Legislature gives domestic partners next of kin status; county denies DP

On Aug. 12, the New York State Senate unanimously approved guaranteeing same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners the same rights as spouses and next-of-kin when taking care of loved ones in hospitals, nursing homes and health-care facilities.

The Senate vote on S7088 was 59-0. The Assembly approved an identical version, A9872-A, on June 3, by an equally lopsided vote of 141-1. Governor Pataki is thought likely to sign the measure.

The status of New York State domestic partners as next of kin also raises questions about why Monroe County does not offer domestic partnership benefits to its employees, unlike all major state employers, including Kodak, Xerox, Bausch & Lomb, Thomson West, Excellus, U.R., etc.

Monroe County, one of the largest local employers, continues to deny recognition of domestic partnerships. This position was reaffirmed in a letter to GAGV Executive Director Chuck Bowen from County Attorney Daniel M. DeLuss on July 22, which stated, "At this time, Monroe County policy does not allow for domestic partnership benefits."

Chuck Bowen asked, "Why isn’t the county doing what every other major employer in this county does, namely offer domestic partnership benefits? The state of New York has passed this law making domestic partners next of kin, and the Republican-dominated Senate approved this measure unanimously. The bill even directs municipalities required for domestic partnership benefits. Gov. Pataki is

Domestic partners continued on p. 3

Christ Church welcomes take a stand at Pride

The following were the signs used by the Christ Church (Episcopal) welcomers near the Church Office stairwell gathering place, at the Pride Parade on Saturday, July 17:

"We Welcome ALL," "Our Church of open is open to all. There will be NO OUTCASTS... 1985 Presiding Bishop E. Brown," "The EPISCOPAL Church... homosexual persons are children of God, having a full and equal claim to the love and pastoral care of the Church... 1976 General Convention," and "Christ Church (East & Broadway) Celebrates Diversity."

The Diocese has a float in the parade led by a "protestor," the "Episcopal Church Welcomes You. Episcopal Diocese of Rochester."

Three parishioners had posters with signs of their church in the parade behind the Episcopal Diocese’s float: Christ Church, Rochester, St. Luke’s, Fairport and St. John’s, Honeoye Falls.

The parade’s float was coordinated by the Diocesan Committee on Gay and Lesbian Ministry. There were also many other church denominations represented in the parade.

Besides the signs, our group’s decorations included long bands of colored cloth in the sequence of rainbow colors, that were tied to the existing “Episcopal Church Welcomes You” sign of Christ Church at East and Broadway, then along the lower route branches along Broadway, to the other signs at the Church Office stairwell, where our welcomers were gathered. Eight parishioners served as welcomers and decorators. Two other guests of parishioners assisted. Two others from St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s parish noticed us and stood with us, as did one regular visitor of Christ Church.

Eight parishioners served as welcomers and decorators. Two other guests of parishioners assisted. Two others from St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s parish noticed us and stood with us, as did one regular visitor of Christ Church.

One police “protester” approached our group prior to the parade to ask if we believed in the Bible. We talked for about five minutes with him, but the divergence in our views was in our summary of the Gospel as a message of love, versus his belief in certain passages that seem to condemn homosexual acts. He also believed that sexual orientation was a choice.

There was the usual number of protestors at the four corners of East and

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

ImageOut find

Inset: ImageOut has located a hit classic of gift items: Sweden’s 1564 Time of Death. Page B1

NEWSFRONTS

LOCAL & STATE NEWS

Patrick Pitoni joins GAGV Board

Patrick Pitoni has joined the Board of Directors of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley.

Patrick, a Rochester resident who is co-owner and sales manager of Oser Press, said, "I would like to help the GAGV become financially strong, and I am very excited about the future plans and services offered."

Patrick brings an extensive background in business and management. He has ongoing experience with direct mail campaigns, membership drives and buying target lists. Many of his clients are non-profit organizations.

Empire Bears host auction to benefit Youth

Ron Workers of Workers Autographs LLC has donated three autograph displays to benefit the GAGV youth programs and other charities supported by the Empire Bears.

GAGV Youth Services Director Toby Greenfield said, “We greatly appreciate Ron’s generous action by the Bear group.”

The items will be auctioned at the May Housing Gala in Cobbs Hill Park, behind School #1 on Hillside Dr. The auction will begin at 9 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 2, as part of the Lake Ontario Bear Rendezvous.

These photographs and prints of Smokey the Bear feature signatures by the creator of Smokey, Ralph Wendelin. They are professionally matted and framed in black frames. Minimum bids range from $31.25 to $46.25. Retail values are over $185. Recent similar action of similar items have exceeded $600.

To learn more, and see pictures of these items, check out the website at www.empirebears.org http://www.empirebears.org. Other items will also be part of this charity auction. Donations are welcome.

GAGV seeks funding to open Youth Learning Center for fall semester

BY SUSAN JORDAN

The Gay Alliance is reaching out to the community for funds to open its Youth Learning Center.

The center will be in a high-ceilinged space, on the first floor of the Auditorium Center, near the testing center.

Chefs’ designs for remodeling the Center space are on hold, awaiting sufficient funds to make them a reality for the 400 youth who are depending on the program.

The firm Architects Dwellings, TTLG has created plans for the Youth space (see graphics on pages one and three). Six Ades and Mary Jo Conrad-Reingold of Dwellings have donated time and talent, but funds are still needed to make the dream become reality for the fall semester.

GAGV Youth Services Director Toby Greenfield said, "Gay youth in the Youth Groups have horror stories to report about their school experiences. It is far too common to hear teenagers and young adults (who either identify as, or are perceived to be) gay speak of physical violence, verbal abuse and constant harassment. There is an incredible need in our city for a safe space for gay kids. Our Youth Groups are wonderful, but they are not enough. We need a place open every day for these kids. Our goal for this new and unique Youth Center is to have drop-in hours every day after school. Don’t our youth deserve that?"

Several Youth Group members spoke about their need for the new Center.

"I have been attending the Gay Alliance Youth Group for over five years now, and it has helped in my life in so many ways. The Gay Alliance and all who work there have been there for me throughout it all. They Youth Center continued on page 3
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. We will not print personal attacks on individuals, nor will we be a forum for advertising exclusively of interests between individuals. We reserve the right to edit for clarity. We will print anonymous letters if the name and phone number are provided to the editor. Confidential letters will be respectfully submitted. Submissions are due by the 15th of the month at: The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St., Suite 500, Rochester NY 14605, email emptycloset@gagv.us. Online edition of EC available at www.gagvalliance.org.

By GAGV Executive Director Chuck Bowden

Why did Gov. McGreevy do it?

The opinions of this writer are not necessarily that of the management, or something to that effect.

Why did Governor Jim McGreevy do what he had to do?

Coming out is a very difficult process and it is not something you do simply one time. We are called upon in our daily lives to explain why we might not “fit” into the parameters society has defined for each gender and their relationships.

Coming out is a lifelong process as we encounter new situations and ideas in our lives. Many of us face the process bravely, with an honest and unflinching attitude that we hope will help others embrace of the value of our diversity.

Even so, it is always scary to come out because the response is predictably unpredictable. Will they be accepting or just tolerant? Will they hate me now? Will they fire me? Will they hurt me physically or emotionally?

New Jersey Governor Jim McGreevy’s decision to come out when he announced his resignation did very little to help the coming out process. As a matter of fact, there are those in the LGBT community who feel used by what he did. Had he simply announced that he was a gay (or bisexual American) and that he supports the rights of everyone, perhaps the entire outcome would be different.

Remember – and I can’t stress this enough – his sexual orientation has absolutely nothing to do with his ability as a leader to govern. This was the most important opportunity to add Governor Jim to our short list of role models, especially for youth who are questioning their identity and sexual self-worth because they don’t fit into our heterosexist society.

We need to let our children know that, “You can grow up to be President of the United States as long as you study hard, work hard and set out to achieve your goal”. Whether you are gay or not has nothing to do with it.”

I was left with a lot of questions, as were many gay Americans, after the press conference. If he is a “Gay American,” why was he holding hands with his wife who is continuing to “stand with him”? Why are he and she going to seek counseling to save their marriage? Why did Governor Jim have a second child after beginning his torrid gay love affair?

Maybe the big picture is that Governor Jim was in a lot of trouble for other issues – campaign finance, fundraising, etc. He certainly violated the basic tenet of marriage – whether same or opposite sex – and that is fading. But with all of the attention focusing on the push for equal rights for gays and lesbians, did he choose to label himself as a “Gay American” to deflect attention from all of the other wrongdoings?

For over a year I have been saying that the LGBT community would be used as a political pawn in this year’s election. Bush started it, the U.S. House of Representatives followed suit, and the U.S. Senate used us in an effort to embarrass the Democrats before their convention. The choice of the horse to run, the selection of the candidates at every level of our government.

Governor Jim’s attempt to make his being gay pay political dividends is a complete and total betrayal.

Register and vote!

OCT. 8 IS THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE IN NOVEMBER

Registration forms are available through the GAGV website or by calling us at (585) 244-8640.

DON’T SIT THIS ONE OUT! WE NEED YOUR VOTE!

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Youth Center continued from page one

A. C., age 19.
N. H., age 18.

Domestic partners continued from page 1
eight. "Thirty-year-old marriage between a man and a woman," Deputy Director of Communications Bob Nolan had not responded by press time to a call by the GAGV to discuss the origin of that definition, and the ratio­
nale for the County's position on domestic partnership.

County legislator Bill Benet, Democrat, told the EC, "I am guessing the reason (why Monroe County doesn't offer domestic partner benefits) is because of Tom Cook, head of the Conservative Party. I would bet he's still an anti-gay rights and he holds a lot of sway with them. If they're still pursuing this policy, even in the face of Republican Party approval, it may be because of the Conservative hard line position."

Winning the same access rights as spous­es in emergency rooms, intensive care set­tings, and after visiting hours in hospitals has been a goal of the gay community for almost a quarter of a century, since the time HIV/AIDS made its first appearance in the United States and same-sex partners were often denied access to each other in health-care facilities, even during the last moments of life.

On Aug. 12, the Empire State Pride Agenda, backing the measure's passage, hailed both the State Senate and the Assembly for approving hospital visitation rights and said it was urged for Governor George Pataki to sign the bill into law.

"This moment has been almost 25 years in the making for our families," said Alan Van Capelle, Pride Agenda Executive Director. "Same-sex partners who love and care for each other have a fundamental right to be together when one of them is sick and hospitalized. These historic votes in the Assembly and Senate affirm this fundamental human right and illustrate the values all of us share in New York about who makes up a family.

"We thank Senator sponsor Nicholas Spano (R-Thankers) for his support for all families and we thank every Senator who voted for passage," continued Van Capelle.

"We thank the Senate Minority for their steadfast support for equal treatment of our families and we again thank Assembly sponsors Deborah Glick (D-Manhattan) and Sam Hoyt (D-Buffalo) for their work to pass the identical Assembly version this past June.

"Governor Pataki in the past has taken action to recognize the equality of our families and we trust he will do the same here. We urge him to sign this bill into law," said Van Capelle.

7.688A.987-2-A defines domestic partner as a person who has formally entered into a domestic partnership or similar relationship, a person who is recognized or covered as a beneficiary under the other person's employment benefits or health insurance, and a person who is dependent or mutually dependent on the other person for support.

The bill won's mutual dependence can be proved.

This session is the first one where this issue has been voted on in either chamber of the Legislature. It is one of some 700 or so state-based rights and responsibilities New York automatically provides to any couple that receives a marriage license.

A statewide poll on same-sex marriage conducted in March and commissioned by the Pride Agenda revealed that 85 percent of New Yorkers believe extending hospital visitation rights to same-sex couples is important.

New Yorkers in the same poll also sup­ported extending other rights to same-sex couples, such as medical decision-making and spousal health insurance, by similarly high percentages.

For additional poll information, see the April 19, 2004 press release entitled "Pride Agenda Releases Results of New York Statewide Poll on Marriage for Same-Sex Couples" on the Pride Agenda's website at www.prideagenda.org.

Currently in New York State, the only jurisdictions that provide domestic partners hospital visitation rights are New York City, in city-owned hospitals, and Westchester County, in both public and private hospi­tal.

Christ Church continued from p. 1

cers wowed to our welcoming group at the Office statewide area and several shown statements such as "Thank you and "We love you" and "We love your Church." We also wowed to the people with flags which prompted them to read our signs and wave back and say positive things back to us. It was hard not to feel loved from the very first time.

Several people stopped to read our 1976 resolution" sign and several took photos of our welcoming area, and of the Episcopal Diocese contingent in the parade. It is significant that we were the last group of Christians on a sidewalk on route holding signs (all of which were welcoming mes­sages), so we stood out.

And we enjoyed watching the parade as well.

JOIN US

- Red (Student; no EC sub) .............................................................. $5
- Orange (Individual) ................................................................. $30
- Yellow (Family) ................................................................. $50
- Green ................................................................................. $150
- Blue .................................................................................. $300
- Violet .................................................................................. $600
- Pride .................................................................................. $1,200
- and above

For information on joining the GAGV as an organization, business or corporate member call 244-8640. GAGV, 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500, Rochester New York 14605.

City School District Finance committee recommends domestic partner benefits

BY SUSAN JORDAN

The Finance Committee of the Rochester School District Board of Commissioners voted unanimously Aug. 9 to recommend Domestic Partnership Benefits for District employees.

Kitty Moran of GLSEN (Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network) commented, "I think it’s very exciting that the Finance Committee has voted to support that, and I think it’s a measure of how the District is behind fairness and treating all people with dignity and respect. That is showed by their creating the ad hoc committee and consid­ering the issue it raised.

"We will see in September if the Board of Commissioners agrees. I believe they will, because I believe they are fair-minded and will accept what the Finance Committee recommends."

In June, an ad hoc committee, the Task Force on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Issues, was formed by Commissioner James Bowers, Finance Committee Chair, with members of the lgbt community (including representatives of GLSEN and the GAGV), the greater Rochester community and union leaders to discuss DP benefits.

On June 10, the Task Force presented a report to the District Board on the physical and verbal harassment experienced by area students.

The Finance Committee has now adopt­ed many of the recommendations from the ad hoc committee.

The DP recommendation not only includes health insurance, but any other benefits offered by the District, such as bereavement leave.

The report now goes to the full Board of Commissioners who will vote at their September meeting. If approved by the School District, the benefits will go into effect on Jan. 1, 2006.
A Washington state court ruled on Aug. 4 that same-sex couples must be allowed to marry, in a decision that Lambda Legal, counsel in a lawsuit on behalf of eight King County couples, called “a historic ruling for fairness and equality.”

In a ruling issued in Seattle, King County Superior Court Judge William Downing said that the state's high court has a recent fairness and security marriage provides, and this ruling says we’re entitled to get them the same way straight couples do.”

In today’s ruling, Judge Downing called the eight couples represented by Lambda Legal and the Northwest Women’s Law Center “law-abiding, taxpaying model citizens,” and said, “There is no worthwhile institution that they would dishonor, much less destroy.”

In the ruling, Downing also said, “The characteristics embodied by these plaintiffs are ones that our society and the institution of marriage need more of, not less. Let the plaintiffs stand as inspiration for all those citizens, homosexual and heterosexual, who may follow their path.”

The county and the state are expected to appeal today’s ruling, and the Supreme Court may take the case directly and hear arguments at the same time, which is how the case was filed in the King County Superior Court.

Lambda Legal and the Northwest Women’s Law Center filed the lawsuit in March on behalf of same-sex couples who were denied marriage licenses in King County, arguing that denying marriage to same-sex couples violates the state Constitution’s guarantee of equal treatment and privacy for all Washingtonians.

The ruling strikes down as unconstitutional the state’s Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as a union between one man and one woman. The law was enacted by state lawmakers in 1998 over the veto of then Governor Gary Locke. The court held that the Washington State Constitution requires that same-sex couples have access to marriage, and that the state Constitution guarantees that the 1998 law violates those guarantees.

The Massachusetts high court opinion list February, the Washington court held that this law violates the state’s guarantees of equality, liberty and privacy for all Washingtonians. The court said the state Constitution guarantees that same-sex couples are entitled to full marriage equality.

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Phyllis Lyon. "After being together for more than 50 years, it is a terrible blow to have the rights and protections of marriage taken away from us. At our age, we do not have the luxury of time." One very real consequence of the Court's action is that if one of the women were to die before the other, the surviving partner would have no right to social security or pension benefits and no protection against losing their family home.

The Court did not rule on the ultimate issue of whether excluding same-sex couples from obtaining government-issued marriage licenses violates the California Constitution's guarantees of equality, liberty, and privacy. That question is at the center of cases currently pending in San Francisco Superior Court, including Woo v. Lockyer, an action on behalf of several same-sex couples, Equality California, and Our Families Coalition filed by the National Center for Lesbian Rights, Lambda Legal, and the ACLU in March, and a case on behalf of the City and County of San Francisco, brought by San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera. These cases are similar to a Massachusetts lawsuit that led to a decision last year ordering government to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples statewide. In another similar case, the surviving partner would have no right to social security or pension benefits and no protection against losing their family home.

"In 1948, the California Supreme Court was the first in the country to end race discrimination in marriage. We are confident that the court will live up to its own history and be a swift end to marriage discrimination in California."

While the challenge to the present law governing the issuance of marriage licenses moves forward in the courts, a simultaneous effort to change that law legislatively is also moving forward. The Marriage License Non-Discrimination Act, legislation, which is being carried by San Francisco Supervisor Mark Leno and officially sponsored by Equality California, became law earlier this year.

"Denying one group of people a government issued license for the sole purpose of discriminating against them and their children flies in the face of everything that has been made California great," said Geoffrey Kors, Executive Director of Equality California, sponsor of the legislation and party to the litigation on behalf of its members. "These 4000 families, and hundreds of thousands of other families headed by same-sex couples, deserve nothing less than equality and we are confident that the courts and the legislature will remedy this injustice."

Missouri bans same-sex marriage; lesbian to be Democratic nominee for House

Missouri voters approved amending their state constitution to ban same-sex marriage the first week in August. Missouri becomes the fifth state, after Alaska, Hawaii, Nebraska and Nevada, to enact a constitutional ban on gay marriage. Just over 1.05 million people voted for the amendment, representing 70.7 percent of the vote. Only 29.3 percent voted against the measure. Around a dozen other states are set to vote on similar ballot initiatives this year, including Louisiana (Sept. 18), Georgia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Mississippi, Montana, Oklahoma, Oregon and Utah. Ohio supporters of a constitutional amendment to ban civil unions and any legal status for unmarried couples say they have enough signatures to get their proposal on the November ballot.

"It is important to remember that today's decision says nothing about whether California can continue to discriminate against our families," said Jon Davidson of Lambda Legal. ACLU of Northern California Associate Director Bob Kearney added: "In 1948, the California Supreme Court was the first in the country to end race discrimination in marriage. We are confident that the court will live up to its own history and be a swift end to marriage discrimination in California."

"In 1948, the California Supreme Court was the first in the country to end race discrimination in marriage. We are confident that the court will live up to its own history and be a swift end to marriage discrimination in California."

Chic Parker
Former GAGV President

Tim Tompkins
Christopher Woodworth

We truly understand the real estate business...
Let our expertise work for you!

Tim Tompkins is a NYS Licensed Real Estate Broker – Registered Mortgage Broker with the NYS Banking Department.

Amnesty Int'l urges protests against mistreatment, rape of Nepalese transgender activists

Amnesty International is mobilizing its members to write Nepalese authorities following the arrest of 39 trans (male transgender) in Kathmandu on the night of Aug. 9. The men were arrested in public and are being held in Hanuman Dhoka police station in Kathmandu. They reportedly were given no food or drinking water for their first 15 hours in custody.

"We are extremely concerned that all 39 could be in grave danger of torture or ill treatment in detention," said Mabel Heflin, Director of Amnesty International USA's OutFront program for LGBT human rights. "Members and concerned human rights activists should write the Prime Minister of Nepal, the Nepalese Ambassador to the US and other authorities, demanding guarantees of humane treatment in custody and requesting their unconditional release absent their being charged with some recognizable criminal offence."

All are members of the Blue Diamond Society, a local organization that provides sexual health, HIV/AIDS and advocacy services to sexual minorities, and campaigns for their rights.

The Aug. 9 arrests could be in retaliation for a complaint to police made by the Blue Diamond Society about an earlier attack, when police officers in Kathmandu are alleged to have raped four trans. Following a disturbance at around 3:30 a.m. in the early hours of July 25, police reportedly stopped the four, Jaya Bahadur Lama, Ramesh Lama, Binod and Madan, forced them into a police van, beat them and took their money.

Police officers allegedly raped Jaya Bahadur Lama while driving around the city. The four were then reportedly taken to Gausala police station where Ramesh Lama was taken into the backyard of the police station, beaten and forced to perform oral sex.

Although Jaya Bahadur and Ramesh Lama managed to escape from the police, Binod and Madan were kept inside the van and were reportedly beaten and raped by approximately 12 policemen for three hours.

Recently the number of violent attacks on Blue Diamond Society members and workers and other sexual minorities has increased. In addition, following a June 18 petition from a private individual requesting that the Blue Diamond Society be outlawed because it was "trying to make homosexual activities legal," the organization is facing a possible Supreme Court ban on its activities.

"It is essential that Nepalese authorities conduct proper investigations into all reports of attacks on sexual minorities. They should reject categorically any attempt to unfairly infringe on the rights of members of the Blue Diamond Society to freedom of association and freedom from discrimination," concluded Heflin. "The basic human rights of all Nepalese people must be guaranteed."
Interview

Basically Treblemakers
Band celebrates its 10th anniversary this year

BY SUSAN JORDAN

Basically Treblemakers Band has been a fixture of the Rochester LGBT community since it was founded, in March 1994, by Tim Stallman and Gerry Mason. This year, with 25 members, it celebrates its 10th anniversary—a decade of queer music making!

Four band members attended the 1993 March on Washington and performed with the national Lesbian and Gay Band Association massed band. Inspired by the experience, they returned to Rochester and, in Tim Stallman’s words, “turned a pride march into a pride parade.” Each year since, the band has invited members of other bands to join them for Rochester Pride, and has traveled to many places to perform as well. BT members have visited and performed in Toronto, New York City, and even at the Gay Games in Sydney, Australia.

In 1997, BT hosted an international conference of bands, assisted by the Eastman School of Music, the GAGV, the Community Business Forum and the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus. In addition to Rochester’s Parade and Picnic, BT has performed for many organizations which have asked for their support, including Al Sigl Center, Mary Canola, AIDS Rochester (AIDS Walk), Cancer Survivors, Breast Cancer walks, “Barktober Fest, Helping People with AIDS, and more. The band has played along Park Avenue during the Park Avenue Merchants Association Winter Festival, at ImageOut closing night gala, at St. Mary’s Church Downtown, and at the New York State Fair, where they appeared again last month.

Last year the Gay Alliance was able to assist BT by making the band a GAGV program, thus enabling them to continue to use free rehearsal space in a city school, with the GAGV as the insurance carrier.

Three band members, Charles Varin, Glenn Estey and Abe Abramis, recently talked to the Empty Closet about their experiences with the band and its music.

Empty Closet: What instruments do you play and what made you get involved with the band?
Charles Varin: I play tuba and sousaphone. I had played music in high school and college, and really missed playing, and was looking for an organization that would let me do that. I saw an article in the Empty Closet asking for new members, and called. For me it was a musical motivation.

BT did being out and marching in the pride parade present a problem for you?
CV: I was out at the time, and the fact that the band was gay was an added bonus.

Glenn Estey: I play woodwinds and am the drum major .... I had just come to Rochester from Salt Lake City and was looking for some way to contribute to the gay community.

Abe Abrams: I joined seven or eight years ago. I had been given my alto sax and I carried it around the country for eight years — I didn’t know how to play. A friend of mine from Eastman said he could fix it and teach me how to play. Two months later, I went to a BT rehearsal and played ONE note. It was a whole note, and I played it on time and stopped on time. Then I was hooked. I got a lot of support from band members, and took lessons, and started fitting in.

EC: What are some of the highlights that stand out for you?
CV: For me, it was playing at the 1996 inaugural of President Clinton. We joined the national organization, the Lesbian and Gay Bands Association, Judy Ames of BT is now president of the national group. They coordinated a massed band and we played on the steps of the Federal Trade Commission.

EC: BT does many different kinds of music. Which types do you personally enjoy most?
CV: I like marching music — and also Dixieland.

EC: Do you do more of that... CV: I’d love to.

EC: What do you see as the band’s role in the LGBT community? Do you think it plays a role?

EC: It does. First of all, it provides live music. There’s also a different
NUMERO 372 www.gayalliance.org THE EMPTY CLOSET

It’s not the same thing you’re used to seeing in the gay community.

We also travel to other cities, because there aren’t many gay marching bands. We'll be at the State Fair on Aug. 28 and 29.

GE: That closes our season, and after a few weeks’ break we start rehearsals again in mid or late September. The new season starts with the Park Avenue Winter Festival, and we might do the ImageOut closing night party in October. We’re sponsoring a film this year on Oct. 9.

CV: “Eating Out.” We’ll celebrate our 10th anniversary that night. We’ll perform and then eat out.

CV: We would like new members. That’s always a goal. If anyone is interested, they can call Tim Stallman at 242-0237.

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ENDA as we've known it must die

BY MATT FOREMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN TASK FORCE

For many years, our community has debated the place of transgender people in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). The time for debate is over. The question must be called. ENDA must move forward. If it is not, we will not walk away from it.

I would completely understand someone saying that it’s the height of hypocrisy for me to be saying this. After all, I was Executive Director of the Empire State Pride Agenda when New York enacted the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act (SONDA), which extended broad-based protections to gay, lesbian and bisexual - but not transgender - New Yorkers. All I can say is that hindsight is 2020. I made mistakes in New York and that painful experience seared into my mind and heart three lessons that I think are directly applicable to ENDA.

The first lesson is not to accept what legislators have to say on this subject, which is invariably that trans-inclusion will kill legislation. In New York, the leaders of each house of the legislature exercise absolute control over everything (and I do mean everything). For years, we asked the leadership to add “gender identity and expression” to SONDA and every time the answer was a very simple “No.” On the side, we’d be told, “Look, let’s be honest. This took a long time to get members of our (gay) people, but this trans thing is very different. A lot of what we were told was far worse than this, but being an insider community we could never go public with those comments. That’s the way it works.”

I never accepted that answer because we thought we had to. We thought that making a stink about this would derail other legislation - the same strategies - the endless “carrot” deal, making sure a DOMA never saw the light of day, and winning significant appropriations for LGBT health and human services programs.

In hindsight, my judgment was wrong. Ultimately - and often reluctantly - legislators have to respond to the pressure of constituencies they support. Ultimately, a community has the right to decide what kind of legislation is advanced on its behalf. I believe now that we had insisted on trans-inclusion back then, it would have happened, maybe not immediately, but it would have happened. Part of my resistance was a belief that we could only get so much, and that pushing for too much would have jeopardized everything else. As we went along, I began to realize the more you ask for the more you get, and the harder you push, the quicker it comes. Working at the Task Force, I’ve already witnessed dozens of situations at the state and local level where legislators have initially rejected trans-inclusion. Our community, united, has said no way. And guess what? In almost every instance, legislators have, reluctantly, moved forward with trans-inclusion never an issue.

I wish ENDA is caught in a similar situation. ENDA’s Congressional supporters, including our champion Barney Frank, believe that trans-inclusion will cripple ENDA chances and that it will cost the support of some co-sponsors. I have no doubt Barney and our community’s inside lobbyists are hearing the same kind of egregious transphobic statements from members of Congress that we heard from legislators in Albany. Our side probably feels like we have no choice and can’t risk angering key players by pushing trans-inclusion, particularly since we have had to lead on House and Senate members to vote against anti-marriage legislation and other attacks.

Do I think of our community has options. For one, we should make sure that our legislators understand what it works.)

The second lesson I learned is that you have to make a bill trans-inclusive early on, so that when it finally starts moving, the issue is behind you and can’t be used as another excuse for inaction. This also requires not falling into the “this will be the year” trap.

After languishing for nearly 20 years, SONDA became the New York Assembly every session starting in 1993, by increasing bipartisanship margins. Every year after that, we hoped - we believed - that we could move the bill through the Republican Conservative-dominated Senate. In retrospect, I realize we were playing out “if only” Hall-May-like scenarios. IF ONLY we applied enough pressure (or IF ONLY we kept our mouths shut). IF ONLY we could pressure our representatives in Washington to use their clout in Albany. IF ONLY we could persuade the Governor to sign the bill. IF ONLY the Democrats in the Assembly would make SONDA’s priority in end-of-session horse-trading with the Senate. IF ONLY IF ONLY.

When every year seemed like it would be THE year, we didn’t want to do or say anything that might upset or stall our supporters. We couldn’t imagine walking away from the legislation around which our organization had been founded when it was SO close to becoming law. This, too, kept me from pressing harder and insisting on passage.

In hindsight, I should have recognized that the “this will be the year if” scenarios were a combination of wishful thinking on our part and the way in which legislative bodies keep hungry constituencies in line - dangling different varieties of carrots which inevitably vanish at the end of successive legislative sessions. I should have recognized that SONDA was passed only when we had real contacts and leverage with the Republicans. In hindsight, it’s clear that demanding trans-inclusion from the Democrats years back would not have caused either the bills demise or delayed its enactment, and that not demanding inclusion was wrong. Because I did not do that, when three decades of work and a series of complicated political maneuvers engaging Republicans finally got the bill to move in the State Senate, the only bill on the table was the trans-exclusive bill repeatedly passed by the Assembly. (Then, miraculously, the Democrats in the Assembly relented and voted for trans-inclusion for years, turned around and said, “Well of course we’d pass a trans-inclusive bill - IF ONLY the Republicans did it first.”)

It feels like ENDA might be afflicted by the missteps that have occurred in the years back. ENDA was introduced in a moment of hope - 1994 - when Democrats controlled both houses of Congress and the White House. The comprehensive civil rights bill (which I’m proud to say the Task Force played a leading role in getting introduced in the early ’70s) was abandoned in favor of this bill, covering only employment discrimination because that’s what the polls showed (and still show) had the highest public opinion support. At that moment in time, ENDA did have a shot, and it came within one vote of passing the Senate in 1996. Even then, however, House approval was a long shot and the bill’s prospects have obviously not soared since then.

In hindsight, I have no doubt the “IF ONLY” scenarios have been playing out endlessly since then. IF ONLY President Clinton would bargain with Republican leaders over ENDA. IF ONLY Al Gore is elected. IF ONLY we can get “friendly” Republicans to put pressure on their leaders. IF ONLY the Democrats regain control of Congress. IF ONLY John Kerry is elected.

ENDA isn’t poised to pass and be signed into law any time soon, even if most of the barns are thrown out in November. Now is the time to make it trans-inclusive, so that when those conditions come together and ENDA ready to move at last, it will be the law we can all embrace. Take it from me - while I am very proud that gay, lesbian and bisexual New Yorkers are now protected from discrimination - there isn’t a day that goes by that I do not have real regrets about the mistakes I have seen made with SONDA.

Finally, the third lesson is not an easy one to admit. I failed to recognize my own trans ignorance and prejudices. Legislators essentially said, “You guys in suits are OK, but them, there’s no way.” I realize now that I thought that I was a “good guy” and that my accepting the unspoken corollaries, I am better and I am not one of them. From there, it’s easy to start spinning out the differences between anti-gay and anti-transgender discrimination and why the remedies to it are different, etc., etc.

On this front, I do not think for one minute that those still pushing the trans-exclusive ENDA share my prejudices. On the contrary. It would be distinguishable not to recognize, however, that many in our community do not understand why or how trans issues are “gay issues” - and how “gay issues” are trans issues - and don’t see any reason to spend time or political capital on them. This, I think, has kept us from being strongly and implacably united around trans-inclusion.

That needs to change now. ENDA as we have known it must die. Long live a new ENDA for all our people.

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SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

If someone were to pay you 10 cents for every kind word you ever spoke and collect 5 cents for every unkind word, would you be rich or poor?
The best way to break a habit is to drop it.
Enjoy your own life without comparing it with that of another.
Tact is rubbing out another’s mistake instead of rubbing it in.
Our lives teach us who we are.

Author Unknown

Real Estate Matters

The Top 5 “Quick Fixes” To Sell Your Home:

1. Curb appeal – If you can’t get them to come in, you can’t sell it. Go outside and look at your home from the street as though you’ve never seen it before. Would you stop to come in during an open house or would you just keep driving? Would you know, ask an honest friend or neighbor – or me!

2. Clean and clean some more - If you do nothing else, make sure you do this. Nothing turns a potential buyer off faster than a dirty or messy home.

3. Redesign – the art of moving things around that you already own to create a new and interesting space. It’s all about the placement of items in a space that can make it feel bigger or create a good “traffic pattern.”

4. Paint – This fix is not as fast as putting out flowers, but nearly as inexpensive! A quick painting technique is to paint just one wall in a room or to “float” a square of color on a wall.

5. Put out flowers – A fresh flower arrangement can completely change the atmosphere in a room.

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Life getting “Hairy”? Need to “Smooth” things out?
You WORK hard to tone that body – now SHOW it off!

LAKE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH, DOWNTOWN UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, THE PROGRAM FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN & GENDER IN CHURCH & SOCIETY AT COLGATE ROCHESTER CROZER DIVINITY SCHOOL

Present
THE SERIES

Christian Faith and LGBT Experience

Mark Jordan
will speak on
“The Myths of Christian Marriage and the Perils of Queer Romance”

Dr. Jordan is Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Religion at Emory University. A Roman Catholic and openly gay, he is the author of The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology and the forthcoming Blessing Same-Sex Unions.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2004 at 7:30 PM
at
LAKE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH,
70 Ambrose Street
(Located at the point formed by the intersection of Lake Ave., Ambrose St., and Jones Ave, about 1/2 mile North of the Kodak Office Bldg.)
There is ample parking behind 77 Ambrose Street.

Free Admission - Reception will follow.
For information, call 458-5765 or 442-5486

Dr. Jordan will also speak at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, 1100 S. Goodman Street on Monday, October 25 at 10:30 AM in the Faculty Lounge. The lecture and the following discussion are free and open to the public.

The Top 5 “Quick Fixes” To Sell Your Home:

5. Put out flowers – A fresh flower arrangement can completely change the atmosphere in a room.

4. Paint – This fix is not as fast as putting out flowers, but nearly as inexpensive! A quick painting technique is to paint just one wall in a room or to “float” a square of color on a wall.

3. Redesign – the art of moving things around that you already own to create a new and interesting space. It’s all about the placement of items in a space that can make it feel bigger or create a good “traffic pattern.”

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Christopher Del Conte
585-750-0876
christ@parkavenue.com
RGMC hosts sunset garden stroll

On Aug. 21, the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus hosted a Sunset Garden Stroll in nine beautiful city gardens. The event was a fundraiser for the RGMC. After a gray and misty morning, the sun came out and the Garden Stroll was a huge success, with over 100 people attending (see RGMC article in Groups section, page C6). Above and next page: a garden on Hickory St. Homeowners/gardeners provided food, drink and gardening tips.
Above: Gary Keleher, Chorus member and gardener, explains different kinds of plants to the strollers. Below: Elier Ruiz, RGMC producer, gets up close and personal with some cosmos.
Telling a state court that same-sex couples in New York need the protections and security of marriage, New Yorkers pay New York taxes and call New York home, they deserve the protections of marriage under the state Constitution.

"In New York, many same-sex couples are having their Canadian marriages recognized by state officials. They must prove that they shouldn't have to cross international borders to get those protections. New Yorkers who have lived in New York and New York their home, and they should be allowed to marry in their own neighborhoods and communities -- just like that straight friends and neighbors," said Somer.

The plaintiffs in Lambda Legal's New York case are: Michael Dumas, Dennis Hernandez and Nevin Cohen, a couple of three years who would like to become parents, Heather Winter, a couple of five years who worry about the lack of protections in times of sickness if one should become ill and have a family someday but worry about doing so without the protections of marriage; Lauren Abrams and Donna Freeman-Tweed, a couple of 22 years who want to marry to help protect their young sons; Lauren Hernandez and Michael Elsasser, a couple of 17 years who with the their partner having their Canadian marriages respected and if one should become ill and have to endure in the hospital, and had a rape test been ordered, and numerous drive-away gasoline thefts. He spent 20 years in prison, and has had trouble keeping her mouth shut, and not f***ing with a dick in your mouth.

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The Viking Resort is located on beautiful Keuka Lake, the Princess of the Finger Lakes region of New York State. We have 1000 feet of private lakeshore for swimming and fishing, and nightly bonfires. Rowboats are free for guests’ use and we have a variety of boats for rent. Docking facilities are available for privately-owned boats.

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Labyrinth Quest sponsors labyrinth walk at Colgate

In cooperation with the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, Labyrinth Quest will sponsor a community labyrinth walk at the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School on Monday, Sept. 13, and Tuesday, Oct. 19, from 7 until 9:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the University Theatre.

Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, 1100 S. Goodman St., which is handicapped accessible. A 36-foot diameter replica of one that was at the 7th. Reiki will be provided by Rochester area Reiki practitioners, and chair massage by Osteopath Richard Thayer. Sonam Targee, noted area musician and healer, will provide music. Free will offerings are gratefully accepted. Call Harriet Royer at (585) 436-9174.

The Labyrinth is an ancient geometric pattern in which all its lines of thought become a pathway to healing and wholeness. The labyrinth used in this walk is a 36-foot diameter replica of one that was laid in the nave of Chartres Cathedral in France in 1200 A.D. rubble and dirt. Both are suffused with the material and spiritual balance and free flow of energy in the body. Sonam Targee will play flutes from around the world with musical offerings and religious traditions.

The mission of Labyrinth Quest is to provide labyrinth design programs, and build labyrinth structures for people and organizations.

Democratic convention: highs and lows for gay Americans

BY SEBASTIAN WHITE

Marriage for same-sex couples may be a top political priority for the gay community if watching the recent Democratic National Convention and waiting for clear and unambiguous gay and lesbian media may have been critical of the Democratic strong point, but delegates like Sonam Targee, noted area musician and healer, will provide music. Free will offerings are gratefully accepted. Call Harriet Royer at (585) 436-9174.

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To the Editor:

It is important that you be aware of their activities.
The Religious Freedom Action Coalition is encouraging conservative Christians to visit liberal and open churches – including the gay-friendly Metropolitan Community Churches, Unitarian Universalist, and predominantly African-American AME congregations.

The visitor are encouraged to note any possible violations of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service's guidelines for political activity, such as the endorsement of a particular candidate or political party – and then report it to www.RatOutAChurch.org <aoldb:llmaillwrite/www.RatOutAChurch.org.

This information will be used to file complaints against non-fundamentalist churches and to seek revocation of their tax-exempt status.

This is little more than an effort to intimidate and silence churches such as MCC. In fact, the organization's website proclaims its mission as “Ending Radical Left-Wing Politics In The Pulpit.”

As many former fundamentalists are quick to testify, “radical left-wing politics” tend to be all viewpoints that disagree with fundamentalist dogma.

It is important that all MCC clergy and lay leaders in the United States familiarize yourself with the IRS guidelines related to political activity. These were recently compiled into a brief list of “Dos” and “Don’ts” by Margaret Mahlman, MCC’s Chief Financial Officer, and distributed by e-mail to local churches. If you need another copy of this document, please send your request to info@MCCchurch.org.


Careful adherence to these IRS guidelines will protect the integrity of your church’s ministry and your church’s tax-exempt status.

And there may be a silver lining in all of this: In the midst of this effort to intimidate our churches, many conservative Christians may have the opportunity to sit in our churches, experience the depth of our worship, and hear MCC’s spiritual message of inclusive love for all people. IRS. The background to this story may be of interest to you.

In early July, Jerry Falwell endorsed U.S. President George Bush’s reelection campaign through his ministry’s website which appears to be a violation of IRS laws.

On July 15, Americans United for Separation of Church and State filed a complaint against Falwell with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The complaint seeks the revocation of tax-exempt status for Falwell’s ministries because of the alleged violation of IRS laws.

Incidentally, this is not the first time Falwell has been accused of violating IRS political laws. In 1993, Falwell’s television ministry was fined $50,000 for engaging in improper political activity.

A four-year IRS probe determined that Falwell’s Thomas Road Baptist Church raised money for political purposes, a violation of U.S. law.

The creation of the www.RatOutAChurch.org <aoldb:llmaillwrite/www.RatOutAChurch.org <aoldb:llmaillwrite website and campaign was a backlash against Americans United for Separation of Church and State (who Falwell recently called “liberal thugs”) and Christian churches that do not adhere to fundamentalist views.

Kerry Lobel, MCC Interim Director
Rare Chair Affair to raise money for Breast Cancer Coalition on Oct. 2

It's time for the Rare Chair Affair. For the third year, Rochester artists have created unique chairs to be auctioned off to benefit the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester (BCCR).

The auction will take place Oct. 2 at 6 p.m. at the Hyatt Rochester.

Live and silent auctions will feature chairs, artwork, jewelry and other items. The evening includes cocktails, dinner and dancing, and is sponsored by community organizations, including gold sponsors Excellus Blue Cross-Blue Shield and Coblentz Press Inc.

A selection of the chairs is on display at Eastview Mall’s Center Court through Sept. 9. They will also be on the BCCR website, www.bccr.org.

The Advocate’s Spirit Award will be presented this year for the first time, in honor of one of BCCR’s founders, Harriet Susskind-Rosenblum, a Rochester poet who died of breast cancer in October 2002. The award will go to a member of the community whose work best exemplifies Ms. Susskind-Rosenblum’s spirit.

BCCR, in its sixth year, is the only area group which focuses exclusively on breast cancer. Its programs include initiatives on advocacy, education, support and research, including Breast Cancer 101 for the newly diagnosed; Breast Cancer 201 for those with advanced disease, and formal and informal support groups.

Brown Bag Friday Lunch is often among the first stops a newly diagnosed woman makes to meet others faced with the challenge of breast cancer. Proceeds from the Rare Chair event will fund these and other programs.

All funds raised by BCCR stay in the greater Rochester area and are distributed equally to areas of focus, unless the donor specifies otherwise. Monroe County is still number one in New York State for new incidences of breast cancer.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and the Rare Chair Affair is a chance to learn more and become part of the solution. Tickets are available by calling BCCR at 585-473-8177, or at www.bccr.org.

MCC/Vatican continued from page 14

Price at Iliff School of Theology (www.iliff.edu) in Denver, Colorado, named after the former Roman Catholic nun and past pastor of one of MCC’s first churches especially for women, Dahl, a former MCC denominational staff member who coordinated World Global Outreach, currently resides in Ventura, California.

The Rev. Dr. Karen Ziegler Feminist Preaching Prize at Union Theological Seminary (www.uts.columbia.edu) in New York City, named after the former pastor of MCC New York and an early feminist theologian in MCC who served with distinction in the early years of the AIDS epidemic.

Ziegler currently works for Duke University Medical Center in Raleigh, North Carolina as a nurse practitioner.

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Making the Scene

Meg and the Clams perform at Milestones in July. Lots of women show up for the group’s performances at the downtown club. PHOTO BY RENEE SOTILE.

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More information: www.therwcc.org, join-us@therwcc.org, 585.234.444.1.

TARA

153 Liberty Pole Way (585) 232-4719 Rochester, NY

We at Tara would like to Thank all of our patrons and all of the Volunteers for coming and supporting G.R.E.A.T.’s Christmas in July this past July 23th. We exceeded our expectations and it was all Thanks to You!

A very special and Heartfelt Thank You to all the performers who donated their Time, Talent and Money to such a worthy cause. Without you of course we couldn’t have done such an Incredible Job.

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- M-F 4:00 - 8:00 – Sat-Sun: 12:00 - 8:00

Friday’s Happiest Hours
- 5:00 - 7:00 $1.00 Well and Domestic

Monday
- Martini Madness – All Call Martinis $3.50 All Day

Wednesday
- Two for One Well and Domestic Beer with Brett from 8:00 - 2:00AM

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Featuring Creme De La Creme Desserts

EXTENDED
- Sunday Tea Dance 4:00 to 9:00 with Ann’s Clambaka and DJ Chuck Berry
NOAH’S ARC: Premiere of the DVD series, Noah’s Arc, at Mark Schimmel Theatre for the Arts @ Pace University on Aug. 5. This new series is about the lives of African American LGBT men. ALL PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY DOUG MESZLER.

STRICTLY BALLROOM: Above, at the Ballroom in Bryant Park for the NYC Festival of Dance. The Aug. 5 event was a benefit for Dancers Responding to AIDS. Diane Lachtrupp and Johnny Martinez, from Stepping Out Studio, perform the Argentine Tango.

NOVELIST: Left, Pulitzer-Prize winning author Michael Cunningham is pictured on July 29 reading from his novel, A Home at the End of the World, at Central Park SummerStage.

MOVE ON: Right, Anti-War benefit reading of Tony Kushner’s new play, Only We Who Guard the Mystery Shall Be Unhappy at the American Airlines Theater on Aug. 2. The evening was a benefit for MoveOn.org. Pictured are Patricia Clarkson, John Cameron Mitchell.

FAMILY CRUISE: Hundreds of gay and lesbian families from across the country set sail on Rosie O’Donnell’s first-ever gay family cruise on July 11. Pictured are some of the families at Pier 88 just before departure.

ICONS: The Lesbian and Gay History of The World, Vol. I was written and performed by Jade Esteban Estrada, shown as Michaelangelo on Aug. 1. A musical trip through gay history, the show was performed during the 5th Annual Midtown International Theatre Festival at Where Eagles Dare Theatre.

ROCK THE VOTE @ The Park (10th & 17th St): a special night of fundraising, celebrities, voter registration and sexy fun. Pictured are Jai Rodriguez (Queer Eye For The Straight Guy) and Mark Getzlaff (Boy Meets Boy, My Big Fat Gay Italian Wedding).

A PICNIC IN BROOKLYN: Left, Rochesterians John Morgan (MOCHA Project Executive Director, on right) and Morris Stewart have fun at Pride in the City Annual Family Day Picnic at Fort Greene Park, Brooklyn on Aug. 7.
Equality Leadership Conference 2004
Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley

The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley invites you to the 2004 Equality Leadership Conference
Burgundy Basin Inn
1361 Marsh Road, Pittsford, New York
Saturday, November 6, 2004
8am to 1:30pm

Keynote Luncheon Address
The Honorable Eliot D. Spitzer
Attorney General, State of New York

Conference Agenda
8:00 am..............Registration and Continental Breakfast
8:30 am.............“The Value of LGBT Employee Resource Network Groups”—An informative session on how ERNG’s benefit any organization – public or private. Includes information on how to start and support a group and what benefits can be expected.
10:00 am..........Break
10:15 am..........LGBT Corporate Diversity—“Does it affect the bottom-line?” — A panel discussion by leaders of Rochester’s Business Community, followed by a problem-solving exercise.
11:45 am..........Break
12:00 Noon........Leadership Luncheon
• Results of 2004 Rochester LGBT Business Survey
• Presentation of Corporate and Media Awards
• Keynote Address
1:30 pm.............Conference Adjournment
Coffee & Dessert Buffet

Registration Fees
• Conference fee: $75 per person
• Luncheon only: $50 per person

For more information, contact: Paul Berezney
GAGV Marketing and Development Director • (585) 244-8640, ext 14 or paulb@gagv.us
Somerville art show at Forum opens Oct. 3

Tom Somerville, artist in residence at Artisan Works, will show his work at The Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave., starting on Sunday, Oct. 3 at 6 p.m. The art exhibit is a fundraiser for the Gay Alliance's Anti-Violence program.

There will be two selections of art featured: one is a series on queer-bashing and the other is a series of male nudes. All pieces exhibited will be for sale, with a percentage of the profit for the anti-violence program.

The queer-bashing series will include I Blame My Nose on You, Biggest. Somerville’s self portrait from last year’s ImageART festival. Also included are a series of portraits of Teena Brandon, Barry Winchell and Alan Schindler (all gay or transgender murder victims) as well as a landscape of the place where Matthew Shepard was murdered. One of these paintings will be donated to the anti-violence program (selected by Alex Cobus, AVP Coordinator) as well as a percentage of all sales.

“This year I tried to find a venue to exhibit my anti-gay violence series,” Somerville said, “I couldn’t find a gallery in Rochester that would exhibit it. One painting that was originally accepted into an exhibit was pulled at the last minute because the topic was too controversial,” according to the gallery director. I don’t think it’s a ‘controversial’ subject because I think the number of people who support murdering gay people is very small. Most homophobic people do not think gays should be murdered. I think the problem is not that it is ‘controversial’ but that it is uncomfortable for people to talk about.

“Having been a victim of such a hate crime I wanted to become involved,” Somerville continued. “My queer-bashing series grew out of my own incident. I felt I was making an important statement, yet no one would show it. I was surprised when The Bachelor Forum approached me about exhibiting the series. They got right behind me on it and have been very supportive.”

This year Tom donated pieces to The Tracy B. Baran Memorial Breast Cancer Hat Auction (which raised over $3,000 for women treated at the Pluta Cancer Center), and a piece appraised at $3,000 was accepted into a fundraising art exhibit at Vanderbilt Hall in N.Y.C. for Services for the Under Served, a charitable organization that helps the homeless of the city.

Somerville won an honorable mention in an exhibit that opened in N.Y.C., then traveled nationally for a year raising awareness about HIV.

“I will soon select an organization and donate that piece to them,” Somerville said. “This is my way of donating to charities because I am a ‘starting’ artist and, therefore, cash shy. It is what I can do. Art is a good way to raise awareness because it is so visual.”

ImageOut Archive Night features Time of Desire, a lost classic of lesbian and gay cinema

BY CAROLE DOWLING, IMAGEOUT P.R. COMMITTEE

ImageOut programmer Dan Humphrey talks about ImageOut’s Archive Nights, which will feature two very different films this year: on Monday, Oct. 11, John Huston’s notorious cult film, Reflections in a Golden Eye, starring Elizabeth Taylor, Marlon Brando and Robert Forster (sponsored by the Empty Closet) and, on Oct. 13, The Time of Desire, a 1954 Swedish import that was censured by the critics for its sexuality, but ended up running for years in the U.S.

CD: Dan, Time of Desire has something that helps the homeless of the city.

Tom Somerville’s self portrait, painted after he was attacked and beaten. One series of artworks in the show depicts several victims of gay-bashing, and the site where Matthew Shepard was killed.

The Time of Desire by Egil Holmboe, a Swedish film from 1954, has been completely forgotten by gay film critics and historians. ImageOut has unearthed perhaps the only uncut version, which will be screened on Oct. 13.

Tickets go on sale online on Sept. 16 and walk in ticket sales at the ImageOut office on Sept. 25-26. Left: Ulysses Lips (Barbro Larsson) kisses her sister Fagn (Margaretha Löwler).
In the Life for September takes on the may issues of lgbt marriage equality

With America currently in an uproar over the definition of "marriage," In the Life's September episode takes on the issue of gay marriage. Underwritten by the GAGV, In the Life airs on Sept. 11 at 11 p.m., on WXXI.

VIBE Magazine's former Editorial Director, Emil Wilbekin, guest hosts In the Life's season finale "Mergers and Acquisitions," a full exploration of the term "marriage."

WHY GAY MARRIAGE?: IT's marriage that's marriage and that's marriage.

CONSERVATIVES SPEAK OUT: No one argues that gay and lesbian Americans should have the right to marry. A number of opponents share their thoughts on the Christian roots of the nation and why "gay marriage" threatens the foundation of family.

BOYS OF SUMMER: Real of a Summer Continued on Page 4

ImageArt open mic poetry reading is Sept. 11; Gallery opening is Oct. 3

Music review: The boys of summer '04

SPEAK OUT: ONE COUPLE'S STRUGGLE: Todd Roulette and Chuck Allen were planning to make history with their same sex ceremony planned for November 2003 at the historic St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Harlem. ITL examines how a twist of fate not only denied the ceremony for the couple but also highlighted the impact of not having the legal rights that can only be secured through marriage.

ENTERTAINMENT UPDATE: Melissa Etheridge-

BESHERRILL PULCHUM

Melissa Etheridge

In February newly wed Melissa Etheridge released her new album Lucid. In June a pay-per-view event was aired from Etheridge's April 17 concert at the Roseland Ballroom in New York City. On Sept. 28 that concert will be released on DVD.

Along with the concert, the DVD Lucky Live will feature an interview with Etheridge, behind the scenes footage and a photo gallery. Two editions of the DVD are being released: one edition contains only the DVD; the other will include an audio version of the concert.

Melissa Etheridge is currently on tour promoting her new album. She is not scheduled to appear in the Western New York area. Her closest concert in New York City is in Canada: Sept. 27: Hamilton, Ontario, Hamilton Place; Sept. 28: London, Ontario, John Labatt Centre; Sept. 29: Toronto, Massey Hall; Sept. 30 and Oct. 1, Ottawa-Gatineau, Le Theatre du Casino at Casino du Lac Leamy; Oct. 10 and 11, Montreal, St. Denis Theatre; Oct. 14 and 15, New York City, City Centre.

Red Hot by RuPaul

Rhonda Ross, RuPaul is Red Hot. Looking Good and Feeling Gorgeous, on her first album in nearly five years. Red Hot will get the party started, whether you had one planned or not.

Her new album is full of high energy dance tunes to keep you dancing. RuPaul said that if you can dance, then you can start a revolution. She made the new album Red Hot because she felt compelled by current events. RuPaul seven tackles the subject of gay love and marriage. On the song "Love Is Love," RuPaul says "All I know is, Love is Love and in this world there ain't enough."

"RuPaul's strong voice and the buff body, he certainly found a significant following of adolescent girls. Children should be exposed to women who can carry a tune warms your heart, but with their lack of dance moves and little to no controversy surrounding any of the members, 98 Degrees failed to ever reach the level of success.

Much of what held the band back then is still the problem here on Nick's current show. But with their lack of dance moves and little to no controversy surrounding any of the members, 98 Degrees failed to ever reach the level of success.

Mr. Jessica Simpson launches his solo career with this moderate freshman effort. Those of you who have watched Nick's hit show on MTV, "The Newelyweds," probably know that his wife is the star of the show, but some of you may recall that in the recent past he competed for your ear this summer.

So, you kind of feel like you got ripped off by a summer without much sux! I don't blame you. It got a little depressingly at times. Fortunately, if a cute guy that can carry a tune warms your heart, you had a few decent choices.

From the recent boy-band alumni to attempt a solo career, to the latest installment from the current lead of dance and to the recent run of arguably the best solo act to ever come out of Britain, there was no lack of men competing for your attentions this summer. Nick Lachey SoulO

Mr. Jessica Simpson launches his solo career with this moderate freshman effort. Those of you who have watched Nick's hit show on MTV, "The Newelyweds," probably know that his wife is the star of the show, but some of you may recall that in the recent past he competed for your ear this summer.

"The Newelyweds," probably knew that his wife is the star of the show, but some of you may recall that in the recent past he competed for your ear this summer.

So, you kind of feel like you...
other canonical books dealing with gay film history. I'd certainly never heard of it.

When I went back to old issues of the New York Times, or Variety, how­ever, there it was, reviewed, advertised, and playing, with great controversy, around the country. One thing that was immediately clear is that it was a very big hit, at least in major metropolitan areas, upon its American release. At one point, the entertainment pages of the Times show it playing in four differ­ent theaters in Manhattan at once, and this was several months after it had first opened in the city in an exclu­sive engagement.

Naturally, my curiosity was piqued, and when I learned that there was a print deep in the vaults of the George Eastman House's collection that I could preview, I just jumped for joy. Once I screened it in their study center there, I was even more ecstatic, because it is this absolutely amazing film. It's decades ahead of its time in so many ways. While a quick gloss over its plot might cause one to fear the worst -- that this sexy Swedish film about two young-adult sisters who are having an incestuous affair is just fodder for jedi­cious straight guys, for instance -- it's really much more sophisticated than one would think.

It ultimately suggests what anthropologists have been saying about the incest taboo, that frankly, more than anything else, it's all about circulating property or money between different families through marriage. By impli­cation, the film takes things a step further by suggesting that, likewise, the taboo against homosexuality is also more about maintaining the circulation of capital through a kind of exchange of women between men, by their fathers marrying them off. Feminist anthro­pologists would make this very claim in the 1970s, but here is this entertaining, funny, sexy film clearly saying the same thing, one that was made in 1954.

In one amazing moment, the girls' relationship is so modern that it makes you question all our most entrenched way questions all our most entrenched taboos and the way they structure our societies, and that ultimately suggests love should be separated from that kind of ruthless system of capital circula­tion.

CD: That's one of the reasons this film is so entertaining... it works on so

One day, perhaps, when “Time of Desire” has regained its deserved place in lesbian and gay film his­tory, it will be written that it was... screened for the first time in decades by ImageOut.
Today's pop/dance music
I found myself longing for
But probably only at a gay
he is one
Alright")
Third, it takes the over-used and
she was already stealing the show on
since Usher released the multi-platinum
It's Made
to score three consecutive hit albums in
and talented at crafting music you
and goodbye to the early days of music
and delivery, but you have to experi-
-Just don't spark enough inter-
George's fans should have enough here to last
many of the remaining tunes (with
Poor
and go without much notice.
had a way of making every
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get the right people to help you keep
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-Just don't spark enough interaction to hold you for long. Nick's voice
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-Just don't spark enough interaction to hold you for long. Nick's voice
perhaps make this album come and go without much notice.
I was already stealing the show on
It seems he can't resist
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Why I march

As Rochester's Gay Pride parade progressed down East Avenue, one could not help but register the large number of religious protesters. Most were dressy lone men, some with bullhorns and others saddled by cumbersome signs upon which scripture and diatribe had been scrawled.

Folks marching in the parade and those gathered to watch along the route reacted in a variety of ways. One delighted man who had journeyed from Syracuse said he came here expressly to confront the religious protesters. He stood next to one man and then next to another, shouting gibberish loud enough to smother their ranting. His presence was clever, since far by than the attempts of some who attempted to engage the demonstrators in dialogue, in the vain hope that debate or discussion might be persuasive.

Other marchers responded in anger and shouted obscenities. Some sat and just shuddered in fear. As cheesy as those boxes are, they have an effect.

One questions the value of even acknowledging these demonstrators' presence. They are committed to their ideas, quite unmovable from their postures. Except, ironically, for one sad soul who maintains his stance when he persisted in ignoring the admonitions of a man who warned him to get inside. His response was clever, since far by than the attempts of some who attempted to engage the demonstrators in dialogue, in the vain hope that debate or discussion might be persuasive.

Conversations over the next several days revealed that many of our friends and acquaintances were seriously disturbed by the fanatic protests. They had been frightened by the intensity of their screed as well as their prevalence. I'm a bit more thick-skinned, I've been at this marching business for a long time.

For 20 years I have gone to New York City for Gay Pride. Several times I've amazed in the aftermath to prove to be a pivotal moment — when one stops being a spectator and becomes a participant. It's a different kind of witnessing, a shift from passive to active.

One year I rode in the SAGE bus, waving to hooties along Fifth Avenue, and I have an old snapshot taken in front of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, showing a pen across the avenue containing a dozen or so rabid, angry so-called Christians who spewed cruel and holy water. Yep, I was splashed at. Spitting, which might have their natural impulse, is illegal. New York managers to confine religious protesters by providing them a delineated venue. They're contained within one section and once you've passed them you are done with them.

As I listened to these various friends I was surprised that in addition to my pro forma tolerance (everyone has a right to freedom of speech), I had perhaps achieved a degree of compassion for the loonies.

I didn't ask to be born gay. I doubt I was, that what dogs like best is to be a spectator and becomes a participant. It's a different kind of witnessing, a shift from passive to active. I'm always number one. When the hell someone is going to bump off David Geffen so that I can move up in the hierarchy of influential modern gay figures?

There were in print stating that you are publicly out. And then I heard that wedding bells (although others argue that I'm really hearing cuckoo clocks).

I want to think that Ethan Hawke and I were meant to live happily ever after together. I mean we share the same birth date (11/6/67), and he did play a character named Nate in the movie Reality Bites, which also features my favorite comedienne Jeannie Garofalo. Come on! The fans were practically pointing big shiny neon arrows in the directions of both of us to follow to the other. But Ethan had to go through his Uma phase, and we all know how that...
Columns continued from page B5

disaster ended up. So Ethan, if you’re reading this (and I know you are), you missed your chance buddy Natan’s man. (I’m not being a little bit.)

And Nate (I hope you don’t mind me calling you by your first name) I’m practically your boyfriend by now, I hope you don’t think I fall for any handsome face who can hang curtains. You’re safe.

What competition do you really have? Thom Filicia of Queer Eye fame? That big queen is simply riding Carson Kressley’s designer labeled coat tails. And if you’re worried about Ty Pennington, formerly of TLC’s Trading Spaces…Puleez! I’m so over that whole Southern Southern designer and the inability he maintains. He’s just a hunk with a hammer. I think his hair gel has stayed in a little too long for my tastes (if you know what I mean).

So all that’s left for you to do is to meet me, fall in love with me, and take me back to Chicago. To make it simple, here is a list for you to follow:

1) Buy a airline ticket to Rochester
2) Meet Troy Robinson
3) Unleash your passionate love for Troy Robinson
4) Redecorate Troy Robinson's bedroom
5) Repeat item #3 on this list
6) Marry Troy Robinson
7) Buy two airline tickets back to Chicago

See how easy it will all be. And I’m sure the rest of our lives will be filled with laughter, love, feng shui, and hot sweaty man sex. So know I’ll be seeing you real soon.

And no I’ve never had a restraining order filed against me (just in case you’re checking).

Yours Always,
Troy Robinson
(ska Mr. Beth Robinson
Email: misadventuresinbend@jullabian

The crystal did us in”

Tim admits that, at least at first, the crystal was euphoric. “I’d be lying if I said I didn’t enjoy it,” he concedes. In the beginning, the drug seemed transformational.

But Tim asked that his and his lover’s names be changed, had always been a little “uptight” about sex. Previously, he had never been able to totally let go during sex. “I always held back.” He explains. “Crystal made it seem OK to be a sex pig.”

Unlike many men who use the drug, Tim never had problems with an erection while doing crystal. “That made me especially popular at the sex parties.”

It also seemed to give him an “in” with the Alter crowd, something he’d never been able to do before. Something that as a gay man living in one of the gayest neighborhoods in America, he had always craved.

But Tim knew from his seemingly beautiful gay man whom he never showed me anything but attitude before were now always hanging around.” Tim recalls. “I felt like I made it.”

The first time Tim did crystal, he didn’t even know what it was. His lover, Pat, put the powder on a plate, cut it into lines with a credit card, and rolled up a joint. Before Tim knew it, he was snorting.

“I was doing it with my partner. We were just doing it together,” says Tim, now.” He seemed to know what he was doing. I loved him, and I trusted him, and so I thought it was OK.”

But Tim and Pat went from using crystal sporadically to using it on a regular pattern. “As Pat got off work on Friday, he’d go score some tina. Once home, he’d get on the computer and hang out with other men to view for sex parties. The more, the better.

The first time it happened, Tim can’t quite recall who popped it on his head that was warning danger. But it was so scary, I felt like we were so deep, I didn’t know how to turn back, or what was going to happen.” Tim says. “Would Pat leave me? Would I lose all my new, beautiful friends? So then I’d take a bump to silence the warning.

Still, Tim did worry. Though Pat denied it, Tim was suspicious that Pat might be doing it during the night. But he had been a built, stocky man at 6’6” and 260 pounds, had lost 75 pounds. Occasionally, Tim and Pat would run into an old boyfriend, Tim realized they had once regularly socialized with, but whom they rarely saw anymore. Their old friends never again express alarm at Pat’s appearance.

“Hey, everyone he was doing the Atkins diet,” Tim says.

After a year of this, Tim did try to talk to Pat about his concerns. But Pat turned belligerent. When Tim expressed doubts about what crystal might be doing to their lives, Pat would threaten to leave.

Tim wanted desperately to salvage the love he had shared with Pat. At least if they were doing crystal together, he continued to think, they could watch out for each other. But Tim recalls, “Tim got out of bed to find half a dozen strangers lying around naked in the living room. Pat was seated on the couch, with a gay porn video behind his head. Everyone was ‘tweaked out of their minds’,” says Tim.

They were all sitting around watching a porno movie, trying to massage,” Tim recalls. “But none of them really could, because they were all so high on crystal. They couldn’t even talk to each other, and all they had been blank staring on their faces.”

“Then we took our clothes off. I was in shock. I thought maybe, in a weird way, this would save him and our relationship.”

But Pat looked at it differently. “I’d already given it a year, so now I can do anything I want,” Pat told Tim.

For several more months, Tim still tried to hang on, to win back from the crystal he had once loved. Then one weekend, Tim had disappeared for three days, without a word. Later, Tim would find out he had gone on a crystal binge.

“I didn’t know if he was dead or alive,” Tim says.

But Tim knew what he had to do. After two years of struggling with the devastation of crystal, Tim left both Pat and the drug that had consumed him.

It still leaves Tim perplexed as to why they did so occasionally the last time the two talked, Pat told Tim he had finally quit. But Tim found out from other friends that Pat was now “slamping” injecting crystal into his arms.

Tim is still saddened by what happened.

“We had survived so many other things in our relationship: job losses and parents dying and affairs with other men. But this crystal was too big. The crystal did us in.”

Conundrums

BY OVE OVERMYER

Listen up: Respect Your Elders

Last July, 5,000 or so Igots men and women were mixing it up on a warm summer evening in Manhattan’s Washington Square Park. It was prominently occupied by me that I’m not getting any younger. Even the all-wave, bare-chested club kids and h-bops stumbling about with their beer cups foaming over, they seemed oblivious to the wiser eyes of the older folk who dotted the perimeter watching intermly.

I got the impression that these older folk seemed comfortable with the idea that “those days” were behind them. Unfortunately, midlife and aging is not just the aging of the body, but the ever-aging of social and personal adjustments that require just as much intestinal fortitude. Researchers often report that this population has received little or no attention, but they do recognize the fact that more programs need to be initiated to address the needs of this often hidden demographic.

Many factors seem to be of particular concern. For example, the system that has traditionally overlooked the existence of gay people, whereby services are directed to a heterosexual population. This could be considered an issue with John Verano, who is a member of The Rainbow Seniors of Western New York. John is also a man who has lived his share of history. He asked about his experiences with respect to aging, and how it’s affected his life.

“Isolation… it’s what I feel every day. Most of my friends have trouble getting along, their number is reduced, they’re feeling moved to loneliness, and I wouldn’t wish that on anyone.”

“I could talk to him more than two days every year,” John laments. “Sometimes I feel disconnected with the community, because so many times I’m the only one with ‘gay’.

“‘No one thinks of old people as gay people. I’m here to tell you otherwise: We’re out there and we have our friends.’

The health care system is also a big issue with John and other seniors like him. God knows John has had his share of hospital stays, but the system that has traditionally overlooked the existence of gay people, whereby services are directed to a heterosexual population. This could be considered a Community that is sensitive to their needs. Every American deserves this right. For older gay, many have not had this option, just like other seniors.

What is even more troubling is that the gay community has literally abandoned them, they have disappeared in our own. We, the gay communities, have made incredible fiscal strides over the years. However, financially caring for older gay, the community has left them out. They are not living together in an assisted living facility with a life partner has a huge impact on the overall well being of the patient. If they could arrange to live together, will they be welcomed? Will there be indifference?

Too many discussions, and not enough answers. I imagine most people, regardless of sexual orientation, would want to remain or live their years together. The same community that is sensitive to their needs. Every American deserves this right. For older gay, many have not had this option, just like other seniors.

What is even more troubling is that the gay community has literally abandoned them, they have disappeared in our own. We, the gay communities, have made incredible fiscal strides over the years. However, financially caring for older gay, the community has left them out. They are not living together in an assisted living facility with a life partner has a huge impact on the overall well being of the patient. If they could arrange to live together, will they be welcomed? Will there be indifference? Too many discussions, and not enough answers. I imagine most people, regardless of sexual orientation, would want to remain or live their years together. The same community that is sensitive to their needs. Every American deserves this right. For older gay, many have not had this option, just like other seniors.
We have mailed the invitations to our voice of experience of those who came your elder has something to say, shut the wife would need a bun warmer. Were things like flour and yeast? Scratch were things that made the difference in the future of our own world. It is our responsibility to educate the lives of others. Everyone's responsibility to educate the future is inexplicably bound with giving dignity and respect to the lives of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered choruses using the magic of song to enhance diversity. The air was electric. And it was here, amidst the noise and chatter, that Aimee Gasparre, chorus director and calendar survivor, walked into the room. And without saying a single word, had our undivided attention.

For this night, in front of hundreds of strangers, Aimee decided to face the fear of rejection and humiliation and walk onstage, leaving the face of her wig behind.

Chemotherapy treatment may have taken her hair, it had not taken her courage.

"I felt I needed to do this (perform) without my hair," Aimee later said, "I am more than my wig, I needed to face that I am getting through this cancer and be who I am. I felt I was hiding behind my wig."

It was during a routine mamogram, on Dec. 23, 2003 that Aimee discovered she had breast cancer. "I felt terrified," she said.

But with the love of her family (12 year old daughter, Alexandra, and her husband Tony), Aimee faced the challenge of chemotherapy and now, her determination and courage is optimistic for a full recovery.

But for those of us who witnessed Aimee's act of courage, it was a moment not to be forgotten. It was a reminder that each day of our lives we encounter people of courage, and more often than not, fail to recognize what role models they are. Just how inspirational they can be.

Courage, like that displayed by my friend who celebrated her seventy-seventh year in Alcoholics Anonymous. I admire this woman beyond all measure for her decision to stay no, one day at a time, to the alcohol which, she once said, "At one time mattered more than anything in life."

Courage, like that displayed by a former Kodak employee who, at middle age, is learning a new job skill in order to support his family.

Courage, like that displayed by a 52-year-old woman who is raising her two-year-old grandson while her daughter, a single mother, is in Iraq. Doing it all without anger or frustration, at the loss of her own time in life. Doing it with love.

"Oh, we can't sell it, we can't buy it, we can't give it away. It is ours alone to use when the time is right. Thank you, Aimee. Be well." Julie West

Friend2926@gmail.com

Columnists continued on page 12
AIDS Rochester
Mary Magdalene House.
AIDS Rochester, Inc., 1350 University Ave., Rochester NY 14607. Provide support services for people with HIV/AIDS and their families; presents educational programs related to HIV/STDS to community groups; offers free, confidential testing every Monday and Thursday, 5-8 pm (no appointment necessary). Also testing on Outreach Van throughout city. Contact information: business line (585)442-2220 VTTY, www.aidsrochester.org, Rural counties served NY 14607, 585-442-0282) and Bath (1-800-964-2437). Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley provides referrals to physicians and service agencies. Person on duty Mon.-Thurs. 9 a.m.-9 p.m., Fri. 1-9 p.m., message machine other times. (585)244-8640. Center for Health and Behavioral Training of Monroe County, 691 St. Paul St., 4th floor. 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 demographic and statistical data for use in developing health care services. (585)441-3520. Men of Color Health Awareness Project (MOCHA). HIV prevention focus for men who have sex with men (MSM) in the minority community. Support groups, one on one peer education, safer sex workshops, referral services, buddy testing. Sibley Tower Building, 25 Franklin St., Suite 1050, 420-1400. Monroe County Health Department at 855 W. Main St., offers testing and counseling for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. (585)464-5928. 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

Women's RESOURCES

CULTURAL:
AIDS Rochester Women's Community Chorus. 234-4411. (See Ongoing Calendar).

POLITICAL:
National Organization for Women (Greater Rochester NOW). PO Box 91910, (585)591-1310. E-mail: info@rochesternow.org Web page: http://www.rochesternow.org.

SPORTS:
Rochester Renegades Women's Rugby. New players always welcome. Any skill level. We will teach you the game. Hotline (585)234-3006; online at www.renegades-rugby.com

AIDS Rochester Women's Health Outreach. 1350 University Ave. ARI has services for HIV positive women and others in the lesbian community. 442-2220.

Community Health Network. 87 N. Clinton Ave. 234-9000; TTY (585)461-9025. HIV and Primary care medical services for HIV positive women, their partners and family members. OB/GYN, HIV pre-test and post-test counseling. Confidential or free HIV testing.

Alternative for Battled Women. 232-7353; TTY 232-1741. Shatter (women only), counseling. Lesbians, gay men welcome.

Vicin Resource Center of Wayne County, Newark, N.Y. Hotline 800-455-1172; office (315)521-1171; fax (315)521-1169.

Mary Magdalene House. Women's Outreach center for HIV positive women and women at risk. 231 Lyell Ave. Open Mon-Fri. 6:30-9:30 pm 456-5728.

PROFESSIONAL:
AIDS Community Health Center, 87 N. Clinton Ave. 234-9000; TTY (585)461-9025. HIV and STDS Prevention Focus for men who have sex with men (MSM) in the minority community. Support groups, on one on one peer education, safer sex workshops, referral services, buddy testing. Sibley Tower Building, 25 Franklin St., Suite 1050, 420-1400.

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Queer is sweet.

Elder abuse is not.

Elder members of our LGBT community report disproportionate amounts of discrimination and mistreatment while receiving geriatric care. Gay health isn't just for the young. It's up to us. Let's take care of each other.

Find out more about gay health.
Go to: www.aidsrochester.org/gayhealth, or call 585-442-2220.
Action Front Center
(ACTION FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY) Provides HIV prevention education and case management services. Training and technical assistance to service providers. Renewable library open to public. All services free and confidential. Multicultural and bilingual staff. Jeannette Noble, program manager, 33 Chestnut St., second floor, Hours: 8-5 Mon.-Fri., 262-4330; fax 262-4572. Free anonymous HIV testing on walk-in basis. Thursdays 9 am-4 pm, provided through NYSDOH at Action Front Center, 242 Andrews St. Carmen Haus, 262-6530.

Anthony Jordan Health Center
Prevention Counseling and Testing Program.
Part of national initiative to increase testing among communities of color, targeting the GLBT population. Provides prevention case management, educational presentations, and access to other Jordan services. Prevention Counseling & Testing is a walk-in program; no appointments necessary. Office hours Mon.-Fri., 8:30 am-5 pm; extended hours on Mondays until 8 pm. (585)423-2822; fax 423-2893. Website: www.jordanhealthctr.org. For more information call Program Manager Pearlie Breedlove-Luttrell, (585)423-2874.

Evergreen Health Services, Buffalo.
Primary care, HIV and family care, HIV testing and counseling: (716)847-0328.

CDC National STD and AIDS Hotline.
1-800-222-5225; 1-800-222-4237; 1-800-222-4292. English service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Spanish service: 1-800-344-7432, 8 am-2 am, seven days a week. TTY service 1-800-222-7588, 10 am-10 pm, Monday-Friday.

Public Interest Law Office of Rochester (PILOR).
80 St. Paul St., Suite 701. Free legal services to HIV positive persons, families, Spanish bilingual advocates available. Civil cases, no criminal cases. Ask to speak to someone in PILOR, 454-4590.

Health Association HART (HIV/AIDS Resources and Treatment) Program.
250 East Ave. (585)322-8392. Provides housing assistance, acupuncture, massage, reiki, support groups, referral services, Positively Alive (HIV + women’s support network).

Westside Health Services.
Brown Square Health Center, 175 Lyell Ave. (585-6480) Rochester Wellness Center, 480 Genesee St. (450-3040). HIV/AIDS services, support, more.

McGree McCeller Wellness Center at Unity Health’s Connection Clinic.

Catholic Charities AIDS Services. A multicultural and bi-lingual staff providing services to a diversity of people infected and affected with HIV/AIDS home-based case management for all ages: a crisis case manager; a child/adolescent case worker; transitional case management for children and family members going through bereavement, recreational and support groups for children and teens, and camping experiences including Camp SOAR. We coordinate HOPWA Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS) short term emergency assistance with rent/mortgage/utility payments and limited subsidized housing. 1945 E. Ridge Rd., Suite 24, Rochester NY 14622, (585)339-9800.

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Travel tips:
 Off-season in Ogunquit

BY SUSAN JORDAN

Labor Day has passed and it’s the off-season in resorts like Provincetown and Maine’s mini-P’town, Ogunquit, just a short hop over the New Hampshire border. The crowds are smaller and the prices lower now, and it just might be the best time of year to venture to the shore (watch out for hurricanes though).

Ogunquit does draw visitors off-season; the biggest pull is “An Ogunquit Christmas,” when the town and lighthouses are decorated with Christmas lights and all kinds of seasonal activities go on. If you’re already been to P’town, Ogunquit could be an enjoyable new experience. It’s gentrified and prettier, but then most places are these days.

Many of the little gardens along Shore Road and in Perkins Cove are delightful.

Out of four bars in the little town, three are gay, and there are many gay bed & breakfasts and one for lesbians. One popular social stop is the Front Porch Café, with a piano bar upstairs. Many women and men like to have pre-dinner drinks at the downstairs bar.

The gay section of the three-mile beach is past the volleyball court, but if you’re going off-season, the beach will not be as crowded with families as it was in August.

Not all of the cruising in Ogunquit takes place on land. Many boat trips are recommended you, including Hurricane in Perkins Cove (get your reservations early), Gypsy at sea, and some say the old 137-foot Nubble Light is right off shore and is one of the most photographed in Maine.

If you are looking for something more adventurous, there’s a four-hour-plus, no frills whale watching cruise that takes you at high speed 25 miles out to sea, to a ledge where marine creatures hang out. The day I went we saw no whales, but sailed for some time amidst a large group of beautiful Atlantic dolphins, including several babies.

On the way back we paused at Boon Island, one of the most remote and bleak lighthouse sites anywhere. It’s a grim-looking rock over six miles out to sea, and some say the old 137-foot lighthouse is haunted—which is easy to believe. However, the seals basking on the rocks and popping their heads out of the water seemed happy enough.

Charters fishing and rides on lobsterman’s boats are also available, and the Ogunquit area offers hiking, biking, kayaking, golf, and horseback riding to the summit of Mt. Agamenticus. Maine water is notoriously cold, but Ogunquit has an inner beach along a river, and that water gets warmed by the sun. A popular activity is the Point Float, where you float from the river around the point to the ocean, then go back and do it again.

The lobster is king in Ogunquit, and many excellent restaurants offer variations on the theme. Barnacle Billy’s, overlooking Perkins Cove, is the local lobsterama, but the sweetest, tenderest lobster I had was at the gay-owned Five-O restaurant downtown.

Dining options vary from the lesbian-owned Amore Breakfast (go by 8 or 9, wait, at least during the season) to the five-star gay-owned Arrows. Good food can also be had at many other places, including Hurricane in Perkins Cove (get your reservations early), Gypsy Sweethearts downtown (sit by the windows and watch the world go by), and TR.O.V.E.N.C.E., with excellent French food, at Perkins Cove.

Where to stay: for women, it’s Heritage of Ogunquit, a charming Victorian B&B run by Rica Stephenson. The five suites are named after Martha Navařilova, Gertrude Stein, Lily Tomlin, K.d. lang, and Jodie Foster. There’s a hot tub, videos to watch and a common kitchen area.

Men can choose from many places, such as Distant Sands, Admiral’s Inn, Moon Over Maine, the Inn at Two Village Square, and at least nine others; check Damron’s or the GayLover Pages for the latest listings. Some web addresses: www.theadmiralsinn.com/index.html; www.distant sands.com; www.theinnsrr.com; www.moonovermaine.com.

Note: Ogunquit is a tiny town with a big summer traffic problem. Since it’s so small, it’s easy to park where you’re staying and walk where you want to go, but for the elderly, and those with walking problems, or massive amounts of beach paraphernalia, parking fees are high. (There is a trolley system, however.)

The parking situation is another good reason to visit off-season.

And the best thing is, Ogunquit is the threshold to the rest of magical Maine, all the way to the beautiful Penobscot Bay area and Acadia National Park.
Travel tips: 

From Fargo to Bismarck

BER MELE EXIT

The movie "Fargo" had rave reviews, but actually depicted little of the town of Fargo, North Dakota. Judging from my chats with native Dakotans, "Fargo" is unclear to the outside world and you may not necessarily want to enjoy the attractions during that time of year.

My recent trek was with a group of writers led by North Dakota tourism expert and former farm hand (I'm told that her parents taught her the fine arts of cattle raising and spring cleaning), Rachel Retterath. I was checked into the Hotel Donalson at 101 Broadway (888-478-4700).

I expected a "Little House On the Prairie" accommodation and was more than surprised. Each of the suites is decorated with antiques and local art and offers such amenities as a flat screen television and bathroom with heated tiles. The hotel has a restaurant and bar (I didn't know that Minnesota produces a vodka called "Shakers") on the first level, a wine cellar and exercise room in the basement and a rooftop and hot tub.

Fargo attractions. On to downtown Fargo where "Fargo" was playing at the Fargo Theatre. Brew you don't hear everyone saying, "yah." Had a tour of the theatre where I like to play with an inner-city kid they have (or had) at Radio City Music Hall. Plains Art Museum, 704 1st Ave. (701-232-5821), is set in a renovated turn-of-the- century building and offers exhibits of national and regional works of art as well as a studio where artists can derive privacy.

World War II buffs will definitely appreciate a tour of the Fargo Air Museum, 1649 10th Ave. (701-293-8043). The aircraft is operating, but not in the museum. Check out the North Dakota area memorabilia and purchase a dog tag ($7 bucks including shipping).

Off to Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center, 202 1st Ave. (218-299-5111), located in the abutting town of Moorhead, Minnesota. It is here that you learn about the Viking ship Hjemkomst, and view a documentary. It is the reconstruction of the 76-foot hand-built ship and its 6000-mile cruise across the Atlantic in 1935.

It may not be a Viking ship, but a pontoon boat will suffice. Just down the hill from the HHIC. Cool and refreshing as we breeze along the Red River. The boat departs from 804 Kaby (701-281-5817, RUBY). It's a 45-minute tour with tales of history, geography and wildlife.

 똼onaCULE USA, located in West Fargo (701-282-2282) sponsors a Red River Valley historic site featuring old (1800s and early 1900s) main street businesses, local industries, homes, as well as museums of cars, air- planes and dolls. There's a tour in the main building that will take you on a history tour. A September Harvest event is scheduled.

Historic facts. William G. Fargo, director of the express company, was a native New Yorker, teamed up with his partner Henry Wells when they worked in the banking and express shipping industry. You guessed it. Wells Fargo Stage Line and later The American Express. The Native Americans called their nation an "alliance of friends," Da- cazt. It included the Dakotas and the land where the Wells Fargo general member tribes roamed (with the buf- falo) and hunted. Spooling of buffalo, where dinner.

Ferry of Fargo. The Fargo-Fort Wallace Ferry will suffice. Just down the North Dakota area memorabilia and didn't know that Minnesota produces a dog tag ($7 bucks including shipping).

It's a 45-minute tour with tales of history, geography and wildlife.

>Contact us at spa-dakota.com.

Dinner at Stanton at Swist Voiles, 211 Harmon Ave. (701-238-3500), started with homemade fleischkeuch­ la, seasoned chopped meat in a fried pocket map of the Toronto subway system. There is only the yellow line and the green line, so it’s tough to figure out their subway, and the above ground light rail. Taking the taxi from the King Street Subway station (it's on the yellow line) from here you can easily walk to the village or take the bus.

Go to http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/tcfd/subway-rt-nf for a great map of the system. The yellow line is the closest to it. I had a full body massage under a Vichy Shower. Goodness knows how many treatments were applied already, but at the end I felt absolutely fabulous.

Jill Becker, the owner of the Salon, added a state-of-the-art spa facility to her business and that's just the beginning. Her husband does Plastic Reconstruction and there is plans to open the clinic so you know where to check out. Check them out at spa-dakota.com.

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Abortion, breast cancer, and lies

Have you ever been told a lie? Had someone twist the facts to change your opinion of you? Was it about an issue as important as your health?

In the past you can't tell where this is going, let me give you the answer to all of these questions — Yes. Anti-Choice extremists have been spreading rumors of a link between abortion and breast cancer - a rumor that is completely and totally untrue. Here are the real facts.

Many studies have been done on the possible link between abortion and breast cancer. This is because of the changes in hormones that take place in a woman's body when she becomes pregnant and some people's perceptions of abortion's effect on these hormone levels. Breast tissue undergoes changes during pregnancy to prepare the woman for breastfeeding. There are people who believe abortion interferes with these hormone changes, and thus increases a woman's risk of developing breast cancer. This belief is completely unfounded, and held up by research that is questionable at best. Here's why.

The issue with many studies supporting the link is one of "recall bias." These studies would ask women (those who had and did not have breast cancer) if they had ever had an abortion. This is where the problem came up. Aborting women were found not to have had abortions, whereas many women did not admit to having an abortion, though in truth, the truth was otherwise. This unwillingness to admit to an abortion, however, was found among women who had breast cancer, because they were trying to discover any cause or risk factor that would prevent the condition. This made them more likely to admit to the procedure, as well as skewing the statistics to favor the link between abortion and breast cancer.

Recall bias in these studies, known as Retrospective "case-control" studies, made the research incomplete and completely inaccurate, rendering these studies moot. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Committee on Gynecologic Practice has stated that "early studies of the relationship between prior induced abortion and breast cancer risk have been inconsistent and are difficult to interpret because of methodologic considerations. More rigorous recent studies have suggested a causal relation between induced abortion and a subsequent increase in breast cancer risk."

A better and more accurate kind of study is known as Prospective study, which is much less prone to bias. This kind of study tracks women's complete medical histories in a number of different ways, including medical records before 1973, through their child-bearing years to be aware of any and all abortions, or even referring to their children's birth certificates, which list all of the mother's previous pregnancies and how they ended (done in Denmark in the 1990s) to study the risk of developing breast cancer. These studies use much more complete and accurate information, are much less prone to bias, and show absolutely no link between abortion and breast cancer.

I know what you're thinking. You're wondering how this issue relates to the lesbian population, which is, understandably, at a quite small risk of becoming pregnant. This issue extends beyond healthcare and into the public's right to know the truth. Anti-Choice extremists from all walks of life (that's right, including the government) are spreading these rumors to scare women into giving up their reproductive freedom, that is, not planning a pregnancy, but the issue is still yours to champion.

Women deserve to know the truth about their bodies, their health, and their lives. Help spread the word that women will not be bullied into giving up their choices, and will not accept skewed statistics as the truth. We will not be fooled, and we will not be silenced. Your body is your own, and not someone else's lies and propaganda can change that.

Senior Moment

BY TODD PLANK

Senior Moment (by aspring senior Todd Plank)

I'm imagining that the majority of the readers of this column, regardless of their age, have claimed to have had a senior moment. Pronounced SEE nun yur mon.munt and defined as "A momentary lapse in memory, particularly one experienced by a senior citizen." Senior Moment was named Word of the Year by Webster's New World College Dictionary a couple of years ago.

With such a term having become a part of our national vocabulary, it would be easy to define some common reasons for memory loss and aging go hand in hand. As evidence of this belief, read this excerpt from the article "Keeping Boomers With It: How to Sustain Memory in the Senior Generation" (Dec. 24, 2002) by Allison apRoberts:

"There is a natural decline in short-term memory as we age, which can be annoying. Among the producers that step in when memory falters is "Senior Moment." Pronounced SEE nun yur mon.munt and defined as: "A momentary lapse in memory, particularly one experienced by a senior citizen." Senior Moment was named Word of the Year by Webster's New World College Dictionary a couple of years ago."
My mother, who filled a 36B cup, assured me that she didn’t “develop” until after she gave birth to me and my sister. She even showed me the “falseies” she used to wear. I ended up not having children, but found when I gained a few pounds around the time I turned 40 I began sporting a modest cleavage that was perfect for my small frame. I also liked the sensation of my breasts jiggling when I walked.

What I didn’t like about my breasts was that they produced tumors faster than they could be biopsied. All had been benign until February 2002, when at age 47 I was diagnosed with cancer in my right breast. Doctors recommended a skin-sparing double mastectomy, and there was no question in my mind that I would have immediate reconstruction. The memory of my mother’s chest after her mastectomy in 1972 was a big reason. Where the fullness and smoothness of her breast once was, there was flabbiness, broken by a thick angry scar that ran down her chest. The cancer metastasized, and four years later, she was dead.

When the poet-writer Audre Lorde was diagnosed in 1978 with cancer in her right breast, she had a single mastectomy and opted not to wear a prosthesis. In her classic Cancer Journals, she drew a connection between her right breast, she had a single cancer-free breast! A flatter stomach! This option sounded pretty good to me.

In the weeks before the mastectomies and the reconstruction, I dealt with the anxiety in the way I do — through humor. The idea of part of my belly becoming my breasts naturally lent itself to puns. Some of the better ones my friend Stan and I came up with went like this:

When I laugh very hard, should I call it a bosom laugh?

If I lose money in the stock market, will it rip it up?

When I feel passionate about something, should I say I have a fire in my breasts?

Will you now be my abdominal buddy?

Little did I know how painful and debilitating the surgery would be. Fast forward to a year and a half later. The new breasts turned out quite smaller and have a less pleasing shape than the ones they replaced. It took cancer for me to discover what a size queen I really was. The biggest loss, however, is that my manufactured breasts don’t harden when I’m cold or have an orgasm — a constant reminder that they aren’t just for show.

But I do take comfort in knowing that these breasts, however fake, sit on my chest and I know that I need that reassurance. So, I’m not like an Amazon warrior of Dalmatian and I’m not going to bare my chest in public, though I respect those women who choose not to have reconstruction.

I’m keeping my clothes on and co-chairing a consortium of New York City hospitals, cancer agencies and gift and donation organizations to support and empower gift port groups for lbt women with cancer. In my own way and on my own terms, I am a fighter, too.

Health Crisis

by Don Bruner

Exercise your right to vote

It is my hope and prayer that communities of color and other marginalized communities, will exercise their right to vote this coming November.

We are presented with an opportunity to change the political landscape in Washington.

Starting with the blatant theft and corruption in Florida in 2000, there has been overwhelming evidence the past four years that indicate we are not important to the Bush Administration.

In my opinion, the Democratic Party rally cry ought to have been, “Remember Florida,” leading up the presidential race. The Democratic Party is faced with the challenge of not being passive, and responding to many of us citizens who have been overlooked in the past four years. Twelve years ago, during his campaign for re-election, Daddy Bush asked us the question, were we better off four years later? We responded emphatically, “no.” The past is not meant to dwell on; however, you need to know where you’ve been in order to move forward.

Are we better off under the current Bush Administration? Let’s examine the facts. War was declared on a country that was not just a war, and currently there is not an end in sight, and the loss of lives of American soldiers during the post-war occupation are greater than the initial invasion. We as a country have lost respect and support of the United Nations, national and strategic allies around the globe. As of today, evidence of weapons of mass destruction has been found in Iraq, and the latest reports indicate the capabilities for such weapons were destroyed shortly after the first Gulf war.

The economy has been on a continued downward spiral, interference with the constitutional rights of same sex couples has also continued, resulting in denial of basic health care coverage.

The Bush Administration has given lip service to “No Child Left Behind”; when the parents of minority children are left behind, does it not take a rocket scientist to figure the children are automatically left behind too. Federal funding to many school districts around the country has decreased as well.

Several months ago, Congressman Waxman and others represented the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for distortions on their report on health disparities in minority communities. Many influential scientists, including Nobel laureates, issued a statement on what they described as misuse of science by the administration.

President Bush’s budget is aimed at dramatic cuts in training of health professionals and the elimination of millions of dollars that recruit blacks and Hispanics for careers as doctors, nurses and pharmacists.

In addition, President Bush has given limited funding to Stem Cell research, critical to unlocking the mysteries of many diseases.

A while back, President Bush was asked if he ever made a mistake. His initial response was no response at all. This possibly explains his arrogance and ignorance, and there can be no room for growth.

Last, I would underscore, particularly to African Americans, we have an obligation to the legacies of many of our elders. Their lives were here for us to have the right to vote. Let’s honor their memories by changing the current political climate in Washington this coming November.

Quer & Healthy

by Erik Lieber

Getting to Know You Vol. 6: “Cut” to the Chase

So far in this series on male sexual anatomy, we’ve talked about parts of the body that all men have. This

Columnists continued on next page
Columnists continued from previous page

month, however, we're going to stay slightly from that path — by discussing a body part we all USED to have, but that many of us no longer possess: the foreskin.

The foreskin is a "hot issue" in the contemporary world of number of levels... first, there is some debate both in the medical community and in the community about the benefits and dangers of circumcision. Second, there are many men who have found the foreskin to be a very erotic part of the male anatomy. So discussion of the foreskin seems relevant for all of us -- whether we have one or not!

What is the foreskin? The foreskin is a thin sheath or tubule of skin that extends over the head of the penis. This skin is very rich in nerve endings and is extremely sensitive. In many men with an intact foreskin, it is loose enough to be manipulated, rolled, stretched, and/or massaged. The presence or absence of a foreskin does have some affect on both health and sexual pleasure.

Most men, at least in the U.S., do not have a foreskin because at birth or even as children they underwent a medical procedure called circumcision that removes the foreskin. An estimated two thirds of U.S. men are circumcised.

Pros of circumcision include a part of culture or religion (for example, the Jewish community traditionally circumcises its infant boys). For many others, however, circumcision is a fact of life because it has become a cultural norm.

Many doctors once believed that circumcision was necessary for both the physical and mental health of young men. In fact at one point in our history it was the supposed cure for masturbation! This was inspired by a medical phenomenon whereby many physicians over the years to improve cleanliness, decrease STD's, and avoid cancer.

Critics of circumcision, however, have argued that these concerns are not valid and, furthermore, that circumcision is a cruel and unnecessary procedure. Whatever your thoughts on circumcision and the foreskin, however, there are some interesting health tips to know about:

1. Circumcision: One of the primary concerns is that it is possible for dirt, bacteria, soap, and other foreign particles to get trapped under the foreskin. This can lead to a range of concerns ranging from a build-up of smegma, a creamy substance that can develop under the foreskin, to balanitis, an infection that can cause inflammation in the head of the penis. Keeping the penis and foreskin clean is critical for both hygiene and health reasons.

2. Sensitivity: An intact foreskin often provides enhanced sexual sensations, but it also sensitizes the skin in other ways. Namely, it is easily irritated by harsh soaps or aggressive washing, scratching, or rubbing. Taking care with the foreskin and choosing the appropriate soaps and/or warm water can prevent problems.

3. Tightness: For some men the foreskin is very tight around the penis head in some cases, uncomfortably so. A condition known as phimosis results when the foreskin is so tight it cannot be easily retracted over the penis head... which can be both inconvenient and uncomfortable. For these men, talking to a physician about ways to expand or stretch the foreskin can often help -- and a small percentage of men may opt for circumcision in adolescence or adulthood.

4. HIV... in some cases reporting them to TWICE the risk! This could be because of the types of cells that line the foreskin, the fact that the skin on the head of uncircumcised men is more sensitive, or that the foreskin can trap virus or bacteria inside.

All this leads to the conclusion that for men with a foreskin, sexual safety practices are of utmost importance. Knowing your body is a good thing. Whether you have a foreskin or not... whether you desire one on your partner or not, knowing about the health of the penis and foreskin is one way to... be gay, be proud, and be healthy!

Derek Libby is the Gay Health Coordinator at AIDS Rochester, Inc. and can be reached at (585) 442-2200 x2042 or by email at elibey@aidsrochester.org. An archive of his previous articles, as well as other gay health information, can be found at AIDS Rochester's website dedicated to queer health at www.stedorchester.org/health.

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AIDS Community Health Center* www.gayally.org SEPTEMBER 2004

Hello my Darlings, Out to read the following report on the Expansion of Bush's National Support Base To the dictum of never talking about religion or politics, but seeing that many of us no longer possess: the many men have found the foreskin to be an extremely sensitive. In many men with a foreskin, sexual safety practices are of utmost importance. Knowing your body is a good thing. Whether you have a foreskin or not... whether you desire one on your partner or not, knowing about the health of the penis and foreskin is one way to... be gay, be proud, and be healthy!

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Miss Tulip calls all creatures great and small to action.

For the millions of animal lovers who were about to call his golden retriever a Siamese (while patting him on the head... the dog, not Larry), Miss Tulip generally ascribes to the dictum of never talking about religion or politics, but seeing that many of us no longer possess: the many men have found the foreskin to be an extremely sensitive. In many men with a foreskin, sexual safety practices are of utmost importance. Knowing your body is a good thing. Whether you have a foreskin or not... whether you desire one on your partner or not, knowing about the health of the penis and foreskin is one way to... be gay, be proud, and be healthy!

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Miss Tulip hereby calls all creatures great and small to action. As a means of advertising the ACP(UL) position on key issues, Miss Tulip will be offering T-shirts that say: "Lord, help my President to be the person his dog thinks he is." (This was inspired by a bumper sticker Miss "I" saw that said: "Lord, help me to be the person my dog thinks I am.")

Miss Tulip will also be distributing posters of herself saluting a bush with her rear right leg... she doesn't think any captions are necessary, do you? See at you the election booth, Miss Tulip

PS: The Time report was written by my good friend Bruce McCall.

Next MONTH: A FAN LETTER FROM COLORADO!
"Civil Disobedients!!
YOUr HONoR...
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YOUth website is coming soon

The GAGV Youth Group website should be up and running this month, accessible at www.gayalliance.org. Above: the website logo was designed by Janet Santiago, The Youth Page for the Empty Closet will debut in the fall. This will feature poetry, essays, artwork and more by members of the Youth Group.

Youth update:
Back to school dance is coming up!

BY TOBY GREENFIELD

Greeting from Youth Group Land...
We had a great month of August and a wonderful summer. As we welcome new youth to our groups every Sunday, this month we also say a fond farewell to many of our kids who are flying the coop and heading off to college.

You will all be greatly missed, though we DO expect periodic drop-ins to group over Thanksgiving, Christmas, and any other weekends you come back home. I mean, you'll have to come home to do laundry, right?

With the arrival of September of course comes BACK TO SCHOOL! And if you're a member of the GAGV Youth Group, September also means Back to School DANCE! Oh, how the youth love their dances! And if you're part of a group, you'll be happy to host our dance from 5-9 p.m. (date to be determined).

Call me at 244-8640 x 130. Ages 13-23 are welcome and admission is $5. All proceeds benefit our Youth Program.

This month also finds our new Youth Webpage finally up and running! There's still work to be done on it, but please check it out at http://youth.gayalliance.org. We're always looking for webmasters out there who are willing to volunteer their time to help us with the website. Please contact Toby by 244-8640 if you're interested.

Speaking of volunteers, if you have a special talent (oh... say photography, yoga, poetry, fashion, knitting, etc.) and would be interested in sharing your talent with some eager LGBT youth, please give me a call. (Hey, the kids love new blood! Don't be shy out there.)

And finally, we're putting the final touches on our new Youth Page for the Empty Closet, which will debut in the October issue! Any youth out there who are interested in contributing articles, poems, interviews, essays, puzzles, artwork, photos or comics, please come to one of our Youth Groups or give me a call at 244-8640.

Anti-Violence news:
shelter for gay men; volunteer trainings set for Sept. 13, 14

BY ALEX COBUS, GAGV ANTI-VIOLENCE COORDINATOR

The GAGV Anti-Violence Program receives more calls as each day passes. We receive calls from those in need of help, as well as those looking to offer help. I am pleased to offer several bits of information to both groups, in no particular order:

For gbt men in need of shelter from an abusive relationship, Changes & Changes, Inc. provides confidential assistance to female and male victims of domestic violence in Livingston County, New York, including emergency safety services such as shelter and a 24-hour hotline. Other services include support and assistance in decision-making, advocacy and referrals (legal, medical, housing, counseling, and social services) and individual counseling. Residents living outside of Livingston County can access services by calling Changes & Changes 24-hour hotline at 658-2660, or 888-252-9360.

For light victims and survivors of domestic violence, the GAGV-AP will begin offering support groups in September. The purpose of the Domestic Violence Survivors Support Group is to provide a needed refuge for people who are currently in an abusive relationship, or have experienced domestic violence in a past relationship. The first meeting will be in September. You must call at 244-8640, or email me at alexandrac@gagv.org to register for this support group, or to get more information.

There will be an Art Exhibit and fundraiser for GAGV’s Anti-Violence Program, featuring local artist Thomas Somerville, which opens on Sunday, Oct. 5, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m., at The Forum, 670 University Ave. There will be two selections of art featured: one is a series on queer shaving and the other is a series of male nudes. All pieces exhibited will be for sale with a percentage of the sale going to the Anti-Violence Program. The Queer shaving series will include I Blew My Nose on You, Faggot, Somerville’s self portrait from last year's ImageART festival. Also included are Anti-Violence continued on next page

Thinking about coming out?
Workshops offer support

BY TODD PLANK

If you have been deliberating about whether or not to attend the GAGV’s Fall Coming Out Workshop, don’t delay! Having conducted two of the introductory workshops since I joined the GAGV staff last October, as well as a complementary part two (at the request of the previous workshop participants), I can testify to the power of these workshop-support groups to change lives.

Here are a couple of comments I received as feedback on the quality and effectiveness of past workshops: “I can’t believe how far I’ve come! By providing a safe space for me, and letting me go at my own pace, I can clearly see the road ahead of me. There is more work to do, but I know it is doable and I am not afraid anymore.” Another participant wrote: “I feel much more confident about being gay. It feels good to know other people in the area. I also feel more prepared to handle close friends’ and relatives’ reactions.”

To provide a little more background about the nature of the workshop, I am reprinting excerpts from the article that appeared in the October 2003 Empty Closet.

Obviously a six-week course (I expanded it to seven weeks for Fall 2004) cannot deal with all of an individual's coming out issues. What this course hopes to accomplish is to assist folks in establishing a comfort level with where they are, and identify and develop resources to bolster and guide them through their coming out process.

In developing this workshop for the GAGV, my aim was to take a holistic approach...
The Wordsmith Profile

A reader's guide to contemporary literature

Patricia Nell Warren (part 2)

BY OVE OVERTHY

Editor's Note: An editorial correction with regard to the book selection file of Patricia Nell Warren (part 1) should read: According to the Publishing Trade Press, readers picked Sir Lancelot as the FILE OF AMERICAN MELODRAMA with a tough, shiny exterior with a file of shoes. With eight successful novels circulating in the marketplace, Warren tries to set the record straight about the slice of life she captured in her latest book, "The Empty Closet," which was released in 1994. It is an unsentimental, no-nonsense look at the kaleidoscopic gay experience. Warren's work in the gay community is as complex as the gay community itself. Her assertion is that what's really going on behind prison walls is as compelling as the CDC's research that I use in writing. By using the term homophobia, I am not referring to eating granola, taking herbal remedies, practicing yoga or playing the sitar. The book is as powerful as it is illuminating. The book is as powerful as it is illuminating.

"I really don't have a job," Warren says. She writes with great compassion about how older Americans are viewed, and how marginalized they've become. She states, "Our community is now a half-century old, if you count back to the World War II era. By now we might have achieved some collective maturity... but often I wonder just how mature we are and why we are so different from the gay community's norms and expectations. The gay community is as a group, as an entity, as a way of life. At age 38, her experiences have taught her about separation (she was taught about separation at an early age). For example, "Elephant Graveyard" (www.gaywired.com/wildcat/wildcatedit.htm), she writes with great compassion about how older Americans are viewed, and how marginalized they've become. She states, "Our community is now a half-century old and if we compare our research with regard to the work of簽署人, we can all learn from the experiences and insights of others. While I know that a lot of valuable information was communicated during my community's workshop, I am not referring to eating granola, taking herbal remedies, practicing yoga or playing the sitar. The book is as powerful as it is illuminating.

When I talk about taking a holistic approach to the coming out process, I am focusing on the importance of working toward creating and maintaining balance in the significant areas of our lives. We cannot separate being gay from the other important aspects of our lives (when we try to do this it is called compartmentalization, and it doesn't work very well). Our relationships with family, friends, co-workers, our minister, doctor and even strangers are all impacted by our being gay or lesbian, whether we make the choice to come out or not. It's our spiritual, mental, health, employment (and by extension income), and ability to make friends, have fun and find romance are each and all affected by our comfort level with our sexual orientation and gender identity.

We lead whole lives. This fact does not change when we suspect or discover that we are queer. It is also true that coming out takes a lot of energy, both mental and physical, and can be very draining on our personal resources.

Part of the challenge of dealing with being gay or lesbian is not to let it consume so much of our time and energy that we neglect other important areas of our lives that deserve our time and attention. Failure to address these can lead to additional sources of stress and upset, which doesn't help when you're already feeling rather overwhelmed.

Regardless of where we are in our coming out process (the CASS model identifies six distinct stages, which are discussed in the workshop), we can all learn from the experiences and insights of others. While I know that a lot of valuable information was communicated during my community's workshop, I am not referring to eating granola, taking herbal remedies, practicing yoga or playing the sitar. The book is as powerful as it is illuminating.

Coming Out from previous page

The anti-violence project is a series of portraits of teenagers Brandon, who was murdered in a hate crime, and Virginia, who was sexually assaulted and murdered, which is as a landscape of the area where Matthew Shepard was murdered.

There are still resources available for September's GAGV-ADV Advocate Training! We are seeking caring and committed volunteers to staff our phones both during and after business hours.

This is an incredible and unique opportunity for you to make a difference in your community, and gain some valuable skills in the process. No previous experience or training is required, although we certainly welcome those who do have some related background. The GAGV-ADV will provide an extensive training, and snacks!

Call the GAGV-ADV Coordinator, Alexandra Cobus, at 585-244-8640, for more information, or to sign up for the training. For more information, or to sign up for the training, call 585-244-8640.

Look for more information in next month's Empty Closet.
Family matters

BY TODD PLANK

Starting this month I will be writing a column addressing the interests, needs and concerns of LGBT families. In our modern age, families have taken increasingly diverse forms, with same-sex, opposite sex, single, and racially diverse mixes of parents challenging assumptions about the ideal of the "traditional" family. While most of us would agree that the Cleavers (from the TV series "Pride and Prejudice") are a perfect family, the myth still persists.

It seems that this was the idealized version of family that President Bush spoke about last October in his proclamation announcing Marriage Protection Week (Oct. 12-18) immediately following National Coming Out Day, Oct. 11 -- interesting coincidences! Bush stated, "By supporting responsible child-rearing and strong families, the Administration is seeking to ensure that every child can grow up in a safe and loving home." He went on to say: "And we must continue our work to create a compassionate, welcoming society, where all people are treated with dignity and respect."

From these words of our Commander in Chief and feel warm and fuzzy, until you remember that they exclusively encompass families headed by married, heterosexual parents. Everything Bush said was couched in the rhetoric of preserving and upholding the "sanctity of marriage." How could we have a large percentage of families in our nation, be they gay or straight. Despite the current lack of recognition and support of "real" families opposed to the fantasy of the "traditional family," LGBT parents, single and coupled, (and in a few places we can now say legally married couples -- hurrah!) are demonstrating that strong, healthy families come in varied combinations of shapes, sizes, genders, and colors. It is love, not laws, that makes a family and love that ultimately gives legitimacy to any human relationship.

The families in the Rochester lesbian community reflect the trends in other parts of the country. Our Rochester Pride & Joy Family Task group, created last fall, was comprised of families with two moms, two dads, single gay and lesbian parents, and individuals and couples as yet childless, but eagerly exploring parent options.

A related group, Rochester's COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere) chapter, was infused with new energy around the same time as P&J. COLAGE was designed as a social group for the kids (gay, straight or otherwise) of queer parents. Recognizing that the summer months are a busy time for all families, there were no formal family outings scheduled, except, of course, of the Gay Alliance's Pride Picnic, with our exciting addition this year of family-friendly activities, including a petting zoo, pony rides, a moon walk, dunking booth, games, drumming circle, a doggie drag contest, and a special Pride & Joy Families booth with free pop, candy, and trinkets for the kids.

The GAGV is committed to creating greater visibility for the many LGBT families in our community, as well as seeking to provide programming and resources to meet the needs of these "alternative" families of choice. My vision for this column, Family Matters, is to educate our community on the opportunities

Lake Ontario Bear Rendezvous
October 1-3, 2004
Rochester, New York

Schedule (Exact times subject to change)

Friday, October 1:
9:00 PM: Registration opens at Tara
10:00 PM: Bear Piano Bar at Tara with our own Peter N.
2:00 AM: After Hours Party

Saturday, October 2:
11:00 AM: Brunch (included) at Tay House Lodge
1 - 5 PM: Choice of:
- Party at Rochester Spa and Body Club (show badge for discounts)
- Garden at Tay House Lodge
- Shopping or Museum Excursions
6:30 PM: Dinner (included) at Tay House Lodge
8:00 PM: Mr. Empire Bear 2004 contest at Tay House Lodge
10:00 PM: Bearnight at the Bachelor Forum
2:00 AM: After Hours Party

Sunday, October 3:
Noon: Farewell Brunch at Michelina's in Brighton ($12)

Cost (U.S. $):
Through 8/30 $25 members, $40 non-members.
After 8/30: $40 members, $55 non-members.

For reservations, visit our web site at www.empirebears.org/lobr2004 or call the Bearlink at (585) 234-3381.
October Dinners: Oct. 11, Basil, Rte. 15A (across from MCC), 7 p.m.; Oct. 25, Jay’s Diner, Rt. 15 (West Henrietta Rd.) 7 p.m.

September’s Discussion Night will not be held due to vacation plans and will instead replace our Social Event on Sept. 22. The topic will be What I Did On My Summer Vacation (bring a story or pictures from this year’s or story of prior ones). Sept. 22’s meeting will be held at the GAVG, 179 Atlantic Ave. (corner of Elton/Atlantic).

For further info on our new Dinner Nights Out, and/or on our discussion/social event meetings, please contact Kerry at (585) 865-4619; email DressyFemme@Aol.com or write P.O. Box 18734, Rochester, NY 14618.

ROMANS
Rochester Male Naturists (ROMANS) is a social organization of gay naturists who enjoy camaraderie in the nude.

Our affiliations include Gay Naturists International (GNI) and International Men Enjoying Naturism (IMEN).

If you have thought about social nudity but were apprehensive about being nude the first time, there are several clothed events, such as eating out as a group at restaurants and going to concerts and movies, where you can meet other members of our group in a clothed environment. Membership is open to men over 21 years of age who have an interest in social nudism. Most members come from the greater Rochester area, though Buffalo, Syracuse, Utica and the southern tier are also represented.

Visit the ROMANS web site where an application for membership and information about the club are available. http://www.geocities.com/wnyromans/ or E-mail: wnyromans@yahoo.com, or write ROMANS, P.O. Box 92293, Rochester, NY 14692.

Dignity
Dignity Integrity Rochester is joining Dignity Buffalo for a joint Labor Day (Monday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.) picnic in Indiana. Information is available on all of our 5 p.m. Sunday services at St. Luke – St. Simon Cyrene Church, 12 South Fitzhugh St., at the corner of Broad St.

Our monthly D/F potluck will be Sunday, Sept. 19, following service. September’s theme is school cafeteria food. (Surely you can make something tastier.)

Finally, Dignity Integrity is celebrating our 25th anniversary on Sunday, Sept. 26 with a liturgy. All are welcome at each of the aforementioned events.

Womyn’s Fishing Group
The September 2004 outings of Fishing In The Fingerlakes, a social group for womyn who love freshwater fishing, will be held on Sunday, Sept. 19 (out to Seneca Falls, Locks 2 & 3, westmost entrance) and on Sunday, Sept. 26 (out to Keuka Lake in Hammondsport) -- this will be a day trip so please meet outside the GAVG at 9:30 a.m. instead of 10 a.m.

For Sept. 19: Meet us outside the GAVG, 179 Atlantic Ave., corner Elton/Atlantic Ave., between 10-10:15 a.m. and we’ll head out for the day! For further info, contact Kerry/Cindy at 288-7208, or email FishingFolksNY@aol.com.

Gay Fathers
Wow! Where has the summer gone? After a three month break, the Rochester Gay Fathers Group will be starting back up with their twice monthly (first and third Tuesday) support meetings.

We will be meeting for the first time, for the 2004-2005 year, on Tuesday, Sept. 21. We meet from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at the GAVG Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. We hope to see some of the past members return, as well as some new ones. All dads are welcome to attend.

We will also be a co-sponsor of a movie being shown during the Image Out Film Festival in October. More information will follow in the next issue of the Empty Closet.

Group information:
The group consists of men and in some cases, their same sex partners. We are all at different points in our lives: some are married; some are going through the separation/divorce process and are in various stages of coming out. This is a support group (not therapy) intended to discuss the challenges facing gay fathers. Some topics for discussions include dealing with wives, ex-wives, or children; coming out to children, parents, spouses, co-workers; building new relationships or maintaining existing relationships; issues with children and your partner.

The meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of the month (except June, July and August and the first three Monday nights of each month).

“arly and often...”

Dignity-Integrity
(Roman Catholic-Episcopal)
An active faith community since 1975

Liturgy every Sunday at 5:00 p.m.
Liturgy of the Word: first, third, and fifth Sundays of the month
Eucharistic Mass: second and fourth Sundays of the month
Social Hour following Liturgy

Church of St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene
17 South Fitzhugh Street (Corner of Broad and S. Fitzhugh)
(the church with the pink steeple)

D-I Info-Line: (585) 234-5092
(Recorded information and voice mail)
E-mail: info@di-rochester.org
Web Site: http://www.di-rochester.org/
Pastoral care is available.

All are welcome regardless of worship tradition, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Join us as we claim our rightful place in the Church!

Open Arms
Metropolitan Community Church
Empowering People • Embracing the Journey • Touching the World

Sunday Morning Worship ....... 11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship ....... 7:00 P.M.

Jim Mulcahy, Interim Pastoral Leader
175 Norris Drive
Rochester, New York 14610
E-mail: mailto:omccc@frontiernet.net
585-271-8478

Meet People

Check out the sections and the Ongoing Calendar to find the group that’s right for you! If you are already in a group send a monthly news update to The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St., Suite 800, Rochester, NY 14605 by the 15th of every month.
Welcome back from summer break! Let’s review what we learned last semester.

Q: What does GLSEN stand for?

A: Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.

Q: What is GLSEN’s vision?

A: GLSEN envisions a future in which every child learns to respect and accept all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

Q: How does GLSEN plan to make that happen?

A: GLSEN has three main focus areas:
1. Make anti-lgbt bullying, harassment and name-calling unacceptable in America’s schools.
2. Engage and empower educators as partners in creating schools where every student can fully participate in school life regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.
3. Ensure that the national education agenda to create effective schools for families.

Q: What’s GLSEN’s web address?

A: www.glsen.org

Q: Is there a GLSEN chapter in my area?

A: Yes! GLSEN Rochester has been around since 1998.

Q: How does GLSEN Rochester help make Rochester-area schools safer for LGBT students?

A: GLSEN Rochester offers several training programs for schools. The programs can be tailored for the audience, time available, group size and to address specific issues.

Q: If someone wants information about the local GLSEN organization or the training available, how do they get it?

A: There are several correct answers here:
1. Read the monthly update from GLSEN Rochester in the Empty Closet.
2. Come to one of the quarterly meetings.
3. Get on the mailing list by sending an email to GLSENrochester@ao.com or calling 585-244-5509.

Q: How often do GLSEN Rochester meetings happen?

A: GLSEN Rochester meets on the fourth or fifth Tuesday of each month.

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A: www.glsen.org

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A: Yes! GLSEN Rochester has been around since 1998.
Join us for Western Night on Saturday, Sept. 18 at the Bachelor Forum. Come out and join the Rams in welcoming our brother club from Buffalo.

Our October Barnight will be Show Your Colors Night on Oct. 16. Put on your club colors and show up to represent your club at the Bachelor Forum. Our annual run was Aug. 27-29. It was a fun-filled weekend of partying with hot men on beautiful Seneca Lake. For those of you who missed it mark your calendars for next year for our 30th Anniversary run.

The Rochester Rams M.C. is Rochester’s foremost gay motorcycle and leather club as well as being one of the oldest clubs of its type in the country. Our home bar is the Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave., where we hold But Nights on the third Saturday of each month. We hold general meetings (open to the public) the Wednesday before each Bar Night at 7:30 p.m. at the Forum. For more info, visit our website: www.rochestermens.com.

Gay Men’s Chorus

Being a part of a family of friends that is starting their 22nd consecutive season of singing the songs of their lives to the Greater Rochester community... Every four years, performing alongside choirs from around the world at an international choral festival, and being remembered by all in attendance for your extreme talent in previous years... Knowing that you are a significant facet of the Rochester Gay community... Having a day, July 17, dedicated to your organization by the Mayor and County Executive.

And those are just some of our favorite things that make the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus such a unique and splendid organization. Are you interested in being a part of magic and the prestige known as the RAGMC? Voice placements for our December concert are at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 2, and our first rehearsal is on Thursday, Sept. 9, at 7 p.m. We are always welcoming new members or volunteers, so please visit our website at www.ragmc.org, give our office a call at 585-423-0650, or email us at info@ragmc.org.

On Aug. 21, the RAGMC hosted our 2nd Annual Garden Tour, “A City Garden Sunset Stroll.” The turnout was excellent and all who attended had a wonderful evening wandering through nine private gardens. Due to the tremendous success of our tour, we already have five gardens lined up for next year! Thank you to all who supported us in our August fundraising event! Watch for upcoming details about our annual Garden Tour event in September and an RAGMC-sponsored Seneca Lake wine tour in October. Don’t forget to visit us at www. thergmc.org.

Women’s Community Chorus

Greeting all that this “note” finds you all healthy and enjoying the little bit of sun and warmth that we’ve experienced this “summer.” It’s been a very busy couple of months for the Rochester Women’s Community Chorus. Twenty of us traveled to Montreal, Canada to sing in the seventh international GALA choral festival. We have been hard at work carrying out our vision in order to make the upcoming season a harmonious one for all.

I said my final goodbye to Chappell Kingsland last week as he embarked on his next phase of his life. He will be the music director of a Unitarian Church in Denver, Colo., as well as being the accompanist for a women’s choir based in Boulder, Colo. We are very fortunate to welcome to our family Mr. Robert Johnson, a skilled and experienced pianist and choral conductor who will also be the interim music director of the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus.

Our season will begin on Wednesday, Sept. 8. Rehearsals will be held in “Celebration Hall” on the second floor of the Downtown United Presbyterian Church, which is located at 121 N. Fitzhugh St. in Downtown Rochester. (Fitzhugh St. is between N. Plymouth Ave. and State St.)

To access “Celebration Hall,” enter through the door to the left of the main sanctuary. There is an intercom/buzzer. Up the stairs to the right of the reception desk is an elevator and a stairwell which will take you directly to the second floor.

We aim to start rehearsals promptly at 6:30 p.m. and end at 8:50 sharp. If you are a new singer or are returning after a leave of absence, I ask that you be at the first rehearsal between 6:15 and 6:15 for voice placement. Here is our updated calendar for the coming year:

- 9/8: 6:30 p.m. DUPC -- First Rehearsal
- 10/15-10/16: 5 p.m. -- Camp Onanda, Fall Retreat
- 11/14: 4 p.m. Salem UCC -- Performance
- 11/23: 6:30 p.m. DUPC -- Rehearsal
- 11/24: NO REHEARSAL
- 11/29: 6:15 p.m. Hochstein -- Tech Rehearsal
- 12/20: 6:15 p.m. Hochstein -- Dress Rehearsal
- 12/21: 6:15 p.m. Hochstein -- Dress Rehearsal
- 12/7: 7:30 p.m. Hochstein -- Holiday Show
- 1/5: 7:30 p.m. DUPC -- Rehearsals resume
- 6/12: 6:15 p.m. Hochstein -- Tech Rehearsal
- 6/17: 6:15 p.m. Hochstein -- Dress Rehearsal

ABSC

The Atlantic-Beacon Sculpture Project Committee has had a busy summer. In July, ABSC displayed eight sculpture model entries during Gay Pride Week at the GAGV Community Picnic and the Pride Festival, to very enthusiastic crowds. Many visitors stopped by our display tables and gave ABSC terrific feedback on the various sculpture models they liked.

To see pictures of the eight sculpture entries, please click onto our website at www.ABSC14607.org.

Recently, ABSC and ARTWalk are working together to select a sculpture finalist, who will be announced on Sunday, Sept. 19 at the ARTWalk Alive Festival, along University Ave.

ABSC will also be offering a mini-grant of up to $1000 for an aspiring film or video student/professional to help document the creation and building of Rochester’s newest community sculpture. For more information, contact us at ABSC14607@aol.com.

We look forward to seeing you all on Sept. 19!

Women’s Hiking

We’re gearing up for summer hiking... join us! Cool way to meet great people! We have lots of fun, and you are never alone because new ladies are always joining our adventures. Meet new friends or maybe find romance. For info call Donna Marie Kearney, 585-442-6399.

PLAGAL

PLAGAL prides itself on the diversity of its membership. It is one of the few pro life organizations that accept all those who are pro-life. PLAGAL members come from different social and economic backgrounds, different political parties, some have religious affiliations while others do not. We have members who are drag queens, partners, bisexuals, single, those in long term relationships and we even have heterosexual individuals in our group.

Contact us for more information. PO Box 35292 Washington DC 20035; 202-265-9737; plagal@plagal.org; http://www.plagal.org. Rochester liaison: Donna Marie Kearney, 585-442-6399.

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Come and Sing With the Rochester Rainbow Gospel Choir

Rochester’s Inclusive Gospel Choir is beginning its fifth season!

Singers rehearse either Sundays 5-8:30 pm or Tuesdays 7-8:30 pm at Opening Arts MCC, 175 Norris Drive, beginning September 12

For more information call: 585-4508 or e-mail: Rainbowchoir@hotmail.com

Susan SanFilippo, C.S.W.

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- What effect does my past have on me?
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Create a free profile with up to five photos!
Toronto pride 2004 photos
Free personal & classified ads!
Links and gay business listings with maps

GayRochester.Com
Version 2.0

A City Garden Sunset Stroll
The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus (RGMC) will be hosting a tour of some of the most unique private gardens in Rochester on Saturday, August 21, from 5pm...

Rochester Pride Parade 2004
Rochester Pride photos are now online! Be sure to tell all your friends, and then click photos to check them out! ...

The PIRATE Party
Arrrggghhh matey! It be the PIRATE party on Saturday September 4th! Join us for a night of pirate debauchery! Shiver me timbers! Come see Pandora,...

Toronto Pride Parade 2004
Check out our collection of nearly 500 high-res photos from Toronto Pride 2004. Click photos to see all the fun...

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ACHC, The Spa, Tara, Motor,
Little Theatre, Anthony
Jordan Health, Genesee
Federal Credit Union, Pride
Connection, Cheesy Eddy’s,
Avenue Pub, Lakeshore
Records, Record Archive,
Canaltown Coffee Roasters,
ARI, Borders (Henrietta and
Victor), Barnes & Noble
(Pittsford Plaza), Nasty D’s,
Muthers, Family Medicine
(South Ave.), Utter Clutter,
Monroe Show World, Atomic
Eggplant, ImageOut office,
Spin Cafe, Montana Mills,
Greenwood Books, State
St. News, Monroe Co. HIV/
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Nights, Ventures IRPT, Black
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places!
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THE RIGHT PRICE:
Classified ads are $5 for the first 30 words; each additional word is another $1. We do not bill for classifieds, so please send or bring ad and payment to The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St., Rochester, NY 14609. The deadline is the 15th of the month, for the following month's issue. We cannot accept ads over the phone. We publish free ads for prisoners on a space-available basis. Pay when you place your ad.

FYI:
We will accept only ads accompanied by name and phone number. Neither will be published, but we must have a way 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 or personal address/phone number.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Volunteer for the Empty Closet. Are you a writer, photographer, or proofreader? Want to help out with announcements or services? Call Susan at 244-9030.

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Lawn & Order. Lawn mowing-mulching. Spring/fall clean-ups-shrub trimming call today for a free estimate. Debby 482-3455 or email at LawnandOrder59@aol.com

Hot Oil Rub, Full-body. Students! Treat yourself once returning to school, to a relaxing sexual rubdown. I'm very friendly, with eight plus years' experience. Discretion assured. Only $13/hour, others $20/hour. For appointments only, call 585-325-7241, 10 a.m. - 11 p.m., or leave a call-back phone #.

Receive a Hot Body Rub by a very attractive masculine Italian Bi-male, age 30. I have an athletic build, muscular arms and clean shaven with a GQ look. The rate is $73 and I come to you. Page Shown at 521-0455.

ROOMMATES/ HOUSEMATES
Roommate wanted to share three bedroom, home in Gates/Chili with one dog and cat. Great neighborhood. Female only. Available Oct. 1. Cleanlines a must. $550/month includes everything. For more info call Alisha @ 503-9954.

FOR RENT

Apartment For Rent. City/Inondequate borders. Two-bedroom, kitchen, living-dining room, parking and yard, $600/month plus utilities. Call 266-6577.

Room for Rent. Professional male seeking to rent room in private home. Walking distance to U of R and Genesee Valley Park. $350-$375 includes all utilities, cable & laundry. Room has option to be furnished or unfurnished. Seeking person who desires a nice and quiet place to live. Non-smoker. First month's rent and security. 281-7478.

FOR SALE
For Sale Great Starter Home! Totally renovated 3/4 bedroom one and 1/2 bath with new roof, windows, carpet, kitchen -- including new stove, dishwasher, and microwave. Possible rent-to-own. 64 Greeley St., 559-0000. Call Joe A. Ware 585-503-3618 or 585-328-7230.

Cabin for Sale. Two bedrooms, bath, beautiful private setting, twelve wooded acres, swimming pond, one hour from Rochester. Call Pat at my office 585-234-3887, leave your name and phone number. $75,000.

Major Corporation in Rochester has a position open for an Administrative Assistant.

REQUIREMENTS:
Customer Focus Communication (verbal and written) Team work with other Administrative Assistants Accuracy & Reliability (Reports, Employee related, etc.) Quality, timely delivery and prompt filling of all documents. Timely secretarial support (copies, appointments, research, etc.) Initiative and Resourcefulness Computer software applications knowledge and quick study of new software Dependability & Dependable attendance Productivity (Quantity and quality of work output).

Salary is $14 per hour with excellent benefits. Please send cover letter and resume to: Administrative Assistant Position, c/o GAGV, 875 East Main Street, Rochester, NY 14609. No telephone calls please.

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WEDNESDAY 1
Dignity Integrity picnic with Buffalo Dignity. Medina, NY. 1 pm-4 pm. Also Sept. 5.

THURSDAY 2
Manuel Rivera-Oroz and Yolanda Daliq Hanihld show, opens at UR's Hartnett Gallery. 5-7 pm.

Rochester Gay Men's Chorus voice placements for new members. 6:30 pm, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 423-0650; www.thergmc.org.

SATURDAY 4

Rochester Women's Community Chorus. First rehearsal, 6:30 pm, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St.

MONDAY 6
Labor Day Parade. Community Groups meet on Silby Place, 10 am., Parade 11 am.

TUESDAY 7
Married Men's Support Group, 7-9 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Call Charlie, 530-4512.

FRIDAY 9

SATURDAY 11
Quichmasters trainings for GAVG Speakers Bureau. 9-4 pm. Also Sept. 12, 9 am-noon. GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. For info call Todd Plank, 244-8640, ext. 26.

Image/Art poetry reading, Open mic at Visual Studies Workshop Auditorium, 31 Prince St. 7-10 pm, Free.

Empire Bears potluck at GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 6:30 pm.

In the Life. WXXI, 11 pm. Focus on marriage issues. National lght news magazine.

SUNDAY 12
Quichmasters trainings for GAVG Speakers Bureau. 9 am-noon, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

MONDAY 13
Anti-Violence Project volunteer trainings. Also Sept. 14, 6-9 pm, Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Call Alex, 244-8640, ext. 17.

Butch Femme Connection dinner night. Olive Garden, Jefferson Rd., 7 pm. 865-4619.

Labyrinth Walk. Strong Hall, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, 110 Goodman St.

WEDNESDAY 15
Coming Out workshops begin, running through Oct. 27 on consec­utive Wednesdays. 7-9 pm. Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. $5. Sponsorship available. Call Todd Plank, 244-8640 ext. 24.

THURSDAY 16
Outside the Box. High Point, 310 Park Ave. 6-9 pm. $25.

THURSDAY 17
Buffalo Bulls vs. West MI 7 p.m. at Buffalo Avenue, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. 7208. "School Cafeteria Food".

SUNDAY 19
Give Me Food. A fall-themed fundraising benefit. 5-7 pm. Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St.


AIWTalk: Live music, musical, dance and literary artists perform at University Avenue Community Center, noon-7 pm. Winner of ABSG sculpture competition announced. Info at www.rochesterartwalk.org.

Dignity Integrity potluck. Follow­ing 5 pm service at St Luke-St Simon Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. 7208. "School Cafeteria Food".

TUESDAY 21
Gay Fathers Group. First meeting of fall. 6:30-8:30 pm. GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

NOW (National Organization of Women) annual dinner. 6 pm, Burgundy Basin Inn, 1361 Marsh Rd., Pittsford, $35, 451-5227.

SATURDAY 25
Buffalo Bulls vs. West MI 7 p.m. at Buffalo Avenue, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. "School Cafeteria Food".

THURSDAY 29
Gay Father's Group. 7 p.m. at GAGV Community Center. 179 Atlantic Ave. 7208.

SUNDAY 30
Empire Bears Lake Ontario Bear rendezvous. Through Oct. 3. 585-234-3881; info@empirebears.org.

SUNDAY 2
Empire Bears auction, to bene­fit GAGV youth programs and other charities. Macy House Lodge, Bays Hill Park, behind School #1, Hillsdale Drive. 9 pm.

Racine Chair Affair. Auction to ben­efit breast cancer victims. Hyatt, 6 pm. 585-473-8177. Chairs on display at Eastview Mall until Sept. 8. Sponsored by Breast Cancer Coalition.

SUNDAY 3
ImageArt gallery opening. Little Theatre Cafe Gallery, 240 East Ave. 2-5 pm. Lgbtq artists show their work.

Thomas Somerville Art Show, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave. Series of queer-bashing paintings and series of male nude. Opening is 6 pm.

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Weekly GLBTI AA Meetings in Rochester

There are five regularly scheduled GLBTI AA meetings in Rochester every week.

What makes GLBTI recovery a bit dif­ferent is that we recognize: issues surrou­nding our sexuality can contribute to our alcoholism and addiction; coming out and coming to terms with ourselves as alcoholics or addicts can be a trauma­tizing as coming out and coming to terms with our sexuality; other drugs of abuse run rampant in our community and we do not exclude those so addicted (you will not be shunned down for speaking words like pot, cocaine, crack, heroin, ecstasy, K, speed, meth, pills, etc.); the bars play a large role in socialization within our community which can present challenges even when we are fully committed to our sobriety.

After our meetings, we frequently go out for coffee, dinner, movies, whatever; while it's tempting to stay in the fold of GLBTI recovery, we live and work in a predomi­nantly straight society, so we encourage our members to include "straight" meet­ings in their program.

Open meetings are open to alcoholics and addicts as well as to our partners, friends, family and anyone else interested in the AA program of recovery. Closed meetings are limited to alcoholics and addicts. We ask that partners, friends, family and curiosity seekers respect our privacy.

Wednesdays

New Freedom/New Happiness Group: 7 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S Winton Rd. Bus riders: Take the #18 University Ave bus to 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.

(2 sessions)

Free to Be: 7:30 p.m. At The Yellow House, 1601 Jackson Rd, Penfield. NOT accessible by bus.

Closed meeting, restricted to alcoh­olics and addicts.

Mixed men and women

Handicapped accessible

This can be a speaker, discussion or both.

Saturday Night Special: 7 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S Winton Rd. Bus riders: The #18 University Ave bus does not go by the church on weekend evenings.

Sundays

Rocky Gay Men: 8:30 pm at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 17 Fitzhugh St. Bus riders use the Fitzhugh stop on Main St at the County Office Building and walk south one block.

Closed meeting, restricted to alcohol­ics and addicts

Men's meeting

NOT handicapped accessible

This meeting begins with a speaker who is followed by an open discussion.

Sunday 6
Dignity Integrity celebrates 25th anniversary with liturgy, 5 pm, St. Luke-St. Simon Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.


Monday 27

Butch Femme Connection dinner night: Macaroni Grill. Jefferson Rd. 7 pm. 865-4619.

October, Friday 1
Empire Bears Lake Ontario Bear rendezvous. Through Oct. 3. 585-234-3881; info@empirebears.org.

Saturday 2
Empire Bears auction, to bene­fit GAGV youth programs and other charities. Macy House Lodge, Bays Hill Park, behind School #1, Hillsdale Drive. 9 pm.

Racine Chair Affair. Auction to ben­efit breast cancer victims. Hyatt, 6 pm. 585-473-8177. Chairs on display at Eastview Mall until Sept. 8. Sponsored by Breast Cancer Coalition.

Sunday 3
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Monday  
Gay and Lesbian Support Group  
Third Presbyterian Church, 34 Meigs St.  
First and third Mondays, 7:30-9 pm, 358-3466.

Rochester Historical Bowling Society  
7:15 pm, Mondays, Clover Laves, 2750 Monroe Ave.

COAP  
Come Out and Play, Business meeting last Monday, 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Tom M., 454-3009.

American Baptists Concerned  
Tuesdays, 7 pm. For location call Dale, 244-8640 or 771-5321.

Third Mondays, 7:30 pm, Webster House, 57 Armory St. 442-5464.

HIV Positive Gay Men Support group  
Every Monday, 6 pm, AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave. 442-2220 or 3051.

Green Party (political)  
Second Mondays, 7-9 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 234-6470.

Basically Treblemakers Band  
Rehearsals 4:30-6:30 pm, every Monday. Call Tim, 242-0237.

Treasurer Group  
Second Mondays, Open Arms MCC, 175 Norris Drive, 7-9 pm.

Rochester Front Runners/Front Walkers  
Run/walk every Monday, 6 pm, meet George Eastman House parking lot, 271-2700.

Triangle Talk  

Tuesday  
Atlantic Five O  
Gay men 50 and over. Second Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 451-0821.

Orleans Rainbow Fellowship  
Support/social group, meets second Tuesdays, 7 pm. For location call Dale, 589-9107, or e-mail DLAbraci180@msn.com

Gay Fathers’ Support Group  
First and third Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Meetings resume Sept. 21.

MOCHA coffee chat  
Open discussion for men of color who have sex with men. Coffee, refreshments, First and third Tuesdays, 6:30 pm. MOCHA Project, 25 Franklin St., Suite 1060, 420-1400.

Youth of Color Group  
3-5 pm, MOCHA Project, 25 Franklin St., Sibley Center, 1000, 420-1400, 244-8640.

LGBT Alzheimer’s Caregivers Support Group  
Second Tuesdays, 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Second floor. Paul, 244-8640 x 14.

Wednesday  
Women’s Community Choir  
Rehearsals each Wednesday, 6:30-9 pm. For location, call 234-4441.

Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley Board of Directors  
Meeting, second Wednesdays, 7 pm, 875 E. Main St., fourth floor Blue Room, 244-8640.

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

Support Group for Parents Who Have Lost Children  
First and third Wednesdays, 11 am-12:30 pm, Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs St. Sponsored by Genesee Region Home Care. Free. 325-1860.

Front Runners/Front Walkers  
6 pm run/walk, meet George Eastman House parking lot, 271-2700.

Empire Bears  
First Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. info@empi rebears.org.

Transgender Group  
Third Wednesdays, 6:30-9 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

Multinu-4 Coffee Talk  
7 pm, Bin Café (799 Park Ave.) Social for former Multinu-4 BBS members; other gbty qbers welcome, every fourth Wednesday, 8 pm.

Gray Area  
Support/social group for bisexual women. First Wednesdays, 5:30-7 pm. For location, call 451-1388, 932-9780.

GAGV Library & Archives  
Summer hours, 9-5 pm, every Wednesday, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 244-9410. Books can be returned to GAGV offices, 875 E. Main St., Suite 500, from 9 am-6 pm.

Butch/Femme Connection  
First and third Wednesdays, 7-9 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

Empire Bears  
Second Saturdays, Bachelor Forum, 470 University Ave. 234-8820.

Cross Dresser Support Group  
First and third Sundays, 6:30-9:30 pm, GAGV, 179 Atlantic Ave. Info: 261-2132. RC Dimnet@hotmail.com.

Transgender Group  
Last Saturdays, 5-2 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

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

MOCHA Business Forum  
Professionals’ social group, Second Thursdays, 6:30-7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

GLOB! (Gay and Lesbian Support Group)  
Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 110 N. Fitzhugh St. 7-9 pm, 423-0050. Free confidential walk-in HIV testing Every Thursday night, 5-8 pm. AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave. 442-2220.

MOCAs movie night  
Second Thursdays, 6:30 pm, MOCHA Project, 25 Franklin St., Suite 1050, 420-1400.

Gay Men’s Movie Night  
7-9:30 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

Friday  
Gay Men’s AA meeting  
Each Friday, 7:30-8:30 pm. Closed meeting GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

Butch/Femme Connection  
First Friday, 7-9 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

Saturday  
Rochester Rams bar night  
Third Friday. 8 pm-2 am, Bachelor Forum, 470 University Ave. 234-8820.

Front Runners/Front Walkers  
9 am run/walk, Meet George Eastman House parking lot, 461-4246.

Empire Bears  
Second Saturdays, Bachelor Forum, 470 University Ave. 234-3381.

Cross Dresser Support Group  
First Sundays, 6:30-9:30 pm, GAGV, 179 Atlantic Ave. Info: 261-2132. RCDIMNET@hotmail.com.

Global/Network Gay Group  
Ages 13-18. Every Sunday, 2-4 pm, GAGV, 875 E. Main St. 420-1400.

Rainbow Amateur Radio Assoc.  
10 pm-1 am. Every Sunday. Business meeting/Lunch. Call Bob, 442-7188.

Finger Lakes chapter.  
Food Not Bombs free food  
4 pm. Handicapped parking behind church; others please park in ramp garage accessed from Court St.

Single Women’s Potluck  
Fourth Sundays, 5 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Bring dish to pass, tabke setting.

WNY Lesbian Couples  
Third Saturdays, 7-9 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Dykelyoked and Game Night. Start-up event. For location call http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WNYLesbianCouples/.

GAGV Library & Archives  
Beginning Sept. 11, 10 am-2 pm.

Second Sundays, 6 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. 234-0050. Free confidential walk-in HIV testing Every Thursday night, 5-8 pm. AIDS Rochester, 1350 University Ave. 442-2220.

MOCAs movie night  
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Transgender Group  
Last Saturdays, 5-2 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

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

Lilac Rainbow Alliance for the Deaf (LRAD)  
Fourth Saturdays, 6-9 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

Something for da Sistaz  
Women’s group, every third Saturday, GAGV Project, Suite 1050, 25 Franklin St. 420-1400.

Pride and Joy Families  
Third Saturdays, 1-3 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.
Long-Term Care... The Facts You Need To Know

Do you know why younger adults are making decisions now about their future long-term care needs?
Do you know why women are at particular financial and emotional risk when it comes to taking care of an aging parent?
Do you know what is the longest living unfunded liability facing the baby boomer generation?

This is the first in a series of articles that will answer these questions and give you the most up-to-date information on a subject that affects us all: long-term care.

What is Long-Term Care?
Long-term care includes the insurance you need if you ever have an accident, chronic illness, or disability that leaves you unable to care for yourself.

While many people equate the need for long-term care service with retiring in a nursing home or other institutional facility, almost 50 percent of the elderly and 45 percent of severely disabled individuals live at home or in community-based settings.

Actor Christopher Reeve's tragic sporting accident is proof that the need for long-term care can strike at any age and any time. In fact, 40 percent of people needing long-term care in this country are working age adults, ages 18-64.1 And the actual risk of needing long-term care is greater than 50 percent.2 The need for long-term care is growing rapidly as medical technology is advancing and Americans are living longer than ever before.

More and more Americans are living with chronic illnesses such as Parkinson's, Lou Gehrig's disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and Alzheimer's. In addition, each year strokes, cancer and traumatic injuries leave thousands of people young and old, dependent upon long-term care.

Long-Term Care is Expensive.
Since long-term care is so expensive and not covered by traditional health insurance, many people are unsure of long-term care options and costs. It could cost you much more than you expect. And the cost is expected to escalate.

Knowledge about and planning for long-term care services can prepare you for the unforeseen realities of life - getting older.

1 Americans for Long Term Care, 2001.
2 Aging Committee, Hearing Finding Investigators' Senate Special Committee on Aging, June 2002.
6 Ibid.

Now you don't need to predict the future to protect it.

It's hard to know today what it will take to provide for your future tomorrow. With CareDirectors® Simplicity you don't have to.

With Simplicity you aren't required to purchase coverage for services that you may not need or may not be available in the next 10 years—when you're likely to need care. You'll simply receive a benefit check each month, regardless of services used or amounts spent, thus minimizing your care options to best meet your care needs.

Simplicity provides comprehensive coverage that's flexible enough to fit any lifestyle.

It's that simple.