The Red Ball celebrates love, community

The Red Ball, a Valentine’s Dance celebrating community, love and friendship, will be held on Feb. 6, sponsored by the Gay Alliance. The dance will run from 7-11 p.m. in the Cathedral Hall, Auditorium Center, 875 E. Main St.

DJ Chuck Argento will provide music for all ages, and there will be light refreshments, desserts, a gift basket raffle and an auction. Organizers hint, “Wear red to win prizes.” Dance admission is $7 and the fee for the Ravines Cellar Wine and Holstein Artisan Chocolates Tasting in the Beaujolais Nouveau Room is $5. Tickets will be available at Outlinebay and Equal-Grounds, and online at www.gayalliance.org.

Information: 244-4640.

ARI-ACHC merger creates AIDS Care

After more than a year of planning, preparation and perseverance, the legal merger between AIDS Community Health Center and AIDS Rochester is official.

The new organization formed by this merger is called AIDS Care, located at 259 Monroe Ave. This is the only organization in the Finger Lakes region providing all the HIV/AIDS care and prevention services as its sole focus and is the only organization in Genesee County fully designated as a Community Health Center by the federal government. AIDS Care has chosen dates for communities throughout the state to celebrate National AIDS Awareness Week. These dates, March 28 through April 3, have been extended to include all Genesee County organizations.

“AIDS Care is an organization of one purpose, one focus, and one commitment – to offer a wide array of services to meet the needs of the individuals and families who support our mission and vision,” Laura L. Seime, executive director.

“We've always prided ourselves on providing all the HIV/AIDS care, support, outreach, and prevention services people need, but as a result of this merger, we now have the resources and the capacity to provide those services on a larger scale,” said Dr. Marc A. Suchard, medical director.

AIDS Care, located at 259 Monroe Ave., will offer a wide array of services to meet the needs of the individuals and families who support the mission and vision. These services include HIV/AIDS medical, social, and prevention services.

“We've always prided ourselves on providing all the HIV/AIDS care, support, outreach, and prevention services people need,” said Laura L. Seime, executive director.

“We've always prided ourselves on providing all the HIV/AIDS care, support, outreach, and prevention services people need, but as a result of this merger, we now have the resources and the capacity to provide those services on a larger scale,” said Dr. Marc A. Suchard, medical director.

The Red Ball, a Valentine’s Dance celebrating community, love and friendship, will be held on Feb. 6, sponsored by the Gay Alliance. The dance will run from 7-11 p.m. in the Cathedral Hall, Auditorium Center, 875 E. Main St.

DJ Chuck Argento will provide music for all ages, and there will be light refreshments, desserts, a gift basket raffle and an auction. Organizers hint, “Wear red to win prizes.” Dance admission is $7 and the fee for the Ravines Cellar Wine and Holstein Artisan Chocolates Tasting in the Beaujolais Nouveau Room is $5. Tickets will be available at Outlinebay and Equal-Grounds, and online at www.gayalliance.org.

Information: 244-4640.

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

Gold

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

Silver

Ace Ice Making Services; Bausch & Lomb Inc.; Corning Incorporated; Harter Secret & Eddy LLP; Haveron & Haveron CPA’s; ITT Corporation; Monroe Plan for Medical Care; Sage Activists of SageRutby; St. John Fisher College; Tim Tompkins Enterprises; Xerox Capital Services

Bronze

Canandaigua National Bank; Edgerton Florist; Empire State College; GALAOG; Pride at Work; Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church; Third Presbyterian Church; Wegmans Food Markets; The Woolbright Group

Pride

Thomson Reuters

Highland offers mammograms for women 40, older

Highland Breast Imaging Center in Petrolia celebrates the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester and Genesee Services of Monroe County, are currently offering the opportunity by offering free mammograms to women 40 and older who do not have health insurance or whose health insurance does not cover mammograms.

The date is Saturday, Feb. 13, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Highland Breast Imaging Center, 500 Red Creek Drive, Suite 100.

A Reiki Practitioner and Massage Therapist will be on hand to provide free 10-minute Reiki sessions or chair massage after mammograms. Women may schedule appointments with a friend or family member and receive a certificate to purchase one lunch and get the second lunch free at Lorna’s Food Factory.

Parking is free and refreshments will be available.

Women may call the Breast Imaging Center at 393-2150 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to make an appointment in advance. Women who cannot make it to the center can also have their mammograms scheduled for a different time and date.

The Breast Imaging Center is working with the Coalition on enhancing the health of women in Monroe County. For more detailed information about the screening day or the services offered, call Reiki, Coordinator, Patient and Community Relations, at 487-3305.

Pandora’s adventures in reality TV

Page B1

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

Gold

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

Silver

Ace Ice Making Services; Bausch & Lomb Inc.; Corning Incorporated; Harter Secret & Eddy LLP; Haveron & Haveron CPA’s; ITT Corporation; Monroe Plan for Medical Care; Sage Activists of SageRutby; St. John Fisher College; Tim Tompkins Enterprises; Xerox Capital Services

Bronze

Canandaigua National Bank; Edgerton Florist; Empire State College; GALAOG; Pride at Work; Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church; Third Presbyterian Church; Wegmans Food Markets; The Woolbright Group

Pride

Thomson Reuters

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

Gold

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

Silver

Ace Ice Making Services; Bausch & Lomb Inc.; Corning Incorporated; Harter Secret & Eddy LLP; Haveron & Haveron CPA’s; ITT Corporation; Monroe Plan for Medical Care; Sage Activists of SageRutby; St. John Fisher College; Tim Tompkins Enterprises; Xerox Capital Services

Bronze

Canandaigua National Bank; Edgerton Florist; Empire State College; GALAOG; Pride at Work; Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church; Third Presbyterian Church; Wegmans Food Markets; The Woolbright Group

Pride

Thomson Reuters
The Vatican or loving gay families: which really harms children?

The Roman Catholic church has poured millions into defeating marriage equality in California and Maine, in an attempt to destroy gay families, including those not of the Catholic faith.

But without attacking gays from the pulpit, the Vatican represses equal civil rights for gay Americans through political lobbying. Vatican bigots claim that gay families are "harming" their own children — merely by having them. They want to forbid gay kids to have children.

Church leaders are allegedly purging U.S. communities of women religious, presumably going after lesbians and feminists. They threaten to cut off their D.C. charity to punish the District of Columbia for passing marriage equality, and threaten to deny continuity to Catholic politicians like Patrick Kennedy, who support women's right to choose not to have children.

Meanwhile, the worldwide sexual abuse of women and children by priests, and the traditional concealment of these crimes by church authorities, are finally being revealed.

In addition to money spent to persecute non-Catholic law-breaking gay citizens, the Catholic church has spent billions of dollars worldwide enabling child rapists, concealing these heinous crimes from law enforcement, and settling civil lawsuits by victims," wrote heartless@blonde.com in December 2009.

"Recently, the Murphy Commission in Ireland completed a three-year investigation into decades of systemic abuse and sexual exploitation of children at the hands of Roman Catholic clergy in that country. The Dublin Archdiocese covered up hundreds of cases of criminal child rape, sheltered the priests, and shuffled them to other parishes, including parishes in the United States.

"This is in addition to a report released six months ago detailing the endemic levels of child rape in church-run institutions since before the 1930s. Victims are urging government probes into the institution which for decades enabled the rape and abuse of women and children in orphanages, schools, and workhouses such as the Magdalene laundries.

"The Examiner newspaper, describing the abuse as 'avarice', said that the (Murphy) report uncovered a 'library of horror' that could 'only be described as an active evil, a pervading darkness that poisoned lives'.

"The report found that the archbishops did not report abuse to police until the 1990s as part of a culture of secrecy and an overwhelming desire to avoid damaging the reputation of the Church and protect its assets.

"One priest admitted to abusing 100 children, another was an active pedophile - raping children of both sexes — for over 25 years.

"SNAP, the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, can help victims find support and counseling.

"Given all of this, some humility by church leaders might seem in order. But of course the men at the Vatican still see themselves as the ultimate moral authority, with the right to condemn the love, the consensual sexuality and the families of all humans born gay, lesbian, transgender or bisexual.

"The Vatican does not print negative or "attack" articles, whether they already do that exchange ideas with others, who must be able to speak in a way that takes into consideration the needs and desires of all LGBT people and all allies.

"If you ever hear someone say that they have no reason to use the services of the Gay Alliance, please help me to remind them that they already do.

"Creating Community (and So Much More) at the Gay Alliance

For more than 36 years, the Gay Alliance has been creating and serving the Rochester community. There have been as many good times as there have been bad times and I am proud to say we are stronger than ever.

"During my tenure as Executive Director, I have had people tell me that they do not feel a personal need for the Gay Alliance — they are grateful we are here to help others, and grateful they could call upon us if they ever had a crisis, but they feel that we play no role in their daily lives.

"I understand why someone may feel that way. The programs we most recognize for are the Empty Closet Youth Services, the Community Safety Program and its crime victim assistance and our Speakers Bureau. Many of you may never have a reason to interact with the Gay Alliance beyond these programs, but I know the work they do impacts your life by changing a variety of minds and hearts and minds of your neighbors.

"However, I also want to remind those that feel unconcerned to our work that much more happens in our offices beyond these four major programs.

"The Gay Alliance is a critically important touchstone for people who want to work with the broader LGBT community to create and maintain the types of relationships and networks that will give them a sense of belonging.

"It is in addition to money spent to punish the reputation of the Church and protect its assets.

"We also partner with Pride and Joy Families ofingham, who provide family building and supporting services. Our work provides all lives, and lifts the veil of secrecy and embarrassment of the LGBT communities every day in many different ways. Do we lose money at the Gay Alliance? Absolutely not. But life is better in Rochester because we have been here to answer questions, provide collaboration, and represent the needs and desires of all LGBT people and all allies.

"The Empty Closet is the official publication of the Gay Alliance, Inc., so we are thegay voice of that organization, providing news and events of the Rochester gay community about local and national LGBT issues. We provide a forum to discuss ideas and creative work from a variety of individuals. We are the leadership within the community, and the one and only voice of the Gay Alliance. We also seek to foster a better understanding of the Church that exchanges ideas and seeks to educate.

"The Gay Alliance then has a middle position with respect to the entire community. We do not propagate any political agenda, we do not support any particular individual or organization, and we do not endorse political candidates, parties or ideas. We do nothing that this publication itself must or could not do. We are the gay and lesbian voice for the Rochester gay community and serve the Rochester gay community and serve the Rochester gay community. If you have any ideas or suggestions for the Gay Alliance, we are here to help you.

"Combing hair taught me how to live.

15 year old Youth Program participant

A

On your own you cannot live. You can not go on your own and do not need to reflect the collective attitudes of the Gay Alliance, Inc. or the Empty Closet. You can sit here at the table and be a subject of conversation available online. Only one with the same voice in a room full of voices. We write to the person you think is the best at communicating their message in a way that is different from our own. We do not need to reflect the collective attitudes of the Gay Alliance, Inc. or the Empty Closet. We can print letters if the text length is limited to 250 words.

"Letters to the editor:

The opinions of columnists, editorial writers or other contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitudes of the Gay Alliance, Inc. or the Empty Closet.
Agenda’s annual Albany lobby day. She

In addition to her work with the Pride Agenda, she has served on the Gay Alliance.org for more information or to reserve your seat. III

The Agenda coalition. In past years

ful means of connecting college students

energy to the LGBT civil rights move

er instilled in me: dedication, passion

in December she returned to Rochester

In addition, to her work with the

and responsible communities.

opinions, by December it had become a political vote.

Barres said that GENDA and Dignity for All Students can pass this year, “if we all get out there and push our senators to make it happen.”

Deb Oppenheimer thanked the Pride Agenda and said that she has been inspired by the transgender people and LGBT activists she has met over the years, in Provincetown, New York City, Buffalo and Rochester.

Todd Plank presented the STAR Award to Rebecca Newberry, stating, “I’ve never met such a natural organizer in my life. She has inspired me and taught me a thing or two about organizing.”

Barres said that “The Rochester community is very fortunate to have passionate activists and leaders like Deb and Rebecca. They inspire me and many others to continue to advance the cause of equality and justice for LGBTQ New Yorkers through education, advocacy and outreach. We are truly blessed to have such hard working volunteers as mentors and role models for the next generation of activists.”

Plank continued, “The Pride Agenda has aggressive goals for 2010, which will require the enthusiastic engagement of our existing base of volunteers and the additional help of many new activists in our civil rights struggle. I would encourage anyone who is interested in getting more involved in our local community to contact me.”

Monthly IMPACT team meetings are held at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church (121 N Fitzhugh St., 14614) on the third Wednesday of each month from 6:30-8 p.m. An active skill-building workshop is scheduled for Saturday, March 27.

For more details contact Todd Plank at 585-271-2420; tplank@prideagenda.org or visit www.prideagenda.org.

Van Capelle: Ford is snake oil salesman

Alan Van Capelle, executive director of the Empire State Pride Agenda, has issued the following statement on Harold Ford Jr.'s potential support of Kirsten Gillibrand, Governor Paterson's appointee to the Senate.

“I know Harold Ford, Jr. just arrived to New York, but as a native and lifelong resident I know what New York values are and I know a snake oil salesman when I see one. You simply can't claim to be pro-choice when you've voted to allow the stoning of people who can't take these relationships and this community away from us.”

“I'm glad to hear that Senator Schumer - who did evolve past the awful Federal Marriage Amendment. The fact is, Senator Gillibrand has been more outspoken and passionate than Kirsten Gillibrand about her support for legislation that would finally provide full equality to LGBT Americans. Personally, I think she will have my vote and I would think that the work she has done over the past year has earned her the support of the vast majority of LGBT New Yorkers.”

Anti-gay harassment may equal “stalking” by Susan Jordan

The Gay Alliance observed January as National Stalking Awareness Month. Stalking is defined as “a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would

Inquiry Classes

Inquirey Community Learning

UPCOMING CLASSES

BDM: An Introduction

LGBT Images from Hollywood

COMING OUT: What does that mean?

BDSM: An Introduction

Introduction to ASL

Bible Self-Defense Class

Dog Obedience for Queers and their Canines

See page 12 for more details and also www.gayalliance.org

BRONSON TO RUN: Harry Bronson, Monroe County Legislator Minority Leader, announced on Jan. 23 his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for NY State Assembly member Susan John’s 131st District seat. Willa Powell, a Democrat and School Board member, has also announced her candidacy. Bronson said on Jan. 23, “I enter this race because people are demanding a new approach to state government. Citizens want results and not partisan politics... This campaign is about achieving the results the people want, have demanded and deserve.” Above: Bronson spoke at the Gay Agenda protest rally on Dec. 3, after the NYS Senate had voted down marriage equality. For coverage of upcoming state and local marriage organizing, see page A 6; for more coverage of recent local marriage equality protests, see page A 16. Photo: Susan Jordan

Inquirers: minds a workin’

Van Capelle: Ford is snake oil salesman

Alan Van Capelle, executive director of the Empire State Pride Agenda, has issued the following statement on Harold Ford Jr. as a potential opponent of Kirsten Gillibrand, Governor Paterson’s appointee to the Senate. Gillibrand has supported LGBT people and Harold Ford, Jr. has not.

“Quite frankly, I cannot point to another member of the U.S. Senate who, in their first year in office, has been more outspoken and passionate than Kirsten Gillibrand about her support for legislation that would finally provide full equality to LGBT Americans. Personally, I think she will have my vote and I would think that the work she has done over the past year has earned her the support of the vast majority of LGBT New Yorkers.”

“The fact is, Senator Gillibrand has voted in support of LGBT equality every time she’s had the chance to do so in her entire career as an elected official. Kirsten Gillibrand has supported LGBT people and Harold Ford, Jr. has not.

“Inquirers: minds a workin’

Van Capelle: Ford is snake oil salesman

Alan Van Capelle, executive director of the Empire State Pride Agenda, has issued the following statement on Harold Ford Jr. as a potential opponent of Kirsten Gillibrand, Governor Paterson’s appointee to the Senate. Gillibrand has supported LGBT people and Harold Ford, Jr. has not.

“Quite frankly, I cannot point to another member of the U.S. Senate who, in their first year in office, has been more outspoken and passionate than Kirsten Gillibrand about her support for legislation that would finally provide full equality to LGBT Americans. Personally, I think she will have my vote and I would think that the work she has done over the past year has earned her the support of the vast majority of LGBT New Yorkers.”

“The fact is, Senator Gillibrand has voted in support of LGBT equality every time she’s had the chance to do so in her entire career as an elected official. Kirsten Gillibrand has supported LGBT people and Harold Ford, Jr. has not.

“Inquirers: minds a workin’
Prop 8 Trial still underway at EC press time

The case challenging California's same-sex marriage ban opened Jan. 11, heard by U.S. District Court Chief Judge Vaughn Walker.

Judge Walker, who was appointed by former President George H.W. Bush, is known as an independent thinker. He fast-tracked the case because he believes the case raises serious civil rights claims and took the unusual step of allowing the court proceedings to be videotaped so the public could watch. The trial was to be aired on YouTube each day, but the Supreme Court ruled against that.

After two weeks of powerful and often emotional evidence, the plaintiffs presented their last live witness Jan. 22. On Jan. 25, the plaintiffs rested their case, and then the defendants will have their turn. Typically, at the end of all witness testimony, the attorneys present closing arguments. On Jan. 22 Judge Walker announced that there would be a two week break before closing arguments to give the parties a chance to review the evidence.

The federal trial over the unconstitutionality of Proposition 8 began with an opening statement by trial attorney Theodore Olson, who with David Boies lead the legal team assembled by the American Foundation for Equal Rights to litigate the case, Perry v. Schwarzenegger. Olson and Boies are both conservatives who oppose the right-wing conservative rejection of equal civil rights for LGBT Americans.

Opening statements were followed by testimony from Kris Perry, Sandy Stier, Paul Katami and Jeff Zarrillo, who comprise two couples who wish to be married but who were denied marriage licenses because of Proposition 8.

"This unequal treatment of gays and lesbians denies them the basic liberties and equal protection under the law that are guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, the plaintiffs' suit states.

According to the suit, Prop. 8 violates the Due Process Clause by impairing the state's fundamental liberties; violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment; the suit states our gay and lesbians believe for a disfavored legal status, thereby creating a category of 'second-class citizens'; discriminates on the basis of gender and discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation.

Olson and Boies also pointed out the "crazily quick" of separate, unequal and unconstitutional classifications of people that Prop. 8 has compelled the California government to create: opposite-sex couples who have full marriage rights; same-sex couples who have marriage rights; same-sex couples married between May and Nov. 2008 whose current marriages are recognized, but who will be unable to remarry if widowed or divorced; same-sex couples married in other states who may petition California for recognition.

The defendants have the burden of demonstrating that Prop. 8 is narrowly tailored to serve a compelling government interest. Olson and Boies planned to demonstrate at trial, however, that the initiative fails to advance even a single legitimate interest.

Tellingly, when asked by Chief Judge Walker at an OEC 14 hearing to identify any harm to opposite-sex marriage that would result from marriage equality, the defendants were unable to answer. "I don't know," several defense witnesses have maintained that gays are child molesters or are not capable of "normal" 8th amendment.

The federal trial over the unconstitutionality of Proposition 8 went into its sixth day on Jan. 15. During the past week 10 witnesses, including Kris Perry, Sandy Stier, Paul Katami and Jeff Zarrillo and five eminent experts, had clearly and convincingly demonstrated critical points, including the importance of marriage in American society; that Proposition 8 perpetuates irreparable, immovable and discriminatory harm and does not have any benefit to society.
Queer couples start marrying in N.H.

At midnight on Jan. 1, jubilant gay and lesbian couples began to marry legally in New Hampshire. Governor John Lynch signed marriage equality legislation in June 2009, which was set to go into effect on the new year.

"As wedding bells ring in the new year in New Hampshire, it marks a new era for the state and for America," said GLAAD President Jarrett Barrios. "Gay and lesbian New Hampshire couples today are better able to take care of each other and their families. After marriage equality became law in Massachusetts, it made a huge difference in my life and enabled me to fully care for my husband and son as a family.

"As more and more Americans are coming to know and understand gay and lesbian families, we are seeing a public support for equality and fairness for all families is growing.


"Righting wrongs of LGBT Americans and civil rights advocates have started a campaign to overturn marriage equality in New Hampshire.

N.J. senate rejects marriage equality

On Jan. 7, despite the leadership of Garden State Equality and elected leaders such as Governor Corzine, the New Jersey Senate voted to reject marriage equality bill by a vote of 42-20.

According to journalist Michael K. Lavin, New Jersey activists continue to point the finger at incoming Gov. Chris Christie as the primary reason legislation failed to pass. Christie has repeatedly said he would veto any bill that would allow gays and lesbians to marry. He reported the public sentiment in the state legislature is that the public support for equality and fairness for all families is growing.

"The New Jersey Senate vote was a clear blow to marriage equality advocates and the families they support," said Anders. "With its new policy, the federal government is setting a good example for all employers. Although many states governments and businesses already provide workplace protections for transgender employees, explicit protection of transgender employees will likely be a catalyst for many more states and businesses to apply the federal policy. With this new policy and ENDA pending in both the House and Senate, we have an unprecedented opportunity to protect the rights of all Americans at work. At Congress returns today, we call on all states and businesses that should make passing ENDA a priority."

A copy of an ACLU report, Working for Equality, transgender employees and applicants for federal employment discrimination of LGBT employees and applicants for federal employment discrimination of LGBT employees. The report of federal employees will likely be a catalyst for many more states and businesses to apply the federal policy. With this new policy and ENDA pending in both the House and Senate, we have an unprecedented opportunity to protect the rights of all Americans at work. At Congress returns today, we call on all states and businesses that should make passing ENDA a priority.

Queer couples start marrying in N.H.

At midnight on Jan. 1, jubilant gay and lesbian couples began to marry legally in New Hampshire. Governor John Lynch signed marriage equality legislation in June 2009, which was set to go into effect on the new year.

"As wedding bells ring in the new year in New Hampshire, it marks a new era for the state and for America," said GLAAD President Jarrett Barrios. "Gay and lesbian New Hampshire couples today are better able to take care of each other and their families. After marriage equality became law in Massachusetts, it made a huge difference in my life and enabled me to fully care for my husband and son as a family.


"Righting wrongs of LGBT Americans and civil rights advocates have started a campaign to overturn marriage equality in New Hampshire.

N.J. senate rejects marriage equality

On Jan. 7, despite the leadership of Garden State Equality and elected leaders such as Governor Corzine, the New Jersey Senate voted to reject marriage equality bill by a vote of 42-20.

According to journalist Michael K. Lavin, New Jersey activists continue to point the finger at incoming Gov. Chris Christie as the primary reason legislation failed to pass. Christie has repeatedly said he would veto any bill that would allow gays and lesbians to marry. He reported the public sentiment in the state legislature is that the public support for equality and fairness for all families is growing.

"The New Jersey Senate vote was a clear blow to marriage equality advocates and the families they support," said Anders. "With its new policy, the federal government is setting a good example for all employers. Although many states governments and businesses already provide workplace protections for transgender employees, explicit protection of transgender employees will likely be a catalyst for many more states and businesses to apply the federal policy. With this new policy and ENDA pending in both the House and Senate, we have an unprecedented opportunity to protect the rights of all Americans at work. At Congress returns today, we call on all states and businesses that should make passing ENDA a priority."

A copy of an ACLU report, Working for Equality, transgender employees and applicants for federal employment discrimination of LGBT employees. The report of federal employees will likely be a catalyst for many more states and businesses to apply the federal policy. With this new policy and ENDA pending in both the House and Senate, we have an unprecedented opportunity to protect the rights of all Americans at work. At Congress returns today, we call on all states and businesses that should make passing ENDA a priority.

Portugal beats the U.S. to marriage equality

Portugal, traditionally one of Europe's most socially conservative Catholic countries, approved the legalization of gay marriage on Jan. 8 with a minimum of fuss.

The vote was 125 to 99.

"This law rights a wrong," Prime Minister Jose Socrates said in a speech to lawmakers, adding that it "simply ends pointless suffering."

With the governing Socialists and other left-wing opposition parties holding a strong majority, the new law is likely to gain final approval before a visit by homo­phobic Pope Benedict XVI, due in Portu­gal in May.

In contrast to Spain, where the lead­up to the legalization of gay marriage in 2005 brought hundreds of thousands of demonstrators onto the streets, the bill was

Portugal continues page 14
Interview

Anne Tischer

By Susan Jordan

Ask, Don't Tell policy. Tischer of the new group Equality ROC (EROC) fills us in on what is happening around NYS and in Rochester and her ongoing campaign for full equality for LGBT New Yorkers and our families.

Local Rochester: What are activities across the state thinking about the best strategies for getting the marriage bill passed?

Anne Tischer: The disappointing Marriage Equality vote by the New York Senate had the same effect as getting punched by a bully... Initially it knocked the wind out of everyone, but now we are uniting, mad and targeted.

The vote was as useful as it’s now apparent to the average Joe in our community that full LGBT equality is not “inevitable” even in a supposedly progressive state like New York. I have seen many new faces at activist meetings. The vote also revealed our friends and roommates in the Senate, sharpened our strategies and has set the stage for statewide collaborations.

Long gone are the days of Equality Buffalo just returned from New York City, where we attended the huge monthly meeting of Marriage Equality New York (MENY) and met with their leadership. MENY remains focused on the fight for marriage as the most effective means of eliminating all forms of LGBT inequality.

Getting married and 95 percent of other problems disappear — immigration, unfair taxation, survivors’ benefits, health care access. It establishes publicly that gays are equal citizens and makes it harder to justify things like the military’s Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy.

MENY is actively networking statewide. Per Ron Zacchi, executive director of MENY, “Statewide support is the only way marriage equality will pass in our state. We need Western New York, Capital Region, Orange County, Long Island, NYC, Republicans, Democrats, people of faith, people of color, elderly people, the LGBTQ community, our friends and many others, to have a fair shot at equality in marriage.”

Local Rochester groups like Equality ROC will be joining MENY in Albany on Feb. 23 for Marriage Equality Lobby Day. A bus will be going from Rochester and Buffalo. Transportation and lunch will be $35x scholarships are available. Register at http://www.meny.us/med.php.

Rochester will also be part of other MENY statewide actions including the "Wishing March" in September, echoes the march across the Brooklyn Bridge done with rainbow umbrellas.

EC: Why push for marriage equality now when the next vote could be 18 months away?

AT: It is important to remember how long it took for women to get the vote and the number of times it failed. Finally, after 72 years, a 24-year-old Tennessee legislature cast the tie-breaking vote: holding his mother’s instructions to be a “good boy” and “support the ladies.” We need to form long term relationships with state Senators and generate the public pressure needed to guarantee victory.

Replacing targeted Senators is also part of the strategy. Senator Onorato, under serious pressure, has already bowed out of running again. And Senator Haskell-Thompson changed her vote to yes based on a personal connection made with an advocate. We need this year to do the setup work required for the next vote. And don’t assume that Empire State Pride Agenda has dropped the ball on marriage equality as they publicly prioritize the passage of GENOA and Dignity for All Students legislation this year. Their focus for marriage just moved behind the scenes.

EC: Can you tell us about plans for direct actions or other organizing?

AT: We went to NYC specifically to talk coordinated direct action and civil disobedience training. Downstate groups are already at work, targeting Senator Krueger who is rumoured to be gay and voted no. He is being challenged to come out in protests at his home and at his appearances. Other no-voting Democrats find their community meetings being opted by LGBT activists who Filibuster all the speaking time.

Senator Robach of Rochester, a Republican, has twice been publicly challenged by protesters on his vote (see page A 1 and A 1B) and I suspect that we will see more intensity in such direct action opportunities with targeted Senators. Marriage Equality New York has a newly formed direct action component called Act Out that is being trained by veteran ACT UP activists. They will be a resource statewide and will network with Rochester.

Doing civil disobedience is a “sexy” concept, but it is important to remember that our purpose is no pass legislation. Political action guru I met with expressed concern about using strong “direct actions” as a first step this legislative session. What then do you do for Act II?

They have advised doing progressively edgier actions. Cathy Marion-Thomass, Board President of MENY, calls for...
April 3, will mark the eighth annual LGBT Health Week—during which a specific focus on the health needs and issues of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals will be addressed.

For the past three years, the Rochester LGBT Health Coalition has participated in this annual event and brought energy and programming around LGBT health to the Rochester community. This year, however, we’re taking things to a whole new level.

Obviously our community’s health is too important (and fabulous) to fit into just one week. So this year, in partnership with the LGBT Health & Human Services Coalition (convened by ESFA), we are proud to announce that March 2010 will be the first ever New York State LGBT Health MONTH!

A calendar of events is already coming together for the entire month, including meetings and partnerships with local groups, Coalition member organizations, and other great LGBT organizations like ImageCLEF. Keep an eye out for the March Empty Closet, for information about LGBT Health Month events here in Rochester.

This year’s theme, “31 Ways in 31 Days,” promises to bring a myriad of engaging events and daily health tips designed to raise awareness, build community and promote LGBT health — at both the individual and the community level.

(AIDS Care from page 3)

In addition, the merger is expected to help provide fiscal stability in today’s challenging economic environment, to ensure the organization’s viability well into the future.

“This is an exciting day, not only for AIDS Care, but also for those we serve and the entire community,” says John Wight, a patient and member of the Board of Directors. “This milestone has produced a win-win situation, benefiting both the health of the organization, and more importantly, patients and clients like myself.”

AIDS Community Health Center, formerly known as Community Health Network, was founded in 1989 by two infectious disease physicians, Dr. Steven Scheibel and Dr. William Valenti, and a one-room office. By 1989, 76 patients came to receive care. By 2006, the AIDS Community Health Center’s 60 staff members were serving more than 600 people.

AIDS Rochester was established 26 years ago as part of the New York State Health Department’s network of Community Service Programs (CSP). The organization started with one staff person and a one-room office. By 2000, the agency had 90 staff members dedicated to providing a continuum of prevention and social services for people living with HIV and their loved ones.

The main offices of both organizations moved to one facility at 259 Monroe Ave. in October 2009, just weeks before the official merger. The new phone number for AIDS Care’s main office is 585-549-7200 and the company is launching a new website at www.acRochester.org. AIDS Care also maintains satellite locations in both Geneva, and on Central Ave. in downtown Rochester.

LOCAL AND STATE

(Stalking continued from page 3)

cause a reasonable person to feel fear.”

Stalking is a crime that is pervasive, dangerous and potentially lethal. The National Crime Victims Bureau says that 3.4 million people are stalked annually in the U.S. — but most victims never report.

So stalking is not only a heteronormative weapon of domestic violence issued, committed with abusive husbands or boyfriends, or rejected would-be boyfriends. Nor is it just crazed fans stalking celebrities, or rapists. In the LGBT community, the definition of stalking also fits the behavior of some bullies, as well as some types of chronic harassments from neighbors, according to Kelly Clark, Gay Alliance Community Safety Director.

Clark said, “I want to look at that because I think we’ve missed an opportunity for redress for some people, since we aren’t identifying harassment as stalking.”

If you feel you are being stalked, or want more information, call Kelly Clark at 244-8640. If you are in danger, call 911 immediately. If you are experiencing stalking/harassment incidents or phone calls, Kelly Clark recommends keeping a log so that if you choose to contact police, you will have specific information to give them.

Dray Ebony wins House of Blahnik scholarship

This year’s winner of the House of Blahnik Scholarship is a House/Ballroom celebrity and is affectionately known to all as the Icon, Dray Ebony. The Grandfather of the “Immortal” House of Ebony has been walking balls for 23 years and currently attends the University of Phoenix where he majors in Human Services.

“I am so honored and touched to receive this scholarship that you just can’t imagine,” remarked Dray.

As a former member of the House of Ebony and a student of Dray’s teachings, I am personally moved by his transformation and all that he is doing with LGBT youth in NYC and around the country. We could not have given this year’s scholarship to a more deserving individual,” said Damon Humes, founder and overall father of the House of Blahnik and executive director of Rochester’s MOCHA Center.

Aside from being inducted into the ballroom Hall of Fame, winning the prestigious Icon of the Year award three years in a row, being legendary for winning many fashion awards and every realness award imaginable and having enough articles/poetries to decorate the mantels of an entire generation of ball patrons, Grandfather Ebony is a AIDS activist, inspirational speaker and leader for social and political change within the House/Ball community. In his role with FACES-NY, Dray works with the STAR Project to provide health education and facilitate support and discussion groups that target the house/ball community and the larger LGBT people of color community.

The Blahnik Scholarship was established in 2006 after the house leadership had several discussions about a disturbing trend of academic failure within the ballroom community. “We couldn’t understand why so many individuals who could be so dedicated and disciplined in competition weren’t able to transfer these skills to their academic pursuits,” remarked Damon Humes.

“Who were able to recognize was the huge amount of support, affirmation and encouragement that those young people received from this community when they could vogue, or walk the runway, we wanted to honor that while celebrating folks for excelling academically as well.”

According to the Board President Kevin Bynes, “The real world endeavors and achievements may be valued above the artistic and social achievements, but from a human development point of view they are all equally important. The ball scene has done an amazing job of supporting the artistic and social development of individuals. Now we want to support their academic real world achievements as well.”

Kindred welcomes LGBT seniors in Rochester

LGBT senior citizens in Rochester now have a gay-friendly option for homeless, Kindred Senior Care, an agency with offices in New York City and Rochester, is among the first homecare services (Local & State continues on page 8)
in the U.S. to openly welcome LGBT seniors seeking assistance with independent living. LGBT seniors are an especially vulnerable population. Compared to their heterosexual counterparts, LGBT seniors are twice as likely to live alone, four times as likely to have no children, and 10 times less likely to have someone to call in an emergency. Additionally, fears of discrimination often keep LGBT seniors from accessing the care they need within mainstream institutions.

"There is a general trend for LGBT seniors to go back into the closet" when they seek health related services," says Joe Fisher, founder and managing director of Kindred Senior Care. "At Kindred, we are proud to be a part of a welcoming community that cherishes gay and lesbian seniors as they are."

Kindred integrates LGBT sensitivity throughout caregiver screening, training, and ongoing staff development.

"Our commitment to LGBT seniors is part of Kindred’s broader mission to openly welcome LGBT gay and lesbian seniors as they age," Fisher stated. "By focusing on compatibility, we establish connections that are mutually enriching for clients and caregivers alike."

Kindred Senior Care is a progressive homecare agency serving senior citizens in the Rochester and New York metropolitan areas. Services span all aspects of non-medical care, such as companionship, meal preparation, light housekeeping, medication reminders, bill paying, and daily exercise.

For more information, visit www.kindredseniorcare.com or contact your local Kindred office:

585-210-0296
(St. Louis, Mo., Thomas Debraggio, of Clinton, N.Y., and Francesca Hurley, of Indianapolis, Ind.)

The deadline to enter this year’s competition is March 15. For complete contest guidelines and entry information, visit www.rit.edu/NTID/WritingContest.

Free film marks Freedom to Marry Week Feb. 8-14

A free screening of "Preacher's Sons" will take place at the downtown First Unitarian Church of Rochester on Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 7 p.m. in the Clara Barton Lounge.

"Preacher's Sons" is a provocative, realistic love story about the Stewart family. Five troubled boys pulled from the train wreck of foster care, and the two men who are now their fathers. This intimate look at an unlikely family transcends all political convictions.

RIT writing contest is for high school students with hearing loss

High school sophomores and juniors who are deaf or hard of hearing can use the power of words to express their feelings and win prizes in the fifth annual Rochester Institute of Technology SpRIT Writing Contest. Winners will have their choice of a scholarship and travel expenses to the Explore Your Future program at RIT’s National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), or a $500 cash prize. ETF is a six-day summer career exploration program for deaf and hard-of-hearing students that gives them the opportunity to sample different careers, as well as college life.

Entries will include creative writing, such as a short story or poem, a short writing sample and a personal reflection.

Last year’s winners were Evan Brown, of Guilderland, Mass., Zach Jodlowski, of St. Louis, Mo., Thomas Debraggio, of Clinton, N.Y., and Francesca Hurley, of Indianapolis, Ind.

Entries will include creative writing, such as a short story or poem, a short writing sample and a personal reflection.

For more information, visit www.rit.edu/NTID/WritingContest.

For your accounting needs: "Call the Gay CPA"

Full service income tax preparation including electronic filing
- All other states available (that have an income tax)
- Corporation, Trust and Partnership returns
- Available year-round for tax questions
- Year-end planning for the lowest legal tax

Mr. Jean Thibodeau, CPA
(Certified Public Accountant)
31 Putting Green Lane
Penfield, NY 14526
(585) 586-6160 by appointment only, please

Pleasant Street Apothecary Has Just What You’re Looking For...

Friendly, Personalized Service From the Experts!

* Locally-owned and operated
* 24-Hour prescription ordering
* Delivery service available
* Special expertise in:
  - Diabetes
  - HIV/AIDS
  - Medicare D
* LGBT Friendly
* Free parking

NEW LOCATION!
259 Monroe Ave.
Rochester, NY 14607
585-241-9000 or 800-923-9394
Fax: 585-454-2017
Pharmacy Hours
Monday - Friday: 8:30 am - 6:00 pm
Tuesday: 8:30 am - 7:30 pm
Saturday: 9:00 am - Noon
Closed Sunday

Chain-store pharmacies can’t always offer you the personalized care and specialty service you deserve.

Our expert pharmacists are always available to answer questions and provide friendly assistance.

For all your accounting needs: "Call the Gay CPA"
JOIN UP and Volunteer for Victory today!

The Rochester Victory Alliance at the University of Rochester needs healthy, HIV-negative men who have sex with men, ages 18-45 for local studies.

FACTS:
- HIV vaccines are synthetic (man-made).
- It is IMPOSSIBLE to get HIV infection from the vaccine.
- Participants are paid an average of $750.

For more information, or to learn if you qualify, call (585) 756-2329

RochesterVictoryAlliance.org
tired of straight talk?

Until gay rights become fully realized, you need more than talk. You need to figure out a smart financial future for you and your partner. From insurance to retirement and all that lies between, we can help you protect what matters most—the future of your loved one.

Get more than straight talk.
Get unique solutions.

Insurance: long-term care, disability income & life insurance
Financial strategies • Retirement solutions • Wealth management

Michael Argaman and Marlene Dattilo are registered representatives of and offer securities through MML Investors Services, Inc., member SIPC. 600 Clinton Square, Rochester, NY 14604 (585) 262-5600.

THE RED BALL
Community Valentine's Day Dance
Saturday, February 6
7-11pm
in the
Elegant Cathedral Hall, Auditorium
875 E. Main St.
Tickets: $7.
Available at the Gay Alliance, Equal=Grounds, & OUtlandish
Celebrating Community, Love, & Friendship
Featuring DJ Chuck Argento
Light Refreshments & Desserts
Fabulous Gift Basket Raffle & More!
Get your RED on and win prizes!

For your added pleasure:
Enjoy a glass of wine & sample
Artisan Hedonist Chocolates
in the Beaujolais Nouveau Room
Ticket Price $5.

For more information:
visit www.gayalliance.org
or call 585-244-8640

Silver Dry Cleaners and Launderers
Main Plant 365 Andrews St 631-4790
Home and Office pick-up and delivery
Brooklyn • First Federal Bldg. • 566-5565
57 Peirce Hill Mall • 223-3660
Genesis • 243-1829
Danville • 252-7400

Drive-in Dry Cleaners 230 Monroe Avenue 232-6306

$3 OFF DRY CLEANING on any order over $15
Not valid with other offers. One coupon per customer per visit. Restrictions apply.

$6 OFF DRY CLEANING on any order over $20
Not valid with other offers. One coupon per customer per visit. Restrictions apply.

Premier Dog Training
Good Reason #2:
Starting your puppy on the right paw requires the right trainer.

Using dog-friendly methods to promote a better relationship between you and your dog.

585.764.8187
PremierPets@rochester.rr.com
Diane J. Gardner, CPDT
Certified Pot Dog Trainer

MassMutual Financial Architects
financialarchitects.upstate.com
(585) 262-5600
Get in touch with a Financial Services Professional today.
Michael Argaman or Marlene Dattilo
Financial Architects • 600 Clinton Square • Rochester, NY 14604

FIN. Architec;ts

Get in touch with a Financial Services Professional today.

Mike Argaman or Martine Dattilo

Financial Architects • 600 Clinton Square • Rochester, NY 14604

Get more than straight talk.
Get unique solutions.

Insurance: long-term care, disability income & life insurance
Financial strategies • Retirement solutions • Wealth management

Michael Argaman and Marlene Dattilo are registered representatives of and offer securities through MML Investors Services, Inc., member SIPC. 600 Clinton Square, Rochester, NY 14604 (585) 262-5600.

THE RED BALL
Community Valentine's Day Dance
Saturday, February 6
7-11pm
in the
Elegant Cathedral Hall, Auditorium
875 E. Main St.
Tickets: $7.
Available at the Gay Alliance, Equal=Grounds, & OUtlandish
Celebrating Community, Love, & Friendship
Featuring DJ Chuck Argento
Light Refreshments & Desserts
Fabulous Gift Basket Raffle & More!
Get your RED on and win prizes!

For your added pleasure:
Enjoy a glass of wine & sample
Artisan Hedonist Chocolates
in the Beaujolais Nouveau Room
Ticket Price $5.

For more information:
visit www.gayalliance.org
or call 585-244-8640

Silver Dry Cleaners and Launderers
Main Plant 365 Andrews St 631-4790
Home and Office pick-up and delivery
Brooklyn • First Federal Bldg. • 566-5565
57 Peirce Hill Mall • 223-3660
Genesis • 243-1829
Danville • 252-7400

Drive-in Dry Cleaners 230 Monroe Avenue 232-6306

$3 OFF DRY CLEANING on any order over $15
Not valid with other offers. One coupon per customer per visit. Restrictions apply.

$6 OFF DRY CLEANING on any order over $20
Not valid with other offers. One coupon per customer per visit. Restrictions apply.

Premier Dog Training
Good Reason #2:
Starting your puppy on the right paw requires the right trainer.

Using dog-friendly methods to promote a better relationship between you and your dog.

585.764.8187
PremierPets@rochester.rr.com
Diane J. Gardner, CPDT
Certified Pot Dog Trainer

MassMutual Financial Architects
financialarchitects.upstate.com
(585) 262-5600
Get in touch with a Financial Services Professional today.
Michael Argaman or Marlene Dattilo
Financial Architects • 600 Clinton Square • Rochester, NY 14604

FIN. Architec;ts

Get in touch with a Financial Services Professional today.

Mike Argaman or Martine Dattilo

Financial Architects • 600 Clinton Square • Rochester, NY 14604

Get more than straight talk.
Get unique solutions.

Insurance: long-term care, disability income & life insurance
Financial strategies • Retirement solutions • Wealth management

Michael Argaman and Marlene Dattilo are registered representatives of and offer securities through MML Investors Services, Inc., member SIPC. 600 Clinton Square, Rochester, NY 14604 (585) 262-5600.
Visit our kitchen and retail location
674 South Avenue, Rochester
Open Monday - Saturday, 10am - 6pm
585.461.2815

www.hedonistchocolates.com

CELEBRATE
LOVE
THIS VALENTINE’S DAY
WITH A GIFT FROM THE HEART

MANN’S JEWELERS
redefining luxury & value
2945 Monroe Avenue
MANNSJEWELERS.COM

BRING IN THIS AD TO RECEIVE $50 TOWARD YOUR PURCHASE OF $200 OR MORE

HEDONIST Artisan Chocolates
perfect for Valentine’s Day

Visit our kitchen and retail location
674 South Avenue, Rochester
Open Monday - Saturday, 10am - 6pm
585.461.2815

www.hedonistchocolates.com

LOOK FOR FUTURE WINE TASTINGS
During February and March, a portion of all proceeds will go to the Wease Cares Children’s Fund.

Mention Wease Cares when you are checking out and an additional discount will be provided!

CORN HILL
FINE WINES & SPIRITS
at Corn Hill Landing

A Broad Selection from Around the World
260 Exchange Street • Rochester • 232-5530
Mon-Sat: 10am-8pm • Sunday: 12-5pm

THIS VALENTINE'S DAY
WITH A GIFT FROM THE HEART

MANN’S JEWELERS
redefining luxury & value
2945 Monroe Avenue
MANNSJEWELERS.COM

BRING IN THIS AD TO RECEIVE $50 TOWARD YOUR PURCHASE OF $200 OR MORE

CELEBRATE
LOVE
THIS VALENTINE’S DAY
WITH A GIFT FROM THE HEART

MANN’S JEWELERS
redefining luxury & value
2945 Monroe Avenue
MANNSJEWELERS.COM

BRING IN THIS AD TO RECEIVE $50 TOWARD YOUR PURCHASE OF $200 OR MORE

CELEBRATE
LOVE
THIS VALENTINE’S DAY
WITH A GIFT FROM THE HEART

MANN’S JEWELERS
redefining luxury & value
2945 Monroe Avenue
MANNSJEWELERS.COM

BRING IN THIS AD TO RECEIVE $50 TOWARD YOUR PURCHASE OF $200 OR MORE
InQｕery Community Learning

Inquiring minds want to know... The Gay Alliance is thrilled to announce their new program, InQｕery – an easy way for LGBT and allied community members to learn about a wide variety of things together. All sessions will be part social, part educational, and LGBT to the core. Many InQｕery offerings are classes, but plans are to add tours, and special events to the calendar of InQｕery sessions. Have questions? Want to lead an InQｕery session? Contact Scott at 585-244-8640 or ScottF@gayalliance.org. Currently, most sessions are free, but some classes may have special fees for tickets or supplies. Please contact us for ASL interpretation at any session at least 14 days before the class date: DeafAccess@gayalliance.org

Upcoming Classes

Transgender Issues and Parenting: A PFLAG discussion
Tuesday February 2, 7-9pm
Facilitated by members of PFLAG
Location: St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Screening & Discussion: *The Preacher’s Sons*
Tuesday February 9, 7pm
Facilitator: Todd Plante, ESPA
Location: First Universalist Church

Coming OUT! Towards an Understanding of Self Identity
Wednesday, February 10, 6:30-8:30pm
Facilitator: Scott Fearing, Gay Alliance
Program Director
Location: Youth Center

Homophobia: More than Name Calling
Thursday, February 18, 6:30-8pm
Facilitator: Scott Fearing, Gay Alliance
Program Director
Location: Community Room

BDSM: A Guide for Lay people, Well-wishers, and Newbies
Wednesday, February 24, 6:30-8pm
Facilitator: Laura McSpadden, Gay Alliance Office Administrator
Location: Youth Center

Screening & Discussion: The Celluloid Closet
Monday, March 7, 6:30-8:30pm
Facilitated by Sally Clark, Community Safety Director at the Gay Alliance.
Location: Youth Center

Understanding Human Sexuality
Sunday, March 15, 6:30-8:30pm
Facilitator: Scott Fearing, Gay Alliance
Program Director
Location: Community Room

James R. Yost, L.M.T.
60 & 90 Minute Therapeutic Massage Sessions
by Appointment, phone 202-8754 or visit us online

Now Offering Hot Stone Massage

Now Accepting VISA and Master Card.
February: The month of hearts and flowers and LOVE. So what IS love?

By Evelyn Bailey

The word "love" comes to us from the Middle English word "luft", derived from the Old English word "lufu". This is akin to Old High German, "luha", and another Old English word, "luh" which means "dear". Yet another word related to love, "lube", "lub", or "lu:" comes to us from the Hunnic Latin word meaning "to please". In all words related to the word love, roots relating to dear, pleasing, and cherished may be found, handing over the deeper meaning of the modern word.

Most people think of the definition of love as a strong romantic attachment between two people, often intermingled with sexual desire and attraction. Through history, people have defined love more broadly, encompassing many relationships. These forms of love and affection include love, but by actions. In this definition, love isn't what you say - it's what you do. Love includes charity or giving. Shoulders To Stand On

SYNOMYMS: adulation, affection, admiration, appreciation, adoration, attachment, cherishing, craving, delight, devotion, emotion, enthusiasm, enjoyment, fervor, fidelity, fondness, friendship, hankering, idolatry, inclination, infatuation, involvement, like, love, lust, mad, fond, partiality, passion, pity, regard, regard, respect, sentiment, soft spot, taste, tenderness, weakness, worship, yearning, zeal. Antonyms: dislike, hate, hatred. Ref: Theaurus.com

Shoulders To Stand On: Documenting our history begins with GAVG grant

By Evelyn Bailey

The Documentary Heritage Program (DHP) is a statewide program established to preserve New York state's historical records and guidance to non-profit organizations. The DHP Grants are designed to encourage more comprehensive documentation of New York State's history and culture by supporting projects that identify, survey, collect, and make available important records relating to groups and topics traditionally under-represented in the historical record. DHP is administered by the New York State Archives, a unit of the New York State Education Department.

The GAVG applied for and was awarded A Documentation Program Grant for Population Groups in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries by the NYS Archives Documentary Heritage Program. The Grant timeline was from May 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010.

February: The GAVG Shouders To Stand On program can begin documenting and preserving the history of the GLBT community in the Rochester region and its impact on New York state and the nation in advancing the cause for justice and equal rights.

This project will give credibility to our community and culture, and will be available to teach and inspire future generations.

Many records are in serious danger of being lost or neglected, yet they document major change in our local community. Many sources of historical record are no longer accessible or available because of the death of individuals, the loss of material through relocation of organizations, groups, individuals, and corporations, and the lack of having a repository for the records.

In 2010 there are still a number of closeted individuals living secretly or in denial of their sexuality within the gay community. Many contributions are unrecognized, unacknowledged, and necessary in order to have a complete historical picture of the community. In many records individuals are referred to by first names and last initials. In some cases pseudonyms were used for fear of loss of jobs, license and family. From a very practical view, historical records cannot be kept in friendly environments, and can take up much needed space. Participating in this program would relieve organizations, agencies, groups and individuals of the responsibility of providing for the preservation of their records, and would free up valuable space. Just as importantly, it would allow records to be kept safe in the same way that the GLBT records held at the Goodstein Sexuality Archives at Cornell University. The preservation of these records will make GLBT history in Rochester available to the community, historians, researchers, educators, and future historians that give definition to who the GLBT community is, and its contribution to improve the quality of life of the Rochester community by providing leadership in the areas of politics, health, civil rights, social justice, and economic growth.

We are asking any and all GLBT organizations, agencies, and groups in existence, or that have been in existence, to contact Nicole Menarchem at 244-6660 x 32 with their contact information. The Shoulders To Stand On Program is asking any individuals who have been involved in these groups with information on where their records might be, their purpose and past leaders and participants to contact Nicole Menarchem as well.

We NEED YOUR HELP: Contact Nicole Menarchem at 244-6660 x 32 or go to www.shoulderstodon.org to provide any information you think is helpful.
We have to protect the children in schools who are being recruited into homosexual activities.

"The idea that homosexuality can be prohibited in Africa is as absurd and unrealistic as banning oxygen," said TWO's Beson. "Gay people are not a threat to children. We do not recruit them. It is clear that the Ugandan government is awash in ignorance and trying to legislate based on false stereotypes and misinformation. Unfortunately, American evangelicals and ex-gay organizations are responsible for spreading these lies and propaganda in Africa."

Concerned by what he calls the "barbarity" of Uganda's proposed Anti-Homosexuality Bill ("kill the gays bill"), U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) sent a strong letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk.

Wyden is Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee's subcommittee on International Trade, Customs and Global Competitiveness.

Wyden says that passage of the bill would violate the terms of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) through which Uganda is permitted by the United States to export its goods duty-free to the United States. AGOA requires that beneficiaries not engage in "gross violations of internationally recognized human rights." Uganda has enjoyed the AGOA plenum since 2000.

Wyden said in the letter to Clinton and Kirk:

"I strongly urge you to communicate immediately to the Ugandan government, and President Yoweri Museveni directly, that Uganda's beneficary status under AGOA will be revoked should the proposed legislation be enacted.... Before us is a concrete opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to ending violence and oppression in Africa."

Media reported on Jan. 7 that Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni would refuse to mobilize on a subject which, according to Lisbon's Cardinal Ricardo da Costa, is "parliament's responsibility."

Portugal has offered civil unions to same-sex couples since 2001, but they did not provide some key benefits that come with marriage involving pensions, inheritance and the sharing of names. Legally married same-sex couples will still not be allowed to adopt, however.

Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality bill may not kill gays—just break their "bad habit"

Newsweek reported on Jan. 7 that Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni would refuse to mobilize on a subject which, according to Lisbon's Cardinal Ricardo da Costa, is "parliament's responsibility."

Portugal has offered civil unions to same-sex couples since 2001, but they did not provide some key benefits that come with marriage involving pensions, inheritance and the sharing of names. Legally married same-sex couples will still not be allowed to adopt, however.

Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality bill may not kill gays—just break their "bad habit"

Media reported on Jan. 7 that Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni would refuse to mobilize on a subject which, according to Lisbon's Cardinal Ricardo da Costa, is "parliament's responsibility."

Portugal has offered civil unions to same-sex couples since 2001, but they did not provide some key benefits that come with marriage involving pensions, inheritance and the sharing of names. Legally married same-sex couples will still not be allowed to adopt, however.

Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality bill may not kill gays—just break their "bad habit"

Media reported on Jan. 7 that Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni would refuse to mobilize on a subject which, according to Lisbon’s Cardinal Patricia Jose Policarpo, is "parliament’s responsibility."

Portugal has offered civil unions to same-sex couples since 2001, but they did not provide some key benefits that come with marriage involving pensions, inheritance and the sharing of names. Legally married same-sex couples will still not be allowed to adopt, however.

Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality bill may not kill gays—just break their "bad habit"

Media reported on Jan. 7 that Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni would refuse to mobilize on a subject which, according to Lisbon’s Cardinal Patricia Jose Policarpo, is "parliament’s responsibility."

Portugal has offered civil unions to same-sex couples since 2001, but they did not provide some key benefits that come with marriage involving pensions, inheritance and the sharing of names. Legally married same-sex couples will still not be allowed to adopt, however.

Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality bill may not kill gays—just break their "bad habit"

Media reported on Jan. 7 that Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni would refuse to mobilize on a subject which, according to Lisbon’s Cardinal Patricia Jose Policarpo, is "parliament’s responsibility."

Portugal has offered civil unions to same-sex couples since 2001, but they did not provide some key benefits that come with marriage involving pensions, inheritance and the sharing of names. Legally married same-sex couples will still not be allowed to adopt, however.

Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality bill may not kill gays—just break their "bad habit"

Media reported on Jan. 7 that Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni would refuse to mobilize on a subject which, according to Lisbon’s Cardinal Patricia Jose Policarpo, is "parliament’s responsibility."

Portugal has offered civil unions to same-sex couples since 2001, but they did not provide some key benefits that come with marriage involving pensions, inheritance and the sharing of names. Legally married same-sex couples will still not be allowed to adopt, however.

Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality bill may not kill gays—just break their "bad habit"

Media reported on Jan. 7 that Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni would refuse to mobilize on a subject which, according to Lisbon’s Cardinal Patricia Jose Policarpo, is "parliament’s responsibility."

Portugal has offered civil unions to same-sex couples since 2001, but they did not provide some key benefits that come with marriage involving pensions, inheritance and the sharing of names. Legally married same-sex couples will still not be allowed to adopt, however.
discrimination against LGBT persons worldwide.

The senator’s letter also states that Uganda benefits from a trade relationship with the European Union similar to AGOA. So far only Sweden has explicitly stated that continuation of aid will be tied to adherence to basic human rights.

Sen. Wyden says he intends “to sponsor legislation to amend U.S. trade preference programs, including AGOA, to make clear that failure to appropriately respect sexual orientation and gender identity as human rights shall preclude a country from benefiting from any U.S. trade preference scheme.” Uganda already outlaws homosexuality. Hopefully the senator will consider such laws in conflict with the definition of respect he outlines in the new legislation.

The United States Congress held a hearing in mid-January to discuss the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, which is due to be debated in the Ugandan Parliament this month. The hearing was held under the auspices of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.

“We hope to have a good panel of witnesses, including human rights workers from Uganda as well as international NGOs and State Department officials,” Representative Tammy Baldwin, who is due to chair the Commission hearing, told UK Gay News Jan. 14.

“The hearing on Capitol Hill is for an update on the situation in Uganda... and we hope that this will raise further awareness of the situation in Uganda,” she added.

Rep. Baldwin described the “Kill the Gays Bill” as “frightening and hostile”. •
Collector's delight

These Schonbek lamps display authentic, semi-precious rock crystal and swathy quartz ornaments - rare gemstones unique in the universe. From foot to finial, Schonbek lamps are original designs, worthy of a discerning collector.

And, incidentally, they are highly functional light sources, with built-in dimmer switches. See the collection in our showroom.

---

Union Hill Country Grill

Launched 1995

Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner - Catering

Homemade Pizza

Dine In - Take Out - Delivery

1891 Ridge Road, Webster, NY

(Next to the Union Hill Fire House)

PHONE: (585) 265-4443

FAX: (585) 265-4270

---

Geri Stanton Counseling Services

NYS Licensed Mental Health Counselor
Sign Language Skilled

Individual • Couple • Group

Serving the GLBT community for over 10 years

Geri Stanton, MS.Ed., MS.Ed.
46 Prince Street
Rochester, NY 14607-1023

Office 585.325.7180
TTY 585.533.2041

---

Randy G. Raetz, DDS

General Dentistry for the entire community
including bleaching and cosmetics

WE ARE NOW IN OUR NEW OFFICE!!!!

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

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

(585)473-1550

New Patients Welcome
Evening & Saturday appts. available

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

---

Third Presbyterian Church

Seeking the Light

Where LGBT persons are welcomed
as full partners in ministry

LGBT Support Group, 1st and 3rd Mondays at 7:30 pm
4 Meigs Street at East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607
(585) 271-6513 www.thirdpresbyterian.org/morelight

---

Pet Adoption Network

Come visit our many rescued pets in need of loving homes!

4261 Culver Rd
Sat & Sun
12 - 4 pm

Bring a copy of this ad 
& receive a FREE kitty playhouse - while supplies last!

PetAdoptionNetwork.org
585-338-9175
Journey of a Soulforce rider: first in a series

By Andrew Longhol 

The last few months have been truly life-changing. I applied to be a part of Soulforce’s Equality Ride back in October, and finally got to go to work at training in Austin, Texas during the month of January.

The Equality Ride, first started in 2006, has made visits to Christian colleges and universities across the country, which actively discriminate against those of us with a queer gender identity or sexual orientation. This year, the Ride makes stops to schools of Methodist, Baptist, and various other faith traditions.

This past week, I experienced these minorities, and that stops to schools of Methodist, Baptist, and the many other colleges on our journey to equality to. 

As I return to it this March 2006, that cisgenderism and heterosexism have due to the fact that many just have never lived in a community that we will be making a stop at Houghton College, a liberal arts college of the Wesleyan Church located about 70 miles south of Rochester. Houghton is the school that I attended for several years right out of high school, and I can testify to the fact that those of queer identity have much trouble here.

Houghton is bound up in my coming out story, and as I return to it this March it will continue to be a part of my growth as a gay man of Christian faith. I will now be able to tell those on this campus that eigengender and heterosexism have no place in a place professing the Christian Gospel. However, I do recognize that the presence of these attitudes are merely due to the fact that many just have never experienced these minorities, and that with acquiescence will eventually come acceptance and affirmation. This is what gives me hope, and I know that Houghton and the many other colleges on our journey can change if we give them opportunity to.

Having just come back from the training, as I write this, I feel strongly identified with the words of the Prophet Isaiah that Jesus Christ quoted in Nazareth, “The Spirit... has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” 

That is the work that we will be engaged in for this Ride. So many queer people are imprisoned and oppressed, and we all have an obligation to work for the change that Jesus proclaimed. Children of God are hurting; we must go and witness to them that there is hope. Children of God are suicidal, we must go and witness to them that there is a reason to live.

In the coming months, I hope to share much more with you about the wonderful work that I will be doing. Look in future editions of The Empty Closet for my thoughts on my trip. Also check out my blog, http://thewayfaster.wordpress.com, which will hopefully be a place that I can share with you on a day-to-day basis.

And finally, I must make the plug for financial support. All projects require money as we all know, and the Equality Ride is no different. For every Rider, we must raise $500. To help out in this way I’d ask you to go to http://www.soulforce.org/andrew to find out how to contribute.

And if you decide that you are not able to contribute in this way, I’d like to also set you know that any personal connections that you can make for us in our stop communities and elsewhere are appreciated just as much.

I leave you with these words that we sing in my local Mennonite congregation, and I hope that someday the Church and society as a whole might join in: “How can we be silent when we are the voice of Christ, speaking justice to the nations, breathing love to all the earth... Nienie can stop the Spirit, burning now inside us. We will shape the future. We will not be silent!”

SOUlFORCE SCHEDULE:
Mar.5-Valley Forge Christian College, Phoenixville, PA
Mar.6-Houghton College, Houghton, NY
Mar.15-Oakwood University, Huntsville, AL
Mar.17-Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC
Mar.18-Campbell Univ., Bueals, NC
Mar.22-Bethune-Cookman University, Daytona Beach, FL
Mar.25-Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA
Mar.26-Wilson College, Jackson, MS
Mar.20-Mississippi College, Clinton, MS
Apr.8-Baylor University, Waco, TX
Apr.9-Hardin Simmons University, Abilene, TX
Apr.9-Abilene Christian University, Abilene, TX
Apr.13-Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, MO
Apr.16-Union College, Lincoln, NE
Apr.21-Bethel College, Mishawaka, IN
Apr.22-Moline University, Canton, OH

Jennifer L. Gravitz, Esq.
Quality legal services provided with old fashioned care in the privacy of your home or office

Buying/Selling Real Estate
Wills and Estate Settlement
Consumer Bankruptcy
Name Changes
Traffic Violations

5349 Monroe Ave. Suite 344 Rochester, NY 14618
(585) 244-8295

SOULFORCE SCHEDULE:
Mar.5-Valley Forge Christian College, Phoenixville, PA
Mar.6-Houghton College, Houghton, NY
Mar.15-Oakwood University, Huntsville, AL
Mar.17-Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC
Mar.18-Campbell Univ., Bueals, NC
Mar.22-Bethune-Cookman University, Daytona Beach, FL
Mar.25-Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA
Mar.26-Wilson College, Jackson, MS
Mar.20-Mississippi College, Clinton, MS
Apr.6-Baylor University, Waco, TX
Apr.7-Hardin Simmons University, Abilene, TX
Apr.8-Abilene Christian University, Abilene, TX
Apr.13-Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, MO
Apr.16-Union College, Lincoln, NE
Apr.21-Bethel College, Mishawaka, IN
Apr.22-Moline University, Canton, OH

Jennifer L. Gravitz, Esq.
Quality legal services provided with old fashioned care in the privacy of your home or office

Buying/Selling Real Estate
Wills and Estate Settlement
Consumer Bankruptcy
Name Changes
Traffic Violations

5349 Monroe Ave. Suite 344 Rochester, NY 14618
(585) 244-8295

HUTHER-DOYLE
HELPING YOU PUT THE PIECES BACK TOGETHER

NOW OFFERING SPECIALIZED CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY TREATMENT TO THE GAY – LESBIAN – BISEXUAL COMMUNITY
SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT
EXCLUSIVE GLB TREATMENT GROUP
SENSITIVE TO GLB ISSUES
GLB EXPERIENCED CLINICIAN

(585)-325-5100
360 East Avenue
Rochester, New York 14604

SOUTLFORCE SCHEDULE:
Mar.5-Valley Forge Christian College, Phoenixville, PA
Mar.6-Houghton College, Houghton, NY
Mar.15-Oakwood University, Huntsville, AL
Mar.17-Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC
Mar.18-Campbell Univ., Bueals, NC
Mar.22-Bethune-Cookman University, Daytona Beach, FL
Mar.25-Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA
Mar.26-Wilson College, Jackson, MS
Mar.20-Mississippi College, Clinton, MS
Apr.6-Baylor University, Waco, TX
Apr.7-Hardin Simmons University, Abilene, TX
Apr.8-Abilene Christian University, Abilene, TX
Apr.13-Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, MO
Apr.16-Union College, Lincoln, NE
Apr.21-Bethel College, Mishawaka, IN
Apr.22-Moline University, Canton, OH

Jennifer L. Gravitz, Esq.
Quality legal services provided with old fashioned care in the privacy of your home or office

Buying/Selling Real Estate
Wills and Estate Settlement
Consumer Bankruptcy
Name Changes
Traffic Violations

5349 Monroe Ave. Suite 344 Rochester, NY 14618
(585) 244-8295

HUTHER-DOYLE
HELPING YOU PUT THE PIECES BACK TOGETHER

NOW OFFERING SPECIALIZED CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY TREATMENT TO THE GAY – LESBIAN – BISEXUAL COMMUNITY
SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT
EXCLUSIVE GLB TREATMENT GROUP
SENSITIVE TO GLB ISSUES
GLB EXPERIENCED CLINICIAN

(585)-325-5100
360 East Avenue
Rochester, New York 14604
PICKETING ROBACH’S OFFICE: Although it was 12 degrees on Ridge Road in Greece on Dec. 18, LGBT community members and allies picketed at Sen. Joseph Robach’s office to protest his vote against marriage equality. Above: Pam Barres and Dave Garrison. Protestor Anne Tischer told The Empty Closet, “Senator Robach saw us and ducked!” Photo: Bess Watts

PROTESTING ROBACH’S VOTE: Around 25 LGBT activists, some of them constituents of NYS Senator Joseph Robach, picketed at a SEAC fundraiser on East Ave. on Dec. 4, demanding to know why Sen. Robach voted against marriage equality. The senator did not speak with protestors. The picket line was organized by Civil Rights Front. Photos: Susan Jordan

SHOP ‘N WRAP: Many thanks to the Gay Alliance for allowing Galaxie to once again organize the annual Shop & Wrap event at the GAGV Youth Center to benefit clients of AIDS Community Health Center. Between 120 and 170 gift boxes were wrapped and delivered in December to ACHC (now AIDS Care). Photos: Ralph Carter

We offer a wide range of confidential services to help you take control of your health:

• GYN Check-ups
• HIV/STD Testing
• Counseling

Call 1-866-600-6886 to make an appointment or for more information. Or visit www.pprsr.org

Most insurances accepted. Financial assistance may be available.
Making the Season Bright

The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus gave their winter concert on Dec. 4 and 5 at Hochstein. Photos: Tony Correa

Valentine’s Day Weekend
Friday Feb. 12th, Saturday Feb. 13th, & Sunday Feb. 14th
MOUTHWATERING, DELICIOUS, SURF & TURF
14oz NY Strip .......................$26.95
with 6oz Lobster .......................$38.95
8oz Filet ...............................$27.95
with 6oz Lobster .......................$39.95
22oz Bone in Ribeye ....................$29.95
with 6oz Lobster .......................$41.95

Full Dinner Menu Available

Brunch
Sunday February 14th 11am-4pm
$14.95 Adults & $6.95 Children under 10
Served with Juice and Champagne Mimosa’s

BREAKFAST STATION
French Toast on homemade bread, Create your own Omelet Station, Eggs Benedict, Frittata, Bacon & Sausage

ROAST BEEF HAM CARVING STATION
CHICKEN & PASTA,
Penne Vodka, Chicken French

PIZZA MARGARITA

SALADS
Tomato Salad with Cucumbers & Onions, Orange, Onion, & Fennel Salad, Fresh Fruit Salad

DESSERTS
Italian Assorted Cookie Pastries, Fresh Muffins & much more.

Serving dinner on Valentine’s Day 4-close
Please Call 427-0410 for Reservations

Lunch: Mon-Fri • Dinner: 7 Nights a Week
2171 W. Henrietta Rd. • 427.0410
www.portofinorochester.com

The Empty Closet
SELL ADS. BUILD COMMUNITY. MAKE MONEY.

THE EMPTY CLOSET IS LOOKING FOR A SALES REPRESENTATIVE TO SELL ADVERTISING IN THE EMPTY CLOSET. 30% COMMISSION. 585-244-9030
let the sun shine
STANDUP TANNING
NOW AVAILABLE

movie lounge
fantasy room
steam room
sundeck
fitness center
WiFi
private rooms
private video rooms
suites
lockers
food & beverages

YOUTH RATE
Starting Thursday Feb 11
HALF PRICE LOCKERS YOUTH RATE THURSDAY
Feb 11 Kick Off Party
FREE LOCKER
Youth Rates 18 - 30 yo
4PM to 3AM

play it safe. for life.

Rochester Spa & Body Club | 107 Liberty Pole Way
rochesterspa.com | 454.1074 | open 24/7
Admission is $1. The show will present new work by Alicia Ross, opening at Rochester Contemporary Art Center, 137 East Ave., on Feb. 12.

The opening reception is 7-9 p.m., and will feature an auction. Admission is $1. The show will run until March 21. Both of these events will benefit education about and prevention of violence against women and girls. None of this is sponsored by Rape Crisis and Planned Parenthood.

Eve Ensler's The Vagina Monologues will be performed on March 13 at Hochstein School of Music at 7 p.m. Tickets will be $20 general admission and $10 students/children and will go on sale by the first week of February at Equal-Grounds, Parkeigh, Aaron's Alley, at select Planned Parenthood locations and online at www.pprsr.org. The show will also be ASL interpreted.

Proceeds will benefit Rape Crisis Services in Monroe County and Women and Girls of the Democratic Republic of Congo. See the March Empty Closet for full details.

Seated L-R: Jason Minner, J. R. Toeter, Judy Molner, Jamal Abdunnasir, Ralph Moranto, Marcy Savastano, Michael O'Connor, Colista Turner, Beth Winslow, Marc D'Amico, Jonathan N helicopter. (In front, silhouetted: David Henderson, director.) Photos: Laura McSpadden

Michael vs. Pandora: Round 1
By Michael Steck
email: michaelsteck3@gmail.com

You've seen her on stage thinking she's Madonna. You've seen her wearing a four-foot Afro while doing something she calls "angry tap dancing." You've seen her take a 17-year-old with a lipstick wielding serial killer on the loose. Now, you will see her read a script with 12 of her fabulous drag queens vying for the title of drag supremacy on Season 2 of RuPaul's Drag Race. If you haven't figured it out already, I am talking about a seasoned veteran of drag performance here in Rochester: Pandora Boxx. Recently, I was able to get an on-one-on interview with Pandora and discuss her many ventures, including her latest stint on reality television.

Michael Steck: Incessant Facebook posts. Twitter after twitter, e-mails, MySpace, blogs and so on. Some would say that you have reached the point of no return with your vanity. What's next? Interviewing yourself?

Pandora Boxx: I like to call myself the Queen of Self-Promotion. It's not really about vanity. If you are an entertainer, you need to keep yourself in everyone's consciousness, otherwise you can quickly be forgotten. So I'm going to keep on Twatting!

MS: I don't think people could forget about you. Try as hard as they may. I mean that in the nicest way possible, of course. As if all of that wasn't enough, now you seem to want to become a reality television star. What's up with that?

PB: I don't know if I ever sought to be a reality television star. RuPaul's Drag Race is a groundbreaking hit show. RuPaul changed the mainstream's view on drag when he burst onto the scene in the mid-90s and is changing it again with this amazing show. I wanted to be a part of something that helps bring drag queens into the consciousness of the world. I thought if I got on this show it would be an amazing way to get my brand of drag and humor out to an international audience.

MS: Do you really think you are that funny? I've seen some of those YouTube skits and I think I've seen funnier work on 'She's the Sheriff' starring Suzanne Somers.

PB: Humor is subjective. There are so many different brands of humor. What I think is funny someone else might not. I think there are some things I do that are funny across the board and then there are those things that are really only there. Not everyone will get it but who cares. You can't please everyone.

MS: We've all seen the evidence from your stage act. So I see on RuPaulDragRace.com that you are indeed listed as the oldest contestant in the race. How does that make you feel? Will you follow the likes of the 27-year-old winner of season 1, Beyoncé, to work a walker into your act? I'd say it couldn't hurt. Do you avoid well-lit rooms at all costs now?

PB: Karma is certainly a bitch sometimes. You know you can quickly be forgotten. I'm going to keep on Twatting! It's not really about vanity. If you are an entertainer, you need to keep yourself in everyone's consciousness, otherwise you can quickly be forgotten.

MS: I'm going to keep on Twatting!

PB: You can no longer keep an eye on the things that happen on Season 2 of RuPaul's Drag Race? A little kai kai, sex, sex, sex? They definitely have changed the main­stream's view on drag.

MS: I hope they use a little of that "Vaseline lens" on you for the show.

PB: As far as I know the "Vaseline lens" is gone! I'm sure they heard enough about it from last season. Also, RuPaul does not need it! He looks stunning! They definitely have revved things up for this season. The race is about four times as big, the challenges are bigger and better. This whole season kicks it up a notch. Thank God for a big hit first season!

MS: RuPaul does the do as both his debonair male persona and his flamboyant alter ego. How do you feel you balance your yin and yang? Do you often feel schizophrenic, like you are talking to yourself?

PB: I think it is great that RuPaul's Drag Race shows both sides of drag performers. I think it adds to the whole experience of the show. It shows how much work goes into these amazing transformations. We are boys and we dress like girls, well, fabulously frocked girls. It's all about the illusion. It's definitely easy to lose yourself in your drag persona and I did at one time. Now, there is a definite balance and that's because I think my life is more balanced. It's like RuPaul says, "If you can't love yourself, how in the hell are you going to love somebody else?"

MS: Speaking of love, were there any hookups on RuPaul's Drag Race? A little Lai kai, perhaps? (Kai is a term that is used to talk about two drag queens having sexual relations.)

PB: Oh just because it's a reality show men means someone has to hook up? I see how you think. I'll just say there are a lot of things that happen on Season 2 of RuPaul's Drag Race. More drama, more tears, more laughs.

See Pandora Boxx on "RuPaul's Drag Race" on Feb. 1.
just more, more, more! You will have a hornets-nest. I have tried to incorporate that into my life and performance. I was always a shy little boy growing up. Drugs helped me come out of my shell. Entertainers like Madonna, Cher, Tina Turner, Courtney Love, Dolores Pon­cy, Cyndi Lauper have all shown me it’s OK to be yourself and just to be who you were born to be. I don’t want to be any­one else but me!

MS: Blah, blah, blah. Let’s move on to a more interesting topic. I, like every­one else, want to know more about the show and less about you. Been there, done that. So what scoop can you give us about the Tectonic Theatre Project’s upcoming production?

PB: Where were you in that back­yard? I knew I was being watched! If you’d like to take a seat at your doorstep and give you a Blanket Party’s that’s having a blanket tossed over your head and being beaten with socks full of quarters, in case you were wondering.

PB: It’s an incredible season! I fell honored to have been chosen out of thou­sands of applicants from all over the country. There is also an amazing group of beautiful, talented queens. Everyone brings something different to the table and everyone is very different from last season too.

The empty closet • the gay alliance of the geneseec valley • number 431 • February 2010

Black History films run at Little, Feb. 19-25
February 19-25 marks the fourth annu­al “Spotlight on Black History Month” at The Little Theatre. This film series brings various aspects of African-American life to the big screen, including the drive to embrace the American Dream, the revitalization of a scarred community, and the ongoing struggles to overcome the dark sides of black history in America.

The goal of the series is to present a varied range of film topics and to provide a forum for open discussion and edu­cation.

The films include: Shadows of the Lynching Tree (Rochester Premiere), directed by Rochester native Carvin Eison (Talkback with the director will follow the 6:30 showing on Feb. 19); Presence/Queer, a documentary about the lives of a series but loving teacher of culinary arts in an inner city high school in Philadelphia, and a half dozen of her students, and Hearts of Stone, a documentary about a gutty Newark high school principal’s efforts to stem off gang violence and boost student morale.

This year’s program takes a look at the darker side of our nation’s past,” com­ments Bob Russell, executive director at The Little. “But also at the hope that cre­ates the bright side of our future.” Tickets for all films are $5.

Bread & Water Theatre plans 2010 season

With upcoming productions such as Terse Hauser, Lambda Project: The Art of Pride, Ladies and Gentlemen, Ninjitty’s Last Dance and The Asremoon, it comes as no surprise that Bread and Water Theatre is enter­ing into their 10th year of opera­tion.

The first production of the 2010 sea­son is Edmund White’s Torna Hauser, about an author coming face-to-face with America’s most notorious terrorist. With the terrorist on death row, the lack of time causes a strange bond between the two men. This is a tau­t drama that touches on the definitions of freedom and the need for love. “White has cap­tured the amusingly constricted voices of the partisan novelist and the phe­lian terrorist cantily and cogently.” - The New York Times. Performance dates: Feb. 26, 27 March 5, 6, 12, and 13 at 8 p.m.; March 7 and 16 at 2 p.m.

Bread and Water Theatre will be par­ticipating in The Rainbow Theater Fes­tival for 2010. This will include a few differ­ent productions, the first begin­ning with The Lambda Project: The Art of Pride, a series of real-life stories from the public on the topic of sexuality and the Rainbow Pride Flag and brought to life by Bread & Water Theatre’s per­formers. Performance dates: April 9 and 10 at 8 p.m.; April 11 at 2 p.m.

The second production falling under the umbrella of The Rainbow Theater Festival for 2010 is Ladies and Gentle­men by Emma Donoghue. The play was inspired by an 1805 newspaper exposé of Annie Hurdle – the mustachioed “Mon­arch of Male Impersonation” who threw it all away for love. Sunday Tribune. “Ladies and Gentlemen plays wonderful theatrical games, gently blurring the sexual bound­aries between gender and identity... a deeply satisfying and moving meditation on what it means to be a woman.” Performing: dates: April 16, 17, 23, and 24 at 8 p.m. April 25 at 2 p.m.

Bread & Water Theatre’s season will be presented at 243 Rosedale St. (New Life Presbyterian Church at the corner of Monroe Ave. and Rosedale St.) begin­ning Feb. 26 and running through Nov. 21. Single ticket prices range from $6-$12 and may be purchased in person or at BreadandWaterTheatre.org.

For more information, call (585) 271-5522 and for information on later productions of 2010, see The Empty Closet.

Rochester Gay Men Chorus

Earth, lucky;

March 20th, 2010
Explore our unending quest for romance—from first kiss to making love last

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT: Parkleigh, Outlandish, The Creator’s Hands, Equal-Grounds
ALL CONCERTS 8:00pm at Hochstein www.thergmc.org or call 423-0650

[Image 0x0 to 792x1224]
Next Door Bar and Grill
By Paul Huffman

Our first impression on arriving at Next Door Bar and Grill was that this place belongs in a larger and trendier market, like Los Angeles. Next Door is in Rochester because this is the headquarters of Wegmans and Pitfords the home of their flagship store (of their 75 store supermarket chain spread across five states). Wegmans is an integral part of our community and its new restaurant, Next Door, has created quite a buzz around town.

Wegmans Corporation has reinvented their fine dining restaurant, Tastings, with the more informal Next Door Bar and Grill, across Monroe Avenue from the Wegmans Super Store. They have twice the space (50,700 square feet) of the original restaurant and seating for 270 indoors and outdoors.

Next Door is bold, but has a casual come as you are atmosphere, so diners can feel comfortable here in causal attire or in a business suit. Interior Designer Stacey Wegman, wife of CEO Danny Wegman, has incorporated natural woods, leathers, and fabrics in soft tones into the design. Birch log dividers divide the entry foyer from the entrance, Birch logs divide the entry foyer from the seating area and incorporate natural woods, leathers, and fabrics in soft tones into the design. Audition fixtures dress the smaller private dining rooms, and one in the Test Kitchen. The private dining rooms can be rented out to accommodate parties of eight to 100. The state-of-the-art Test Kitchen lends itself to chef demonstrations and tastings and houses the restaurant's cooking library and several new high end commercial appliances.

Next Door is riding the crest of the wave in food and hospitality trends. General Manager Alex Berentzen heads up the operation. He has helped develop and consult for restaurants in The Netherlands and Charlestown and for the Ritz Carlton in Orlando. Berentzen assisted General Manager Josh Miles and Restaurant Manager Patrick Nalley are all certified Sommeliers.

The Wine List is extensive (about 300 selections) in a wide range of prices. Several carefully selected wines are available by the glass ($5 - 17). Bottled and draft beers, local domestic and imported are on the menu ($4 - 6). They even have their own craft beer, Redrock Next Door Ale ($2/16 oz, $4/22 oz). Specialty Drinks ($8) are designed as a twist on the classics or based on fresh seasonal ingredients and juices for the "best cocktails in town".

Happy Hour is every day from 4 – 7 p.m., with food and drink specials.

Executive chef Chris Brands has developed the menus at Next Door. Brands, a New Jersey native, came to Tastings from the Ocean Room in Charleston in 2007. He's been earning accolades since graduating from Hyde Park's Culinary Institute of America (CIA) in 1993. "The level at which you start to compromise and accept mediocrity will inevitably define where you will fail," says Brands. "I do not compromise, nor do I accept mediocrity."

The Sushi Bar and Robata Grill jut into the main Dining Room, as does the Robata Grill. A U-shaped bar is bordered by several alcove type rooms furnished with larger rustic fixtures dress the smaller private dining rooms, and one in the Test Kitchen. The private dining rooms can be rented out to accommodate parties of eight to 100. The state-of-the-art Test Kitchen lends itself to chef demonstrations and tastings and houses the restaurant's cooking library and several new high end commercial appliances.

Next Door is riding the crest of the wave in food and hospitality trends. General Manager Alex Berentzen heads up the operation. He has helped develop and consult for restaurants in The Netherlands and Charlestown and for the Ritz Carlton in Orlando. Berentzen assisted General Manager Josh Miles and Restaurant Manager Patrick Nalley are all certified Sommeliers.

The Wine List is extensive (about 300 selections) in a wide range of prices. Several carefully selected wines are available by the glass ($5 - 17). Bottled and draft beers, local domestic and imported are on the menu ($4 - 6). They even have their own craft beer, Redrock Next Door Ale ($2/16 oz, $4/22 oz). Specialty Drinks ($8) are designed as a twist on the classics or based on fresh seasonal ingredients and juices for the "best cocktails in town".

Happy Hour is every day from 4 – 7 p.m., with food and drink specials.

Executive chef Chris Brands has developed the menus at Next Door. Brands, a New Jersey native, came to Tastings from the Ocean Room in Charleston in 2007. He's been earning accolades since graduating from Hyde Park's Culinary Institute of America (CIA) in 1993. "The level at which you start to compromise and accept mediocrity will inevitably define where you will fail," says Brands. "I do not compromise, nor do I accept mediocrity."

The Bouley Burger ($11), a substantial portion of ground beef, choice of cheese, vegetables, ketchup and mustard on a toasted English muffin, is served with a cranberry sauce and vanilla Chantilly. The Mini Warm Apple Pie ($9) is an individual round lattice top pie made with local apples. We thought the simple piecrust needed more richness to come up to the other more pronounced flavors of this dessert (red currant sauce, apple syrup and house made maple ice cream).

We finished with the regular drip coffee ($2.25). It's a rich and complex, unapologetic blend roasted in the European style and served in an oversize cup. Cappuccino or Latte ($4.50), Double Shot Espresso ($4) or Tea ($2.25) can all top off a great meal in style.

General Manager Alex Berentzen pointed out to us that they have paid attention to the smallest details. The dishes are handsome commercial grade white bone china. Small wooden Japanese sake boxes hold the sugar and sweetener. The check comes in a leather backgammon and now to Next Door. The Braised Veal Cheeks ($17) is a relative new comer to the mainstream restaurant scene. These are fork tender and delicious. Cooked cabbage, sprout and meal is accompanied with rice.

Next Door’s selection of food, wine and spirits is bound to delight most foodies, but this establishment is not forgotten those who prefer more familiar fare. Roasted Young Chicken ($17), Pasta Bolognese ($16), Linguine with Red Sauce ($14) or Hearth Baked Mac ‘n’ Cheese ($15) are some of the comfort food items on the menu.

Checking out the Dessert Menu is a must here. The dessert selections, like the rest of the menu, reflect the use of fresh seasonal ingredients, locally grown and organic whenever possible. The desserts, including ice creams, are made from scratch in house.

We were pleased with our choice of the Seasonal Fruit Cheesecake ($8). The individual sized round sweet spiced cheesecake has a thick gingernut crust and is served with a cranberry sauce and vanilla Chantilly.
NY Sharks bite Bank of Hollywood

By Merle East
Adrienne Smith, Leeano Brzozowski and Melodie Abrook, three players from the New York Sharks women's professional football team, entered the world of celebrity money handouts and were granted the $65,000 that they asked for.

It was the new Ryan Seacrest-produced E! reality show, “Bank of Hollywood,” that pinned them up against “bankers” Sean Patterson, Vanessa Rousso, Melody Thornton and Candy Spelling. The Sharks requested funding for training and competing in the first ever International Women’s Tackle Football Tournament, to be held in Stockholm, Sweden in June 2010.

How did this all come about? “I received an email in September regarding something referred to as ‘your dream,’” said Adrienne. “My job entails marketing and I got in touch with a few of the players to get their opinion on whether this would be something that would work for the team. With a positive reply, I filled out the application, which I was to bring with me to a casting call in New York City. Both Leanne and Melodie were behind me and available. We showed up dressed in full gear.

“I got a callback for round two, in which they videotaped us asking for the money. The producer must have been impressed, as I kept receiving calls and paperwork. They requested our appearance in Hollywood.”

Andra Douglas, owner of the New York Sharks (www.nysharksfootball.com), flew out with them. Two of the producers met with her after deciding on what day the shoot would occur.

“After we arrived,” Adrienne continued, “they took us to the studio for a rehearsal. That’s when we learned who the judges were, although we never made contact with them until that actual day of the shoot.”

The contestants are kept separated and the producers provided many rehearsals, as Adrienne, the main spokesperson, represented the three.

“We had our hair totally tucked into our helmets. When we removed them, there were cheers as the audience reacted to our being females. While we were making our appeal, there was footage of our team playing in the background. It took three of the four judges to say ‘yes!’

What does it mean for the New York Sharks? The competition involves both the Independent Women’s Football League (www.iwflsports.com) and USA Football (www.usafootball.com); the $65,000 will help fund the New York Sharks’ participation in the tournament.

“It doesn’t guarantee that the three of us will play,” said Adrienne, “as there are coaches from both the IWFL and USA Football selecting the qualified players.”

Team USA Players will be selected from the Independent Women’s Football League (IWFL), which consists of more than 1,800 female athletes on 51 teams across North America. According to the IWFL website, the player roster would be announced by Feb. 1.
Columnists
The opinions of columnists, editors and writers and other contributing writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or The Empty Closet.

Growing Up CHOICES

By Eric Bellinson
The Empty Closet

My life is selective. I have a New Year’s eye and my cell phone rings, I look to see who’s time when sentimen­
tal types rack up. I don’t know if I was pre­

c peeked. I was only 3 by the time I read my first paycheck from Then that I have

The Norton Anthology of Litera­

tography to donate to the library of the Gay

The Norton Anthology of Litera­

gary, I have something to think about.

Adorable, my baby’s back.

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and more than a little embarrassed. Less glib,

rowed and swam, I had that choice. That became my

by the time we’d spend together. My love

My love, my horizon. My focus on a love

I realized I have something to think about.

a subscription. I have never discovered that

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

than just pot, I felt enough anguish that I

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

the mail with an I Love the Bronx

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

The mind chugs along on more than

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

My love, my horizon. My focus on a love

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

However, you’ve got to say that the book I

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,

I and increasingly more intimate. Less glib,
to have a U.S. Government-issued photo ID. If an individual's name and security number were not previously unencrypted for purposes of background check by the sponsoring organization, that individual will be admitted at the gate due to security reasons.

Once in the White House, tours were self-guided. However, the United States Secret Service officers were posted in every room, not only for security reasons, but also to provide historical information about each room in the White House.

Luckily, NBC had its own White House historian on hand, Dr. Sylvia Rhue, Director of Religious Affairs at NBC. Rhue became a self-made White House historian when she was 17. Her enslaved maternal great-grandmother was born in Blair House, the official statehouse of the First President.

President Preston Blair, Sr. (1791-1870), prominent politician and editor of the Washington Globe in the 1830s, was either Blair’s illegitimate child or a great-great-grandfather of America’s film industry. Rhue’s 18th-century presence is not only for security reasons, but also for the purpose of historical education.

Pardon me if I sound a little bit skeptical, but that’s what I’m always impressed by this guy. I have always been impressed by this guy taking none of him some 13 years ago he entered political service and proved he found him articulate, charming, educated and hardworking. But I can’t find all those qualities that scared me. I worked hard for Elliot Spitzer in 2006 and look where that got us. This guy doesn’t have marital quality in New York. And today, if things start leaning to the right on the political continuum, Ford could be conveniently swayed again—just because he has “evolved” one more time on this issue.

For now, I’m sticking with Senator Kennedy. With Fiorello Galdston, called a “front runner” at the Empire State Pride Agenda dinner in Rochester last May and really impressed me with her devotion to civil rights issues. I know she will never flip flop on us. With Harold, who knows? I’m hazed at his writings about a return to New York City for three short years can do to a Tennessee politician. Being a carpebagger is never pretty.

Healthy & Queer

LGBTQI+ movement

By Erik Libey
February 21 through 27 is National Eating Disorders Awareness Week in the United States. Eating Disorders are a serious issue in our country that affects millions of people. According to the National Eating Disorders Association, an estimated 10 million to 20 million women are suffering from an eating disorder such as anorexia or bulimia. Millions more are struggling with binge eating disorder.

Before we start drawing the necessary connections to the LGBTQ community, let’s first review some definitions.

An eating disorder is a potentially life-threatening eating disorder characterized by (generally unrealistic) belief that one’s weight is too low—a weight that is often most often achieved through self-starvation and excessive weight loss.

Is there anything you find disturbing or threatening about binge eating disorder? A binge eating disorder (BED) is a type of eating disorder not otherwise specified and is characterized by recurrent binge eating without the regular purging behaviors typical of bulimia.

Eating disorders are serious, and an individual suffering from one or more of them is at great risk of suicide. In fact, one study states that eating disorders risk factors include poor body image, sexual abuse, environment, and family. Many of these risk factors are also found in the LGBTQ community.

What is clear is that eating disorders are not just for everyone, but perhaps especially for LGBTQ people. As a culture we need to reframe how we talk about body image, especially for the LGBTQ community. As a society, we have to learn how to make changes in a way that is healthy. Doing so is just the beginning of the journey to a more accepting, queer, proud, and HEALTHY!!!

Erik Libey is the Associate Director of Diversity at The Lyric Theatre and can be reached at (955)210-4192 or by email at elibey@acrochester.org.

More information on LGBTQI+ movement and resources can be found online at AIDS Care’s LGBT Health website www.everybodygood.com

The Empty Closet • The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley • Number 431 • February 2010

6 B

The United States capital hospital

Andy Fleming, DVM
Aida Aponte-Lamm, DVM

1311 Marsh Road
Pittsford, NY 14534
(585) 248-9590

www.RussowConsulting.com

Russow Consulting

TARA RUSSO, PH.D.
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

120 Allens Creek Road
Rochester, NY 14618
(585) 442-4447

www.RussowConsulting.com

The Empty Closet • The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley • Number 431 • February 2010

EXCLUSIVELY

Columnists Online EC
Columnists Online EC
Columnists Online EC
Columnists Online EC
YOU’RE IN FOR AN AWAKENING.

SPRING AWAKENING
A NEW MUSICAL

“SMART...AND INTENSELY POWERFUL (SPRING AWAKENING) MIGHT WELL BE THE MOST IMPORTANT MUSICAL OF THE DECADE.”
— NEW YORK TIMES

AUDITORIUM THEATRE
FEBRUARY 9-14, 2010

SPRINGAWAKENING.COM

“THE #1 MUSICAL OF THE YEAR!”
— TIME MAGAZINE, 2007

GREASE
is the word!

AMERICAN IDOL
SEASON 5 FINALIST
ACE YOUNG
APPEARS AS DANNY IN THE
MARCH 16, 17, & 21
PERFORMANCES.

AUDITORIUM THEATRE
MARCH 16-21, 2010

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

TICKETMASTER.COM • 800-745-3000 • AUDITORIUM THEATRE BOX OFFICE
885 E. MAIN STREET, ROCHESTER NY 14605 • GROUP DISCOUNTS: 585-222-5000
WWW.RBTY.ORG • PRESENTED BY ROCHESTER BROADWAY THEATRE LEAGUE AND ALBERT NOCCIOLINO
Planning a Valentine's Day Party?

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

Ellenwood ELECTRIC

“We Do It Without Shorts”

- Licensed
- Fully Insured
- Free Quotes

Office: 654-8642
Fax: 224-8228
MLNWood@aol.com

One Flat Rate:
$500 All Night

DJ Chuck Argento
585-317-6477
585-529-5544
cjargento1@yahoo.com
EC advertisers: GET LISTED ONLINE

Place a display advertisement of any size in The Empty Closet and you will automatically be entered into the Gay Alliance Resource Directory (GARD) as an LGBT friendly service provider, shop or organization.

You can check your listing at www.gayalliance.org. Go to “Resources” on the top bar and then “Resource Directory.” Any changes or additions that you would like to see should be sent to JeanneG@gayalliance.org.

GAGV Library seeks volunteers

The GAGV Library is looking for volunteers to help expand the hours of operation. If you like queer books, magazines, music, and movies, this is the place to be! Contact Sean for more information on this great opportunity to give back to the community: seans@gayalliance.org or 244-8640 ext: 31.

GAMBED & BREAKFAST

BY Greg Fox

KYLE’S BED & BREAKFAST

Oh, my goodness... the eighties are in town. Can I help you?

Is this the gay bed & breakfast?

Um... it’s one of them. Come inside. It’s freezing out there. I’m looking for my son. Your son? Who?

Gloria. Oh, my Gawd! Breuer!!! My baby!!!

Look at you... so tall... handsome!

What has it been, now? Five, six years since I’ve seen you?

I’m nothing like my father.

So, Gloria...

I followed the dead up to Toronto in the seventies... fell in love with a draft dodger named Pete.

Don’t leave out the part where you took off when I was five... and left me to be raised by a violent drunk.

I didn’t work out, but then I met Breuer’s father... tall, sexy Canadian Goyem. Breuer showed up a year later!

Oh, Breuer... I’m sure Richard doesn’t want to hear about that now. Where’s the bathroom? I have to pee. Bad.

You know, Nick and his mother reconciled a few weeks ago. Maybe you and Gloria will, too.

Maybe you should mind your own business, Richard.

As if that’s an option...

Website - www.kylecomics.com
E-Mail - kylenBii.f@jnt.com

TAKE OUR ONLINE SURVEY!

Beginning Feb. 1, an online survey about the Empty Closet will be available online at www.gayalliance.org -- click on Empty Closet News. Let us know what’s important to you!
Laura McSpadden, Administrative Assistant

By Susan Jardim

Laura McSpadden is the new administrative assistant at the Gay Alliance. Laura has also been volunteering as a staff reporter/photographer for The Empty Closet, and will continue to do so.

Laura was born in Wabash, Indiana, although her father lived in Rochester in the 1970s. After graduating from Manchester College in Indiana, she worked here in home health care.

Laura says, “I knew I wanted to keep doing meaningful work and also keep being my authentic self. When I was at college I was very out and was the president of the LGBT student organization and worked with the administration on sensitivity to students with transgender identities. So stepping back into an environment where I had to be closeted and didn’t feel comfortable talking about my partner — I didn’t want to go back to that. When I saw the job postings... all the job requirements were things I know I could do... I just knew I had to do it.”

Brian Doran, Development Director

By Susan Jardim

Brian Doran is the new Development Director at the Gay Alliance. A Rochester native, he grew up in the city and went to Aquinas. Then he went to MCC and Buffalo State in preparation for his first career — that of teacher.

Brian taught kindergarten and then ran the East Side Community Daycare for nine years. He then went back to teaching. However, his parents both became ill and he needed to spend his days caring for them. He took an evening job in marketing at Geva, and worked there for 13 years.

In 2007, Brian moved to AIDS Rochester, where he served as development and communications director. Brian says, “In December I accepted a job here at the Alliance. The work is so important. People don’t realize what the Alliance does.”

He concluded, “I’m looking forward to a really exciting first year here, especially around Pride — this is the 21st year!”

PFLAG in Honeoye Falls-Lima School District

On March 25 from 7-8:30 p.m., the Adult Enrichment program of the Honeoye Falls-Lima School District will host a film screening and discussion on “the necessities of having a gay or lesbian child.” The free session will be held in the high school library and include a viewing of the documentary “Anyone and Everyone,” and a facilitated discussion lead by members of the Rochester PFLAG. This film is the first time this screening and discussion have been hosted by an area school district. For more information, contact Honeoye Falls-Lima Community Programs at 585-624-7068 or www.bglesd.org. For information about scheduling a screening, you can contact PFLAG@GayAlliance.org.

Trans Youth Group

The Youth Program at the Gay Alliance continues to offer a monthly support meeting for Trans-identified youth ages 13-23. For more information about the meetings, please contact Youth Program Director Jess Cohen at JessC@gayalliance.org or 585-244-8640 ext. 13.

JumpStart Youth Programming

GayAlliance.org is collaborating with GLSEN’s JumpStart program to host two four-hour workshops in February and March. One session will be focused on issues of Gender and the other will focus on the Day of Silence. For more information about the collaboration or the JumpStart program, please contact Youth Program Director Jess Cohen at JessC@gayalliance.org or 585-244-8640 ext. 13.

Speakers Bureau Keeps Talking

The Speakers Bureau of the Gay Alliance is one of the longest running efforts of the agency, and remains one of the busiest. Trained speakers have started 2010 with a flurry of activity, speaking at a number of local colleges and universities, high schools, churches and social service organizations. If you would like a training on LGBT issues in your workplace, faith community or school, please contact Jeannie Gainsburg, Outreach Coordinator, at JeannieG@GayAlliance.org; 585-244-8640 ext. 14.

College LGBT Conference in Buffalo

April 16-18, 2010, the University at Buffalo will host The Northeast LGBT Conference (NELGBT), an annual conference for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and ally college students and the larger LGBTQ community. This year’s theme is “Shifting: Celebrating Self, Creating Community.” Members of the CampusOUT, the Gay Alliance campus organizing project, will be traveling to Buffalo to participate. For more information, see the conference website at www.nelgbtc.com or contact CampusOUT@gayalliance.org.

Gay Alliance Youth Services for Rochester area LGBTQ and allied youth ages 13-23

www.gayalliance.org or contact JessC@gay.us

Youth Center Hours:

Drop-in: Monday and Wednesday, 2-6pm

Youth Group: Sunday, 2-4pm, ages 13-23

Sunday, 4-5pm, Drop In Hour

Special Interest Programming:

Transgender Youth • Arts and Crafts • Movies • Writing

Special Events:

Youth Dances • Day of Silence • The Big Gay Prom

And we have:

Pool Table • LGBT Youth Library • Internet Access

Adult Volunteers Needed: Fun, friendly 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@bglesd.org 585-244-8640 ext. 747.

Gay Alliance Youth Services for Rochester area LGBTQ and allied youth ages 13-23

www.gayalliance.org or contact JessC@gay.us

Youth Center Hours:

Drop-in: Monday and Wednesday, 2-6pm

Youth Group: Sunday, 2-4pm, ages 13-23

Sunday, 4-5pm, Drop In Hour

Special Interest Programming:

Transgender Youth • Arts and Crafts • Movies • Writing

Special Events:

Youth Dances • Day of Silence • The Big Gay Prom

And we have:

Pool Table • LGBT Youth Library • Internet Access

Adult Volunteers Needed: Fun, friendly 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@bglesd.org 585-244-8640 ext. 747.

Gay Alliance Youth Services for Rochester area LGBTQ and allied youth ages 13-23

www.gayalliance.org or contact JessC@gay.us

Youth Center Hours:

Drop-in: Monday and Wednesday, 2-6pm

Youth Group: Sunday, 2-4pm, ages 13-23

Sunday, 4-5pm, Drop In Hour

Special Interest Programming:

Transgender Youth • Arts and Crafts • Movies • Writing

Special Events:

Youth Dances • Day of Silence • The Big Gay Prom

And we have:

Pool Table • LGBT Youth Library • Internet Access

Adult Volunteers Needed: Fun, friendly 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@bglesd.org 585-244-8640 ext. 747.
Day of Silence and The Big Gay Prom

Two of the largest special events for LGTB youth in Rochester and the Genesee Valley will be occurring soon. Friday, April 16 is the Day of Silence and Friday, May 7 is the Big Gay Prom. The Breaking the Silence Rally will again be held at the Auditorium Center on East Main. Any student from any school around the region are welcome to participate. This year The Big Gay Prom is moving to the Stratton Ballroom on East Ave.

Community Safety

The Community Safety and Anti-Violence team has been very busy helping people who have faced harassment, assault, and domestic violence. If you, or a friend, face any of these situations, call 585-875-0911, The Gay Alliance’s Trauma Team for support and assistance at 585-244-8640 ext 15; Safe@GayAlliance.org.

Gay Alliance in Mouse Ears

The Gay Alliance is a participant in the national give a Day, Get a Disney Day campaign that is hoping to inspire one million people to volunteer a day of service to an organization in their communities. Volunteers will be given a one-time, on-the-spot membership to Disneyland, Disney World, Magic Kingdom or Walt Disney World” Reserve, free. For more information go to http://www.gayalliance.org or contact Jeanne Gainsburg, OutReach Coordinator at 585-244-8640 ext 14.

Staff Stays Current on Conflict Resolution

The Gay Alliance is a member of the Western New York Coalition for Crime Victim Services and on Jan. 16, staff attended a training which addressed laws and best practices surrounding media and electronic recording devices in New York State court proceedings. Following the presentation, the Executive Director Mike Green presented information on existing New York law which bans cameras in court, but failed to update staff to updated with new technologies such as Twitter, cell phone cameras and video, etc.

National Black HIV Awareness Day

MOCHA Center and The Gay Alliance are partnering to offer a program for Black HIV Awareness Day on Saturday, Feb. 6, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Apollo Room on the lower level of the Auditorium Center (875 E. Main St., 4th floor). A keynote speech by Rev. T. Gerald Williams, Unity Fellowship Church of Buffalo, President and Founder of the Minority Coalition of the Genesee Valley (Richmond’s HIV vaccine research). Entertainment will be provided by Miss Sweet Potato Pie and Futurpointe Dance will also available to be food, information tables and free HIV testing. Contact: Michael Booth at 585-244-8640 ext 19 or mbbooth@mochacenter.org.

OUTeach

OUTeach is a new social/support network for youth gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and straight-allied teachers in Monroe County and surrounding area. A collaborative effort of LESN, The Gay Alliance and the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley. OUTeach works to improve school discipline for teachers, staff, and students alike. Meetings are held the second Friday of each month from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Equal Grounds.

E-mail: OUTeachRC@gmail.com; or Jess@GayAlliance.org for more info.

How to get your marriage recognized by New York State

By Jennifer Graivier, Esq.

Congratulations! If you are reading these words, you are probably married. Or are you wondering what to do next? Remember just a few years ago when the right to marry anyway was just a dream? Thanks to Canada (and a handful of other countries), Massachusetts, Iowa, New Hampshire, Vermont and Connecticut, we can now marry the one we love.

Thanks to Martinez v. County of Monroe all New York State agencies (and private companies in certain circumstances) must recognize our marriages and extend the legal rights bestowed on all married couples. Yet we have reports of couples being turned away when they should have access to those rights.

You are now part of a growing group of same-sex couples who are advancing the fight for equality from the right to marry to the right to recognize those marriages. As always, this fight is one that requires education, advocacy and tenacity.

First, educate yourself on the legal rights and duties NY bestows on married couple. You can find a pretty good list at www.buddybuddyday.com/faq.html. Taking your spouse’s last name and changing your driver’s license may reflect it if a NY right, as being named on the birth certificate for a baby born during your marriage. Filing joint income taxes and receiving Social Security benefits are not -- they are federal benefits currently denied to same-sex married couples to learn what worked for them. Get on the web and identify the names of agency supervisors and regional directors/commissioners at the office where you will make your request. Have copies of the Martinez case and the SSA memo in your file folder -- both are available on the Gay Alliance web page. Dress respectfully, speak politely and approach the agency at a time when neither you nor the employee with whom you are dealing are pressed for time -- yes, Mom was right -- you do catch more flies with honey and the little things do matter.

Then, make the “ask.” Having all of your ducks in a row should make it easy for the agency to do the right thing. Hope for the best, plan for the worst. Initially denied, ask to speak to a supervisor and her boss if denied again. Remember names and titles. Be firm, but polite -- don’t give the folks a reason to turn your request down by becoming tactless or physically threatening.

If your request is denied, or conditioned, grudgingly granted, or if you are asked to do more than opposite gendered spouses are asked to do to access the legal protection, it is time to ratchet up the pressure. Contact the Gay Alliance as well as the Empire State Pride Agenda. These agencies can easily recognize patterns and can also report directly to the Governor. Send a copy of the letter to the Gay Alliance and the Empire State Pride Agenda as well as to NYS Attorney General Andrew Cuomo and to Governor David Paterson and ask them to insist that NYS employees comply with the law. Both men were elected to their offices (and will be asking for your vote this November) and are charged with enforcing the law. Make them accountable to you.

You may need to contact a lawyer if the steps above still leave you without the legal protections to which you and your spouse are entitled. You might be entitled to sue in the NY appellate courts and the top court, the Court of Appeals, have affirmed the Martinez decision so even the threat of a lawsuit should send an agency supervisor/director cowering and legal protections rapidly coming your way.

Once you receive the rights to which you are entitled, send a note of appreciation. Let the agency the employees that helped and those that hindered you know how much recognition of your marriage means to you and your family. Continuing to educate and advocate will make it easier for the next family who needs the same legal protection to get it. So, do we live and love happily ever after?

Not so fast — there are many legal battles for recognition of marriages that are coming right in front of us. Private individuals can still regard us married folks as “single.” The mid-size of state and federal laws under which private companies are governed make it difficult if not impossible for you to figure out what benefits you are entitled to from private companies without legal help. The federal government still hides behind DOMA and the Defense of Marriage Act not impossible for you to figure out what benefits you are entitled to from private companies without legal help. The federal government still hides behind DOMA and the Defense of Marriage Act against same sex spouses (i.e. Social Security benefits and citizenship -- just to name two) and remember, many state rights are bundled together with federal laws and denied to us -- Medicaid, taxation of our spouses, health insurance and the inability to file jointly on state income tax because we are unable to do so on our federal taxes — just to name a few more.

These situations are much thornier and will be the subject of next month’s article. Until then, congratulations on your marriage and thank you for joining the battle to gain statewide compliance with the laws mandating recognition of them all.

Marriage Resources


Freedom to Marry: www.freedomtomarry.org/
DIGNITY INTEGRITY

Dignity Integrity will meet Sunday, Feb. 7 for an Episcopalian Eucharist with music. Sunday, Feb. 14, for a Roman Catholic Eucharist of the World. Sunday, Feb. 21 for a Quiet Episcopalian Eucharist and Sunday, Feb. 28 for Prayers to Start the Week, followed by a Lenten potluck soup and bread supper.

Other items: Longtime DI Chaplain Mike Lumbard will present for new chaplains DI will be doing a Lenten program based on the DVD series “Jesus and the Gospels.” DI plans on doing a game night in the future. Check the web site for more information: www.di-rochester.org.

EMPIRE BEARS

The Empire Bears continue to host BEARnight at the Forum every first Saturday. See you there on Feb 6 for Red Bear night. Shirts, hats, hankies, long Johns, if it’s red, it’s a go. On second Saturdays, you can always find the Bears at the GAGV Youth Center at our monthly potluck. It starts at 6:30. Bring a dish, and we provide the rest.

On Feb. 13, the theme is vegetarian dishes. We’ve got plans for a Sunday afternoon party at the Forum on Feb. 21. We’re calling it the club’s 14th anniversary. We’re also planning a game night at a member’s home, a brunch, and other events.

Some members will be attending a Binghamton Bear Run the weekend of Feb 19-21. We’ve also got plans for the Jones Pond and Hillside reunion. Every Wednesday night at 6, you will find us listening to our favorite weekenders, Becky, as she serves up good food and bad jokes at “The Wintonaire,” on Winton near Atlantic. Check us out at www.empirebears.org.

PRIDE & JOY FAMILIES

Pride & Joy Families plans a Rochester event on Feb. 27. From 3-5 p.m. the group will host a “That’s A Family!” screening with a hot cocoa reception and discussion at the Gay Alliance Youth Center (first floor, use Prince St. entrance), 875 E. Main St.

Bring the whole family and your favorite mugs for hot cocoa and a viewing of “That’s A Family!”, a fun documentary in which children take us through their lives as they speak about what it’s like to grow up in a family with parents of different races or religions, divorced parents, a single parent, gay or lesbian parents, adoptive parents or grandparents as guardians. (Don’t worry if you forget your favorite mug — we’ll be happy to let you use one of ours!)

Please RSVP to PrideAndJoy@rochester.org or Karen Goulet at kgoulet@prideandjoyfamilies.org 585-244-6840 ext. 40, or 607-724-4308 for information.

RAINBOW SAGE OF THE GENESSEE VALLEY

By Tony Perri

Welcome in a New Year! Rainbow SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders) of the Genesee Valley would like to invite the community to join us in our planned activities for this year.

Our monthly potluck, now called “Third Sunday Potluck,” is held every third Sunday of the month (except July and August), at the First Universalist Church of Rochester, 150 Clinton Ave. 4 p.m. A short program usually begins the potluck and a good time is had by all. We hope to see you there.

Our annual Intergenerational Panel will be held on March 21, in the GAGV Youth Center. It is a great venue to bring our youth and older community together. The theme this year is self-acceptance. Please plan to attend.

A Eucharite Tournament will be held May 25. More details will follow but get your team together.

For more information on RSVG, please give us a call at 585-325-1640. Leave a message and someone will get back to you. Also visit us at our website, rainbowseniorsw.ny.org.

Have a great 2010!

ROCHESTER RAMS TOY DRIVE A SUCCESS!

By Russ S.

The Rochester RAMS Motorcycle Club conducted their annual Christmas Toy Drive at the Bachelor Forum during their monthly Barnight on Nov. 21. This yearly event again made the holidays brighter for the families at Rochester Children’s Center, a division of Wayne ARC in Newark, NY.

The Rams began this tradition in the early 1990s and originally donated the toys through the Marine Reserve’s “Toys for Tots” program. Rich Richards, who belonged to the Rams and worked as a teacher of the visually impaired at the Rochester Children’s Center, had told the club of the needs of the families served by the center and mentioned that they seldom receive donations from the major holiday drives in the region. As a result the club began donating the collected toys and money directly to the center some 10 years ago.

Rich passed away in 2002 and the Rams have continued providing holiday donations to Rochester Children’s Center in his memory since then. This year the center will be able to provide for dozens of families using the donations, which total well over $3,000 in toys, books, games, bikes and even a computer from the club.

The Rams also made monetary donations of over $770 during 2005, which will help many families receiving services from Roosevelt with food, clothing and gifts for older siblings this holiday season. The Rams are most grateful to the Rochester community for their wonderful support and especially to Forum owner Peter Molt, a Newark native himself, for his continuing support of the Rochester Rams as they celebrate 35 years of Brotherhood in 2010.

ROCHESTER GAY MEN’S CHORUS

Happy New Year to all, from The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus.

Our March 20 concert, “Gettin’ Lucky”, will explore our unending quest for romance—from first love to last, from love lost. Everyone should “get lucky” around St. Patrick’s Day! The concert will also feature The Rochester dining through this theme of love, love, love.

We are in dire need of steamers to come aboard shortly for our upcoming June show, “U.S.S. Metaphor.” Anyone interested? Please call the RGMCh office at 585-386-3415. We have also begun auditioning a few new singers for this show. More information will soon follow.

Save the Date: “Anything Goes” Spring Gala, Sunday, May 2, 4-8 p.m.

Give our web site a visit at www.thergmc.org and find out how you can be part of Rochester’s “Voice of Pride!

SECOND THURSDAYS

Second Thursdays Social and Business Networking Cocktail Party is an informal party for those who miss the former Business Forum. We have a wonderful gathering in January at the Airport Marriott, where gay men and lesbians met for conversation and delicious appetizers. Visitors came from Medina, Corning and New Hampshire, along with the rest from the Rochester area. You are cordially invited to join us every Second Thursday of each month at rotating locations. On Thursday, Feb. 11, we will meet from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Woodcliff Inn, near East View Mall on Thursday, March 11 at the RIT Radios and then on Thursday, April 8 at The Inn on Broadway. There are no dues and no cover charge, just casual conversation. How can we help you? We may have 50/50 raffle and drawings for other prizes.

Updated information can be found with Out and Equal NY Finger Lakes and Rochester also by contacting them at 585-310@mac.com.
SUNDAY 7
Satellite Sunday. GAGV Youth will meet through the month with Ruth-Heinbaugh youth at Lovin' Cap in Henrietta. Group runs 2-4 p.m. Youth Program members can catch a ride on the AIDS Care Van, leaving GAGV Youth Center at 1:30 p.m. sharp! E-mail Jess at jess@gayalliance.org for more information, or to reserve your seat.

Dignity Integrity Episcopal Eucharist with music. 5 p.m., St. Luke St. Simon Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. www.diorector.org: 234-5092.

MONDAY 8
Freedom to Marry Week Youth Valentine Dance, 5-9 p.m. Muthers, 40 S. Union, DJ, pizza, soda, youth drag show. HIV testing. 35: 244-8640.

TUESDAY 9
"Preachers" /"Free". Screening of film, panel discussion at First Unitarian Church, 190 S. Clinton Ave. 7 (MOCHA Center).


Red Ball Community Valentine’s Dance. "Gallant Community, Love and Friendship," 7-11 p.m., Cathedral Hall, Auditorium Center, 875 E. Main St. For information call Michael Booth, 420-1400 x 19 (MOCHA Center).

MONDAY 14
Dignity Integrity Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word. 5 p.m., St. Luke St. Simon Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. www.diorector.org: 234-5092.

FRIDAY 18
Inqueery: Homophobia: More Than Name Calling. 6-9:30 p.m., facilitator Scott Fearing, GAGV Community Room, Auditorium Center, 875 E. Main St. Prince St. entrance, first floor. 244-8640.

Saturday 19
Binghamton Bear Run, weekend of Feb. 19-21.

TUESDAY 20

SUNDAY 24
Dignity Integrity Quips Eucharist. 5 p.m., St. Luke St. Simon Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. www.diorector.org: 234-5092.

Who Was This Man? A State of the Re-Unions Special, 10 p.m. on AM1370 WICI, 92.5. Featured Rustin confidant Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on the use of non-violent resistance, and helped to engi­ neer the March on Washington and frame the Montgomery bus boycott. Yet many have never heard of him. Why? He was gay.


TUESDAY 23
Marriage Equality Lobby Day, Albany. Join Rochester and NYS activists for our civil rights. 6:30-8:30 p.m, facilitator Laura McSpadden. GAGV Youth Center, 244-8640.

SATURDAY 27
Parenting Skills for Families film screening of "That’s a Family!" from 3-5 p.m. with screening reception, discussion. Gay Alliance Youth Center (first floor, Prince St. entrance), 875 E. Main St. RSVP to Pid­ de@loujoyce@nativitygroup.com or Karen Grueter at kguru@nativitygroup.com, or 585-244-8640 ext. 40, or 607-724-4306 (option 3).

Other skill-building workshops.
Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St., 6-8 p.m. Call Todd Plank at 585-241-2426, @plank@prideagenda.org.

SUNDAY 28
Dignity Integrity Prayers to Start the Week, followed by a Lenawee County soup and bread supper. 5 p.m., St. Luke St. Simon Cyrene Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. www.dr revise.org: 234-5092.

MARCH 1
Inqueery: The Cellobist Youth Center.

More reasons to shop at Wine Sense

• Boutique atmosphere
• Limited Production wines at reasonable prices
• Spirits, ports, dessert wines
• Free wine and cheese tastings Friday evenings
• Learn while you shop
• 20% off all mixed cases
• Open Sundays 12-5

749 Park Avenue 585.271.0590 www.wedefinewine.com

Classified ads are $5 for the first 30 words; each additional 10 words is another $1. We do not bill for classifieds, so please send or bring ad and payment to: The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500, Rochester, NY 14605. Paying by check: checks must be made out to Gay Alliance or GAGV. The deadline is the 15th of the month, for the following month’s issue. We cannot accept ads over the phone. Pay when you place your ad. We will accept only those ads accompa­ nied by name and phone number. Neither will be published, but we must be able to confirm publication. The Empty Closet is not responsible for financial loss or physical damage that may result from use of an advertiser. Advertisers must use their own number, voice mail, e-mail or personal address/phone number.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Empty Closet seeks proofsreaders. If you have professional proofreading skills and are not a member of two local listings, please per month to volunteering, please call Susan at 244-0930.

Urgent! Three litter trained indoor cats need good home. Their owner’s recent death has left these kittens in dan­ ger. They can adopt one or more, or even offer temporary shelter, please call The Empty Closet at 244-0930.

SERVICES
Happy Valentines Day! Show your best friend, lover or partner how much you care about them. For our relaxing body rub from me! I’m a fit, friendly, healthy Italian GM. My 10 years experience ensures your relaxa­tion and satisfaction. Hotel out calls or central location in calls. Reasonable rates, discretion assured. Phone delay, call me today at 585-235-6688 or e-mail me at muscledickorman@rochester.rr.com.

W. Shawn Cigars, Interior Design. Specializes in refitting hardwood floors, painting, wallpapering, woodworking and ceramic tiles. Other services include designing silk and fresh flower arrangements. E-mail me at mimican­tiliar@rochester.rr.com for prices.

Martin Ippolito, master electrician. Electrical work, phone lines, cable TV, burglar alarm systems, paddle fans. Call 585-266-6337.

Body rub. If you have tried the rest, then they are discreet. Reasonable rates. (585) 698-8357.

PERSONALS
WG looking for WGF. Must like dogs and cats. I like outdoors, camp­ing, being near water. I like to watch DVDs, go to movies, go to tractor pulls, eat rearing, withering, metal drinking, no drugs. Looking for ages from 38 to 70. I am heavyset, looking for someone who doesn’t mind small or big. I do smoke cigarettes. If you want to respond, call JC, 315-651-4002.

FOR SALE
Four foot floor lights. 50-foot string of four. Brand new, never unboxed. $79 value for $65. 385-7931.
Ongoing Calendar

MONDAY
LGBT Support Group
34 Meigs St. First, 3rd Mondays, 7:30-9 pm.
Café, 403-8932.

Lilac Squares Gay Square Dance Group
Mondays, 7 pm, Open Arms MCC, 740 Manhatt Rd. 520-3398; mglutio@rochester.org.

Free phyllis testing
AIDS Care, 259 Monroe Ave. 5-8 pm. 442-2220.

Rockefeller Historical Bowling Society
7pm, Mondays, Clover Lanes, 2750 Monroe Ave. (Group is full)

HIV Positive Gay Men Support group
Every Monday, 5pm, AIDS Care, 259 Monroe Ave.

GAGV Youth Drop-In Hours
Mondays, Wednesday, 2-6pm, GAGV Youth Center, 875 E. Main St. Prince St. entrance. First floor. 244-8640 ext 13.

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

Steps Beyond Stems Crack Support Group
Mondays, 7-8pm, 259 Monroe Ave.

TUESDAY
Atlantic Five 0
Gay men 50 and over. See Tuesday, 7pm, GAGV Youth Center, 875 E. Main St., first floor, Prince St. entrance. 244-8640 ext 13.

Civil Rights Front

Two Spirit Group
Second Tuesdays, 7:30pm, Equal-Groups, 790 South Ave.

PFLAG potluck
First Tuesdays, 6: dinner, 6:30 meeting. St. Thomas Church, Winton & Highland.

CampOut Coffee Night
First Tuesdays, 7-10 pm, Equal-Groups, 790 South St.

MOCHA Youth Drop-In
Tues-Fri, 9-1am, MOCCHA Center, 107 Liberty Pole Way, 420-7640. 244-8640.

MOCCHA hepatitis clinic
Free hepatitis A and B vaccinations, third Tuesdays, 5-7pm, 107 Liberty Pole Way, 420-7640.

Rainbow SAGE Yoga
6:30p Open Arms MCC, 125 Norris Drive, 442-6690.

Pride 2010 committee meeting
Third Tuesdays GAGV Community Room, first floor, 875 E. Main St. 6:30-8 pm. Everyone welcome to plan Pride 2010 (July 14-18). 244-8640.

Women’s Community Chorus
Rehearsals each Tuesday 6:30-9pm, Downtown United Pres. Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 234-4441, www.thewc.org

IMPACT Team
Second Tuesdays, Downtown Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 6:30 pm. Call Todd Plunk, 277-2420.

Free HIV Testing
Every Tuesday, 5-7:30 pm. AIDS Care, 259 Monroe Ave.

WEDNESDAY
Tawa Pano Church Bible Study
Bible study 7:15 pm. 758 South Ave.

Charlie’s Group
Third Wednesdays. Monthly peer facilitated support group for married men who have sex with men. Confidential, free, 6:30 pm. For location, info Scott, 244-8640 x 20. Scott@stgayusa.com.

Country Line Dancing/Two Stepping
Every Wednesday, Matherin, 40 S. Union, 7

pm. Lessons followed by dancing until 10pm. Beginners to advanced.

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

New Freedom New Happiness
AA meeting 5pm, Unitarian church, 220 Winton Rd. Men and women. Open.

Equality ROC
Second, fourth Wednesdays, 7 pm. For location, info, call Anna, 425-0862.

Support Groups for Parents Who Have Lost Children
First, 3rd Wednesdays, 11am-12:30pm, Third Presbyterian Church, 4 McGees St. Common House Care. Fees: 325-1180.

COAP
Come Out and Play. Business meeting last Wednesday. Equn Roots Coffee Shop, 750 South Ave. 7pm, John’s, 261-7200.

Empire Bears
First Wednesdays, 7:45 pm, GAGV Community Center, 875 E. Main St., fifth floor. info@empirebear.org.

Rochester Raums General Meeting
2nd Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave. www.rochesterrans.org.

Transgender/Trans Group
Third Wednesdays, 6:30-9pm, Downtown United Pres. Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St.

Multi-CON Coffee Talk
Third Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30pm, MOCHA Center, 107 Liberty Pole Way, 420-1400. GAGV Youth Drop In Hours
Mondays, Wednesdays, 5:30-7 pm, GAGV Youth Center, 875 E. Main St. Prince St. entrance. first floor. 244-8640 ext 13.

Men’s networking group
Third Wednesdays, 6:30-8:30, 875 E. Main. Fellow signs for “Charlie’s Group”. Scott, 395-244-8640 ext 20.

Married Men’s Support Group
Third Wednesdays, 6-8:30pm, Molasses, 875 E. Main. info@charliesgroup.org Scott, 395-244-8640 ext 20.

MOCCHA youth drop-in
6pm, Eastman House parking lot. www.rochesterfrontrunners.org.

MOCCHA Library & Archives, David Bohnet Cyber
Every Wednesday, 6-8 pm. first floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8640.

THURSDAY
Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gay Concerns
6:30pm, first Thursday. Ralph, 28-7749.

Queer Radical Reading Group
First and third Thursdays, 7 pm, Equal-Groups, 750 South Ave.

Pride at Work
First Fridays, 5:30pm, 167 Flinders St. off Thurston Rd. 425-0862.

GLOBAL (Gays and Lesbians of Bausch & Lomb)
Meets every third Thursday of the month. 6:30 pm, Location to be determined. LifeLine Cafe, 311 Winton Road, 244-1414.

MOCHA/GAGV Youth Trans Group
First Thursdays, 5-7pm, GAGV Youth Center, 875 E. Main St., first floor (Prince St. entrance). 244-8640 ext 13.

Catholic Gay & Lesbian Family Ministry
Third Thursday, 7-9pm, School of Good Shepherd Church, 5388 E. Herkertta Rd. 392-2862.

AAQ
Support group for transgender people of color. Third Thursdays, 5-7pm. MOCHA. 107 Liberty Pole Way. 420-1400.

Second Thursdays
Social and business networking, changing venues. Email thomas50@ mac.com for information.

Gay & Lesbian Cancer Support Group
Second Thursdays, 6-7:30pm, Gilardi Clubhouse, 235 Alexander St. RSVP: 423- 9700; info@gladchickabooster.org.

FRIDAY
Gay Men’s AA meeting
First Friday, 7-9pm, Closed meeting, Emmanuel Baptist Church, 815 Park Ave.

GLBTQI Motorcycle Group
Second Fridays, various locations. RochesterGLBT@lycos.com: 478- 1656; blundislee@coniker.net.

SATURDAY
Rochester Raums Bar Night
Third Saturdays, 8pm-2am, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave., 271-6939.

Empire Bears Bar Night

Frontrunners/Frontwalkers

Empire Bears Potluck
2nd Saturdays, GAGV Youth Center, 875 E. Main, First floor, Prince St. entrance. 6:30pm 5pm dinner. Bring dish to pass. www.empirebear.org.

Cross Dresser Support Group
First Saturdays, 6-30pm, call for location: 251-2132. RCDNEIT@rochester.com.

AA Meetings in Rochester
Every week there are four regularly scheduled GLBTI AA meetings in Rochester.

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

Gay Men’s
7:30 pm. Immunual Baptist Church, 815 Park Ave.

• Closed meeting, restricted to alcoholics and addicts

• Men’s meeting

• Handicapped accessible

This is a round-robin discussion meeting. If you are shy about people or speaking up in a group, you will find this meeting particularly warm and inviting because everyone gets their turn to speak (or pass). As a result, this meeting is open to all and we plan to open about the same hour.

Saturdays
Saturday Night Special
7 pm at the First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. Bus riders: The #18 University Ave bus does not go by the church on weekend evenings. Take the #18 University Ave bus to the corner of East and Winton, then walk five minutes south (uphill) on Winton. This is an open discussion meeting. All issues – as they relate to our alcoholism/addiction and recovery – are fair game.

Sundays
Rochester Gay Men
8 pm at St. Luke/St. Simon’s Episcopal Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. Bus riders use the Fitzhugh St. stop on Main St. at the County Office Building and walk south one block.

• Closed meeting, restricted to alcoholics and addicts

• Men’s meeting

• Handicapped accessible

Meeting begins with a speaker, followed by open discussion.

AA Meetings in Rochester
HOPE TAKES ACTION

Join us in the effort to stop HIV.

Men who are between 18-45 years old and HIV negative can take action by volunteering in an HIV vaccine study. Volunteers receive reimbursement for time and travel. You can’t get HIV from the vaccine.

Call 585-756-2DAY or visit www.HopeTakesAction.org