. This year, international choreographers Heather Roffe and James Hansen will both premiere new works as well as reviving audience favorites.

City Newspaper wrote of MERGED 2013: It "seemed new and fresh, yet it was still accessible and, at times, even poignant." "I was flat out amazed," and "I was captivated by...some very exciting dancing." In 2014 City wrote, "I was moved nearly to tears" and "It was a work of art in motion."

Merged III blends physically exciting dance and theatricality to produce a concert that is simultaneously thought provoking to seasoned dance viewers

and accessible to first time audience members. Hansen will present "Lovely", a tongue-in-cheek look at beauty performed to an original sound design create from 1950's teenagers instructional films teaching good grooming habits. Roffe's work will include "Twice Removed" which was recently premiered at the iconic 92nd Street Y in NYC.

James Hansen had a 15-year career dancing in NYC. His choreography has received rave reviews including "A wonderful example of how much the human body can communicate." (Backstage NY), "A thoughtful meditation on group dynamics." (NY Times) "Breathtaking" (Richmond Times Dispatch) and "mesmerizing" (Norfolk's Portfolio Weekly). He has been produced by some of the most prestigious dance festivals including two years at Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival. Additionally, he is beginning his sixth year as the Undergraduate Program Director of Dance at The College at Brockport.

Heather Roffe has had her work performed nationally and internationally, most recently in the Caribbean and NYC, and has danced with Garth Fagan Dance Company, FuturPointe Dance,



and with Bill Evans Dance. Roffe has been described as "one of the most dramatic and exciting dancers in our region." (Democrat and Chronicle), "Cutting Edge" (City Newspaper) and "Striking" (npr.org).

Performances are Thursday 9/17, 7:30 p.m., Saturday 9/19, 4 p.m., and Sunday 9/20, 6:30 p.m. at GEVA's Next Stage Theater. Tickets are \$12 general admission and \$10 for students, seniors, and children and can be purchased online at [rochesterfringe.com/shows/show/merged-iii](http://rochesterfringe.com/shows/show/merged-iii) or at Geva Theater Center one hour before show time.

## Sue Latta will be ImageArt resident artist in October

By Susan Jordan

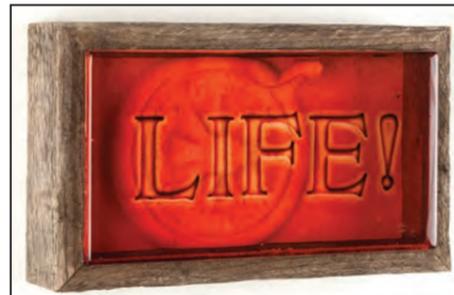
Mixed media artist Sue Latta, from Boise, Idaho, will be in Rochester in October to collaborate with ImageArt on an exhibition, a workshop and discussion.

Lata says on her website, "I am a mixed media sculptor. I make things. I have made things for as long as I can remember. I can't not make things. I use such materials as steel, rubber, resin, rawhide, cast aluminum, wood, glass, found objects, photographs, paper, and iron. The exploration of material possibilities and the discovery of what a given material will do are a big part of my working process but the goal of the work is to create sculptural forms that are emotive as well as visceral, work that pulls you in, asks more than it answers and requires something of you."

"I have been a working artist for over 15 years. I have done a number of public projects and commissioned works and received grants from the Idaho Commission on the Arts and the Boise City Arts Commission. My work has been collected throughout the United States and Canada, and is included in the Permanent Collections at the University of Nevada Reno and the Idaho Shakespeare Festival and in numerous private collections. I am currently represented in galleries in Victoria British Columbia, San Francisco CA, and Boise ID.

"I received an MFA in sculpture in 2007 from Boise State University where I am currently working as an adjunct professor of art. I also teach private workshops in a multitude of disciplines at my studio." More information can be found at: <http://thesculpturestudio.org/> She recently spoke with The Empty Closet.

Empty Closet: How old were you when you started "making



Sue Latta

things"?

Sue Latta: ...Truth be told I was probably born with it. My favorite toys were the wood blocks, lincoln logs and legos. I was very serious about my legos this was before they came with a map to tell you what to make, none of that...back in my day (hehehe) we had to use our imagination.

I also built interesting things for my Barbies. A butcher shop store front complete with hanging meat, all made out of aluminum foil, wheel chairs made out of paper plates for their recovery after the car wreck, etc.

But I didn't put a name to this disorder until I went to college. I started as a psychology major (and some days I wonder "what if?" I might be a doctor right now), then I took that first photography class...during one particular critique the instructor said about my work "This is a photographer's photograph." That was it, hook, line and sinker...my ego jumped up and said yep that was me, I did that, look what I did!!! I went and changed my major...I think that was 1984.

EC: Which sculptors or other artists have most inspired you?

SL: I have a list: Kiki Smith, Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse, Tim Hawkinson, Robert Gober, Doris Salcedo, Tara Donovan, Anselm Kiefer, Robert Rauschenberg... to name just a few. But those names don't really cover the things that inspire me.

I'm also inspired by numerous other artists whose names I don't remember or never knew in the first place. I'm inspired by cracks in the sidewalk, broken things, decay of any sort

and things that have been taken over by nature; I'm also inspired by objects that have been really well designed and really smart song writing. Or like I tell my students, "Everything you see, everything you hear, everything you read and everything you experience."

EC: What is the most challenging material you work with? Which do you love best? Do you search for new materials?

SL: Current material...polyurethane resin...hmmm... I know that it's plastic; I know that now after five years of working with it, it will most of the time do what I tell it to and I think I've seen most of the possibilities of what it does when it's not obeying. I have used it in almost all the ways that the manufacturer recommended against...I think?!

Really the hardest thing about working with it, besides having to be a freak about dust, is that it is unpredictable. But then again sometimes that's good because I have made some pretty cool discoveries. It has also done some things that I just can't get it to repeat.

What next...well I'm not finished with what I'm doing now so I'm not moving on any time soon, but I have thought that next I might get on the "green" bandwagon and start making art out of garbage...??? I might even be able to fool you into believing that it's not garbage!

EC: Were you in Rochester in 2014 for your show "Personal Pronouns" at Visual Studies Workshop?

SL: I wasn't there for the show but I did have a piece in (Latta continues page 28)

(Latta continued from page 27)

the show titled "The Space Between".

EC: How did your Image Art residency come about and what do you hope to achieve?

SL: I teach at Boise State University and I've had the opportunity to work with some awesome students. A couple of years ago I was contacted by a former student, Ross Knapper, who asked if I would be interested in participating in ImageArt. I enthusiastically agreed. When the ImageArt residency came available I was offered the opportunity to be a resident.

The goal I've set for the residency is to collect one terabyte of images. In addition to the time spent in Rochester, my wife and I will be driving across the country. We'll take the Northern route (I-70) on the way out and the southern route (I-40) on the way back. I'm thinking of it as a seven-week long photo field trip.

Also during the residency I will be doing an artist talk and a workshop on the image transfer process that I developed.

EC: Do you feel women are treated equally in the art world – especially woman sculptors?

SL: Generally I think that things have improved for women but there is still a great disparity between men and women in gallery representation, museum shows, and press coverage, all of it. What's interesting is that if you look at any undergraduate university art department you'll find that women make up the majority of students. Unfortunately in the arts, much like nearly every other professional field, women still lag behind men.

EC: Are you also interested in film and will you be attending ImageOut screenings?

SL: I'm not very familiar with independent films. I do love movies. I will be attending many of the ImageOut screenings. ■

## New lesbian romantic comedy by trans man wins two festival awards

The theme of "authenticity" drives the narrative of *ALTO*, a lesbian romantic comedy starring American Idol's Diana DeGarmo and written/directed Mikki del Monico, which has won the Audience Award at VisionFest and Best First Film at the Downtown Independent Film Festival Los Angeles.

For del Monico, who made the transition from female to male while making the film, this playful mob caper turns the genre on its ear by introducing a lesbian love story that bridges differences and unites families. Following an international festival run, the film which features original music by DeGarmo and the all-female band Antigone Rising (a.k.a. Alto in the film), is being released on DVD and Video On Demand (VOD) by Cinema Libre Studio on August 11.

A quirky love story set against an unanticipated run-in with the New York Mafia, *ALTO*'s comedic elements make it



accessible as a story about family as much as about owning our personal truths. On making this, his first feature film, del Monico says, "I know what it's like to step outside the everyday world and play by my own set of rules. The path to making this film involved my coming out as transgender, something I'd felt completely unprepared to discuss for many years. I have a great family, but I wasn't prepared for their acceptance. I'd tied myself in knots because I didn't want to hurt them. Instead they gave me the gift of any great family: their love."

### SYNOPSIS:

Frankie (Diana DeGarmo, American Idol) is as headstrong about her rock band, The Altos, as she is about her Italian-American heritage. Engaged to a good Italian man, everything in her life is in order until she discovers a corpse in the trunk of her rental car, possibly due to a mob hit. Heather, her sister, convinces Frankie to attend the funeral where they meet Nicolette (Natalie Knepp), the daughter of the new Brooklyn mafia don. When Nicolette shows up at her band's gig, it triggers a cascade of events that take Frankie towards an unexpected romance.

Trailer: <http://www.altothemovie.com/see-it.html>

DeGarmo first caught America's attention by earning the runner-up position on American Idol's third season, a platform she used to launch a successful music and theatre career, including the Tony award-winning revival of *Hair*. She is currently wrapping up a national tour of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

## Bill Evans presents new dances at Geva, Sept. 26

Bill Evans *Dancer/75!* with Don Halquist will take place on Sept. 26 at 2 p.m., at Geva Theatre Center.

Bill Evans was named one of the world's three favorite tap artists in the *Dance Magazine Readers' Poll*. He will share two iconic, classic tap dance works, a duet with his partner Don Halquist,

and a new, hilarious and poignant performance art piece by Claire Porter in this "homecoming" performance. Join Bill as he returns to the Geva Theatre Center for this entertaining show. Appropriate for all ages. [billevansdance.org](http://billevansdance.org)

Tickets are general admission \$12; seniors \$10.

Excerpts from review by Ann Poore, published in *UTAH'S ART MAGAZINE*, August 2, 2015: "William "Bill" Evans' Repertory Dance Theatre-sponsored (August 1, 2015) solo concert at the Rose Wagner (in Salt Lake City) was completely captivating. The dancer was, by turns, nostalgic, frenetic, smooth, effervescent, hilarious, and always, always an outstanding performer just givin' it his all."

"What a memorable night for those fortunate enough to have been there."

"Had he not kept reminding us that this was his 75th birthday tour, it would have been easy to forget – he was that good. Tap is exciting and exacting and Evans is a master dancer and choreographer of both it and of modern dance."



Bill Evans. Photo Jim Dusen



## Cate Blanchett's lesbian-themed film could win Oscar

By Joe Morgan on [gaystarnews.com](http://gaystarnews.com)

Cate Blanchett could very easily be walking away with her third Oscar for her work in lesbian drama *Carol*, if the trailer has anything to go by.

Based on Patricia Highsmith's 1952 semi-autobiographical novel *The Price Of Salt*, the film is set against the glamorous backdrop of 1950s New York.

*Carol*, played by Blanchett, is a married woman who risks everything when she embarks on a romance with younger department store worker Therese, played by Rooney Mara.

It set critics buzzing with praise at the Cannes Film Festival. On Metacritics, 98% of movie experts gave the film five out of five stars.

If she won the Oscar, like many critics are already predicting, it would be her third after *The Aviator* and *Blue Jasmine*.

Directed by Todd Haynes, this is just the latest of his feature films to focus on sexual and gender identity. His third film, *Velvet Goldmine*, starred Stonewall actor Jonathan Rhys Meyers as a bisexual glam rock star in 1970s London. His fourth, *Far From Heaven*, starred Julianne Moore as a 1950s housewife whose husband (Dennis Quaid) comes out. And his last movie, *I'm Not There*, starred Blanchett in a gender-bending portrayal of Bob Dylan.

*Carol* is scheduled for limited release, premiering in the US on 20 November and in the UK on 27 November.



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Gregg Soucie

## Volunteer of the Month: Gregg Soucie

If you have been attending the Pride events, you have certainly seen our September volunteer of the month. Gregg Soucie has been a dedicated volunteer to the Gay Alliance and is willing to take on any task that is needed. Gregg always has a smile on his face and his positive energy is contagious.

He said, "I have been attending Pride for about 20 years now. After the first 10 or so I wanted to be part of Pride. So I started helping with floats and being a participant. I was in Club Mother's, Club Atlantis, and Equal Grounds several years, and also marched with Harry Bronson one year.

"Four years ago I wanted to do more, so I showed up and asked where I could help and the rest is history. I love volunteering and being part of the magic. My reward is seeing the joy and smiles on everyone's faces. I take the Friday off for Pride from my fulltime job, where I manage an

apartment complex, and take the weekend off from my part time job as a spiritual healer and psychic-medium. I look forward to being part of this event every year and doing whatever I can to make Pride a success every year!"

## Gay Alliance takes Safe Zone Train-the-Trainer Certification Program across the country

By Rowan Collins

Since its inaugural run in the fall of 2013, the Gay Alliance's Safe Zone Train-the-Trainer Certification Program has been a great success. Taking the Education Team from our own backyard in Rochester to all corners of the country, the program has become one of the most requested trainings.

This year alone Train-the-Trainer has been held 14 times in eight different states – including California, Georgia, and Illinois!

The Train-the-Trainer Certification Program, simply put, trains people to become effective educators around LGBTQ+ issues who are ready to provide Safe Zone trainings on their campuses and in their organizations. The Education Team has been incredibly successful at starting the important conversations that lead to real growth and change.

Six months after their certification, participants are asked to take a survey about their thoughts on the training and its

usefulness. Below is some of the amazing feedback the program has received! Eighty-three percent of participants who took the follow-up survey rated the training a 5 out of 5.

"Positive, emotional, interesting, informative. The presentation was perfect. This was a very positive experience."

"I felt a real sense of community that my feelings and thoughts were valued and respected completely. Excellent presentation. I wouldn't change a thing. Wonderful class."

"Best professional training in Higher Ed I have done. LOVED! Thank you! I look forward to further development from you."

"Simply amazing! Authentic, easy to understand, willing to answer questions, being able to interact with everyone and hear different perspectives. Honestly, nothing could have improved this training. Thank you so, so much!"

## Meet the Board: Shira May

Board member Shira May told The Empty Closet, "I live in Pittsford village with my 8-year-old son and my fiance, Mickey Behan.

"I am an adjunct instructor at Monroe Community College, where I teach Interpersonal Communication -- a skills-based course focused on assertiveness and active listening techniques. I also offer communication coaching for individuals, couples, and groups. This summer my partner and I launched a catering business called Flying Peacock. We currently run a food stand offering sliders, salads, and lemonade at the Pittsford Village Farmers Market (Thursdays from 4-7 p.m. now through Oct.15)."

She added that the Gay Alliance was important to her during her coming out process. "I came out only about three years ago, and the Gay Alliance was an integral part of my support system through this process. From attending my first Speak Out training with Scott and Jeanne, to staying updated on LGBTQ issues via The Empty Closet, to volunteering at Pride, to becoming a member of the Speakers Bureau, I have been inspired by the mission of the Gay Alliance to be a 'champion for LGBTQ life and culture.'"

When asked why she wanted to take on the responsibilities of joining the Board, Shira said, "As a queer woman who has survived many challenges – including childhood sexual abuse, a fundamentalist religious upbringing, going through a divorce, and, last but not least, motherhood – I am proud to be in a place in my life where I can share my story and use my life experiences to help make a difference in the lives of others. The Gay Alliance serves so many



Shira May

people in our community who are in desperate need of support: teens seeking safety and resources, older adults in need of community, educators looking for guidance to support youth, and many more. I am honored to be able to support the Gay Alliance in any way I can."

Shira commented on her goals: "As a Board member my priority is to support and champion the organization in its mission and vision. I would like to see the Gay Alliance increase its visibility and connections in the region and across the country, and I am delighted to see this happening with amazing initiatives such as the Safe Zone train-the-trainer program and the Shoulders to Stand On documentary. I am particularly interested in increasing connections with spiritual communities that desperately need information and opportunities for dialogue."

She concluded, "For me, volunteering for the Gay Alliance not only felt good because I was

serving the LGBTQ community, it also helped me see that I am an important part of this community and that I belong here. Plus, working with the staff and with other volunteers, I've gotten to meet some of the kindest and most inspiring people I've ever known."

## Youth Group meetings change until move to new space is complete

With the Gay Alliance's move looming on the horizon this fall, Youth Programming is switching temporarily from weekly meetings to monthly events.

Office space must now be used for temporary storage, so until the Alliance moves to its larger space at 100 College Ave., special youth events are being planned out of the office. September event details TBA.

In October the Youth Group plans a Halloween dance, location TBA.

This winter, the Alliance hopes to be in the new office, with new Youth Program efforts taking place in a much larger space.

The Youth Gender Identity Group will be meeting at the Center for Youth, 905 Monroe Ave.

Information and updates on all Youth activities can be found on the Youth Facebook page, at <https://www.facebook.com/Gay-AllianceYouth>. ■

## 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.



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)

## 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)

## Community Survey 2015

*The Gay Alliance wants to hear from you!  
Let us know what we're doing well and what we can improve upon by taking our Community Survey anytime from now until September 30th.  
Your voice matters in shaping our future!*

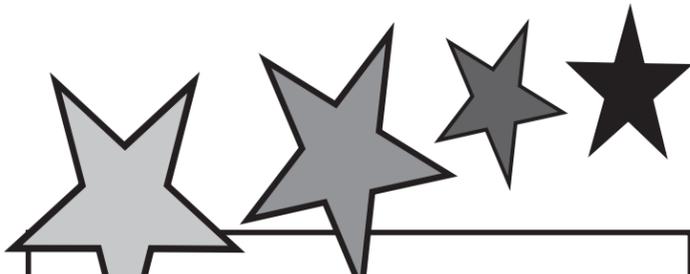
Take the Survey at:  
[www.gayalliance.org/communitysurvey](http://www.gayalliance.org/communitysurvey)



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  
**Executive Director:** Scott Fearing **Education Director:** Jeanne Gainsburg **Education Coordinator:** Rowan Collins  
**Database:** Kat Wiggall **Bookkeeper:** Christopher Hennelly **Office Administrator:** Tristan Wright  
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## 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!

### Monthly Special Events:

For ages 13-20, until the move to the new youth space at 100 College Ave., see Gay Alliance Youth on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GayAllianceYouth>

### Gender Identity Support Group:

Tuesdays: 5:30-6:30pm. (Ages 13-18)  
*More info: [youth@gayalliance.org](mailto:youth@gayalliance.org)*  
 (Temporarily meeting at Center for Youth, 905 Monroe Ave.)

### The Gay Alliance

875 E. Main Street, (5th Floor)  
 Auditorium Center, Rochester, New York 14605  
 585-244-8640  
[www.gayalliance.org](http://www.gayalliance.org)

## Presentations and Trainings in July 2015

- SafeZone Training for Interpreters at the Gay Alliance
- Communicating Respectfully with LGBTQ Individuals at Corning Inc.
- Creating Safe and Inclusive Schools at Pittsford Central School District
- SafeZone Training at Parma Public Library
- The Importance of Being an Ally at Lakeville Church of Christ
- Meeting the Mental Health Needs of the LGBTQ Client at the Greater Rochester Collaborative MSW Program
- SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Certification Program at Rape Crisis Center of Summit and Medina Counties in Ohio

### Quotes from July participants:

- "AMAZING, informative, growing, learning, nurturing. Listened to EVERYONE'S experiences. This has been an eye opener. I would recommend this workshop always and anytime."
- "The presenter was warm, charming and 'real.' Keep the presentation the way it is. It was perfect to me. I would take this class again."
- "An overall great experience. Really created a safe place to share and learn. I loved the activities. The presenter was awesome. He did an amazing job making sure the discussion stayed safe and important. Thank you again for sharing and being able to help us grow."
- "This was one of the BEST/FUN trainings I've attended this year!"

## SAGE SEPTEMBER



SAGE Bingo champs! Photo: Anne Tischer

**Tuesday September 1** - 10:30-11:30am Yoga with Tom; 11:30am-2pm Cake & Cards Day! Brown bag lunch, birthday celebration, games & crafts: making greeting cards for injured veterans. Host: Saundra & Anne

**Thursday September 3** - 10:30-11:30am Yoga with Tom. Leadership Council meets at 5pm.

**Friday September 4** - 5-7pm, SAGE HAPPY HOUR at Avenue Pub, 522 Monroe Ave. 14607 Bring trivia questions to share. Hosts: Anne & David

**Tuesday September 8** - 10:30-11:30am Yoga with Tom; 11:30am brown bag lunch, 12:30pm - Lunch & Learn: Pets and You - health benefits, adopting and caring for a pet. Bring pictures of your own pets to share. Host: Jessie

**Thursday September 10** - No Yoga. 10:30am-noon, Breakfast Club at Denny's (911 Jefferson Rd, Henrietta). RSVP to Audet at (585) 287-2958 no later than September 8. Host: Audet

**Friday September 11** - 6-8pm Coffee Connection, 681 South Ave., 14620. SAGE Coffee Hour: Pick up a Cup! Host: Roza

**Sunday September 13** - Macedon Lumberjack Festival, \$3. admission, \$2. for seniors. Fireman's Field on Canandaigua Road- professional competition starts at 10:30am, lumberjack breakfast served from 8am to noon with other food available all day, craft sale, log rolling, ax throwing, two man cross saw, chain saw tree topping, wood carving and much more. It is lotsa fun. Carpooling from Auditorium Center, 875 E. Main, back parking lot at 9am (contact Anne at [anne.tischer1@gmail.com](mailto:anne.tischer1@gmail.com) or 426-0862 to RSVP) or meet us there! More info at: <http://macedoncenterfire.org/custom.html?id=19056> Host: Anne

**Tuesday September 15** - 10:30-11:30am Yoga with Tom; 11:30-2:00pm Trip to the Memorial Art Gallery, 500 University Ave. 14607 - brown bag lunch in MAG atrium; Senior admission to gallery \$8. We will car pool from Open Arms Community at 11:30, or else meet us at the MAG at 11:45am to have lunch together & tour the museum. Host: Jessie & Anne

**Thursday September 17** - 10:30-11:30am Yoga with Tom.

**Saturday September 19** - 5-8pm 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 September 22** - 10:30-11:30am Yoga with Tom; 11:30am brown bag lunch, 12:30pm Health and Wellness series with Reba Silterra RDN CDE: Small Steps. Big Rewards. Preventing type 2 Diabetes - Part 2. Free class, open to the public.

**Thursday September 24** - 10:30-11:30am Yoga with Tom.

**Friday September 25** - Fabulous Fish Fry 5pm at the Golden Fox Restaurant at Parsells and Culver. Please RSVP to Jim at 585-354-8009 or by email at [Jimz7875@aol.com](mailto:Jimz7875@aol.com) by September 22.

**Tuesday September 29** - 10:30-11:30am Yoga with Tom, 11:30-2pm Bachelor Party Luncheon for Brian & Jim at Open Arms MCC, catered lunch by Lorraines Lunch Basket \$10 per person & a \$5 suggested donation for a gift. We'll "roast" the soon to be newly weds & do party games. RSVP to Anne, 426-0862.

**SAVE THE DATE:** Halloween Party, Saturday October 31, 4:30 -8:30 pm, at Lake Riley Lodge, Cobb's Hill Park.

**SAGE Rochester** is a program of the Gay Alliance designed for LGBTQI people over 50 and operates out of the Open Arms Church Community Center, 707 East Main St. (pending a move to the new Gay Alliance LGBTQ Resource Center, 100 College Ave.) 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 [sage@gayalliance.org](mailto:sage@gayalliance.org) 585-244-8640. We are also on Facebook as SAGE Rochester.

# 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)

## CULTURAL

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

**Rochester Gay Men's Chorus**  
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

## ELDERS

### Gay Alliance SAGE Rochester

Many monthly get together, some at Open Arms MCC 707 E. Main St. 244-8640; 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

### CNY Fertility Center

Integrative Fertility Care. Support meetings, webinars, workshops. Information: cbriel@cnyfertility.com; 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.

### Catholic Charities Community Services

1099 Jay Street, Building J (585) 339-9800, 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 LGBTIQ 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. Web: 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; 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.

### Volunteer Legal Services Project

(585) 232-3051; 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. 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.

### 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.

### 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

### 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. 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

### 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.

### 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, 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.

### Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley

See 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.

### 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.

### 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, www.empirejustice.org.

### Volunteer Legal Services Project

(585) 232-3051; 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 Center for Youth, 905 Monroe Ave. Ages 13-18. 244-8640

### Genesee Valley Gender Variants

Thurs. 7-9pm, Equal Grounds, 750 South Ave. 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 abartholomeo@gmail.com.

## WOMEN

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

Address: Rochester, NY; E-mail info@loragroup.org Website: 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 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; email: 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

Monthly Special Events until the move! 244-8640; Ages 13-20. www.gayalliance.org. Check Facebook.com/GayAllianceYouth

### 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

**LORA Coffee Social**  
Equal Grounds Coffee House 750 South Ave.  
Monday evenings, 7 pm. Free parking around the back, free street parking, and also in the lot adjacent to the coffee shop. The LORA Women's Group is open to everyone, all races, sexualities, and genders. For more info visit www.loragroup.org or contact: Regina Altizer: reginaaltizer@gmail.com

**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.

**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 Youth Gender Identity Support Group**  
5:30-6:30pm, Center for Youth, 905 Monroe Ave. 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**  
6 pm, Equal Grounds Coffee House - 750 South Ave. 1st & 3rd Wednesdays of the month from Bring your supplies and a sense of adventure! For more info visit www.loragroup.org or Contact Kerry Cater: 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.

**LGBT Bereavement Support Group**  
First, 3rd Wednesdays, 5:30-7pm, 3111 Winton Rd. S., Lifetime Care 475-8800

**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

**LORA Late Bloomers Group**  
LORA Late Bloomers Group is a group for lesbian, bisexual, & transgender women who are just coming out. Last Thursdays at Trillium Health, 259 Monroe Ave. 7 pm. Facilitator: Jessica Cohen. Email: LGBTHealth@trilliumhealth.org

**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**  
Monthly Special Events until move, 244-8640; Ages 13-20. youth@gayalliance.org. Check Facebook.com/GayAllianceYouth

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

**Boyz Night Out**  
Drag king revue. First Fridays, The Firehouse Saloon, 814 S. Clinton Ave.

**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. ■

## SCHOLARSHIP LEADERSHIP ENDOWMENT

# RISE BRUNCH

## SEPTEMBER 27

### NOON TO 3PM

ROCHESTER YACHT CLUB  
5555 ST. PAUL BOULEVARD  
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14617

[WWW.GAYALLIANCE.ORG/RISE](http://WWW.GAYALLIANCE.ORG/RISE)

# September

## SUNDAY 6

**Dignity Integrity.** Labor Day Picnic in Lima (Mass will be held in Lima...no service at church). 4 pm. Hotline at 585-234-5092 or website at [www.di-rochester.org/](http://www.di-rochester.org/)

**Rochester Women's Community Chorus.** First rehearsal of season. 6:30-8:45 pm. Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 14614. Website at [www.therwcc.org](http://www.therwcc.org), email [RWCCSings@gmail.com](mailto:RWCCSings@gmail.com) or call 585-234-4441. New singers arrive at 6-6:15 for voice placement. See article p. 25.

## WEDNESDAY 9

**ImageOut Festival Fair.** Free. 6:30 pm, Strassenburgh Planetarium at the Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Ave. First chance to get tickets for October film festival. Planetary Lounge 6:30-9 pm, with cash bar, free popcorn, snacks. Trailer Park, 6:30-9 pm, previews films in this year's festival. Free film at 8:15 pm - "Out to Win" (interviews with LGBT athletes).

## SATURDAY 12

**Prostate Cancer event: Cars for Cancer.** BayTowne, 1900 Empire Blvd. 8am-3pm. Sponsored by UsTOO. [ustoorochesterny@gmail.com](mailto:ustoorochesterny@gmail.com)

## SUNDAY 13

**SAGE trip to Macedon Lumberjack Festival.** \$3. Car pooling from Auditorium Center parking lot, 875 E. Main, 9 am. See page 31.

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

## TUESDAY 15

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

## THURSDAY 17

**Merged III.** James Hansen and Heather Roffe in Fringe Festival dance performance. Geva's Next Stage Theatre, 7:30 pm. Also Sept. 19, 4 pm, Sept. 20, 6:30 pm. \$12 general admission and \$10 for students, seniors, and children online at [rochesterfringe.com/shows/show/merged-iii](http://rochesterfringe.com/shows/show/merged-iii) or at Geva Theater Center one hour before show time.

## FRIDAY 18

**Big Wigs** with Mrs. Kasha Davis, Aggy Dune. Fringe Festival performance, 10:30 pm. Theateroc stage at Xerox Auditorium. Also Sept. 19, 5:30 pm; Sept. 20, 7:30 pm; Sept. 24, 7:30 pm; Sept. 26, 7:30 pm. Tickets at <http://rochesterfringe.com/shows/show>.

## SATURDAY 19

**Free mammograms for women over 35,** Anthony Jordan Health Center, 82 Holland St. 10 am-2 pm. Free transportation available. 487-3304.

**Dance performance at RAPA** as part of Fringe Festival. Dance by Loose Change Dance Collective, Alex Taylor Dance, about lesbian love triangle. 45 Prince St. Tickets \$10 general, \$8 students/seniors, and can be purchased

online: [rochesterfringe.com](http://rochesterfringe.com) (no extra booking fees); by phone: 585-957-9837 (fees apply); at the Box Office: One Fringe Place (corner of Main and Gibbs) or in person: at the venue door one hour before the show.

## SUNDAY 20

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

**Prostate cancer event: SEA-Blue Ribbon Walk.** Genesee Valley Park Riverbend Shelter. 9 am registration, 10:15 step off. Includes "Pups for Prostates"—prize for best-dressed dog in blue. (NO fur dye or coloring!) Sponsored by UsTOO. SEA Blue Light Project through Sept. 26. [ustoorochesterny@gmail.com](mailto:ustoorochesterny@gmail.com)

## MONDAY 21

**ImageOut free screening of "GBF"** at Fringe Festival, 7:30 pm, Pedestrian Drive-In between Speigeltent and Spiegelgarten, corner of East Ave. and Gibbs.

## WEDNESDAY 23

**Free Prostate Cancer Screening** for uninsured men. Anthony Jordan Health, 82 Holland St./Brown Square. Sponsored by UsTOO.

## SATURDAY 26

**Butch Femme Connection Supper Club.** Peppermints Diner, W. Henrietta Rd./Rte. 15, 7 pm. For further information, contact Kerry at [DressyFemme@aol.com](mailto:DressyFemme@aol.com) or Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/bfconnection>.

**Bill Evans Dancer 75!** 2 pm, Geva Theatre Center. Tickets are general admission \$12; seniors \$10.

## SUNDAY 27

**Dignity Integrity.** 40th Anniversary Liturgy (Episcopal), followed by reception. 5 pm, St. Luke's and St. Simon's Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

**RISE brunch.** Rochester Initiative for Scholarship and Education (RISE). Supporting Rochester LGBTQ Scholarship Fund, GAGV Youth and Leadership Development Programs. Noon-3 pm, Rochester Yacht Club, 5555 St. Paul Blvd. Tickets, sponsorships, info at [www.gayalliance.org/riise](http://www.gayalliance.org/riise).

## OCTOBER

### THURSDAY 3

**Eastman House Photo Finish 5K run,** 8:30 am, Neighborhood of the Arts. Raising funds for George Eastman House and local charities, including GAGV's new space at 100 College Ave. See page 3; donate to Gay Alliance runners at <https://www.crowdrise.com/GAGVRenovation> or register to run at <https://www.signmeup.com/site/reg/register.aspx?fid=JL2VQH7>.

# 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

**Rochester's Best Man to Man Rubdown.** Unwind with this degreed, employed, fit, friendly, healthy, Italian GWM. Middle aged, 5'8", 165 lbs., 32" waist, nonsmoker, d & d free, HIV negative. My 10-plus years experience guarantees your relaxation and satisfaction. Hotel visit, in call in my home or out call

in your residence. Reasonable rates. Discretion appreciated and practiced. Don't delay, call me today at 585-773-2410 (cell) or 585-235-6688 (home).

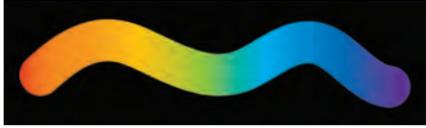
**Handyman:** Simple repairs or full renovations, no job is too large or small. Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical, Interior & Exterior. 35 years experience. Call Alan & Bill 585-204-0632 or cell 304-517-6832.

**Martin Ippolito master electrician.** Electrical work, telephone jacks, cable TV, burglar alarm systems, paddle fans. 585-266-6337.

**Wedding Space and clergy services available.** Celebrate your special day at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church, 707 E. Main St. [info@openarmsmcc.org](mailto:info@openarmsmcc.org) (585) 271-8478.

**Marriage in mind?** Private lake view home on Lake Ontario, 40 miles west of Rochester, available for weddings, including ceremony and reception. Non-denomination officiant also available. Reasonable rates. Please contact Tony. Email: [rtony13@aol.com](mailto:rtony13@aol.com) or call 585 703 3894. ■





# 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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 Chris DelConte (chrisd@gayalliance.org)

**Advertising policy:**  
 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

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### 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)  
**Join us!**

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### FREE SEPTEMBER EVENTS

#### FESTIVAL FAIR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH



**Strasenburgh Planetarium**  
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657 East Ave, Rochester, NY 14607

**DOORS OPEN AT 6:30PM**

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Purchase Festival Tickets)**

• **PLAN YOUR FESTIVAL EXPERIENCE**

Preview Festival films in the "Trailer Park"  
Catch ImageOut Programming Director Michael Gamilla's Presentation  
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- **CASH BAR**



**FREE  
SCREENING  
AT 8:15PM**

Arrive early to get your  
FREE ticket. Tickets will be  
available on a first-come,  
first-served basis.

From Brittney Griner to Michael Sam, the past few years have  
been pioneering in progressing the visibility of out LGBT athletes in  
pro sports. In the documentary **Out To Win**, filmmaker Malcolm  
Ingram hopes to further highlight these historic accomplishments  
and bridge a brighter path of LGBT visibility in pro sports.

Featuring interviews with trailblazing athletes such as  
**Martina Navratilova, Billie Jean King, Jason Collins,  
Brittney Griner, Billy Bean**, and many more, this film will  
hopefully fuel the fight in breaking down homophobia in pro  
sports, while inspiring a new generation of out and proud athletes.



**ROCHESTER FRINGE FEST  
FREE SCREENING  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21**

Pedestrian Drive-In  
(Next to the Spiegeltent in the Spiegelgarten)

**7:30PM**

