Feb. 12 Sweetheart Ball will salute Hollywood golden era

Dinner Dance to be at Rochester Riverside Convention Center

Fred and Ginger would love it. The GAGV presents the Sweetheart Ball 2005, saluting Hollywood's Glamorous Golden Era. It will be held on Saturday, Feb. 12, 6 p.m. to midnight, at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center.

The evening begins with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres in the Riverside Court from 6 to 7 p.m. The doors will then open to the ballroom where a sit down dinner will be served. Performing for us will be the big band sounds of the BASSically TNEB Ensemble, and DJ Chuck Argento will spin your favorite hits while “cigarette girls” visit your table with special offerings as you dance 'till midnight.

Member Discounts available on-line through Paypal only. See www.gayalliance.org.

Pink Arrow Package

A Pink Arrow is a sure way to strike the heart (and attention) of that special someone at this year's Sweetheart Ball, while at the same time making a valuable contribution to the Gay Alliance. For $200, the Pink Arrow Package includes two ball tickets, a long stem rose, a box of chocolates and recognition in the Empty Closet.

Sweetheart Ball tickets are $75 per person. The tickets are available at the GAGV office, Fifth Ave. 870 E. Main St. until Feb. 4. The tickets are also available through Feb. 5 at Outstanding Video & Cafe The Pink Connection.

You must know your dinner choice: Beef, Chicken, Fish or Vegetarian.

All proceeds from the Pink Arrow Package will benefit the Rochester Community Center.

MOCHA Project develops two programs, moves to new location

BY SUSAN JORDAN

The Mocha Project (Men Of Color Health Awareness) Project of Rochester may eventually be a model for other HIV education and prevention agencies around the country, due to two federal grants the organization has received.

The funding has also enabled MOCHA to move to a new location at 107 Liberty Pole Way.

Program Director Keith Pannell told the Empty Closet, “The grant we received through the Health Resources and Services Administration is to look at young men of color who have sex with men that are HIV positive, and come up with replicable intervention programs for them.”

He said that MOCHA has developed a prevention/intervention program called “Many Men, Many Voices.” “We proposed to evaluate its effectiveness and then adapt interventions specifically for that target population,” Pannell said.

“So, we're going to have one-on-one intervention where we're looking at stage-based behavioral counseling, adapting that for young men of color. Then we also have outreach to energize this population and bring them into utilizing the programs,” Pannell said.

Pannell said that MOCHA will develop a Care Collaborative for young men, to meet gaps in services and be able to follow up with and track participants. The three projects will be evaluated over the next five years (it is a five-year grant). Pannell said, “Ultimately we'll be able to replicate this in other places. We brought (social worker) Camero Logan and three other staff on board to work specifically on this project.”

Logan, now Project Coordinator, started her career as a service coordinator in Buffalo. “I've worked at various human services agencies,” she said, “in different sectors. I am a social worker, and it's a new experience for me; coordinating these projects...”

MOCHA continued on page 3

Equality Forum to mark movement's 40th anniversary

"40 Years, 40 Heroes" - The Equality Forum will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the GLBT Civil Rights Movement from April 25 to May 1 in Philadelphia.

The Gay Alliance hopes to join in celebrating the 40th anniversary of the GLBT civil rights movement by bringing a host of Rochester gay and lesbian members to Philadelphia to take part in a week of workshops, special events, parties and celebrations. Sunday, May 1, will see a National Celebration at Independence Hall, the birthplace of the LGB civil rights movement, as the Equality Forum honors 40 Heroes who have made a difference.

On July 4, 1965, in front of Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, 40 courageous activists demonstrated for gay and lesbian civil rights. These Pioneers created this new movement of visibility and solidarity and started a national and international civil rights movement,” stated Sally Saman, National Co-Chair, 40th Anniversary Celebration.

“On Sunday, May 1, 2005, with Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell Pavilion as the backdrop, we will honor 40 Heroes, who over the past 40 years have made a defining difference for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) civil rights movement,” said Jonathan Capurro, National Co-Chair, 40th Anniversary Celebration.

The celebration will also include entertainers, speakers, program on Independence Mall (Independence Hall to the National Constitution Center), large street festival, continuous screenings of Gay Pioneers, 40 Equality Forum rainbow flags along Independence Mall and a closing concert.

Over 28 national and international directors of the forum will be present, as well as Keith Boykin (Board President, National Black Justice Coalition), Matt Foreman (Executive Director, National Gay & Lesbian Task Force), Selise Berry (Executive Director Out & Equal Workplace Advocates), Matt Contel (Director, ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project), Kevin Cathcart (Executive Director, Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund), Patrick Guedj (Executive Director, Log Cabin Republicans), Sheila Healy of National Association of Community Centers, and Kevin Jennings (Executive Director, GLSEN).

“Our role model for this celebration Equality Forum continued on page 3

MOCHA News

- Project Coordinator
- Camero Logan, left, and Project Director Kraig Pannell are working on two expanded programs, funding came from two federal grants.

MCC employee suits for partnership benefits

An employee of Monroe Community College is suing the college and Monroe County for denial of domestic partner health care benefits. She is seeking an unspecified amount as well as a court order that the county and MCC are violating New York's constitution and human rights law.

Patricia Martinez, of Gates, has worked for MCC for about 11 years. She is a word processing supervisor. She and her partner have been together for 15 years (it is a five-year grant). Martinez and her partner were denied the benefits. According to the Democrat & Chronicle, a spokesperson for the college said that Martinez is covered by the Civil Service Employees Union contract, which does not address d.g.p. benefits. The college did cite the federal Defense of Marriage Act, which was put in place by conservatives to prevent states from recognizing same-sex marriages.

The college and the county, and MCC, Human Resource Director Shelley Rabson, has 30 days to file a response to the lawsuit.

Martinez’s attorney Jeffrey Wilks told the Empty Closet, "What kind of arbitrary decision is that – to give benefits to one partner and not other employees? It's arbitrary and capricious. The other issue is, let’s make this a case that brings gay marriage to New York. That’s the right thing to do – MCC lawsuit continued on page 3
BAD NEWS & GOOD news

It's a new year, but we're still surrounded by the same old stuff, and some new bad things as well, such as the horror of natural disaster in our backyard. The old bad news includes the horror of war in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Middle East, South America and too many other places, and the usual blatantly unjust injustice here and abroad. There is also good news, but let's start with the bad stuff and get it over with.

THE BAD NEWS (a small selection): Dubya has appointed as domestic policy advisor one Claude Allen, best known as the only African American aide to the late Jesse Helms. Allen joined Helms while the latter was filibustering against having a national holiday to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. That tells you a lot about Allen, who has also made his hatred of "queers" and "radical feminists" part of the record. He obviously qualifies as the ideal token to set a precedent.

Another Allen, this time Gerald, a Republican legislator in Alabama, is calling for a ban on all books by or about gays and lesbians. There was plenty of evidence of how this would be enforced, but Dubya is joined while the latter is still speaking. It tells you a lot about Dubya and Allen to consider this important initiative in censorship—which presumably will go as long as they are straight. (Subliminal Jr. That tells you a lot about Allen, who has made his hatred of "queers" and "radical feminists" part of the record. He obviously qualifies as the ideal token to set a precedent."

There are a lot of fair-minded heterosexuals out there who are capable of changing their opinions when they get new information from science, social justice movements and people they know and care about. The struggle continues.

The GAGV has had another month of great challenge and dynamic change. The Board of Directors' commitment is to keep you informed of these challenges, changes and strategies for action that we face this time. Please continue to communicate your thoughts and ideas to strengthen the organization. Your offers of help and support have been deeply appreciated as we build a stronger and more effective organization for the community, our volunteers, and the GAGV staff.

As many of you know, the GAGV temporarily closed its offices from Dec. 14, 2004 to Jan. 3, 2005, but did continue to deliver critical AIDS Youth and Anti-Violence programs and services. This action was taken due to a delay in receiving grant monies.

Additionally, approximately 30 percent of the Agency's $500,000 budget is funded by State and local grants. In November, to help cover the effects of the GAGV's temporary closure, the Board established a 2005 Development Committee. The focus of the Development Committee work is on soliciting agency/office memberships, fundraising events, individual donors, planned giving and membership. The goal of this committee is to deliver both a short and long term sustainable and predictable funding stream for the agency.

The GAGV is extremely fortunate to have both Margaret Sanchez de Sanchez and Cynthia Woolbright of the Woolbright Group as guiding contributors to this team. Both are highly experienced with fundraising initiatives. Margaret Sanchez is a member of the Board of Directors and President of Association of Fundraising Professionals. The Board of Directors personally donated $7,000 during this same period. We thank the community for donating $5,925 through the agency's annual year-end appeal. Several local businesses signed a variety of highly qualified candidates who have submitted formal letters of interest for the Executive Director position. This search process will take place in early February.

The interview team is comprised of four Board members, Executive Directors of three local not-for-profit agencies, a co-chair of the Empire State Pride Agenda and a member of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley Development Committee.

As we move into 2005, the agency's annual year-end appeal will include new strategies. We will continue to distinguish ourselves. Part of our purpose is to maintain a critical youth and anti-violence program, the Library/Resource Center, the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley Program, the Anti-Violence Program, Educational and Outreach Program, Empty Closet and community communications, the Library Arch located at the Community Center and the making of the video history of the lgbt community in Rochester.

We will continue to be the umbrella organization for our 15 current groups and the two new groups which most at the Community Center.

One thing is for sure: you for your continued support of the GAGV!

GAGV Congratulates Carolyn Portanova

The Gay Alliance congratulates Carolyn Portanova, CEO of the Rochester Family Community Center, for winning the Athena Award, given by the Rochester Business Alliance Women's Coalition to honor Rochester businesswomen.

The GAGV appreciates the work Portanova has done to help single female heads of households (with a family loan initiative), women moving from welfare to work and those recovering from alcohol abuse.

Report from the Board: December 2004-January 2005

The Empty Closet is a publication of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, 147 E. Main St., Suite 500, Rochester, New York 14605. Make checks payable to GAGV.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: The opinions of columnists, editorial writers and other contributing writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or the Empty Closet. We will print letters at the discretion of the editors and on a space available basis. While we reserve the right to edit for space and clarity, we will print numerous letters to the name and phone number of the writer (if phone number provided). We will respect confidentiality to the extent possible. Letters are due by the 15th of the month at: The Empty Closet, 675 E. Main St., Suite 500, Rochester NY 14605; email emptycloset@gagus.org. Online edition of EC available at www.gayalliance.org.
Breakfast to raise funds for Pritchard campaign Feb. 10

Bill Pritchard is running for re-election to City Council this year. The Friends of Bill Pritchard will hold a fundraiser breakfast to benefit his campaign.

The breakfast will take place on Feb. 10, from 8 to 9:30 a.m., at the Rochester Riverfront Community Center.

The suggested donation is $100. For information and to place reservations, call 251-2575.

In 2003, Pritchard won the Democratic party nomination to fill Nancy Gruwell's seat on City Council. He was elected to the seat that fall.

Business, jobs and fiscal responsibility have been among his top priorities.

Sweetheart Ball continued from page 1
benefit the programs and services of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley. Call (585) 244-8640 Extension 20 for any additional ball information.

Equity Forum continued from page 1
Bayard Rustin, Jr., a college of Rev. Martin Luther King. Bayard Rustin was a gay African American who organized the National March on Washington.

"The Gay Pioneers chose this iconic site in 1965 to launch the movement. There is no better location than where our Declaration of Independence was written and home of the beacon of freedom, the Liberty Bell."

"Equity Forum 2005 from April 25 to May 1 in Philadelphia will have over 60 events with 100 regional, national and international organizations participating. There is no registration fee and all sub­stantive programs are free," stated Joseph Farrell, Chair, Board of Directors. "We promote creative programs and col­laborative events.

We have obtained a permit from Independence National Historical Park, National Park Service," said Abbe Fleeman, Regional Co-Chair. "We thank Mary Burner, Superintendent of Independence National Park for encouraging us to support these events.

National Historical Park for embracing the 40th anniversary as an important part of the Park's history."

"We are grateful to U.S. Senator Arlen Specter, Congressman Robert Brady, Governor Ed Rendell and Mayor Street for their written support of the permit," said Michael Williams, Regional Co-Chair. "We take great pride that Philadelphia is the birthplace of our nation and the civil rights movement."


"Almost no public schools and few col­leges teach gay history. 'Gay Pioneers' is about our civil rights. It is an inspiring film. Through grants, 'Gay Pioneers' is being sent without charge to 2,600 GLAs, every light community center and gay youth center and over 150 collegiate light organi­zations throughout the nation."

"In 2003, Philadelphia launched a national campaign to attract gift tourism. Our motto is 'Get your history straight and your nightlife right.' We promise the national and international gay community that Philadelphia lives up to its billing as the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection," said Tami Sohnman, Chair, Philadelphia Gay Tourism Caucus.

Equity Forum's mission is to advance national and international civil rights. Equity Forum undertakes high impact initiatives, produces documentary films and presents the largest annual national and international gay civil rights forum.

MOCHA continued from page 1
ects. It's been enlightening so far. Being a woman of color, I realize that we do have an epidemic among women of color here in the Rochester community. I think it's impor­tant that Rochester understand MOCHA is there to provide prevention/inter­vention strategies to the African American community. Anyone who sees the work we do on a day to day basis would be impressed with the service we provide."

Logan said that MOCHA's Care Collaborative will include Hunter Doyle, Black Men Latino Man Health Crisis (BMLMHC), ACHC, NR and other agen­cies in order to provide improved services to HIV positive and negative people. "It's important that (the Rochester community) know the service MOCHA offers," he said.

The second grant MOCHA has received is from the Office of Minority Health. It is shared with BMLMHC, and involves continuing the Let's Get It Done initiative, which was created in February and extended from Hoffman-LaRoche. Get It Done is an effort to engage African American men and women through an innovative model of outreach and testing in barber shops and beauty salons over the next three years. The project seeks to provide a multi-level approach directly addressing cultural nuances and the psych­ological needs of the target population. It will include promotion services using behavioral science approaches.

'The most important things MOCHA does is education,' Right & Logan said. "I have two staff members who go to bars, ride Muni's, RJs, and so on. We provide free tester packs that include condoms, fliers, information on different strategies for prevention. We do everything everywhere; but right now it seems like the bars are the most effective places."

Knapp added, "With the new ini­tiation, there will be new venues, wherever the population tends to be, we will go."

"We move from the former St. Mary's Building to nearby Liberty Pole Way was important because of the increased space it provided. Knapp said, "There wasn't enough space for staff (at the former loca­tion) and we also needed space more con­ducive to the services we're providing. We have a group room, private space for meet­ings, staff offices. We wanted some confi­dentiality and anonymity for clients coming in here."

The group room is set up like a raised and welcoming living room, with comfort­able furniture and a spirituality group, and is coming up to 300 square feet. Pannell added, "We're working with the faith community, and we're also working with the inter­ests groups and being very community-based with our staff. We're working with the faith community, trying to educate, bridge some gaps and foster collaboration."

MOCHA programs also include the Youth Group (currently with about 10 members per week), which collaborates with the GAGV Youth Group. The move to larger offices has enabled MOCHA to allot space to other agencies, such as BMLMHC and Ton Empowerment. In December, MOCHA had about 680 drop-ins for ser­vices, and the 10 or more groups that meet there average 10 to 15 people each. (For information on groups and meeting times, see the Ongoing Calendar, page C11.)

MCC lawsuit continued from page 1
what's the point of asking for benefits when you can ask for marriage? New York has a long, rich history of recognizing marriages that may not have been performed in New York. We're just asking the court, 'Do what you're already done.'"

Some information from Matthew Daneman, Demos & Chronicle.

Arguments heard in marriage law­suit against N.Y.S.

The lawsuit against New York State for the right to same-sex marriage has gone to court.

State Supreme Court Justice Robert Malvey heard arguments in Elmira on Jan. 14. Mariette Geldenhuys, one of the attor­neys for the 23 couples seeking the right to marry, compared New York's opposition to same-sex marriage to the 19th century denial of voting rights for women.

"The basis of (the state's) opposition is that it goes against tradition. If tradition carried on, we would still have slavery," Geldenhuys said. She pointed out to the judge that New York made is illegal in 2002 to discriminate against people of sexual ori­entation, and that the state allows same-sex couples to adopt children.

Jim McGowan, an attorney for the state, said that the court must follow past deci­sions upholding the prohibition against same-sex marriage.

Malvey will issue a ruling within 60 days of Jan. 14.

Domestic & Chronicle

Deadline nears for board nominations

The Board of Directors of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley is seeking ener­getic candidates for the spring election of board members. Candidates with professional experience in one or more of the following areas are needed: accounting and finance; fundraising and development; cam­paigns; public and media relations. Those elected by the GAGV membership will serve a two-year term, with the possibility of serving an additional term. To be considered for the board, candidates must submit a letter of interest and resume to the Board of Directors. Send letter of interest and resume to the Board of Directors, GAGV, PO Box 500, Rochester NY 14605.

State & Local News continued on page 12
Illinois bans discrimination; includes trans protections


The bill was introduced over 30 years ago in 1974. When signed into law by Governor Rod R. Blagojevich, a supporter of the measure, Illinois will become the 15th state to protect gay people from discrimination, and the 5th state to protect transgender persons. The bill cleared the State Senate by a vote of 30-27 and the State House by a vote of 65-51.

We salute Equality Illinois and its tireless leader, Rick Garcia, for this extraordinary achievement," said Matt Fisk, Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "This win again shows that dogged work by state and local leaders and activists can surmount enormous odds — and is real sure to a community still hurting and healing.

A non-discrimination bill first passed the House in 1993, also because of the work of the Illinois Gay PAC.

The law will "add sexual orientation" to the state's existing nondiscrimination statute, making it illegal to discriminate in employment, housing, public accommodations or credit on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, or marital or sexual status. The definition of "sexual orientation" includes provisions to protect trans and transgender people.

The non-discrimination bill first passed the state House in 1993.

"In the midst of anti-marriage attacks, several state legislatures moved forward with broader rights for same-sex couples and their children," said Kilbourn.

"Our fight against the advance of civil rights for the LGBT community continues. The bill was passed 33-0 in the state Senate and 143-72 in the House before being signed by the Governor's predecessor.

The outlook for state legislation in 2005 looks mixed," said Kilbourn. "We will continue to fight for our voices, but 2005 will see some victories for LGBT people.

Already anti-marriage constitutional amendments have been pre-filed in South Carolina, Texas and Virginia. However, the California legislature will consider a bill to extend marriage equality to same-sex couples and several other state legislatures have extended responsibilities for same-sex couples and their children.

Additionally a number of states will consider nondiscrimination and hate crime bills that include protections for LGBT individuals.

The report is available in pdf format at www.hrc.org/StateLegReport. For print copies, contact carrie.evans@hrc.org.

Toni Broaddus named head of Equality Federation

Leaders of statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (lgbt) advocacy organizations have named Toni Broaddus, who served as the first director of their national coalition, the Equality Federation. The Federation will continue to support peer-to-peer leadership training and support programs for state activities, but the organization will also direct major resources to state-based organizing efforts.

"This is a critical time for the lgbt community. It is critical that we strengthen and build our rights movement in the United States," said Broaddus. "If we are going to realize the promise of equality for LGBT people, we absolutely must have strong and effective state organizations to lead the way. As Equality Federation's Executive Director, my number one priority is to ensure that activists in every state and territory have the tools and resources they need to educate American voters about how discrimination harms our families, our communities, and our country. LGBT state organizations are on the front lines in the radical right's war against LGBT people. The entire progressive community should be there to support them as we fight for legislative victories.

The vast majority of rights gained by lgbt Americans over the past 35 years have been won at the state level by the dedicated leaders and organizations. Currently, 13 states protect employees from discrimination based on sexual orientation. Twenty states have safe schools laws, 29 states have passed hate crimes legislation, and 11 states have codified at least some type of family protections.

These successes have been countered with a virulent backlash. In 2004, 13 states passed constitutional amendments to deny the right to marry to same-sex couples. Nine of these amendments were anti-marriage, anti-­transgender protections - like civil unions or domestic partnerships - for LGBT couples. Seven states have also passed anti-transgender bills.

"From now on, our movement has directed the majority of its resources to the national level," notes Ian Palmquist, Equality North Carolina Director and Federation Co-Chair. "But the recent elections support the fundamental belief of Equality Federation members that the key to winning this battle is at the state level. Now that foreign tourists for ‘seXual’ attractions. One worker they speak of is that Patong is second only to Bangkok as the transsexual capital of the world.

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, visiting Thailand on Jan. 7, said he would review the warning to tourists to stay away. Of the 500 lgbt people who used to work at Patong, approximately one fifth have fled to other tourist destinations in search of work. The number has not been calculated.

Jonathan Watts, The Guardian

Bush caught between a rock & a hard place

In an interview Jan. 16 with the Washington Post, President George W. Bush appeared to go back on his campaign promise to push for the Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA), which, following his initial endorsement, fell on the Senate floor last summer.
Almost immediately after the interview was first published, White House officials began retracting Bush's statements to pacify the outraged Republicans who felt the president was exercising from a campaign promise. According to administration officials, President Bush does fully support the discriminatory amendment and he will continue to work with Republicans in Washington to push for its passing. In response, Democratic National Committee (DNC) Chairman Terry McAuliffe issued the following statement:

"The conflicting messages on Sunday show that this president is caught between a rock and a hard place. George Bush knows the vast majority of American people are against this divisive amendment, but he is beholden to the fundamentalists in his party who now control Washington, D.C.

"On Jan. 20 President Bush will be given a chance to lay out his plans for the next four years, but chances are it will be the same selfish agenda that caters to his right-wing allies at the expense of American families.

"On Jan. 14, the Democratic National Committee unveiled a national petition, calling on George W. Bush to abandon his support for the FMA and to tell his Republican allies in Congress to stop pushing for its passage. For more information, or to sign the petition, go to www.democrats.org/glbt.

"On Jan. 20, Lambda Legal filed an appeal for a full hearing in the case of Darlene Jespersen, a female bartender at Harrah's Sports Bar after the company enacted a new dress code, called the "Personal Best" program, requiring the female bartenders to wear makeup, specified as foundation or powder, blush, mascara, and lipstick "at all times," Jespersen's work was outstanding for two full decades, but she found the makeup interfered with doing her job well. She was fired just once she objected to the company's rigid and outdated sex stereotypes, Lambda Legal said.

"After she was fired, Jespersen filed a federal lawsuit accusing Harrah's of sex discrimination that is prohibited under federal law. Federal civil rights laws allow employers to have dress codes or other standards as long as they do not burden employees differently based on their sex, race or other protected personal characteristics. But Harrah's Casino's "Personal Best" program is not an equal burden on men and women, Lambda Legal says, because male employees are subject to fairly simple rules that don't force them to conform to ultra-masculine sex stereotypes, while the rules for women are far more oppressive and can impair their ability to do their jobs. A federal judge ruled against Jespersen in 2002, and Lambda Legal stepped in to help handle her case on appeal.

"This is a textbook case of sex discrimination. Harrah's fired Darlene from her bartending job because she didn't adhere to the most extreme stereotypes of women. While employers are certainly allowed to have reasonable dress codes, Harrah's went too far. No one -- male or female -- should have to stick to sexist stereotypes just to keep their jobs," Pizer said.

"According to Lambda Legal, courts have been clear that employers cannot judge workers based on whether they conform to gender stereotypes rather than on their work performance. More than two decades ago, the same appeals court hearing this case said that an airline violated sex discrimination laws by setting different weight restrictions for male and female flight attendants to cater to customers who prefer women to conform to a particular appearance. The appeals court ruled similarly just four years ago.

"Lambda Legal's appeal on behalf of Jespersen argues that Harrah's Casino demeaned her as a person and held her to a higher standard of dress than her male coworkers. Lambda Legal argues that Harrah's "Personal Best" policy goes much further than what is reasonable because it is so extreme in requiring female bartenders to dress in such an ultra-feminine appearance, which is far more stereotyped and oppressive than what is usual in the casino industry.

Task Force accepting journalism internship applications now

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force is accepting applications for its Messenger-Anderson Journalism/Internship Scholarship Program for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students.

Self-identified LGBT high school seniors and undergraduate college students who plan to pursue a degree in journalism or communications at an accredited four-year college or university are encouraged to apply.

The Messenger-Anderson Scholarship Award is $5000 for the first year, followed by $2,500 each year for the next two years, bringing the award total to $10,000. Applicants must re-apply each year. Winners are required to participate in an eight-week Messenger-Anderson Scholarship Intern Program at one of the Task Force offices during the summer.

The postmark deadline for applications is February 24, 2005.

The Communications Team is responsible for educating the public about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues by articulating the Task Force's mission to build a grassroots political power through the media, by disseminating materials produced by the Task Force Policy Institute, and by responding to public information requests. By working to shape public discourse, the Communications Team contributes directly to the Task Force mission of advancing social justice.

The Messenger-Anderson Scholarships are intended to enable students to hone their skills in several areas of communications practice. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to: tracking news coverage of the Task Force, researching media opportunities, assisting with rapid response to breaking stories, writing and editing press releases, and updating websites.

Successful candidates should have strong communication skills both orally and in writing, and demonstrate a desire and commitment to work in a multi-cultural environment where commitment to diversity is required. Race, ethnicity, origin, gender, age, sexual orientation and physical ability is an important institutional value.

For application guidelines and to download an application, visit http://www.thet­askforce.org/aboutus/messenger.cfm.

The Messenger-Anderson Scholarship was donated by Larry Messenger and Jim Anderson in memory of Lawrence and Selina Messenger. The Messengers believed that there was a pressing need to encourage LGBT students to become more involved in shaping media coverage.

Fair coverage of LGBT issues impacts upon the basic premise that we are all created equal; however, media coverage today often begins with the discriminatory notion that equality for LGBT people is somehow a matter of debate.

By encouraging LGBT students to pursue journalism and by assisting them with their studies, the Task Force hopes to improve the way the LGBT community and movement are covered.
The Reverend Michael Hopkins of Two Saints

BY SUSAN JORDAN

The Reverend Michael Hopkins became pastor at St. Luke/St. Simon the Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitchburg St., in October. “Two Saints,” as it is known, has a long history of including light people, and the local combined chapter of Dignity Integrity (LGBT Catholics and Episcopalian) has met there since it began. D-I groups often refer to it as “the church with the pink steeple.”

Recently the Empty Closet had a chance to talk with Rev. Hopkins, the former national head of Integrity, the group for LGBT Episcopalians, who was involved in assisting the Rev. Gene Robinson during the international controversy surrounding his election as an openly gay Bishop of New Hampshire.

Rev. Hopkins previously served at St. George’s in Glenn Dale, Md., which he brought from a small chapel and mission church into a full parish. He feels that one goal here in Rochester is to help two things to continue to be a downtown church, combining African American and white congregations.

Rev. Hopkins and his partner John Clinton Bradley had a service of blessing for their union last June in Glenn Dale. The presiding minister was the Bishop of Washington, the Rev. John Clark (who, incidentally, had been part of the funeral service for Ronald Reagan the day before).

Empty Closet: What has your experience been like so far?

Michael Hopkins: We’re thrilled to be here. Winter’s been kind so far. Nothing surprises me, since I grew up in San Juan County, but my partner is a native Floridian and he has much to bear.

EC: How does the church here contrast with your previous post in Maryland?

MH: It was in the suburbs of Maryland, outside Washington D.C. My parish there was about 20 percent gay and lesbian people – mostly suburbanites. Both of us have been surprised with the size of the gay and lesbian community in Rochester; it’s much larger than we anticipated.

EC: Can you describe your experiences as head of Integrity, especially during the time of Bishop Robinson’s election?

MH: I was president of Integrity for five years, from 1998 to 2003. It’s a volunteer job.

I was a consultant to the diocese of New Hampshire and helped them think through the national process. I didn’t have anything to do with the election. Once he was elected, he brought in several people he knew to help. As president of Integrity, I had to do a lot of media stuff, especially at the General Convention in Minneapolis in August 03.

On one hand, it was a rollercoaster, especially because of the allegations that surfaced at the last minute. At the same time, Gene’s calminess helped all of us greatly. He is remarkable and has the ability to remain centered in an extraordinary way. He has remained pretty unfappable since, with all the repercussions that continue to go on. He really spent most of his time doing his job. His understanding of his primary responsibilities is to New Hampshire.

MH: It seems that the sky hasn’t fallen. What is going on now within the church over this question?

MH: The sky hasn’t fallen. What is going on is continuing drama in the church’s life, wrestling with the question of who belongs. That’s been going on for centuries. The first incidents are in the New Testament, and the church has been struggling ever since.

Various elements of the Anglican communion have split various times in history.

EC: Have you and your partner considered getting legally married in Canada?

MH: If marriage was a civil right in this state, my partner and I would take advantage of that, for all the civil benefits that would come of it. I do certainly hope that eventually it will be possible. Going to Canada wouldn’t bring all the benefits here, and we’ve already done the spiritual side, so it seems redundant. Whether the church will ever get there is anybody’s guess. It’s a long, hard road.

Equalities in terms of equal treatment in the church is a viable goal, and is already going on in the Episcopal church.

EC: If a denomination is against holding marriage ceremonies for same sex couples, that would be their decision, but it’s hard to understand the opposition to civil marriages.

One has to keep hope and the determination to press on. There won’t be any possibilities for change if people give up, and that’s how I’ve dealt with life in the church as well.

MH: The fear is that once that happens, churches will somehow be forced to accept it. It will somehow become inevitable for them.

EC: What connections have you made within the LGBT community here so far?

MH: I’ve begun to do a little work with Interfaith Advocates, and the MOCHA Project. I just met with a local church this morning, talking about HIV/AIDS.

This is a parish merging a historically African American congregation with a white parish. St. Luke’s is the oldest Episcopal parish and the oldest public building in the city. It’s a majority African American congregation, but very mixed.

D-I meets here, and has ever since it was founded almost 30 years ago. We’ve been to a few of the meetings. Those folks have been very welcoming to me.

EC: What is your vision for the future of Two Saints during your time here?

MH: We’re working on that. I didn’t come here to tell them what to do, but to help them discern what their future is, and help them embrace the city. We’ve got to find ways to continue to be a downtown church, and maintain the diversity here, which includes sexual orientation. Gay folks have been welcome here for many years, if that wasn’t the case, I wouldn’t be here.

Where I could go in the country was somewhat limited. I’ve been Episcopalian since my college days, and I walk it with. I wasn’t really raised in a church. I’ve been Anglican for 15 years now.

EC: When I interviewed the Rev. Jen Crowe is right - the options are limited. One good thing about this is that those limitations are breaking down. For the most part, sexuality is not an issue here. Since the day I arrived we haven’t had to spend any time dealing with that issue. I just got right down to work.

EC: Were you discouraged by the election results or do you feel there is room for hope?

MH: There’s always reason for hope; no one gave died for life. Certainly I was discouraged by the election. There are a lot of problems with this administration on a whole range of issues, not just marriage rights.

One has to keep hope and the determination to press on. There won’t be any possibilities for change if people give up, and that’s how I’ve dealt with life in the church as well. The church has changed tremendously in the last 20 years—and a lot of people are very threatened by that.

EC: It’s scary that people are being taught that everybody they hold most sacred has to be aligned and identified with an extremist right wing political movement.

MH: One question we’re dealing with is, how does a progressive Christian community take an active role in reclaiming and proclaiming its understanding of the Christian faith? Among liberal-minded folks, there has been a certain calling of Christianity to the religious right.

The Rev. Gayle Harris, my predecessor, really solidified the merger between the two congregations, and I think she did an excellent job and really left a legacy of commitment to progressive Christian thinking. Ill
Don't let these cold winter days keep you from buying or selling. Call us today!

LITTMAN JEWELERS
(MARKETPLACE MALL ONLY)
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2005
10AM TO 7PM
VALENTINE’S DIAMOND & GEM SHOW

Don't forget that Special Someone on Valentine's Day. Custom Design something fabulous from our selection of settings, diamonds and gemstones. An appraisal service will be offered on this day. Littman interest-free financing available.

Littman Jewelers has donated loose gems to be given away at the Sweetheart Ball, February 12th.
The National Appeals ruled that Title VII of the 1964
law that recognizes transsexuals in their
condition, thereby allowing tax deduction
valid. The Religious Right has been embold­
ened by George Bush's slim margin of
victory, and claims a mandate to reshape the
tory and claims a mandate to reshape the
tory and claims a mandate to reshape the
tory and claims a mandate to reshape the

Seven transgendered delegates were elect­
ed to the Democratic National Convention. Through meetings with Democratic National Committee staff, participation within the GLBT Caucus, Convention events, their visibility within their state dele­
tegations, these seven placed a human face on the transgender community.

A U.S.-insurance company, Aetna, announced that companies could include sex realignment surgery as a covered ben­

The pace of transgender murders con­
tinued unabated with 21 reported murders in 2004, the latest a transgender prostitute
murdered in Hollywood by an off-duty Marine MP on Dec. 27. Following a high
speed chase, the Marine was killed by police officers when he pointed a pistol at them.
The trial of transrapist Israel Araujo, 17-year-old transsexual who was brutally murdered in 2003, ended in a mis­

There are a variety of support groups
that didn't exist years ago -- there is
something for everyone. But it is that
Group's responsibility to get themselves
out there and known and maybe help that
person that is trapped in a harmful situation or
has no where else to turn.

There might be need to be taken care of in
those cases where we might imagine as the
worst situations, and figure out a way to
reach them.

Who am I?

BY CANDICE BLEU
I stare in the mirror at the reflection look­
ing back at me. There is this strong pres­
ence that I cannot relate to. The image I see is foreign to me. It's not what I picture
in my head.
I feel different, out of place. I am not
sure what I am feeling or if it is something
that will pass.
But I know there is a burning need to
Be my whole life seems abnormal, no path
that will lead me to the answers that I seek.
I have looked at news articles, books, and
the media, hoping I could find something
that I should relate to. The idea was to
address these strong emotions and desires that are inside me. Maybe even put a face with a picture that would help me with what I am going through.
What is it?
Growing up as a child, it was an inno­
cence, a self expression, a need to be. My
family, community, and the churches had
made their beliefs very clear, due to their
upbringing, their culture and lack of educa­
tion as far as someone different and outside
their element was concerned.
It is all Black and White and no in between.
Boys are Boys and Girls are Girls.
Where do I fit in? Suddenly it became a
shame, and the fear was of being caught or
beaten, because I was told I am supposed to
act and be this way.
As I grow older to do some curiosity and
I question this belief. It only angers and
strengthens me against this dictatorship.
So begins my journey into self-explora­
tion and Identity. What is Identity? An
elementary characteristic. This is where we
start to evolve. Trying to identify with others
as a non binary individual rather than feel like
an outsider or abnormal. Am I the only one
going through this alone?
Even the smallest thing to someone else
is a major crisis for me. Trying to decide what is best to do. The built-up anxiety over what happens if I go in this one or that one. Trying to feel comfortable in clothes that make me feel whole as a
person, and yet still trying to blend into a
judgemental and sometimes hostile society.
Some have upend this game of Labeling. They judge you by your percep­
tion, prejudices, ignorance and hatred,
not wanting to understand, comprehend, or
even relate to the idea of who you are and
what your life encompasses. We are clas­
sified by our age, religion, race, gender,
sexuality, etc. Labeling is just a way to box
you into a category so the simple mind will
be able to identify you by their social, and
cultural standards.
There are many of us who hate labels,
but we can't help but find ourselves buying
into them whether we know it or not. You
won't fully understand someone until you
open yourself to discussion and educate
yourself and your community. There are
still people who think they are updated, but
use outdated terms that are hateful and
prejudicial.

Fig. Diyke, Sho-male, Crossdressers... these are words that most of mainstream America has been introduced to by not know­
whether they are technical, medical, or
just plain courteous. But how do you find a forum or group where you can share and
embolden a diversity of people that seek
to find their place, whether it is spiritually,
mentally, or physically?

On the other hand, not all was good in 2004: ENDA went nowhere in Congress with or without transgender inclusion.

Despite Senate passage and favorable House Motion to Instruct, a Congressional Committee Chairman killed the Hate Crimes amendment.

A Florida Appeals Court ruled that transgender people have the same constitutional rights as all other people. The ruling reversed the well supported lower court ruling that Michael Kantaris is male and not transgender.

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) issued immi­
igration law policy stating that CIS shall not recognize the marriage, or intended mar­riage, between two individuals where one
or both of the parties claim to have changed
their sex. Jiffy Javellana, Philippine husband of Donita Ganzon, has filed suit in Federal Court to overturn the CIS decision to refuse his application for permanent residency and to revoke his work permit. The CIS consid­
ered that Donita, a postop transsexual of 24,
years, is still a man and that the marriage
is, therefore, invalid. CIS officials invoked the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as between a man and a woman but without a scientific definition of man and woman.

A school district in Texas canceled its
event set to honor the GLBT community. The school board said the event, which was
also to include speakers, was not canceled
because of the school board's stance on the
issue. The district had previously canceled
the event because it was not in compliance with the district's policy on student
activities.

Seven transgendered delegates were elec­
ted to the Democratic National Convention. Through meetings with Democratic National Committee staff, participation within the GLBT Caucus, Convention events, their visibility within their state dele­
tegations, these seven placed a human face on the transgender community.

A U.S.-insurance company, Aetna, announced that companies could include sex realignment surgery as a covered ben­

The pace of transgender murders con­
tinued unabated with 21 reported murders in 2004, the latest a transgender prostitute
murdered in Hollywood by an off-duty Marine MP on Dec. 27. Following a high
speed chase, the Marine was killed by police officers when he pointed a pistol at them.
The trial of transrapist Israel Araujo, 17-year-old transsexual who was brutally murdered in 2003, ended in a mis­

There are a variety of support groups
that didn't exist years ago -- there is
something for everyone. But it is that
Group's responsibility to get themselves
out there and known and maybe help that
person that is trapped in a harmful situation or
has no where else to turn.

There might be need to be taken care of in
those cases where we might imagine as the
worst situations, and figure out a way to
reach them.
Randy G. Raetz, DDS
General Dentistry for the entire community including bleaching and cosmetics

WE ARE NOW IN OUR NEW OFFICE!!!!!!

Come check out our new modern office, offering patients the benefits of digital x-rays, intraoral cameras, and flat screen t.v.s in a relaxing and enjoyable environment.

2257 South Clinton Avenue
Westfall Park Medical Center
Rochester, NY 14618

(585)473-1550

New Patients Welcome
Evening & Saturday appts. available

Check us out on the web at www.drandyydds.com
Call for an appointment today!!

---

We’re Here For All Women!

Women have special needs. We can answer those questions that you may feel uncomfortable asking other health care providers. We care about you.

- Affordable gyn health care.
- Caring and friendly staff
- HIV and STI testing
- Confidential
- Insurance accepted

Planned Parenthood
of the Rochester/Syracuse Region Inc.
Toll-Free Helpline
1-866-600-6886
www.pprsr.org

---

“YOU MAY NOT ALWAYS FIND THE PERFECT PERSON... ...BUT WE HAVE THE PERFECT CHAIR—NO KIDDING”
A Day In The Life of the GAGV

So what's going on at the Gay Alliance?
The staff and board are getting on with the tasks of the new year.

DATE: Jan. 11, 2005
PLACES: The GAGV administrative office and Youth Center, 875 E. Main St.; The MOCHA Project, 107 Liberty Pole Way; The Gay Alliance Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

9 a.m. (below): Executive Assistant Cindi Eveleigh processes the day's donations to the Alliance at the office at 875 E. Main St., in the Auditorium Center.

10 a.m.: (right) Board President Emily Jones meets with Cynthia Woolbright of The Woolbright Group. The GAGV has enlisted Cynthia's expertise and creativity to design the year-long annual giving campaign for the agency.

11:30 a.m. (bottom) Alex Cobus, GAGV Anti Violence Project Coordinator, does a training for the MOCHA staff (including Cheryl Rivers, right) at 107 Liberty Pole Way.

Noon: (next page, top) Mary Ann Gaglio, Sweetheart Ball organizer, consults floral designer Charlie Lytle about floral arrangements for the GAGV dinner dance fundraiser on Feb. 12.

1:30 p.m. (next page, center) Youth Services Director Toby Greenfield works in her office in the Youth Center. The youth meditation group will be meeting tonight.

2 p.m.: (next page, below) Graphic designer Jim Anderson and EC intern Khanh Lao work on the February Empty Closet (photo by Susan Jordan).

4 p.m.: (this page, below right) Community Relations Director Todd Plank (left) works at the Community Center with volunteers for the GAGV Library. Atlantic 5.0 is the group which will be meeting tonight from 7 to 9 at the Center.

6 p.m. (next page, bottom) Cindi locks up the administrative office.

The Day in the Life actually ends at 9 p.m., as the Atlantic 5.0 group leaves the Community Center. Another day in the 33-year history of the GAGV is over... and tomorrow it will start all over again. ☣️
Wine Tasting
Wine Sense
749 Park Avenue
Rochester
Saturday
February 12,
2005
5 to 7 pm
$20 per person at the door.
All proceeds to benefit the
Rochester Gay Men's Chorus.

Buffalo Bars
ROAD TRIP
February 26, 2005
Meet at the Forum at 7:00 pm - Leave for Buffalo at 9:00 pm
Visit Allen St., Buddies - Return to Rochester at 7:30 am
Tickets available at OUTflish.
The Chorus Line: (585) 423-2650, cmit@rgmci.org
All profits to benefit Rochester Gay Men's Chorus.

Residential New and Old Work Specialists
Serving the Rochester Community for over 20 years

Ellenwood Electric
“We Do It Without Shorts”
Licensed
Fully Insured
Free Quotes
Office: 654-8642
Emergency: 202-0402
Fax: 224-8228
Multi-Faith event to look at visions for lgbt advocacy

The buzz is already starting among queer folks and their allies in churches and synagogues locally regarding the upcoming Rochester Multi-Faith Roundtable for Pride in the Pulpit on Feb. 28.

The Roundtable, which should draw 50-100 faith leaders in the community is scheduled for Feb. 28, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., at the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, 1100 South Goodman St. $10 charge to cover refreshments and lunch.

Pride in the Pulpit is one of four programs associated with the "Pride in Action" initiative launched in 2004 by the Empire State Pride Agenda. The other programs are: My Family, My Workplace, and My Union.

The goal of Pride in the Pulpit is to develop a network of leaders of faith to advocate for LGBT New Yorkers and our families. The work of the program and areas for ado To register or join as co-sponsor of the event, please contact Rev. William on CRCD's, 389-271-1320 x226, or wsatler@rc.edu or contact Chris Cormier, Community Organizer, Empire State Pride Agenda, ccormier@prideagenda.org 585-271-1320, www.prideagenda.org.

Universal service backs gay marriage

BY BRENDAN MCDONOUGH

People who pass by the First Universalist Church on Clinton Ave. downtown will have to wait a little longer to see the banner that reads, "Stand on the Side of Love, Support the Freedom to Marry." It flew down during a windstorm and is still being repaired.

Despite it not being up yet, dozens of members of the gay community attended a "Service of Love and Hope - In Support of Marriage Equality" on Dec. 17.

Through song and prayer, people of all ages and all backgrounds let their voices be heard. The Reverend George Tyger organized the event and says that after the November election there was a need for people to come together.

"There was a sense of disappointment and bewilderment about what direction things might be moving. People really needed a way to express that disappointment, but also to say we are still going to be moving ahead and we are not going to let this kind of thing set us back or stop us," he said.

Same sex couples cannot get married and because of that are denied more than 1,100 benefits and rights that heterosexual couples get automatically. Jen Fenner and her partner of 12 years, Margaret Nolan, have had to take additional steps to protect each other, including getting a will and power of attorney in the event something should happen to one of them.

"We would get married in a second if we could," said Nolan. For them, it is not as much about the word marriage as it is the rights that come with it. "Our biggest issue is not with the word marriage, it is with taking the word marriage to deny us rights," said Nolan.

For Paul Brew and his partner of seven years, Todd Plante, the service offered hope and a bright future. "We would get married in a heart beat, but we would not get mar­ried unless it is the real thing, we are not going to settle for a civil union and going to Vermont, we want the whole nine yards," said Brew. He said that one day he would like to bring his parents in from Texas and walk down the aisle.

"Never in the history of the United States has anyone proposed writing discrimination into the constitution, even for slavery they didn’t have an amendment saying it is OK to have slaves, now all of a sudden they are going to have an amendment saying it is OK to discriminate against gay people that is pretty radical," said Brew.

To make sure that does not happen, Rev. Tyger plans to hold more church services. "We need to educate people about what this is all about, so we can begin making the legal changes," said Tyger. In addition to changing the law, his goal is also to simply bring people together and show them that people in same sex relationships are no different from anyone else.

"There was a time, 60 years ago when interracial marriage was considered wrong, people said that marriage was only for people of the same race and that has changed. This is just one more step towards change and it will change, it is just a matter of keeping it up front and working at it," Rev. Tyger said.

Fisher Pride Union promotes diversity

Fisher Pride Union at St. John Fisher College welcomes all students and friends, regardless of sexual orientation, to join and promote acceptance of diversity on campus and in the community.

Fisher Pride is a support group that offers a safe place with other students you can relate to.

In joining, students will learn a lot about themselves, their peers, their society, and their community, and can help effect positive change in a variety of ways.

Contact Fisher Pride by email at pride@jfc.edu or visit the website at www.fisherpride.com.

The group meets every Thursday at 9:30 p.m. in the dining hall, located in Hafley Hall, just outside of the security office.

Mission Statement:

"Fisher Pride Union is a student organization whose mission is to promote and encourage diversity by fostering understanding in issues of sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity, and concerns of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Questioning community.

"We will strive to provide a safe environment for all those who identify as LGBTIQ, and their allies, while maintaining educational programs geared towards homophobia, heterosexism, sexual health issues, and respect for minority populations on the St. John Fisher College campus and throughout the community.

"In doing so, we shall provide a safe haven for open and honest discussion about these issues.

"We will also facilitate training, con­versation, awareness, and recognition of these concerns as they relate to academics, personal/social growth, politics and student wellness in relation to both the students and the faculty/staff of St. John Fisher College, and in the world."

Free mammograms

The Highland Hospital Breast Care Center and the Women's Health Partnership will be teaming up on Saturday, Feb. 12, to offer free mammograms to all women who are in need.

And, while appointments for this one day must, by nature, be limited, women will also be able to schedule their free mammogram at any other time that might be more convenient for them.

Highland Hospital's Breast Care Center and Women's Health Partnership are offering free mammograms to women without health insurance. It's Saturday, Feb. 12, 2005, 8 a.m. til 3 p.m. 1000 South Ave. Call 341-6080 to make an appointment.

Adoption support group is forming

Get support, learn about local resources and share stories. An adoption support group is now forming. This group is for individuals and families affected by adoption.

This group will cover adoption issues such as raising adopted children, adoptive family issues, cultural heritage, identity, loss, abandonment, low self-esteem, open adoption, sexuality, search, reunion, post-reunion relationships, and post-adoption issues. People can get support from the group, learn about local resources, and share stories at the group.

Facilitator BJ Douglas, CSW, LMSW, specializes in grief and loss, codependency and recovering from abuse. Douglas has worked with Adoption Triad members as a counselor for over 12 years. She received her Master's degree in Social Work in 1996 and worked with the Adoption Support Group and adoption support groups since 1992.

For more information, contact BJ Douglas at 787-2398.
Lynn Tavernese, Community Relations Director and then Acting Executive Director for the Gay Alliance, left the GAGV the first week in January to take up a position for the Gay Alliance, leaving the GAGV the first week in January to take up a position for the Gay Alliance. Her dynamic spirit and determination propelled us through a challenging time of transition. I look forward to continuing my professional association with Lynn and her partner Judy Cranston in their active roles on the GAGV board and various committees.

Youth Services Director Toby Greenfield commented, “Lynn stepped in to a challenging situation and handled it with great poise. She brought wonderful leadership skills to the GAGV and helped our staff come together during a difficult time. She will be sorely missed.”

Board President Emily Jones noted, “The Board of the GAGV is extremely grateful to Lynn Tavernese for accepting the role of Interim Director of the Gay Alliance during a time of significant transition. Lynn's ability to critically focus on the operations of the organization allowed the Board to quickly assess a very complex situation.

As a result of Lynn's ability to focus on the critical operational elements of the agency, the Board was able to make some very difficult but needed decisions that would strategically insure the longevity of the organization.

“Lynn worked tirelessly for several months providing the board with options for both near and long-term viability for the agency in the community. Lynn's exceptional leadership from both an operational and people perspective will be deeply missed. We wish Lynn all success in her newly chosen career opportunity and look forward to her working with us on many of our upcoming events.”

The GAGV staff and board expressed appreciation for all that Lynn has accomplished during her time at the agency. Her leadership, people perspective will be deeply missed. She did a tremendous amount of good for the agency and our community. I found her to be an inspirational leader with untiring energy and enthusiasm. I look forward to continuing my professional association with Lynn and her partner Judy Cranston in their active roles on the GAGV board and various committees.”

Youth Services Director Toby Greenfield commented, “Lynn stepped in to a challenging situation and handled it with great poise. She brought wonderful leadership skills to the GAGV and helped our staff come together during a difficult time. She will be sorely missed.”

Board President Emily Jones noted, “The Board of the GAGV is extremely grateful to Lynn Tavernese for accepting the role of Interim Director of the Gay Alliance during a time of significant transition. Lynn's ability to critically focus on the operations of the organization allowed the Board to quickly assess a very complex situation.

As a result of Lynn's ability to focus on the critical operational elements of the agency, the Board was able to make some very difficult but needed decisions that would strategically insure the longevity of the organization.

“Lynn worked tirelessly for several months providing the board with options for both near and long-term viability for the agency in the community. Lynn's exceptional leadership from both an operational and people perspective will be deeply missed. We wish Lynn all success in her newly chosen career opportunity and look forward to her working with us on many of our upcoming events.”
AVER veteran’s group to hold regional meeting here Feb. 12-13

AVER is a non-profit, chapter-based association of active, reserve and veteran service members dedicated to full and equal rights and equitable treatment for all present and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The group will hold its regional (NE U.S., including Ohio) conference in Rochester on Feb. 12-13 at the GACV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

“At some point the ban against gays and lesbians in the military will be overturned,” says James Darby, former national secretary of AVER. “American Veterans for Equal Rights has been working for 12 years to achieve this goal. Although we have suffered many setbacks, and lost a few battles, there have been some significant victories. The military, and the federal government have never been interested in giving us the same rights that everyone else in this country enjoys.”

“Gays and lesbians in this country enjoy a freedom today that was unimaginable just 25 years ago. Thanks to organizations like ACLU, Lambda, HRC, NLG/LP and others we have national support for our cause. Thanks to Service Members Legal Defense Network and the Military Law Task Force, gays and lesbians have somewhere to turn to for legal assistance.

“We are here speaking for our brothers and sisters in uniform who may not speak out. We are out there at Veterans functions letting them know who we are. We have confronted the Religious Right with people about us.

“Another goal I have for the Rochester Chapter of AVER (RAVER),” Stallman said, “is to support all of our active service men and women through this current conflict and to support our veterans where we can. I personally do not support this current conflict in Iraq, but do support all the men and women who serve honorably to protect our freedoms. Including our right to fight for equality to serve opening in our Armed Forces.”

The AVER Regional (NE US including Ohio) Conference is being held in Rochester, Feb. 11-13 at the GACV Community Center at 179 Atlantic Ave. AVER membership is open to veterans and supporters, so those who would like to do something for veterans and current service men and women will find this an opportunity to become a member. For more information please contact Tim Stallman at 585-507-3289.

Discover the Piano
Want to develop your keyboard skills?
Study with Jack Bradigan Spula, classical pianist

Eastman School of Music bachelor’s and master’s degrees
Years of experience as a teacher, soloist, and chamber musician

Former principal accompanist, Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus
All levels; half-hour or full-hour lessons available at Jack’s studio in the Ellwanger & Barry neighborhood.

Jack Bradigan Spula, 585-271-0255
jbspula@yahoo.com

Read Gay Liberation Theology!
A class is meeting Sunday mornings, 11:20am to 12:15pm, to read and discuss Courage to Love: A Gay Priest Stands Up for His Beliefs by Will Leckie and Barry Stopfer. Open to women and men, LGBT and straight.

Lake Avenue Baptist Church
A Welcoming & Affirming Congregation

Beautiful Homes at Affordable Prices

* 7 New Homes on Display
* Virtually Hundreds of Plans
* Choose a Model or Custom Order
* Single & Multi-Section Plans
* Ranch, Cape Cod or Colonial
* Spacious Community Sites
* Custom Land/Home Packages
* Complete Financing Services
* Better Business Member

Apropos Financial Planning

Fee-only
Kay Conheady, Principal

kconhead@aproposfp.com
www.aproposfp.com

Phone: (585) 533-1950
Fax: (585) 533-6400

AGL Homes

ASK ABOUT OUR SPECIAL BUYS & CURRENT INCENTIVES!

MODELS OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

(585) 226-2727

4305 Route 5 in Caledonia - Just 1 Mile West of Avon

www.aglhomes.com
Call the Gay CPA

Jean Thibodeau, CPA
(Certified Public Accountant)
Full service income tax preparation
Electronic filing
All other states available (that have an income tax)
 Corporations, Trusts and Partnership returns
Available year round for tax questions
Year end planning for the lowest legal tax

(585) 586-6160
Please call for an appointment
31 Putting Green Lane • Penfield, NY • 14526

Our Church welcomes you.
Regardless of race, creed, color, sexuality
or the number of times you’ve been born.
Whether you’ve been born once or born again, we invite you to come and join us
in the fellowship and worship of Jesus Christ.

St. Mark’s Episcopal Church
170 Main Street, Penn Yan, New York 14527
(315) 536-3955 • www.stmarks-episcopal-church.com
A Progressive Christian Community in the Anglican Tradition
A Welcoming and Inclusive Church • Commitment Ceremonies performed here
Holy Eucharist at 8 & 10 am every Sunday • Coffee Hour and Fellowship follows

Say “I love you” in a thousand ways

Over 1,000 Unique Handcrafted Gifts
Yes, and Jewelry!

Animas Traders
Latin American Arts and Crafts
975 South Clinton Avenue
(behind the Cinema Thruway)
(585) 271-4210
Tuesdays thru Fridays: 12-6
Saturdays: 10-5; Sundays: 12-5
(on the web at www.animastraders.com)

Get Married in Canada!
Unique, Personalized Marriage Ceremonies.

Same sex marriages are legal in Ontario Canada. The city of Kingston has become a
popular destination for couples who wish to solemnize their union and legally marry.
There is no waiting, blood test or residency requirements.

Weddings Kingston specializes in offering couples “all-inclusive” wedding packages and
chapel services. From the initial consultation to the honeymoon suite, we look after every detail: ceremony, flowers,
photography, accommodations and more.

Kingston is a picturesque, limestone city on the shores of Lake Ontario. It is serviced by numerous
international flights via Toronto.

Contact us and we’ll help you
with ALL the details.
toll free. 1.866.873.9654
e. info@weddingskingston.com
w. www.weddingskingston.com

CHECK OUT OUR NEW LOCATION

Without Fredrick’s...
Naughty & Nice
For Valentine’s Day
February 14
It’s Not A Secret!
244-3670

Adults Only

Whether you’ve been born once or born again, we invite you to come and join us
in the fellowship and worship of Jesus Christ.

St. Mark’s Episcopal Church
170 Main Street, Penn Yan, New York 14527
(315) 536-3955 • www.stmarks-episcopal-church.com
A Progressive Christian Community in the Anglican Tradition
A Welcoming and Inclusive Church • Commitment Ceremonies performed here
Holy Eucharist at 8 & 10 am every Sunday • Coffee Hour and Fellowship follows

Say “I love you” in a thousand ways

Over 1,000 Unique Handcrafted Gifts
Yes, and Jewelry!

Animas Traders
Latin American Arts and Crafts
975 South Clinton Avenue
(behind the Cinema Thruway)
(585) 271-4210
Tuesdays thru Fridays: 12-6
Saturdays: 10-5; Sundays: 12-5
(on the web at www.animastraders.com)

Get Married in Canada!
Unique, Personalized Marriage Ceremonies.

Same sex marriages are legal in Ontario Canada. The city of Kingston has become a
popular destination for couples who wish to solemnize their union and legally marry.
There is no waiting, blood test or residency requirements.

Weddings Kingston specializes in offering couples “all-inclusive” wedding packages and
chapel services. From the initial consultation to the honeymoon suite, we look after every detail: ceremony, flowers,
photography, accommodations and more.

Kingston is a picturesque, limestone city on the shores of Lake Ontario. It is serviced by numerous
international flights via Toronto.

Contact us and we’ll help you
with ALL the details.
toll free. 1.866.873.9654
e. info@weddingskingston.com
w. www.weddingskingston.com

CHECK OUT OUR NEW LOCATION

Without Fredrick’s...
Naughty & Nice
For Valentine’s Day
February 14
It’s Not A Secret!
244-3670

Adults Only

The Friendliest Gay Shoppe You’ll Ever Visit!
MORE Art • MORE Gifts • MORE Films • & MORE More

Come see us as we expand!
728 South Avenue, Rochester, New York 14620
585.242.7840
www.prideconnection.net
Mention this ad and receive 10% off one full-priced item thru February.
Offer excludes gift certificates, consignment art and rentals.
Temple Sinai
A Welcoming and Affirming Reform Jewish Congregation

February Service Schedule

Friday, February 4 .................................................. 7:30 PM
Friday, February 11 ................................................. 8:00 PM
Friday, February 18 ................................................. 8:00 PM
Friday, February 25 ................................................. 6:00 PM

363 Penfield Road, Rochester, New York 14625
Rabbi Alan Katz and Rabbi Amy Sapowith
(585) 381-6890 • www.tsinai.org

Hopefully you won’t buy each other the same thing again this year.
Happy Valentine’s Day!

John Magere
266-5565 x24
Nothnagle REALTORS®

KEN SALTZMAN
A PAINTER

654-6174
FREE ESTIMATES

Integrative Healing Arts Center
Massage Therapy at its Finest!

Couples Massage
Sunday Brunch-time Massage
Synchronized Massage

For more info
call 429.0223 or 429.0382
36 Winthrop Street
Rochester, NY 14607
healingarts@rochester.rr.com

The Secret Labs
www.thesecretlabs.com
• web hosting
• web design
• e-commerce
• personal
• professional
• affordable
• reliable

Share the Secret! (585 415-6918)

Auditorium Center
875 E. Main Street, Rochester

Commitment Ceremonies and Parties
Accommodating small groups to over 300 guests
• Cathedral Hall available for receptions •
• Large ornate conference and meeting areas •
• Ample on site parking •

BOOK YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW
For more information, call 585-423-0295

Park Ave*
Chiropractic & Wellness Center
379 Park Ave.
Rochester, NY 14607
(585) 271-5590

Headaches, Neck, Extremity or Low back Pain?
Effective chiropractic care with
an emphasis on posture and structure can HELP!

Now Accepting New Patients
No Referral Necessary

Most major insurances accepted including
Blue Choice, Aetna, Preferred Care, United Healthcare,
Worker’s Compensation and No Fault
Convenient payment plans and office hours available

CALL NOW TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT!
Serving the Park Avenue Community for 5 years
Yvonne Donnelly joins Empire State Pride Agenda board, urges others to get involved

BY SUSAN JORDAN

Yvonne Donnelly of Rochester has joined the board of the Empire State Pride Agenda, just in time for the Agenda’s annual Spring Dinner here, on May 21.

Donnelly told the Empty Closet, “I initially got involved with the Pride Agenda in 2000 through Duffy Palmer (co-chair). We got talking and he asked if I wanted to be on the dinner planning committee, and I did. About two years ago, he asked if I wanted to be on the board, but things weren’t right for me at the time. He asked again last fall, and the timing was just right for a number of reasons, so I said yes.”

Donnelly is employed by Insurance Worx, and her boss, Sam Mazzola, is gay. She said, “I think that with everything coming in line for me, especially working for a gay man, the time was right for me to take this on.”

Being a board member means committing to four meetings a year, three in New York City and one here, during the dinner weekend in May. Donnelly will also join a sub-committee, but has not yet decided which one. The March board meeting will be her first.

“Duffy mentioned the membership committee,” she said. “I don’t know if they have a special events committee, but that’s what I usually work on. When I get all the information in March, I’m sure I’ll be overwhelmed by it all.”

She said that ESPA could use more board members from the Rochester area. “I’d like to encourage several of my friends to get on the board,” she said.

When asked about the Pride Agenda’s top priorities, she said, “I would say the gay marriage issue is certainly something everybody’s mind is on when we’re talking about gay rights. I think it’s such an involved issue for people that everyone needs to get on the same page and work together, crossing party lines. Republicans and Democrats need each other in order to move forward.”

She noted also that although many people think domestic partnership benefits are safe, that is not necessarily true (see MCC lawsuit story on page 1). “Although it’s overshadowed by the marriage issue, it’s still in the forefront, and we still have a lot of work to do,” Donnelly said.

About the spring dinner, she commented, “I think it’s important for everyone to come out for the dinner. We try to reach and educate as many people as possible. Compared to the dinner in N.Y.C., we have a 50-50 gay-straight ratio, which is where a lot of the education piece comes into play. The more my community is educated about what’s happening in the gay community, the more we can start bridging those gaps.”

Donnelly said that the Pride Agenda New York dinner is generally attended by around 1,500 people, primarily gay men. In Rochester, she said, around 500 come to the spring dinner, half gay and half straight.

“The board is amazed every year at how many straight people we have,” she said.

The Spring Dinner on May 21 will take place at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center, with a reception at 6:30 p.m. in the Gallery. The dinner and program begin at 8 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom.

For more information about the Pride Agenda, or to become a Table Captain or Sponsor for the Spring Dinner, call Duffy Palmer at 585-243-9224 or Timothy Stahl at 212-627-0305. □
IN YOUR KEY WEST BONNET: The Key West Bonnet party held at the Bay Street Hotel in Sodus Point on Nov. 6 raised around $11,000 for AIDS Rochester. Hotel owners Anne and Doug McLoud have hosted the event for several years. PHOTOS BY PETER PARTS

WORLD AIDS DAY: Thomas Warfield (left) produced a World AIDS Day concert at Unity Church on Dec. 1.

QUEER EYES: The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus performed their winter concert, Queer Eye for the Holidays, on Dec. 10 and 11.
UNLEASHED: The Animal Planet Unleashed held a bash at Crobar on Jan. 5. The celebration hailed Animal Planet’s best pooch programming of the year. Jai Rodriguez (Queer Eye for the Straight Guy) gets kissed by a fan. PHOTOS BY DOUG MESZLER

CELEBRATING KWANZAA: 17th Annual Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two-Spirit, Transgender People of Color Community Kwanzaa celebration at the LGBT Center on Jan. 1. Pictured is Darnell Tyson of the Lavender Light Choir.

THE LAST BOOKSTORE CLOSES: NYC’s last remaining locally owned LGBTQ bookstore, Creative Visions, closed its doors in the West Village (Hudson St.) after 14 years, effective Jan. 2.

CT’s Image Creations!!
Gay owned and operated
585-339-9957
www.ctsimagecreations.com
image@froniernet.net
Order securely online
Specializing in Photo
Tee Shirts
Sweat Shirts
Hats
Mugs
Photo
Mouse Pads
Felt Posters
Calendars
Balloon-A-Grams
Keychains
Buttons
For All Occasions, Delivery Available
1805A East Avenue, Rochester 14610

Volunteers Needed:
We’ve already started planning the 2005 Rochester Lesbian & Gay Film & Video Festival and we could use your help!
We’ll be having an informal meeting on
February 28th at 7pm
Identity Out Office
Village Gate Square
where you’ll be able to speak with ImageOut board and committee members to see where your skills will best fit. Please plan on joining us!
You can find information on all our volunteer committees at
www.ImageOut.org

Join Us!
ImageOut 2005 Season Volunteer Kick-Off Meeting
YOUR GAGV PRESENTS
THE SWEETHEART BALL 2005
SALUTING HOLLYWOOD’S GLAMOROUS GOLDEN ERA
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH, 6PM-MIDNIGHT
ROCHESTER RIVERSIDE CONVENTION CENTER

THE EVENING BEGINS WITH COCKTAILS AND HORS D’OEUVRES IN THE RIVERSIDE COURT FROM 6 TO 7PM.
THE DOORS WILL THEN OPEN TO THE BALLROOM WHERE BASSI CALLY TREBLEMAKERS WILL PERFORM BIG BAND SOUNDS AND DJ CHUCK ARGENTO WILL SPIN A VARIETY OF YOUR FAVORITE HITS WHILE “CIGARETTE GIRLS” VISIT YOUR TABLE WITH SPECIAL OFFERINGS AS YOU DANCE ’TILL MIDNIGHT.

Sweetheart Ball Tickets
are $75 per person. The tickets are available at the GAGV office, 8th floor of the Auditorium Center until February 4. Tickets are also available from January 14 – February 6 at Outlandish Video & Gifts and The Pride Connection. All proceeds from this fund-raiser will benefit the programs and services of your Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley. Phone (585) 244-8640, Ext. 20 for more Sweetheart Ball information.

Pink Arrow Package
A Pink Arrow is a sure way to strike the heart (and attention) of that special someone at this year’s Sweetheart Ball while at the same time, making a valuable contribution to your Gay Alliance.
For $200, the Pink Arrow Package includes two Sweetheart Ball tickets, a long stem rose, a box of chocolates and sweet recognition in an upcoming issue of the Empty Closet.
Go Pink!

For Your Dining Elegance:

Hors d’oeuvres
Shrimp, along with passed hot and cold hors d’oeuvres.

Dinner (Please know your dinner choice when ordering tickets.)
Beef: Grilled top sirloin steak with portobello mushrooms and caramelized onions.
Chicken: Boneless breast stuffed with prosciutto ham, spinach sun-dried tomatoes, pine nuts, and parmesan cheese topped with fresh basil cream sauce.
Fish: Grilled salmon with a honey dijon glaze.
Vegetarian: Layered puree of broccoli, cauliflower and carrot each separated by a light crepe and presented on a red pepper coulis.

You need not have a sweetheart to attend the Sweetheart Ball. If you do not currently have a sweetheart, we will help you find one.
For all Singles, (if you chose), we will have something for you to wear so you may find your Sweetheart.

Littman Jewelers
Loose Gems provided by Littman Jewelers, valued at over $800, will be raffled off at the Sweetheart Ball.
GAGV Member discounts available on-line through PayPal only.
The Empty Closet
Have you got the scoop?
Show it with the rest of the gay community! The Empty Closet is always looking for information regarding events and social activities. If you know something, send it to us. Submissions are due by the 15th of each month at The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St., Suite 500, Rochester, New York 14608, or phone: 244-9030. Email: emptycloset@gagv.us.

COLUMNS
Misadventures in Boyland
Travels to New York to interview Janet Maslin.
Page B5

Sin-cinnati?
Travel across the Twin Cities explores the historical city on the Ohio River.
Page B10

ENTERTAINMENT
Portraits
Mark De Watara’s Portraits will be performed on Feb. 11 at the Museum & Balance Center.
Page B2

by Ove Overmyer
For all you folks who grew up in Catholic schools across the country, you certainly don’t need to be reminded of how guilt and fear were utilized as manipulative tools for controlling your behavior. Rochester born Alison Smith’s gripping debut memoir, Name All the Animals, ( Scribner, 2004) whose title takes its cue from the biblical reference, is far from the melancholic pain one might expect when conjuring up some of those forgettable memories. However, as it unfolds, her book is anything but forgettable. The story of her teenage years lets us in on the extraordinary account of the way her family coped with the accidental death of her brother, Roy, their grieving as a family, her coming of age, and the secret same sex proclivities that characterized her early identity. She accomplishes all of this without a trace of self-pity, rising above the sadness and heartbreaks with poignant, formidable optimism. As a matter of fact, at times this book can be downright funny. It would also be deplinquent of me not to mention the many local references to growing up in Rochester. New York -- like outdoor skating at Allen’s Creek, which gives the setting an added, distinctive charm. The New York Times’ Janet Maslin called the book “literary and precise.” Noted author David Schickler said, “The grief in this book is the size of Goliath...Ms. Smith with scrappy, unsentimental grace, battles her giant and wins our spectator hearts. Her brother Roy, her school days at Mercy, her prose, her candor -- all are lean and vital. Alison Smith is a cool warrior of a writer, but wants to make us hug her and her story... and we do.” Alison Smith was born in Rochester 36 years ago. She hail's from a long line Smith continued on page 3.

Alison Smith talks about her acclaimed memoir, Name All the Animals
Alison Smith’s memoir deals with death, family, the nuns who were her teachers, and coming of age as a lesbian in Rochester. The book has received outstanding reviews and a series of awards.

Coming Up
Meg Gehman and new band will do benefit for GAGV Youth Group
Meg Gehman, well known for her rock group Meg and the Claims, has started a new band, This Other Life. They will appear at a benefit concert for the GAGV Youth Group on March 19.
Youth Services Director Toby Greenfield said, “We really appreciate Meg’s help and generosity. She and This Other Life are making a major contribution to our youth. And it should be a terrific concert.”
The concert will take place at the GAGV Youth Center, 875 E. Main St., first floor, at 8 p.m. Tickets are $5. For more information, call 244-8640 ext. 13, and see the interview with Meg in the March Empty Closet.

RGMC plans wine tasting, Buffalo clubs trip
Are you a true wine aficionado, or perhaps just a casual enthusiast? The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus is hosting a fundraiser that everyone, from novice to professional sommelier, will enjoy. Valentine’s Wine Tasting Benefit will be held on Saturday, Feb. 12, from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Wine Sense, located at 749 Park Ave. A donation of $20 at the door not only includes many scrumptious samplings, but also entitles you to a souvenir Wine Sense tasting glass.
Additionally, you will receive 20 percent off all of your purchases during the wine tasting. For more information, email the Chorus at info@thergmc.org, call 585-423-0640, or visit the website at www.thergmc.org.
Do the cold winter days seem to be dragging you down? Are you looking for something to do that’s a little wild, a little crazy, and just down-right fun? Join the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus as they beat the winter blues with a Buffalo Bar Bus Trip!
This fundraising evening starts with a special happy hour on Saturday, Feb. 26, from 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. at The Bachelor Forum, located at 670 University Ave. At 9 p.m. participants board a comfy warm bus to Buffalo to begin a bar-hopping bonanza!
First stop is Allen Street, the gay village of Buffalo, and then the group will head over to Buddies, which is also within walking distance of several other gay dance clubs and bars.
After the bars close at 4 a.m., the group will stop for breakfast in Buffalo before heading back to arrive at The Bachelor Forum at 7:30 a.m. “Door” prizes will be given away on the bus and drink specials will be offered. Don’t forget a pillow for the ride back. For only $25 you can join RGMC on what is sure to be a fun-filled evening! Tickets are available at Outlandish, located at 274 N. Goodman, or by calling The Chorus Line at 585-423-0640. For more information please email Elier Ruiz at euel@thergmc.org or give the group a ring on The Chorus Line.
For more upcoming events, see the RGMC article in the groups pages, Section C.

GRRC wins grant for “Portraits”
Greater Rochester Repertory Companies, Inc. is proud to announce that they have been awarded a grant of $3,500 for producing Portraits, an original musical revue by Mark DeWaters. It will premiere on Feb. 11. The Arts & Cultural Council for Portraits continued on next page.

The Rochelettes do “I Hate Christmas” at the winter concert, Dec. 11.

The Empty Closet
Have you got the scoop?
Show it with the rest of the gay community! The Empty Closet is always looking for information regarding events and social activities. If you know something, send it to us. Submissions are due by the 15th of each month at The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St., Suite 500, Rochester, New York 14608, or phone: 244-9030. Email: emptycloset@gagv.us.

COLUMNS
Misadventures in Boyland
Travels to New York to interview Janet Maslin.
Page B5

Sin-cinnati?
Travel across the Twin Cities explores the historical city on the Ohio River.
Page B10

ENTERTAINMENT
Portraits
Mark De Watara’s Portraits will be performed on Feb. 11 at the Museum & Balance Center.
Page B2

by Ove Overmyer
For all you folks who grew up in Catholic schools across the country, you certainly don’t need to be reminded of how guilt and fear were utilized as manipulative tools for controlling your behavior. Rochester born Alison Smith’s gripping debut memoir, Name All the Animals, (Scribner, 2004) whose title takes its cue from the biblical reference, is far from the melancholic pain one might expect when conjuring up some of those forgettable memories. However, as it unfolds, her book is anything but forgettable. The story of her teenage years lets us in on the extraordinary account of the way her family coped with the accidental death of her brother, Roy, their grieving as a family, her coming of age, and the secret same sex proclivities that characterized her early identity. She accomplishes all of this without a trace of self-pity, rising above the sadness and heartbreaks with poignant, formidable optimism. As a matter of fact, at times this book can be downright funny. It would also be deplinquent of me not to mention the many local references to growing up in Rochester. New York -- like outdoor skating at Allen’s Creek, which gives the setting an added, distinctive charm. The New York Times’ Janet Maslin called the book “literary and precise.” Noted author David Schickler said, “The grief in this book is the size of Goliath...Ms. Smith with scrappy, unsentimental grace, battles her giant and wins our spectator hearts. Her brother Roy, her school days at Mercy, her prose, her candor -- all are lean and vital. Alison Smith is a cool warrior of a writer, but wants to make us hug her and her story... and we do.” Alison Smith was born in Rochester 36 years ago. She hail’s from a long line Smith continued on page 3.

Alison Smith talks about her acclaimed memoir, Name All the Animals
Alison Smith’s memoir deals with death, family, the nuns who were her teachers, and coming of age as a lesbian in Rochester. The book has received outstanding reviews and a series of awards.

Coming Up
Meg Gehman and new band will do benefit for GAGV Youth Group
Meg Gehman, well known for her rock group Meg and the Claims, has started a new band, This Other Life. They will appear at a benefit concert for the GAGV Youth Group on March 19.
Youth Services Director Toby Greenfield said, “We really appreciate Meg’s help and generosity. She and This Other Life are making a major contribution to our youth. And it should be a terrific concert.”
The concert will take place at the GAGV Youth Center, 875 E. Main St., first floor, at 8 p.m. Tickets are $5. For more information, call 244-8640 ext. 13, and see the interview with Meg in the March Empty Closet.

RGMC plans wine tasting, Buffalo clubs trip
Are you a true wine aficionado, or perhaps just a casual enthusiast? The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus is hosting a fundraiser that everyone, from novice to professional sommelier, will enjoy. Valentine’s Wine Tasting Benefit will be held on Saturday, Feb. 12, from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Wine Sense, located at 749 Park Ave. A donation of $20 at the door not only includes many scrumptious samplings, but also entitles you to a souvenir Wine Sense tasting glass.
Additionally, you will receive 20 percent off all of your purchases during the wine tasting. For more information, email the Chorus at info@thergmc.org, call 585-423-0640, or visit the website at www.thergmc.org.
Do the cold winter days seem to be dragging you down? Are you looking for something to do that’s a little wild, a little crazy, and just down-right fun? Join the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus as they beat the winter blues with a Buffalo Bar Bus Trip!
This fundraising evening starts with a special happy hour on Saturday, Feb. 26, from 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. at The Bachelor Forum, located at 670 University Ave. At 9 p.m. participants board a comfy warm bus to Buffalo to begin a bar-hopping bonanza!
First stop is Allen Street, the gay village of Buffalo, and then the group will head over to Buddies, which is also within walking distance of several other gay dance clubs and bars.
After the bars close at 4 a.m., the group will stop for breakfast in Buffalo before heading back to arrive at The Bachelor Forum at 7:30 a.m. “Door” prizes will be given away on the bus and drink specials will be offered. Don’t forget a pillow for the ride back. For only $25 you can join RGMC on what is sure to be a fun-filled evening! Tickets are available at Outlandish, located at 274 N. Goodman, or by calling The Chorus Line at 585-423-0640. For more information please email Elier Ruiz at euel@thergmc.org or give the group a ring on The Chorus Line.
For more upcoming events, see the RGMC article in the groups pages, Section C.

GRRC wins grant for “Portraits”
Greater Rochester Repertory Companies, Inc. is proud to announce that they have been awarded a grant of $3,500 for producing Portraits, an original musical revue by Mark DeWaters. It will premiere on Feb. 11. The Arts & Cultural Council for Portraits continued on next page.

The Rochelettes do “I Hate Christmas” at the winter concert, Dec. 11.
Entertainment News
BY SHERRAIL FULGHUM

GRRC presents Portraits
The Greater Rochester Repertory Companies (GRRC) will present the premiere of Portraits— an original musical revue by composer and lyricist Mark De Waters. Thanks to a $5,500 grant awarded by The Arts and Cultural Council of Greater Rochester, GRRC is able to continue sponsoring the talents of local authors and composers.

Portraits will premiere on Feb. 11 at the Rochester Museum and Science Center. The show begins at 10 p.m. Portraits will also be performed at STAGES 3 in the Auditorium Center, 875 E. Main St., on April 8, 9, 15, and 16. For further information contact Diane Naccitelli at 585-624-8360 or grrc@rochester.com.

Drag Kings
Drag King Carlos Las Vegas is researching drag king names for a project to be published. Any drag king who would like to participate in the project contact him at carlos_lasvegas@yahoo.com.

And for those who like to plan ahead, International Drag King Extravaganza 7 (IDKE) will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada this year. The dates are Oct. 20-23, 2005.

Etheridge update
Melissa Etheridge will make her debut with Olivia Cruise Lines in May on their Eastern Caribbean Cruise, April 3-10. An auction for tickets on the cruise, an autographed guitar, and a meet and greet with Melissa is being offered on her website at www.melissaetheridge.com.

The proceeds from the auction go to the Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation for breast cancer research.
of blue collar workers and educators—she was supposed to be a teacher herself, get married, keep the faith... so to speak.

"Both of my parents were not too keen on me becoming a writer. It was not in our culture. We became school-teachers. My dad worked at the factory."

Alison eventually graduated from Brown University with a B.A. in Comparative Literature. "It's not as if this education and career direction have caused any distance between Alison and her father, you see. "He's very excited now. He really, really loves the book."

When I did a reading in Rochester last year, he brought 55 of his closest friends. "Sady," Smith's mother passed away in April of last year.

Just after the reading she caught up with the roaming author by phone from her home near Prospect Park in Brooklyn. She just returned from a short retreat, hiking the National Parks of Costa Rica.

We have traded emails before, but when we finally heard each other's voices, I felt like I was talking to a dear old friend I saw just yesterday. Her tone was warm and familiar.

"In Name All the Animals, I wasn't so concerned about it in terms of selling points or having a specific audience. Whether people interpreted the book as a coming-of-age, grief memoir, coming-out memoir, it really didn't matter in the creative process. I just wanted to stick close to my experience and tell my story."

She added, "I also think this book is a love story. I was madly in love with Teresa Dinovelli, and I was lucky because the first person I romantically kissed was somebody who was my peer. I felt so emotionally and intellectually connect- ed to her. It was true love, and when stumbling around in high school behind statues of the Virgin Mary, it's rare to get that. This should be celebrated. I was happy to tell this story."

"In Name All the Animals, Alison guides us through the hallways and classrooms of Our Lady of Mercy School for Girls. The narrative is rife with comic foibles and misadventures involving sexual exploration behind Our Lady of the Broken Toes statue, discovering the sisters' secret swimming pool, and falling asleep with a girlfriend in the dean of discipline's bed. The nuns are depicted in all their heavenly glory. It reminded me of my own experience with "Sister Mary Knuckles," who would swat my hand if I gave her a wrong answer. I still loved her to death anyway."

The Catholic sisters that Alison depicts in her story ebb and flow from jocular calamity to sweet soul-searching sympathies of divine intervention. They also grab lightning bolts from the sky and perpetuate homophobia with horror. Our book may help some teenagers who would swat my hand if I gave her a wrong answer. I still loved her to death anyway.

"The Catholic sisters that Alison depicts in her story ebb and flow from jocular calamity to sweet soul-searching sympathies of divine intervention. They also grab lightning bolts from the sky and perpetuate homophobia with horror."

The Catholic Church, which is conservative in its approach to sexuality, is also involved in the publishing process. "In Alison's life, she told me she has no plans to translate and distribute the memoir in six countries as well. As much as her readership would like to know about the next chapter in Alison's life, she told me she has no timetable for a sequel. She does, however, have plans for fiction, which she explains as a "liberating gesture."

"I love that you get to make everything up," she said. "Getting lost is a big part of my writing process—you've just got to get into the voice, the characters wherever they take you."

Alison Smith is presently making arrangements for another book tour promoting the release of the paperback due out this month. "Any chance Rochester is on that map?" I questioned. "As a matter of fact, I would very much like to visit Rochester, especially to meet with the youth community. Besides, I could visit my Dad. He still lives there."

Ultimately triumphant, Alison Smith has created a necessary gift for those who are still searching for meaning from loss of a loved one. This is also a story about the power of sibling love and loyalty, delivered in clear-eyed prose.

I would find it hard to imagine any reader not being profoundly touched by her story of love and lifespan. Author David Schickler nailed it when he said that after reading this book, the author was just trying to make the audience reach out and hug her and her story. We, the readers, were right—since then I haven’t let go.

Alison Smith is presently making arrangements for another book tour promoting the release of the paperback due out this month. "Any chance Rochester is on that map?" I questioned. "As a matter of fact, I would very much like to visit Rochester, especially to meet with the youth community. Besides, I could visit my Dad. He still lives there."

Ultimately triumphant, Alison Smith has created a necessary gift for those who are still searching for meaning from loss of a loved one. This is also a story about the power of sibling love and loyalty, delivered in clear-eyed prose.

I would find it hard to imagine any reader not being profoundly touched by her story of love and lifespan. Author David Schickler nailed it when he said that after reading this book, the author was just trying to make the audience reach out and hug her and her story. We, the readers, were right—since then I haven’t let go.

Alison Smith is presently making arrangements for another book tour promoting the release of the paperback due out this month. "Any chance Rochester is on that map?" I questioned. "As a matter of fact, I would very much like to visit Rochester, especially to meet with the youth community. Besides, I could visit my Dad. He still lives there."

Ultimately triumphant, Alison Smith has created a necessary gift for those who are still searching for meaning from loss of a loved one. This is also a story about the power of sibling love and loyalty, delivered in clear-eyed prose.

I would find it hard to imagine any reader not being profoundly touched by her story of love and lifespan. Author David Schickler nailed it when he said that after reading this book, the author was just trying to make the audience reach out and hug her and her story. We, the readers, were right—since then I haven’t let go.
Lake Avenue Baptist Church

A Welcoming & Affirming Congregation Invites you!

9:45am
Sunday morning worship service

11:15am
Class on LGBT liberation theology

Childcare and Sunday School for children are available

Lake Avenue Baptist Church is located just off Lake Avenue near the stop light at 145 Lake Avenue.

For more information phone: 585-458-5765
Those little bi-curious guy. What my dad tells my friend to be is if I'm your personal stalker, you can see Lover Boy. A dick because it rhymes with Lick. Disco era drugs? no, thank you. For that special troll in my life, I'm a mom and pop business. They give their customers well. They give them love. When I love, I'm knee-deep in Conversation Hearts -- those little hard-as-pebbles, pastel colored, heart shaped bears of Valentine sayings such as Be Mine and Only You. I go to Spanish Harlem, the Met and a slew of movies.

And when I come home on New Year's Eve, my car is my dining room. All is right with the world once again. Order, elusive as it may be, has for the time being, been restored.

Email ELBACAD88BEDU

Misadventures in Boyland

Tell it to My Heart

It's less than two weeks after the start of the new year. I already have a chalky aftertaste in my mouth that will last me the rest of the winter. That's right! I'm knee-deep in Conversation Hearts -- those little hard-as-pebbles, pastel colored, heart shaped bears of Valentine sayings such as Be Mine and Only You.

Conversation Hearts, originally called Momo Hearts, were created in 1866 (I think they were all made in 1866 in this century since I've never come across one that wasn't as hard as a fossil) by Daniel Chase, brother of NECCO founder Oliver Chase.

NECCO, the New England Confectionery Company (founded in 1857) brought us such candy gems as Mary Jane and the Clark Bar. Obviously the makers of this candy are responsible for half the chipped teeth and lost fillings in America since the Civil War. I wouldn't be surprised if Union soldiers used the little hearts in lieu of bullets when ammo supplies were low. I bet today the company gets a cut of the profits from the American Dental Association. (One hand washes the other, if you know what I mean.)

According to NECCO's web site, approximately eight billion of the little candy hearts are produced annually. That's a lot of hearts, and that's just the dances. And each year about 10 new phrases are designed for public consumption. Last year's favorite was: I Love You, 3 Wishes, Ever After, and New Love.

As I dug through a bag of Conversation Hearts, childhood memories of my grandparents for me to put into practice, albeit a tad randomly, some of my often espoused blather about letting someone know I love them. I never made a wish, as I wise up, although that breakthrough did arise upon which cash will have no meaning. The opinions of columnists, editorial writers and other contributing writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or The Empty Closet.

The car shop manager has given me his sister's address. She lives in Connecticut and she is a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

I have known this dealer for many, many years of schlepping in the driveway and clawing into the glove compartment searching for the owner's manual. "Stop. Do not drive." Back inside I comforted the dealer.

Now these folks are marvelous. It is my third purchase from them, a rather expensive off-brand luxury car that with some quips I decided I deserved after many, many years of schlepping in economy heaps. In recent years I have become auto-erotic.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

I have known this dealer for many, many years of schlepping in the driveway and clawing into the glove compartment searching for the owner's manual. I mean, these folks are marvelous. It is my third purchase from them, a rather expensive off-brand luxury car that with some quips I decided I deserved after many, many years of schlepping in economy heaps. In recent years I have become auto-erotic.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.

Buy upscale once and you shake up your boots. Do I deserve this car? What will the friends I poor mouth to think now? This senseless fades away fairly quickly. Buy a second car from the same dealer and you realize you are a valued patron. Buy the third time you need something done and you shake on it. I say. She's very reliable.
be wasn’t paying attention.

Let It Be: What you should do when you find an angry pimple on your forehead right before you go out on a date.

So Fine - A description of an attractive black man. Or the description of thinning hair.

First Kiss: Virgin. Let’s Kiss - Making out. Got Love - This reminds me of the "Got Milk?" ad campaign. It seems kind of needy.

Real Love - The opposite of an online hook-up.

True Love - Love before it becomes tainted with jealousy and envy. Sure Love - Love you can bet on like Venus.

Making out. I wish John Kerry had beat George Bush in the presidential elections.

The whole country would stop blaming gays for John Kerry's loss.

I wish gay people could see that we have to continue our fight for marriage, regardless of how unpopular it might make us with some voters.

I wish my right to love wasn’t up for debate.

New Love - My new boyfriend, because you gave me crabs!

Marry Me - Hopefully something we will all be able to do legally in the near future.

After eating about 10 pounds of the little rice cake chalk, I wondered what the new 2005 phrases were, so I called NECCO, but was told that it was far too early for them to release the new sayings to the public (they were to be announced after the date my column was due). Yeah, heaven forbid that information ends up in the hands of terrorists. But maybe I’m just being a Venus.

Email: Misadventuresinboyland@hotmail.com

THE EMPTY CLOSET

BY MUBARAK DAIM

Wishes for 2005

It is an annual ritual that in the first column of each year, I make a wish list of what I hope for in the coming year. Some of it’s whimsical, some of it’s personal, some of it’s political.

All of it is heartfelt.

I wish I wasn’t feeling a year older.

I wish gay men weren’t so unrelentingly focused on age and beauty.

I wish I were more beautiful.

I wish gay men weren’t so obsessed with the culture of the gym.

I wish I could go to the gym more.

I wish men online wouldn’t ask me my "stats," and mean they cared more about the size of my biceps or the size of my penis than the size of my heart.

I wish I had bigger biceps.

And a bigger penis.

I wish I spent less time online.

I wish to focus less on searching for sex and love, and more on focusing on friendships. Lovers come and go, but real friends are wish you for a lifetime.

I wish the men I wanted to have sex with were the same ones I wanted to date.

I wish I had more dates.

You didn’t really think I was going to wish for less sex, did you?

I wish you could tell by looking that someone was funny or smart or interesting, as easily as you can tell if you find them attractive.

I wish I’d find a lover to share the last half of my life.

I wish I didn’t have to go to Massachusetts if I wanted to get married.

I wish John Kerry had beat George Bush in the presidential elections.

We will all be able to do legally in the near future.

Female Ejaculation, Demystified!

By Alicea Frazer, Columnist, Planned Parenthood of the Rochester/Syracuse Region

Has anyone ever asked if you can "squirt?" Have you or your lover ever had a wet spot on the bed and wondered how it could possibly be so large? Female ejaculation is a completely normal sexual response experienced by approximately one in five women, some recent studies speculate that as many as 50 percent of all women may be capable of female ejaculation with some practice.

Female ejaculation was depicted in Indian and Chinese sex books such as The Karma Sutra of Vanyana and Secret Methods of the Plain Girl as far back as 500 B.C. Ancient Greek physicians wrote of glands surrounding the female urethra (urethral sponge) that emit prostatic-like secretions, later identified by anatomists in the Renaissance. So why all this mystery around female ejaculation?

Many women may have experienced ejaculation and not known what it was. Twenty-five percent of American women never have orgasms during sexual play, perhaps because they hold back in fear of wetting the bed, believing they are urinating when they may actually be ejaculating. To this day, doctors prescribe drugs and perform surgeries to "suppress" the urge to urinate during sexual stimulation. In 1991, sexuality researcher Beverly Whipple published research and a medical film depicting female ejaculation — that many doctors continue to dismiss despite increasing evidence.

It is believed that there is a direct correlation between the infamous G Spot and ejaculation, although some women say they can ejaculate in a generate state of sexual arousal. In most instances, direct, firm, yet gentle massaging pressure must be applied to the G Spot, which can be found one to three inches inside the front wall of the vagina — towards your belly button.

(Plan to urinate before you attempt this so you don’t worry about it happening while you are experiencing female ejaculation.)

Notice an area the size of a lime bean that is soft and smooth, rather than textured like the rest of your vagina, that is your G Spot Sually when you are already sexually aroused, since blood will be rushed to the urethral sponge, causing it to become enlarged - this will allow you to find it. The urethral sponge is directly behind the G Spot and surrounds the urethra. (The urethral sponge, that is soft and smooth, is expelled through the urethra.)

All women have a G Spot, although sensitivity varies. As you begin to firmly massage your G Spot, you probably will feel the sensation to urinate, Ride out this sensation, it means you’re getting close. Relax your pubococcygeus (PC) muscles in your vagina and enjoy the sensation, try pushing out and contracting your PC muscle. Women who have well toned PC muscles tend to ejaculate more easily. You can strengthen your PC muscles with exercises.

{For an upcoming column on PC muscle exercises.}

The amount of ejaculate varies from woman to woman, from a few drops to, more commonly, a few teaspoons. The website Clinor.us states that female ejaculation can amount to as much as five cups! Many women don’t know they have ejaculated because it’s just a few drops, but find it pleasurable nonetheless. Part of learning to ejaculate is learning to relax, being willing to explore and having fun. You may want to pur a towel down or try using a waterproof mattress pad. If you achieve ejaculation and are skeptical about what the fluid is, sniff it. Female ejaculation is a clear alkaline fluid that looks like watery skim milk with no smell and can taste slightly salty or sweet. It feels thin like water, as opposed to normal,
silly vaginal mucous. It can dribble or squirt out and is often documented in one woman to project 10 feet.

More research needs to be done on how the fluid is produced, but it is believed to come from a collection of 30 small parietal glands surrounding the urethra, emptying into many small ducts that exit through the urethra. Chemical analysis of female ejaculate proves that it is not urine, and contains glucose and prostatic acid phosphate, an enzyme present in male prostatic secretions.

Ejaculation usually occurs as a result of a G Spot orgasm or stimulation. G Spot orgasms result in uterine contractions whereas more common "clitoral" orgasms produce vaginal contractions. Some women say their G Spot orgasms are more intense than clitoral orgasms, for most it just feels pleasurable. You can also use a number of G Spot toys which usually have a "hook" like shape to stimulate the G Spot, but for most, fingers or a dildo or a toy at the right angle works just fine. If playing with a dildo in a harness, try rear entry or have the partner who is being penetrated lie on her side with one leg drawn to her chest and enter from the rear for best G Spot stimulation and ejaculation potential.

If you can't ejaculate, don't fret. Work on strengthening your PC muscles and continue to explore. Some women have more, or bigger, glands than others and naturally produce more fluid. Prior infections can damage or scar your glands so that fluid can't come out. Vaginal birth can weaken or damage the health of the urethra, emptying into many small ducts that exit through the urethra. Chemical analysis of female ejaculate proves that it is not urine, and contains glucose and prostatic acid phosphate, an enzyme present in male prostatic secretions.

"How Safe is it at the TOP?"

HIV has been a concern for the health of the queer community for over two decades... and of particular importance to gay and bisexual men. Many beliefs about HIV are widely shared within our community... but as science learns more about the virus sometimes these beliefs must change. For example, traditional wisdom in our community has held that men are "tops" (the insertive partner during anal sex) are at very low risk. Recent scientific information is now telling us, however, that their risk might not be as low as they (or WE) have always thought. The belief that tops can't get HIV has always stemmed from the knowledge that the anus and rectum don't have the same skin cells on the outside of their penis that is also susceptible to HIV and the foreskin can trap fluid increasing risk. The implications of this information are very important for men who top -- especially when considering new medical data that has been released. A study recently published in "The Journal of Infectious Diseases" reported that rectal secretions have high concentrations of HIV. In fact, the study found that in some cases the amount of virus in these secretions were five times higher than in the patients' blood and 25 times higher than in semen. Additionally the same study found in that in HIV positive men who are taking medications to treat their HIV that virus levels in their rectal secretions (and sometimes semen) can remain high even when those levels are low or undetectable in the bloodstream.

For tops, bottoms and versatile alike knowing about your body, the health risks that exist, and keeping current on the latest information that can affect your health is a great way to... be queer, be proud, and be healthy! Erik Libey is the Gay Health Coordinator at AIDS Rochester, Inc. and can be reached at 442-2220 or by email at elibey@aidsrochester.org. An archive of previous articles as well as additional gay health information, can be found at www.aidsrochester.org/gayhealth.
**Women’s RESOURCES**

**HEALTH:**
- Monroe County Women’s Health Partnership, 111 Westfall Rd., Rochester NY 14622; (585)274-6978. Comprehensive breast cancer screening services for uninsured and underinsured women.

**Elizabeth Wende Breast Clinic,** 170 Bangs Drive, 442-8432. Dr. Wende Logan-Young and an all-woman staff provide mammograms.

**AIDS Rochester Women’s Health Outreach**
- 1350 University Ave., ARI has services for HIV positive women and others in the lesbian community. 442-2205.

**Community Health Network**
- 87 N. Clinton Ave. 244-9000; TTY (585)461-9025. HIV and Primary care medical services for HIV positive women, their negative partners and family members. OB/GYN, HIV pre-test and post-test counseling. Confidential or free HIV testing.

**Alternatives for Battered Women**
- 232-7303; TTY 232-1741, Shatter (women only), counseling. Lesbians, gay men welcome.

**Victim Resource Center of Wayne County**
- Newark N.Y. Hotline 800-455-1172; office (315)253-1171; fax (315)253-1169.

**Mary Magdalene House**
- Women’s Outreach center for HIV positive women and women at risk. 291 Logan-Young and an all-woman staff provides many programs.

**CULTURAL:**
- Rochester Women’s Community Chorus, 234-4441. (See Ongoing calendar).

**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., 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)422-2200/TTY; www.aldarocheater.org.

**ONLINE:**
- Rochester Dykes: www.dykes.com; e-mail aadirabodie@yahoo.com
- WOmen’s Center, 175 N. Clinton Ave. 546-7740.
- Butch-Femme Connection, Contact Kerry at 856-4619, or e-mail Drewsy@frankemael.com.
- Color Outside the Line Crew, Contact Jackie Williams, 462-4945.

**FREE CONFIDENTIAL ORAL HIV TESTING RESULTS IN JUST 20 MINUTES!**

Walk-In Hours:
- Every Week Mon. & Thurs. 5pm to 8pm
Planned Parenthood of Rochester and Genesee Valley offers testing and information. (585) 546-2959.

Threshold Youth Center provides confidential testing for young people ages 12-25. Fees on sliding scale; no one denied service. Threshold Center for Alternative Youth Services, 80 St. Paul St. 4:14-7:30. Free oral HIV testing Thursdays 2-4 pm, ages 12-25.

Rural HIV testing, anonymous and confidential, in Allegany, Livingston, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne or Yates Counties, call 1-800-992-6003.

Action Front Center (Action for a Better Community) Provides HIV prevention education and care management services. Training and technical assistance to service providers. Resource library open to public. All services free and confidential. Multicultural and bilingual staff. Jared Noble, program manager 33 Chestnut St., second Floor. Hours: 8:30-5 pm, Monday-Friday. 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 Hsu, 262-4330.

Anthony Jordan Health Center Prevention Counseling and Testing Program. Part of national initiative to increase testing among communities of color, targeting the GLBTI population. Provides prevention counseling, 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 Breidlove-Luttrell, (585)423-2822.

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

CDC National STD and AIDS Hotline

HIV/STD 1-800-222-HIV (1-800-222-4484) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Includes free and confidential counseling, and information for clients, partners, and health care providers. 585-234-7880, 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. All civil cases except divorce; no criminal cases. Ask to speak to someone in PILOR, 454-4040.

Health Association HART (HIV AIDS Resources and Treatment) Program. 250 East Ave. (585)222-3932. Provides housing assistance, acupuncture, massage, retail, support groups, referral services, Positively Alive (HIV - women's support network).

Westside Health Services, Brown Square Health Center, 175 Lyell Av. (585)464-6600, Woodward Health Center, 480 Genesee St. (585)340-4040. HIV/AIDS services, support, more.

McCree McCallister Wellness Center at Unity Health's Connection Clinic. (585)381-3000, 80 Genesee St., Bishop Kearney Bldg., 3rd floor. Full range of services, regardless of ability to pay. Caring, confidential and convenient.

Catholic Charities AIDS Services. A multicultural and b-lingual staff providing services to a diversity of people infected and affected with HIV/intensive home-based case management for all ages: a clinical crisis 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 (HIV) short term emergency assistance with rent/mortgage/utility payments and limited subsidized housing. 1145 E. Ridge Rd., Suite 24, Rochester NY 14622. (585)339-8800.


SANDYRELLA CLEANING SERVICES

Make your home or office sparkle like a castle.

Fully insured. Call for a free estimate today.

Sandy Jacques
(585) 787-2081 • Cell: (585) 762-4604
sandyrellaclean@aol.com

Russow Consulting

TARA RUSSOW, Ph.D.
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

120 Allens Creek Road
Rochester, NY 14618
(585) 442-4447
www.RussowConsulting.com

COUNSELING SERVICES ENERGY THERAPIES

MAXINE McDoNdAL
CSW-R, CASAC

(585) 244-9550

Ontario, NY and
1427 Monroe Ave., Rochester, NY 14618
WEB: HTTP://HOME.ROCHESTER.RR.COM/MA\XMC

314 7th Street • Pittsford, NY 14534
(585) 218-6825 • www.marksiewic.com

First Unitarian Church
Worship Services
Family Services
Religious Education Classes

1920 Winton Rd. South
Rochester, N.Y. 14619

Gay Health

Monroe County Department of Health STD Clinic
Phone: (585) 464-5928

Monroe Community College Student Health Services
Phone: (585) 292-2018 (MCC Students only)

Highland Hospital Nursing Staff
Hohart & Williams Smith College
Health Services
Phone: (585) 891-3800

Rochester Institute of Technology Student Health Services
Phone: (585) 475-2255 (FITT Students only)

Threshold Center for Alternative Youth Services
Phone: (585) 454-7530 (serving ages 12-25)

Women Gynecology & Childbirth Association, P.C.
Phone: (585) 244-3430 (Main Office)
List compiled by AIDS Rochester, Inc. Further information on this list and related gay health topics available at http://www.aidsrochester.org/gayhealth

This list is under construction, if you are a provider or恋人 of one who would like to be included in this directory, please call Erik Libey at 442-2220 for more information.
W-K-R-Me in Cincinnati

BY MERLE EXIT

Views from downtown Cincinnati’s tallest building, the Carew Tower (441 Vine Street), spanned the landscapes of both the city and Kentucky side of the Ohio River. A cool breeze was accompanied by echoing rock music emerging from the streets below, where a local band was performing in Fountain Square as the Tyler Davidson Fountain spewed its brightness.

I could see Mr. Adams on the left. It was the highest point in the city and where the Celestial Restaurant and Lounge (513-241-4455) offered a romantic setting and eclectic menu that included a roasted red and yellow beet salad, endive, watercress, radicchio, smoked bacon, baked goat cheese crouton, poached cherry tomatoes and walnuts with an olive vinaigrette oozed over it. My taste buds recalled the Dijon and rosemary buds of a young escapee named Caleb.

A few blocks north, the magnificent Arnoff Center for the Arts (513-241-2345) featured Gregory Harrison as Billy Flynn in a Broadway Across America’s production of Chicago. Magnificent theatre and the performance did not conjure up feelings of wanting to be in New York.

It was easy to spot Union Terminal and it wasn’t thoughts of Amtrak that left an impression, but rather the Cherry Museum Center (513-287-7900) with four major attractions. The Cincinnati History Museum featured “Cincinnati in Motion,” an impressive scale model of the city from 1900 thru the 1940s, with working trains, streetcars and inclines as well as a re-creation of the Cincinnati Landing in the late 1850s.

Live bats were presented and talked about at the Museum of Natural History and Science, but were not dwelling there when I strode through a re-created limestone cavern.

I didn’t have time to view the five-story wrap around screen of an OmniMax flick, but did check out the Discovery Children’s Museum. It would have been a perfect place to connect learning through hands on activities such as math, science, economics (buying groceries), health and sociology (learning about children from other countries).

Every major city has a few major art centers and after our short tour of Mr. Adams, we wended our way to the nearby Cincinnati Art Museum (513-721-ARTS), housing the new multi-million dollar international exhibit “Petra: Lost City of Stone”. I had seen this exhibit at the Museum of Natural History in New York, but this one appeared to be more extensive. Either that or I totally forgot my New York experience.

Barbecue. Ah, yes, the recalling of lunch at Montgomery Inn Boathouse (513-721-7427). Choice loin back ribs and a great BBQ sauce.

Need to walk it off. But instead we drove to Dayton to view the Dayton Aviation Heritage Center and U.S. Air Force Museum (937-255-2386). Although there was the Morphis MovieRide Theatre and IMAX Theatre, time was spent at the historic hanger where I hopped aboard one of two presidential aircrafts. One was the SAM 26000 that President Kennedy flew in to Texas in 1963, and where President Johnson was sworn in as the plane carried Kennedy’s body back to Washington, D.C. The other was the aircraft structured for President E.R.’s wheelchair.

Adoptee/adoption support groups

Individual, couples and family counseling

Barbara Jean Allender
Douglas, CSW

Specializing in families

Touched by adoption

(585) 787-2398
463 Manse Lane
Rochester, NY 14625

License #069074-1
Acting on faith
continued from page 7

... in the form of referendums against same-sex marriage, and this homophobia was then leveraged to influence the outcome of the presidential election as well. Each day, it seems, there is another religious voice stirring up hatred and fear, refusing to acknowledge the full and equal human rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people.

In a time such as this, when many of us can imagine a turn backwards occurring, when many of us fear greater harassment and feel the betrayal of representatives of a religion that claims to hold love as its primary value — in the midst of this difficult and challenging time, let us keep in mind that dying dragons lash out in any way that they can and let us remember that change takes time.

I believe that the dragon of homophobia is dying, that progress toward equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people is being made, and that in its death, the anger and fear of the dragon of homophobia may cause it to appear stronger than it actually is. Just as during the civil rights movement when it must have felt nearly impossible to view the images and walk the lines where schoolchildren were being pushed back with fire hoses, today we are faced with appalling setbacks as well. But these are setbacks in the midst of progress, and progress will continue.

In the midst of this turmoil, it is important to feel an anchor of purpose, a foundation of love and nurturing and support grounding us. I found that anchor, that embrace of a liberal religious community in the Unitarian Universalist church. Whatever happens in the world outside, know that inside the walls of each and every Unitarian Universalist church, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people need not be afraid. Inside the walls of this church you, yours, and your families are recognized, valued and celebrated.

No matter what goes on in our country, even if each and every state passes an amendment to their constitution banning same-sex marriage and limiting the civil rights of lesbians, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people — you will be safe and valued within these walls. We welcome you to our faith community, and we join with you in the struggle for equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people.

Senior Moment
BY TODD FLANK

Happy 40th Anniversary!
This spring, the LGBTQ community will have the opportunity to celebrate the groundbreaking achievements of 40 heroes over the past 40 years in the struggle for civil rights for gay people. Rochester was privileged to welcome three of these remarkable individuals at the Fall 2004 ImageOut Festival’s screening of Gay Pioneers. (The GAGV Library has a loan copy available).

Following the viewing of the film at the Dryden, the audience had the chance to ask questions of seniors Barbara Gittings, Frank Kameny, Lilli Vincenz, and Malcolm Lazin, the Executive Director of the Equality Forum, which co-produced the film with PBS affiliate WHYY.

When referring to the beginning of the gay civil rights movement, most often reference is made to the Stonewall Riots (1969); however it was actually four years earlier, in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia that the first organized protests were held. On July 4, 1965, 40 conservatively-dressed gay rights activists carried signs supporting gay emancipation. These marches took place each successive year thereafter until 1969, by which time the number of demonstrators in Philadelphia had grown to 150.

To commemorate the bold actions of these early gay pioneers, the Equality Forum will be organizing a week (beginning April 25) of programs, special events, parties and celebrations, culminating in a National Celebration on Sunday, May 1. On Saturday evening there will be a special reception held to recognize Pennsylvania’s New York neighbors.

At a time when the U.S.A. is divided on the direction it will take with respect to personal liberties, it is critically important for this nation, and the world, to take notice of the vast numbers of people, including seniors, who suffer from discriminatory practices, even persecution, at the hands of legislators, religious leaders, court officials, employers, and family members.

How appropriate that the challenge be made at the “birthplace of liberty”.

This country needs to be pressured to live up to its claim to be the land of the free.
Please let me introduce myself. My name is Ralph Padilla—a sales and leasing professional for Bob Johnson Chevrolet. As an automotive veteran, I am proud to be working at the #1 Chevy dealership in Rochester—Bob Johnson Chevrolet.

Bob Johnson Chevrolet sells more Chevy vehicles than any other dealership for many reasons, particularly:

- We have more Chevy inventory—all colors—all options.
- We provide the best prices upfront—you'll receive low, low financing, the highest rebates possible, our exclusive Platinum Plus Program, and special incentives provided exclusively by Bob Johnson Chevrolet.

For ADDITIONAL SAVINGS, call me and mention this ad!

At Bob Johnson Chevrolet, You'll get more for your money...

You'll get much greater value... It's a better place to buy a car!
GAGV Community Center News

GAGV Information

GAGV Community Center
179 Atlantic Avenue
Rochester, NY 14607-1255
Library open 6-8pm, Wednesdays
Meeting space is wheelchair accessible.

Youth Center, Empty Closet & Administrative Offices
Suite 500, 875 E. Main Street
Rochester, New York 14605
Phone: (585) 244-8404
Empty Closet Phone: (585) 244-9030
GAGV/EC
Fax: (585) 244-8246
GAGV e-mail: info@gagv.us
Empty Closet e-mail: emptycloset@gagv.us
GAGV Website/EC Online: www.gagvalliance.org
Office hours:
Monday – Friday, 9am – 6pm

Board President
Emily M. Jones
Empty Closet Editor
Susan Jordan
Youth Services Director
Toby Greenfield
Executive Assistant
Cindi Eaveleigh
Community Relations Director
Todd Plank
Graphic Designer
Jim Anderson
Anti-Violence Coordinator
Alexandra Cobus

YOUTH GROUPS:
The GAGV Youth Group (13-23) meets Sundays 2-4pm at the Youth Center, 875 E. Main Street, 585-244-8640
The Youth Group of Color meets Tuesdays from 5-5pm at The Mocha Project office, 25 Franklin Street, Suite 1060, 585-420-1400

GAGV STATs Nov-Dec. 2004
COMMUNITY CENTER GROUPS: 14
PEOPLE USING CENTER: 499
YOUTH GROUP CALLS: 25
NEW YOUTH: 17
GENERAL INFO CALLS: 124
AVP INFO CALLS: 37
AVP CRISIS CALLS: 17
EC DEC: 5,200;
7,369 SITE VISITORS
GAYALLIANC.ORG: 1,134 VISITORS

Family Matters: Say hello to ARNI
BY TODD PLANK

If any of my readers have had a chance to visit the Fere Institutes website (www.fere.org and click on Lesbian and Gay Family Building), you hopefully have taken some time to review the impressive list of resources (websites, directories, book lists, etc.) available to parents and prospective parents. Under family building links you will find the Adoption Resource Network.

ARNI is a local community-based (PO Box 378, Penfield NY 14524) not-for-profit organization that helps to build strong families brought together through adoption and foster care. The focus of ARNI is on increasing opportunities for children who await permanency, strengthening families through quality educational programs, and offering referrals to medical and mental health and other service providers, and support through a variety of avenues. ARNI has been recognized for the past decade as a leader in Upstate New York in providing opportunities to individuals and families through recruitment, education, referral and support. ARNI is committed to finding new ways to meet the needs of the children and families of the foster and adoptive community.

I recently had the chance to interview Lisa Maynard, the Executive Director of ARNI.

(Todd) Lisa, Can give me some background about ARNI?
(Lisa) ARNI was started in 1991. It was much appreciated.

Next, some exciting news! We are thrilled and honored to announce that Meg Gehman from “Meg and the Clams” will be performing with her new band, “This Other Life,” in a benefit concert for our Youth Program! It will take place Saturday, March 19 at 8 p.m. here at our Youth Center!

Tickets are $5 and can be purchased here at the GAGV or at the door the night of the show. We are psyched to have Meg here and we hope a ton of you come out to see the show!

Stay tuned for an interview with Meg in the March EC.

This month we’ll be busy planning our Valentine’s Day Dance -- which is all set for Monday, Feb. 14 from 5-9 p.m. at Mother’s. We’ll have drag (of course), food, dancing, and special guests! Check our Youth Web site at http://youth.gayalliance.org for more info.

We are also continuing to work hard on our monthly Empty Closet Youth Pages. We hope you continue reading our wonderful young columnists and contributors.

To benefit the youth: Meg Gehman and her second band, This Other Life, will perform a benefit for the Gay Alliance Youth Group on March 19 at the Youth Center, 875 E. Main St. See next month’s Empty Closet for an interview with Meg.

Youth update: Meg and “This Other Life” set benefit concert

BY TOBY GREENFIELD

Happy New Year from the GAGV Youth Program.

We want to start out with a special thank you to the Rochester Rams for their generous holiday donation to our Youth Program. It was much appreciated.

BY ALEX COBUSH, AVP COORDINATOR

Valentine’s Day is just around the corner, and most single folks are scrambling to arrange a date for the dreaded “holiday.” If you are one of the increasing number of people using the various on-line dating services, below are some tips to insure your safety while navigating the cyber-dating scene.

We have all heard about safe sex, but safe isn’t just about sex. Start thinking about safety before you find yourself in a bad situation.

1. Remember that when you meet someone you’ve charted online, you’re really meeting them for the first time. When you’re online you don’t have non-verbal cues such as voice inflection or body language to guide your judgment of their honesty or intentions.

2. For your first meeting, pick a place that’s public and neutral. If you’re traveling to visit them in their town, you should pick a place you’re comfortable with when you arrive. Ideally, choose a place you know well.

3. AVP continued on next page

Al-Anon

Al-Anon will be hosting an informational meeting and there will be a discussion about the possibility of creating a local 12 step/Al-Anon support group. The open meeting will be held on Monday, Feb. 21 from 7-8pm at the GAGV Community Center at 179 Atlantic Ave.

The snow date is Saturday, Feb. 26 at 10:30am.

Call Todd at (585) 244-6640 ext. 24 with questions.

Anti-Violence Project: thinking about online safety

BY ALEX COBUSH, AVP COORDINATOR

 Arn

Igbt
adoptive parents like myself were seeking help with how to talk to my kids about adoption? When I expressed my intention to a friend to tell my children that they had been adopted, she recoiled at the idea. She thought that children would be extremely scared if they knew that their birth mother had given them up.

(Todd) Correct me if I’m wrong, but you’ve mentioned this before to me. Eventually wouldn’t your children have figured it out for themselves?

(Lisa) Laughing... There was no way that we were going to hide the fact that I wasn’t their biological mother. Another topic that stirs up anxiety for prospective parents?

(Todd) When I sat down with my children, I taught them the concept of adoption. At that point in their lives, adopting was not a concept they could understand. It could be an open relationship between all parties. ARNI offered a developed birth mother support group for women who made the decision to have their children and give them up for adoption. The group is facilitated by two women.

(Lisa) It’s only natural that as children develop into young adults and struggle through the process of developing an identity of their own, that they will question how they resemble their birth parents. I recall my son asking me how adoptive parents would be hesitant to deny the influence of genetics. Every child is going to have to grapple with the question of who am I? It’s easy for safety purposes, and you’ll be able to contact a friend after the date. This is good for safety purposes, and you’ll get a warning if a site tries to give you a cookie, or disable cookies altogether. You can customize your Web browser’s e-mail settings to use a pseudonym instead of your real name, and a blank or false e-mail address. If you want to give someone your real name or e-mail address, you can give it to them in your message.

8. Be cautious about revealing information that could identify you. For example, if you give someone your listed phone number, they can get your real name and street address.

If there’s a problem, report it. Call GAGV’s Anti-Violence Program at 585-244-8640, if you’re harassed online or victimized by someone you’ve met.

All of GAGV’s AVP services are free and confidential.

GAGV Oral History Project seeks volunteers, donors

By OVE OVERMYER

The GAGV Library & Archive Oral History Project, housed at the GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave., is an effort to record spoken histories that reflect the rich gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender history in the Greater Rochester area.

The library itself is open every Wednesday night from 6 to 8 p.m. It can also be accessed by appointment; call Community Relations Director Todd Plank at 244-8640 ext. 24. 

The GAGV Archive includes several decades of clippings, photographs, and other artefacts from Rochester-area LGBT history. The Oral History Project seeks to record the memories of those who took part in those exciting years of growth.

Oral History is a way to preserve the past through stories and lives of those who have lived it. The long-term goal of this project is to preserve, archive, and make available these testimonies for future research and educational purposes.

The audio-visual VHS recordings will be the property of the GAGV Library & Archive. The documentation will be gathered by audio-visual interviews of community members who are willing to tell their life story. In doing so, they will be part of a foundation legacy for future generations to build on.

The GAGV Library and Archive Project is now presently accepting names of volunteers who would like to participate in this project. The project focus is in the research and planning phase.

We are seeking oral history donors, as well as interviewers. The interviewers will be required to attend certified workshops to guarantee appropriate interview skills.

Classes are now being developed through the Rochester Regional Library Council, and the GAGV Library and Archive Project team.

For more info, please contact Ove Overmyer at oovermyer@libraryweb.org, or call Todd Plank at 244-8640 ext. 24.
Buffalo United Artists (BUA) presents Making Gay History, a new play adapted from the best-selling book by Eric Markus

BUA (BUA) is currently presenting Making Gay History, a new play by BUA playwright Matthew Crehan Higgins, adapted from the best-selling book by Eric Markus.

Making Gay History takes the audience back in time for a journey through the first half century of the gay rights movement, told through interviews with “60 mostly ordinary people who achieved extraordinary things.” The performances are at Main Street Cabaret, 672 Main St. in Buffalo.

Crehan Higgins said, “What struck me most during the process of adapting the book was how closely the struggles faced by the national movement mirrored those of the Western New York community in the past and today. When I read Making Gay History, I knew these stories needed to be brought to life.”

Eric Markus initially had doubts about the adaptation. He said, “It’s such a complex story and there’s so much material that I couldn’t imagine how Matthew could extract a coherent, emotionally charged narrative. The script blew me away…”

The play’s world premiere was held in January. Performances continue on Fridays and Saturdays through Feb. 19, at 8 p.m. Tickets are $20 general admission and $12 for students.

Special group rates of $10 per person are available, for groups of 10 or more (not valid on Feb. 18 and 19). For reservations and information, call 716-886-9239.

Pride Center publishes guide to health resources

The Pride Center of Western New York announces the Health and Wellness Resource Guide, developed specifically to provide critical information for the understanding of their health care and information. Fears and concerns regarding gender identity or sexual orientation often prevent full disclosure to health care professionals and significantly limit options for treatment.

The Pride Center hopes the new Health and Wellness Resource Guide helps eliminate some of those fears and concerns.

Currently the guide is available at the Pride Center, and will soon be at many of the Buffalo distribution points for the Center newsletter, Nucleus. For more information, call the Pride Center of Western New York at (716)852-7743 or email info@pridecenterwny.org.

Coming up in June: Smith Opera House fundraiser in Geneva

Though it may still be cold and snowy outside, it’s not too early to start thinking about the Smith Opera House’s annual “Medley of Tastes” fundraiser.

The 2005 food and wine tasting event is scheduled for Monday, June 20 at Houghton House on the Hobart and William Smith Colleges campus.

Advance sale $25 tickets went on sale Jan. 10. Limited to 400 patrons, this event has completely sold-out for the past two years. Tickets may be purchased at The Smith box office or by calling 315-781-LIVE or toll-free 866-355-LIVE.

One of the region’s premier events of its kind, nearly 50 vendors from restaurants and wineries throughout the Finger Lakes are expected to share their finest samples or “tastes” with event attendees. In addition to admission to the event, each patron receives a complimentary limited edition 2005 “Medley of Tastes” wine glass and buffet tray. There will also be exciting raffle opportunities featuring gift certificates and products from Finger Lakes region restaurants and wines and the opportunity to vote for best “Food,” “Wine” and “Dessert” tastes.

All proceeds generated by the event are available, for groups of 10 or more (not valid on Feb. 18 and 19). For reservations and information, call 716-886-9239.

The Making Gay History cast.

An amazing, 7 day, 560 mile, fundraising bike ride across New York State

Empire State AIDS Ride

WANTED: RIDERS

For the experience of a lifetime!

RIDE WITH:

AIDS Rochester’s Bike Team

Information Meeting!
Thursday, February 24th, 5:30PM
Mid-Town Athletic Club
200 East Highland Drive
Meet the organizer of the Empire State AIDS Ride and talk to people who have done it!

mid-town athletic club

A week that will change you forever... AIDS Rochester

For more information, call Marty at AIDS Rochester 442-2220
Artysy Fartsy Film

Why not extend your Valentine's Day celebration by bringing that special someone -- or ignoring the whole thing and bringing yourself -- to see a film with Artsy-Fartsy Film Group, an outreach of Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church?

We’ll meet at the Little Theatre (240 East Ave., Rochester) on the afternoon of February 19. To learn the film selection and the time to meet at the theater, please do one of the following on or after Thursday, Feb. 17: call the church at 271-8478 to hear a recording, check the church webpage at www.frontiernet.net/~oamcc1, or email oamcc@frontiernet.net.

After the film, we’ll discuss it over coffee at a nearby spot.

Butch Femme

Discussion Night Feb. 4 will be “What Makes Relationships Work?” It’s 7-9 p.m. at the GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave., corner Elm/Atlantic.

Our Dinner Nights Out for February will be as follows: Ome-Do to help deal with conflicts, the dates of our dinners will change for this month only! Sunday, Feb. 13: East Ridge Family Restaurant, East Ridge Rd., Irondequoit, 7 p.m.; Wednesday, Feb. 23: A birthday dinner for our members with February birthdays! Karpatia Hungarian Restaurant, 1950 East Ridge Rd., Irondequoit, 7 p.m.

For further info, contact Kerry, Facilitator, at (585) 865-4619, email DressyFemme@aol.com, or write PO. Box 18734, Rochester, NY 14616.

Dignity Integrity

Ash Wednesday is early this year, on Feb. 9. Please join us at D-1 as we prepare for the Easter season.

Our potluck dinner on Sunday, Feb. 20 features simple soups and bread, in keeping with the Lenten season. All are welcome. And please save the date of Saturday, March 5, when D-1 will host our annual March Madness Cabin Party at the Tay House in Cobbs Hill Park.

Please join us at 5 p.m. any and every Sunday as we claim our rightful place in the Church. Please see our display ad for more information and how to contact us. Thanks.

Empire Bears

It’s February, it’s cold, and we’ve got plans to warn you up! The Empire Bears are back at Mel’s Diner on West Henrietta Rd. at Jefferson every Monday at 6 p.m. for supper and laughs with Bodie, the best waitress in Rochester. The BEARS would follow her anywhere. She’s got nice cookies, too. Come join us for dinner followed by a movie.

Want other ways to warn us up? Our potluck suppers continue on second Saturdays at the GAGV, 179 Atlantic Ave., at 6:30. In February, it’s a soup and chili contest, with fixin’s to go with ‘em. Bring your best pot full of goodness, and share some hot stuff with the BEARS. All are invited. That’ll be followed by BEARight at the Forum. Union suit is the theme. Keep the flap buttoned, cub; it’s cold out there.

Also, this month, the Empire Bears will be hosting a special Leather Bearnight at the Cellar Door on Commercial St. in East Rochester on Saturday, Feb. 5. Camping supply give-aways, specials, and fun. Come check out the new bar in town.

We’ve got a Dim Sum Brunch planned for Sunday the 20th at 1 p.m. Meet at the Cantonese House in Win- Jefferson. Then on Saturday the 26th, our buddy Peter plays piano at Tara, and we’ll be there too. Also our potluck suppers continue on second Sundays the 27th, the BEARS will be attending Peter’s famous, fabulous, food-filled Oscar party. Come dish those dresses and hair styles. What was she thinking? Last, but not least, the Bears will hold their monthly business meeting on Wednesday the second at the GAGV at 7:30.

Check out these events, recent pictures, and upcoming plans at our website, empirebears.org. Join us for any of the events listed here. Have you got your tickets for RGMC’s March concert yet? It features Music of the Movies, and it is packed with show stoppers. Lots of our members are involved, and you won’t want to miss it.

Gay Fathers

The Gay Fathers’ Group continues into the new year, meeting on the first and third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave.

A social night is sometimes planned for the fourth or fifth Tuesday of the month. Two of them have taken place already this cycle.

In general, the group consists of men and in some cases their same sex partners. We are all at different stages in our lives. Some are married, some are going through separation/divorce, some have custody of their children and some don’t, and all are at different points in the coming out process. This is a support group (not therapy) intended to discuss all these issues and more. Every one here is offered the opportunity to seek support and to give it. Issues we discuss include relationships with our children and our former spouses, relationships with our partners, family, the coming out process and legal concerns. Every one has a chance to participate since we are not a very large group (usually about 12 men) and all the conversations are confidential.

Our web site is a work in progress and we hope to have it up and running soon. Please call the GAGV office at 244-8640, ext. 24. If you are interested in finding out more about us. There are also brochures available about our group at the Community Center.

Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church

Where we know God loves us just the way we are

Weaving People Embracing the Journey Touching the World

Sunday Morning Worship ... 11 am

Rev. Jim Mulcahy, Pastor
175 Norris Drive Rochester, NY 14610
Email: oamcc@frontiernet.net
Website: www.frontiernet.net/~oamcc
Telephone 585-271-8478

MEET PEOPLE

Check out this section and the Ongoing Calendar to find the group that’s right for you! If you are already in a group and a monthly news update to the The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St. Suite 500, Rochester, NY 14605 by the 15th of every month.

Dignity-Integrity

(Roman Catholic-Episcopal)

An active faith community since 1975

Liturgies every Sunday at 5:00 p.m.

Liturgy of the Word - 1st, 3rd, and Fifth Sundays of the month
Ecclesiastical 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-1 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!

“We will know we are Christians by our love...”
Rochester Rams
Join us for Master and slave night on Saturday, Feb. 19 at the Forum.
If you bring your slave to the Forum in a collar and leash, both the Master and the slave will get a ticket for a free beer or well drink.

Remember this is barnight: leather, denim and boots never go out of style. All of our regular barnight features like beer bar, boot shine, our check, raffle and wall-to-wall hot men will be available at this full-service event.
Our March Barnight will be Heavy Leather Night on Saturday, March 19. Put your leather and join all the other leather-dad men at the Forum.
The Rochester Rams M.C. is Rochester New York’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 Bar 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.rochesterrams.com.

RGMC
The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus (RGMC) would like to thank everyone who supported us for our holiday concert, “Queer Eye for the Holidays”, which was held on Dec. 10 and 11 at Hochstein.
The audience was entertained not only with traditional holiday works, such as Benjamin Britten’s Ceremony of Carols, but were also rolling in the aisles when the Rochesters performed a dance routine to Zebra Head’s I Hate Christmas, complete in dazzling, sequin-studded, cheerleader garb! The evening was rounded out with an audience sing along which helped everyone leave the concert with the rich glow of the holidays burning brightly inside themselves.

Many local dignitaries, including Mayor John Cranley, Councilmember Bill Prichard, and Councilmember Tim Mains, were in attendance. The RGMC extends its gratitude to them and all who attended our concert. Thank you again, Rochester, for helping make our holiday concert a tremendous success!
Are you a true wine aficionado, or perhaps just a casual enthusiast? The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus is hosting a fundraiser that everyone, from novice to professional sommelier, will enjoy! A Valentine’s Wine Tasting Benefit will be held on Saturday, Feb. 12, from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Wine Sense, located at 749 Park Ave. A donation of $20 at the door not only includes many scrumptious samplings, but also entitles you to a souvenir Wine Sense tasting glass! Additionally, you will receive 20 percent off all of your purchases during the wine tasting. For more information, please email us at info@thergmc.org, call The Chorus Line at 585-423-0640, or visit our website at www.thergmc.org.

Do the cold winter days seem to be dragging you down? Are you looking for something to do that’s a little wild, a little crazy, and just down-right fun? Join the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus as we beat the winter blahs with a Buffalo Bar Bus Trip! This fundraising evening starts with a special happy hour on Saturday, Feb. 26, from 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. at The Bachelor Forum, located at 670 University Ave. At 9 p.m. we board a comfy warm bus to Buffalo to begin a bar-hopping bonanza!

First we will hit Allen Street, the gay village of Buffalo, and then head over to Buddies, which is also within walking distance to several other gay dance clubs and bars. After the bars close at 4 a.m., we will stop for breakfast in Buffalo before heading back to arrive at The Bachelor Forum at 7:30 a.m. “Door” prizes will be given away on the bus and drink specials will be offered. Don’t forget your pillow for the ride back!
For only $25 you can join us on what is sure to be a fun-filled evening! Tickets are available at Ourlandish, located at 274 N. Goodman, or by calling The Chorus Line at 585-423-0640. For more information please email Elier Ruiz at elier@thergmc.org or give us a ring on The Chorus Line.
March is just around the corner and so is “Tinseltown Tunes”, the RGMC’s second concert in our 22nd concert season, Music of Our Lives. “Tinseltown Tunes” is music from the films that defined who we are as people. The RGMC will bring the very best Hollywood has to offer you in song. Sister Act, Moulin Rouge, The Little Mermaid and Mr. Holland’s Opus are among the many films that will open their scores for your enjoyment. Relax and enjoy those precious moments on screen on Saturday, March 19, at 8 p.m. and Sunday, March 20, at 2 p.m.
The School of the Arts, located at 45 Prince St., will host our March concert, but also to the RGMC’s first cultural fair. Held an hour before, during intermission, and an hour after each performance, many local organizations will be present. Door prizes, raffles, and a silent auction will also be held to benefit the RGMC, so don’t forget your checkoutbook!
In addition to these fun festivities, original panels of the AIDS Memorial Quilt will be available for viewing. As this season marks the 20th anniversary of several significant events in the fight against AIDS, the RGMC has chosen to dedicate a portion of each of our programs to celebrating the music of those composers, lyricists, arrangers and performers who have been forever silenced by AIDS.
Advance general admission tickets are $15, $12 for seniors and students, and $6 for children. Tickets may be purchased starting in late February at The Creator’s Hands, Parkleigh, Ourlandish, The Pride Connection, from chorus members, or by calling The Chorus Line at 585-423-0650. You can also visit our website at www.thergmc.org or email us at info@thergmc.org. Additionally, tickets will be available for purchase at the door for $18 on the day of the performance.
April showers might bring May flowers, but they also bring a Seneca Lake Wine Tour! On Saturday, April 16, the RGMC will host our first fund-raising wine tour. After departing the Downtown United Presbyterian Church (DUPC) at 8 a.m. in a luxury motor-coach, we will visit Anthony Road Wine Company, Glenora Wine Cellars, Arcadian Estate Winery, and Castel Griech Estate Winery. Relax as you are transported comfortably from winery to winery. Also enjoy a scrumptious lunch at Glenora while taking in a breathtaking view of Seneca Lake. The motor-coach will return to DUPC at 6 p.m. Tickets are $45 and cover all tasting fees. “Door” prizes will also be given away. Join us for a day of wine and wonderful times! For more information or to purchase tickets, please email us at info@thergmc.org or call The Chorus Line at 585-423-0650.

Groups continued on page 9

Geri Stanton Counseling Services
M.S.Ed., M.Ed.
Nationally Certified Counselor
Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor
Sign Language Skilled

Individual • Couple • Group
Serving the GLBT community for over 10 years

Geri Stanton Counseling Services
595 Blossom Road Suite 315
Rochester, NY 14610

Office 585.325.7180
TTY 585.533.2041

Elaine Elkins, M.S.
Psychotherapist
244-4837

Individual & Relationship Counseling
Anxiety & Depression
Loneliness & Separation
Resolving Conflicts
Communication Skills
Sexual Abuse Recovery
Drug & Alcoholism
Grief & Loss

Barbara Debes, M.S.
Counselor/Lesbian
Encouragement
Caring
Guidance
Respect

The EMPTY GLORET C 05

0 NUMBER 376 www.gaysalliance.org
might be something that I wasn't, but being the best me possible, I've I found means to be someone that I wasn't, but being the best possible, I've I've learned that that was all right because that was their life and their ignorance. Ignorance was nothing for me so I learned to get away. I've been beaten, and left feeling broken and so small, like dirt to the ground, yet I let all that pass by. As far as school, it took the longest, but now, I stuck up for myself. When I hear a remark such as faggot or queer, I stick up for myself, and sometimes even just ignore it and report it to the principal. The principal now listens and that is highly respected, although there is really nothing that can be done, unless there is witnesses, but I appreciate the fact. People have done and said worse things, but I don't feel the heart to talk of it, because I was made and felt broken. Last year, I'd go to so many extremes, such as skipping classes, and sitting in the stairs, lying around the halls crying. Sometimes it still happens, but it's not as bad. All has changed because I've found my ground, and that's just where I stand. I've found means to pride, and that's what I'll get me through life, holding my head high, till the day that I die. No one can take that away. And on the streets, I'll be me. If I know you, I'll talk to you, if not, getting on with life is what I'm all about. Take it as this. You don't know me, and don't need to know me. Can't ever forget the past, but I put it all behind me. Life is brutal from the times I had myself so scared. So paranoid not knowing what was to go on. I got kicked, pinched, snacked and jumped, but it made me stronger. Standing tall with those who lend me a hand and help me to gain prosperity. A lot of people say that I'm mighty young to be standing where I'm standing in life, and say I don't know a thing, but what I call myself to be. No one knows yourself better than you! So, if you wish to label, let it all go. I've learned that I am no one's property, and no one's punching bag. I am, individually, and indeed have needs like every human being. No one should be able to make one feel like they are not a person. Basically, what I have learned is that my preferences are me, what makes me, there is far more to me than just that. The people who don't see that live blind. Our hairball problem. Our immorality, selfishly inhumane, who take prejudice to another level. I learned that that was all right because that was their life and their ignorance. Ignorance was nothing for me so I learned to get away. I've been beaten, and left feeling broken and so small, like dirt to the ground, yet I let all that pass by. As far as school, it took the longest, but now, I stuck up for myself. When I hear a remark such as faggot or queer, I stick up for myself, and sometimes even just ignore it and report it to the principal. The principal now listens and that is highly respected, although there is really nothing that can be done, unless there is witnesses, but I appreciate the fact. People have done and said worse things, but I don't feel the heart to talk of it, because I was made and felt broken. Last year, I'd go to so many extremes, such as skipping classes, and sitting in the stairs, lying around the halls crying. Sometimes it still happens, but it's not as bad. All has changed because I've found my ground, and that's just where I stand. I've found means to pride, and that's what I'll get me through life, holding my head high, till the day that I die. No one can take that away. And on the streets, I'll be me. If I know you, I'll talk to you, if not, getting on with life is what I'm all about. Take it as this. You don't know me, and don't need to know me. Can't ever forget the past, but I put it all behind me. Life is brutal from the times I had myself so scared. So paranoid not knowing what was to go on. I got kicked, pinched, snacked and jumped, but it made me stronger. Standing tall with those who lend me a hand and help me to gain prosperity. A lot of people say that I'm mighty young to be standing where I'm standing in life, and say I don't know a thing, but what I call myself to be. No one knows yourself better than you! So, if you wish to label, let it all go. I've learned that I am no one's property, and no one's punching bag. I am, individually, and indeed have needs like every human being. No one should be able to make one feel like they are not a person. Basically, what I have learned is that my preferences are me, what makes me, there is far more to me than just that. The people who don't see that live blind and criticize, but I am not in melan- choly because of shit like this. I've let it pass me by. Once you have a real life, you can be part of mine.
An Ode to Being GLBT on Valentine’s Day:
What’s Love Got To Do With It?

We walk in the park
It’s just you and me
Your gaze wanders over
To friends of mine
Who happen to be family

It’s just two humans beings
Waltzing down the street
Quick to hold hands
A declaration of their love
Marching to their own beat

You suddenly stop in mid stride with an inquisitive look on your face...

“Are...they?”
You challenge slowly...

“Why, yes”
I reply knowingly...

You look at me with inquisition and affirmingly say...
“I mean...What’s love got to do with it anyway?”

“It’s people like you...”
I quickly and angrily retort to your surprise...

They say there’s no limit to love, almost like some boundless energy.”

You say, “They honestly look happy!”
I can hear the change in your tone...

“So why are some people so hateful,” you ask, “Why do they always have to condone!”

Agreeing with a long sigh I say, “I know...When there’s so much to be fearful of in this crazy world, I never could understood why they just don’t let them go.”

We both fall silent and you follow their song
I wonder if you question now; your stereotype was all wrong

I think to myself in our silence and quickly relapse into a daydream in short time...As I get caught up in my overly optimistic mind

I remember instantly that it’s soon to be Valentine’s Day
I secretly hope that the world can discover the way
I ask myself, I wonder what the day can find
We definitely need to clear and free all of mankind

All the ridiculous jargon
All the preconceived notions
We need a new improved number nine love potion

To cure the ills at heart
It would be a sure shot way to start

To reach out and show them
To tell it like it really is
That love is still love, even for us
And all that crazy romantic biz

It grows and strengthens
It helps to light the way
Just like it did in the past
Continuing on forever
It can start with today

I snap back to reality
After my mindful bliss
I look at you knowingly
Following my daydream reminisce

“Your answer,” I say...
“Love has everything to do with it, my friend...”

You slowly turn back to me with a big smile
I think now that you understand better; you’ve walked that extra mile

-Anonymous
YOU DO NOT NEED A SWEETHEART TO ATTEND THE BALL, IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A SWEETHEART WE WILL HELP YOU FIND ONE AT THE BALL. FOR ALL SINGLES, IF YOU CHOSE, WE WILL HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU TO WEAR SO YOU MAY FIND YOUR SWEETHEART.
Announcements

We're in need of reporters, photographers and distribution volunteers. If you can give two hours per month, please call Susan at 244-9030.

Looking for Two Friends from the '60s. Jenny was a drummer at Blue Chip Lounge and co-owner of Rochester gas station. A guy named Dale lived on East Side near freight yard, worked at Carrier Sagtartagia. Please contact Salvatore with any information, 232-6035. I’m back in town but don’t have much time -- telephone.

HELP WANTED

Prevention Educator. GLBT. Person will oversee, develop and implement comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention outreach and group and individual level interventions to Men who have sex with Men (MSM) and Women who partner with Women (WSW) and HIV+ MSM; conduct confidential HIV counseling and testing in venues serving targeted communities and provide supervision to GLBT project staff. Job requires bachelor's degree (or equivalent in experience) and minimum of one year of relevant experience. Must have previous experience in service or public health education. Supervisory experience preferred. Salary high twenties. Bilingual a plus. Some travel required. We are committed to continuing education. Excellent per diem rate. Contact us for more information.

Women’s Hiking

We’re gearing up for hiking... join us! Cool way to meet great women.

We have lots of fun, and you are not alone because new ladies are always joining our adventures. Meet new friends or maybe find romance. For info call Donna Marie Kearney, 585-594-2699.

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 political backgrounds; some are pro-life organizations while others do not. We have members who are drag queens, peasants, bisexuals, singles, those in long term relationships and we even have heterosexual individuals in our group.

Contact us for more information. PO Box 32922 Washington DC 20033; Fax: 202-265-6977; plagal@plagal.org; http://www.plagal.org. Call: Donna Marie Kearney, 585-594-2699.

RWC

The Rochester Women’s Community Chorus is seeking soloists and alsos for its June 11 concert with the group “Women Of Note.” The choirs will be celebrating spring and warmer weather with tunes that swing and move.

RWC is delighted to feature among our local women’s singing groups the The Women Of Note on an auditioned 15-voice chorus that is based here in Rochester. They have a very inclusive and well-balanced membership list, but especially it jazz standards from the ’20s–’30s. The Rochester Women’s Community Chorus welcomes women of all ages and sex to their family. There are lots of ways to be a part of this supportive and caring organization. Opportunities include tickling ivories, building props, being on stage crew, writing grants, etc.

If you would like more information about our spring concert or if you would like to join us, please call 585-234-4441 or visit our wonderful website at chorus@therwcc.org.

ROMANS

ROMANS is a social organization of gay naturists who enjoy camaraderie in the nude.

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

If you have thought about social nudity but were apprehensive about being naked the first time, there are several clothed events such as eating out as a group at restaurants, going to concerts and travel where we meet other groups of members in our clothed environment.

Our nude/swims are the first Saturday of the month, before lunch our group meets for dinner in a clothed environment. Our next club meeting is Feb. 26 at 1 p.m.

We are open to men over 21 years of age who have an interest in social nudism. Most members come from the Rochester area, although 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 is available: http://www.geocities.com/wnyromans/OE/ or E-mail: romans@rochester.rr.com, or W.O.R.M.S. PO Box 92293, Rochester, NY 14692.

Rainbow Elders

Rainbow Elders of the Niagara Frontier

In March 2004 I celebrated my 70th birthday, and at the party my friends gave me I announced my intention of starting a senior citizen group.

Shortly thereafter, the Rainbow Seniors of Western New York contacted the Buffalo Pride Center about the possibility of starting a senior citizen group. I said, “I’ll be happy to do it!” So I immediately got in touch with the Rochester folks, attended a monthly meeting, and became a member.

Just one month later I became a member of their Board of Directors, and with their help I had the first meeting in Buffalo at a Pride bookstore. We got off to a good start and actually outgrew the Pride Center meeting space, so we moved to the AIDS Alliance office on Genesee Street.

We now meet there the first Sunday of every month and pattern our meetings like those in Rochester. We have a Board of Directors, a program of events that we planned program and then the potluck supper. Attendance has been steady and we are looking to grow.

The Rochester group wanted to invite Buffalo to become part of their 501(3) not-for-profit corporation and life and almost all age groups. We do not have membership or sell our products, a treasurer and a secretary. We try to schedule programs that are varied and interesting. For our December meeting we had a Holiday Gift Certificate for the clients at AIDS Alliance. In January we had a demonstration and lesson in Tai Chi at the Person to Person meeting at Buffalo’s largest Tai Chi studio. Other months we had a slide presentation of Buffalo’s Gay Archives and a talk by a member of an ongoing historic study of Buffalo’s gay bars.

We don’t have membership per se, but our attendees come from all walks of life and almost all age groups. The common bond we all have is to meet Groups continued on next page.
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 as 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 shunted down for speaking words like pot, cocaine, crack, heroin, ecstasy, K, speed, 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 dinner, movies, whiskies, whatever 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.

Wednesday

New Freedom/New Happiness Group: 7 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 200 Winton Rd. Bus riders: Take the #18 University bus to 12 Corners. Use the stop just past the top of the hill at Hillside Ave and before Highland Ave. Or take the #25 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.

Friday (2 meetings)

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 steps meeting depending on what seems best at the time.

Gay Men’s: 7:30 p.m. GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. At Elton St. Bus riders: Take the #18 University Ave bus, use the stop between Portsmouth Terrace and Elton St., Walk one block north on Elton St. to the GAGV Community Center.

Closed meeting, restricted to alcoholics and addicts

Men’s meeting

Handicapped accessible

This is a round-robin discussion meeting. If you are shy about meeting people or speaking up in a group, you will find this meeting particularly warm and inviting because everyone gets their turn to speak (or pass). As a result, this meeting often runs long, so plan on more than the usual hour.

Saturday

Saturday Night Special: 7 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S Winton Rd.


Saturday

Gay Rochester Men’s Chorus Buffalo trip. Happy hour at Forum, 670 University Ave., followed by 9 pm bus trip to Buffalo gay bars and clubs. Return 7:30 am on Feb. 27, $25. Tickets at Outlandish, or at 585-423-0660. For information see www.thegmc.org.

SUNDAY


Monday

Pride in the Pulpet Rochester Multi-faith Roundtable, 9 am – 3 pm. Colgate-Rochester Crozer Divinity School, 1100 South Goodman St. 271-1320 ext. 258; wscale@crds.edu. You may also contact Chris Comier, Community Organizer for ESPA, at ccomier@prideagenda.org. 212-627-0305; www.prideagenda.org. Pride in the Pulpet is one of four initiatives of Empire State Pride Agenda, with goal of developing network of faith leaders as light advocates.

Pride in the Pulpet is a 2005 volunteer kick-off meeting. 7 pm. ImageOut office, Village Gate Square, 274 N. Goodman.

Rainbow Summers

continued from previous page safely with our peers (and their significant others or friends) in a non-bar setting. Each of us has (his) individual reasons of course, but the important focus is on being comfortable with each other and having a time to be together for fellowship and fun.

We continue to interact with the Rochester group and plan to always do so. We will always want to visit them and have them visit us. And hopefully when we are better established and defined, we will revisit our offer of a partnership and be able to proceed with that initiative.

No matter what, we are all in the same family.

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 as 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 shunted down for speaking words like pot, cocaine, crack, heroin, ecstasy, K, speed, 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 dinner, movies, whiskies, whatever 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.

Wednesday

New Freedom/New Happiness Group: 7 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 200 Winton Rd. Bus riders: Take the #18 University bus to 12 Corners. Use the stop just past the top of the hill at Hillside Ave and before Highland Ave. Or take the #25 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.

Friday (2 meetings)

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 steps meeting depending on what seems best at the time.

Gay Men’s: 7:30 p.m. GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. At Elton St. Bus riders: Take the #18 University Ave bus, use the stop between Portsmouth Terrace and Elton St., Walk one block north on Elton St. to the GAGV Community Center.

Closed meeting, restricted to alcoholics and addicts

Men’s meeting

Handicapped accessible

This is a round-robin discussion meeting. If you are shy about meeting people or speaking up in a group, you will find this meeting particularly warm and inviting because everyone gets their turn to speak (or pass). As a result, this meeting often runs long, so plan on more than the usual hour.

Saturday

Saturday Night Special: 7 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S Winton Rd.


Saturday

Gay Rochester Men’s Chorus Buffalo trip. Happy hour at Forum, 670 University Ave., followed by 9 pm bus trip to Buffalo gay bars and clubs. Return 7:30 am on Feb. 27, $25. Tickets at Outlandish, or at 585-423-0660. For information see www.thegmc.org.
**Monday**

**Gay and Lesbian Support Group**  
Third Presbyterian Church, 34 Meigs St.  
First, third Mondays, 7:30-9 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Tom Fl., 454-3609.

**American Baptists Concerned**  
MOCHA  
Tuesdays, 5:30-7 pm.  
Third Mondays, 7:30 pm. Webster House, 3609 S. Ave.

**Rochester Historical Bowling Society**  
7:15 pm, Mondays. Clover Lanes, 2750 Monroe Ave. (Group is full).

**Coal**  
Come Out and Play. Business meeting last Mondays, 7 pm, GAGV Community Center, 179 Atlantic Ave. Tom M., 454-3609.

**American Baptists Concerned**  
MOCHA  
Tuesdays, 5:30-7 pm.  
Third Mondays, 7:30 pm. Webster House, 3609 S. Ave.

**Wednesday**

**Women’s Community Chorus**  
Rehearsals each Wednesday, 6:30-9 pm, Call for location, 234-6441.

**Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley**  
Atlantic Five 0
OUTlandish Videos & gifts
Where it’s IN to be OUT
- Greeting Cards
- Gift Items
- Stickers
- T-Shirts
- Books
- Magazines

OUTlandish Leather
Leather for Your Lifestyle
We feature quality leather clothing and Upstate New York’s largest selection of Fetish and Kink supplies.

OUTlandish is now Rochester’s Only Video Store specializing in the rental and sale of LGBT interest Adult Videos. Check out our huge library of over 4000 LGBT themed Adult and Mainstream DVDs and VHS tape Videos for rent or sale. New titles arrive weekly.

Stop in and open your free rental account today!
- Adult rentals - $2 / 1 day, $3.50 / 2 days, $4.50 / 3 days.
- Mainstream rentals only $1 / day for up to 3 days.
- On Tuesdays, rent one, get one free.
- On Fridays, rent for 2 days, get 3rd day free.
- Rent 7 movies, get one free rental.
- Prepay $50, get 25 2-day rentals ($87.50 value).
PLUS
Hundreds of new & previewed videos & DVDs for sale,
Priced from $4.95 - $19.95
*Must present valid credit card and driver's license to open account

Outlandish Videos & Gifts & Leather • 274 North Goodman Street, in the Village Gate
Hours: Monday – Saturday, 11 AM – 11 PM and Sundays, Noon – 5 PM • After-hours Video/DVD Drop is Available
Phone: 585.760.8383 • www.outlandish1.com • outlastandish@aol.com

---

**BENEFITS OF MASSAGE:**
- Improve circulation/boost flexibility
- Release chronic muscle pain/tension
- Increase energy
- Boost immune system
- Reduce stress and anxiety

**CONDITIONS THAT BENEFIT FROM MASSAGE:**
- Headaches
- Sprains/Sprains
- Whiplash
- Fibromyalgia
- Stress
- Injuries
- Arthritis
- Plantar Fasciitis

**Massage Therapy**
4210 W. Ridge Rd
Rochester, NY 14626
585.225.0230

Licensed Massage Therapists: Marie Delkorn, Diane Richardson, Matt Windsor, and Peter Cuccaro

**THE ESCAPE PACKAGE**
What a gift to share with a special friend or with your companion! Wouldn’t it be great to surprise a friend or your companion with a night out? Now you can. We will give each one of you a relaxation massage at the same time with your own massage therapist in a peaceful atmosphere. A complimentary bottle of wine will be given to you to enjoy at your leisure.
Price: $100.00

Prices:
- 30 min. - $35
- 60 min. - $55
- 90 min. - $80
- Chair - $1/min.

**Senior Citizens Discount Program:**
- 30 min. - $25
- 60 min. - $45

**Special Incentive Program:**
- 2 - 30 min. massages ....... $60
- 2 - 60 min. massages ...... $100

Gift Certificates available

---

**ANGEL’S AT WORK**
Frances Carus, CHT
585.723.9350

Offering:
- Counseling for
  - Couples/Family/Individuals
- Counseling Specialties:
  - Anxiety / Depression

Also Available:
- Spiritual Guiding
- Shamanic Healing and Workshops