Progressive political agenda is on tap for 2013: local politicians comment

By Ove Overmyer
Staff Reporter

Any way you slice it, 2013 will be a turbulent year for our global economy and America’s working families. But don’t despair. Most pundits would agree that our legislative gridlock in Washington is the primary source of this turbulence, and even though we hear despair and bleak predictions coming from both of the political extremes, our local lawmakers still think progressive folks will have plenty to cheer about in the coming legislative year.

Since 2010, most of the nation’s attention has fallen on Congress’ inability to pass meaningful legislation. The 112th Congress, which came to a close the first week in January, was the least productive in history. Together, the House and Senate enacted 36 fewer laws, considered the fewest bills and held the lowest number of formal negotiations between them — all measures that helped these politicians achieve a new historic low.

The finger-pointing starts with a dysfunctional legislative branch, especially the House GOP; the concepts of compromise and pragmatism were non-existent. It takes real skill to be less appreciated than one of the most phobia-inducing insects on the planet, but somehow Congress managed, hitting new lows in a recent Public Policy Polling (PPP) survey that found even cockroaches more appealing.

Also more popular than Congress: root canals, NFL replacement referees, head lice, Canadian rock band Nickelback, colonoscopies, carnies (that is, carnival employees), traffic jams, Donald Trump, France, Genghis Khan, used-car salesmen, Washington political pundits and brussels sprouts.

In any event, in an effort to inform our readers, The Empty Closet set out to interview several local elected officials to get their perspective on what area residents can expect in the coming year. We asked lawmakers to provide an analysis of what key developments and major policies will confront us in 2013 and to discuss what they hope to accomplish in the new legislative session. Here is what they had to say.

Rep. Louise Slaughter
Rep. Louise Slaughter is the United States representative for New York’s 25th Congressional District, serving in Congress since 1987. She is arguably one of the most beloved public officials from the Rochester area ever to serve in Congress.

The dance will run from 7 to 11 p.m., in the Cathedral Ballroom at the Auditorsium Center, 875 E. Main St. The glamorous evening will feature raffles, a photo booth, prizes for best masks and outfits, complimentary refreshments and a wine and beer lounge. Youth Group members are working on fabulous masks for ball-goers — only $5 – or you can bring your own.

Music will be provided by DJ Chuck Argeto.

Tickets are $10 in advance (www.gagv.org/events/redball.shtml or at Equal Ground, Outlawland, Dat-kleigh, and Arlenes’ Costumes) and $15 at the door.
Predictions: 2013

Last year saw encouraging gains for the LGBT community nationwide. Marriage is now legal in Washington state, Maryland and Maine, while Minnesota rejected an anti-gay amendment. Many polls indicale that prejudice against our love and families is declining and acceptance of LGBT people as human beings is increasing.

In the Rochester area and New York in general, the election saw victories for gay candidates like Harry Bronson and Scan Patrick Maloney, and many pro-gay candidates. Least we grow complacent, though, we should remember that we are still in a period of backlash, and while the professional bigots’ power has lessened, we could still lose everything we have gained if we sit back and say, “Everything’s fine and we don’t have any further work to do.” Youth who get harassed every day at school, trans people, gays, and lesbians attacked on the street, and families who can’t get federal recognition because of DOMA, could tell us that it hasn’t yet over. Not even close.

We don’t know what surprises 2013 holds, but it’s fun to imagine. The Empty Closet has therefore consulted its Mighty Mystic for a less-than-serious reading.

From the Empty Closet Crystal Ball

An inspection will be found on the wall of a newly discovered Mayan temple: “Beginning of North American Goofball Media Age.”

Twinkies will return, but in the form of eggs rolled stuffed with whipped cream, now manufactured in Taiwan by non-unionized workers. The new company will be short-lived due to a lawsuit by cannoli manufacturers. Tea Party Republican members of the House of Representations will be voted out next November and replaced by golden retrievers who have nice personalities and play well with others.

A collaboration between Lady Gaga and Psy will create the global pop trend of 2013: “Gagam.”

In an attempt to shore up ratings, trendy vampires, werewolves and zombies will take over the cast of “Glee.”

In a similar effort, the undead will replace living commentators on Fox News — but no one will notice the difference.

NASA will discover an earth-like planet with intelligent life forms, as deduced from radio message tentatively translated as “The check is in the mail.”

Global warming will decline slightly in 2013 due to the evaporated election-year hot air.

Big Gas will keep trying to turn the clock backwards.

Donald Trump’s hairpiece will become a miniature golf course in Connecticut.

Congressional Republicans will continue trying to shut down the government and slash Social Security, food stamps and Medicare, to get the $3 million needed for their top priority: paying lawyers to defend DOMA.

The sky will continue not to fall as same sex marriage becomes legal in an increasing number of states. Chicken Little will be fired and become a sandwich with Chicken Fil A.

Home Care

How will you choose your provider of Home Care when you need it?

So many of us struggle with this question from a personal safety and financial perspective.

How would you like to be cared for at home if you needed care during recuperation from an accident or for long term care needs? What would you like a total stranger to know about you or would not like them to know? What are your fears? What would you expect of this caregiver? Do you trust your doctor to recommend someone to come into your home?

The Gay Alliance has partnered with Home Care Rochester, the leading home care agency in Rochester, ranked in the top 100 in the nation out of 10,000 agencies. HCR has invited the Gay Alliance to provide both insights on concerns and issues LGBT clients may have prior to inviting a caregiver into their homes and LGBT cultural competency training for their staff.

Realizing that there are unique needs that the LGBT population may face, Home Care of Rochester has taken a leading role to partner with the Academy of Medicine, AIDS Care and the Gay Alliance to educate the medical professionals and those who train and educate these professionals and caregivers on March 14, at the Academy of Medicine.

A panel of leading physicians will discuss the unique needs of the LGBT population at this symposium. The symposium is open to 60-70 physicians, nurses, therapists and faculty training all health care professionals and all caregivers. The symposium will explore and describe what the health care provider’s role needs to be in order to create welcoming and affirming healthcare for the LGBT community.

This cutting edge symposium and the work that follows from it will enable those of us who will need care to feel safe, affirmed and well cared for in our own homes, as we invite a stranger in to care for us.

Many things

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The Empty Closet is free with your annual membership in the Gay Alliance.
Progressive from page 1

New York’s major priorities are sev-
ernon of the Violence Against Women Act and the Employment Non-
discrimination Act (ENDA). ENDA would prohibit em-
ployees from discriminating on the basis of sexual orien-
tion or gender identity when consider-
ing decisions on hiring, firing, promotion, or implementing an individual or employee.

Slaughter also told The EC she plans to pass a bill which would establish a com-
prehensive federal prohibition of discrimination in the workplace, on schools, based on actual or per-
cived sexual orientation or gen-
der identity and provide victims with meaningful and effective remedies, modeled after Title IX. This bill is called the Stu-
dent Non-Discrimination Act (SNDA).
President Obama: The love we commit to one another...

An excerpt from President Obama’s inaugural address:

"...We, the people, declare today that the most evident of truths — that all of us are created equal — is the star that guides us still; just as our forebears through Seneca Falls, and Selma, and Stonewall, just as it guided all those men and women, strong and2 weak, who left footprints along this great Mall, to hear a preacher say that we cannot walk alone; to hear a King proclaim that our individual freedom is inextricably bound to the freedom of every soul on Earth. It is now our generation’s task to carry on what those pioneers began...."
Currently, the BSA is discussing potentially removing the national membership restriction regarding sexual orientation. This would mean there would no longer be any national policy regarding sexual orientation, and the chartered organizations that oversee and deliver Scouting would accept membership and select leaders consistent with each organization’s mission, principles, or religious beliefs. BSA members and parents would be able to choose a local unit that best meets the needs of their families.

NBC News reports that “the change could come as early as next week, after the BSA’s national board holds a regularly scheduled meeting.”

"The Boy Scouts of America have heard from scouts, corporations and millions of Americans that discriminating against gay scouts and scout leaders is wrong,” said GLAAD President Herndon Graddick. “Scouting is a valuable institution and this change will only strengthen its core principles of fairness and respect.”

"This would be an incredible step forward in the fight against homophobia,” said Walhs, Eagle Scout and founder of Scouts for Equality. “We look forward to working with BSA Councils and chartering organizations across the country to end the exclusion of our gay brothers in Scouting, as well as the gay and lesbian leaders who serve the organizations so well.”

According to the BSA website, there are over 500 local councils across the country. Scouts for Equality reports that 11 councils, serving over 200,000 Scouts, have already taken a stand against the BSA’s anti-gay policies.

Christian poll: Fewer Americans think homosexuality is a sin

Trudy Ring posted on The Advocate on Jan. 11: “The percentage of Americans who think being gay is a sin, according to a new poll. The poll, Field & Sullivan’s Christian Life/Way Research, a Christian-oriented firm, showed 37 percent of respondents saying ‘homosexual behavior’ is in fact ‘always wrong.’ This is down from 44 percent in a September 2011 survey. That’s a statistically significant difference, say LifeWay pollsters, who conducted their latest study in November and released the results in January. In the new poll, fully 63 percent of respondents said homosexuality is not a sin, up from 43 percent in 2011, and 17 percent said it’s ‘always wrong’ — down from 33 percent in the previous study.

LifeWay president Ed Stetzer said that the poll’s results are a “substantial drop in the proportion of Americans who think being gay is a sin, according to a new poll.”

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GOP lawmakers back Wyo. marriage bill

GOP state Rep. Keith Gingery is one of the cosponsors of a marriage equality bill just proposed in Wyoming. Yes, Wyoming.

Laramie Democratic Rep. Kathy Connelly filed legislation in January that would create a path for gay couples to form civil unions or get married. The dual approach already has won the backing of Reps. Ruth Ann Perretta, R-Jackson, and Gingery. Both Tenon County lawmakers said they would prefer to see gay marriage allowed in Wyoming but are willing to debate whether civil unions might be a better way to go.

“Wyomingites, in order to be a basic human rights and fairness issue, Perrotta said. “It’s a basic constitutional issue. There should just be no reason for same-sex couples not to have the same rights as everyone else.”

Gingery is the chairman of the judiciary committee, which will be the first to debate the bill. He said the issue poses a legal problem that state officials need to resolve. "The population of gay couples in the state is increasing, and the law is not very clear about what rights they have," he said. Gingery, who is Catholic, says the question of whether to allow same-sex couples to get married in Wyoming isn’t a religious issue. If passed, the law wouldn’t affect church policy, he said.

Some sex marriage bills have failed in the Wyoming legislature in 2007, 2009, and 2011.

Film shows evangicals’ ties to Uganda ‘Kill the Gays’ legislation

A new film from director Roger Ross Williams that premiered at Sundance explores the relationship between American evangelical churches, their mission- ary, and anti-gay laws in Africa like Uganda’s so-called “Kill the Gays” bill.

“Will be a director’s statement. "I thought about following the actors — brave and admirable men and women — who were fighting against these policies. But I was more curious about the people who, in effect, wanted to kill me. (According to the provisions of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill, I could be put to death or imprisoned.) Notably, almost every evangelical I met — Americans or Ugandans — was polite, agreeable, even charming. Yet I knew that if the bill passed, there would be blood on the streets of Kampala."

What explains the murderous rage and ecstatic transcendence? In the well-known tropes of the American journey into the heart of darkness and finds the mystery of Africa and its unknowable others, a black man made that journey and found — America,

The film’s teaser on YouTube, though not revealed what theOther Churchordo not affiliated with the Vatican, ordained a transgender man as a priest Jan. 26.

Anthea Butler, associate professor of religious studies at the University of Pennsylvania, told USA Today: "I am honored and humbled to have you come and see my show?" Butler told the New York Times in a statement. “I am honored and humbled to have my calling to ministry affirmed by the Catholic Church."

The Christian Life/Way Research, a Christian-oriented firm, showed 37 percent of respondents saying “homosexual behavior” is “always wrong.” This is down from 44 percent in a September 2011 survey. That’s a statistically significant difference, say LifeWay pollsters, who conducted their latest study in November and released the results in January. In the new poll, fully 63 percent of respondents said homosexuality is not a sin, up from 43 percent in 2011, and 17 percent said it’s “always wrong” — down from 33 percent in the previous study.

The world has never had an up-close look at how anti-gay animus is export- ed from the United States to places like Uganda. The film also raises urgent questions for American people of faith who care about justice and human rights. The
Discharged service members will get full pay after settlement

Former service members who are part of a class action lawsuit challenging a Defense Department policy that cuts in half the separation pay of those who have been honorably discharged for "homosexual conduct" will receive a settlement after a hearing in January.

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Human Rights Campaign filed a class action lawsuit against the policy, which was not part of the “Don’t Say Anything” legislation passed in 2011 and that marriage equality advocates hailed as a significant victory.

According to a recent U.S. military inquiry, 13,000 service members, including 1,000 gay and lesbian couples receiving marriage licenses. And marriage equality advocates hailed the milestones as "a significant victory." So it's not surprising that NOM, the U.S. based group that has been fighting marriage equality since 2004, has been forced out of office – whether in New York two years ago or in Illinois earlier this month – are "empty," said Nom's President, Brian Brown, just one of several officials who’ve been金字塔式 on how to stop same-sex marriage in America. French President Francois Hollande, a socialist, campaigned on legalizing same-sex marriage in America.

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Interview

Dr. Linda Chaudron
UR hosts trans healthcare conference

By Susan Jordan

The University of Rochester Medical Center will present a conference on transgender healthcare issues on March 1, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. at the UR Saunders Research Building, 265 Crintenden Blvd.

URMC states, “Transgender individuals have unique health experiences and needs that are often unmet by the general medical community. It is necessary for health professionals of all disciplines to learn about the specific needs of transgender individuals in an effort to provide culturally competent and evidence-based patient- and family-centered care to this population.”

“This conference begins to address the disparities specific to transgender individuals by educating students, staff, providers and the healthcare community about their particular healthcare needs, the evidence-based treatments available for their needs and the challenges encountered in healthcare settings. We seek to improve the knowledge of our medical community, and that of Upstate New York, to provide culturally sensitive and evidence-based care to transgender individuals in our communities.”

Dr. Linda Chaudron is Senior Associate Dean for Diversity. She said, “Our office is relatively new and evolving. We have put on a diversity series during the past year. "As a medical student, I worked a lot on women and medical issues, both of patients and providers. So that has always been an interest of mine. My career has broadened my interest in diversity in medicine, both in our patients and in our workforce. The scope of my office is to promote and educate about diversity issues in medicine. It was started by Dr. Vivian Lewis in 2006 and expanded in 2011 when I took over."

The idea for a trans conference began when Dr. Chaudron was approached by several faculty members, who were concerned with educating primary care providers about trans issues. She said, “I think it’s fair to say that in primary care, providers are seeing more trans patients, but the provider-gender mismatches don’t see too many — so they need to be educated. We decided this was an important healthcare issue. It cuts across disciplines — social work, nursing, etc. — and it cuts across specialties — pediatrics, adult primary care, psychiatry, OB-GYN, surgery. Because it’s impacted by so many different providers, it makes sense for our office to pull this event together.”

She said that the one-day conference targets medical providers regionally, all over upstate and down to the southern tier. “The education is just not available,” she said, “so we thought this was a good opportunity to educate providers who otherwise would have to figure it out on their own. There are a lot of resources, but you have to know where to look. So our goal is to educate about the resources that are out there.”

Anyone can register for and attend the conference, but the main goal is to educate medical providers and staffs. Dr. Chaudron commented, “There may be things of particular interest to the trans community and families, and people can register for just a half-day and hear the featured speakers, rather than registering for the whole day and attending workshops.”

The speakers will include Jamison Green, who is transgender and president of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health, and who will be coming from San Francisco. For a full list of speakers and events, and to see the various fees and register, go to www.urmc.rochester.edu/cpe.

URMC hopes that those who attend this conference “will be able to identify and have an increased awareness of the healthcare disparities faced by those in the transgender community; develop the skills and learn about the resources available to have an improved gender non-conforming accessible practice and become familiar with the World Professional Association of Transgender Health’s (WPATH) standards of care.”

Dr. Chaudron said, “We’re excited to do this and personally I feel lucky to have the opportunity to educate myself about the transgender community and its resources.”

“When I was starting out, I had a trans patient and I knew nothing — SHE educated ME. So I think it’s time we gave back and started educating healthcare providers — and not expect trans patients to do that!”

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Dr. Linda Chaudron
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Tim O’Connell is a West Hollywood resident who performs at clubs all over the country, but made it back for ImageOut. Above right: Michael Gamilla, co-chair of the ImageOut film festival selection committee. Photos: Jill Frier

Making the Scene

By Susan Jordan

Tim O’Connell’s private Rochester is very special. After several decades as the access person for the City Engineers Records Collection, he knows almost every brick in every building in this city – and the history behind it all. He was the resource for many years for historians, artists and anyone needing detailed information about Rochester.

Born at St. Mary’s in Rochester, Tim grew up in Lyons, Greece and Penfield, later lived in the South Wedge and has also spent a lot of time in NYC. He is now retired and lives with his partner of 20 years, James Graves, in Brighton. An Army vet, Tim recently recorded an oral history for the local chapter of Vietnam Veterans.

The City Engineers Records Collection was started at the same time as the Phelps and Gottham Purchase of 1789. Tim said, ‘Everybody that needed information had to come to me – for master plans, capital improvements, environmental studies. We would hear from special collections, the EPA, etc. – anyone needing information about any project that dealt with city history and infrastructure. It was a learning process for me over 23 years, to document the information, which was all from primary source materials.

“It was a unique position that doesn’t exist anymore, a position that crossed all boundaries and borders. The job was like Christmas morning every day – you never knew what you’d find. The highest accomplishment was the documentation of the Olmsted park system in the city of Rochester.”

Tim’s favorite public building in the city is the Rundel Public Library. He said, “Morton Rundel was a cousin of George Eastman and had an art gallery. He left millions to the city for the construction of a central library with an art division, and left a lot of art to the city. The Library was constructed as part of a ‘City Beautiful’ movement plan in the first decades of the 20th century. It’s an imposing building inside and out and is dedicated to ‘the self-improvement and education of the individual.’ So it also serves a noble purpose. It’s built over the oldest water race in the city. I volunteer there twice a week in the city historian’s office, cataloguing the Lara photo negative collection, which is glass plate negatives from the 1930s to 1970s.”

His favorite private residence is a beautiful c. 1875 house on Arnold Park, where several mayors have lived. Tim is on the board of the Highland Park Conservatory, and on two committees of the Landmark Society. He is co-chair of the Olmsted subcommittee and also on the committee on preservation issues. He said, “I meet on a monthly basis with local historians for lunch at the Bausch & Lomb cafeteria – representatives from U.R. Rare Books, the Museum and Science Center, Landmark Society, City Hall and the Library, and local neighborhood historians.”

When asked his opinion about the current state of Midtown, Tim says, “I think it’s very unfortunate that the present city administration doesn’t appreciate buildings with historic importance. They could learn a lot from European countries, which value their old buildings and do not allow the use of the automobile to be of primary importance.”

Tim’s hobbies and interests include tending his vegetable garden and cooking. “Last year was the second experiment in canning,” he says. The pickles apparently didn’t turn out too well, unless you like mush. Tim’s specialty dish is shrimps and scallops with artichoke hearts, roasted red peppers, pasta and feta.

He said, “We like to stay home and kick back in front of the fire, because the house we live in now is very interesting – sort of 1950s California feng shui, front to back split level plan. JFK visited in the early ’60s, the then owner of the house, Rose Ferro, was Monroe County Democratic Party chair and he was probably here for a reception.”

When they do go out for dinner, Tim and James enjoy Chen Gardens on Monroe. Tim likes the Little Bleu Cheese Shop at 684 South Ave., which he says is “part of the resurgent South Wedge.” And he admits, “Contrary to doctor’s orders, I still have a craving for the garbage plate at Nick Tahou’s.”

Tim at his favorite house on Arnold Park. Tim O’Connell at the gatehouse of Mt. Hope Cemetery. Photos: Susan Jordan

GAY ALLIANCE ANNUAL MEETING: Jason Baneccuti of the GAG board speaks at the annual meeting on Dec. 12. Photo: Jill Frier


SCENEMAKERS OF THE YEAR: ImageOut’s 20th anniversary was a major event of 2012. Above: The opening night after-party at Tilt. Left: Pandora Boxx, with a friend, is now a West Hollywood resident who performs at clubs all over the country, but made it back for ImageOut. Above right: Michael Gamilla, co-chair of the ImageOut film festival selection committee. Photos: Jill Frier
The Rochester Trans Group marched on Monroe Ave. on Nov. 24 to observe the Transgender Day of Recognition. Photos: Khoury Humphrey

Trans Group marches on Day of Recognition
By JoAnne Metzler

It was cold, the thermometer showed 30 degrees and with the wind whipping around it felt like 10 below!

That didn’t prevent almost 20 people from marching on the corners of Monroe Ave. and South Goodman St. on Saturday, Nov. 24 in RTG’s (Rochester Trans Group) first ever march in observation of the Trans Day of Recognition.

The group walked back and forth each time the light changed, holding up signs with sayings like: “Honk 4 Trans” and “We Are Trans And We Vote!”

The signs were all made the week before by members of the Gay Alliance Youth Group, PFLAG and RTG with the guidance of Kelly Clark, the Inter-generational Program Director for the Gay Alliance and Anne Tischer, a famous Rochester based activist who with other local activists was vital in getting marriage equality passed last year.

The Transgender Day of Remembrance (as it’s also known) on Nov. 20 was started to honor Rita Hester who was murdered on Nov. 28, 1998. Hester’s death launched the “Remembering Our Dead” web project in 1998 and a San Francisco candlelight vigil in 1999. Transgenderday.org notes that her murder -- like most anti-transgender murder cases -- has yet to be solved. The Trans Murder Monitoring project reports that from Jan. 1, 2008 to Dec. 31, 2011, there have been 816 reports of people who died from anti-transgender violence in 55 countries. It should be noted that this number is probably much lower than the actual figure, as it only represents known cases due to issues of language used in reporting the murders (different countries have different terms for being transgender or gender non-conforming) and due to the fact that not all trans people who are murdered are identified as trans.

This year, however, the RTG borrowed an idea from the University of Montana and their Trans group (here’s a quote from their internet site) “...perhaps it’s time to change our focus from the negative aspects of death, and make this a time to recognize the many who are living and fighting for their equality... we will now be referring to the Trans Day of Remembrance as the Trans Day of Recognition.”

So for their meeting on Saturday, Nov. 24, members of RTG and their allies marched for those who have been murdered because of hatred of trans people and also celebrated having the gift of being trans!

Realizing they couldn’t feel their toes, they returned to the Gay Alliance Community Center and joined with members of the Youth Group and Rainbow Seniors and all enjoyed a quite varied and delicious thanksgiving potluck dinner which included turkey and stuffing, two different mac-and-cheeses and even pizza!
Cathedral (from page 6) and for that we embrace you. Following recent victories for marriage equality across the country and particularly in Maryland and Washington, DC, the Very Rev. Gary Hall, dean of Washington National Cathedral, said, “It is now only fitting that the National Cathedral follow suit. We enthusiastically affirm each person as a beloved child of God—and doing so means including the full participation of men and women in the life of this spiritual home for the nation.” Since the 1960s, many clergy have provided private blessings to gay and lesbian couples, but the Church had no official practice. Following the 2009 General Convention, the Church bishops may provide “generous pastoral response” to gay couples, especially in states that allow civil unions or marriages. The Jan. 9 announcement is consistent with the adoption of a new liturgy for blessing same-sex couples in the denominations General Convention in August. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his last Sunday sermon from the Canaheer pulpit of the Cathedral in 1968. In 2004, the state funeral service for President Ronald W. Reagan was held at the Cathedral. President Barack Obama and several other past presidents-elect have been in attendance for the presidential inaugural prayer service held at the Cathedral on Inauguration Day. “The Episcopal Church is one of a growing number of denominations to see a new day in the intersection of faith and sexual orientation and gender identity. This is not only good for LGBT people, it is good for the soul of the church,” added Rev. Flourey.

Jamaica may get anti discrimination law
By Maurice Toullison
Mark Golding, Jamaica’s Minister of Justice, hinted that Jamaica may get an anti-discrimination law in the near future. The statement comes in response to a critical report by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which addressed human rights abuses against LGBTs in Jamaica. The Civil Service Staff Orders of 2004 (which have the force of law) already protect Jamaican civil servants from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. A general anti-discrimination law would simply extend this protection to all Jamaicans. However, there will likely be strong opposition from the powerful and influential religious fundamentalists who effectively blocked broad anti-discrimination language from being included in the 2010 revision to Jamaica’s Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms.

Golding did not address the country’s “buggery” laws, which provide for prison sentences of up to 10 years for male homosexual activity. For more information, see the article “Specific laws needed to target discrimination — Golding” in RJR News online.

Rev. Nancy Wilson
First gay clergy member joins inauguration service
The LGBT-inclusive nature of President Obama’s inauguration festivities carried over into the Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service at the National Cathedral in Washing- ton, D.C., with the first participation by an openly gay clergy member. The Reverend Elder Nancy L. Wilson, moderator of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, a largely LGBT denomination, gave the first reading of Scripture, a passage from the book of Isaiah, at the event. She was one of a diverse group of interfaith clergy to partici- pate in the service, which was attended by President Obama and Vice President Biden.

In a blog post she wrote for the pro-LGBT interfaith group Believe Out Loud before the event, Wilson said she expected to be “exhaling” at the service. “This exaltation is not for myself but for the millions of les- bian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people who have longed for a safe place to call home,” she wrote. “Whether spiritual or physical, we need safe homes.

In a statement released through GLAAD, she added, “President Obama prayerfully and respectfully stood up for gay and lesbian equality during his campaign, and I am proud to stand with him.

This was the 57th inaugural prayer ser- vice, and officials with the National Cathed- ral confirmed that Wilson was the first openly gay clergy member to participate. Video of the entire service is available at the National Cathedral’s website; it can be viewed with Microsoft Silverlight or Win- dows Media Player. Very Rev. Gary Hall, dean of Washington National Cathedral, confirmed that Wilson was the first openly gay clergy member to participate in the service. This was the 57th inaugural prayer ser- Pro-poker player wins tournament
Our lesbian pro poker player Vanessa Selbst, who is engaged to be married, in January won over $1.4 million at the PokersStars High Rollers Tournament, beating an all male field of players.

The talk before the High Roller final was of the record Vanessa Selbst looked certain to break. Selbst, 28, would become the highest-earning woman in poker if she finished fifth or better, overtaking Kathy Leibert with more than $6 million to her name. In the end Selbst cleared that mark, by some way and in some style, winning the $25,000 High Roller title and a first prize of $1,424,420.

To consider Selbst’s career in mere num- bers misses the enormity of her achieve- ments. Since 2006 Selbst has won numerous major titles, including two World Series of Poker bracelets, two NAPT main events, and the ParoDaveu main event. The PCA becomes the latest, and it won’t be the last. Selbst says she plays for the money and joy of the game, not statistics, but the sig- nificance of her achievement isn’t lost on her. “There’s plenty of room for women to get involved in this game, to get really good at it, and to beat all the guys,” she said. —JoeMyGod.com

PFLAG founder Jeanne Manford dies
PFLAG mourned its founder on Jan. 9. The group stated, “Today the world has lost a pioneer: Jeanne Manford, the founder of PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) and the Mother of the Straight Ally movement.

Jeanne was one of the foremost fighters in the battle for acceptance and equality for les- bian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. It is truly humbling to imagine in 1972 – just 40 years ago -- a simple school- teacher started this movement of family and ally support, without benefit of any of the technologies that today makes a grassroots movement so easy to organize. No Internet. No cellphones. Just a deep love for her son and a sign reading ‘Children of Gay Unite in Support for Our Children.’

This simple and powerful message of love and acceptance from one person – ex- panned so strongly it was heard by millions of people worldwide and led to the founding of PFLAG, an organization with more than 350 chapters across the U.S. and 200,000 members and supporters, and the creation of similar organizations across the globe.

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A wealth plan that is thoughtfully constructed can help you provide for those you love. For same-sex partners, a wealth plan has to take account of specific federal and state laws that can have a material impact on your financial well-being.

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NOM hate group says gays deserve death
At NOMExposed on Jan. 15 Jeremy Hooper revealed a clip just posted by NOM on their anti-gay Rhode Island site in which the anti-gay Liberty Counsel’s Matt Bar- renius says homosexuality is a “sin that is self- destructive” before going on to declare that “the wages of sin is death.”

Gay blogger Joe Jervis wrote, “While NOM has historically been relatively cir- cumspect in their condemnations of LGBT people, by posting Barnett’s words, NOM has endorsed his message.”

Hooper wrote of the below clip and another one posted by NOM: “I actually think I might be undersell- ing the two videos. I’m not kidding you—I don’t get much worse than these two clips! They are not just anti–marriage equality — these are proudly anti-LGBT videos that denigrate us in every single way imaginable. These videos are from the most extreme fringe of this debate. They would make even some outspoken conservatives blush. The videos I just described to you are now forever to the National Organization For Marriage’s Rhode Island strategy. The organization is pushing them on its official website as ‘a preview of what the same-sex marriage argument is about and telling supporters to share them widely.” —JoeMyGod.com

UPDATE, Rhode Island House Judiciary Committee of the Assembly has unanimously approved marriage equality on Jan. 22. The bill went to the House of Representatives 51–19. A Senate vote comes next. They must not have visited the NOM website.

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From Our Readers

Long Term Care gets more expensive, especially for single women

To The Editor:
One of the fastest growing health issues is the growth of Long-Term Care, with over 50 percent being from cognitive impairment. As our population ages it is important to plan for this health change because it is expensive and is not covered by existing Medical Insurance or any new benefits from the Health Care Reform act of 2010. In fact, the Class Act was cancelled last year as unaffordable. That means each of us must plan and pay for our own care with our own resources until depleted.

However, planning for the consequences of a health change caused by Alzheimer’s or other physical change is going to get harder, especially for women trying to use Long Term Care insurance as a solution. Insurer’s analyzing claims data have found claims cost to be significantly higher for women than men, primarily because women live longer than men. While Life Insurance has typically been gender-based rates, Long Term Care insurance has typically been unisex rates. That is about to change as insurers have been battered by historically low interest rates, and must adjust their models.

The first to see the impact of these changes will be single women, who will see as much as a 40 percent increase over the rate for a single man.

Couples typically get a couples discount, which is available to both married couples and those in a committed relationship. This discount will be maintained because it reflects a blended claims risk...the assumption being that the couple is heterosexual.

How these changes will impact the gay community is anybody’s guess, so it is paramount that those who have not yet developed a plan start planning now.

Thomas Mulford
For more comprehensive article, contact Thomas Mulford, CLTC, LTCP at Northfield@frontier.com or phone (585) 381-3668.

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Melting Away
Best of the Fest Screening
February 28 at 6:30pm
Little Theatre, 240 East Avenue, Rochester NY
Directed by Doron Eran / Israel / 86 min.
This heartfelt drama follows the story of a family drawn into crisis after the parents discover their child has been secretly cross-dressing and kick him out of the house. Years later, when the father is dying of cancer, the mother hires a private detective to track him down. Instead of a “son”, the detective finds a woman who earns her pay dancing at gay carnivals. Will the daughter now manage to overcome the past and forgive her parents? Will the parents be able to adapt to their new daughter?
For the first time in the history of Israeli cinema, Melting Away is the first feature film about parents coping with their transgendered child. Melting Away was conceived after the brutal murder at the Tel Aviv LGBT Youth Center and the deep shock felt by Doron Eran, director, and his partner, screenwriter Bili Ben Moshe after hearing of parents refusing to visit their injured kids at the hospital.

Tsuayko
Directed by Mitsuyo Miyazaki / Japan/USA / 25 min.
In Japanese with English subtitles
Memories are powerful. Especially when they are this profound. Overcoming poverty and class conflict in Japan after World War II to be with the one you truly love is easier said than done.

Tickets are $8
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Thursday, February 28th

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The Empty Closet • The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley • Number 464 • February 2013
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Clockwise from left: Gulf Garcia bowls, So Young Park vases/cups, cardinal cast iron bell, striped ceramic tumblers.
Shoulders to Stand On (partially reprinted from The Empty Closet, September 1973)

By Evelyn Bailey

HISTORY AND GOALS OF GAY ALLIANCE OUTLINED.

THE PAST. The gay liberation movement began in New York City in 1969 when gays finally became outraged enough at the regular police harassment that they fought back. The Stonewall Bar on Christopher Street in Greenwich Village was the scene of the first gay people’s rebellion. It was nurtured by that spirit in the late '60s which seemed to beckon oppressed peoples to stand tall.

The movement came to the Rochester area in October of 1970 when a student group was formed by Bob Osborne, Larry Fine, RJ Alcala and others and funded at the University of Rochester. The University of Rochester Gay Liberation Front attracted students and non-students from a wide surrounding area, and for several years served as a focal point for gay rights activities in the region. Early in 1973, it became evident that a city-based organization was needed.

NOW. The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley was organized in July of 1973, and located in the Bull's Head area of West Main St. Its membership represents a wide variety of ages and lifestyles, but there is a common imperative among them to bring to Rochester the third most welcoming gay city in the country. The leaders in each area were also leaders in the Gay Alliance.

Over the past 40 years, ordinary men and women have been leaders in gay community using their energy, time and talent to begin, incubate and give birth to over 260 LGBT organizations, agencies, and groups in Rochester, all a part of the Gay Alliance. In every part of the greater Rochester community, you will find gay men and women in leadership roles moving the community forward.

Here is a partial list of these “interest groups” that have strengthened the community and have helped to make Rochester the third most welcoming gay city in the country. The leaders in each area were also leaders in the Gay Alliance.

Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley; 875 E. Main St. The Alliance is now located at 875 E. Main St.

Gay Alliance and its continuing vision of a cooperative alliance of many interest groups: political, legal, educational, social, and religious. Shoulders To Stand On is proud of all of the women and men who have made this happen. Congratulations to YOU!

History Corner: February 1973

From a monthly newsletter of the University of Rochester Gay Liberation Front, February, 1973. HAPPENINGS:

SUN 4 FEB  “WHAT’S GOOD ABOUT BEING GAY?” A Norman Vincent Peale view of gay life. 7:30 pm NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION: Meets at the Music Lounge at 7:30pm and moves to another location.

SUN 11 FEB Tenderness Hearts and Flowers. Bring original or plagiarized love poems and thoughts about gay tenderness.

Todd Union Music Lounge 7:30 pm

WED 14 FEB GAY RADIO SHOW. WCMF-FM 98.5 Mhz. Midnite WCMF-FM will feature an hour long program by and for Rochester area gays. The program will appear weekly beginning Wednesday, Feb. 14 at midnight.

SAT 17 FEB DANCE! Danforth Dining Center 9pm – 1am. 75c with U of R, ID card. OTHERS $1.50. BAND: Major Bummer

SUN 18 FEB “GLF LIBRARY” Our Gay Librarian takes you on a cruise around organic foods. 7:30 pm Todd Union Music Lounge

SUN 25 FEB “FUNKY GAY KITCHEN”. A non-meeting meeting about fun, food and intimate conversation. A chance to get your taste buds off on organic foods. 7:30 pm Todd Union Music Lounge

Gay Alliance and its continuing vision of a cooperative alliance of many interest groups: political, legal, educational, social, and religious. Shoulders To Stand On is proud of all of the women and men who have made this happen. Congratulations to YOU!
Growing Up STREET LIFE

By Eric Bellman

Manhattan is a pedestrian culture. Everyone walks everywhere. Even in winter, the weather is never as harsh as it is here. Earning a living as a street performer, I’ve noticed that a majority of urban life is the ubiquitous presence of panhandlers. Who is and is not worthy of their stories? Homeless, addicts, con men, all of these, something else, or none of the above. It doesn’t matter. One just aver one’s gaze and continues on. The beggar clusters in high traffic areas – intersections, near subway entrances, outside bodega, never in poor neighbor- hoods – what’s the point? And odd, not in the very posh enclaves of the upper east side.

My friend Sally drives me wild. She has never passed a bum without reaching into her purse and giving him a couple of bucks. Rarely is it a woman asking for alms on the street. And music lover that she is, if it’s someone in a subway playing an accordion or another instrument, she’s not one to pass by. I’ve been a musician myself, but not quite to the point of not having the ability to make a living. I can’t play a harmonica, or anything other than my voice. I can’t even do a handstand, and I used to be strong.

One of my meditation books I came across suggested trying. A note that the Budd- hist teacher, advises the reader to plan a time and then give money to home- less people, the very soul I cringe at as I pass them on the street. And an intriguing notion and, I think, worth my attention.

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Impoverished are women and girls. Some person has named that dreadful situation "third world poverty." Feminization of Poverty means to increase the suffering of women in a society. It means to make it more appropriate for women. Absurd. Their White-out Man— the farmer who expels a Trailer Trash" and "Kmart" needs to forbid "Feminization of Poverty."

Meanwhile, the Pakistani government is vexed about the spread of dangerous homophobia. I wonder if the government's homophobia is a strain different from America's regular, every day, everywhere homophobia. In any case, the government is not aware of the instituted seminars teaching parents and teachers to identify latent homosexuality.

I could spit. In dire stress she could spit and spit? My mother, a gentle womyn herstory. In the fifties "barf" was an associated with non-heterosexual beings. "ass." Some suggestive animals cannot be...”

Today I am so furious I could spit. “In February, 1987, Meredith Elizabeth Reiniger @ frontier.net wrote: "Two versatile words, part of my personal whiskey, and KY Jelly. Groceries: breast, butt, corn, mango, navel, masculine, gender, sex. Then they had to write an essay explaining what they learned from the AP English class. I do wonder if assguppies will ever be asdugs. And that would be good for all of us. Today I am so furious I could spit. The Pakistani government is fussing with the word he really wanted to discuss. I started to chant... asspuppy, asspuppy, asspuppy. The brutally-raped woman suffered... but I made it through. The fog seemed heavier in some spots..."
As a result of this decision, Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) violated equal protection, and was therefore unconstitutional.

Edie Windsor and Thea Spyer lived as a couple for over 44 years, and were married in Canada in May 2007. In 2009, Thea died and Edie filed a federal estate tax return claiming the right, as a spouse, to inherit Thea’s estate free of estate taxes. The federal government denied her this right, and instead treated Edie as a complete stranger. This case highlights the disparity between Federal Law and the law of some states, such as New York, and brings to the forefront whether marriage is a Federal issue or a State issue.

The first issue to be decided was whether or not Edie and Thea were married at the state level. New York State passed its own Marriage Equality Act on June 24, 2011. However, the issue was whether or not their 2007 marriage in Canada was recognized by New York at Thea’s death in 2009. The court concluded that at the time of Thea’s death, New York did recognize a valid same-sex marriage so long as it was legal at the time and in the place where it occurred.

Having found that the marriage was valid under New York State law, the court then applied a concept known as “intermediate scrutiny” to the facts of the case. Intermediate scrutiny is a standard of review applied to sex-based classifications. In order for a law to pass this test, it must be demonstrated that the law furthers an important government interest in a way that is substantially related to that interest.

The court justified this level of scrutiny because they found that homosexuals as a group have historically endured persecution and discrimination; homosexuality has no relation to aptitude or ability to contribute to society; homosexuals are a discernible group with non-obvious distinguishing characteristics; and the class remains a politically weakened minority.

The Obama administration has instructed the Justice Department not to defend DOMA. As a result, the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group, a House Panel under the leadership of Paul Clement (a former Solicitor General under President George W. Bush) took the case. In defending DOMA, it was argued that DOMA maintains a uniform definition of marriage; it saves government resources; it preserves a traditional understanding of marriage and it encourages responsible procreation.

The court found that maintaining a uniform definition of marriage and saving government resources were important government interests, but DOMA itself was not substantially related to supporting those interests. They also found that preserving a traditional understanding of marriage was not an important government interest.

As a result of this decision, Section 3 of DOMA was found to violate the Equal Protection Clause and is therefore unconstitutional. Since this decision, this case will come before the Supreme Court for review of the same-sex marriage issue on March 26. Other Circuit Courts have come to a different conclusion and upheld DOMA.
DIGNITY-INTEGRITY

D-3 Rochester meets weekly at 5 p.m. at St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St., corner of Broad St. We have the following services and activities for the months of February 2013.

1st Sunday: Episcopal Mass/Healing Service with music
2nd Sunday: Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word, with music.
3rd Sunday: Quiet Episcopal Mass in the Chapel.
4th Sunday: Evening Prayer, followed by a Potluck Supper.

The season of Lent comes early this year, so our Porthole Theme is “Soup and Bread”. Bring along your favorite bread or make up a yummy soup to share. No time to cook? Just bring yourself and a friend or two and join us for food and conversation!

The 6th Annual Christmas Hymn Sing was held on Friday, Dec. 28. Tim Schramm did a stellar job leading us once again in singing all our favorites.

Feb. 16 is our Winter Cabin Party from 4:30 to 9 p.m. We’ll provide paper goods and beverages, and the location comes equipped with a fireplace so it will be roaring when you arrive. Bring munchies or a dish to pass (we’ll eat around 5:30 p.m.) and perhaps a party game such as cards or Scrabble. To save yourself and your friends a seat for at this event, call the Hotline at 585-234-5092 and someone will get back to you promptly! Hope you can join us!

EMPIRE BEARS

It’s winter, but the BEARS do come out to play, so join us! You can find us every Wednesday evening, having 6 p.m. supper at The Wintonaire with our favorite waitress, Becky. She’ll know your name and favorite meal by next week.

Or you could meet us at our monthly potluck, the second Saturday of the month at the GAGV. Enter at the rear, off Prince Street. We’ll be there early on Feb. 9, before 6:30, because there’s a show going on, and parking will be tight. We’ll play cards and games after stuffing ourselves.

Or you might run into us catching a movie at The Cinema on Tuesday, line dancing at 94 Alex on Wednesday, rehearsing with the Gay Men’s Chorus on Thursday, or meeting friends at The Forum on Saturday. Members are on the email list to keep up with events.

The Empire Bears is a social club for gay men, most of whom are larger-sized and middle-aged, but we have friends of all sizes, ages, and interests, and enjoy meeting new ones. Try us.

OPEN ARMS METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

“We’re going home...back to the city that is. After a handful of years in the suburbs of Chili, the consensus from congregants and visitors alike is that they wish the church were still located in the heart of Rochester.

So a “For Sale” sign graces the front yard of the charming white church that Open Arms MCC has inhabited for the last six years. It is hard to argue against a move which will bring the church congregation closer to like-minded progressive people who are concerned about social justice and looking for vibrant spirituality within a welcoming religious fellowship.

In the meantime it is business as usual in the church. Sunday Service continues at 10:30 a.m. each week, graced with our Rainbow Rangers Children’s Ministry. Drop in some Sunday at 740 Marshall Rd, Rochester 14624. For more information call (585) 271-8478 or check our website: http://openarmsmcc.org.

ROCHESTER TRANS GROUP

It was cold, the thermometer said 30 degrees and with the wind whirring around it felt like 10 below!

Only that didn’t prevent almost 20 of us from marching on the corners of Monroe Ave. and South Goodman St. on Saturday, Nov. 24 in RTG’s (Rochester Trans Group) first ever march in observation of the Trans Day of Recognition.

We walked back and forth each time the light changed, holding up signs with sayings like “Hank 4 Trans” and “We Are Trans And We Voted!” The signs were all made the week before by members of the Gay Alliance Youth Group, PFLAG and RTG with the guidance of Kelly Clark, the Intergenerational Program Director for the Gay Alliance and Anne Tischer, a famous Rochester based activist who with her partner Bess Watts, was vital in getting marriage equality passed last year. The RTG thanks you all!

The Transgender Day of Remembrance (as it’s also known) on Nov. 20 was started to honor Rita Hester who was murdered on Nov. 28, 1998. Hester’s death launched the “Remembering Our Dead” web project in 1998 and a San Francisco candlelight vigil in 1999. Transgenderdor.org notes that her murder – like most anti-transgender murder cases – has yet to be solved.

The Trans Murder Monitoring project reports that from January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2011, there have been 816 reported and people who die from anti-transgender violence in 55 countries. It should be noted that this number is probably much lower than the actual figure, as it only represents known cases due to issues of language used in reporting the murders (different countries have different terms for being transgender or gender-non-conforming) and due to the fact that not all trans people who are murdered are identified as trans.

This year, however, we borrowed an idea from the University of Montana and their Trans group (here’s a quote from an idea from the University of Montana and their Trans group (here’s a quote from the Trans Murder Monitoring project) “...perhaps its time to change our focus from the negative aspects of death, and make this a time to recognize the many who are living and fighting for their Trans Day of Remembrance as the Trans Day of Recognition.”

So for our meeting on Saturday, Nov. 24, members of RTG and our allies marched for those who have been murdered because of hatred of trans people and celebrated having the gift of being trans! After not being able to feel our toes, we returned to the Gay Alliance Community Center and joined with members of the Youth Group and Rainbow Seniors and all enjoyed a quite varied and delicious Thanksgiving potluck dinner which included turkey, two different mac & cheese and even pizza!

For our Saturday, Feb. 23 meeting, we’re invited to two enthusiastic speakers, Courtney Michelle and Anne Tischer, to get us revved up about getting GENDA passed in New York State this year. Courtney is the Rochester organizer for ESPA (Empire State Pride Agenda) a political advocacy group that is working to get us our rights. Anne is that famous activist who with her partner Bess Watts, was instrumental and vital in getting marriage equality in New York passed last year. Both of these women are quite passionate about GENDA and we have this chance to hear them together.

We’ll also talk about going to Albany on Tuesday, March 30 for the Pride Agenda’s Equality & Justice Day, when we have the opportunity to talk to our legislators about our issues and that it’s past (way past) time to pass GENDA! So plan on being there on Saturday, Feb. 23.

We’re looking for: Gay & bi men and trans women who have sex with men, ages 18-50 & HIV negative for local studies.

Do what you can to make HIV history. The world is waiting.

Contact us today to find out how YOU can participate in an HIV vaccine study.

volunteer@rochestervictoryalliance.org 585-881-5500 (call toll free)
thechro.org
rochestervictoryalliance.org
We meet in the Gay Alliance's Community Center located in the Auditorium Theatre, 875 E. Main St. on the last Saturday of each month, between 3-5:30 p.m. 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 to let you in without paying the parking fee. Our website is: www.rntyrg.org or on Facebook at: https://www.facebook.com/RochesterTransGroup. So plan on coming to a meeting, bring your questions, bring your answers, and meet people like yourself! See you on Feb. 23!

ROMANS
Rochester MAle NaturistS (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 21. We are all sizes, big and small. We are single, partnered, married, and divorced. We are short and tall, wide and thin, quiet and outgoing. We are young and not so young, furry and smooth. ROMANS is an inclusive social group for all men who are gay-friendly, who love to laugh and learn, and who enjoy nude social activities.

Our February nude volleyball and swim will be on the 2nd and our monthly meeting will be on the 16th. We are trying something different with our monthly meeting by going out to eat at a local restaurant. Of course it will be a clothed event. So if you want to check out Romans with your clothing on, our February meeting is your chance.

Visit the Romans web site where an application for membership and information about the club is available. http://www.wnyromans.com or E-mail: wnyromans@yahoo.com, call our message line at 585-281-4964 or write ROMANS, PO Box 92293, Rochester, NY 14692.

The Gay Alliance would like to invite you to participate in our SpeakOUT Training: Providing Successful LGBT Education

The Gay Alliance SpeakOUT Training prepares participants to educate others on LGBT issues in a respectful way, to successfully advocate for LGBT individuals and to address challenges to full LGBT inclusion. SpeakOUT participants become more confident and articulate while talking with others about LGBT issues. This is a great experience for someone new to LGBT issues or someone who has lived or worked with the issues for years. Think of it as professional development for your life. This training is also the first step in becoming trained as a Gay Alliance Speakers Bureau member.

Facilitators: Jeanne Gainsburg, Gay Alliance Outreach Coordinator and Scott Fearing, Gay Alliance Program Director, draw upon their 30+ years of LGBT training and education experience to facilitate the class. A dynamic mix of interactive exercises and lecture make for a fast-paced, intense and valuable learning experience.

The SpeakOUT Training will run from Friday, March 22 from 6-9pm and on Saturday, March 23 from 8:30am-5pm and is $50 per person. It will be held in the Gay Alliance Community Center in the Auditorium Center (875 E. Main St. Rochester, NY 14605). We only offer this training twice a year and it fills fast, so don't wait! To register, go to: www.gayalliance.org/speakout.html. To ask questions or find out about paying through an invoice to your school, please contact: SpeakOUT@gayalliance.org or 585-244-9864 ext. 20.

*ASL interpretation available if requested before March 6.

Collectors' delight

These Schoenbek lamps display authentic, semi-precious rock crystal and smokey quartz ornaments — rare gemstones unique in the universe. From four toeight, Schoenbek lamps are original designs, worthy of a discerning collector.

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

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Shaun Rice is Uncle Fester in “The Addams Family”

By Susan Jordan

The 2013/2014 National Tour of the new musical The Addams Family, based on the bizarre and beloved family of characters created by legendary cartoonist Charles Addams, will make its Rochester premiere Feb. 5-10 at the Auditorium Theatre as part of the M&T Bank Broadway Season presented by RBTi & Albert Nocciolino. Tickets are on sale now at Ticketmaster.com, 800.743.3000 and the Box Office.

Chris Jones of the Chicago Tribune described the production as “classic, full-filt, fast-paced, old-fashioned musical comedy!” and John Simon of Bloomberg News called it “uproarious! A glitzy-bloomy musical entirely worthy of the macabre drawings by Charles Addams.”

The Addams Family features an original story that is every father’s nightmare. Wednesday Addams, the ultimate princess of darkness, has grown up and fallen in love with a sweet, smart young man from a respectable family. A man her parents have never met. And if that weren’t upsetting enough, she confides in her father and begs him not to tell her mother. Now, Gomez Addams must do something he’s never done before—keep a secret from his beloved wife, Morticia. Everything will change for the whole family on the fateful night they host a dinner for Wednesday’s “normal” boyfriend and his parents.

Shaun Rice plays lovably weird Uncle Fester, who lights electric bulbs by putting them in his mouth. He recently answered some questions from The Empty Closet.

ECC: Do you think of yourself as an actor first, or a comedian, or a singer? Or all of the above equally?
SR: I definitely think of myself as a comedic actor first and then a singer second.

ECC: When did you decide to go into show business and how did your career evolve? Was Broadway always your major aspiration?
SR: My family moved to Florida when I was going into the second grade — and the school I attended put a great deal of attention to the arts. Each grade put on a class play — so I was bitten by the bug very early. I enjoyed my experiences with the school plays and choral performances so much that I convinced my parents to find me a local agent.

ECC: Being so close to Orlando, I had the opportunity to do some

Shaun Rice

Interview with Shaun Rice

Khoury Humphrey is “unframed” show opens at The Gallery at Equal-Grounds on Feb. 1.

The Indigo Girls

Indigo Girls to sing at Greentopia: an interview with Emily Saliers

By Susan Jordan

The Indigo Girls will give a concert during the Greentopia festival on March 2, at Hochstein, 50 Plymouth Ave. Emily Saliers recently answered some questions from The Empty Closet about music, the environment and her messages for young women and LGBT youth.

You’ll be performing at Greentopia here in March. Do you have strong feelings about environmental issues?

Yes, we have strong feelings about environmental issues! The Indigo Girls is a group called Honor the Earth that focuses on environmental issues in indigenous communities. We have found that what we’ve learned in these communities is applicable to all environmental issues.

What musicians have inspired you the most?

I’ve really been enjoying the Belle Bragade, their grandfather is composer John Williams, and their record from last year is probably my favorite record of the year. And I just — through a mix my friend sent me — discovered a writer named Sarah Suskind, and I’m also listening to a good bit of Yo Yo Ma and classical music compilations.

The Gay Alliance has a flourishing youth group. Do you have a message for young women, or LGBT youth in general?

There is a blessing in being a minority with a strong vision for justice in the world. Young woman or LGBT youth inspire me to work towards equality for all. Find your own voice and celebrate it!

Shaun Rice

Khoury Humphrey series thaws out at Equal-Grounds

Khoury Humphrey’s multi-media series “unframed” will be exhibited at the Gallery @ Equal-Grounds this month.

Khoury Humphrey will be present during the reception on Friday, Feb. 1, from 6 to 9 p.m.

Khoury Humphrey’s series “unframed” was chosen by The Gallery @ Equal-Grounds as part of the gallery’s THAW 2013. This city galleries collaborative deals with winter’s thaw and dripping water. Khoury combines inks, wax, alcohol, watercolor, glow-in-the-dark gel, and various forms of acrylic to deliver the unique composition found in his work. The application is delivered by utilizing spray bottles, brushes, eyedroppers, blowing techniques, random items that he finds, and even his hands as a tool themselves.

The dates for this show are Feb. 1-27.

Interview with Khoury Humphrey

Khoury Humphrey is a writer, artist and freelance photographer. Khoury Humphrey moved to Rochester during the summer of 2012.

Inspired at a young age by his (Khoury continues next page)

Khoury Humphrey’s “unframed” show opens at The Gallery at Equal-Grounds on Feb. 1.

The Addams Family cast. Photo: Scott Suchman

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Inspired at a young age by his (Khoury continues next page)
Anything you’d like to add? I’d like to add that I’m looking forward to the NFL playoffs and the Super Bowl because I’m a football freak. I’m looking forward to Obama keeping his promises to the LGBT community and I’m thankful for what he’s done so far. And I’m also reading a great book called Beautiful Ruins by J. advocate.

Concert tickets are $36.50. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. and the concert starts at 8. Tickets are available at greenspotfest-

val.com, dancermails.com, Abilenes (153 Liberty Pole Way), and Greenpoint (81 Browns Race) and may be charged by phone at 1-888-512-SHOW. E:

extra work on Nickelodeon shows and a few industrial films. I also got involved in a community theatre children’s group The Carrollwood Players. I basically acknowledge that the situation you start to “play for a laugh” – you’re the most serious drama ever. The moment you have to approach it as if it were the

EC: Is it harder creating a character in a comedy almost NEVER find you have to approach it like drama. Charles writing comedy is much harder than

SR: The characters in The Addams Family have appeared in so many different incarnations over the years: The movie versions. But his devotion to his

EC: What should Rochester audiences know about this production? SR: Well they should definitely know that they’ll be missing out if they miss this show. It’s such a charming and fun musical – with some dynamic singing and dancing to boot. Even if this is their first exposure to the Addams Family, I think they’ll come away wanting more. The message is so fundamental and pure about the triumph of good over evil, that I was a crummy artist.” Despite never having taken a formal art or photography class. His family provided a
great source of encouragement and sup-
port while growing up. “I'd receive art and silver pumps, bronzed tighty-
whites, nickels and glittering hand-

bag latches. While the dances range more between abstract meditations of body to a depiction of unrequited love, each work delves into a unique theatrical world.

SR: I mostly grew up in Tampa, Fla. – but have been back and forth between NYC and Tampa for about 10 years now. I actually love touring – it’s not for everyone to be sure. But I love getting to see different parts of the world and different people being on the go.

SR: You probably always get asked

KHOURY FROM PAGE 27: Armored with crayons and paper, Humphrey remembers waking up at 4:30 every morning to watch the television show Pappy Drew It. Often he would become exasperated that his drawings were never getting published. “I always thought I had no natural talent, that I was a crummy artist.” Despite this, Humphrey by the heart are still there.

Humphrey's work is a queer childhood, while a DIY you-

“The Metallic Series invites the audi-
iance to consider their own perception of the eyes emanated an eerie glow. Like an optical illusion, once the vultures were pointed out, it was difficult to imagine how I missed them in the first place. ‘I like keeping things vague so the individ-
ual can impose their own meaning onto the work.’”

In lieu of crayons, Humphrey works with acrylics, watercolors, ink, wax, and alcohol. Through trial and error, he discovered the art was generally not meant to be touched. He forces himself to resist the urge of reaching out when visiting other people’s galleries. “I want my artwork unfarmed — I invite people to touch my work. It’s a compliment to me. One sense isn’t enough for artwork.”

Outer space, dead trees, cephalopods, birds and human bodies are common themes found in his work. “I really enjoy dead trees for some reason — I suppose growing up in the land of the Great Plains, where droughts are common, contributed to that.”

Humphrey implements different methods into his work. His latest piece is a set, consisting of three individual paint-

ings, and has yet to be titled. He asked me if I had any advice. “I think you should have done something else.” Humphrey’s work is a testament to his artistry and his
dedication to his craft. “I think you should have done something else.”

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dedication to his craft. “I think you should have done something else.”
Bill Evans Dance offers a jazz/tap valentine

Bill Evans Dance presents "RRROX...Rochester Rhythm and Romance: Jazz Hugs and Tap Kisses," a dance and music Valentine for Rochester audiences, at Downstairs Cabaret Theatre Center, 540 East Main St., Feb. 15–17.

The event features rhythm tap choreography and performance by Bill Evans, Cheryl Johnson and Courtney World and instrumental and vocal jazz music by Richard Delaney, Cheryl Johnson and Tamara Wilco, with guest artists from the Bill Evans Dance Company and the College at Brockport Department of Dance.

Returning to downtown Rochester with their first jazz/tap show since the sold-out Autumn Leaves at the Geva Theatre Center just over a year ago, Evans, Johnson and World offer a new program of romantic jazz music standards and an amazing variety of tap dance styles. Musical selections will include My Funny Valentine, Take 'Em or Leave 'Em, Let's Get Lost, Just for You, My Funny Valentine, Takin' A Chance On Love, Let's Get Lost, Just for You, My Funny Valentine, Takin' A Chance On Love, Let's Get Lost, Just for You, My Funny Valentine, Takin' A Chance On Love, Let's Get Lost, Just for You, and World Stages at 340 W. 5th St., is offering two great shows this season – "Bare," a musical focusing on two gay guys, and "Forever Dusty," about the life of singer Dusty Springfield.

"Bare" takes place at a Catholic School in St. Celia’s Church where 16-year old nerdy Peter (Taylor Trensch) and high school jock Jason (Jason Hite) have fallen in love. Now there’s Ivy (Elizabeth Judd), who has transferred here having here sports a reputation as a slut, who is going with Matt (Gerard Canonico).

The play opens with back and side sets of hundreds of student photos that look as if they were taken by cell phone or such. Peter is stage talking about a large photo shot of the student in the cast and we go to a flashback of what leads up to the ending.

Jason and Peter are lying in bed talking about a signal for them to meet as well as that Jason is trying out for the part of Romeo in the school play. Jason does not want to come out of the closet, not only for fear of his parents but of the "head jock" Zack (Casey Garvin). Ivy is trying out for the part of Juliet and needless to say, they each get their intended role. Jason is getting too chummy with Ivy, who has fallen in love with him. Matt is not only jealous but has gotten wind of a photo of Jason and Peter kissing. Jason wants to prove that he is "normal".

We also have Sister Joan (Missi Pyle), another transfer, whose father was a dj and mother a lounge singer. She's hip to all and only wants her students to be happy. Pyle gets to do a number, "Don't Tie Up The Request Line," involving the whole cast, that shows off her acting, comic and dance abilities.

"Bare" is a contemporary rock musical with a totally outstanding and harmonious cast as well as an ultra talented creative team. The drama of the gay issue comes through with music, dance and lots of comedy. It’s a sort of gay version of "Spring Awakening," and that's good. My only disappointment is that it's "Off-Broadway". I give it two thumbs up and a big toe.

"Forever Dusty," the story of singer Dusty Springfield, well portrayed by Kristen Holly Smith, is at a different stage. The show opens in the year 1968 at a recording studio in Memphis, as Dusty is trying to record "Son of a Preacher Man" for her album "Dusty In Memphis," along with the band is her producer Jerry Wexler (Benim Foster). The recording session is not working well and we are soon transported to Dusty's life as a teenager at a Catholic School in post-war London. Her name is Mary O'Brien and on a dare she sings "Whishin' and Hopin'." TV op: Dusty sings "If Only Want To Be With You," which lets her wear her famous long eyelashes and black eyeliner to go with the big hair. She soon meets Claire (Christina Sajous), an American writer who is black. Dusty sings, "The Look of Love," leading into a love relationship with Claire. But Dusty has no intention of coming out of the closet. Drugs, alcohol and breast cancer. Show is great.

Cheryl Johnston, Bill Evans and Court- ney World.

RRROX is a one hour-long program, with no intermission. There will be special "Tappy Hour" 5:30 p.m. shows on Valentine’s Day, Feb. 15 and 16. Evening shows Feb. 13 through 16. Two matinees on Sunday, Feb. 17, and a Wednesday show on February 13 at 7 p.m. Thursday Feb. 14, shows are at 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. and on Feb. 15 and Saturday Feb. 16, at 5:30 and 8 p.m.; Sunday Feb. 17, 2 and 4 p.m.

Three world-class tap dancers joined forces in the spring of 2011. Bill Evans was named one of America’s three favorite tap dancers in the latest Dance Magazine Readers’ Poll. Cheryl Johnson became the Pacific Northwest’s foremost tap artist/jazz vocalist and recently returned to her native Rochester. Courtneym World, a vibrant young tap artist, is one of the most sought-after teachers and performers in western New York. Richard Delaney is an acclaimed Cuban-style jazz musician and director of the Mambo Kings. Tamara Wilco is director of music in the Department of Dance at SUNY Brockport.

Gays to the left; Lesbians to the right

By Merle Exit

New York’s off-Broadway venue, New World Stages at 540 W. 5th St., is offering two great shows this season – "Bare," a musical focusing on two gay guys, and "Forever Dusty," about the life of singer Dusty Springfield.

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Forney Center for homeless LGBT youth plans to send the leftover socks to the Ali Forney tie-dyed socks. The youth program vice learning event that raised $600 for Allison Wright spearheaded an effort by a hands in public without fear, and check-through our day with access to safe, community. Does that mean marriage equality passed in New York ever since do lesbians do in bed? thankfully continue-ded questions from participants at Gay Alliance. I have fielded questions from participants at Gay Alliance Speakers Bureau presentations since 2003 and, for the most part, I can’t honestly say that I have noticed any dra-stic changes within that time.

“How did your parents react when you came out?” continues to be one of the most difficult, feared and relevant today as it ever was. We are also more active than ever before! In the last two years the Gay Alliance Education Program has given the 350 presentations and spoken to over 8,000 participants! As Speakers Bureau members we learn how to use our per-sonal stories to promote questions and spark conversations which lead to learning, growth and change. We are always seeking new qualified people to be part of our Speakers Bureau. If you have every thought that you might be the volunteer job for you, there is no better time to join us than right now! Our Speakers Bureau is open to any-one wanting to learn how to effectively educate on LGBT issues and is also the first step in branching out to train a Speakers Bureau member.

The next training will take place on Friday, March 22 from 6-9 p.m. and all day Saturday, March 23 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Registration in now open at: http://www.gayalliance.org/speakout.html.

Help the Gay Alliance celebrate our 40 year anniversary by becoming part of our team. ■

Youth plan pancake breakfast, videos
By Susan Jordan
The Gay Alliance Youth Group is full of plans for the winter and spring. Com-ming up this month is an All You Can Eat Pancake breakfast on Sunday, Feb. 17, from 12:30 to 3 p.m. at the GAGV Center, first floor, 875 E. Main St. The breakfast is a fundraiser for the Ali Forney Youth Center in NYC, devastated by Hurricane Sandy last fall.

The youth themselves will be cooking pancakes, serving and completely organizing the event. Admission is $10. Tickets will be available at the Red Bull on Feb. 9, and by calling 244-8646 or ext 19.

LGBT Health Month in March may also include a healthcare career college tour in March or April, which can inform youth about the many different health-care careers offered by the University of Rochester.

The Our Loud Our Proud youth leadership group is producing a series of videos to be shown on YouTube. Their goal is to do outreach to closeted and questioning youth in Monroe County. The video series will start with the topic of coming out: each video will be one to two minutes long. The youth hope to also use the videos as messages to youth that they can find sup-port and community at the Gay Alliance.

The youth themselves are writing the script for the video, which will give infor-mation on how to come out, the possible consequences in different situations, etc. Intergenerational Program Director Kelly Clark says, “We got a Youth As Resources grant through the Monroe County Youth Bureau. The grant had to be written by the youth themselves, and Nick Cornish, Health Educator, helped them write a successful grant. The Youth Bureau has a board of area youth who give money to other youth to accomplish things. So that was really exciting.

The Youth Group will be taking part with Rainbow SAGE in the Intergen-erational Panel in March. Details in the March EC. Day of Silence (April 19) planning got underway on Jan. 25. Anyone interested in participating in the planning process should email youth@gayalliance.org.

Finally, the Gay Alliance Youth Pro-gram is recruiting volunteers for Prom 2013, which will be held in mid-May or early June - hopefully June 1. Kelly Clark said, “We’re seeking people to be on the Prom Committee. The first Prom planning meeting will be held early this month and we need a theme, etc. The Parents Booster Club is raising money for the Prom. Youth interested in joining the Committee should email youth@gayalliance.org. ■

Gay Alliance Volunteer-of-the-Month: Kat Wiggall
Congratulations to Kat Wiggall for being chosen as the Gay Alliance Volun-teer-of-the-Month. Kat was born and raised in Rochester and has been a volunteer in some capac-ity since she was a teenager. She first got involved with the Gay Alliance last Janu-ary when she attended our SpeakOUT workshop and began her training as a Gay Alliance Speakers Bureau member. Since that time she has presented on several occasions. She especially enjoys the oppor-tunities to train teachers and help create welcoming and inclusive schools.

In the spring Kat asked us what else she could do for the Gay Alliance and we set up her in the office assisting us with data entry. It quickly became appar-ent how much she could offer, and work! Kat began working once a week in the office and the staff began to rely heav-ily on her technical skills.

This past summer, Kat was an active Pride volunteer and also trained to be a Youth Program volunteer. Since then she has been helping the Gay Alliance youth by offering support and guidance and helping with youth events.

Congratulations go out to Kat as her position at the Gay Alliance has recently changed to part-time employee. Kat, the staff and board at the Gay Alliance are thrilled to welcome you as a staff member and we thank you for all of the volunteer hours you gave us.■

Gay Alliance Youth say Thank You....
On Dec. 13 the Gay Alliance Youth Parent Boosters held a wine tasting at Wine Sense on Park Ave.

The event raised over $300, which will be used for the Big Gay Prom. We give a big Thank You to Mike Dejong, the owner of Wine Sense, for his donation.

Save the date: We will hold another tasting on Saturday, April 13 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Wine Sense. Join us then to enjoy some wine for the wine season! ■
**February Calendar**

**Rainbow SAGE at The Center**

- **February 5**
  - Valentine’s Day Ball/Dance at the Center
  - **February 12**
    - Welcome to Tickle You Pink
  - **February 19**
    - Book Club and Movie Showing
  - **February 26**
    - Casino Royale Game Day

**Tuesday Lunch at the Center**

- **Full Hot Meal Served at Noon**
- **Just $3 suggested donation**
- **Join us for good food and conversation.**
- **Activities are subject to change.**

**GAY ALLIANCE NEWS FOR FEBRUARY 2013**

**Youth**

**Gay Alliance Youth Program**

The Gay Alliance Youth program empowers today’s teens to meet today’s challenges! It provides a safe space to explore their identity, make friends, build community, gain life skills, become a leader and have fun!

**Wed./Thurs.:**

- 3:30-7:30pm
- 7-9pm

- **Coming Out/Being Out Support Group**
  - Thursdays 6:30-7:30pm (13-18 yrs old)

- **Gender Identity Support Group**
  - Thursdays 6:30-7:30pm (13-18 yrs old)

**Gay Alliance Community Center**

- Auditorium Theater Bldg., 875 E. Main Street, 1st Floor
- Rochester, New York 14605
- Phone: 585 244-8640
- Check out our weekly programs, descriptions and special events: www.gayalliance.org/events/youth

**Fantasy Casino Royale on Tuesdays**

- Tuesdays, Feb 26, hosted by L.O.R.A., Open Arms MCC. Play poker, blackjack, craps and slots for fun and prizes. Hot lunch is served at noon with games to follow. All are welcome -- bring a friend or family member. There is no fee to participate — except your smile. 😊

**Happiest of New Years to You and Yours!**

“Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right.” — Oprah Winfrey

As the holiday season wraps up and we begin the journey into 2013 there are many things to look forward to at The Center! Themed days such as the upcoming Casino Royale Day and presentations aimed to inform and promote healthy lifestyles, as well as meet-ups in the community. We value each and every one of you and hope you join us on Tuesdays.

- **Log onto www.gayalliance.org/events/sage-events or check us out on Facebook to update yourself on all the activities happening at The Center!**

**Casino Royale**

Are you feeling lucky? Come to Fantasy Casino Royale on Tuesday, Feb 26, hosted by L.O.R.A. and Open Arms MCC. Play poker, blackjack, craps and slots for fun and prizes. Hot lunch is served at noon with games to follow. All are welcome — bring a friend or family member. There is no fee to participate — except your smile. 😊

**Fun Valentine’s Day Facts to Tickle You Pink**

- More than 36 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolate are sold for Valentine’s Day each year.
- About eight billion candy hearts are currently reading whether hard cover, paperback or e-reader!

- **Rainbow SAGE at The Center**
  - **February 5**
  - Valentine’s Day Wall/Door Hanging Craft

**Location**

- The Center is open for adults 50+. **Tuesdays 11:30am-3pm.**
- Internet access, Billiards. Library open 1-3pm.
- February 5..............Valentine’s Day Wall/Door Hanging Craft
- February 12............Hearing & Aging Presentation
- February 19.............Book Club and Movie Showing
- February 26.............Casino Royale Game Day

**Tuesday Lunch at the Center**

- **Full Hot Meal Served at Noon**
- **Join us for good food and conversation.**
- **Activities are subject to change.**
  - Gay Alliance Community Center, 875 E. Main St., 1st floor (585) 244-8640
AIDS Care
AIDS Care is the leading provider of HIV/AIDS services in Rochester and the Finger Lakes. Our site-based services include testing and counseling, along with STD screenings. Primary and Specialty Medical Care, Phlebotomy and many other services. AIDS Care satellite offices in Geneva and Bath. AIDS Care is also a caring and engaging provider of education and support to medical professionals. Contact Information: Website: www.aidsrochester.org; 1105 Monroe Ave, Rochester, NY 14607; Main Phone: 585-545-2700; Health Services After Hours: 585-258-3383. Cancer Management Group: www.cmgri.com; 927-275-5151; 545-244-6456. Finger Lakes Office: 605 W. Warner St., Geneva, NY 14456; 315-781-3603. Southern Tier Office: 122 Liberty St, Batavia, NY 14020; 716-733-9766. The Health Outreach Project: 416 Central Ave., Rochester, NY 14605; 585-454-5510.

Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley
Refers to physicians and service agencies.
Victry Center
University of Rochester Medical Center. One of several research sites worldwide that work on target therapy. Rochester site conducts research vaccine studies sponsored by National Institutes of Health (NIH). 585-756-2350; rochesterunix.org/clinic/Threshold
At the Community Place, 145 Parsells Ave., third floor. Serves individuals who receive state-funded HIV, STD testing and General Health Care, ages 25-65. This clinic is for everyone, no one is denied, most insurances accepted. Mon., Wed., Fri. 9am-5pm; Tues., Thurs., 9am-5pm; Sat. 10am-2pm. www.24hoursa.com
Center for Health and Behavioral Training of Monroe County
850 Seneca St., Rochester 14614. Collaboration of Monroe County Health Department and U.R. Hospitals. Provides year-round training in prevention and management of STDs, HIV and related issues, such as domestic violence and case management. (585)763-5382 x270
Newark N.Y. Hotline 800-456-1172; office 585-244-8640 ext 19. For women and men.
McCree McCuller Wellness Center at Unity Health's Connection Clinic
(585)368-9000, 89 Genesee St. Bishop Kearney Bldg., 3rd floor. Full range of services, regardless of ability to pay. Catholic Charities AIDS Services
A multinational and bi-lingual staff providing support to people living with AIDS. Helps with housing, personal care, and assist with medications. 80 St. Paul St., Suite 701. Free legal services (using rapid testing) Hepatitis C rapid testing. 585-244-9030 or e-mail: legalservices@ccrc.org
Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley
Refers to physicians and service agencies.
Gay Alliance Youth Gender Identity
Ages 13-18. 244-8640; kellyc@gayalliance.org

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FRIDAY 1

Khousy Humphrey “unframed” opening reception, Equal Grounds, 750 South Ave., 6-9 pm.

MONDAY 2
ROMANS nude volleyball and swim. http://www.romansnyc.com or E-mail: info@romansnyc.com, message line at 585-281-4964; write ROMANS, PO Box 92239, Rochester, NY 14602.

SUNDAY 3
Dignity Integrity. Episcopal Mass/Healing Service, with music. 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

SATURDAY 9

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 payment to: The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500, Rochester, New York 14620.

paying by check: checks must be made out to Gay Alliance. The deadline is the 15th of the month, for the following month’s issue. We cannot accept checks over the phone. Pay when you place your ad. We will accept only individuals’ name and phone number. Neither will be published, but we must be able to confirm placement.

The Empty Closet is not responsible for financial loss or physical injury that may result from any contact with an advertiser. Advertisers must use their own box number, voice mail, e-mail or personal address/phone number.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
UR researcher needs lesbian stories. I am a graduate student at the University of Rochester in the Department of Public Health Sciences, conducting research in the area of lesbian health. I am asking local lesbian women about their experiences, stress, challenges related to their sexual orientation. Interested in learning about the ways lesbian women deal with these experiences, resources they use to develop coping strategies. Research will help us to understand what can be done to reduce negative impact of stress on sexual minorities. If you identify yourself as a lesbian or gay woman, I need you. Even if you think that you do not have anything to share, I want to hear your story. Will conduct in-depth individual interviews (about one hour) at mutually agreed upon location comfortable and convenient for you. All measures being taken to ensure your privacy is maintained. Contact Allison Marsh (585) 342-5447, Allison_marsh@urmc.rochester.edu

SUNDAY 10
Dignity Integrity. Roman Catholic Liturgy of Word, with music. 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

TUESDAY 12
Mardi gras SAGE speaker. Dr. Paul D. Allen of UR discusses hearing loss and aging. SAGE at The Center, 1 pm, GAGV Center, 875 E. Main St., first floor. Admission $10. Tickets available at Ruby Masquerade on Feb. 9, and by calling 585-234-5992.

ROMANS monthly meeting. http://www.romansnyc.com or E-mail: info@romansnyc.com, message line at 585-281-4964; write ROMANS, Po Box 92239, Rochester, NY 14602.

THURSDAY 14
Valentine’s Day
Out and Equal Mondays
7-9:30 pm, Legends Sports Bar & Grill at Rochester Radisson Riverside.

FRIDAY 15
Empty Closet deadline for March. 585-234-0303; urmc@gayalliance.org.

SATURDAY 16
Dignity Integrity Winter Cabin Party. 4-30 pm. Call the Hotline at 585-234-5992.

ROMANS monthly meeting. http://www.romansnyc.com or E-mail: info@romansnyc.com, message line at 585-281-4964; write ROMANS, PO Box 92239, Rochester, NY 14602.

SAGE Closet Royale. Hosted by L.O.R.A., Open Arms MCC. Play poker, blackjack, craps and slots for fun and prizes. Hot lunch is served at noon (53 requested donation) with games to follow. 585-310-9223. First floor. 244-8640.

THURSDAY 28
Meltin Away by Doron Eran. Ima-GayOut Best of the Fest screening, 6:30 pm. Little Theatre 1.

MARCH 1
FRIDAY 1
URMC Transgender Healthcare conference. 7:30 am-4:15 pm. UR Saunders Research Building, 265 Crittenten Blvd. www.urmc.rochester.edu/cpe.

SATURDAY 2

SATURDAY 23
Rochester Transgender Group meet- ing. 4-5:30 pm, GAGV Center, 875 E. Main St., first floor.

SUNDAY 24
Dignity Integrity. Evening Prayer, followed by a post-liturgy supper, “Soup and Bread.” 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

TUESDAY 26
SAGE Casino Royale. Hosted by L.O.R.A., Open Arms MCC. Play poker, blackjack, craps and slots for fun and prizes. Hot lunch is served at noon (53 requested donation) with games to follow. 585-310-9223. First floor. 244-8640.

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SATURDAY 2

Prostate Cancer Support Group. 7-8:30 pm, Memorial Art Gallery Center Union, 500 University Ave.

SERVICES
Rochester’s Best Man to Man Rubdown. Unwind with this degree, employed, fit, friendly, healthy, Italian from Middle age, 5’8”, 165 lbs., 32” waist, nonsmoker, d & d free, HIV negative. My 10-plus years experience guarantees your relaxation and satisfaction. Hotel visit, in call in my home or out call in your residence. Reasonable rates. Distraction appreciated and practiced. Don’t delay, call me today at 585 773-2410 (cell) or 585 235-6688 (home) or e-mail me at: massagebrian@verizon.net.

Wedding Space and clergy services available. Celebrate your special day at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church 740 Marshall Rd., off Chili Ave. info@openarmsmcc.org. (585) 271-8478.

MatCCC seeking actors for produc- tion of Torch Song Trilogy. Call Michael Arve, 585 234-1254 (vm ONLY) or e-mail michaelarve@yahoo.com. Needed: 4 male actors ages 25-35 to play drag queen (Artha); male: Ed is tall, handsome and lean mid 30s; male: Allan, 18–20, shamefully beautiful, a frightened child in hustler’s clothing; male: David, 15 going on 30. Play will be presented the last two weekends of June 2013 at MatCCC, Rehearsals will start in mid March 2013. Please call if interested.

Children’s Ministry thriving at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church for toddlers to ‘tweens. Join us for worship at 10:30 am, 11:30 am, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave.

MARCH 2
SATURDAY 16
Dignity Integrity Winter Cabin Party. 4-30 pm. Call the Hotline at 585-234-5992.

ROMANS monthly meeting. http://www.romansnyc.com or E-mail: info@romansnyc.com, message line at 585-281-4964; write ROMANS, PO Box 92239, Rochester, NY 14602.

Rochester Rams bar night. 9 pm-2 am, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave.

SUNDAY 17
Dignity Integrity. Quiet Episcopal Mass in the Chapel. 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

Gay Alliance Youth Group pancake breakfast. Benefits Alan Forney shelter for homeless youth in NYC. 12:30-3 pm, GAGV Center, 875 E. Main St., first floor. Admission $10. Tickets available at Ruby Masquerade on Feb. 9, and by calling 244-8640 ext 59.

Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus Casion- no fundraiser. 4-8 pm, 140 Alex Bar & Grill. Suggested donation: $15 advance, $20 at door. Includes gambling money, dinner, drink specials, prizes. Tickets at Outlandish, Equal Grounds, Parkleigh, thergmc.org.

Rochester Transgender Group meet- ing. 4-5:30 pm, GAGV Center, 875 E. Main St., first floor.

SUNDAY 24
Dignity Integrity. Evening Prayer, followed by a post-liturgy supper, “Soup and Bread.” 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.
THE EMPTY CLOSET is published by the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500 Rochester, New York 14624 © 2013, All rights reserved.

Advertising policy: The Empty Closet does not print advertisements that contain nude drawings or photographs, nor does it print advertisements that state that the person(s) portrayed in the ad is for sale, or that you will “get” that particular person if you patronize the establishment advertised. Advertisements that are explicitly racist, sexist, anti-semitic, or homophobic will be refused. Advertisements from organizations that are sexist, racist, anti-semitic or anti-gay will also be refused. All political advertisements must contain information about who placed them and a method of contact. Additionally, The Empty Closet does not print negative or “attack” advertisements, whether they relate to a product or a person, with whom the advertiser intends to compete. Your ad will not be produced. A negative advertisement is defined as one that focuses on personal indiscretions or the political ideas, a personal attack, a personal defect, or a social or political issue. The ad must be fair and not baseless and it must not be intended to promote public disinterest in a product. The Empty Closet reserves the right to edit for space and clarity. We will print columns, editorials and other contributions written by our correspondents to present all viewpoints in a way that takes into consideration the views of all – women, men, people of color, young and old, and those from various walks of life. We will not print personal attacks on individuals, nor will we print contest Win a prize type advertisements with cash prizes. The competition is available at www.gayalliance.org.

Publication Information: The Empty Closet is published 11 times a year (December and January combined) by The Empty Closet Press for the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc. Approximately 5000 copies of each issue are distributed during the first week of the month, normally by mail in sealed envelopes. The publication of the name or photograph of any person or organization in articles is not an indication of the sexual or affectional orientation of that person or the members of that organization. For further information, please write to The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St., Rochester, NY 14624, e-mail: pflag@gayalliance.org or phone: (585) 244-8640.

The Empty Closet is the official publication of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc., as stated in the bylaws of that organization. Its purpose is to inform the Rochester gay community about local and national gay-related news and events; to provide a forum for ideas and creative work from the local gay community; to help promote leadership within the community; and to be a part of a national network of lesbian and gay publications that encourages the primary tenet that “this is our country and we have the right to speak our minds.”

Part of our purpose is to maintain a middle position with regard to national organizations and their policies of the Gay Alliance or The Empty Closet, including the primary tenet that The Empty Closet’s purpose is to inform the Rochester gay community and to provide an important forum for ideas.

Submissions:
For publication, submit news items, ads, photos, letters, stories, poetry, ads, photographs or art by mail or in person to The Empty Closet office by the 15th of the month. Completed forms for non-camera ready ads are available by calling the office.

Letters to the editor:
The opinions of columnists, editorial writers and other contributing writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or The Empty Closet. The Empty Closet shall not be liable for any loss or expense that results from the publication (whether correctly or incorrectly) of any information in ads. In the event of non-payment, your account may be assigned to a collection agency or an attorney, and will be liable for the charges paid by us to the collection agency or attorney.

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.

**FREE** Home Staging consultation with all listings.

**EXCLUSIVE** Design services for non-camera ready ads are available by calling the office.

**Letter of the editor:**
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It’s not a black thing.
It’s not a white thing.
It’s not a gay thing.
It’s not a straight thing.

Testing for HIV is everyone’s thing.

Introducing the first in-home oral HIV test

- FDA approved
- Results in 20 minutes
- Same test used by Healthcare Professionals
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Knowing is the best thing™
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- A positive result with this test does not mean that you are definitely infected with HIV, but rather that additional testing should be done in a medical setting.
- A negative result with this test does not mean that you are definitely not infected with HIV, particularly when exposure may have been within the previous 3 months.
- If your test is negative and you engage in activities that put you at risk for HIV on a regular basis, you should test regularly.
- This product should not be used to make decisions on behavior that may put you at increased risk for HIV.