Conservatives fail again to repeal NYS Marriage Equality Act

By Susan Jordon

Standing heat didn’t stop over 60 people from attending the Rainbow Flag Raising ceremony at City Hall on Friday, July 6, as Rochester Pride 2012 took off with some big news from the RPD.

At the Flag Raising, Chief James Sheppard of the Rochester Police Department announced revised policies for RPD officers’ treatment of transgender people. The new policies for the Police Department involve

revised search and seizure policies, transportation of prisoner policies and more. “This will ensure that officers are respectful of transgender people,” he said.

Sharna O’Toole, a trans activist, told The Empty Closet, “Any time we have a statement of respect for trans people it’s a step forward for the general community, because the police will role model how to interact with us.”

On Saturday, July 14, the day of the 24th Rochester Pride Parade and Festival, the heat was still stifling, but we were in the spirit of thousands of people along Park Ave. and Goodman St. The Flower City Pride Band and the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus provided musical accompaniment to the colorful spectacle, and Grand Marshal Todd Plunk and Honorary Grand Marshal Tom Perrine were applauded with applause.

Superheroes abounded, as did politicians. Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, running for re-election this year, received one of the knadest ovations. She rode with City Council member Dana Miller. Also present were Joe Morelle, Matt Haag, Harry Bennison, Judge Odoriki, Judge Gall Donofrio, Doug Langan and Ted O’Brien. RPD Chief Sheppard marched, and the Rochester Fire Department sent a hook and ladder truck. Many people had water guns and a lot of spraying and drenching and laughing took place.

Pride 2012: RPD announces new trans policies

The July 6 ruling, from the 4th Department in the New York Appellate Division, unanimously rejected a conservative challenge to the Marriage Equality Act (MEA). The 4th Department’s final text and the locking-down of a part of the State Capital building during the Senate floor debate and vote.

The closed-door GOP meetings violated the state’s Open Meetings Law, NYCF alleged, while the “message of necessity” was “ultra vires,” or beyond the governor’s authority, and the Capitol lockdown prevented the plaintiffs from accessing senators, violating their freedom of speech.

Last November, Livingston County Supreme Court Justice Robert Wiggins granted the defendants’ motion to dismiss the second and third claims and also ruled that the state attorney general was not a co-defendant in the case. Wiggins accepted the plaintiffs’ argument that a meeting of the Republican caucus that also included non-Republicans meant it could not be shielded by the OML’s exemption for private caucuses. That exemption states that a private party caucus qualifies even if it invites “guests,” but NYCF argued such “guests” must be members of the same political party.

In unanimously reversing Wiggins and ruling that the Senate did not violate the law, Justice Eugene Fahey wrote that the plain meaning of the statute did not limit the term “guests” in that way. A Senate party caucus can invite anybody as a guest other than a member of the Legislature. The opinion determined that the court.

Since neither Bloomberg nor Cuomo were members of the Legislature, they could be invited as guests without the caucus losing its exemption from the requirement that public business be conducted in public.

No public business was conducted at the meeting, and there is no allegation that the Republican caucus took any votes. Instead, the meeting was an occasion for the mayor and the governor to lobby the Republican senators to support the bill.

Nothing in the Open Meetings Law defines lobbying as “public business” and there is no precedent requiring that meetings between groups of legislators and lobbyists to discuss pending legislation take place in public. The July 6 ruling states that the Republican Conference agreed to pass the MEA at those meetings. Fahey wrote, “No did Conservatives continue pg 12

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The mysterious multiverse

What an amazing, magical spring we had this year. Shooting stars, meteor storms, aurora, fire in the form of fracking, northern lights, billions of Red Planet videos that were created by the Press Guide, working extra hours, stretching to one-time super hero deadline to make the Guide relevant and up to date as possible prior to printing.

Finally, Pride wouldn't be possible without our Sponsors, Volunteers, Community Partners and Participants. Thank you all so very much!

As planning continues for the Youth Out Loud Proud Summer Program (Aug. 20-24) and the Fall Youth Program, one of the most important components is Youth volunteers. Kelly Clark, Director of Educational Programs, has applications available. The first round of applications ended on July 31, but if you're interested in volunteering with Youth, please do complete the application for the next round of interviews.

The Rainbow SAGE Summer Planner for 2013 was published in May, offers an explanation intelligible to those of us who are not physicians. He writes, "...proponents of three independent developments now suggest that there are other universes separate from ours, most made from different particles and governed by different forces, populating an astonishingly vast cosmos."

There may be other universes exactly replicating ours, but with all possible variations of reality the physicist says with our slightly different in each one. Then there could be even more universes comprising the network of our universe in every way, each playing out all of its possible realities in infinite variations.

Read the article for the details. However, some recent theories implicate the mysterious force or entity known as Dark Energy. No one on this planet knows what it is, but if it's true we still have to go to understand the cosmos. (Of course there are plenty of people who are sure that they understand it all, because their patriarchal god, they say, talks to them directly. This deity's central message seems to be that hate women, gay men, the poor, liberals and many of their other fellow human beings.)

Buddhists may be right in saying that we are not equipped to fully understand the cosmos and shouldn't waste time obsessing about it. We have evolved to have large brains and reasoning power, which (presumably) are to be used to increase our scientific understanding of what life is — and to enable us to be reasonable and compassionate in our behavior to each other.

Reflections on Pride

The Gay Alliance provides Advocacy, Education and Community for LGBT and Straight Ally individuals and we and all the volunteer committees from Rochester Pride just finished our largest Community event of the year with the 11 days of Pride.

As with all wonderful events part of the thrill is the experience and the other part is reliving it. Check our Pride memories via the Gay Alliance's Youtube channel (https://www.youtube.com/user/GayAlliance), where Rochester Pride's Flag Raising, Mixer, Parade, Festival and Picnic all have separate and extraordinarily vivid videos that were created by the incomparable Ove Overmyer.

After such a series of events, one of the first orders of business is to reflect on what worked well, what didn't, how it could be done better, etc., which the staff did during the first week of the month, some by mail and some in person.

Of the many photos that were created by the Press Guide, working extra hours, stretching to one-time super hero deadline to make the Guide relevant and up to date as possible prior to printing.

The opinions of this writer in a six-month period is over many people in the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley. At this time of year, we would like to express our gratitude to Susan Gainsburg, our Outreach Coordinator, for her role (especially during Pride season) as "Goddes of Volunteers." However, Jeanne also schedules our Outreach and Professional Education programs. As the full season begins, watch the website for updated programs and consider approaching your employers to have LGBT Professional Education programs.

Lastly, congratulations to Lectures of Rochester (L-O-R-A) for their First Annual Women's Festival in June. Almost 500 Womyns and friends gathered at Elliston Park for friendship, fun and music. Awesome job!!

Letters to the Editor: The opinions of this writer 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. All letters are to the Editor, and print sub­mit­ers and the other contributing writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley. In The Empty Closet, the Editor reserves the right to edit for space and clarity. We will print anon­ymously sub­mit­ed letters in our discretion and a maximum of three hundred sixty-five (365) words. The Editor will not publish editorial writers who fail to submit a photograph for publication. We will print sixteen (16) words in this issue. The opinions of this writer in a six-month period is over many people in the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley. At this time of year, we would like to express our gratitude to Susan Gainsburg, our Outreach Coordinator, for her role (especially during Pride season) as "Goddes of Volunteers." However, Jeanne also schedules our Outreach and Professional Education programs. As the full season begins, watch the website for updated programs and consider approaching your employers to have LGBT Professional Education programs.

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SPLC demands that hate group cease using gay wedding photo

By Susan Jordan

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) sent a letter on July 11 on behalf of a gay couple, Brian Edwards and Tom Privite, that the SPLC used to stop the couple’s personal wedding photo in its victim’s page gallery.

Delgado and Public Advocate, a group identified as a hate group by the SPLC, used the couple’s personal engagement photo without permission, and altered the photo to include Delgado propaganda to attack a Florida. The letter notes that “SPLC’s photo without permission, and altered the photo to include Delgado propaganda to attack a Florida. The letter notes that SPLC’s public records are not safe from anyone, as the property is currently

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FDA approves first home use HIV test kit

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration on July 3 approved the OraQuick In-Home HIV Test, the first over-the-counter, self-administered HIV test kit designed to detect the presence of antibodies to human immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1) and type 2 (HIV-2).

The OraQuick In-Home HIV Test is designed to allow individuals to collect an oral fluid sample by swabbing the inside of the mouth and lower gums inside of their mouths, then place that sample into a developer vial, and obtain test results within 20 to 40 minutes. A positive result with this test does not mean that an individual is definitely infected with HIV, but rather that additional testing should be done in a medical setting to confirm the test result.

Similarly, a negative test result does not mean that an individual is definitely not infected with HIV, particularly when exposure may have been within the previous three months. The test has the potential to identify large numbers of previously undiagnosed HIV infections, especially if used by those unlikely to use standard screening methods.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV infection. About one in five are not aware they are infected. There are about 50,000 new HIV infections every year. Many of these new infections are transmitted from people who are unaware they are infected. There are about 50,000 new HIV infections every year. Many of these new infections are transmitted from people who are unaware they are infected.

Argentina's president demands transgender equality, not tolerance

Argentina President Cristina Kirchner made a strong statement on July 3 in favor of transgender and LBQ equality at an event marking the new right of transgen­

er, citizens to officially change their gen­

er, on official documents without proving that they were born with that gender.

"Today is a day of tremendous reparation," she said. "Today we do not shout for liberation but instead we shout for equali­

ity, which is just as important as freedom. I do not want to use a word that bothers me greatly: Tolerance. No, I do not believe in 'tolerance.' To tolerate is to say I'll allow you to be because I have no other choice. I want to talk about equality and I want to talk about all of you who will now have the same rights I have enjoyed from the moment I was born and the rights that so many millions of Argentines have enjoyed from the moment they were born. Then we're the society we are.

"Bleaboard.com author Andres Dusque says the new law, which was passed unani­

mously by the legislature, makes Argen­


tina the world's most progressive nation for transgender rights. Argentina legalized same-sex marriage in 2010 and it is now quite arguable that the former right-wing dictatorship is the world's most progres­

sion for LGBT rights overall.

Protestors defy St. Petersburg gay ban, all are arrested

On July 7 a handful of brave activists defied the St. Petersburg ban on public pro-gay demonstrations and almost all of them were arrested.

The rally organizers were arrested July 7 at a park in Russia's second city, and five others were detained at a beer rally attempt near the landmark Smolny complex. A Russian news agency reported. Only six people showed up for the second rally, and the three arrested at the first attempt were the only participants.

Although homosexuality was decriminalized after the fall of the Soviet Union, hatred of gays remains strong in Russia and Ukraine. Some rally attempts provoke violence by opponents, such as a coalition of neo-Nazi skinheads and ultra-conservative Orthodox priests.

Gay man's murder pushes Chile president to sign hate crimes law

A little more than three months after the death of Daniel Zamudio, who was beaten, stabbed, burned, and branded with a swastika by a gang of neo-Nazis in March and died days later in a hospital, Chile's President Sebastian Pinera signed a hate crimes bill into law which had languished in the country's legislature for seven years, the AP reports.

"Without a doubt, Daniel's death was painful, but it was not in vain," Pinera said at a press conference joined by Zamudio's parents.

"His passing not only unified wills to finally approve this anti-hate law but it also helped us examine our conscience and authorized us to discriminate against someone... After his death we'll think twice, thrice or four times before we fall prey to that behavior."

Four suspects, some with criminal records for attacks on homosexuals, have been jailed in Zamudio's killing. Prosecutors are seeking murder charges.

Said Gay Liberation and Integration Movement President Rolando Jimenez to the AP: "This law is a giant leap toward creating tools that can prevent and pun­

ish discrimination. There's still a lot to be done and we need the institutions to enforce it."


General Mills wins approval for pro gay stand on marriage

General Mills has won a petition's approval for pro gay marriage equality for committed gay couples.

A petition in support of Minnesota-based Fortune 500 Company General Mills by the Human Rights Campaign has gotten nearly five times more signa­

res than an anti-equality petition launched by the National Organization for Marriage (NOM).

HRC launched the petition the last week in June, in General Mills CEO John B. Quinlan announced the company opposed the state's proposed constitu­

tional amendment, which seeks to ban gay and lesbian couples. To date, more than 80,000 people have signed HRC's peti­t

tion, as well as another petition by the Minnesota United campaign support­

ing the constitutional amendment.

In contrast, the anti-equality Nation­

al Organization for Marriage (NOM) launched a petition decondemning General Mills. Only 7,700 people have signed on to that petition in nearly five times fewer than HRCs and MN United's petitions.

"Gay marriage is a bold stand in support of equality for all Minnesota famil­

ies and it's paying off," said HRC Work­

er's Director Peter Pinkston. "With five times the number of signa­

tures, it's clear that American consumers are sending a strong message that equality is good for business."

FAQ guidance set to help LGBT older adults

The Administration on Aging (AoA) on July 10 announced that it would release important new FAQ guidance that empowers AoA-funded aging providers to support LGBT older adults as a popula­

tion of "greatest social need," saying the way for increased services that can sig­

ificantly improve their health and well­

being.

"AoA applauds this critically impor­

tant step taken by the Administration on Aging to recognize that LGBT older peo­

dles are at risk of discrimination when they are seeking services to support their lives. AoA actions will help to ensure that services are available to meet those needs," said Michael Adams, Executive Director of the Washington-based Human Rights Campaign.

"AoA will continue to work with the Administration on Aging to con­tinue to improve the availability of appro­

priate services to LGBT elders across the country." This step forms a crucial piece of the Administration on Aging's strategy to ensure that services are available to meet those needs, said Michael Adams, Executive Director of the Washington-based Human Rights Campaign.

"AoA steps to improve access to services and resources that they deserve. AoA is good for all Americans," said House Committee on Ways and Means member Rep. G. K. Butterfield (D-NC). "This step brings much-needed attention to the unique needs of LGBT older adults, and the urgent actions we must all take to preserve their dignity," said HRC Press Officer Matt Rome.

"AoA actions today are a crucial step toward ensuring that this generation has equal access to the resources and services that they deserve. AoA applauds AoA for its leadership, and we will look forward to working with them on future improvements."

The FAQ guidance clarifies that the current definition of "greatest social need" in the Older Americans Act – "citizens of the United States, who, because of age, need additional support to remain independent and contribute to their community" – should be expanded to include LGBT older adults.

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and gender identity. LGBT older adults are at an increased risk for social isolation, experience poorer health and health access, and face higher poverty rates than other seniors. Despite this increased need, this group is least likely to seek federal assistance and healthcare due to actual and perceived discrimination. This FAQ guidance allows the aging networks that serve LGBT older adults and receive AoA funding to consider this vulnerable population as one with a “greater social need.” This designation will encourage Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to include LGBT older adults when prioritizing funding, engaging in outreach, evaluating unmet needs and collecting data.

This announcement is the latest action taken by the AoA to address LGBT older adults’ unique needs. In January 2010, SAGE received a historic grant from the Administration on Aging to establish the National Resource Center for LGBT Aging (lgbtagingcenter.org), the country’s only technical assistance resource center aimed at improving the quality of services and supports offered to LGBT older adults. With a wealth of multimedia resources for aging providers, the National Resource Center will be a key resource for AAAs as they implement the guidance.

Leading Hispanic groups endorse LGBT acceptance campaign

Twenty-one of the nation’s leading Hispanic organizations announced on July 9 their endorsement of a campaign to lift up Hispanic voices and build support within the Latino community for acceptance of LGBT family and community members. Public opinion polls show that Latinos really do lead the way when it comes to acceptance of LGBT people. Recent studies by the Pew Hispanic Center, Benetton & Amaundi International, 2012, and the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda have found strong support among Hispanics for a number of LGBT issues.

SAGE, in partnership with ten bilingual campaign providing resources and information that are culturally appropriate to empower LGBT older adults, and supporting Latino families and communities. In addition, the campaign will provide training, technical assistance, and support to the 21 Hispanic organizations and will spearhead a national effort to educate the public through a range of viral campaigns including an interactive bilingual website rich with videos, resources, and publications social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube; promoting stories and voices in the media and an organizing campaign to engage the community through mobile devices.

The polling shows that many in the Latino community already understand that there is one struggle for equality, a struggle that benefits from appreciating common mission. Familia es Familia is a campaign that will help to deepen the understanding that a discriminatory deprivation of rights on any basis is a cause for concern of all. Together, we can overcome the false narratives that adversely affect any member of the Latino community,” said Thomas A. Saenz, President and General Counsel, MALDEF. “NCCL is deeply committed to the civil rights of all Americans, including our friends and family in the LGBT community. We are very proud that this groundbreaking public education campaign, ‘Familia es Familia,’ is being launched at our annual conference this year in Las Vegas,” said Janet Murguia, President and CEO, NCLR.

Brent Wilkes, Executive Director of LULAC, the nation’s oldest Latino civil rights organization, said, “Since its inception, LULAC has fought for the equality of minorities. All individuals regardless of their race, ethnicity, country of origin or sexual orientation, deserve equal rights.”

“A growing majority of Latinos in this country knows that marry gay or lesbian person is part of someone’s family – a son or daughter, a brother or sister, a loved one – and the more conversations we have, family member to family member, the more support for the freedom to marry grows,” said Fred Westfall, founder and president of Freedom to Marry. “Latino gay couples seek the freedom to marry to affirm and strengthen their love, their commitment, and their ability to take care of each other and their families and their government should not be putting barriers in their way. Freedom to Marry is proud to be supporting the Familia es Familia campaign to lift up Hispanic voices and stories as together we make the case for ending the exclusion from marriage.”

Freedom to Marry provided the seed funding and serves as fiscal sponsor for Familia es Familia. The Gill Foundation has also committed to providing additional support.

“Given the breadth and depth of this first-of-its-kind campaign, this effort is significant for our community and we hope that it will help to change the dialogue and hearts and minds about our Latino LGBT community members,” said Ignat Durran, Laura Esquivel and Catherine Pino, the D&P Creative Strategist for the campaign. “We’re working to bring people together around our shared values of family and fairness, which this video campaign will do.”

Bond is referring to the now unscaled court documents written by the anti-gay National Organization for Marriage which is a primary funder of the Maryland Marriage Alliance (most recently its signature petition) “Driven, in which the group outlined in strategy to stop same-sex marriage: “The strategic goal... is to drive a wedge between gays and blacks — two key Democratic constituencies. Find, equip, energize and connect African American men, women, gay and straight — to provide a wedge into our gay marriage base into organizing by denouncing these spokeswomen and women as bigots.”

New HRC leader Chad Griffith hails from Hope, Arkansas

Chad Griffith is the first southerner to head up Human Rights Campaign, the Washington-based LGBT activist group. And according to AP reporter James Noss’ profile on Griffith and his current work, growing up in Arkansas and its religious culture had a deep impact on the new HRC president.

Arkansas helped shape Griffin into the leader he is today: a man uniquely qualified to fight a civil rights battle that will be fought one, even after President Barack Obama came out in support of same-sex marriage this year.

In the first Southerner to head up the Washington-based group, Griffin has a knack for translating the fight for gay rights into language familiar to people in the Bible Belt. He sometimes borrows phrases from the pulpit — brothers and sisters, God’s children — to advocate equality for gay, bisexual and transgender people: “It’s not as big as people think it is. It’s not more than the golden rule,” Griffin told community leaders during his visit last month. “Treat others as you wish to be treated.”

The article goes on to mention that Griffin was born in a town called Hope. “The vote took place at the denomination’s General Convention in Indianapolis in July. While the passage signifies a step in the Episcopal Church’s journey toward equality, it’s far from the endgame in large part influenced by the racial divides that exist in the state. If you remember those famous photos from the ’60s and the civil rights movement, you didn’t only see African-Americans marching down the street, Griffin noted. “They saw them marching arm in arm with their white brothers and sisters.”

Read more: http://www.towleroad.com/fizzx.tw/Kq7QZ

Episcopal Church moves forward on LGBT rights, except for “marriage”

The Episcopal Church has approved a new liturgy for blessing same-sex unions, two proposals adding gender identity and expression to the Church’s nondiscrimination canons for ordained ministry and in the “life, worship, and governance of the Church,” and a resolution supporting legislation for equal immigration rights for same-sex couples.

The votes took place at the denomination’s General Convention in Indianapolis in July. While the passage signifies a step in the Episcopal Church’s journey toward equality, it’s far from the endgame.”

“This is a great day for the Episcopal Church and people of faith everywhere,” said the Rev. Victoria E. Grifin, director of the Human Rights Campaign’s Religion and Faith Program. “The Episcopal Church has reaffirmed its covenant with LGBT Episcopalians who are also God’s children and they deserve to be treated with dignity, respect, and love.”

These votes took a long time in the making. Since the 1980s, many clergy have advocated for gay and lesbian couples, but the Church had no official stance. Following the 2009 General Convention, the Church said bishops may provide “generous pastoral response” (Newsrights continue page 15)
Interview

Harry Bronson

By Susan Jordan

New York State Assembly member Harry Bronson (D-Rochester/Chili/Rush/Riga/Wheatland) feels that the past two years have been productive ones in Albany, with several significant advances for LGBT civil rights, as well as measures which will help all New Yorkers.

Bronson said, "Clearly, the session goes in two-year cycles. It's been a very, very successful two-year cycle. In 2011, the top of the list is course passage of Marriage Equality, which is so important to us."

"As an Assembly member, it was with great joy that I co-sponsored marriage equality, helped move it through the legislative process and finally cast my vote for marriage equality - all this in my very first term of office. I am privileged to have been part of this movement and also to have attended the marriage equality bill signing with Governor Cuomo - a night I will never forget. That night, the Governor honored me by presenting to one of the pens which he used to sign the bill into law and make history. With the stroke of a pen our lives changed forever."

"Over the past year since that night I have attended many weddings where loving, committed couples have declared their love for each other, but now under the authority of New York State. Wanting to share that historical moment with the community, the 'marriage equality pen' has been used at a number of these weddings for the signing of the couples' wedding licenses. In a small way it allows all of us not only to celebrate the significance of what we were a part of, but also to remember the struggle so we will forever be vigilant to protect what we have gained."

Continuing with his session highlights, Bronson said, "Also, I can list ethics reforms a closing a $10 billion budget deficit; reducing taxes for the first time in 13 years. The good news is because we were committed to increasing spending for education and health care, part of the way we achieved that in December was restructuring the income tax code, reducing taxes for lower and middle-income people to the lowest level in 58 years. That was 2011."

"This year we continued and built on the success of government through collaboration between the Assembly, the Senate and the governor - something we haven’t seen since a decade ago. It’s been all go all the way."

Bronson helped to pass a law expanding the DNA database. He said, "New York took a lead in the country by expanding the database to include most crime convictions. We did that with two objectives to ensure that those convicted and guilty of crimes are held accountable, and just as important, that those not guilty and wrongly charged will be exonerated."

He continued, "We instituted the 1-STOP, which is about creating a database of prescription drugs that doctors will refer to in order to reduce prescription drug abuse and sale on the black market."

The Dignity for All Students Act became law on July 1. Another law aimed at reducing bullying, which will help LGBTQ youth and prevent youth suicides, is the cyberbullying measure passed on June 18. "This is important to our community," Bronson said, "and will impact the bullying of young people on the internet by ensuring a positive approach to young people facing bullying."

"In the Assembly," he said, "we were successful in passing GENDA again. I think we can learn from the Marriage Equality model - education first, bringing the general public along and building a coalition including all aspects of our society - businesses, local governments, clergy. Interestingly enough, one of the huge successes in passing marriage equality is taking the New York model to other states, where activists are trying to enact marriage equality."

GENDA would provide basic anti-discrimination protections to transgender and gender variant New Yorkers. It has not passed in the Republican-dominated Senate.

Bronson added, "I think, like marriage equality, passing GENDA will be a struggle, but one we will ultimately be successful in. It’s anyone’s guess when that will happen. I am a co-sponsor in the Assembly, which has been very supportive. We need to use the same strategy - get supporters from all segments of society so they can convince the Senate to pass GENDA."

"Through education and visibility we can mobilize businesses and local governments. We can use Rochester as an example. We have an anti-discrimination ordinance that includes transgender, thanks to Tim Mains, and it has been successful in Rochester. The recent FBI policy change on transgender announced by Chief Sheppard is a positive change. So once again Rochester is a leader in civil rights for the LGBT community."

"Another LGBT issue that was huge this year," Bronson said, "was maintaining funding for the LGBT Health and Human Services Network at $5.36 million, which is extremely impressive given the economic situation. I took a leadership role working with the Empire State Pride Agenda. We increased the funding for runaway and homeless youth up to $2.45 million. We not only avoided a huge cut, but we got a slight increase in a very difficult economic year."

In July, anti-gay conservatives tried for the fourth time to repeal marriage equality, claiming they were concerned about "closed door meetings" by Democrats, and other technicalities, marking their real and obvious motive. On July 6, a panel of the New York Appellate Division unanimously rejected the conservative challenge.

New York State does not have a referendum system, unlike California, where marriage equality was overturned through a referendum ("Prop 8") funded by hate groups across the country. But although marriage equality in New York cannot be reversed in this manner, Harry Bronson warned, "I think we need to be vigilant, because there’s always a chance that a law could be repealed. We worked for decades to get marriage equality - we have to make sure we keep our guard up."

We don't have referendums or a procedure in place to challenge a repeal, so I’m convinced the law won’t be repealed, but still we need to be sure that the public continues to be supportive, that we keep our straight allies and keep our civil rights now that we have them."

Not all marriages, whether heterosexual or of same sex couples, are free of abuse. Bronson noted, "Also this year, the first bill I sponsored was passed. It was on domestic violence, and created a database to help victims have fewer hurdles in the justice system, through protective orders. Magistrates can now issue orders of protection, and that’s important to us because, although a lot of people don’t think about it, our LGBT domestic relationships, domestic violence does exist."

"This year, what we did through the governor’s leadership - and I was a co-sponsor - is make a complete overhaul of the court and police approach to domestic violence."
Emcee Matt Molloy.

Members of the Rochester Women’s Community Chorus.

Harry Bronson.

Jeannie Gainsburg (Electra) and Dontaee Williamson (Robin) at the Mixer.

Carrie Vernon, Pride 2012 Committee Chair, at the Mixer.

Brigid Waterhouse and Dontaee at Super Sassy in the South Wedge on July 6.

Dyke Picnic: There was a big turnout for the dyke Picnic on June 30 at Ellison Park. Many women were thrilled to learn that the event will return next year (as the Womyn’s Picnic).

At JCC: Rev. Jim Mulcahy spoke at the “Beyond Gay” event hosted by the Gay Alliance on July 5.
**PRIDE PARADE:** Center for Disability Rights float: “Gotham City has PRIDE.”

Grand Marshal Todd Plank and Paul Brown.

Pam Polashenski and Jeannie Gainsburg.

Honorary Grand Marshal Tom Ferarrese.

Miss Gay Pride, Tasha Brooks, and Mr. Gay Pride, Tonsio were crowned on June 10.

Kasha Davis greets her fans.

Tilt won the Mother’s Favorite (Best of Show) award.

Jason Robert Ballard, president of Self Made Men.

Rochester Gay Men’s Community Chorus won the Ruby Slipper award.

Outlandish won the Rainbow Award.

The Gay Alliance Youth Group marched as the Rainbow Justice League, led by Pride Queen, Lady Dee and King Taylor Made.
Rochester Pride 2012

The MOCHA Center marching unit.

The Rochester Trans Group and other area groups marched together. WNY trans groups met here in April to begin a collaboration.

The Gay Alliance Library & Archives won the Community Award.

Rochester Rights Activists won the Stonewall award and reminded us of our history.

Paul Allen with the ImageOut contingent.

Sue Cowell hits the road for Louise.

Pam Barres.

Gerry Szymanski of the Library & Archives.
FESTIVAL: FuturPointe Dance Co. performs. Right: Liam Knighten.

HEADLINER: Jessica Sutta.

PICNIC: The Pride Picnic took place in Genesee Valley Park on July 15. It has been going since the 1970s and is the oldest Pride event.

Second place winner Kate Sweeney with judges Thomas Warfield and Michael Gamilla.

The winner of the picnic site decorating contest was the Flamingo Farmers. (see page 30)

A visitor from Buffalo Pride.

A resident of Avenue Q at the festival.

Dancing in the Roundhouse.
Deborah Magone performed at the Pride Power Mixer on July 13.

Rochester Rights Activists.

Marriage Equality's first anniversary.

Youth Group members in the parade.

Todd Plank and City Council member Matt Haag at the Mixer.
Collector's delight

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Tuthill Lighting

Page One

Pride 2012 a community-building experience and featured something for people of all ages and interests. The Gay Alliance event at the JCC on July 5 provided LGBT history and a global perspective, through films and a talk by Reverend Jim Mckulka, who was interviewed in last month’s Empty Closet about the troubling situation in the Ukraine and much of Eastern Europe, where, as in many countries worldwide, gay activism is often illegal and may be repressed by brutal violence.

Pride events over the course included parties, dances, films, theatre performances and readings, the tram open mic event at Equal Grounds (see page 10), Family Day at the Museum and Science Center, and the Picnic on July 15. The Pride Parade on June 25 AIDS Care announced that it has once again been recognized as a leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality in the Healthcare Equality Index 2012 report, an annual survey conducted by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation.

AIDS Care was one of a select group of 234 healthcare facilities nationwide to be named Leaders in Healthcare Equality. Facilities awarded this title meet several key indicators for equitable care, including nondiscrimination policies for LGBT patients and employees, a guarantee of equal treatment for same-sex partners and parents, and LGBT health education for key staff.

Many of the patients who receive AIDS Care’s comprehensive medical care and supportive services, and also utilize the agency’s programs (Pleasant Street Apothecary) are members of the LGBT community.

The city’s director of LGBT health initiatives at AIDS Care, said, “AIDS Care is very proud to have been recognized this year as a second consecutive year as a Leader in the Human Rights Campaign as a leader, both locally and throughout the country, in implementing policies and training to meet the needs of the LGBT community.”

In addition to the aforementioned services, AIDS Care is a Proud Health Care Provider, a website, www.everybodysgood.com, where the LGBT community can access comprehensive and inclusive information on health and social services. These include policies that lay the foundation for a welcoming environment for LGBT people and their families. These policies include patient and employment nondiscrimination, patient and employee confidentiality, and cultural competency training for staff.

AIDS Care was congratulated by JRC’s Family Services Director Ellen Kahn. “LGBT patients deeply appreciate the welcoming environment provided by JRC’s Family Services. It makes a big difference to know that your local healthcare facility is fully committed to helping you celebrate who you are and give your neighbors and co-workers.”

For more information on the Health Care Equality Index 2012, or to download a free copy of the report, visit www.hrc.org/hei.

LGBT Giving Circle accepts nonprofit grant applications till Aug. 31.

A group of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and allies has formed the LGBT Giving Circle to make contributions in a new fund, and currently is accepting grant applications from nonprofit organizations that work to bridge the gap between community needs and resources.

The LGBT Giving Circle, established at the Greater Rochester Community Foundation in October 2011, is a philanthropic group of like-minded individuals and households interested in making a difference in their community now and in the future.

To do that, annual contributions in the form of memberships are split between grant making for the current year and endowment to meet future needs. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowable under law with the LGBT Fund for Greater Rochester and later this year members will decide together how the grant money should be distributed.

I am excited to get to know other LGBT philanthropists in the community. For me, it represents being at the table in the philanthropic community in Rochester,” says John Williams of Rochester, a founding member of the Giving Circle.

Giving Circles are a way to introduce philanthropy to groups of people who may believe that more can be accomplished by working together rather than as individuals. Giving Circles include social, educational and engagement opportunities that connect participants to their communities and provide a simple premise that more can be accomplished collectively.

It is estimated that 180,000 people identified as LGBT within the Greater Rochester area.

The LGBT Giving Circle is one of four affiliated with the Community Foundation. The others are the Rochester Women’s Giving Circle, NextGen Rochester, and the African American Giving Initiative.

Creating a LGBT giving group promotes positive change in the community — and beyond — is not new. In Rochester, the employees at Kodak, Bausch & Lomb and Xerox formed the first employee resource group in Rochester to help bridge the LGBT demographic within companies in order to change public policy,” recalls Emily Jones of Greece, a Kodak retiree and one of the Giving Circle’s founding members.

Moving forward with the Giving Circle, we don’t know what will be needed in the future, but we do know that programs that support LGBT community and acceptance will promote that change that is beneficial to all.”

Funding members of the Giving Circle will play a critical role in funding key projects and programs to help support the community’s work.

“Our mission is to unite donors to support LGBT organizations, and LGBT employees who are aligned with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community to enhance their lives and strengthen our region.”

The LGBT Giving Circle, which so far has received gifts or memberships from…
more than 50 individuals or households, is now accepting applications from nonprofit organizations and churches in Virginia, as it kicks off its inaugural round of community grants. Only organizations and institutions that have been in existence for at least one year and that do not discriminate based on sexual orientation and gender expression in their hiring, employment, and service policies are eligible.

Grant criteria, developed by the Giving Circle, includes the provision that projects seeking funding should accomplish one, or all of the following: support the mission of the LGBT Giving Circle; Keep the grant money in the community and support the local economy; Foster cooperation among organizations, associations, agencies, and institutions in the community; and, have a critical emphasis on helping those who also reside in the household on a permanent basis. "Carrilion Clinic did the absolute right thing here," said Ferguson, upon hearing the news. "They applied for funding to help the thousands of people who signed my petition on Change.org, and for me to quickly respond to the outpouring of support from Will, and their son, Oliver. Hopefully, more private clubs will follow the leadership of the Carrilion Clinic and alter their policies as well." "Incredibly, in just a few days, more than 190,000 people signed Mark's Change.org petition calling on the Carrilton Clinic to allow gay parents and their kids to swim at the Roanoke Athletic Club," said Joe Mina­­no, the group's founder, on Tuesday. "After Mark's campaign went viral, the Carrilton Clinic clearly realized that they needed to respond quickly before the issue became a national news story." Ukraine cancels vote on silencing pro-gay speech In a last minute move, the Ukrainian parliament canceled the July 6 scheduled vote on legislation that would ban any Ukrainian citizens from specifi­cally about gays or lesbians. Human rights defenders and many European officials have already come out in opposition to the bill, due to its potentially chilling effect on freedom of speech and expression for millions of Ukrainians - gay and straight. The move to shelve the bill is seen as a critical victory for its opponents, leaving just a few days before the dissolution of parliament to consider any new legislation. "For more than 30 days, the issue has been on the front page of the newspapers," said Andre Banks, co-founder and executive director of the National LGBTQ Taskforce. "It's time for the Ukrainian parliament to move on to other pressing issues." The bill is expected that grants will range from $500 to $2,000. All applications must be submitted by Aug. 31 via email or postmarked by that date if it is mailed. The grant proposals will be reviewed by a board appointed by the LGBT Giving Circle and will be decided on in a closed meeting. Grant decisions will be shared with and voted on by all eligible members of the Giving Circle at the next meeting in November. The LGBT Giving Circle is interested in helping more people join. Annual membership levels are $250, $500 or $1,000 for an individual or a household. A household membership permits on-person as well as off-site grants. Eligible applicants must be single or married. Contributions of any amount or gifts of a person or specific amount are welcome. Participating in the Giving Circle, says Williams, is about "having your voice, designating who gets to give, not the amount of the gift." For more details on the LGBT Giving Circle and the grant criteria and application, visit www.naq.org/LGBT.
Can we talk? Religion and LGBTQ; Trans open mic

The Good, The Bad, and The Funny: Trans open story at Equal-Grounds

By Casey Sullivan and Erin Serivani

"Shauna O'Toole told not to talk and she listened! That will make the front page!" That's how the funny started during a preliminary meeting preparing for the first official trans-specific event during Rochester Pride in years. On Wednesday, July 11, 70 people crammed into two rooms at Equal Grounds to attend the appropriately titled "The Good, The Bad, and The Funny." This took part during the 11-day series of events celebrating LGBT Pride in Rochester.

Shauna Marie O'Toole headlined and was largely responsible for assembling the keynote speakers, Maur DeLaney, Rowan Collins and Jason Roberts. The four have spoken numerous times with the Gay Alliance's Speakers Bureau and are in talks about forming a panel to talk at different venues.

The evening started with The Funny, as Shauna shared her story of the unfortunate yet humorous time when she shaved in a mini-mart bathroom on the way to her counselor. Armed with hand soap in lieu of shaving cream, she was greeted by her counselor with, "What lawn mower attacked you? Who won?" When she arrived, The advice You Can't Shave in a Mini-Mart Bathroom is also the title of her book, which shares anecdotes about varying religions holding an interactive discussion about the topic.

Panellists were Megan Robinson of the Catholic Diocese, Michael Deck of the Inwood Presbyterian Church of Christ, Rabbi Sarah Friedson-King of Temple Beth El, Darrell Lance from Lake Avenue Baptist Church, Reverend Canen Denise Varsough of the Episcopal Diocese, Mubarak Bashir from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, and Reverend Nick Menard of the Brockport Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. John Clinton Bradley of Oasis Rochester took the duties of the moderator.

The Funny started during a preliminary meeting preparing for the first official trans-specific event during Rochester Pride in years.

Shauna O'Toole shared her story of how she transitioned in a rural town, which turned out to be largely responsible for assembling the keynote speakers. Maur DeLaney started the Genesee Valley Gender Variants (gen­devvariant.org). Rowan Collins and Jason Roberts represented The Self Made Men (theselfmademen.com).

Panel discusses religious views on homosexuality

By Tyler School

On June 14, the Jewish Community Center (JCC) of Rochester hosted a panel discussion as part of their ongoing "Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals" exhibit from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The panel was entitled "LGBTQ and Religion: The Struggle for Inclusiveness" and featured prominent local members of varying religions holding an interactive discussion about the topic.

Each panelist introduced themselves with "I can't believe I'm doing this..." but this only added to the importance of sharing their messages. The outputing of support from the community was amazing and very appreciated. Shauna's idea of making sure no one is left behind was evident.

The event was recorded by the Gay Alliance and will be transmitted and published as a book, the proceeds of which will be donated to the National Center for Transgender Equality.

Representatives from AIDS Care asked attendees to fill out surveys to discern the level of interest in opening a potential trans health care facility in Rochester. Empire State Pride Agenda (ESPA) was also there to ask people to sign postcards in support of passing the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act and to get people involved in the Transcribe Project.

The event was recorded by the Gay Alliance and will be transmitted and published as a book, the proceeds of which will be donated to the National Center for Transgender Equality. We appreciate both AIDS Care and ESPA's ongoing support of the trans community.

We would like to thank all of the people who shared their stories. More information about Shauna Marie O'Toole, and where you can purchase her books, may be found on her website (youcanbeshavetaminim.org or shaunotoole.com). Maur DeLaney started the Genesee Valley Gender Variants (gen-devvariant.org). Rowan Collins and Jason Roberts represented The Self Made Men (theselfmademen.com).

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John Clinton Bradley of Oasis Rochester took the duties of the moderator.

Clinton Bradley explained to the audience why he was there as moderator. He explained that he was raised in the Southern Baptist tradition and was deeply involved with his church as a teen, but "I harbored a deep secret that I was attracted to members of the same sex." The touching story set the tone for the entire event.

Each panelist introduced himself or herself and explained what the views of their respective religions were on the subject of homosexuality. While some faiths have stricter standards than others, all panelists emphasized that they welcome all people with open arms. Bashir stated that even though the Quran explicitly states that marriage is between a man and a woman and gay sex acts are forbidden, part of being a Muslim is "treating humanity with compassion."

Rabbit Sarah Friedson-King lightened the mood by making a joke about the Jewish viewpoint of homosexuality. "So you have two Jews, and three opinions."

The amiable comment perfectly described the diverse stances of Judaism towards homosexuality. There are three major movements of Judaism: Orthodox, Conservative and Reform. Beliefs and opinions towards homosexuality not only vary between these movements, but also within them.

The audience then asked questions. Several audience members aimed at their questions at Bashir and Robinson, due to their religions' more negative stance towards gay marriage. One curious member asked Bashir how he could reconcile treating the LGBTQ community as second-class citizens. Bashir, who felt that this statement was untrue, responded by saying he believes in "in separation of mosque and state" and that "no man has the right to judge other people."

By far the most touching moment of the night came when a man posed a morally challenging question. He delineated to the panel his long struggle with homosexuality, which included his marriage to a woman for 24 years and the personal turmoil he felt trying to live up to the word of God. He asked why God would make him the way he was if He supposedly is against homosexuality, a sentiment shared by many in the LGBTQ community. This brave audience member received a loud and impassioned round of applause.

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Opinion

Military recruitment and the Rochester City School Board
By David Kramer

This year the Rochester gay community celebrated another good year. The floats at the Parade were outstanding; the spectators audacious. The South Wedge was electric. In the bigger picture, Americans can also celebrate the first year of the abolition of DADT. In June, the Pentagon even threw a party for its LGBT soldiers. Now that is progress. Now is a time to recognize that Rochester played a historic role in the elimination of bias against gay soldiers. Often forgotten is that, in December 1991, the Rochester City School Board became the first district in the nation to ban military recruitment because of discriminatory practices.

Soon, other districts, as well as colleges and universities, followed the Board’s example. Finally, twenty years later, Congress completely eliminated sexual orientation as a bar to service. Today, any gay student in the Rochester School District in the nation to ban military recruitment because of discriminatory practices.

The federal themes emerged.

First, the Board believed it had to act on a principle. After initial hearings, discussions, the Board could easily have dropped the issue without anyone noticing. But it didn’t. Douglas remarked that he wasn’t out to make history, but to do the right thing. Today, he is more convinced; the Board could easily have dropped the issue without anyone noticing. But it didn’t.

Second, the Board’s decision was not in any way an anti-military statement. Quite the reverse. The Board wanted expanded access to a military career for all. A patriotic desire to serve should be celebrated not condemned.

At the same time, one of the Board’s chief concerns was community reaction to a ban. The decision seemed sure to spark controversy. Swiec grew up in Buffalo where he says its Mayor openly branded gay citizens; he feared the worst. Fortunately, all agreed, as they looked back, that no virulent public backlash occurred. For the most part, Rochestrians accepted the decision as fair and commendable. The policy was implemented without incident. Swiec says he was never prouder of the tolerance and progressive spirit of his adopted hometown.

We can be proud that the Board held firm to principle. After initial hearings and discussions, the Board could easily have dropped the issue without anyone noticing. But it didn’t.

Third, they reflected on the unprecedented decision and the intervening years, several themes emerged. The Pentagon policy was in direct conflict with the Board’s anti-bias mandate, which forbade any organization with a written policy of discrimination based on sexual orientation from recruiting. The Board felt duty bound to ensure equal treatment for all its students.

Second, the Board’s decision was not in any way an anti-military statement. Quite the reverse. The Board wanted expanded access to a military career for all. A patriotic desire to serve should be celebrated not condemned.

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Douglas remarked that he wasn’t out to make history, but to do the right thing. Today, he is more convinced; “Twenty years later, Congress and the military came to the same conclusion as we did.” Cary said he wasn’t really surprised that Rochester was first; “It was fitting. After all, this is the city of Frederick Douglas and Susan B. Anthony.” I could not agree more.

Kramer is a Fellow at the Nazareth College Center for Public History.
From our Readers

We are ONE...

To the Editor:

Recently, a straight female coworker asked me if all gay men were anti-female. I told her that neither I nor any of the gay men I know were anti-female. I asked her what she had generated the question. She related that, during a previous job, a young gay man with whom she worked refused to talk to her, was extremely rude to her, and generally let her know he thought she was a lesser human being. It seems she treated all of his female coworkers in the same way.

In contrast, he treated all his male coworkers with dignity and joviality.

My response was that this young man demonstrated an appalling lack of respect for others, and an immaturity that borders on the infantile.

I attribute some of this young man's actions to the fact that he is evidently ignorant of the history of the LGBT community.

Those of us in our senior years can well recall the 1980s — the "age of AIDS." This was a time when young gay men were dying by the dozen every week. It was a time when much of the country, especially the Reaganites in power and their evangelical allies, were indifferent to the crisis at best. At worst, they declared it to be a punishment of a vengeful God.

At the time, most caregivers and first responders were reluctant to even touch a gay man with AIDS. It was thought that anyone could contract the disease from simple skin contact.

Who stepped in the fill the void left by the absent caregivers and first responders? It was women, and especially lesbians, who came to the rescue. They cleaned and dressed the sick men, prepared their medication, fed them, took them to the hospital and, when the time came, finalized funeral arrangements.

I think it was this outpouring of love, concern, and action from the lesbian community that ended the "us versus them" attitude that many gay men had had toward lesbians prior to the Age of AIDS.

After that, we became ONE community: the LGBT community.

There is no "us versus them" within our community. We are ONE!

It is time that gay men like my friend's former coworker came to realize this.

Young LGBT people absolutely must know our history if we are to prevent anti-female or anti-male attitudes from developing. Such attitudes are counterproductive and immature. They only serve the interests of the largely white, rich, and conservative straight males who would delight in an implosion of the LGBT community.

Phil Darrow

Go to:
The Empty Closet pages at www.GayAlliance.org to find the latest news, resources, events! Friend Empty Closet News on Facebook and follow us on Twitter!

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My Own Private Rochester: Jo and Chris Meleca Voigt
By Susan Jordan
Jo and Christine Meleca Voigt are longtime activists for marriage equality, working with Marriage Equality New York (MENY), new Marriage Equality USA (MEUSA). They were married in Canada in 2008 and in Vermont in 2009, and are thinking of renewing their vows in New York, now that marriage equality is legal here.

Jo and Chris live in Greece with their two magnificent Maine Coon cats, Lincoln and Kennedy. Jo teaches Spanish and Italian at Greece Arcadia Middle School. She grew up in Irondequoit and has lived in this area all her life, except for college in Ohio and a brief period of living in northern California. She has been involved in Democratic Party politics, running for Greece Town Board in 2005 and County Legislature in 2009. Chris was born in New Hartford, near Utica, and raised in the Rochester area. She is a special education teacher at a Hilton middle school.

The two became a couple in 2001, Jo said, “it was that time period when Massachusetts legalized marriage and then President George Bush appeared on TV to call for a constitutional amendment to define marriage as between a man and a woman. The day I watched him say that was the day I became an activist.”

They became active with Equality Rochester through Anne Tischler, and then met Cathy Marino Thomas and Ron Zacchi of MENY. Jo said, “Anne was in this area all her life, except for college in New York, now that marriage equality was an empowering experience that served to energize the continued fight for full equality for ALL.”

Although they live in Greece, Chris and Jo love the city; their favorite area is the Park Avenue neighborhood. Chris commented, “It still has mom and pop stores, and artists – it’s like an urban neighborhood.”

Jo commented, “I think about the significant role Rochester has played in history: how the first Republican state legislator to vote for marriage equality came from Rochester, and I think about wem’s rights, labor history, and the Underground Railroad. When I look at the fight for justice and equal rights, Rochester seems to play a pivotal role. That’s what makes me want to take an active part in politics. There’s a rich history here of people fighting for equality.”

Jennifer Posey making waffle cones. Photo: Susan Jordan
Hedonist Artisan Chocolates
By Susan Jordan
When in search of fine handmade chocolates in Rochester, there is only one choice: Hedonist Artisan Chocolates, 674 Main St. Jennifer Posey and her partner Zahra Lungford started the business in 2007. Jennifer and Zahra moved to Rochester in 2004 from Michigan; they are originally from California. Zahra took a job at Xerox, and Jennifer, who had worked as director of parks and recreation in their Michigan town, looked for something to do. The answer was chocolate.

“I worked at Equal-Grounds as a barista,” Jennifer told The Empty Closet. “In California I had worked for Richard Donnelly, a chocolatier (with ‘musketeer’). I wasn’t an apprentice – just a customer. I learned there’s a whole different world of chocolate. There are a lot of people who care about chocolate and all the different kinds... We realized that there were no fine chocolate makers in Rochester. We are now members of the Fine Chocolate Association. You have to practice fine chocolate making using quality ingredients.

“As jazz, you can practice your instrument like a musician. You can do it at a level that you can.” Jennifer said, “I can’t make a ball of chocolate. I can only make a bar, because I’m not a chocolate maker. But I can make a ball of chocolate, because I’m not a chocolate maker.”

Hedonist is a French-American style chocolate maker and does not grind and blend cocoa beans – the “bean to bar” method, Jennifer said. “We use two different brands: Valrhona (the worldwide leader) and Noel, another French chocolate. It is real chocolate and we don’t do anything to it. We don’t put a lot of fillings in the chocolate. We let it be whole chocolate. We want to show the chocolate flavor and give it to the customer. It’s a chocolate bar, but we get it in large chunks. We then temper the chocolate – a process of heating and cooling it down to around 90 degrees, then heat it again to around 90 degrees. This makes the crystals inside the chocolate behave in a certain way – making it harder and firmer, with a shine, so it snaps when you break it and isn’t soft. Humidity is a big factor. We have a new system that keeps humidity at 50 percent.”

When asked what the main challenges are in starting one’s own small business, Jennifer says, “It’s still a challenge for people who are committed to it. A lady told me that the secret to success is having a passion and a gift that can be translated into business. We started the business with $500 in credit cards. Especially in the early years we kept overhead down. You have to have a website, Facebook page, proper credit card processing, etc. – all the things big businesses have. If you don’t, people just aren’t going to buy it.

“One big thing: never cut corners. Businesses that do usually don’t last. Always be honest and put your best foot forward. Mostly you have to have clear goals and objectives. We started with a business plan – and then re-wrote it. Originally we were going to have both chocolate and ice cream, but we realized that was too much. You have to have goals and you reached them. Have a business plan and always be there – your hands are on everything.”

Now Hedonist does ice cream as well. “People wanted it,” Jennifer said, “but ice cream in general is a failed business. It’s just not profitable. You’d have to sell 100 cones a day to make a profit, so it’s a moneymaker. But that’s not a concern for us – we want people to come to the South Wedge to have a good time. We have only 20 percent over run – meaning air in ice cream. We’re closer to gelato – but we do have 16 percent butter fat.”

“Out current chocolate maker Nathaniel Mich is very interested in ice cream. We have eight flavors at a time, and our ingredients are shared, so we don’t have to have a whole separate business. We use local cream for both the chocolate and the ice cream – it’s from Pittsford Dairy. A lot of the taste is not in the chocolate, it’s in the cream. Our ice cream is local from Churchville; we use local goat cheese and get our fruit from Hard Orchards in Holley; right now we do strawberry, raspberry sorbet, and peach brandy with blueberry. We want to use the local food as much as possible and it’s fun. Local is one of our values – but we get people who say, ‘I shop here because it’s local.’ I want them to shop here because it’s good and it pleases your senses.”

They make their own waffle cones as well, Jennifer says. “We spend more time making cones than we do ice cream. We make cones all day long.”

Hedonist chocolates are available at several Finger Lakes wineries, especially at Ravine on Seneca Lake, and at their new location in Geneva. “It’s a great winery,” Jennifer says.

Jennifer partners with Rochester Works in their program to give local youth employment skills. “The kids learn to show up on time, answer the phone, pack things – there’s an incredible amount of work to be done in a chocolate shop. It’s labor intensive for us to train them, but our goal is to be able to hire them afterwards. One of our youth workers is still with us after a year.”

A Hedonist is someone in pursuit of pleasure, especially the pleasures of the senses. In ancient Greek philosophy, hedonism was the ethical doctrine that pleasure, seen as the happiness of an individual or society, is the principal good and proper aim of action. Puritanical, pleasure-negative societies have seen hedonism as self-indulgence. Jennifer believes that pleasing our senses is healthy and her many customers seem to agree.
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Growing Up

By Eric Bellman

This year, I stood out, held my ground and did not try to hang out beyond the west 30s in the parade, a parade which I used to go to as a Gay Pride. Even though the parade lasted for about two hours, by 10:30 people would be meeting their groups, getting into costume, laughing and it was great for taking pictures.

The parade started at the Village Center and ended in the West Village, are too thick and who can stand will parade. Marshals be stressed to the seniors. I qualify. Actually I haven't seen ester Gay pride parade in years. I just take pictures for the parade and do interviews for the Gay Times.

To get to the goodies now I'd have to wander easily back and forth, hurrying about when I saw another cluster of participants shuffling around, sweating on sunscreen or glitter. Barricades were everywhere.

For years I used this lady writer down to her feminine comportment, I think about the term ‘running away’, probably it’s not the right one, Ocean said ‘New York Times reporter is strong, even in messier atmospheres and the gay community’s rejection of a “gay identity”’.

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denounced in spite of being caught in an indisputable same-gender love's embrace. Let's not forget our down-town Jersey girl Dana Owens, a.k.a. a Hip-hop's reigning Queen Latifah. The African American celebrity gossip, news, popular culture and entertainment blog Bossip.com outed Latifah in September 2007. Not only was this declaration designed and gal pal and "personal trainer" Jeanette Jenkins in a tender embrace that was not intended for public viewing. When phrases from R&B soul diva Aaliya's revealing quotes about Latifah and Jenkins intimately embraced aboard a private yacht in France went viral on the Internet, the public's long awaited "Gotcha" moment resurfaced.

"My private life is my private life. Whomever I might be with, I don't feel the need to share it. I don't think I ever will, " Queen Latifah said in a November 2007 interview with People magazine, referring to who she is, a lesbian. Ann Powers, in her article "A Close Look At Frank Ocean's Coming Out Letter for NPR," opines differently why artists might not self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ): "There is another reason why Ocean can't be saddled with an easy label, and it points to an interesting aspect of his newly mined self-conception. Ocean, instead of embracing an identity, Ocean shared a set of memories and explored complex feelings, just as he did in his songs. Unlike the standard coming out gesture - newsman Anderson Cooper's public email to his friends saying, for example, "I'm gay" - Ocean presented sexuality as something that arises within particular circumstances, defined by shifting desire and individual encounters rather than solidifying as an identity. In the age-old debate about whether sexuality emerges as something we are, or through something we do, Ocean was a middle ground - we have little to say about ourselves. However, who does it for us, what it is that we do, what we say it is that we do, and how we say it is not something we can control."

"What we've witnessed is a profound elucidation on the part of gay-identified individuals who cannot conceive of any identity outside of the limiting gay straight binary. And in the process, they continue to challenge and redefined reality that many Black men who love men are not comfortable with the L.G.B.T. where they identify.

The terms "LGBT," "queer" and "gay" are not descriptors Marago and his organization Reframe Media uses. They would be "same-gender-loving," because terms like "gay" and "queer" up to LGBT do not resonate with Marago and many in the African-American LGBTQ community. As a matter of fact, it is credited with coining the terms "men who have sex with men (MSM) and "same-gender-loving" (SGL)."

With a president who now embraces same-sex marriage, and in this era of celebrated LGBT artists like Ellen DeGeneres and Wanda Sykes, the fluidity of sexuality is becoming more accepted, even in certain artist arenas of the African American community. When Ocean (made) public his announcement, pop culture icons and Jay-Z expressed their support. And Russell Simmons, co-founder of the hip-hop label Def Jam, wrote a congratulatory article, "The Courage of Frank Ocean Just Changed the Game!" In Global Grind, Sunday Forward, Today is a very fine day or hip-hop. It is a day that will define who we really are. How committed will we be? How inclusive are we? [...] Your decision to go public about your sexual orientation gives hope to many young people still living in fear.

Ocean has certainly changed the game for hip-hop and R&B. LGBTQ artists, but this sum up issue this when he posted on his Tumblr page. "My hope is that the babies been days will inherit less of the (explicative) than we did.

"A Few Bricks Short
BLOOD IS THicker Than Water"
by David Hall

It's bad enough when I have to suffer homophobia from some over-the-top, born again, evangelical Christians, but I think even more offensive is when I suffer homophobia from the American Red Cross. Yes, that's right - the American Red Cross. They told me to stop using CPR and CRP, but they discriminate against me if I try to donate blood. Many straight people don't know I'm in the right.

They don't want my blood because I am a gay man and they're afraid that I might pass on AIDS. And, because I'm a gay man. They'll take a blood donation from a straight man that I might pass on AIDS. And they'll take a blood donation from all of the prostitutes too. You can have as much straight sex as you want and still donate blood. It just seems that they don't want any of that nasty of homosexual blood.

This is because of an outdated policy, created by the FDA, which was implemented more than 30 years ago at the beginning of the AIDS crisis back in the 1980s there was no way to test donated blood for the AIDS virus and, to be fair, at that time many did think of AIDS as a gay disease, so I guess I can understand how that policy came into effect.

However, today, in 2012, things are very, very different. We now understand that HIV can infect anyone, gay or straight, male or female, young or old - it's not only a gay disease; it's a human disease. Besides that, there are 14 separate tests that donated blood receives to ensure that it is healthy. The FDA policy that the American Red Cross adheres to states that anyone that is in danger of contracting HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is ineligible to donate blood. Well, that would pretty much be anyone who is having sex with someone else! If they were really enforcing the policy no one would be able to donate blood unless they were celibate or a homosexual. Wouldn't those interest­ ing boxes have to check on your dona­tion form?

The policy is unconscious and discrimin­ ating and it keeps thousands of healthy, gay Americans from donating blood.

A few weeks ago I passed in town that announced there was an emer­ gency blood shortage and donations were so urgently needed. Wouldn't those interest­ ing boxes have to check on your dona­tion form?

You have to admit, one of the many things our community does right is helping needy organizations. Donations for food cupboards, toys, Christmas, money for AIDS, and other crucial causes - we do it extremely well and generously. Gay individuals and groups would certainly give American Red Cross blood drives and be a great assis­tance to this very important organization.

So, can I, as a gay person, do what you have to need stopping being homophobic and let little ol' gay me donate blood too.

You can contact David at davidhall50@verizon.net

Inspirational
CAN WE TALK?
by Rev. Dr. Marcus Kroll

Sometimes it can be a scary thing when we think about the things we say to ourselves, never mind each other. When we con­ stantly listen to what we are saying to ourselves, we draw ourselves into a state of negativity.

Now when we begin to lie to our­selves. When we hear someone we love start to say negative and self-deprecating things about us, we can either help in and help them to look at the space they are in that is enabling them to speak this kind of thing. Or, we can reflect on these thoughts and stop listening to them.

The production of our story, it is at those moments that we need to get in touch with our inner screenwriter and say, "Can we talk?" The lines you are writ­ ing for me are not working. They are not going to help me evolve or grow. They are not about helping me experience the light of truth, so rewrite them.

Sometimes we forget that we are the authors of our own screenplay. In our screenplays, we are responsible for every thought and action and the intent behind them. We have the power to moveourselves from a state of negativity to a space of love, light, and positive energy. How we talk about others in our screenplay is also about us. While they may be supporting characters in our screenplay, they are there for a purpose and a reason, just as we play supporting characters in their screenplays.

We write them into our stories in the same way we write in our stories.

Sometimes when I hear how others have scripted me, it is different from how I actually live my life. When I have to remind myself this is about them; it is their story, not mine. They can write it however they want on the other hand, am going to focus on my story and be intentional about it being a declaration of my truth about who and what I am at the moment in time.

Keeping those negatives voices out of one's internal script is not always easy. It takes practice. However, as with any craft or discipline, mastery comes through dis­ cipline, intent, and practice.

So just for today, be intentional about saying to your inner screenwriter, "Can we talk?" any time negative or self-dep­ creating lines appear in your script. Edit them out and replace them with thoughts which propel you into the light.

Legally Equal
A WHIRLWIND OF MARRIAGE LAWS
by Marcus Kroll

In the last few months have been a whirlwind in the world of LGBT rights. May started on a down note with the Amendment One in North Carolina.

The amendment was passed by the voters, with 61 percent voting to define marriage solely as a union between a man and a woman. The amendment is in concert with North Carolina law, which already bans gay marriage.

The amendment does go one step further and moves beyond state law, attempting to void other types of domestic partnerships and other laws that guarantee legal status within the state. This would have the effect of dis­ rupting protection orders for unmarried couples, gay or straight, as the new law also bars the filing of domestic abuse cases.

Shortly after, in response to North Carolina's amendment and a statement by the Vice President in a Sunday show interview supporting same-sex mar­riage of "Call Me Tony" to page 24)
President Obama has instructed the Department of Justice to no longer defend the constitutionality of DOMA. Currently, the ruling only applies within the 1st Circuit – which includes Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire and Puerto Rico. It will not be enforced in the First Circuit until the Supreme Court decides the case. It is not clear how this decision will affect other jurisdictions.

NY Gay Wedding Consultant
A YEAR OF DISCOVERY
By Eve Elzenga

After a year of helping gay couples plan personal, unique, dignified and fabulous weddings, I realize how much I have learned. From all the aspects of the wedding business to the emotional complexity of humans, it has been a year of discovery.

Here are just a few of the interesting things I have found:

- There are two — yes, two — vintage china companies in Rochester. Want plates covered in roses for your shower or reception? One of these vendors can provide them for you.
- There is still a shop in Rochester where you can sit down and look at actual wedding invitation samples. Their selections are on thick, beautiful papers with raised or engraved lettering. Very traditional, classic and classy. The women who help you with your selection are experts on printing, typography and wording. But they do not use e-mail. They are a treasure.
- The freshest flowers in town come from Stan the flower man. Stan drives to Ontario, Canada to purchase directly from growers. He makes the trip twice a week and sells his stock at the Rochester Public Market. He and his wife Diane are happy to help and will take special orders.

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Cucumber."

It's been a great summer so far. Camp­
ing weather has been gorgeous. Dinner
on the patio of Constellation Brands. Be
invited to Albany and Washington, write
letters, photographs and descriptions of
the words being used to describe our
identity. And that we ARE deserving
of the love and support we need to
reach our goals.

The Rochester Butch-Femme Con­
nection will have two supper events in
August. On Saturday, Aug. 11 we will
meet at Peppermill Diner on West Hender­
son Road in Henrietta at 7 p.m. On Aug.
25 we will meet at the Hita­
del Sushi Buffet in Southtown Plaza on
Jefferson Road in Henrietta at 7 p.m. For
more information on the Con­
nection contact Kerry Mee at 589-298-
7208, email DressyFemme@t10.com or
check out our Facebook page http://www. facebook.com/fbconnection.

ROCHESTER TRANS
GROUP

On June 30 RTG went on a field trip to
the JCC (Jewish Community Center) where
Scott Fearing, Education and Out­
reach Director for the Gay Alliance, intro­
duced us to Alex Danforth.

Alex is interning at the Gay Alliance as
part of her education at Wegmans school
of Pharmacy. She was asked by her profes­
or to create a Trans oriented brochure on
Trans medical issues. This idea came out of the Speaker's
Bureau Trans panel that was presented to the Wegmans School of Pharmacy. We
were asked to look at the prototype and comment and we had a number of ideas and
suggestions. The end result is, the brochure looks great, gives an overview of
sexual orientation.

Then we saw the traveling exhibition
"Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals 1933-
1945" at JCC. There were quite a few
panels covered with maps, copies of letters,
orders, statistics, articles and so many
photographs and descriptions of the hor­
tibles committed in that time.

The most disturbing and distressing
part was that there are many people of
almost 70 years ago are virtually identical
to the words being used to describe our
LGBT community by hate and extreme
religious groups today. Really frightening
—and that is why we march, that's why we
go to Albany and Washington, write let­
ters and protest — to demand our rights.
To be recognized as the full human beings
that we are. And that we ARE deserving
of those rights!

And speaking of marching — march
we certainly did. On Saturday, June 16 a

group of us from Rochester and Buffalo
marched in Syracuse's Pride Parade. Then
on Sunday, July 14 at the Rochester
Pride Parade, we marched as the Genesee
Valley Trans Groups, which consisted of
members of RTG, GYA, and Trans Action
from Syracuse and Buffalo (and a big
thank you to Chelsea and Christian who
brought the float they used in Buffalo's
parade and Syracuse's last month).

This is the first time that members of
upstate New York's three major cities have
marched in each other's Pride parade! And
a HUGE thank you to Emily of Water­
lo, who designed and created our
absolutely incredible banner!

Also thank you to Pam Barnes who
paid the expenses for the banner! And
finally we are extremely grateful for the
generosity of Bill Schaefer, a member
of the Gay Alliance Board of Directors and
Co-Chair of the Rochester Pride Parade,
who sponsored our participation in the
parade. Thank you again BIL!

Hope you caught the "The Good, The
Bad and The Ponny" at Equal-Grounds
WOW, the turnout was incredible (around
70 people) and so supportive! Maybe 10 or
so people were brave enough to get up on
the stage, face the crowd and tell their
story. You can't imagine just how energiz­
ing it is to talk about your transition­ing experience in front of an audience!

Now that Pride Week is done we can
look forward to reality. On Sept. 29 we will
have our usual half hour of socializing
from 3 to 3:30 p.m. or so. Our discussion
topic will be "Learning about gender
classes and unlearning old ones. Then
we'll finish up with more socializing until
around 5:30 p.m.

We meet in the Gay Alliance's Youth
Center, located in the Auditorium The­
atre, 875 E Main St. Parking is available
in the back of the theatre off of Prince St
and College Ave. Note: if there is a guard
at the booth, just say you're here for the
Gay Alliance and they have instructions
for you in withholding the parking
fee.

As we said in last month's Empty
Closet, this IS OUR time — such as an
anniversary time — so many Trans related
things are happening, RIGHT now! And
in October the RTG will celebrate its one
year anniversary (can you believe it) and
we are planning some really great... (well
that announcement will be in September's
issue). So come to a meeting, meet some
great people, talk about your concerns,
and... oh, have some fun! See you on
the last Saturday of August!

ROMANS

ROCHESTER MAKERS (ROMANS) is
a social organization of gay naturists who
enjoy camaraderie in the nude.

We are gay, bi, and gay-friendly men
over the age of twenty one. We are all
sizes, big and small. We are single, par­
ned, married and divorced. We are short
and tall, wide and thin, quiet and out­
going. We are young and not so young,
funny and smooth. ROMANS is an inclus­
ive social group for all men who are gay­
friendly who love being nude, and who
enjoy nude social activities.

Visit the Romans web site where an
application for membership and informa­
tion about the club is available http://www. rweromans.com or E-mail to gay@romans.
yahoo.com, call our message line at
258-281-9094 or write ROMANS, PO Box
92293, Rochester, NY 14692.

Find the friends, fun, and common interests you're looking for through the various
groups listed above.

---

Our & Equal's Second Thursday
Networking Event for August will be hosted by
Constellation Brands.

"Quintessentially summer — heat it
up at High Point" takes place Aug. 9,
from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at 207 High Point
Drive, Building 100, Victor.

Join us for a summer evening of social­
ing, light fare and refreshing cocktails
on the patio of Constellation Brands.
Enjoy complimentary wine, beer, Svedka
vodka and appetizers. Be among the first
to try the new Colada Svedka Tour the
Constellation Brand facility! Participate in
drawings and raffle.

$10 registration at the door cov­
ers all hors d'oeuvres and beverages for
the event. Dress for a warm evening on
the lovely patio and enjoy the beautiful
views. RSVP early and invite your friends.
(Note: In the case of inclement weather,
space may be limited.) Additional prizes
provided by Constellation Brands will
be part of this month's 50/50 raffle. All
monies raised will benefit AIDS Aide.

---

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Thursday, August 16th

SUMMER SUNDAYS
Summer Blender Drinks with Katie
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STEAK NIGHT
Steak Night with Deb every Wednesday!
Come enjoy a great dinner on our patio or inside!

Coming Labor Day Weekend!!!
Labor Day Picnic
Hot & Hamburgers
Sunday – 4pm with Katie
Monday – Open at 2pm with Josh

Be sure to check out our Facebook Page and become a Fan!
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COUPON

CoupOn

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2 - 1/4 Lb. Burgers
2 - Fries, 2 - Pop
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Menu #1 - The Economizer
Drop Off Only

$7.99

20 Person Minimum
Italian Sausage w/ Grilled Peppers & Onions
Baked Chicken • Baked Pasta • Tossed Salad
Roasted Potatoes or Salt Potatoes • Rolls & Butter
Chutney, smores, and serving platters are NOT INCLUDED with this menu. There are available for an additional charge.

The Standard Package
20 person minimum
Choice of two meats
$8.99 per person + tax
Drop Off Only

Red Roast Beef Roast Beef
Half Order 1/4 Order

Sweat ’n’ Tangy Pulled Chicken
BBQ Pulled Chicken
Uncle Fred’s Pulled Pork BBQ
Smoked Cajun Brisket
Virginia Baked Ham with Honey Glaze
Italian Sausage with grilled peppers and onions

Italian Chicken - Bonesless skinless and marinated in Italian dressing
Plus a choice of 3

Baked Pasta
Eggplant Parmesan
Mozzarella Salad
Romaine Salad
Pasta Salad
Spinach Salad
Tossed Salad
Italian Chicken
BBQ Pulled Chicken
Uncle Fred’s Pulled Pork
Smoked Cajun Brisket
Italian Sausage with grilled peppers and onions

Italian Sausage • Half Order $20 Full Order $30
Italian Chicken • Half Order $25 Full Order $40
Italian Sausage w/ Grilled Peppers & Onions • Half Order $20 Full Order $40

Pasta Salad

Choice of 3

Chicken Parmesan
Spaghetti & Meatballs
Stuffed Shells
Baked Ziti

Penne Pasta
Pasta Salad

Italian Chicken

Full Order
Half Order

Italian Sausage w/ Grilled Peppers
Onions • Half Order $20 Full Order $40

Baked Pasta

Choice of 3

Italian Chicken

Full Order
Half Order

Vegetable Medley

Choice of 3

Mozzarella Salad
Romaine Salad
Pasta Salad

Full Order
Half Order

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4712 Ridge Rd. W. Spencerville 352-5860 (Open Monday-Friday 11am-9pm, Saturday & Sunday 7am-9pm)
Kasha Davis premieres “Cocktail” at Rochester Fringe Festival Sept 19-23

Mrs. Kasha Davis is back with a new “Cocktail”!

Local actor Ed Popil has appeared in several plays around town, including his acclaimed portrayal of Roger De Bris, the cross-dressing “Springtime” Director in Mel Brooks’ “The Producers” at JCC CenterStage and roles in “Lipstick Masquerade” with Pondera at JCC CenterStage and Geva Nextstage and in “The Mystery of Irma Vep” at Blackfriars.

The rest of Rochester knows him best as “Mrs. Kasha Davis, International Celebrity Housewife” and the co-star of “Big Wig”.

The story of how Little Eddie Popil transformed from a young boy in Scranton, Pa. to “Mrs. Kasha Davis” is unveiled in a new play entitled “There’s Always Time for a Cocktail”.

Popil is teaming with JCC CenterStage Director Ralph Meranto to present the play’s world premiere at The Rochester Fringe Festival Sept. 19-23 at the TheaterRow at Xerox Auditorium.

Audiences can join the ultimate hostess for an evening of music, stories and party games with a heartfelt story of love, acceptance and finding your own path. For details, call the JCC Arts Dept at 461-2000 ext 235.

Sept. 8 White Party to benefit AIDS Care

Rochester’s White Party, a new fundraising event to benefit AIDS Care, will take place on Saturday, Sept. 8, at the Century Club of Rochester, 566 East Ave.

The event will begin at 6:30 p.m. and will include musical entertainment, food, drinks and several surprises.

The event-planning committee is comprised of volunteers and is being chaired by Lisa Cove, a longtime supporter of AIDS Care and friend of the organization’s co-founder, William M. Valent MD.

“We want to create a signature fundraising event, embraced and recognized by the greater Rochester community, so that patients at AIDS Care can continue to receive high-quality care in a welcoming environment,” says Cove.

The theme has been an international success in cities such as Paris, Montreal, Patras, New York and Palm Springs. According to Cove, “We want to bring this world-renowned theme to Rochester. The color represents purity, beauty, and elegance. It also makes everyone look beautiful!”

Dr. Valent, co-founder, senior vice president of medical affairs, and interim chief medical officer, will serve as the event’s honorary chair. “We are very excited to partner with Lisa Cove and the committee to help raise awareness about HIV/AIDS,” says Valent. “HIV has not gone away. AIDS Care provides the comprehensive medical care, support, and treatment that patients need to live healthier lives while coping with the many challenges of this chronic condition.”

Funds raised at this event will benefit AIDS Care’s research program and scenes that should plan on wearing their best white attire for this “elegant evening dressed in white.”

Tickets are available for purchase and there is tiered pricing (prices will rise as the event gets closer). Event sponsorships and V.I.P. tickets are also available. For more information or to purchase tickets for the Rochester White Party, visit AIDS Care’s website at: http://www.acrotchester.org/modules/events/eventid_48. For updates on event details, visit the official website: www.RochesterWhiteParty.com.

Angels in America: Perestroika is at Geva Aug. 30-Sept. 9

Following a successful run of Angels in America Part I: Millennium Approaches in April, Geva Theatre Center will host Method Machine’s production of Tony Kushner’s Angels in America Part II: Perestroika, in the Fielding Nextstage from Aug. 3-Sept. 9.

Angels in America is set in late 1985 and early 1986, as the first wave of the AIDS epidemic in America is escalating and Ronald Reagan has been elected to a second term in the White House. Raging from early eighties, from the political to the intimate to the visionary and supernatural, Angels in America is an epic exploration of love, justice, identity, and theology, of the difficulty, terror and necessity of change. In the second half of Tony Kushner’s epic, the characters that we met in Part I, during the opportunistic 1980s, have developed a sense of community in the 1990s as they come to terms with overcoming catastrophic loss.

Angels in America, Part II: Perestroika was being developed as Part I: Millennium Approaches was being performed. It received its world premiere in November 1992 at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. A year later, it received its London debut at the Royal National Theatre. It won the 1993 Drama Desk and Tony Awards for Best Play.

The cast of Method Machine’s production of Angels in America Part II: Perestroika features Judith Molner (Hannah, Rabbi, Doctor), Peter J. Doyle (Roy, Prior II), Joshua Radford (Joe, Prior II, Eldon), Mary L. Savavano (Harper, Martin), Darlando Bailey (Julius, Lee), Carl Di Buono (Prior, Man in the Park), David Kyle (Louis), Erin Kate Howard (Emily, Angel, Mormon Mother).

As a special event, an encore marathon performance of Part I: Millennium Approaches will take place on Sunday, Sept. 9 at 2 p.m., followed by an evening performance of Part II: Perestroika, giving patrons the opportunity to see the entire seven-hour epic in one day.

Angels in America, Part II: Perestroika is directed by David Henderson. The creative team reunites from last season’s production of Part I: Millennium Approaches and includes Andrew Shomir (Scenic (Angels continues page 28).
(Angels continued from page 27)

Design), Zebulon Houmslea (Costume Design), Kate Sweeney (Lighting Design), John Wilcox (Sound Design), and Eric Evans (Dramaturg).

Tickets start at $25. Reservations: (585) 232-GEVA (4382). Website: www.gevatheatre.org. Geva Theatre Center is located at 75 Woodbury Blvd. More information will follow in the September Empty Closet.

Beth Bloom shows new photos at the Gallery@Equal=Grounds

The August exhibit at The Gallery @ Equal=Grounds is “bloomed,” new photographs by Beth Bloom.

The opening reception is Friday Aug. 3, from 7-9 p.m. Equal=Grounds is located at 750 South Ave. Beth Bloom says, “Please join me to celebrate my second anniversary as gallery director.”

Jason & deMarco to sing here Sept. 29

The openly gay, spiritually-focused musical duo Jason and deMarco will return to Rochester on Saturday, Sept. 29, for an evening of music and inspiration at The Episcopal Church of St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene.

They will be premiering songs from their new album, entitled “The Oneness of Praise.”

With the international release of their album SAFE and the rave reviews that their award-winning SHOWTIME film, “We’re All Angels,” is receiving, Jason and deMarco’s story in People Magazine made the recording duo familiar names to music fans.

Their first single, “It’s Okay,” earned Top 40 status on the Billboard charts and was recently selected as an Abercrombie and Fitch in-store playlist favorite across the nation. With the release of SAFE, Jason and deMarco step into the mainstream with their new moody and chilled-out delivery of new music, as well as recordings that appear in We’re All Angels.

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Travel

Mini Time in Minneapolis

By Merle East

Exploring Minnesota, I went to the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Minneapolis is the largest of the three, but doesn’t necessarily have it all. I loved all three, with a totally different experience in each.

After grabbing a bite in town, I was off to the Lab Theatre to see “Rocky Horror Live”. The theatre, located at 700 North First, is in the Warehouse District a few blocks from where I was staying. Great performance... excellent acting, except that I didn’t care for the guy portraying Dr. Frank n Furter. The locals got a kick because he’s a local personality.

Mill City Museum wasn’t far from the hotel. Minneapolis tourism assisted by sending Bett Santrang. Built into the ruins of what was once the world’s largest flour mill, Mill City Museum is located on the historic Mississippi Riverfront. “Here, visitors of all ages learn about the intertwined histories of the flour industry, the river, and the city of Minneapolis” and I did. The original A Mill, built in 1874, was leveled by a flour dust explosion that claimed 18 lives. That explosion and the resulting fire destroyed much of the riverfront business area, curtailing Minneapolis’ milling capacity in half. Rebuilding and the Minneapolis Historic Society are why it is here.

As for the Riverfront... Minneapolis has more bridges across the Mississippi River than any other community, including suspension, stone arch, steel truss, and concrete-arch bridges. It’s also the site of the first bridge across the Mississippi. On January 23, 1855, a suspension bridge opened in Minneapolis from Nicollet Island to what is now the downtown side of the Mississippi at Hennepin Avenue. Combined with an 1853 bridge from Nicollet Island to the other side of the river, this suspension bridge completed the very first permanent span anywhere along the Mississippi River. It’s a great tour with loads to see and interestingly historic.

I spent much of an afternoon at the Mall of America, then back to Minneapolis for dinner at Republic in a particular locale called 7 corners. New restaurant, pub style. Uses local ingredients? Separate bar area seemed quite busy! I had the best ribs ever! Marinated in five spices and other goodies. Sweet sauce rather than spicy or salty. Entree was a Butter nut Squash Ravioli. Brown butter cream, crispy sage, toasted pine nuts. Totally delicious. Oh yeah... they had Kwak beer! I love that beer! Got a hamburger steak salad and turkey and apple sandwich to go. Hey, they even make their own ketchup! Good luck to you, Rick Gunztel!

Just down the block is Theatre in the Round, where I saw the play “The Reluctant Debutante”. I was not disappointed with the acting... a step above Community Theatre.

An architecture of bright colors, waterfalls and tall windows spans the walls of Rosa Mexicano, located at 609 Hennepin Avenue, in the Minneapolis’ entertainment district, one of 12 in the United States where you can expect true Mexican fare that is far from Tex-Mex. I was looking forward to partaking. www.rosamexicano.com. And... for further information on Minneapolis, go to www.exploreminneapolis.com.
THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

THANKS FIRST TO CARRIE VERNON AND THE PRIDE COMMITTEE

(Michael Hardy, Joe Murphy, Louis Mistretta, Bill Schaefer, Jo Meleca-Voigt, Jeff Markarian, Zayne Austin, Lora Thody, Alyssa Styker, Logan Rath, Corey, Michelle, Alyssa Valsey), Jeannes for months TO... Jewish the Holocaust through Pride our wonderful Rochester

Ultralounge Co., Lake Finger Lakes Musical Theatre Festival, Barefoot Wines & Bubbly, CNY Fertility Center, Rokk Vodka, Jagermeister, City of Rochester • Peter Mohr, Lytha

Rath, tech support • Jeff Jones, Friedman, Kat Wiggall, Bridg the amazing Library volunteers Volunteers Coordinator Alyssa Valsey & staff (Anne Wakeman, Scott interns Ashley Powers & Alex President John Altieri • Eric • 140 Alex (PridePaloza) Picnic Committee members: Day • Jessica Mackville • Open food to Pride Picnic volunteers!

• Jennifer Mathews & Wegman's School of Pharmacy at Sjuf • Also the winners of the Pride Picnic sites decoration: 1st Place: Flamingo Farmers • Andrew Seefeld, Brian Smith, Gary Douglas • 2nd Place: The River Folk Fortress of Sassitude • Kate Sweeney • Marilyn Rochester

Chorus: • Rochester Women's Community Church • Tilt • Bill Levy • Hedonist Artisan Chocolates dunking booth proceeds of $800 to the Youth Jennifer Posey, Gretchen Arnold, Laura (Lcatt), Pam C. Burris, Nathaniel Mich & Michael • DJ Todd • DJ Scott • DJ Hector • DJ Henry • Lambda Kodak (provided free portraits) • EZ Bottle & • Monroe County Parks (Ryan Lysen & grounds staff) • WXXI • Rochester Pride sponsors: • Rochester Museum & Science Center • All

• Rick Steven's • City of Rochester (special thanks to)

• Shee's Outhouse • Nolan's PARADE & FESTIVAL • Rochester Police Department & Chief James Sheppard • Mayor Tom Richards & The City of Rochester • Rochester Fire Department • Park Avenue Merchants & Neighborhood Associations • Todd plank & Tom Ferranese • Drivers John, Bob & Jeff Briggs • Jami Halner • Jessica Sutta's driver • Three Judges: Deb Oppenheimer, Karen Morris • City Rickshaw • Wegmans (water) • VisitRochester • Larry & Kelly at Airgroup

Muthers Favorite (best of show): Tilt • Stonewall Award: Rochester nightlife Award: Community Award: Gay Alliances • Lambda • Rochester Gay Men's Chorus • Committee Chairs Joe Murphy & Carrie

Bill Schaefer, Michael • Bucks For Pride Kelley • All parade food/merchandise/entertainers: Jessica • Extraordinary Posters • Rbtl backstage & Scott Free • Drag performers: Sasha Sashay, Brooks, Anthony

FLAG RAISING • City Hall, especially Margaret, Gloria & Mo • Speakers: Chief James Sheppard, Matt Haag, Harry Bronson, Deputy • Matt Molloy, emcee • Rochester Women’s Community Church

Mayor Leonard E. Redon • City Council members

IN THE SOUTH WEDGE • Boulder Coffee Co.; Echo & Sport; John's Tex Mex; Inn Rochester Airport Sales & Assistant • Calamari Sisters & Ultralounge • DJ Chuck • BJ Scansion THE GOOD, Rowan Collins, Jason Robert & EQUAL NETWORKING who donated back MOVIES ImageOut for a superhero-themed movie • Third Presbyterian Church LAMBDA PROJECT (and donation) Christ Church Downtown SPECIAL THANKS ALSO TO... Photographers Ove Ovemyer, Garnetta Ely, Jeff Coulier, Jeff Mills, Melora Miller, Gerry Szymanski, Jill Frier, Mary Lou Smith, Manuel Pena, Matt Ulakovic • Our great graphic designer Jim (Batman) Anderson APOLOGIES TO ANYONE whose name was inadvertently omitted. AND THANKS TO EVERYONE IN THE LGBT COMMUNITY AND ALL OUR ALLIES WHO CAME TO THE EVENTS, FOR MAKING THIS A GREAT COMMUNITY-BUILDING 11 DAYS!

PR • Volunteer Coordinators Robert Rogers, Cynthia Marshall, Ed Waterhouse, Ashley Powers, Bridget Brownell • Gerry Szymanski & • Over 250 Rochester Pride Superhero volunteers • Tilt • Hollywood • Tilt • Nightclub & Beverage Corp... Three Olivies, ImageOut, Sweet Revenge, Rochester Victory Alliance, Wilton & Louis Mistretta • Logan
Out Loud, Out Proud: Youth Summer Camp
runs Aug. 20-24
By Susan Jordan
LGBTQ youth can find their voices and learn leadership skills and help in this month at Youth Summer Camp. The focus of the five-day free program for high school youths who are already out will be on LGBTQ history and identity, to talk about personal experiences as LGBTQ youth, and how to maintain a healthy mind and body.
Youth will play leadership games, facilitated by The Village Idol group; see videos and film on queer history; do a community service project; go on a field trip and complete individual projects on the history of Rochester’s LGBTQ community. Youth need to apply by Aug. 5.
Kelly Clark, Intern Program Coordinator, said, “The youth will be doing part of our Speak Out training, which will help them gain the language skills they need to talk about their own experiences. We will be doing a community service project to do a summer camp for kids, which will help the youth get to know each other. She added, “Various Donnie Lagreca from Nazareth will be our mental health counselor this year. She will work with youth on how to help their community.”

“With our school being a document of our history, ‘The Celluloid Closet,’ about the history of LGBTQ characters in Hollywood films. The youth will be working on local LGBTQ history in the community of the surrounding area. On Stand On in helping me lessons plan, using the archive version of The Empty Closet stories, complete individual projects on the history of LGBTQ-related small group projects.”

She noted that Gay Alliance board member Sarah Nelson is raising funds to enable 20 youth to attend the program, which will cost the Gay Alliance $100 for each participant. As of mid-July, she had raised $1,650 in one week’s time. Kelly said, “We feel it’s important that all families be able to send their kids even if they can’t afford to pay.”
Applications for mid-July included three youth from Henrietta, one from Roches­ter and one from Webster. Kelly said that all have already been involved in their school GSA. She said, “The youth who participate in Out Loud Out Proud is for a reason. This gives youth who will be in grades 9 through 12 in the fall, the opportunity to be better leaders and community advocates. This experience will give them the skills to do that.”

The Summer Camp runs Aug. 20-24 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. To register, call Kelly at 244-8040 or email youthprograms@gayalliance.org.
More exciting youth in the next issue.

RWCC donates to Gay Alliance Youth Group
The Rochester Women’s Community Chorus (RWCC) has donated a portion of their profits from their spring concert to support the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley’s Youth Program.
Concerned with the concert’s theme of friendship and support, RWCC’s audience was treated to a program filled with familiar songs, such as “No One Is Alone,” “Bridge Over Troubled Waters,” “Lean on Me” and “We Are Family.”
She noted that Gay Alliance board member Jordan Altieri, board member Susan Mecor, executive director Scott Fearing, andampton Executive Director John Elkin, and Outreach Director Susan Waters, had been involved in their fundraising. The youth will be able to send their kids even if they can’t afford to pay.

Youth will screen a couple of documentaries, including “The Celluloid Closet,” about the history of LGBTQ characters in Hollywood films. The youth will be working on local LGBTQ history in the community of the surrounding area. On Stand On in helping me lessons plan, using the archive version of The Empty Closet stories, complete individual projects on the history of LGBTQ-related small group projects.”

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More exciting youth in the next issue.

SAGE picnic, eucharistic tournament coming up!
Are you ready for some food and fun? Then come to this Rainbow SAGE annual picnic at King’s Bend Park, North Lodge on 170 West Jefferson Road, Pittsford, on Sunday, Aug. 26, at 12:30 p.m.
Here and burgers will be provided and drinks (non-alcoholic) are included; bring your own food and drinks. Please bring your own table, chairs, and dishes. The tournament will be held, as in the past, at Temple B’rith Kodesh, 2131 Elmwood Ave. To register, call Ginny at 585-473-4765 by Sept. 16.

If you’re interested in playing, please let us know. We need at least 30 teams to make it happen. The tournament will be held at Temple B’rith Kodesh, 2131 Elmwood Ave. To register, call Ginny at 585-473-4765 by Sept. 16.

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BISEXUALITY RESOURCES

AMBI Los Angeles: American Institute of Bisexuality Journal of Research; Bar Area Bisexual Network; Gas; Bi Definition: Milwaukee; Bih U of Wisconsin; Bipartisan Project Group; Bluetooth: Boston: Boston Bisexual Women's Network; Contribe - Columbus; citrus; Dallas/ Fort Worth Lambda; Detroit Gender Freedom Project; Los Angeles; B&J Task Force; New York Area Bisexual Network; Rochester Octopus; Ottawa Bicentennial Project; PFLAG National; San Francisco Bay Vinters Association: The Bisexual Resource Center email bic@icnet.edu.

CULTURAL

Rochester Women's Community Chorus 234-3746; West End Center 585-246-9021.

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Advocacy for Abused Deaf Victims
Mailing address: c/o AGADV, P.O. Box 20023, Rochester 14602, 24-hour hotline: AGADV 585-275-7500, TTY 585-275-2991.

Lita: Rainbow Alliance for the Deaf (LRAD) 585-624-5171.

Second Monday, 9-11pm. For location, information: coaster@rochester.com.

Spectrum Community Development Center (RPCD) 585-312-8907

FRIENDS


Rochester Gay Moms' Group
Support group for mothers and families of gay and or lesbian members in Rochester and surrounding areas. Subscribe: RochesterGayMoms-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Lesbian & Gay Family Building Project Headquartered in Bethlehem and with a presence in many other areas, the LGFJP is dedicated to helping the LGBTQ community achieve their goals and needs. They offer support, assistance, and a wide variety of resources. They also provide legal aid to those in need.

Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth (PFLAG) is the national, voluntary, community-based organization providing support, information, and resources to LGBTQI families and their friends. They offer support, including parent groups, to LGBTQI youth and families. They also provide resources, such as booklets and educational materials, to help families and friends of LGBTQI youth.

The Empty Closet

The Empty Closet is a resource directory page dedicated to providing information for the LGBTQI community. It includes a variety of resources, such as support organizations, legal aid, and healthcare services. The website is updated regularly to ensure that the information is current and accurate.

GAVI Anti-Violence Project
GAVI Anti-Violence Project provides support and resources to LGBTQI individuals and families who have experienced violence. They offer support, education, and advocacy to help prevent and respond to violence.

Women's Center
Women's Center provides support and resources to LGBTQI individuals and families. They offer support, education, and advocacy to help prevent and respond to violence. They also provide resources, such as booklets and educational materials, to help families and friends of LGBTQI youth.

WomensResourceCenter
Women's Resource Center provides support and resources to LGBTQI individuals and families. They offer support, education, and advocacy to help prevent and respond to violence. They also provide resources, such as booklets and educational materials, to help families and friends of LGBTQI youth.

HIV/AIDS

Free testing for HIV exposure is available from the New York State Department of Health, 585-275-2900. If you are at risk for HIV, the National HIV Testing Hotline can be called at 1-800-342-4555. For more information, call 585-681-6915.

HIV/AIDS Testing

Testing centers are located throughout the area, providing confidential HIV testing and counseling services.

AIDS Free testing for HIV exposure is available from the New York State Department of Health, 585-275-2900. If you are at risk for HIV, the National HIV Testing Hotline can be called at 1-800-342-4555. For more information, call 585-681-6915.

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—Women’s Center provides support and resources to LGBTQI individuals and families. They offer support, education, and advocacy to help prevent and respond to violence. They also provide resources, such as booklets and educational materials, to help families and friends of LGBTQI youth.

—WomensResourceCenter

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**August 2012**

**WEDNESDAY 1**

**FRIDAY 3**
Registration deadline for Out Loud Proud, Youth Summer Camp, Aug. 20-24, for high school students who are already out. Info: Kelly Clark, 244-8460; youth@gayalliance.org.

**SUNDAY 5**
Dignity Integrity. Episcopal Man’s/Healing Service, with music, at 5 p.m. at St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. Website: http://www.dl-rochester.org/ or call DI Hotline at 585-234-5092.

**MONDAY 6**
Gay Alliance/Rainbow SAGE Senior Center. 11-3 p.m. Picnic Day with indoor bowling. First floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8460.

**TUESDAY 7**
Gay Alliance/Rainbow SAGE Senior Center. 11-3 p.m. Movie and popcorn, 1 p.m. Film: “Sunset Story.” First floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8460.

**THURSDAY 9**
Equal Second Thursday Networking Event. Constellation Brands, 207 High Point Drive, Building 100, Victor. 5:30-7:30 p.m. $10 registration at door.

**SATURDAY 11**
Women of Color Social Gathering, sponsored by AIDS Care at The Vineyard, 126 Sander St., noon-6 p.m. Keynote speaker: Verna White of Human Innovation, RSVP: By Aug. 1, by contacting Jackie Doster, minority health initiatives program coordinator, at (585) 210-4126 or via e-mail: jdozier@acRochester.org.

**SUNDAY 12**
Dignity Integrity. Roman Catholic liturgy of the word, with music, at 5 p.m. at St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. Website: http://www.dl-rochester.org/ or call DI Hotline at 585-234-5092.

**MONDAY 13**
Gay Alliance/Rainbow SAGE Senior Center. 11-3 p.m. Kidney Foundation Presentation. First floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8460.

**TUESDAY 14**
Gay Alliance/Rainbow SAGE Senior Center. 11 am-1 National Grandparent’s Day, 11 am. First floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8460.

**WEDNESDAY 15**
Empty Closet deadline for September issue. 244-9030; susan@gayalliance.org.

**TUESDAY 21**
Gay Alliance/Rainbow SAGE Senior Center. 11-3 p.m. Field Trip to Barnes & Noble, Lunch Outing at Friendly’s (585-297-7979 or tax and tip includes ice cream). Meet at Auditorium Parking lot 11 am, transportation provided courtesy of AIDS Care. Return by 2:45 p.m.

**Out Loud Proud Youth Summer Camp. Through Aug. 24, 9 am-3:30 pm.**

**TUESDAY 28**
Gay Alliance/Rainbow SAGE Senior Center. 11-3 p.m. Dream Day. Come ready to write down and share your dreams. I pm: make “dream big” cards for the children at Golisano Children’s Hospital. Bring any card making supplies you may have.

**THURSDAY 30**
Angels in America: Perestroika. Opening. Runs through Sept. 9 at Geva Theatre Center. 11am-3 pm. Kidney Foundation Center. 11 am, transportation provided courtesy of AIDS Care. Return by 2:45 pm.

**National Senior Citizens Day**
Gay Alliance/Rainbow SAGE Senior Center, 11-3 pm. Lunch with GAGV Youth. Join youth at 11 am in Community Room to talk about history, then enjoy lunch (bring a bagged lunch). Leave 12:30 by van provided by AIDS Care to Planetarium, 657 East Ave. (cost $3 paid in advance, so we need head count by Aug. 14.)

**SATURDAY 25**
Rochester Butch Femme Connection. Meet 7 pm, Peppermaprt Diner en West Henrietta Road (Route 15) near Lehigh Station Road in Henrietta. Info: (585) 288-7208, email DrawnFemme@AOL.com or Facebook page http://www.facebook.com/rochesterbutfch.

**SUNDAY 26**
Dignity Integrity. Evening Prayer, followed by a Potluck Supper. Pot Luck Theme: “Goed as a Cucumber.” Dinner in Lawyers’ Co-op Park on the river across from Convention Center on Main St. Service 5 pm at St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. Website http://www.di-rochester.org/ or call DI Hotline at 585-234-5092.

**Rainbow SAGE Picnic, King’s Dead Park, North Lodge, 170 West Jefferson Road, Pittsford. 12:30 pm. Bring dish to pass.**

**MONDAY 27**
Gay Alliance/Rainbow SAGE Senior Center. 11-3 pm. Whip up some banana smoothies at 1 pm. First floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8460.

**TUESDAY 28**
Gay Alliance/Rainbow SAGE Senior Center. 11-3 p.m. Dream Day. Come ready to write down and share your dreams. 1 pm: make "dream big" cards for the children at Golisano Children’s Hospital. Bring any card making supplies you may have.

**THURSDAY 30**
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**Sunday 31**
Said for grant applications for non-profits from the LGBT Giving Circle: www.racf.org/LGBT

**OCTOBER 2012**

**FRIDAY 5**
Lake Avenue Baptist Church
An LGBT Affirming Church Invites You!

10:00 AM: Sunday morning worship service
11:15 AM: A Time for Fellowship
11:30 am: Adult Education

Childcare & Sunday School for children are available.

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

www.lakeavebaptist.org
www.facebook.com/pages/LakeAve-Baptist-Church

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**Classifieds**

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 ads accompanied by name and phone number. Neither will be published, but we must be able to confirm placements. The Empty Closet is not responsible for financial loss or physical injury that may result from any contact with an advertiser. Advertisers must use their own box number, voice mail, e-mail or personal address/phone number.

**SERVICES**

Rochester’s Best Man to Man Rape/Rape/1 und with this doggedly employed, fit, friendly, healthy, Italian GWM. Middle aged, 5’8”, 165 lbs., 32” waist, nonsmoker, D & D free, HIV negative. My 10+ years experience guarantees your relaxation and satisfaction. Hourly visit, in call in my home or out call in your residence. Reasonable rates. Discretion appreciated and practiced. Don’t delay, call today at 585-773-2410 (cell) or 585-235-6088 (home) or e-mail me at: magicchucks@rochester.rr.com.

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**Lake Avenue Baptist Church**

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**An LGBT Affirming Church**

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PFLAG meets the 3rd Sunday of each month. Meetings are at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church, 740 Marshall Road, Rochester 14624 from 1 to 3pm. Join us! Questions? Call: 585-244-8640 and leave a message, or e-mail: pflag@gayalliance.org

Seeking sex in the park? No 10 on you = Automatic Arrest
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585 - 244 - 8640

The Gay Alliance is seeking a reliable, energetic self-starter to sell Empty Closet advertising for a generous commission. For more information, please Susan Jordan at 244-9030 or e-mail: susanj@gayalliance.org

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