MOCHA sponsors an evening with Thomas Warfield

By Laura McSpadden

On the evening of Nov. 5, Thomas Warfield gave an interactive presentation on “Poetry and Performance” at the Future Pointe Dance Studios. The event was sponsored by Rochester’s MOCHA Center.

(Marfield continues page 3)

NY Senate vote pending: GAGV plans a rally

By Susan Jordan

Governor David A. Paterson announced on Nov. 10 an agreement by which the Senate leadership has, for the first time, agreed to debate and vote on a marriage equality bill, possibly by the beginning of December. Sen. Tom Duane, chief sponsor, said he is confident that the votes are there to pass the bill. Nothing can be guaranteed, however, since several anti-gay Democrats oppose marriage equality; and support from moderate Republicans is not certain.

At Rochester’s rally protesting the Maine decision on Nov. 5. Photo: Bess Watts

At the Capitol in Albany on Nov. 10. Photo: Bess Watts

Decision 2009 revisited: election offers mixed results for rights

By Ous Overmyer

The tide of extending marriage rights to same-sex couples, which has ebbed across New England in recent years, abruptly stopped on Nov. 3 at the rocky shores of the state of Maine.

A small percentage of Maine voters rejected a state law that would have allowed same-sex couples to wed. The repeal comes just six months after the measure was passed by the Maine legislature and signed by Democratic Gov. John Baldacci.

Maine would have been the sixth state in the country to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry, but instead becomes the 31st state to prevent the unions in a popular vote.

Gay marriage opponents claimed about 53 percent of the vote to supporters’ 47 percent. This is similar to the percentage that defeated marriage equality in California.

Gay rights adherents had hoped Maine voters—known for moderate, independent-minded views—would have been the first to endorse same-sex marriage in a statewide ballot. The Catholic Church and the National Organization for Marriage (NOM) poured well over $2 million into the Maine anti-gay referendum drive. When challenged by the Maine Ethics Commission to reveal the names of their out-of-state donors, as required by Maine law, NOM said the state for “violating” their right to privacy. The Mormon church allegedly is a major NOM donor.

In the five states performing gay marriages—Iowa, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts—the practice took effect after legislation or court order. New York and the District of Columbia recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states, but do not grant them. (For more on the Maine referendum and other national election results, see page A-45.)

Gay rights victories

However, the loss in Maine was not the whole story of Decision 2009. Voters in Kalamazoo, Mich., overwhelmingly embraced equality in their city. Addition­ally, of the 79 openly LGBT candidates the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund endorsed for 2009, 50 were winning as of Nov. 5 and another six had advanced to run­off elections.

This was a year when LGBT candidates broke through in places where they had never won before. Now, the cities of Detroit, Mich., Akron, Ohio, and St. Petersburg, Fla. will have their first openly gay city council members. Chappa Hill, N.C. also elected an openly gay mayor.

Rochester continued its proud tradition of voting for openly gay candidates, re-electing Harry Bronson to the Monroe County Legislature and electing newcom­er Matt Haag to Rochester City Council.

NYS 23rd congressional race goes to Democrats; Con­servative shunt state to special election for New York’s 23rd congressional district, voters went to the polls to select the successor to Repub­lican John M. McHugh, who resigned to become United States Secretary of the Army on Sept. 21, 2009.

The 23rd had historically been one of the more Repub­lican districts in the Northeastern United States. It incorporates the cities of Plattsburg and Water­port and most of the Adirondack

Poison Waters is Miss Gay Rochester A 10

World AIDS Day events coming up

Dec. 1: 9 a.m.-7 p.m. - AIDS Community Health Center and AIDS Rochester provide free HIV testing on a walk-in basis at 259 Monroe Ave. Free condoms available every Tuesday.

Dec. 1: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. - Family Planning Center in Gates. - The Finger Lakes AIDS Task Force, AIDS Rochester and Family Plan­ning Center will host a day of all­day testing event. Dec. 2: 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Monroe Community College Denkowski Center. - Community Health Center panel discussions and HIV counsel­ing and testing event sponsored by The MOCHA Center.

Dec. 7 - 1:30 p.m. - St. John Fisher College. - “The Wit­ness” screening as part of “Finger Lakes Film Festival,” followed by a dis­cussion facilitated by AIDS Rochester.

Dec. 7 - 7:30 p.m. at Lake Avenue Baptist Church. 9th annual PeaceArt World AIDS Day Commemoration.

Dec. 2 - 4:30 p.m. - The University Community Health Services Building. - HIV testing and counseling provided to University of Rochester students by appointment.

Dec. 2 - 9:15 p.m. at Immanuel Baptist Church. - Free meal for those affected by HIV/AIDS, with support and res­ources from community service providers, short testimonials, and guest speakers. Dec. 2 - 7:30 p.m. at Imman­uel Baptist Church. - “Sharing the Gift of Love,” with the Singh Singh, Bishop of Rochester Episcopal Diocese, with the Gospel Choir of Elim Christian Center.

Dec. 3 - 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. (AIDS Day continues page 3)

The Gay Alliance appreciates the continuing partnership of businesses within our community who support our mission and vision.

Gold

- Edelstein Kodak Company; Mass Mutual Financial Group; Merrill Lynch; Nixon Peabody, LLP

Silver

- Silver Ice Making Services; Bausch & Lomb Inc.; Corning Incorporated; Harter Secret & Emony LLP; Haveron & Haveron CPA’s; ITT Corporation; Monroe Plan for Medical Care; Sage Advisors of Sage Rutty; St. John Fisher College; Tim Tompkins Enterprises; Xenos Capital Services

Bronze

- Canadian National Bank; Edgerton Florist; Empire State College; GALAJO: Pride at Work; Open Arts Metropolitan Community Church; Third Presbyterian Church; Wegmans Food Markets; The Woolworth Group

Pride

- Thomson Reuters

Section A

NEW YORK STATE'S OLDEST LGBT PUBLICATION

Shop till you drop at Big Gay Bazaar

Looking for race, queer and transgender gifts for your significant other, friend or client? Why not check out the Big Gay Bazaar on Dec. 5.

The GAGV presents a book sale at the Library, first floor (france st. next to the Youth Center), 657 E. Main St., from 5:30 p.m. - 3 p.m. Books, art, jewelry, knickknacks and doodads for sale.

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Reflections on Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. It’s the food, but it is definitely not Black Friday! This is the holiday when I actually slow down and truly enjoy the time with family, friends and, importantly, myself. It is a brief respite from the hectic pace and pressures of life. As a child it began the countdown to Christmas. It involved two large family parties for Thanksgiving and Christmas, with all the cousins, aunts, uncles and grandparents gathered. I am grateful for my family, the history and our traditions.

Rochester has been my home for 32 years. I have loved and appreciated all of it. I am full of gratitude for the entire extended family of choice that is created through working and supporting each other. We are blessed to have so many organizations and opportunities for creating community. Now would be a great time to think about our many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues and other groups. I think “cross fertilization” and self-education make our community stronger. As Executive Director I have secrets, many different parts of our community. There is always more to do and more to learn. This leads me to the GIVING part of this holiday season. I believe we can learn much from each other and we must require getting out of our comfort zone. I think it would be great if we each attended a few events for groups we don’t know much about.

For me, I want to thank all the people who ventured out for the wonderful performance of MIDRED sponsored by the Gay Alliance and Tawa Panu Unity Fellowship Church. This was part of Transgender Day of Remembrance for those who lost their lives because of hatred, fear and prejudice. CRED created an event of celebration and I am sorry that many missed this opportunity. Speaking honestly, as a community and a state we have a long way to still go on this issue. Now would be a great time to give a few minutes to write a letter to your State Senator supporting passage of GENDA. This legislation would protect an entire group of people from discrimination.

My hope for the new year is that we can continue to give generously of our time and resources to all our organizations.

Volunteers and Book Donations Wanted

The Gay Alliance Library & Archives is looking for donations of books, DVDs, and videos for its collection.

To volunteer:
Please call Jeanne Gansburg at 244-8640
To donate:
Please call 244-8640
Any and all financial contributions for shelving units would also be very much appreciated.

Coming here taught me how to live...
16-year old Youth Program participant

A s you plan your end of the year giving, help to support the GAYFET Future by giving to the Gay Alliance. Hundreds of area youth participate in our programs. We also provide support to schools and families.

Name: 
Address: 
City/Zip: 
Phone: 
E-mail: 

Membership levels:
$1,000-999 Champion
$1,000-4,999 Triangle Club
$5,000-59,999 Stonewall winners begin with a subscription to The Empty Closet – bi-monthly or annual subscriptions at each level.
Phone: 585 244-8640 or mail it to the Gay Alliance 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500, Rochester, NY 14605
Thomas Warfield  
(Warfield from page 1)

Thomas is a professional dancer, singer, pianist, composer, teacher and poet who has performed and traveled around the world. He is also the founder of PeaceArt International, "a not-for-profit local/global outreach organization utilizing the arts and creativity to build community and foster greater human understanding and world peace."

The event began with poetry readings by two MOCHA members, DeAnne Majors and Chris Wilson (aka Trinity). Majors showed poems that grappled with how to find peace within pain and longing, while Wilson’s dealt with themes of communication, the placing of blame and the hurtful consequences of violent acts.

Then Warfield took to the stage with stories of how and why poetry plays an important role in his life. "It was a year of poetic experiences that we thought we were going to come into this election and be successful, at least being victorious in one of the Republican districts. Now, we need to get back to work and do the people’s business," Bronson said.

Coming into the general election, Republicans held 15 out of 29 seats in the Assembly, which they have controlled for most of the year. Of those not up for election, six are held by Republicans and seven are Democrats. New York is a one-party state.

Monroe County Democratic Committee Chairman Joseph Morell told a local newspaper, "I’m not sure what exactly happened. It seems to me we would continue to make gains on what we’d done the two years ago.

Another closely-watched race was in the legislature’s 19th District, which includes Mendon, Gates and Henrietta. Republican incumbent Jeff McCann beat Democrat and GAGV Board Member Jo Medica-Beigt.

In the Monroe County Legislature, Republicans won 30 seats, knocking off only 19 Democrats. Thomas Warfield is a professional dancer, pianist, composer, teacher and poet who has performed and traveled around the world. He is also the founder of PeaceArt International, "a not-for-profit local/global outreach organization utilizing the arts and creativity to build community and foster greater human understanding and world peace."

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Maine voters reject marriage equality

On Nov. 3, a small percentage of voters in Maine stripped the right to legal marriage away from lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender couples. Despite a strong grassroots effort, an attack campaign by anti-gay forces, which spent well over $2 million, just barely passed over 52.84 percent to 47.16 percent — a mere 0.68 percent as California's Prop 8.

The recipe for ending injustice in Maine is simple. Give people the information they need over time, and stir their hearts. We will work harder, and learn better to dispel the distractions and fears that are keeping a smaller and smaller slice of America from treating others fairly," said Eric Holton, executive director of Freedom to Marry and author of Why Marriage Matters: America, Equality and Gay People's Right to Marry. "Each conversation, each day, each story, each win will bring America closer to equality in marriage.

In addition to the thousands of volunteers and hundreds of organizations that joined the fight for the freedom to marry, political leaders from Maine to Washington and across the United States, such as President Barack Obama, Maine Governor John Baldacci, and Washington Governor Chris Gregoire, spoke out against those discriminatory measures.

"My heart goes out today to the couples in Maine who will have to wait a little longer to marry those they love and receive the protections their commitment deserves," said the Mayor of both Maine and Washington worked hard and families across each state stood up and told their stories in order to change hearts and minds.

He said that Freedom to Marry honors the leadership of the No on 1 Protect Maine Equality and Washington Families Standing Together campaign, along with supporting organizations: The Magnuson Act, Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, the Maine chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, and Equal Rights Washington.

While work continues in Maine and Washington, focus shifts to New York, New Jersey and the District of Columbia where bills are currently being considered to end the exclusion of gay couples from marriage. The New York bill may come to the floor for a vote before the end of the year.

IRC statement

The Human Rights Campaign expressed profound sadness and anger at the passage of Question 1 in Maine.

"Although we lost our battle in Maine, we will not lose our voices and heritage — the foundation on which our opponents built their campaign — to break our spirits. We will continue the fight for the freedom to marry on all levels — and we will continue this fight," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "I am angry. But more importantly, I am determined that with the anger I feel today from this outcome in Maine, we will rise up stronger to demand equal treatment under the law and equal respect for our relationships in Maine, California, New Jersey, and every state of the Union.

"Maine was poised to become the fifth state in the United States to recognize same-sex marriage by May 2009, after the measure was passed by the state Senate and House of Representatives and signed into law by Governor John Baldacci. The issue was placed on the statewide ballot after opponents submitted sufficient signatures for the referendum.

"This law did not threaten families; rather, it was an historic step that strengthened Maine's commitment to freedom.

For exemple, this law, we owe a debt of gratitude to Maine legislators and Governor Baldacci for giving their best to protect it at the ballot. We also thank the incredibly talented and dedicated staff and volunteers who brought life to the No on 1 campaign," Solmonese said.

In the state of Washington, a bill to expand domestic partner benefits was passed in May 2009 and signed into law by Governor Christine Gregoire. The measure was placed on the ballot after opponents collected enough signatures to qualify for a referendum. The law provides state-registered same-sex and senior domestic partners with the same state-level benefits that married couples enjoy. Voters in Washington appear to have approved the new law by passing the initiative.

"Although we are bitterly disappointed, we are not surprised to see what appears to be a silver lining in Washington where the people of that state have of late clearly voted a yes for equality. Their votes will ensure that state-registered domestic partners will be fully protected under the law," said Solmonese.

GLAAD statement

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAAD) called on the nation’s media to focus on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and couples in covering the results and aftermath of the vote.

“We are disappointed and disheartened by results in Maine, where we saw marriage equality eliminated for loving and committed couples,” said Jarrett Barrios, President of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). "It’s wrong to take basic rights and protections away from neighbors, friends and co-workers who care deeply for their loved ones and families. It’s wrong, unfair and, frankly, un-American. Many Mainers voted that responsibility and commitment should continue to be respected and protected, but a narrow majority warded away the basic protections of marriage from couples and their families. Opponents campaigned on fear and misinformation, and based lies on the prevarication of gay and lesbian couples — and our allies — to square one. Forced to defend the well-confirmed protections that marriage affords. We must commit to sharing more stories on the triumphs of love, our lives and families to ensure the legal protections of marriage for all, loving, committed couples."

Face Equality statement

Chris Christensen, Executive Director, Family Equality Council, said, "In the long march to full equality, today we pause to grieve with and for the families, and children who have temporarily lost the promise of equality under Maine law. Our freedoms have been stripped away, but we must and will win them back. When the残忍 of our pain and grief lessens, LGBT families will do what they do so naturally — stand together and tell our stories. Connecting with others who have faced the same has always been the key to educating, dreaming and inspiring hope, which will lead to the changing of enough hearts and minds to win our freedom. Our visibility as LGBT families is strong and providing positive roles nationwide. The fight will continue and we will again make marriage a reality for our families in Maine."

GLAD statement

Lee Swilson, Executive Director of Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, which worked on both the legislative and ballot campaign, released this statement: "Today, Maine’s same-sex couples and all their supporters are experiencing a wide range of emotions. For many, the Supreme Court’s decision to allow same-sex couples to marry in Massachusetts will be viewed as a step forward. We commend the people of same-sex couples and their families for their courage in fighting for marriage equality."

"Today’s victory is another step in the long and difficult journey for marriage equality. We will continue to fight for the rights of all couples in Virginia and across the United States," said Solmonese.

What happened to The Blade? LGBT papers suddenly shut down

The Washington Blade, the nation’s oldest LGBT newspaper, and several other major newspapers, disappeared on Nov. 16. Many questions are being asked about what is still a murky and questionable occurrence.

From CreativesUnfolding.com: "Employees at one of the papers arrived to work
In response to media inquiries and an apparent information blackout by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Nicholas B. Benton, owner of the Falls Church News-Press, a Washington, D.C.-area weekly, confirmed that his corporation, Benton Communications, Inc., had won a bid from parities that included the SBA in September to obtain the assets of the Washington Blade. Benton’s bid had been a joint venture between his company and the federal Small Business Administration. Benton said he was working with the SBA to produce a document showing that it had done that. The SBA did not respond.

Karen Tromb at LGPT POV took a look at the increasing amount of questions being raised: “Nicholas F. Benton is among the many shocked over the sudden closure of the legendary gay newspaper, the Washington Blade. But Benton’s shock goes deeper: he intended to buy the Blade precisely to avoid it being shut down as part of a larger recession-protected project.

“Benton, the openly gay owner of the D.C.-area Falls Church News-Press weekly, told The Daily Caller that he had won a bid through his corporation, Benton Communications, Inc., to purchase the Washington Blade in order to maintain its 40-year legacy and keep what many consider the LGBT newspaper ‘of record’ functioning.

‘Though the negotiations for the buy-out of the Blade involved the federal Small Business Administration (SBA) and others, the SBA did not receive ‘offers’ to buy the two papers from Window Media and its business ally Unite Media. But, Stamer said, the decision to decline those offers was entirely left to Window Media and Unite, not the SBA and Sarah Blazek were quoted in The Philadelphia Gay News, “While the federal Small Business Administration (SBA) is saying it played no role in the sale of the Washington Blade and the Southern Voice, two of the nation’s oldest gay newspapers, a 2008 order issued by a federal court gave the SBA broad and exclusive authority to manage the assets of the Avalon Equity Fund, the Investment Fund that owns Window Media, the current parent company of the Blade and Voice.

“The SBA reported that Window and Unite Media ‘publicly available for their publications. Why the papers were closed when they had buyers waiting to purchase is something that needs to be addressed. In press statements, the SBA said Window/Unite Media is wholly responsible for any decision to sell or not sell the newspaper properties it owns, and the decision to shut down the newspapers was made wholly by Window/Unite Media.

“Under the 2008 order, the SBA would have to legally delegate that authority to the officers and directors at Unite and Window. In an email, Gay City News asked the SBA to produce a document showing that it had done that. The SBA did not respond.”

Benton said, “The LGBT POV took a look at the increasing amount of questions being raised: ‘Nicholas F. Benton is among the many shocked over the sudden closure of the legendary gay newspaper, the Washington Blade. But Benton’s shock goes deeper: he intended to buy the Blade precisely to avoid it being shut down as part of a larger recession-protected project.

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### LGBT rights, candidates win across country

In Nov. 3 national election results, voters in Washington state approved Referendum 71, an initiative to approve the state’s domestic partnership law, and voters of Kalamaazoo, Mich., passed Ordinance 1856.

Originally approved twice by the City Commission of Kalamaazoo, opponents forced a public referendum on the Ordinance. The Ordinance revises the City’s existing non-discrimination law to include LGBT people.

With the passage of this legislation, LGBT individuals in Kalamaazoo are provided legal protection from discrimination at work, in housing and in enjoying public accommodations such as restaurants and hotels.

Jennifer Chrieter, Executive Director, Family Equality Council, said, “Kalamaazoo is a leading community in the fight for equality. This Ordinance ensures LGBT families basic protections such as the ability to secure a place to live or eat in a restaurant. It also enables that LGBT individuals can work and provide for their children and families without the fear of being fired for reasons unrelated to their job performance. The public’s support for LGBT people and these basic protections is great for Kalamaazoo and adds to the momentum towards full equality for all families across this country.”

Don Michaels noted that the Blade’s 40 years in operation, its staff was able to establish integral connections between the LGBT community and elected officials, which he said contributed to the paper’s venerable reputation.

“It’s impact was substantial,” said Michaels, who began as the publication’s first paid employee in 1977 and eventually progressed to become editor and then publisher. “When I joined the paper, I was impressed with the sense of purpose and continuity that had been established, and I made it my goal to stay on and build that. Its location in the seat of national government enabled it to discuss the wealth of social and political resources to establish a first-class reporting effort for both local and national issues.

Michaels said he had mixed feelings when he sold the paper to Window. “We took care of people with right livelihoods [Window] and others who praised them, but their stated intentions were good,” he said. “I do regret that they meeting risk of that staff the they inherited, which I feel robbed the organization of an institutional memory.”

While he won’t pay to the “internal workings” of the publication after the sale, Michaels asserted that he doesn’t “buy into the idea that the Blade was a victim of the current bad economic climate for print media,” adding: “It’s obvious there was some pretty bad management at some level.”

Naff said the Blade, which most recent­ly had a weekly circulation of approx­i­mately 23,000 and drew 29,000 visitors per month to its Web site, had been turn­ing a profit.

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Lt. Dan Choi

By Laura McSpadden

If you are not yet familiar with the name Lieutenant Dan Choi, you should be. Choi is not only a West Point graduate, Argentine linguist, environmental engineer and former National Guardsman who has served as an officer in Iraq; he is also an outspoken LGBT activist.

In March of 2009, Choi made history when he came out of the closet on MSNBC's The Rachel Maddow Show. Throughout 2009, he has spoken across the country at a variety of gay rights events and helped found and promote Knights Out, an organization of West Point alumni, faculty and staff in support of LGBT soldiers.

Choi has been discharged as a result of his refusal to silently accept the tenets of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy that has been in effect since 1993. (The final decision regarding an appeal to reinstate Lieutenant Choi is still pending.)

On Oct. 23, Choi spoke at the University of Rochester regarding the consequences and implications of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. He emphasized the importance of repealing this policy, and urged attendees to take action in support of the "T" in the Knights Out logo.

"The first day at West Point, we are taught that we are to obey orders—unless, of course, we are given an immoral, unchristian, illegal or illegal order, in which case we are duty bound to question it and disobey it.

We need to be mindful of the message that we are sending to the world, particularly as we engage in missions that are ostensibly designed to spread pluralism and democracy. If this is our international message that we wish to send, shouldn't America itself, as well as its military, be equitable?

The military is one of the main touchstones of America worldwide, and we need to be aware of the messages its policies send to the world if we wish to be truly respected internationally.

Every other country that we are sharing base camps with as NATO allies in Afghanistan has rejected their threats and laws against equality for gays and lesbians in their militaries. As a result, only American soldiers are serving without gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people.

We need to have a consistent message between what we are preaching and what we are doing. Political ideologies and agendas should not stand in the way of equality, whether by the Sunnis and the Shi'ites or by the United States and Iran. Under "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," we are guilty of immense hypocrisy.

In his speech, Choi shared his personal coming out story; although he has known that he is gay for years, he only decided to come out to his family in January of this year. It was a difficult decision for him to make his parents his first-generation American friends who moved here from Korea, and his father is a Baptist minister, and so he expected significant backlash from his commitment to express himself honestly.

Nevertheless, his parents were able to reach a point of acceptance much faster than he ever would have imagined, a point which he used to illustrate to the listeners in the audience how important it is that we collectively take risks in order to attain greater freedom and equality.

"This week ago, I had a conversation with a dad, right after the Supreme Court decision regarding the Defense of Marriage Act. I knew the Supreme Court would strike down 'DADT.' And I love you, my gay son. I did not expect him to say that for a decade, or maybe 30 or 40 years, or maybe until his death, before he'd finally say, 'Okay, I accept you, and now I am going to die.'" I think acceptance was such a breakthrough for me, and I wondered, what if I had just waited, if I had just shut up and taken the silent face of confusion? Would I be where I am today with my dad? And yet so many people still say, 'For the love of your country, for the sake of your career, or for the sake of your standing in a homophobic environment, stay in the closet.'

EC: "Would you please describe the process that resulted in the genesis of Knights Out, and why its mission is important?"

DC: "The day I came out to my parents, I contacted some people clandestinely in order to start forming a private network of West Point graduates. As we started sharing our stories, we realized that we needed a support system.

"We are operating under the assumption that 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' will be repealed, but fear some degree of backlash like the one that happened in 1994 [in response to Clinton's effort to allow gays in the military that ultimately resulted in the onset of 'DADT'].... And I believe that understanding that there are probably people at West Point who are afraid to come out. The job of Knights Out is to partner with our academy to think ahead to the repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' so as to make the transition as smooth as possible.

"I think and hope that it can be a non-issue. After all, the implementation of this policy is already arbitrary. So, there are already out people serving in the military at all ranks. 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' is suspended for other reasons: political reasons and reasons regarding competitiveness and buckling.

"Furthermore, how can a disproportionate number of females and racial minorities who are being discharged under the guise of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell.' In many ways, 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' is used to propagate male chauvinism and racism.

"Straight soldiers suffer as a result of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' too. The main victims are not those who are being discharged, but those who are being deployed without the most qualified LGBT soldiers there for their protection. They are offering themselves to wicked cons for what they can serve, and yet are discharging qualified gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender soldiers.

"And think about all of the soldiers who are suffering with PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] and survivor guilt. Think about the high rates of suicide among soldiers returning from Iraq, as well as among gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender young adults, in and out of the military. More often than not, the real result from not being able to come out, and you can imagine some of the punishment that results from policy.

"It is a sad truth that not all gay men and lesbians are very good allies and advocates for the transgendered and transgender sexual community. What led to the decision to include the 'T' in the Knights Out phrase?

DC: "The mission at West Point is to educate, train and inspire. Education is highly important.

"There is often a sense of isolation that is experienced by many transgendered people. This calls to educate and inform people about the additional levels of discrimination.

"Don't Ask, Don't Tell' does not directly apply to transgendered people, and there are some people who felt that it would be too politically dangerous to include transgender in our mission. However, as an association of graduates of West Point, I think it is important that we are inclusive and that we recognize the discrimination that transgendered people make regarding trans-inclusiveness in the military.

"Congressman Joe Sestak, a retired United States Naval Admiral, has espoused his belief that 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' discriminates against the military and that he hopes that it will be. How do you think that concerned American citizens can effectively lobby to push 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' and get a vote on it?

DC: "Contact your Congressman and your Senator: write a letter, knock on the doors and push the bill to repeal 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' and get a vote on it.

"Perhaps in the military, particularly if you're a commanding officer, it is your responsibility first and foremost, to make sure that your team feels safe and fit to fight. Look into Knights Out, and think about how to live up to your responsibility and duty to make sure no one on your team feels alone. When we are at war, no leader should let their soldiers down.

"While delivering his speech to the crowd at U. of R., Choi directly confronted the issue of free speech in the face of the blatant inequalities that are promulgated by the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. He asked, "What about it? Do we want to keep silent and wait and see if we can wait right now, tonight, there are partners of lesbian and gay soldiers who are at war overseas?" Choi said. "And if they don't get that phone call then they don't know if their partner is going to die or not. They're not allowed to exist."

"And how can we wait when in Iraq lesbian and gay Iraqis are being hunted by religious extremists and being killed and tortured in the most inhumane ways?" Choi then turned the tables on those who oppose this legislation. "If you're going to risk 50 percent of the homeless youth in our country out on the streets tonight are from the 50 percent lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

"How can we wait when all these things are going on right now? Do we wait because we are afraid of the judgment? Maybe we'd be discharged? Or maybe our parents wouldn't accept us? Or maybe our churches would look at us and say: Should we simply force these things and wait?"

Choi then turned the tables on those who would deny the rights of gay Americans. "In the fear of judgment. "Well, I'll tell you what I fear," he said, "I don't fear the judgment of God, I don't fear the judgment of the United States and yes, there is a lot of judgment. If we're so worried about the judgment, do we ever care about the judgment of the generations to come? Those gay and lesbian children, those bisexual and transgender youth will ask us. And their judgment, I tell you, will be so much more critical and so much more harsh than any kind of judgment that you can get from any kind of homophobic people living today in 2009. And they will ask us, "Why did you do it?""

"They will grow up and ask us, everybody in this room, 'What did you do in 2009? And if you can't answer, what little was yours to be fought? Did you tell everybody that we should wait? Did you tell everybody that we should wait? Did you tell everybody to wait?' Did you say 'Maybe I should wait for my mutual funds to get better, then I can buy a house?' Or maybe I should wait until I'm ready, or what you should wait for the President's plate to get a little bit lighter? It is our responsibility to ask ourselves: what are people who are suffering right now?"

Choi's speech ended with a heartfelt plea after his speech in order to ask him questions, shake his hand, or simply say thank you. "So, one final thing, be open to thank a person for whom she or she has done is often to take up the reins for oneself and continue the good work.

So please ask yourself: what are you going to do in 2009?"

Van Capelle said that the meeting was very difficult, with a lot of anger, frustration and tension in the air. However, voiced anger at the way gay and lesbian couples in the Capitol hallways were being treated. Cathy Marino-Thomas, a Democratic Senator from New York's 23rd Congressional district, said that the meeting was wasting their time, that there would be no vote. 'The Alliance Defense Fund of Scottsdale, Ariz., which intervenes to block equal rights for all lesbian Americans, argued that since same-sex marriage is not legal in New York, state and local governments should not extend equal benefits to gay couples or recognize their legal marriages. The group lost in lower courts, which ruled that extending the benefits does not conflict with current laws. The Alliance Defense Fund of Scottsdale, Ariz., which intervenes to block equal rights for all lesbian Americans, argued that since same-sex marriage is not legal in New York, state and local governments should not extend equal benefits to gay couples or recognize their legal marriages. The group lost in lower courts, which ruled that extending the benefits does not conflict with current laws.

The clock in lower courts, which ruled that extending the benefits does not conflict with current laws. In June, 2006, Westchester County Executive Andrew Spano issued an executive order that the county would recognize out-of-state marriages of same-sex couples, in line with the longstanding tradition. In 2007, the state agreed to allow gay couples married out of state and employed by New York and some local governments to receive health benefits for their families.

The Nov. 19 ruling says, "Plaintiffs have not identified any specific impact that the executive order has had on any public employee or private individual in Westchester County." The state has a long-standing precedent of recognizing legal marriages performed outside the state, and Governor Paterson instructed state agencies in 2007 to recognize such marriages between same-sex couples. Monroe County's defiance of that order, with their refusal to extend benefits to employee Patricia Martinez and her spouse Lisa Golden, resulted in a legal defeat for the county in 2008.

Democrat Owens defeats anti-gay opponent

In Nov. 1's election results for New York's 23rd Congressional district, voters rejected the anti-gay extremist positions of Conservative Party candidate Doug Hoffman, instead electing Democrat Bill Owens. Owens was elected to represent the 23rd Congressional district. The race took a dramatic turn shortly before the election, when the Republican candidate, state assemblywoman DeDe Scozzafava, a supporter of marriage equality endorsed by the Human Rights Campaign PAC, withdrew from the race in the face of blistering attacks by Conservative Party candidate Doug Hoffman, his backers in the Club for Growth and many within the conservative wing of the Republican Party, eager to purge moderates.

The National Organization for Marriage (NOM), which lavishly funded the detractors of marriage equality in California and Maine, endorsed Hoffman and conducted an independent expenditure campaign on his behalf: http://www.votingformarriage.org/index.cfm/LXKcN0/1H1k5556129k/1279A/NOM_Endorses_Doug_Hoffman_for_23rd_G Congressional.htm.

After the withdrawal of Scozzafava and her subsequent endorsement of Owens, the Human Rights Campaign worked to mobilize support for Owens through e-mail and phone calls to its more than 1,000 members and supporters in the 23rd Congressional district. "The voters in New York's 23rd Congressional district stood up and rejected bigotry," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "Voters sent a clear signal of who they want to repre­sent and defeated the extreme positions held by Doug Hoffman. We salute tonight's victory in New York."

Pleasant Street Apothecary re-opens at 259 Monroe Avenue

By Dave Overmyer

The Pleasant Street Apothecary's move from the Michaels Stern building at 87 North Clinton Street to Monroe Square in October went much more smoothly than expected. With last minute assistance from some drug companies helping with storage issues during the transition, and with the entire staff working approximately 100 employee hours that weekend, the store was only closed for one business day.

The pharmacy's inception was the brainchild of the AIDS Community Health Center (ACHC), which is now merging with AIDS Rochester. The new organization will now become the single source for expertise on all aspects of HIV/AIDS care in Rochester and the Finger Lakes communities. The pharmacy, which began operating in the spring of 2005 at the corner of North Clinton and Pleasant Streets, is the primary provider for all things medicine for the clients at ACHC. When they opened more than four years ago, they were filling about 100 prescriptions a day. To their surprise and delight, the business was also a real hit with area residents. Tenants of the Michaels Stern building and a nearby high rise on St. Paul Street became regular customers. However, the pharmacy's absence now casts a shadow in that urban neighborhood.

Coupled with the demise of Ren Square, the exit of supermarkets and a troubled economy, downtown city workers and residents still do not have many options when it comes to shopping or finding products and necessary services. Presently, there are no major pharmacies located within the downtown inner-loop. Dave Overmyer, owner of the Pleasant Bun Restaurant at 87 North Clinton (Pleasant St. continues on page 8)
Dave Desiato and Mark Malahosky. Photo: Ove Overmyer

(Plains-town continued from page 7) St. says the "vacany is a sad reminder to our customers who live in this downtown area-- they will miss having that business here. I loved having ACHC and the pharmacy as neighbors-- they are a great group of people who do amazing work.

New space brings efficiencies
"I feel a little shame and sadness leaving our customers behind, but we are looking toward the future," said pharmacist Mark Malahosky. Pleasant Street Apothecary registered pharmacists Doug Lindle and Malahosky have over 45 years of combined experience. Doug and Mark were working together at Southside Apothecary back when it was on 1351 Mt. Hope Avenue, and later on when dedicated customers followed them to the 1815 South Clinton Avenue location.

Lindle says what makes a good pharmacy a great pharmacy is "providing each and every one of our customers the privacy and respect they deserve." Also, Lindle says the fact that they are open six days a week, employ a 24-hour prescription refill telephone line and have a quick turn-around time really helps.

Lindle also thinks providing free parking and a delivery service. Lindle also thinks being locally owned and operated translates well for their clients. "Also, we've learned that treating women the way they want to be treated is the ideal experience for women. With an increased awareness of what elements women seek in a positive automotive servicing experience, our service center is better prepared to meet and exceed the expectations of our female customers," states Jerry Elman, owner of Schoen Place Auto.

Along with the certification, Schoen Place Auto has enhanced its website to put more to the concerns and wishes women have expressed concerning automotive care. This latest design integrates seamlessly to effectively deliver online information and services to female consumers. The new website can easily be found and accessed utilizing the AutoPatty.com Certified Female Friendly® web icon on the existing Schoen Place Auto website.

Visit the Schoen Place Auto AskPatty.com Certified Female Friendly® site at http://femalefriendlydealers.askpatty.com/df/Schoen_Place_Auto.

Elman says, "At Kodal, I was a big proponent of gender-biased advertising before we became the corporate 'buzzy word.' I was often viewed as a lunatic because I would not allow the business and the people who worked there. I am very proud of the women, African Americans, Hispanics, gay, and lesbians I coached and mentored at a time when they were denied opportunities. Many of them achieved positions higher than mine, and it's a great feeling to know I had some impact on that."

Schoen Place Auto is "female-friendly"
Schoen Place Auto has completed its female-friendly certification, training them the only service center within nearly 300 miles to cater more to the concerns and wishes of all kinds to women.

"Through the AskPatty.com program, we've learned that treating women the same as men does not necessarily yield the ideal experience for women. With an increased awareness of what elements women seek in a positive automotive servicing experience, our service center is better prepared to meet and exceed the expectations of our female customers," states Jerry Elman, owner of Schoen Place Auto.

"As passionate as our vehicles as the guys are, but just for different reasons," says Judy Devere, President and CEO of AskPatty.com. "Women are the majority new car buyer and are 75 percent of service lane customers at dealerships."

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Miss Gay Rochester 2010 Poison Waters (left), with Miss Gay Rochester 2009 Keke Velasquez Lord. The legendary Aggy Dune was emcee at the Nov. 15 pageant. Photos by Jim Hanselman.

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by Evelyn Bailey

Have you ever heard of ACT-UP Rochester, LAG Ponds, GROW, Something for da Sistax, Rochester RAMS? These are just a few of the over 250 groups that have been a part of the Rochester LGBTQ Community from pre-Stonewall to present. What does this have to do with the Documentary Heritage Program Grant awarded to the GAGV and Shoulders To Stand On? Shoulders To Stand On, a documentary chronicling the history of the local LGBTQ community and its impact on the nation, will capture the stories, struggles, and achievements of our queer pioneers. Many people put the gay liberation movement into motion, and continue to work toward justice and equal rights for all. To safeguard Rochester’s gay history, we must identify and locate the individuals, families, organizations, and agencies that document their contribution and influence locally and nationally. Why is this so important? A community, culture, society without a documented history does not exist. Today, we stand on the shoulders of many heroes who made Rochester a city that celebrates diversity and has often set benchmarks for civil liberties throughout the nation. At the forefront, Rochester’s gay community has been there to diminish the cause of equality and freedom for all. But, even as history is made, it remains fragile and can be quickly lost. Because of the societal focus on inclusiveness, the Rochester light community has an increased need to maintain our own identity. We need to document and preserve our historical records that give definition to who we are and the contributions we have made to improve the quality of life of the Rochester community by promoting leadership in the areas of health, civil rights, social justice, and economic growth. This is exactly what the DHP Grant of the NYS Archives, which is a program of the NYS Department of Education, will help us begin to do! This DHP Grant will insure that this historical record will be located and identified for research, advocacy purposes, to teach and inspire future generations.

We need your help! Please go to shoulderstostandon.org. There are many individuals, organizations, and agencies that have been involved in our history. Do you know anyone? Do you know any groups? Do you remember any events that you were involved in? Please, please, please try to jog your memory – and those of your friends. You, the community, are the shoulders we stand on. Make yourself a New Year’s Resolution. Promise to raise your voice, share your story, and share the names, stories, and contact information of people whom you know were involved in our history so that their stories will not be lost. Please, go to shoulderstostandon.org – NOW!

What is the GAGV Shoulders to Stand On Program? Shoulders To Stand On is a program of the GAGV. It is your community program, Shoulders To Stand On focuses on documenting and preserving the history of the GLBT Community in the Rochester region, your history, and its impact on New York state and the nation in advancing the cause for justice and equal rights. This project gives credibility to our community and culture, and will be available to teach and inspire future generations. The GAGV Shoulders to Stand On Program has four initiatives:

Roots Chronology: Digitization of The Empty Closet Newspaper, the oldest gay newspaper in New York State, the second oldest continuously published monthly gay newspaper in the country, and the official paper of record which documents the Rochester gay community’s struggle for civil rights.

Documentary Film – championing the cause of equality and freedom for all. The documentary film Shoulders To Stand On will capture the stories, struggles, and achievements of our gay pioneers, highlight many events that put Rochester in the local and national spotlight, and celebrate the spirit of a community that is bound together with a steadfast sense of pride.

If you’re buying or selling, Call John!
JANUARY

Bi any other name.... Colorado Springs evangelical pastor Ted Haggard, who was accused of having sex with a man, Grant Haas, talked about his sexual experiences with Fox News, often pitched against gays, admits that he had a sexual relationship with a 20-year-old male volunteer, Thomas Dell, who he met at a church. Haggard's second public admission of gay sex -- but he says he really is a "heterosexual man" who has sex with his wife.

FEBRUARY

Killer comment. Laura Ingraham, a Fox News grade-B back, while guest-hosting of apolitical FiAskO, er. Factor on Feb. 8, proclaims that a transgender group is "killing the culture." Of course, it's actually transgender people who are being killed by the culture... though you won't see those murder statistics on Fox.

MARCH

The Pope's condom-nation. "Bumping Benedick" gets yet another large dose of adulation (including negative NYT Times and Lavish editorial) and criticism by the French, Belgian and German governments after it was announced in March when he announces, on a visit to HIV-devastated Africa, that condoms don't prevent AIDS, so he's no longer against it and in "aggravate her" the "government and dangerous". The Belgian Parliament passes a resolution calling the remarks "unaccusable statements" and the Belgian government issue an official protest, which it does.

APRIL

Focus on the Family employee focuses on underage girl. Juan Alberico.

Over 1,000 Focus groups for the Colorado Springs (where it is again) hate group Focus on the Family. The fans he is touting sex with a girl under the age of 15, but instead he has been corresponding with underage with groups like Patterson County (Co) district attorney's office, according to court documents quoted by the Denver Post. He was indicted April 9.

Ovalle makes for a Spanish-speaking arm of James Dobson's Focus on the Family (for Fuck Us on the Family, as Kate Clinton calls it). He narrates Biblical text for CDs, according to Internet websites that sell the products. Sort of like the voice of God.

"We should suck," says Gary Schnorr, beret-wearing a speechman for Fuck Us, which accuses all gays of child abuse -- but has never been heard to mention the shocking fact that Focus on the Family, which is the world's largest hate group, who prays -- oops - for children and against teenage girls.

MAY

Beauty queen, Bible-thumper or moded model/porn star? Miss USA/Miss America 2009, Dione Prejean, 21, goes on Fox & Friends and Christian radio programs, and is wearing a women's underwear model on a poster picture of her surfaced in July 2008. Miss USA-pageant leaders are "calm" and say no "official action" has been taken.

JUNE

after she answered a question on gay marriage posed by Miss USA guest judge Peter Facinelli, gay celebrity group Advocate claims he "thinks he is Catholic, but even if he is Catholic, I think that I believe that a marriage should be between a man and a woman."

Prejean then signed on as spokesperson for the National Organization for Marriage (NOM), pronounced "nuns" to pour money into the anti-marriage-equality campaign in Maine, which won by a large margin. Each side spent millions -- and the vast majority of said millions in records -- and saying the state for regulating same-sex marriage is not an "issue" (since, by NOM's own admission, their organization is investigating NOM). NOM was criticized by Miss USA organizers for "manipulating" Prejean to shirk her pageant responsibilities in favor of "polishing" politics.

The pageant is investigating whether Prejean's behavior and comments for NOM conflict with pageant business. Her sexy photos, however, seem to be the bigger problem. "Adultery, for instance, is against every Catholic doctrine on this issue, and her actions are definitely not somethingbefitting a beauty queen," according to court document.

Prejean says the pageant officials for fox news, liberal and religious discrimination, "I thought that I was doing the right thing in doing it" and her boobs wouldn't be "imposing" Hollywood for bashing this All-American Traditional Values group.

Flash forward to November: a very graphic sex video Prejean had starred in suddenly surfaces. She suddenly drops her breast and nudity on YouTube and the National Enquirer. King Show and her image suddenly disappears from NOM's website. And they all say, "She's a bad apple every year after.

JULY

Come over to the Dark Side.... Episode XXXVII: The Empire Strikes Back! Our story: The Intergalactic Senate Republican Caucus stages a power coup, lead by Skow the Evil Empire, aided and abetted by the Senate majority. If the Jedi cannot prevail against the power coup. Can Governor Yoda save him from the grip of the power elite?

Even Fox has recognized the value of the group's anti-bullying ad campaign. But the only way to defeat bullies is to think that Greece is safer for women now)

August

The Greece Police. Not the disgraced former suburban police department (it's literally only p.c. fundamentalists from churches who follow the REAL message of Christ when they pray, as Auberger claims - but non-Christs, of course, are compassionate enough to subsidize home improvements for the rich and conservative - as opposed to helping the homeless and families on welfare, which would be a "waste of taxpayer dollars")

The Empty Closets

By Susan Jardas

THE GAY ALLIANCE OF THE GENESSEE VALLEY • NUMBER 430 • DEC-JAN 2010

SUSAN JARDAS

By Susan Jardas
The untold tale of being called a "Faggot"

By Mark Davis

I went to the mall earlier this evening to get my watch repaired. As I was leaving through a well known department store, a black dude and his "boi", maybe in their 20s, were coming towards me. One of them said to me "He's a Faggot". Before he got far away I turned and over my shoulder I said: "That's MISTER Faggot to you!"

So I got him to repeat his insult adding the prefix "Mister" to his verbal attack. What the yellow dum-dum realized was that I turned the tables on him and forced him to readdress his stupid remark. Then...run into the queen who is my former boss (I worked there for a second two years ago) and manager of the store. Touching his shoulder and feeling for each other. He gave me a pursed-lipped "Hello Mark."

I told him what had transpired in his store and what I said and he said "Good for you" and continued stuffing gift cards into his bill...but...his eyebrows are so plucked that every time I enter the store and see his cue ball head and plucked eye brows on the "Have an Outstanding Shopping experience here at my store I manage..." poster at every entrance — I have to remember my eyes.

I was rather perturbed by being dised by both a "Ignant" black dude and a queer white one who hates me and of whom I am no big fan. I was thinking...well...I am a man of peace and I have touched their souls with my art. People can be stupid every high high. I love show tunes, Project Fitzgerald. I know who Hermione Granger and the latter, I always have to be in earshot! I have friends and a cosmic family...I like Nirvana and Rosemary Clooney...I idolize David Bowie and Jay-Z...I like Woody Idiot (and I love the outdoors and my Maricon...)

I have friends and a cosmic family...I am loved by many and confound my siblings. I am the black sheep and a gay dog! WOOF! I have been a pig, a bear lover, Lower, a booch; a hoo-hoo and high light. I love show tunes. Project Runway and Judy Garland Live at Carnegie Hall, Coldplay, The Killers and Ella Fitzgerald. I know who Hermione Granger is and I am an Ingridious Bastard and I take Talking Woodstock, where I have been and when I am going.

So don't call me a Faggot unless you really mean it. Unless you have knowed with me and watched me as I have held my dying friends in my arms... as I have wept when an audience stands in ovation as I have wept when I was told that you have watched me lie naked floating in the Mediterranean Sea as my friends roll jaunt and we seek up the sun in a lagoon glistening with turquoise water...

Purse your lips at me because I have stood up to your idiocy and know of who you really are and you are terrified because I do know who I am... I am Mr. Faggot. I love to work out, I hate Rush Limbaugh (and yes he is a Big Fat Idiot) and I love the outdoors and my dog...and I would kill a hobo's butt for hors d'oeuvres... I like David Beckham and I love Yves Saint Laurent 2009's Collection...I love all other things that would not contaminate my being gay... I can call myself "gay" can't I?...besides when you're a Mr. Faggot what would you be next. Mr. N-word? I am a middle aged guy and I still can't get no respect... besides I know the words to "I'm Still Here" from Folies... Nayh! You can just up nod to Lil Wayne in your Humm V... I can see your unmentionables... unfortunately... pull your pants up... and queen give me those tweezers... Dammit!... But as the Divine Miss M says "It makes no never mind..." I lived in Paris Bitch... eat my art and I saw my own great battle and that was with myself. I thought I wouldn't worth anything and let myself be played by those lop-sided theatrehand and were shameless evil people. What do shameless, evil people full of self loathing do to each other... What happens to a kid of lamb when you toss it into the Amazon! If your sense of your own life and spirit is the leg of lamb and you and the self loathing people are pitzbins, what is left of the kid of lamb? I let them help me eviscerate all of my sense of worth... and you know what! I stopped letting them... toot sweet... and I crawled out and kept my head standing to running to jumping to flying to soaring... so I said... the three points.

Groed, Superidity and Foolishness. I've been called everything...induding a "fudg" pack, alicked AIDS Bags and a "God Forsaken Plague Baggy"... And by a relative a "Ass F*ker".

We all have seen the signs, the ones that the people that don't have lives care whenever they forget that they need to make people feel more蠢 then than they do about themselves... you know... signs like "AIDS Cures Fag!"

All that warm fun sentiment that you let your wonderful children hear you say... well I got my self respect...cause poor kid is going to say something stupid to the wrong person one day and well Cause and Effect — he'll get his — and that's from: Mr. I know the Laws that Govern the Universe Buddy and you are on the highway to hell... I am just mad that I wasted all my positive energy on that Robert Redford running Knucklehead and Mr. No-Eyebrows-from-Hell-In-Last-Years-Angie-Swartz... oh well there were the Days The Smart Report... Just remember before you purse those lips or let those loose words that you may regret... think before you add a Rendering to that... and put that on everything!

I have no idea how there is a Maricon (Spanish for Faggot) just make it Senor Maricon..."

Planning a financial future

By William Costella, CLF, LUTCF, CLTC, Special Care Planner, General Agent

By one estimate there are approximately 3,156,921 same-sex households in the United States (Source: Human Rights Campaign, Fully Funded, Full Poll). I don't know how that breaks down by municipality, but I have to believe that hundreds or thousands of same-sex couples walk the streets of Western New York every day.

Undoubtedly, most people, including the professionals gays and lesbians look to, or should look to, for guidance in financial, legal, tax, accounting, social security, legal, estate, and the unique needs of this underserved marketplace. My point: gays and lesbians, single or partnered, need to plan for their financial future.

There are many reasons why gay and lesbian singles, couples or services should consider the importance of prudent financial planning. Perhaps one of the most common is what I call complex family dynamics.

In some cases, gays and lesbians may be estranged from their biological families. As a result, questions arise as to who make financial decisions in the event one partner is disabled. Or how one partner can legally and financially provide for the other in the event of the unforeseen. At first glance, this may appear to be a legal problem, but the actuality there are numerous financial decisions that must be made in tandem.

Remember, in the eyes of the law, right or wrong, gays and lesbians are legal strangers. This means that your standing or status has no formal legal recognition; hence, while you may be ‘partnered’ in life, by law, you single.

The following is a partial list of areas in which same-sex couples, for example, are treated as legal strangers:

Burial determination

Medical decisions

Organ donation

Hospital/nursing home visitation

Prenuptial agreement

Child custody, support and visitation

Property division in the event of divorce

Inheritance

Nearly every item on this list with a legal implication comes with a financial implication. The good news is that there are things gay and lesbian singles and couples can do today to help ensure that their wishes are respected and carried out in the future.

The key is investing now in off-the-shelf financial services or legal advice from well-meaning friends, or rather in the strategy, planning, tactics and tools at our disposal. A ‘partner’ is not a quasifinancial expert, insurance professional and/or investment advisor, as well as a capable attorney and accountant can prove invaluable in helping to protect what matters most.

William D. Costella is General Agent for Financial Architects, a financial services and insurance firm affiliated with MassMutual Financial Group (Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company). MassMutual Financial Group is a marketing name for Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual) and its affiliated companies and sales representatives. The firm offers a range of insurance products and financial services for individuals and businesses, headquartered in Rochester, NY, in the Clinton Square building, Financial Architects also maintains offices in Buffalo, NY, and Canton, ND.

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Upon leaving City Council, Bill Pritchard thanks the LGBT community

By Bill Pritchard

I would like to thank Rochester’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered community for the tremendous support you have given me during my service on the Rochester City Council.

As the end of my term approaches, I have begun to reflect on the past six and half years. I count among the high points the first unfurling of the pride flag in the City Hall atrium in 2008, the significant financial support for ImageOut that continues and the unanimous declaration of support for equal marriage rights by my Council colleagues in 2006. I was also very proud to have provided the official City welcome to Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus concerts since 2004.

A great deal has changed in the LGBT community since I first moved back to Rochester in 1990. Fresh out of military intelligence and graduate school, I was anxious to be part of our political movement. Now, nearly 20 years later, I look to the past with great pride for our legislative victories — civil rights being the most significant.

I am proud to have had the opportunity to serve you over the years in one capacity or another, and to volunteer alongside with you, together accomplishing great things. Perhaps one of my highest points of pride is that I was fortunate enough to continue — and help pass on — the tradition of LGBT service on Rochester City Council.

Some have called my departure from Council a “retirement,” which I find amusing, since at 46 I hardly plan to retire. However, I am looking forward to seeing what life is like beyond politics. After nearly 20 years I am looking forward to doing things that too often took a backseat during my political life and community service — such as spending more time with my partner Michael and our dogs, and with family and friends, as well as a return to teaching.

However, I won’t disappear. I have already volunteered for specific roles with ESPA and RGMC. I’ll work with ImageOut in some way too. I look forward to moving on to this next chapter in my life, part of a novel that you helped write. I have so many wonderful memories and have made friendships that will last a lifetime, and I have you to thank.

Your support and your friendship have helped write the chapters in my life up to this point. Now it’s up to me to finish the book, something I very much look forward to doing.

I am proud of what our community has accomplished over the years and hopeful of the great victories that I know lie ahead. Please stay in touch, and again, thank you for everything.

Bill Pritchard
Making the Scene

MOCHA POETS: Above: DeAmore Majors reads his poetry at MOCHA Center’s “Poetry and Performance” event on Nov. 5 at Futur Pointe Dance Studios. Below: Some participants took a different perspective. Photos: Laura McSpadden

HOPE TAKES ACTION: Stephan Clipper, Prevention Programs Manager and Michael Koehler, U of R Directory of Victory Alliance. Photo: Tony Correa

Njelle Gage and Guy Thorne, directors of Futur Pointe Dance, which performed on Nov. 21. Photo: Tony Correa

THE MAINE EVENT: Above, photos from the Nov. 5 rally in Rochester protesting Maine’s overturn of marriage equality. Photos: Bess Watts

LIBRARY/CYBER CENTER OPENING: The Gay Alliance’s new Library Room and David Bohnett Cyber Center were inspected by around 100 people on Oct. 21. Hours are currently 6-8 p.m. on Wednesdays. The Alliance also has a new Community Room in the same Prince St.-entrance lobby as the Youth Center and Library. A Big Gay Bazaar is scheduled for Dec. 5. Photo: Gerry Szymanski

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Swing for Victory: a high-energy treat

By Susan Jordan

Lots of terrific tight harmonies and lots of energy. "Swing for Victory" is a light-hearted celebration of the '40s songbook. Four hard-working young personalities and four hard-working musicians make it look easy. The "revue," presented by Lively Arts Productions, is a reminder, after lots of colossal Broadway shows, that "innocent" can be fun.

Dick Belzer, John Debrowski, Lauren Meyer and Emily Taradash all sparkle, with excellent voices and over the top humor. They are the - "Four Fs" - performing on radio and before a live audience and bidding, fainting and falling apart behind the scenes. They brightly and relentlessly, every two solid hours with only a 10-minute intermission.


The brilliant, funny and fascinating Mildred Geresant

mIDRED: Change we can believe in

By Laura McSpadden

On Nov. 20, the artist, performer and educator mIDRED performed her one woman show, "When She Was Xang," at Stage Theater in Rochester's Auditorium Center.

Her performance occurred on the Transgender Day of Remembrance, although the Day of Remembrance is held to honor those transgendered people who have lost their lives due to murder and hate crimes, mIDRED's performance served not only to expose bigotry, but also to celebrate the beauty of diversity and gender fluidity. The show was sponsored by the Gay Alliance and the Tawa Pano Unity Fellowship Church.

Despite the whirlwind of busyness that marked the hours before her show, mIDRED was kind enough to take time to be interviewed by The Empty Closet.

The comfort and peace that she feels within her body was interviewed by The Empty Closet.
opening in New York, would go to Philadelphia, Boston and so on, seeing what worked and what didn’t. It’s like the old days when you could create a show organically. Nowadays you have to put up shows in small festivals, like Fresh Fruit in New York, where there are many different things going on—some good, some not so good.

"We plan to roll out two of these shows per year. They must be small, which opens up affordability and the ability to use many different spaces. If theatre is going as an art form—bigger shows like ‘Wicked’ are getting bigger, and smaller shows are getting smaller—I think, as our community and the theatre-going public are changing, and the culture is homogenizing, there needs to be something for everyone. We want to create shows you could take your mother and your 13-year-old to.

Eddie Sabo added. “Swing is an example—there’s a gay character, but it pulls from the 1940s songbook, and that’s the initial audience.”

Dan said, “You also get so much of our history in it. He’s a gay masculine idol, who might have gone on to work at the Macy’s machine shop a few years later.”

Eddie describes himself as “a retired acrobatic dancer” who fell in love with the magic of live theatre. “The reason I went into this as a career was the feeling I get from the musical theatre—seeing the audience react.”

Dan trained as a director. He feels inspired by “the David Merrick of the world—they’re seen as Simon Legrees, but I have worked and what didn’t. It’s like the old way for me. The way for me to answer that is to perform, to answer that is to perform, to answer that is to perform, to answer that is to perform.”

Dan said, “I got in musical theatre—seeing the audience reaction.”

Dan was created from journal entries about my experiences in different gender roles,” she said. “I embarked on the performance, I just lip synced. Then I came to realize that I wanted to use my voice—that I needed to use my voice. So I showed who I was, who was able to dance between them all, never tied down to one or the other.

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Dan said, “I started performing, I just lip synced. Then I came to realize that I wanted to use my voice—that I needed to use my voice. So I showed who I was, who was able to dance between them all, never tied down to one or the other.

The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus will be the featured performers at the holiday concert, on Dec. 4 and 5 at 8 p.m. at the Rochester Community Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. A silent auction will be held during the runs of both shows, for the local LGBT community. The “Swing for Victory” Night Out is Dec. 15 at 8 p.m., and “Cabaret.com” Night Out is Jan. 12 at 8 p.m. Tickets are $22.50 each, and a cash bar is available. (See the ad in this issue."

Anyone interested in contacting milDRED for a performance, workshop, or even moral support will not be disappointed. “I always want people to be able to reach me,” she said. “If anyone needs to talk, to feel supported, to know that they are not alone, they can find me on Facebook or MySpace, or check out my website, or give me a call.”

milDRED’s website can be found at www.dredlove.com, and she can be reached by phone at 666-542-5600.

And, for those who were unfortunate enough to have missed her Rochester appearance, milDRED’s upcoming events can be seen at www.dredlove.com/events.html.

The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus will perform “Spirit of the Season,” at 7:30 p.m. at Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. A silent auction will begin at 7 p.m. The concert will be a sign language interpreted and handicapped accessible.

Tickets are $15 (adults) or $12 (seniors, students). Advance tickets are available at Parkleigh, Outlandish, The Corner’s Houses, Equal-Grounds and through the Chorus at www.thergmc.org or 623-0600.

In the month on Dec. 12, the Rochester Women’s Community Chorus will perform “Spirit of the Season,” at 7:30 p.m. at Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. A silent auction will begin at 7 p.m. The concert will be sign language interpreted and handicapped accessible.

Tickets are $15 (adults) or $12 (seniors, students) and $7 (children 12 and younger). Advance tickets are $2 less and will be available at Equal-Grounds and the Parkleigh, or from Chorus members. More information is at www.rwh.org and 234-4441.
Dining

Restaurant Review: HENRY B'S

By Paul Hoffman

Henry B's moved from its Seneca Falls location to its present location in the street level of The Sagamore on East Avenue in July. Its urban chic setting on the corner of East and Scio Street is pretty dramatic. Walls of tall windows look across East Avenue to the courtyard garden of Christ Church and kitty-corner to Chaired 10 Headquarters. The ambiance of the city neighborhood is an integral part of the background for this new establishment.

Henry B's was originally opened in Seneca Falls over seven years ago by denizen Bruce Bonafiglia. He named the restaurant after his grandfather, Henry. "My grandfather, Henry, was a tremendously fun and warm individual. He liked food and good times and very often it was too much of both." Some of the recipes used here are original family recipes brought over from Italy. Bruce Bonafiglia's cousin, Steave Turri, purchased the Seneca Falls business from his cousin and ultimately moved it to Rochester. Several of the original staff, including executive chef Jeff Barney, made the move from Seneca Falls to Rochester.

Henry B's occupies about 3,500 square feet, a space that takes advantage of all the windows on Scio Street for a long bar and a few tables. There are several bars and a few tables on the other side of the L, so the main dining room looks out onto East Avenue.

Henry B's "younger brother," Sagamore Grille (1,750 square feet) is next to Henry B's on East Avenue. The Sagamore Grille is a little more casual than Henry B's, opens earlier at 11:30 a.m. to catch the lunch crowd and has a different menu, including executive chef Jeff Barney, made the move from Seneca Falls to Rochester.

The restaurant fills up on weekends so the noise level gets extremely high. We came as a party of eight on a Saturday night and were able to catch up with the rest of the table when about half of the dining room emptied out later in the evening. While the music is usually drowned out by the ambient noise. When the restaurant fills up, the noise level gets extremely high. We came as a party of eight on a Saturday night and were able to catch up with the rest of the table when about half of the dining room emptied out later in the evening.

The food at Henry B's is meant for sharing. The portions are generous and suited to family style. This works out well if your party is large enough to clear the plates or if the food will survive a dinner bag. The Chadwicki and Patate di Gorgonzola ($18) on one occasion. This is a "grow-up" version of the cheese nachos right? Some of the staff had recommended we try. It is house-made chips of potato, sweet potato to and zucchini fried, served warm and topped with a delicious gorgonzola cream sauce and chopped fresh sweet red pepper. The two of us were only able to make a dent in that appetizer. We asked our server if they ever serve half orders. She indicated that they don't make a habit of it, but there is a "yes kitchen" and they'd probably accommodate us.

We were pretty disappointed with the Calamari Fritti ($18). This classic fried squid dish, served with a remoulade sauce on the side, arrived at our takeout bag and at room temperature. Both the kitchen and the server missed the opportunity to hold back this platter of food that definitely wasn't "ready for its close-up."

A complimentary plate of hearty Italian bread is served with three homemade spreads. We always had an olive tapenade and a homey-butter with cracked black pepper. The third spread was either white bean spread or a roasted red pepper sauce. This spread was either white bean spread or a roasted red pepper sauce.

We thought it was a bit futile to have fresh black pepper ground by the server over the tops of the salads or entrees because the portions are so large. Individual pepper grinders on the tables could solve that dilemma so that you could season all your food, even what's on the bottom of the bowl.

I counted 16 different pasta dishes. One quarter of those are gnocchi. Henry B's is rightfully proud of their version of this classic Italian comfort food. The house-made potato gnocchi dishes come sauced four different ways: basil pesto, tomato-basil, and Bolognese sauces or butter, prosciutto and parmesan ($20 each). If you can't make up your mind, you can choose three of them on a large platter ($45).

We chose the Grilled Yellowtail Snapper special over Spaghetti alla Putanesca ($36) on one occasion. Putanesca Sauce should be wonderfully fragrant and not a bit understated considering its list of bold and flamboyant ingredients garlic, onions, anchovies, olive oil, chili peppers, black olives, capers and dried tomatoes. This sauce should be as forward as the thundering climax from a Verdi opera. Instead the sauce was undercooked and the fish was served warm and topped with a delicious gorgonzola cream sauce. Espresso and cappuccino aren't available yet, but may be added in the future. They could be the perfect finish to a meal that probably would leave grandfather/great uncle Henry more than satisfied.

Unfinished food is whisked away after each course and presented bugged in microwavable containers at the end of the meal so that the fare can continue "tomorrow."

HENRY B'S

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Growing Up

By Eric Bullman
This must be Growing Up.

I'm not too keen on children. Old people, it's not the usual tone when a call comes but I flip it open anyway. It seems there is a text message.

I am not comfortable with technologies of any sort. Even acquiring a cell phone stressed me to the limit. The heading reads: text from Frank, Frank!

I know what it must be about. I push a few buttons and hear the series of beeps, "Made to it New York, ac... " then it stops. Did I abort the full message by flipping it open?

I knew Frank was going to New York for the weekend. It's his birthday and his special friend was taking him. Staying in New York has never thrilled me. When a call comes but I flip it open when I asked about that, he replied, "We're doing a Square Dance in high school. Doing a Square involved standing next to an assigned partner. Worse yet, I was chosen and made my entire body totally visible to the other three pairs of unwilling participants. I just knew my active eyes would judge my dance attempts.

I simply could not remember the meaning of the code. I just followed along them and my partner. They held hands in public, smooch lunging through "allemande left" and "do-si-do." All the while, I struggled to endure the furtive glances and whispered "Promenade Your Lady." I really did try with all my might to achieve the required Synched Shuffling of Spades. Alas, I was not a winner. My square dance was such a failure I could not bring myself to dance for another event. Eventually the dance floor was filled with lots of limbs doing the Macarena. Person by person, the Macarena in disguise.

One of my favorite dance lessons I have learned is: "Dance like nobody's watching." On the other side a fairy-flitting wottyn twirl freely. She is a reminder. It's not about being looked at. It's about feeling.

At our final week with our gemma- like bodies, old and danced, not in the middle of the dance floor, but in the middle of our friends. I know that they are there all the time, and that I could feel our tender spirit. Gently my heart taught me a new way to twirl. ELBCAD@RITEDU
dection of The Nutcracker starring an all drag queen cast with all proceeds going to the Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

I reminded them I was running a business, not a charity organization and agreed to sponsor them for zero, zip, nada, nothing. It's all bah-humbug!

Now, after a very long week, I was home, donning my chair in front of the muted television.

"Ebbie Scrooge," I said. I'd heard a voice, I turned on the lamp to find my ex-boyfriend standing in my living room. "Jake Marley. What are you doing here?"

Jake shrugged. "What do you think?"

I smiled. "I knew you'd come back."

"No," Jake shook his head. "I'm here to haunt you."

"Don't you have to be dead to haunt someone?"

"Your Christmas spirit is dead, Ebbie."

"You're holding right?" I asked.

"All you worry about is making money and keeping the business going," said Jake. "I've three spirits going to teach you the error of your ways."

"I'd rather not, I said.

"No, you have no choice, Ebbie. They're here. They're queer! They're haunting you, dear."

Then Jake disappeared. I sighed. It must have been a nightmare. I sat down, turning off the TV.

Someone cleared their throat. It wasn't me.

Behind me a drag queen stood in the kitchen doorway. She was tall, heavy, with a huge green wig and bright red lip-stick and knee high white boots. "Hi, doll," she said in a raspy voice.

"Are you one of the spirits? I asked.

"Yep, said the drag queen. "I'm the Ghost of Christmas Past Lovers."

I shook my head. "I don't remember any of my past lovers being drag queens!"

"I'm not just any lover," the spirit grumbled. "I'm here to show you some es-loves. Grab on to my purse, honey. I'll do the rest."

She held out her white leather hand.

I reached out and touched the handle and suddenly felt like I was moving, but my mind, my body, was trapped and I was surrounded by bright lights.

When the light dimmed, we were standing in the entrance of a familiar house.

"I haven't been here in years," I said. "This is my Aunt Frazelwig's house!"

"Who?" The drag queen asked. "Aunt Frazelwig?"

I repeated. "My sister and I used to call her that because she wore awful, terrible wigs. I looked at the drag queen's head. "No offense."

The spirit laughed. "I see you and your sister," said the drag queen. "Who's the woman with the dead animal on her head?"

"That's Aunt Frazelwig," I explained. "Fran and I came here every Christmas Eve to help decorate."

"The drag queen nodded. "How much did your Aunt pay you to help?"

I laughed. "She didn't pay us. We loved her. It was..."

"Yes?" asked the spirit.

"It was Christmas," I mumbled, "A long time ago."

The drag queen held out her purse once more, I grabbed the strap and was immediately transported to another setting. This time we were outside in the park. The sun was setting and we stood ankle deep in snow.

On a bench, directly in front of us, two middle aged men were talking. "I don't want to see this," I shook my head.

"Sorry," the spirit replied. "We go where the purse takes us.

One of the men on the bench was me, fresh out of college, thinking I knew it all. The other man with tears in his eyes was Steven.

"Steven, it's Christmas Eve," Steven said.

"Sorry," my younger version said. "This relationship just isn't working for me. It's time we went our separate ways."

Steven wiped a tear. "I love you, Ebbie."

"Alright, spirit," I insisted. "I don't need to hear anymore."

"But I want the dirty details," said the drag queen.

"Okay," I said. "Steven and I dated in college, but we settled to teach underprivileged kids and he wasn't going to get rich. I had business plans and I met Jake Marley and that seemed the better route for me."

Steven dropped his face into his hands and sobbed as the youthful Ebbie walked away.

"What's wrong with the car?" asked the spirit.

"It got hit by a car," I explained. "Roberta said it was going to be all right."

Roberta got up and helped the car into the chair. "I wish we could let Tiny Tim outside. He seems so depressed since the accident."

"If we had enough money to rent that house we saw in the country, Tim would be able to roam outside safely," her partner said.

"That will be my New Year's Resolu­tion," said Roberta. "To find a better paying job."

"No," I said to the spirit. "How will I run my shop without Roberta?"

The spirit shrugged and held out his hands.

"Wait a minute," I said. "What happens to Tiny Tim?"

The spirit looked around the room. "If things don't change, I think he will die."

"Christmas only lasts 24 hours," he said. "Life, and Christmas, are too short to think of this as bah-humbug!"

Then the spirit of Christmas Past was gone.

In his place stood a tall, muscular man in leather. "The leather man nodded."

"What are you going to show me," I asked. "Kinky Christmas? Fetish Christmas? Bondage Christmas?"

The spirit held out his leather-gloved hand. I reached out to him. Immediately the room spun, brightness glowed around us and when it dimmed we were outside a restaurant.

Through the window I saw tables with plastic chairs along the walls and a long black Formica counter in the back. Squeaky mice with woven baskets decorated the walls. A pitiful hung from the ceiling.

"What's going on?" I asked the stone-faced leather man.

"Merry Christmas!" shouted a voice behind us. I turned to see Roberta Crachit and my nephew Fred meeting

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THE EMPTY CLOSET • THE GAY ALLIANCE OF THE GENESEE VALLEY • NUMBER 430 • DEC-JAN 2010

6 B
“Where are you doing here on Christ­mas Eve?” asked Fred.

“Last minute shopping,” said Roberta, giving Fred a hug. “Now I’m hungry. This place has the best Mexican food in town.”

“True,” said Fred. “But what would Uncle Ebbe think of the Poco Loco Taco Express?”

“I can’t imagine,” replied Roberta.

“What are they talking about?” I asked the spirit. “I love Mexican food.” Mr. Leather Chaps didn’t utter a word. “If this is Fred and Roberta of the future—what about me? Where’s my shop?”

Mr. Leather Chaps pointed up at the street front. I looked carefully at the doorway, the big windows, the front step, the street out front.

“I couldn’t be standing in a snow-covered graveyard. My sister, Fran had her back to us, bundled in a heavy coat and brushing the snow from her hair. The big windows, the front step, the street out front. It couldn’t be but it was true. It wasn’t my flower shop anymore. Scrutney and Marley Florist had become the Poco Loco Taco Express! The spirit gripped my shoulder. I shook my head. “What happened? What did I do?”

Mr. Leather Chaps took my arm and we were standing in a snow-covered cem­etery. My sister, Fran had her back to us, bundled in a heavy coat and brushing the snow from the gravestone. She was crying.

“I stopped by to say Merry Christmas,” sobbed Fran. “I know you never liked Christmas much, but I hope you’re happy now, wherever you are.”

“Who’s she talking to?” I asked.

Mr. Leather Chaps pointed to the gravestone.

I saw the name carved on the marker. EBBE SCROOGE.

“No!” I screamed, staring my eyes. “I can’t be dead. I’ve learned so much. I’ve grown up. I was there. I was sitting in a corner taking a break. I was doing something productive like going through the curtains. It was Christmas morning. Christmas morning. Christmas morning.”

Humming jingle Bells, I danced across the floor.

“Oh dear, I haven’t got any presents to give.” shrugged. “Oh well, I’ll just give money. What’s the sense of hav­ing money if you can’t give it away?” I picked up the phone and dialed a number.

“Roberta,” I said when she answered.

“Why haven’t you reported to work?” “Ebbe,” scolded Roberta. “It’s seven o’clock on Christmas morning.”

“I’m sorry I disturbed you,” I apologized. “How about you take tomorrow off too?”

“Am I fired?”

“No, but I am going to give you a raise. You deserve it.”

“Ebbe,” said Roberta. “Have you been drinking?”

“No, not I,” said “Give Tiny Tim a kiss for me!” hung up.

Then another idea struck me. I grabbed my checkout desk off the desk and wrote a check to the two young men who were raising money for the New Years Eve fundraiser for the Pediatric AIDS Foundation. I’d have to get it to them first thing tomorrow morning! And get a ticket for the show too.

After a quick shower and shave I rushed to my office in the basement, brought up my Christmas tree and covered it with the ornaments.

At two o’clock, I hurried to Fran’s house for dinner. I apologized.

“I hugged my nephew. I hugged the other guests that I met. We had dinner with all the trimmings. I led the group in singing Christmas carols.

It was a great holiday. And I made good on my promise to the spirits about Christmas. I celebrate every year. I spoil my nephew with too many gifts, attend all the holiday fund­raisers and always give Roberta a few extra litters of kittens.

My flower shop continues to be profitable, although the name has changed. I removed Marley from the sign. Fran is my business partner and the shop now called Frazedvig’s Florists.

Jake Marley got bumped by that bland, buff aerobics instructor. With nowhere to live, he rented a tiny apartment above the place where he’s now employed. Jake’s the assistant manager of the Poco Loco Taco Express that opened right across the street from my flower shop.

Roberta and her partner were able to rent a house in the country and Tiny Tim not only lives, but has also fathered three litters of kittens. I adopted one of those kittens myself. I named it Charles Dickens. I’m not sure why, but for some reason that name just seemed appropriate.

Confessions of a Serial Blonde

I WONT BACK DOWN

By Bobby Morris

As you may have noticed, I took a little hiatus from writing recently. I’d like to say that during my break I was doing something meaningful or progressive like going green, campaigning for change, or rescuing orphaned cats in Zimbabwe, but alas, I was not.

I was sitting in a corner taking a breather, counting to ten, and just trying to survive the twists and turns this road we call life throws at us. I watched friends of mine buy their first home, others get mar­ried, and others have their first child, all the while feeling inadequate because they were doing what you’re “supposed” to be doing in your early thirties.

What was I doing? Engaging in several brief affairs, batting my ass to cover the rent of my tiny but adequate apartment, and continuing my downward spiral of addiction to hair products. Clearly, I was not on the same page as the rest of the grown-ups in my life.

Oh, and one of my best friends died suddenly and unexpectedly, which, for lack of a better phrase, really fucking sucked. He, like myself, marded to the beat of his own drummer and wasn’t necessarily living the way most people his age were “supposed” to be living either.

He was one of the very few people who got me and my quirks. And now he was gone. Crap.

So there I was feeling completely out of place with the people still around me, and abandoned by the one who wasn’t. So no, I didn’t feel much like writing. Or laughing. Or dealing with the outside world in general, much less myself. I even lost the will to touch up my roots. Now that’s saying something.

But for every frost, there is a thaw they say. Okay I’m not sure they say that, but you know what I mean. In time, things started to happen around me and in the world that started to awaken that part of me that refuses to roll over and take it like a good boy.

I would hear about hate crime and police brutality stories in the greater LGBTQ community that would somehow fly under the radar with hardly a mention in mainstream media and that would work me up into a state. And news of yet another state passing yet another measure further regulating us to nonexistent citizens would anger me so much I could piss hydrochloric acid. And when the biggest national news story involving gay guys happened to be out “fend”
with Beauty Queen-turned-Viper of the Decade Carrie Prejean and her work on behalf of Christianity to promote marriage as a sacred institution between men and women only; well, damn it all to hell, someone needed to stand up and scream, “THIS IS BULLSHIT!” After a long spell on the island of Poor Pathetic Me, I am happy to return to my post.

The re-ignition of that spark that drives me to write about things ranging from my everyday mundane life to bigger issues facing the LGBTQ community and women’s rights, but speaks out about them every chance she gets, are people whose work inspires me to do my part in being visible and heard. There is so much more to share and learn from each other on this planet.

Now that I’ve had this moment of rekindling, I promise to keep on sharing my stories if you promise to keep reading mine! Hell, maybe some inspiration will rub off on you and you’ll want to share your experiences and stories too. Just don’t ask to borrow my hair products. There are limits, people.

Check out Robby’s blog! www.serialblonde.blogspot.com!

One of the greatest gifts in life, I’ve come to rediscover, is an enthusiasm for sharing stories with people. I consider this a gift because so much of our society is trained to shut up, be still, and follow the status quo, whatever the hell that may be in your particular neck of the woods. If you’re a woman, you’re supposed to stand with Beauty Queen-turned-Viper of the Decade Carrie Prejean and her work on behalf of Christianity to promote marriage as a sacred institution between men and women only, well, damn it all to hell, someone needed to stand up and scream, “THIS IS BULLSHIT!” After a long spell on the island of Poor Pathetic Me, I am happy to return to my post.

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Check out Robby’s blog! www.serialblonde.blogspot.com!
A Night OUT at Downstairs Cabaret!

Grab Your Friends and Join Us for A Night OUT at Downstairs Cabaret Theatre

Tuesday, December 15 at 8:00pm
SWING FOR VICTORY
Guaranteed to put you “In The Mood” for a “Sentimental Journey” - get ready for a GREAT time with this jazzy new musical!

Tuesday, January 12 at 8:00pm
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Should I be insulted? Why's that?

Should you not have read this... before we had sex?

The morning after our first night together...

And you are already on your laptop looking to meet a new man.

I'm not looking for a new man, you nut.

I'm reading your Wikipedia entry.

Most guys I've dated don't have Wikipedia entries.

Yeah, probably. But then...

"Rock star"? Hardly, I am a scientist. Please.

You discovered a moon of Uranus at fourteen and in the next three years...

You made a whole list of even more important discoveries.

And then, at seventeen, you were given your own TV show about astronomy...

New Zealand, also.

Whatever. And now, according to this...

Thankfully, there is no mention of the nude photos.

"Nude photos? What nude photos?!!

Which became a massive hit throughout Europe and Australia.

You've come to America to spread your enthusiasm for astronomy to a whole new audience.

Let's just say... vodka and cell-phone cameras? Not good mix...

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Photos from the Thanksgiving Potluck on 11/15, held by the Youth Group and PFLAG.

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Youth

Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley
Youth Services for Rochester area LGBTQ and allied youth ages 13-25

Check out what is happening:
- www.gayalliance.org
- or contact JessC@gagv.us

Youth Center Happenings
- Drop-in: Monday and Wednesday 2-6pm
- Support Groups
  - Sunday 2pm-4pm ages 13-23
  - Sunday 4:30pm-6pm ages 18-25

Special Interest Programming
- Transgender Youth
- Arts and Crafts
- Movies
- Writing

Special Events
- Youth Dances
- Day of Silence
- Big Gay Prom
- Pool Table
- LGBTQ Youth Library
- Internet Access

Adult Volunteers Needed
Fun, friendly, safe adults are needed to volunteer their time and talents, providing positive role models, maybe sharing a talent or skill.

Contact Scott Fearing, Outreach Coordinator for an application: ScottF@gagv.us 585-244-8640 x14
By Jeanne Gainsburg
With 2009 drawing to a close and 2010 just around the corner, the staff of Gay Alliance thought we should take a quick breather from our busy schedules and share with our readers a little bit about who we are and what our hopes are for the future.

Sue Cowell: “As the Executive Director, I make sure Gay Alliance has the resources to continue the important community organizing work we do. I advocate for funding and resources to make sure we can meet all of our goals and needs in the community. I look forward to collaborating with other groups to leverage resources and work together. Gay Alliance is a model of sexual orientation and gender expression democracy; it’s a way we do our work as a community.”

Sue Cowell:

New Year’s Resolutions: “Work every day for a better justice and a healthy and happy future for all of our community members.”

Scott Fearing: “My work at the Gay Alliance has involved a lot of work that I didn’t expect to do. In fact, I often find myself reflecting on the various roles I’ve played at Gay Alliance and how much I love being part of the organization.”

Scott Fearing:

Happy New Year from the Gay Alliance

2010 Big Gay Prom
The Youth Program of the Gay Alliance has announced that the 2010 Big Gay Prom will occur on Friday, May 7, 2010 at the Strathallan Hotel in Rochester. For more information please contact Youth Program Coordinator Cahn Cohen, 585-244-8640 x12. jas@gayalliance.org.

Support Groups
The Gay Alliance is partnering with local community coalitions to offer three new support groups. Beginning in January there will be regularly scheduled meetings of support groups for “Straight” Sponsors of LGBT people, gay/lesbian relatives and friends, and lesbian/bisexual women who are in recovery. To register for one of these support groups, or for more information please contact Scott PigoGayAlliance.org.

InQueery: Classes start in January
Inquiring minds want to know... January the Gay Alliance will launch InQueery, a new way for LGBT and allied community members to find out what they need to know. Many of the InQueery offerings will be classes; plans are to add lectures, special events, and more to the list of InQueery events. For more information see the InQueery page under the Education tab at www.gayalliance.org.

The resources for LGBT and allied community members and their families are growing every day. In 2010 the Gay Alliance will launch InQueery, a new way for LGBT and allied community members to find out what they need to know. The Gay Alliance is excited to collaborate with other groups to leverage resources and work together. Gay Alliance is a model of sexual orientation and gender expression democracy; it’s a way we do our work as a community.”

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BUTCH FEMME CONNECTION

The Rochester Butch-Femme Connection supper club will have two dinners in December and two dinner events in January. On Saturday, Dec. 12, we will meet at 6 p.m. at 5208 Windcrest Road in Rochester’s 14609 district, at 7 p.m. On Saturday, Dec. 19, we will meet at 6 p.m. at 288-7208. See you there and happy holidays!

DIGNITY-INTERGITY

As of this issue’s publishing date, we were planning to bring the Equal Marriage Bill to come to the floor of the NYS Senate. In anticipation, the Episcopal and Rochester Roman Catholic dioceses asked their members to contact their legislators to sway their votes — in opposite directions.

We applaud the Episcopal diocese for standing on the side of justice and equality by circulating letters in their churches to enlist support, stating, “This is not about anything other than equal protection under the law for all tax-paying citizens.”

Conversely, we are appalled (but not surprised) that the Roman diocese chose to print in its newspaper the NYS Catholic Conference’s appeal calling all Catholics to oppose the legislation, reinforcing the biases of the Roman institution. The U.S. Catholic Bishops, in their draft of an upcoming pastoral letter on marriage, stated that “this proposal redefines marriage, redefines the nature of marriage and the family and, as a result, harms both the intrinsic dignity of every human person and the common good of society.” Oh no, civilization is crumbling around us!

It’s at such times that D-I-L is blessed to be a joint chapter. Wearing our D-I-L fabric, we stomp circulus in the churches to call for support, and browbeat our bishops to stomp circulus at synods.

For more information, please email D-I-L at D-I-L@rochester.edu or call 5208-7208. See you there and happy holidays!

GAY SQUARE DANCE GROUP - THE LILAC SQUARES

It’s been a busy month! Between the classes, Western New York Square Dance Federation meetings, dancing with local “straight/couples” clubs in the area (and breaking down barriers), and TWO of our members went down to a Gay/Lesbian dance near Washington DC. Great times were had by all!

The Lilac Squares meets every Monday we continue to meet at the Coal Tower in Pittsford for supper at 6. Becky serves up some sassy and delicious cuisine, and plastic. You bring the dish to pass and be ready for some fun. We gossip, gab, and game after supper. Come join Beacynth and Beartnight with our brother bears is always fun.

Every Monday we continue to meet at the Coats Tower in Pittsford for supper at 6. Becky serves up some sassy and delicious cuisine, and plastic. You bring the dish to pass and be ready for some fun. We gossip, gab, and game after supper. Come join Beacynth and Beartnight with our brother bears is always fun.

For information on the Lilac Squares or other 衔衔 meetings, please contact us at www.di-rochester.org or call our site at 5208-7208.

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For information on the Lilac Squares or other 衔衔 meetings, please contact us at www.di-rochester.org or call our site at 5208-7208.

MARIA H. HOWDEN, CSW, CASAC

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Groups

EXPERIENCES

worked on a few seasonal projects. Now, we collected teddy bears to give to kids. There were all waiting for the Equal Marriage legislation, reinforcing the biases of the Roman institution. The U.S. Catholic Bishops, in their draft of an upcoming pastoral letter on marriage, stated that “this proposal redefines marriage, redefines the nature of marriage and the family and, as a result, harms both the intrinsic dignity of every human person and the common good of society.” Oh no, civilization is crumbling around us!

It’s at such times that D-I-L is blessed to be a joint chapter. Wearing our D-I-L fabric, we stomp circulus in the churches to call for support, and browbeat our bishops to stomp circulus at synods.

For more information, please visit our website at www.di-rochester.org or call our recorded info line at 244-5972

EMPIRE BEARS

Bear nights following our worship service are always fun. Bear polaroids at the GAGC Youth Center on the first floor of the Memorial Auditorium on East Main St. every second Saturday at 6:30. On Dec. 12, the theme is Holiday favorites as we celebrate the start of Hanukkah. One of our members always jokes that Santa loves pizza! On Jan. 9, we’ll be eating comfort food, Our beingBear with joy and plastic. You bring the dish to pass and be ready for some fun. We gossip, gab, and game after supper. Come join Beacynth and Beartnight with our brother bears is always fun.

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MINCOOKING GROUP

The Year in Review: The members of the Men’s Cooking Group have been hard at work cooking up a storm this past year. Our culinary traditions have led us to Egypt for the taste of the exotic, to our own southern shores for some southern cooking, to the spices of Mexico. Our Christmas event will feature a holiday cocktail party with warm and cold appetizers prepared by the guys.

The Men’s Cooking Group is comprised of gay men who enjoy cooking, or who want to learn more about cooking in a relaxed, convivial atmosphere. The group meets once a month at a volunteer’s home, where recipes are shared and prepared.

New members are welcome. For more information please contact us at Voice Mail 355-7664; E-mail MCGofRochester@aol.com.

PFLAG

On Tuesday, Dec. 1, from 6 to 8 p.m., PFLAG will host a potluck and program. The theme will be “What is a Gay Straight Alliance? How do they function in schools and in what ways do they benefit LGBT youth?”

Advisors and students from several school districts around Rochester will talk with us about their GSA’s and programs and describe programming and outcomes. They will provide an insider’s view of the climate for LGBT students and will help us explore ways that PFLAG members can become useful allies.

PFLAG will meet at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 2000 Highland Ave., at Wintun. For information, call 244-8460 ext 27.

On Tuesday, Jan. 5, from 6 to 8 p.m. also at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, PFLAG will host a forpuck with the discussion theme “Handling Difficult Situations.”

GAGV Program Director Scott Fear will help us learn how to handle difficult situations. Uncomfortable statements made at the holiday feast, biased co-worker jokes, etc.

RAINBOW SAGE: FAREWELL FRIENDS

By Marilyn Mitchell

This will be my final article as President of Rainbow Sage of the Genesee Valley (RSGV), formerly known as Rainbow Seniors of Western New York (RWSNY).

On Nov. 19, my partner Kate, three parrots and our dog, Headi, will be driving to Grass Valley, Calif. As many of you know, I have a new grandson, Jonah (now a one-year-old) and his parents living there. Those thousand miles is much too far away, so it is time to begin a new journey in life and be close to family. Kate and I are very excited for our new life and the experiences that come with it.

There is no GLBTI elder organization in the Sacramento area (near Grass Valley), so you can imagine how deeply I will feel the disconnect with RSGV and the GLBTI community here. This is the community where I came out, where I developed strong friendships, and where I grew to live and accept who I am.

Groups (continued on page 16)
Although the relocation is for positive reasons, I will have a hole in my heart for this community and will hold onto the memories forever. They will fill that hole.

The new interim president for RSGV is Tony Perri, tonyl3@aol.com. Please continue to support RSGV under Tony’s leadership and its great board of directors.

It is my wish, as you read this letter, that Marriage Equality will have passed in NYS; also that RSGV continues to make progress with monthly activities and strengthens its affiliation as a SAGE member and that potential members consider attending and joining this fine organization.

Thank you dear friends and family, live with peace, love, and hope, and treasure who you are, what you have, and those who love you.

Marjorie Mull: “As the new Camp­usOut coordinator, the last six months have been an amazing experience. My job involves leading other students as they organize for social change on their campuses and in their communities.

New Year’s Resolution: It’s kind of ironic that while my job basically involves helping people find their voices and speak up for their communities, I sometimes have a hard time doing so for myself. Next year, I resolve to be better at communicating my needs.

Sophia’s Supper Club: Sophia’s Supper Club is a fun social group for queer identified women, who enjoy gathering at potluck socials with their friends and allies who support the queer community. Most members reside in and around Rochester. Our wide diverse membership includes queer women from all walks of life who are seeking social interaction with other like-minded individuals.

When you attend one of our social potluck gatherings, you will be asked to bring a dish to pass and one non-perishable food item with you, for donation to the AIDS Rochester food bank.

The Club gathers twice a month on the first and third Fridays! Come join us! Meet new people and have some fun!

Time and Date: 6:30 p.m., Dec. 4; Dec. 19.
Place: Tawa Pano Unity Fellowship Church, 58 Sear Ave., Rochester (across from Caroline St. from Equal Grounds).
Contact: Sharon. (585) 566-8391, Information and E-mail: sophias supperclub@yahoo.com

New Year’s Resolution: “Get more students involved in our awesome Center. And world peace.”

Kelly Baumgartner: “I am the Anti­Violence Program’s Victim Advocate. My job is to help victims of violence in the LGBT community find, develop, and support, LGBT friendly and knowledgeable resources, and to advocate for them while they are interacting with the legal, judicial and health care systems. I help victims of domestic violence and anti­transphobia. I think it is important that there are some people who can assist in increasing their safety and preparedness in case of any further violence. These plans can help a victim take the power back in their own lives and help them move forward in creating a new safer life for themselves. I am also the Youth Program Drop-In Supervisor.”

New Year’s Resolution: “I don’t usually make New Year’s resolutions. It doesn’t help in my life to put those kinds of challenging pressures on myself. I don’t need the newly com­ing year to be a reason to change my life. I just remind myself that I want to always be what I see as a better person this coming year than I was the last. To me that seems challenging enough.

Sean Soper: “I am the AmeriCorps Member placed at the Gay Alliance. I have worked here for a whole two months. Some of the things that I do at the GAGV include working in the youth direct service with the youths. Also I serve on the volun­teer coordinator for the youth programs, (through the youth program offices) and the GAGV Recto­n), and with our Speaker’s Bureau. New Year’s Resolution: To keep my new year’s resolutions to myself (I think I just broke it).

John Stevens: “I am the office assist­ant. I deposit the checks, answer the phone, go to the post office and do whatever is to be done. I also help with the co­ordination of the Pride Picnic and Festi­val.”

New Year’s Resolution: “Stay gay black and proud and enjoy my house.”

Health and happiness to you all in 2010 from the Gay Alliance, All.”

Susan SanFilippo, C.S.W.
234-3561
Counseling & Psychotherapy

SAGE NY, the oldest SAGE affiliate, has been in existence for 16 years. A frequent comment heard after the film was, “We never knew it was possible for elder LGBT people to come together and be a part of the larger LGBT community. A community that supports the queer community.

There are 17 SAGE affiliates through­out the country, six in New York State. SAGE NY, the oldest SAGE affiliate, has been in existence for 30 years. Our older LGBT community is growing, and with the boomers quickly joining this group there are many of us who are interested in being of service. It is our goal to continue providing and expanding our services.

At ImageOut this year, we co-spon­sored the documentary “A Place to Live: The Story of Triangle Square,” a powerful film about a low-to-mid­income housing project for older LGBTs in Holly­wood. A frequent comment heard after the film was, “We have a need here in Rochester, for something like this and yes, we do.

While many of us are blessed to age without economic hardship, there are many of us who are in need of some of the basic necessities of life as we age. While Rainbow SAGE does not have the resources at the present time to meet all the needs of our elder population, we can, with the support of the whole community, strive to continually improve. In order to achieve our goals, we need the support of our whole community.

We encourage membership, and, con­trary to popular belief, there are no AGE requirements to be a member. We have a full social calendar for the forthcoming year including picnics, eucharistic to­morrow, writing and fall dance, and as well as discussion groups, educational programs, and our annual intergenera­tional panel. Our events are open to the whole community.

For more information on our events, our monthly newsletter, and member­ship applications, visit our website, rain­bowson.org.
This was the first chocolate store where I with fruit. We just had to sample those. were the Dutch bakery and Dutch choco­ sweeter dessert version. In the meantime, as August is the season for raspberries on the East Coast, particularly Long Island and New Jersey, I planned to compare them.

As far as the wine tasting, we were provided with lunch (I know that you’re laughing) to pair with their various wines, including one regular raspberry and sweeter dessert version.

It’s off to Lynden for the Raspberry Festival. I love this town, Washington’s largest Dutch settlement, with its residents still embracing their Dutch ancestry. I know that we’re there specifically for the festival, but I just needed to sample some of the Dutch fare, specifically the sweets. It was at least 15 minutes and they were making something called “Poffertjes” (little pillows), then there were the Dutch baked and Dutch chocolate shop. Oh yeah, the raspberries. We had a freshly made vanilla ice cream with a chunky raspberry sauce.

The Dutch chocolate shop didn’t compare to our next stop, Chocolate Necessities, back in Bellingham (Hey ... more sent to companies to for most of his creations. Aside from tasting the various cocoa percentages of both dark and milk chocolate, we went to the kitchen where he was preparing chocolates in chocolate.


We had to pass on dessert, as this final day’s venue was taking place at Silver Reef Hotel-Casino-Spa, located in Ferndale, where we were also bedding for the night. Amongst the dessert offers were chocolate Ogilivies Jubilee prepared tableside. Sparkling gels created using powdered cinnamon.

The Lummi Nation is responsible for the acreage used for this resort and operates the casino. I didn’t partake in the casino due to the smoking, nor the spa due to my time constraint, as I was busi­ ning my radio show there. You can listen to two shows about Bellingham on Whirl Wind Radio on www.kblogtalkradio.com. I did get a great night’s sleep in a most comfortable king bed, that had a chocolate on the pillow. (Hey ... more romance!

Although I didn’t get to visit some of the other culinary delights participating, I would like to thank Holmquist Hazel­ nut Orchards, Red Barn Lavender, Belle­ Wood Acres, The C Shop and Glacial Lake Missoula Wine Company. Needless to say, much thanks are given to the staff of Whatcom County tourism for assist­ing in my amusement and hung­

Dennis J. Foley, Ph. D.
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December

TUESDAY 1

World AIDS Day. Equal-Grounds Cofee House, 730 South Ave, will be hosting its 4th annual Names Project event for World AIDS Day, Dec. 1-7, with three events planned. For more information, contact Scott at 896-7118.

TUESDAY 2

HIV Testing. AIDS Community Health Center and AIDS Rochester provide HIV tests on a walk-in basis at 259 Monroe Ave. 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Free HIV tests available every Tuesday at these times.

Panel and testing. Monroe Community College Damon Center, Noon-2 p.m. AIDS Community Health Center panel discussion, followed by a discussion facilitated by AIDS Rochester, St. John Fisher College, 7 p.m. 9th annual PeaceQuest World AIDS Day Concert. 7:30 p.m. at Lake Avenue Baptist Church. With Thomas Warfield, “Of Life and Love.”

WEDNESDAY 2

Full moon

Festival for those affected by HIV/AIDS, with resources from community service providers, short testimonials, and an award ceremony 5:15 p.m. at Emmanuel Baptist Church.

A service, “Sharing the Gift of Love,” with Msgr. Wayne Singh, Bishop of Rochester Episcopal Diocese, with the Gospel Choir of Spiritual Christ Church.

THURSDAY 3

Sophia’s Supper Club. 6:30 p.m., Tawa Pans UFC, 58 South Ave. Potluck dinner for women. Bring dish to pass, non-perishable food item for ARl foodbank. Call Sharon at 508-8391; sophia.supperclub@yahoo.com.

AIDS Community Health Center facilitates panel discussion including members, people living with HIV, 5 to 6 p.m. at University of Rochester in Havens Lounge.

Rochester GAGV’s Chorus concert, “Make the Season Bright,” 8 p.m., Hochstein. $15 adults; $12 senior citizens. www.bargmc.org; 423-4090. Also Dec. 3.

SATURDAY 5

Big Gay Bazaar. GAGV presents a bazaar in its first floor (Prattice St. Lobby), Auditorium Center, 875 E. Main St. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Books, art, jewelry, knickknacks and doodads for sale.

AIDS Community Health Center, panel discussion as part of Action for a better community’s Health Education and Advocacy Response Team World AIDS Day Conference for Women. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at Unity Health System St. Mary Medical Center.

The Santaland Diaries by David Sedaris. Blackfriars Theatre, 759 E. Main St. 8 p.m. See article page B1 for prices and times, and www.blackfriars.org; (585) 454-4050.

Empire Bears potluck. 6:30, GAGV Youth Center, first floor, 875 E. Main St. “Holiday Jovitotes,” celebrating start of Hanukkah.

SUNDAY 13

Dignity Integrity Roman Catholic燊hrist Sunday Celebration in The Absence Of A Priest with music tailored for D-I. Preaching and preaching activist storyteller Quieta Utterino. 3 p.m. at St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene Episcopal Church (“2-Saints”), 17 South Fitzhugh St., www.di-rochester.org or recorded info-line at 234-5092.

TUESDAY 15

Singing for Victory Night Out. 8 p.m. $25 includes show, hors d’oeuvres. 355-4570. Downstairs Cabaret Theatre Center, 540 East Ave.

SATURDAY 19

Butch Female Connection dinner. Meet at Todd of America, 376 Jef­ferson Rd., Henrietta. 7 p.m. from South­town Plaza. Dignity Integrity quiet Episcopal Church. www.bfaithful.org.

MONDAY 21

Winter solstice

FRIDAY 25

FRIDAY 28

SATURDAY 29

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MONDAY
LGBT Support Group
Third Presbyterian Church, corner of Meigs, East Ave. Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm. info@rochester.rr.com.
Free syphilis testing
AIDS Rochester, 257 Monroe Ave., 5-8 pm. 442-2220
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AIDS Rochester, 257 Monroe Ave., 5-8 pm. 442-2220
Gay Square Dance Group
Mondays, 7pm, Open Arms MCC, 740 Marshall Rd. 521-5356; ml@hightrecker.com.
COAF
Come Out and Play, meeting lasting one day, Equal Grounds Coffee Shop, 750 South Av. 7pm, John S., 204-2601
Empire Bears
First Wednesdays, 7-45 pm, GAVV Community Center, 875 E. Main St. 7th floor. info@empirebears.org
Rochester Rams General Meeting
2nd Wednesdays, 7-9 pm, Bichet Forum, 670 University Ave., www.rochesterrams.com
Tuesdays
Atlantic Five 0
Gay men 50 and over. Second Tuesdays, 7pm. GAYV Center, 875 E. Main St. 1st floor, Prince St. entrance. 223-2620.
Two Spirit Group
Second Tuesdays, 7:30 pm, Equal-Grounds, 750 South Av.
FELAG potluck
First Tuesdays, 4-6:30pm meeting, St. Thomas Church, Winton & Highland.
CampusOut Coffee Night
First Tuesdays, 7-10 pm. Equal-Grounds, 750 South Ave.
MOCHA Youth Drop-In
Tuesdays-1st, 1-2pm, MOCHA Center, 107 Liberty Park Way. 420-1400; 244-8640
MOCHA Hepatitis Clinic
Free Hepatitis A & B vaccinations, third Tuesdays, 5:30-7:00pm, 107 Liberty Park Way. 420-1400.
Rainbow SAGE Yoga
6:30-Open Monday Mocha Center, 125 North Drive. 443-6369.
• Pride 2010 committee meeting
Third Tuesdays, GAVV Community Room, first floor, 875 E. Main St. 6:30-8 pm. Everyone welcome to plan Pride 2010 July 10-19. 244-8640.
Women’s Community Chorus
Restaurant each Tuesday, 5:30-9pm. Downtown U.Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 234-4444, www.wocchorus.org.
IMPACT Team
Second Tuesdays, Downtown Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 6:30 pm. Call Todd Plank, 271-2420.
Free HIV Testing
Every Tuesday and Thursday 9-7 pm. AIDS Rochester, 259 Monroe Ave.
WEDNESDAY
Tawa Pano Church Bible Study
Bible study Thurs. 7:35 pm. 758 South Ave.
Country Line Dancing/Two Stepping
Everyone, every Sunday 6-10 pm.大的中文。6:30 pm. Locos followed by dancing until 11pm. Beginners to advanced.
Gay Alliance Board of Directors
Meeting Third Wednesdays, 6 pm. 875 E. Main St. 244-8640.
New Freedom New Happiness
AA Gay meeting, 7 pm, Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. Men and women. Open.
Support Group for Parents who have lost Children
Third, 3rd Wednesday, 11am-12:30pm. Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs St. Geneseo Region Home Care, Free. 325-3880
COAF
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New Freedom New Happiness
AA Gay meeting, 7 pm, Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. Men and women. Open.
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