The Gay Alliance celebrates 40 years: SHOULDERSTO STAND ON FILM PREMIERE IS SEPT. 29 AT DRYDEN

By Susan Jordan

The Gay Alliance will host a Producer’s Premiere and Gala for “Shoulders To Stand On,” the documentary feature film, on Sept. 29 at the Dryden Theatre of the George Eastman House. The film traces the history of Rochester’s LGBT community and equality movement from pre-Stonewall times to today.

The screening begins at 4 p.m., followed by a gala reception to meet some of the individuals in the film. Cost is $49 and since space in the theatre is limited, those who would like to purchase tickets should go as soon as possible to www.gayalliance.org.

Producer/director Kevin Indovino told The Empty Closet, “One question we’re asking a lot of people is, looking at the LGBT movement in Rochester, what is it about our city that made it possible to be progressive? When you start talking to the early pioneers you realize the courage it took to step out of the closet in the early ‘70s and become visible and let their voices be heard. They were risking everything. They were reacting to something that needed to be done.

People always say, we’re the city of Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass. They too were not doing activism in terms of their future fame. They were doing what they had to do. Our LGBT pioneers deserve to be included in the hall of fame with them.

The title Shoulders to Stand On says it all. It’s about recognizing and celebrating the people and organizations that have made Rochester a pretty good place to live for lesbian, gay, bi and transgender people. It didn’t happen by magic—it took a lot of passion and imagination.”

Kevin pointed out that the documentary is part of a historical archiving project, which also includes oral histories recorded by Evelyn Bailey and hopefully a website that will archive all the historical materials, including those at Cornell and the University of Rochester. It will also include a toolkit for teachers, to show them how to use the website for their classroom studies.

The documentary film will be available for purchase on Blu-Ray and Kevin hopes that it will be televised on certain PBS stations. It will also be broken down into sections that can be used for different educational purposes, i.e. a class on HIV/AIDS.

Kevin noted, “It’s important to preserve our history because a lot of it is quickly disappearing. Back in the ‘70s WCMF hosted a radio show, Green Thursdays, which was produced by early activists like Patti Evans and Bob Crystal. All of those shows have been lost—I probably never even recorded them. There’s a huge chunk of history that is gone. We have no idea what those shows might have contained. That’s why it is important to do this project and make sure our history is saved.”

He added, “There are people in the community who have items stored in their closets and don’t realize their historical significance. It’s important to save our history. The other thing is, “Shoulders to Stand On” is at the Dryden Theatre of the George Eastman House. The Gay Alliance has partnered with the George Eastman House to offer a screening and reception. There is also a special exhibit at the George Eastman House which will be on display until late October. We encourage everyone to come out and support this important project.”

Producer Kevin Indovino (right) interviews John Curtis. The Producer’s Premiere is at the Dryden Theatre of the George Eastman House.

GAVG Board Co-Chairs: We’re stepping down but not going away

By Bruce Gorman and Emily Jones

It was with a sense of enthusiasm and commitment to the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley that we announced last fall that we would be stepping down. We took this step as it moves forward with such important work.

We continue to be energized by the extensive and exciting work being done to better serve our LGBT population and the community at large. The work being done with our senior and youth groups who both face issues of rejection and isolation continues.

We are confident that with the leadership of Scott Fearing and the dedicated work of his staff and volunteers that the agency will continue to thrive as it moves forward with such important work.

Finally, we are appreciative of the support we received from the entire board, the agency staff and our entire Rochester Community.

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An American story

“Miko (chief) Apuckshun- nubbee… was the senior Chief to the Choctaw Nation, and upwards of eighty years of age, and was much respected for his virtues.”

According to tribal records, Apuckshunnubbee was born around the year 1740. He and his family occupied a log cabin in Oklafalaya, one of three Choctaw territories in what is now Mississippi. He was known to have fathered four chil- dren… He was a tribal Chief- tain as early as 1801, and was one of the signers of the treaties of 1815-1816, and the Doak’s Stand Treaty of 1820. His judg- ment and wisdom were honored over the entire Nation, even celebrated chief, he was a famous man, and it is said that he was a man of deep religious feelings and was much respected for his piety. In the early autumn months

The Power of Out

For decades the LGBT Com- munity has talked about the importance of being “out”. This community shorthand for being “out of the closet” is often con- fusing to our friends and allies. I have heard this confusion voiced as not understanding why some- one would want to tell others about their “sex life.” To those of us who have come out, we know that is not what it means. We know that coming out is indeed a very per- sonal experience; a sometimes easy, sometimes harrowing, sometimes confusing journey. A journey that does have to do with our sexuality (and our love and families), but little to do with sharing our sex behaviors. A life lived our means having to come out to family, friends, co-workers and strangers. Ulti- mately, no matter the context, being out is about a life lived in an honest and authentic way.

The coming out process is not limited to LGBT peo- ple. Our friends and family members, our allies, have their own coming out to deal with. They must summon the courage to stand up and challenge the lies and bias and they also risk rejection. A different rejection, but potentially equally painful. I hope that you all will never need our support as much as I need theirs. I need to encourage them to live our and be proud of their ali- nity. It is a passion for personal authenticity and a zeal for honor- esty that makes the work of the Gay Alliance unique. Ensuring that people can live an honestly authen- tic, fully our lives is at the heart of all the work that the Gay Alli- ance does. From the work we do to hold you, to our renowned edu- cation and training programs, to our community work, every- thing is encouraging, supporting, and supporting people as they live our lives.

When the Gay Alliance opened its doors, most of soci- ety provided LGBT people assis- tance by institutionalizing us, offering us “cures,” threatening us with lobotomies and generally disowning us. In 1967, news anchor and reporter Mike Wallace summed up feelings of the day in the tele- vision program, “CBS Reports: The Homosexual” this way: “The average homosexual, if there be such, is promiscuous. He is not interested or capable of a lasting relationship like that of a hetero- sexual marriage. His sex life, his love life, consists of a series of one night encounters at the clubs and bars he inhabits. And even on the streets of the city — the one-night stand, the one-night stand, these are characteristics of the homosexual relationship.” Times have changed. Maybe not enough, but a great deal.

As the Gay Alliance contin- ues bringing hope, love and support to our community work, every- thing does. From the newspaper to our club work, partnership of businesses within our community who support our mission and vision.

The Empty Closet Editor

SUSAN JORDAN

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Kelly Clark is moving on to get her doctorate

By Susan Jordan

Kelly Clark, Inter-generational Program Director for the Gay Alliance, will be leaving at the end of September to pursue a doctorate in Executive Leadership through the School of Education at St. John Fisher.

Kelly joined the GAGV staff in October 2008 and served first as coordinator of the Anti-Violence Project. A year ago she became Intergenerational Program Director, working with the Youth Group and Rainbow SAGE.

GAGV Acting Executive Director Scott Fearing said, “I have often joked that recruiting Kelly was one of the top accomplishments of my professional career. Well, it is actually not a joke. She has been an amazing asset to the agency and the work we do, and will be missed. Kelly’s background working on college campuses was invaluable as she began to change how we work. She has had to so many others who understand that we need to focus on skill development and set expectations for meaningful involvement to ensure the next generation of leaders for our community.”

Kelly told the EC that her doctoral program is designed for working adults, with classes every other Friday and Saturday for three years. “They pace it really well,” she said, “and you have to find a part time job.” The reason for leaving the Gay Alliance is that small agencies require a lot of time and energy and I just won’t have it. I will devote most of my time to classes and research and would not be able to do justice to the work at the Alliance.”

Kelly is in an accelerated program. “In the first year you pick a dissertation topic and read the literature and write a couple of chapters of your dissertation based on that. The second year you develop your research project and at the end of the year you’re punching your data. The third year (it’s really 28 months), you finish the final version of your dissertation and pull it all together.”

Kelly thinks her topic could be masculinity and homophobia, analyzing the ways in which concepts of masculinity lead to homophobic violence. Ultimately she would like to lead a national agency.

Kelly said, “I think the Gay Alliance has been a really good opportunity to hone my skills and this is an opportunity to see if I can do something different.”

The Gay Alliance is that very early screening at ImageOut in October will see this documentary. He supported my efforts from beginning to end. Tony died on January 10th and he was a great friend and a great supporter of this project. I will personally continue to support the work of the Gay Alliance.”

Kelli will remain in the area for a while and will stay active, for instance on the Pride committee. She says, “My big concern about the GAGV and our community is that we not forget the lessons of the civil rights movements that have come before us. Rights can be taken away in the blink of an eye, and it’s important that the community not abandon the Gay Alliance just because we are generating a lot of attention or it’s been published. I will personally continue to support the work of the Gay Alliance.”

ESPAs issues first 2013 candidate endorsements

The Empire State Pride Agenda has issued its first endorsement for large scale elections.

Rochester Region: Monroe County Legislator District 17 Joseph Morelle, Jr. (D); Rochester Mayor Thomas Richards (D); County Legislator District 17 Dana Miller (D); Brigh- tontown Councilmember-at-Large Dana Miller (D); Brigh- tontown Mayor Town Supervisor William Mochle (D).

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Six men attack gay couple in Chelsea

NBC New York reports:

By Susan Jordan

A gay couple in Chelsea were holding hands as they left a movie theater in Chelsea were attacked by a man and woman who chased them and tried to pull them apart.

Seven allegations of anti-gay violence in New York State, including the first-ever anti-gay violence lawsuit, were announced last year. "It's time to make the people who are going to make the people and the community they don't like go away, that's time to push us back into the closet. The way that the community and survivors of these attacks have stood up, that's real bravery, and I think that has inspired others to stand up."

While the attacks are leaving some scared to walk down the street, there has been a gal- vanizing effect on the gay community, causing them to speak out and get the attention of the NYPD and City Council. This attention has helped foster a conversation in the community about the crimes, and one result has been for the council to sponsor an Anti-Gay Violence Act in this year’s legislative session.

New Pride Agenda candidate endorsements

With the 2013 election season coming up, the Gay Alliance is announcing endorsements for the first time in its history.

The Gay Alliance has endorsed four candidates for the 2013 elections, including two candidates for New York City Council and two candidates for New York State Assembly.

The Gay Alliance has also endorsed two candidates for New York City Council, including Thomas Ophardt of Rochester, who is running for mayor, has taken a great interest in the problem and said of the attacks, "They think they're going to make the people and the community they don't like go away, that's time to push us back into the closet. The way that the community and survivors of these attacks have stood up, that's real bravery, and I think that has inspired others to stand up."

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Bradley Manning reveals, “I am Chelsea Manning. I am female.”

Bradley Manning wants to live the remainder of her life as a woman, according to a statement sent by attorney David Coombs on Aug. 22, NBC’s Today reports.

“I am Chelsea Manning. I am female,” the Army private wrote in a statement. “Given the way that I feel, and have felt since childhood, I want to begin hormone therapy as soon as possible. I hope that you will support me in this transition.”

“I also request that, starting today, you refer to me by my new name and use the feminine pronoun (except in official mail to the confinement facility),” she continued in the statement. “I look forward to receiving letters from supporters and having the opportunity to write back.”

Manning signed the letter “Chelsea E. Manning.”

Today continues:

During his (sic) trial, Manning’s defense team suggested his struggles with gender identity as a gay soldier were a factor in his decision to leak. His attorneys presented an email to a former supervisor in his decision to leak. His attorneys referred to me by my new name and use the feminine pronoun (except in official mail to the confinement facility). I look forward to receiving letters from supporters and having the opportunity to write back.

Thank you,
Chelsea E. Manning

In related news, Manning’s lawyer plans to ask President Obama to pardon her.

Manning’s lawyer, David Coombs, said he would file a request early next week with the Department of the Army with the hope of making its way to the president, asking him either to pardon Manning or commute her sentence to time served.

Chase Strangio, staff attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union’s Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Project, stated, “In response to Chelsea Manning’s disclosure that she is female, she has been diagnosed with gender dysphoria, and will be seeking hormone therapy as a part of her transition during her incarceration, public statements by military officials that the Army does not provide hormone therapy to treat gender dysphoria raise serious constitutional concerns.”

“Gender dysphoria is a serious medical condition in which a person’s gender identity does not correspond to his or her assigned sex at birth, and hormone therapy is part of the accepted standards of care for this condition. Without the necessary treatment, gender dysphoria can cause severe psychological distress, including anxiety and suicide. When the government holds individuals in its custody, it must provide them with medically necessary care. "The official policy of the Federal Bureau of Prisons and most state agencies does not specifically mention the necessity of the treatment of gender dysphoria, and courts have consistently found that denying such care to prisoners based on blanket exclusions violates the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution.”

From the Facebook page of NBC Los Angeles come the above photos of students rallying in support of former Catholic high school teacher Ken Bencomo, who was fired after 17 years when his same-sex wedding photo was featured in the local press.

A petition that demands Bencomo’s reinstatement has gotten more than 49,000 signatures.

One of the lead organizers of the event, Britanny Littleton, started the Change.org petition demanding that Bencomo be reinstated.

“Today we’re gathering as current and former students of St. Lucy’s, with the support of more than 49,000 people around the country, demanding that one of the best teachers to ever work at St. Lucy’s be given his job back,” said Littleton.

“We were taught at St. Lucy’s that everyone deserves a seat at the table, and that nobody should face discrimination over who they are. It is entirely un-Christian and against the very mission of St. Lucy’s to fire someone like Mr. Bencomo. Doing so only hurts students, but tarnishes the reputation of a school so many of us are proud to have attended.”

Littleton led a group of current and former students into St. Lucy’s to deliver the 49,000 petition signatures, as well as thousands of comments left on the petition by people who knew and supported Ken Bencomo. The students were not allowed into the school, but were able to leave the petition signatures and comments with security personnel.

Littleton said that the students and alumni of St. Lucy’s will continue their campaign to get Bencomo reinstated.

“We’re not going to rest until Mr. Bencomo has his job back,” Littleton said.

“Catholic schools are postmodern. Now it’s time for his students to give back and make sure the whole country knows how great of a teacher he is, and how much he deserves to have his job back.”

Live signature totals from Britanny Littleton’s campaign:

https://www.change.org/petitions/st-lucy-s-prory-high-school-give-ken-bencomo-his-job-back

Reuters coverage of the campaign:

http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/08/02/us-usa-teacher-catholic-idUSBRE97106L20130802

Bayard Rustin to receive Medal of Freedom

The White House on Aug. 8 announced that Bayard Rustin, the late civil and human rights advocate, will be posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States.

An aide and confidant to Dr. Martin Luther King, Rustin was the main organizer of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, an iconic moment in the history of our nation.

Human Rights Campaign (HRC) President Chad Griffin wrote President Obama a letter earlier this year urging him to posthumously grant the medal to Rustin.

“Bayard Rustin’s contributions to
the American civil rights movement remain paramount to its successes to this day,” said Griffin. “His role in the fight for civil rights of African-Americans is all the more admirable because he made it as a gay man, experiencing prejudice not just because of his race, but because of his sexual orientation as well.”

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is an award bestowed by the President of the United States and is, along with the comparable Congressional Gold Medal bestowed by an act of U.S. Congress, the highest civilian award in the United States. It recognizes those individuals who have made “an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavors”. The award is not limited to U.S. citizens and, while it is a civilian award, it can also be awarded to military personnel and worn on the uniform. It was established in 1963 and replaced the earlier Medal of Freedom that was established by President Harry S. Truman in 1945.

Rustin was active in the struggle for civil rights for sixty years, from organizing early freedom rides in the 1940s, to serving as key advisor to Dr. King, to helping found the A. Philip Randolph Institute. His advocacy was far from limited to the rights of African Americans. He worked to end apartheid in South Africa, fought for the freedom of Soviet Jews, worked to protect the property of Japanese Americans interned during World War II, and helped highlight the plight of Vietnamese “boat people.” And in the 1980s, he also spoke up for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, testifying in support of anti-discrimination legislation in New York.

“Bayard Rustin dedicated his life to advocating for fairness and equality and overcame prejudice,不起 any nation forward,” added Griffin.

The late astronaut Sally Ride, who The Wall Street Journal has con- tinued page 13)
No arrests or violence at Uganda’s second Pride

By Andrew Potts on gaystarnews.com

Ugandan MPs have been seeking to ban LGBTs in the country to ban conversion therapy for minors.

New Jersey becomes the second state in the country to ban conversion therapy for minors.

U.S. consul in Amsterdam issues first visa for gay couple of American citizen

On Aug. 2, Secretary of State John Kerry announced the immediate availability of visas for the spouses for gay Americans. Two days later the first such visa was issued in the Netherlands.

From the Facebook page of the US Consulate General, Amsterdam:

“Mr. Francois Conradie is moving to New York, and visited the U.S. Consulate General in Amsterdam for his L2 visa interview on Friday. Today, he was surprised by Consul General Berry, who presented him with the printed visa placed in his passport. This is the first ever visa we have had the privilege of issuing to the same-sex couple of a visa applicant in Amsterdam since the U.S. Supreme Court’s repeal of DOMA. Have a great trip Mr. Conradie!”

Gay Russian TV star comes out on air, is fired

Anton Krasovsky, a well-known Russian TV personality, was fired earlier in the year after he came out publicly on live television, according to Queerty:

“I’m gay, and I’m just the same person as you, my dear audience, as President Putin, as Prime Minister Medvedev and the deputies of our Duma,” Krasovsky, 37, said in an interview on the Kremlin-backed television and internet network he helped launch, Kunts TV.

Though his admission was followed by a “storm of applause” by the audience and the show’s staff, Krasovsky was fired the very same night. By the next day, his presence had been completely erased from any of his corporate accounts and his email was blocked.

Krasovsky was surprised because “it takes them half a day to put up a banner when I ask them to, and here we had such efficiency.”

“Any footage of his coming out has also completely disappeared from the internet, which is a feat in this day and age, but we guess the morals here is never to underestimate the Kremlin,” Queerty said.

Appearing on CNN, Krasovsky was recently asked why he came out in such a public and potentially dangerous fashion, to which he replied. “Because somebody should do it. I decided it was time to be open. It was time to be open, for me.”

Russian TV oficial says dead gays’ hearts should be burned; blames the victims for violence

Dmitriy Kiselyov, when asked during a program on Russian state television host Dmitry Kiselyov, when asked during a government-run television news program broadcast by the state-owned network Rossiya 1.

He translated comments state, “I think that just imposing fines on gays for homosexual propaganda among teenagers is not enough. They should be banned from donating blood, sperm. And their hearts, in case of the automobile accident, should be buried. It’s not an option, it should be buried. It’s not a question of choice, but rather a question of life.”

The audience applauded after Kiselev’s comments.

The New Civil Rights Movement adds that the 112th — a top news show which airs all across Russia every two hours; and that Kiselev has served as Deputy General Director of state broadcast since 2008.

Regarding Rossiya 1, the BBC notes: “Russian TV is dominated by channels that are either run directly by the state or owned by companies with close links to the Kremlin. The government controls Channel One and Russia One -- two of the three main federal channels… TV is the main news source for most Russians. Russia is a regular target for criticism and condemnation from media freedom watchdogs.”

Kiselyov later blamed the victims for the violence. “Our [Russian] problem with homosexuals is that they behave in a provocative, victim-like way. They deliberately provoke situations, so that they become victims. Nobody prevents them from loving each other the way they want to. They are aggressively fuoting minor-ity’s values on the majority. It is likely that society would counteract this. Naturally, right? In various ways, including brutal ones. Since they are brutally扶tting this [on others]. Wanna fight? Get it, then. So what? — Russian state television host Dmitry Kiselyov, when asked during a radio interview if he was aware of the murders of Russian gays. (Via Pink News)

N.J. bans conversion therapy for minors; Christie signs bill

Republican Governor and potential 2016 presidential hopeful Chris Christie signed the new bill into law on Aug. 19, New Jersey becomes the second state in the country to ban conversion therapy for minors.

The measure was previously passed by the state’s congress in July, and until recently, it was unclear as to whether Christie would endorse it and sign it into law. Christie has, however, previously expressed his opposition to the practice, and even stated in a CNN interview that he does not believe homosexuality to be a sin, despite his Catholic background. He opposes marriage equality.

Christie’s upcoming statement highlights his evidence-based approach to the bill. “The American Psychological Asso- ciation has found that efforts to change sexual orientations can pose critical health risks including, but not limited to, depres- sion, substance abuse, social withdra- al, decreased self-esteem and suicidal thoughts. I believe that exposing children to these health risks without clear evi- dence of benefits that outweigh these seri- ous risks is not appropriate.”

Christie’s statement will also recog- nize “government limiting parental choice on the care and treatment of their own children,” no doubt an appeal to his conservative supporters, as well as an anticipation of backlash that has arisen in response to the new bill. Similar legal challenges have already arisen in Califor- nia, the first state to ban conversion ther- apy for minors.

Political analysts are already view- ing Christie’s decision to sign the bill “through the prism of the 2016 race for the White House.

“Christie, a centrist Republican, is considered a leading candidate for his party’s presidential nomination,” report- ed CNN. “While today’s statement will almost certainly draw ire from social

Martha M. Howden, CSW, CASAC

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He translated comments state, “I think that just imposing fines on gays for homosexual propaganda among teenagers is not enough. They should be banned from donating blood, sperm. And their hearts, in case of the automobile accident, should be buried. It’s not an option, it should be buried. It’s not a question of choice, but rather a question of life.”

The audience applauded after Kiselev’s comments.

The New Civil Rights Movement adds that the 112th — a top news show which airs all across Russia every two hours; and that Kiselev has served as Deputy General Director of state broadcast since 2008.

Regarding Rossiya 1, the BBC notes: “Russian TV is dominated by channels that are either run directly by the state or owned by companies with close links to the Kremlin. The government controls Channel One and Russia One -- two of the three main federal channels… TV is the main news source for most Russians. Russia is a regular target for criticism and condemnation from media freedom watchdogs.”

Kiselyov later blamed the victims for the violence. “Our [Russian] problem with homosexuals is that they behave in a provocative, victim-like way. They deliberately provoke situations, so that they become victims. Nobody prevents them from loving each other the way they want to. They are aggressively fuoting minor-ity’s values on the majority. It is likely that society would counteract this. Naturally, right? In various ways, including brutal ones. Since they are brutally扶tting this [on others]. Wanna fight? Get it, then. So what? — Russian state television host Dmitry Kiselyov, when asked during a radio interview if he was aware of the murders of Russian gays. (Via Pink News)

N.J. bans conversion therapy for minors; Christie signs bill

Republican Governor and potential 2016 presidential hopeful Chris Christie signed the new bill into law on Aug. 19, New Jersey becomes the second state in the country to ban conversion therapy for minors.

The measure was previously passed by the state’s congress in July, and until recently, it was unclear as to whether Christie would endorse it and sign it into law. Christie has, however, previously expressed his opposition to the practice, and even stated in a CNN interview that he does not believe homosexuality to be a sin, despite his Catholic background. He opposes marriage equality.

Christie’s upcoming statement highlights his evidence-based approach to the bill. “The American Psychological Asso- ciation has found that efforts to change sexual orientations can pose critical health risks including, but not limited to, depres- sion, substance abuse, social withdra- al, decreased self-esteem and suicidal thoughts. I believe that exposing children to these health risks without clear evi- dence of benefits that outweigh these seri- ous risks is not appropriate.”

Christie’s statement will also recog- nize “government limiting parental choice on the care and treatment of their own children,” no doubt an appeal to his conservative supporters, as well as an anticipation of backlash that has arisen in response to the new bill. Similar legal challenges have already arisen in Califor- nia, the first state to ban conversion ther- apy for minors.

Political analysts are already view- ing Christie’s decision to sign the bill “through the prism of the 2016 race for the White House.

“Christie, a centrist Republican, is considered a leading candidate for his party’s presidential nomination,” report- ed CNN. “While today’s statement will almost certainly draw ire from...
Homecoming sailor proposes at the dock

A Navy sailor returning from a six-month deployment had thought about getting married to his boyfriend during the homecoming celebration in Connecticut for USS New Mexico. About 200 people were gathered at the dock of the Naval Submarine Base New London when Machinist’s Mate Jerel Revels proposed to Dylan Kirchner. Kirchner said he had thought about getting married but the proposal on Aug. 12 came as a surprise. “I didn’t really care everybody was around. It felt just like the two of us,” Kirchner told The Day of New London.-USA Today

Russian thugs post bashing ambush videos

Anti-LGBT vigilantes have taken to the web attempting to lure unsuspecting victims into meeting a potential partner at a particular time and place, only to surprise and ambush them as soon as they show up. These vigilantes then record the violent ambushes before posting them online. The web is simply one of the latest to pop up on the Russian social media site VK.com. In it, five men ambush and brutalize a trans woman in a public park. Since the video begins with a physical attack, it is not immediately apparent if the traditional pre-ambush (Russian continue page 11)

Ally Howell, author of “Transgender Persons and the Law”

By Susan Jordan

“In effect, gender is a language,” writes Ally Howell in her new book, “Transgender Persons and the Law” (American Bar Association, 2013), which is available at the Gay Alliance Library. Howell, a transgender attorney who formerly lived in Rochester, points out that gender is a system of symbols and meanings, such as masculine, feminine, strength, weakness, etc. Traditional culture and most legal jurisdictions regard sex (that is, gender, not sexuality) as fixed at birth. We are our genitalia and nothing more.

In reality, one in 100 births is a person whose body is different in some way from the standard binary male/female. “Gender variance is not new,” Howell writes. She spoke recently with The Empty Closet about her book and the importance of educating the cisgendered majority about the myths and realities of human gender identity.

Empty Closet: Our society believes that there are only two gender options for human beings – John Wayne or Marilyn Monroe. Anyone who doesn’t fit those stereotypes is labeled a “freak” or worse – we are our genitalia. Yet gender variance is actually pretty common. How can society’s outdated views be changed, especially when the issue is being exploited by conservatives for political ends?

Ally Howell: Education is the only way to change things. When I was living in the Rochester area, the transgender group alone, and later as part of the GAGV’s Speakers Bureau, presented programs to the Crisis Helpline staff, college classes, community and church groups, etc. We even presented programs to employers and their employees who had a transgender employee who was transitioning. A group that I co-founded in Alabama before moving to the Rochester area even presented a two-hour professional education program to the Alabama Psychological Association and to county and state correctional administrators and staffs.

EC: The law is now beginning to recognize that human gender identity is a lot more complex than once believed. How has change come about?

AH: Education is the way this has happened. Education like what I just described, plus a number of hard working lawyers who have presented a lot of expert testimony in various court cases involving transgender persons – such as divorces, child custody cases, employment disputes, public housing and public facilities cases, and even cases involving transgender prisoners.

EC: You write that trans women quickly learn that in our culture, “women are valued less than men.” Have you personally experienced sexism since your transition?

AH: Yes, I have. And, in counseling other male-to-female transgender folks, a few have decided not to transition and to stay in the closet because they did not think they could give up the male prerogatives that society affords. Of course, the sexism is nice in other ways like getting doors opened for you. And I even had a man change my flat tire for me once.

EC: The Hon. Phyllis Randolph Frye, the first out of the closet trans U.S. judge, and “grandmother of the national transgender legal and political movement,” wrote the foreword to your book. Do you know her personally?

AH: Yes, Phyllis is a good friend. I even dedicated the book to her. She was the first transgender lawyer that I ever met. She recruited me to serve on the Board of the National Gay and Lesbian Law Association, which also serves and advocates for transgender folks. The National Gay and Lesbian Law Association is now called the National LGBT Bar Association. I even served a term as vice co-chair of that group.

EC: You list many transgender resources for everything from family law to personal safety. How long did it take you to compile the book?

AH: It took the better part of a year to write it working on it part time. It was a work of love. I even assigned my royalties to the American Bar Association’s Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity’s advocacy on behalf of transgender persons.

EC: Is there anything you would like to add to transgender persons?

AH: I hope the book will be used by and useful to attorneys who advise and represent transgender persons, attorneys who advise and represent businesses and governmental agencies which deal with transgender persons, and to people who are interested in learning more about transgender persons and the issues they face.

The book will be updated annually. In fact, I have already collected materials since the manuscript was submitted for publication for the annual supplement for 2014.

Thank you Susan for this opportunity to speak with you.

EC: Thank you!
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Making the Scene

VWA PUERTO RICO: The Gay Alliance had a float in the Puerto Rican Day Parade on Aug. 3. Photo: Bess Watts

Gemini Stone at the Puerto Rican Day Parade. Photo: Wanda Martinez

Victory Alliance staff at WNY Black Gay Pride.

WNY BLACK GAY PRIDE: Bruce Small and Barb Turner of The MOCHA Center at the grill at the WNY Black Gay Pride Picnic on Aug. 11 in Genesee Valley Park. Events took place in Rochester and Buffalo between Aug. 3-11.

Chris Wilson of The MOCHA Center at the cookout on Aug. 11.

My Own Private Rochester: Barbara Turner

By Susan Jordan

Barbara Turner is Prevention Programs and Services Manager at the MOCHA Center. A native-born Rochesterian, her father was one of the first African American Rochester police officers.

Her grandmother, who was a member of the National Negro Business and Professional Women’s Club, was one of the first black legal secretaries at Kodak, and one of Barbara’s greatest inspirations. She passed away seven years ago, but had always predicted that Kodak would encounter the very troubles it has since experienced – another example of secretaries knowing more than executives.

Her other inspiration is the late James McCuller of Action for a Better Community. Barbara said, “He started my first job when I was 14 and inspired me. Every Friday afternoon we met in the auditorium and he would lecture us about altruism, giving back and education. As an adult I reflect on what that actually means, and how this man would come and spend time with a bunch of teenagers.”

Barbara’s favorite places include Genesee Valley Park, where she bikes or walks daily along the trail. “I grew up across from the park on Elmwood. My house now is within walking distance of the park. That’s one of the big reasons I bought the house! Also, I’m proud of the improvements made to the area – housing, shops and restaurants.” One of her favorite restaurants is California Rolling in the park neighborhood. “I also love Cobbs Hill,” she said, “especially the Washington Grove preservation project – a forest within the city. It’s a city-owned area near the reservoir and a coalition of neighbors manages it.” Barbara’s other favorite restaurants are Tapas 177 on St. Paul, the French Quarter on Goodman, Revelry on University Ave. and Cure at the Public Market. “The Market is one of my favorite places,” she said. “I usually go there on Saturday mornings, or Thursdays.” She likes the “low country” food at Revelry, which specializes in the cuisine of the South Carolina/Georgia coast.

Barbara’s favorite local events include the Jazz Festival – any jazz festival, actually – and the Clarissa Street Festival. Of the latter, she says, “It’s so great to see four or five generations of families together, all kissing and hugging and happy to be together.”

“I also love Canandaigua Lake,” she adds. “My favorite thing to do is sit outside and listen to jazz. I usually go to the Canandaigua Arts Festival and the Riesling Festival. I love discovering wineries, although I don’t drink. But they have music festivals, like Brothers Winery in Geneva, which has live music all the time. They have something called Bagg Dare – it’s the weirdest thing but so cool. You walk down a winding road into the woods and there’s a little house there with a pond – just like the julep joint in ‘The Color Purple.’ They have a variety of music.”

For a special Saturday treat, Barbara likes to go to Ithaca for waterfall-viewing, dinner and shopping along the Commons. Her hobbies are gardening and working on her house; as well as with all older homes, there is always something to fix. “I have done a lot of landscaping,” she said, “and working on the patio. I tiled my bathroom. I’m usually working on some project. I had a contractor in the beginning and learned from him – like sanding floors. When I worked at Unity I would borrow tools and learned a lot from the maintenance engineer. I had a furniture re-finishing class for a group of mentally ill alcoholics and drug addicts. I taught them how to re-finish furniture and that gave them something to do besides drink. One member of the group would get each particular piece of furniture.”
same sex weddings begin in New Zealand

Aug. 19 marked the day that marriage equality became the law of the land in New Zealand.

Natasha Vitali and Melissa Ray won their ceremony as part of an all-expenses-paid giveaway on a local radio station, and were the first same-sex couple to be married in the country. Their ceremony took place at 9 a.m. local time in Auckland, New Zealand’s largest city. Lynley Bendall and Ally Wanikau were also among the estimated 31 same-sex couples (according to the Washington Blade) who tied the knot that day.

They held their ceremony while on an Air New Zealand flight from Queenstown to Auckland, and had Modern Family star Jesse Tyler Ferguson and husband Justin Mikita among the many witnesses in attendance.

The newly-adopted marriage equality law came to New Zealand thanks to lesbian Parliamentarian Louisa Wall, who was one of the many in attendance during Vitali and Ray’s ceremony in Auckland. She expressed her pride in a statement to the Washington Blade:

“I feel very proud to have had my marriage equality bill pass through the New Zealand parliamentary process with support from across the House. Today we can celebrate the reality of our law change which allows any two people who love each other, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation or gender identity to commit to one another in the institution of marriage.”

Paul McCarthy and Trent Kandler were also among those who got married Aug. 19. They also have the distinction of being the first Australian same-sex couple to be married under New Zealand’s new law. The Herald Sun predicts that the two men are the first of what will be a “flood” of same-sex Australian couples “expected to travel across the Tasman to exchange vows.” Unfortunately, their nuptials won’t be recognized in their home nation, so their gesture is more of a symbolic one. However, the two men hope that their symbolic gesture will lead to real change.

“Talk to your local candidates, find out what their view is, because this is a chance we have this year to make a difference,” McCarthy said. “We’re normal people, we live in this society... it would be very good if people thought we could be treated equally.”

New Zealand is now the 14th nation in the world to legalize marriage equality. Next in line will likely be England and Wales, which recently approved a bill that is anticipated to take effect this upcoming spring.

LGBT groups join in 50th anniversary of March on Washington

A coalition of national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights organizations, led by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, has issued the following open letter:

An Open Letter in Support of 50th Anniversary of March on Washington

Over the past year, our community has celebrated tremendous wins in the fight for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality and justice.

We have collectively cheered the first ever Senate committee markup of an inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), the Social Security Administration’s modernization of its gender marker policy, and U.S. Supreme Court wins on marriage equality in the Windsor and Perry rulings. But we remain frustrated that ENDA is still not the law of the land and we’re angered and deeply disappointed with the Court’s decision to turn back critical parts of the historic Voting Rights Act in Shelby.

We must channel this frustration and disappointment into action to tackle employment discrimination, voter suppression tactics, immigration reform and racial profiling — all of which disproportionately impact LGBT communities.

This month we have an opportunity to bring the combined energy from our victories to a major gathering that will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs & Freedom.

Vote in the Democratic Primary, Tuesday, September 10

“I have a strong commitment to fairness, justice and equality for the LGBT community rooted in my family’s tradition of service and giving. I have witnessed the cruel consequence of prejudice steeped in ignorance and bias. Throughout my life, and now as Mayor, I have been steadfast in my support. My commitment to continue to fight for equal treatment for Rochester’s LGBT community will never waver.”

Mayor Tom Richards

This ad is paid for by Tom Richards for Mayor.
RichardsforMayor.com
Conklin lives in the Corn Hill neighborhood of the city. When she isn’t working with city officials, or col-
league or on constituent issues, you can usually find

Thomas Richards
Rochester Mayor
By Owe Overyer
When you meet Mayor Tom Richards for the first time, usually the initial thing he will mention about himself is that he is a lifelong resident of Rochester, where he still lives in the Brownstone neighborhood with his wife Betty.

They have two adult sons, three grandchildren and another one on the way. Tom’s father was a minister who ran a homeless shelter downtown on Andrews Street at the corner of Front Street, which was then known as Rochester’s skull row. Tom’s father took him there often as a boy so he could appreciate the misfortune experienced by some people and learn to treat them with respect and compassion.

This was just one of many life lessons that Mayor Richards fondly recalls about his childhood growing up in Rochester.

After college, Mayor Richards served in the Navy for almost four years, including a year as Officer in Charge on a Swift Boat in Vietnam. After his service, he completed law school and served 20 years as a trial attorney. He was the managing partner of the law firm Nixon, Nixon, Hargrave, Duvall & Doyle (now Nixon Peabody) before joining the Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation in 1991 as its general counsel.

He went on to become the president and chief operat-
ing officer of RG&E and then chairman, president and chief executive officer of RGE Energy Group, the parent company of RG&E. After a brief retirement, Richards returned to work serving more than four years as the City of Rochester’s Corporation Counsel and two months as Deputy Mayor. Following the special election in April 2013, the Board of Aldermen elected him to the Mayor’s position.

Early on in his first term, Mayor Richards said that he would seek to recognize that our common interest and our horizontal goals and progress, not only in physically rebuilding our city neighborhoods for the future, but in preparing our young people for that future.

Mayor Richards told the EC, “I said that the City is one of the best guys we could have possibly hoped for.”

He says his vision is to have better schools, safer neigh-
borhoods, ample job opportunities and a vibrant down-
town. He says he is making sure that City Hall is working every day to make Rochester better for all of its citizens.

And when it comes to the issues of equality and jus-
tice, some activists have called Mayor Richards “one of the best of the best of us we could have possibly hoped for.”

Richards told the EC, “Rochester has a well-deserved reputation as being one of our nation’s most progressive cities. In that tradition, we have worked to ensure that City Government is doing everything it can to provide for the equal protection of all Rochesterians, regardless of their race, sexual orientation or gender identity and expres-
sion.” He added, “I am particularly proud to receive ESPA’s endorsement, and thank the LGBT community for their partnership and friendship. As long as I am Mayor, they will continue to have a steadfast advocate in City Hall.”

When asked what he wanted EC readers to know about him, he concluded, “There is no denying we’ve made substantial progress. There is also no denying that we’ve got a long way to go. I have a clear recognition of our challenges and a steady commitment to ensure that everyone shares in progress. We can and we will guide the transformation of our community for the good. I ask you to join me and I humbly ask for your support on Primary Day, Tuesday, September 10.”

Matt Haag
City Councilman-at-Large
By Owe Overyer
Just recently you may have learned that the City of Rochester has implemented policy changes to make our city a more welcoming place for LGBT individuals to live, work, and raise a family. That is in large part due to the work of City Councilman Matt Haag, who was first elected to City Council in 2009.

Haag says he has tirelessly worked on his constituents’ behalf, partnering with Mayor Richards to keep issues of economic development, public safety and equality in the forefront.

Haag is running for re-election this year to an At-Large seat on Rochester City Council. He tells the Empty Closet that he has worked very hard over the past four years to bring a fresh perspective and a focus on commu-
nity engagement to government. He also says that we have been able to accomplish “quite a lot.”

At Rochester Pride’s Flag Raising ceremony this past summer, Mayor Richards and Councilman Haag announced two steps that will improve the quality of life in Rochester. First, the city has added “gender iden-
tity and gender expression” to its list of protected classes. Rochester has long been a leader in civil rights and Haag says this was an important step to make our practice our policy.

Haag told the EC, “This isn’t the first time I’ve worked to obtain protection rights for individuals based on gender identity and expression. When I first took office in 2009, I worked with the Rochester Housing Authority to add gender identity expression as a protected class so that everyone could lose their housing because of how they identify.”

The second important announcement on July 19 was the implementation of a citywide Paid Medical Leave. Haag states that we must ensure that all people are given the same rights to be with their fami-
lies when they need them most. He also states that he and city officials are working to ensure that transgender employees have access to the health care they need.

Councilman Haag says he is also laser-focused on starting discussions about creating a City Contractor Equal Benefits Ordinance, which would require anyone who contracts with the City of Rochester to offer equal benefits to all of their employees regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

When asked what he wants to tell the readers of the EC, he replied, “Each day, I work with community lead-
ers, neighborhood groups and friends in labor and the business sector to help move our city forward. My support from the Democratic, Working Families, and Indepen-
dence parties, Rochester Labor Council, AFL-CIO, 1199 SEIU, Rochester Regional Joint Board Workers United, BENET Local 4249, Rochester Police Locust Club, Unit-
ed Auto Workers UAW 1097, Empire State Pride Agenda, and the Victory Fund testify to my commitment to work-
ing with anyone willing to make our city a better place.

With your support, I’d be honored to serve another term to continue this very important work.”

Carolee Conklin
Rochester City Council At-Large
By Owe Overyer
Democrat Carolee Conklin probably knows the hal-
lowed halls and corridors of 30 Church Street as well as any other Rochesterian working today. She has been affiliated with Rochester’s city government since 1974, serving previously as Deputy City Treasurer, Deputy City Clerk, and City Clerk before running for an at-large seat on City Council in 2005. Conklin was re-elected in 2009.

In an interview with The Empty Closet, Conklin said, “I am proud of the work I have done, and I am ask-
ing for our community’s support for another term. I have used my work and nonprofit board experience to ask the tough questions, expect accountability, and play major leadership role on the Council.”

Conklin says the early years of her life had a lasting impact on how she views the world today. “My views on equality and social justice issues were formed very early. At the age of 15, my 11-year-old sister and I took a train from Buffalo to Washington, D.C., to spend the sum-
mer with my Dad. He was stationed at Fort Belvoir, Va. In June 1952, we arrived at Union Station and the first thing we saw was drinking fountains that said ‘White Only’ or ‘Colored Only’. Those signs applied almost to every aspect of life in our nation’s capital at the time. It was my first overt exposure to inequality. It’s something I will always remember.”

Conklin also recalls the McCarthy Era and the black-
listing, along with newets of dogs and fire hoses being turned on civil rights marchers, as memories that are still fresh in her mind. “To sum things up, I was sobered for civil rights for everyone — minorities, women, GLBT folks, aged population and on and on.”

As City Clerk, Conklin personally mentored marriage equality activists Anne Tischer and Bess Watts through the maze of paperwork that became publicly known as the first local attempt by a same sex couple to apply for a marriage license in the City of Rochester.

During her first term on City Council, Conklin chaired both of Council’s major committees, Commu-
nity Development and Finance. As the Community Development Chair, she led Council’s review of the Community Development program, which has allowed millions of dollars to be spent rebuilding our city.

As the Finance Committee Chair, Councilmember Conklin oversees Council’s review of the Mayor’s pro-
posed annual budget to ensure that the spending plan makes sense and protects city taxpayers. She also rede-
signed Council’s review of the proposed budget to create a fuller discussion of the budget details, and permitted more time for Council’s concerns to be addressed. Her Finance Chair responsibilities also include the review of the annual Capital Improvement Plan, to ensure that the millions of dollars spent repairing our streets, bridges, water supply systems and other key city programs are spent wisely.

“There have been times over the years where I was the only person who voted nay on an issue,” says Conk-
lin. She added, “There have been times when I have led a majority of Council to bring about important changes in policy. Through it all, I am proud of the no-nonsense approach to economic development, public safety and equality in the forefront.

Conklin lives in the Corn Hill neighborhood of the city. When she isn’t working with city officials, or col-
leagues or on constituent issues, you can usually find Carolee attending to her multi-generational, close-knit extended family.
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Health Initiatives program presents a comprehensive and inclusive information. The program also includes a website and a newsletter for key staff members. Additionally, URMC provided senior managers with training in LGBT patient-centered care.

Trillium Health Trillium Health, formerly known as AIDS Care, is proud to be recognized for the third year in a row as a “Leader in LGBT Health Equality.” Says Kathy Ratmell, RN, FNP, chief operating officer and executive vice president of the hospital. “The overarching goal is dignity in health care for our patients and their families, who can face significant challenges in securing adequate healthcare.”

Trillium Health was one of a select group of 466 healthcare facilities nationwide to be named Leaders in LGBT Healthcare Equality. Facilities awarded this title meet key criteria for equitable care, including non-discrimination policies, patient education, and a guarantee of equal visitation for same-sex partners and parents, and LGBT healthcare education for key staff members.

Jay Rudman, president and chief executive officer of Trillium Health, says, “We are proud to be recognized for the third consecutive year as a leader in LGBT healthcare equality, particularly since we have recently renamed our organization and expanded our services to offer medical care not only to HIV positive patients, but also to HIV negative LGBT patients.”

In addition, Trillium Health’s LGBT Health Initiatives program presents health and wellness education to consumers, including as cultural and clinical understanding and peer training to providers throughout Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes region. The program also includes a website, www.everybodysgood.com, where the LGBT community can access comprehensive and inclusive information.

University of Rochester The University of Rochester Medical Center is receiving national recognition for its commitment to care for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender patients and their families. The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation named Strong Memorial Hospital a 2013 Leader in Healthcare Equality.

“LGBT patients deeply appreciate the welcoming care they receive,” says Strong Hospital & Aging Director Shane Snowdon. “It makes a big difference to know you are getting the same care your neighbors and co-workers receive.”

URMC meets or exceeds four key criteria set by the foundation. The criteria include adoption of an explicit patient non-discrimination policy, equal visitation rights, and clearly specified equal opportunity employment practices. In addition, URMC provided senior managers with training in LGBT patient-centered care.

The index best way to provide health care is to honor the values, beliefs, and backgrounds of our patients. This designation reinforces our exceptional commitment to those ideals,” says Kathy Ratmell, RN, FNP, chief operating officer and executive vice president of the hospital. “The overarching goal is dignity in health care for our patients and their families, who can face significant challenges in securing adequate healthcare.”

The new Exchanges will help create a system that encourages innovation in health care before patients require more costly treatment. It increases the number of primary care practitioners and moves to research and eliminate the disparities that many Americans currently experience in accessing healthcare, expanding initiatives to increase the diversity of healthcare professionals and strengthen cultural competency training with the same LGBT patients – which will definitely impact care for LGBT patients.

For more information on the New York Health Benefit Exchange, contact Community Health Advocates at 888-614-5400 or www.cha@cssny.org. The new web portal, www.HealthCare.gov, helps individuals and small businesses find health insurance coverages. Further information on health care reform is available at whitehouse.gov; healthref orm.gov and energycommerce.house.gov.

Affordable Care Act benefits LGBT Americans in many ways

President Obama’s Affordable Care Act gives LGBT citizens more control over their lives, primarily by establishing lower costs.

The Act provides lower costs by expanding the Medicaid program, which helps lower-income Americans living with HIV/AIDS. It eliminates all lifetime limits on coverage if beneficiaries get sick and bans companies from dropping beneficiaries who become sick.

It provides tax credits to small businesses so they can offer affordable health care to employees and gives a $250 rebate to Medicare beneficiaries who lose their doughnut hole in 2010, and by 2020 will completely close the hole for all prescriptions.

It supports states in requiring health insurance companies to submit justifications for requested premium increases, and those companies which have excessive or unjustified premium increases may not be able to participate in the new Health Benefit Exchanges.

It cracks down on excessive overhead by applying standards to insurance company spending on such things as bureaucracy, executive salaries and marketing, and provides consumers with rebates where non-medical costs are too high. And finally it provides tax credits for those who cannot afford quality health insurance.

The ACA also supports early retiree health coverage by providing $5 billion in financial assistance to employer health plans that cover early retirees, thus making it easier for employers to provide coverage and providing up to $1,200 in premium relief for every family with insurance through those employers. It will help to improve the percentage of large companies providing retirement coverage, which dropped from 66 percent in 1988 to 31 percent in 2008.

LGBT Americans will have more choices through the ACA also because it ends insurance company discrimination against children with pre-existing conditions and in future will prevent companies from denying coverage because of pre-existing conditions, or charging more because of health status or gender.

Health Benefit Exchanges The state-based Health Benefit Exchanges will provide access to the same private insurance choices that the President and members of Congress have, including multi-state plans to foster competition and increase consumer choice.

The Exchanges also ensure that LGBT Americans have guaranteed choices of quality, affordable insurance if they lose their jobs, switch jobs, move or become sick. The information is provided through a one-stop-shopping approach that allows people to easily compare prices, benefits and performances of different plans.

The ACA also requires new plans to cover prevention and wellness benefits at no charge and ensure basic health service and prevention coverage, including maternity benefits, extracting those benefits from deductibles and eliminates co-pays for preventive services. The new Exchanges will help create a system that encourages innovation in health care before patients require more costly treatment. It increases the number of primary care practitioners and moves to research and eliminate the disparities that many Americans currently experience in accessing healthcare, expanding initiatives to increase the diversity of healthcare professionals and strengthen cultural competency training with the same LGBT patients – which will definitely impact care for LGBT patients.

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HRC’s Healthcare Equality Index rates local providers

By Susan Jordan

The Human Rights Campaign, a national LGBT rights organization based in Washington D.C., has provided its Healthcare Equality Index (HEI) since 2007, as a tool to survey American health-care facilities and their policies toward LGBT patients.

The 2013 report includes 718 national healthcare facilities. The Rochester-area organizations singled out for good policies and treatment for LGBT patients are Trillium Health, the University of Rochester’s Strong Memorial Hospital and the VA Canandaigua Medical Center.

The index asks each facility 44 questions about best practices in LGBT patient-centered care. The core four leader criteria are patient non-discrimination policies, equal visitation policies, employment non-discrimination policies and training in LGBT patient-centered care.

Trillium Health Trillium Health, formerly known as AIDS Care, announced that it is proud that it has been recognized for the third year in a row as a “Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality.” Trillium Health earned top marks for its commitment to equitable, inclusive care for LGBT patients and their families, who can face significant challenges in securing adequate healthcare.

The Health Care Equality Index rates local providers. The HRC Health & Aging Director, Shane Snowdon, says, “It makes a big difference to know you are getting the same care your neighbors and co-workers receive.”

URMC meets or exceeds four key criteria set by the foundation. The criteria include adoption of an explicit patient non-discrimination policy, equal visitation rights, and clearly specified equal opportunity employment practices. In addition, URMC provided senior managers with training in LGBT patient-centered care.

The index best way to provide health care is to honor the values, beliefs, and backgrounds of our patients. This designation reinforces our exceptional commitment to those ideals,” says Kathy Ratmell, RN, FNP, chief operating officer and executive vice president of the hospital. “The overarching goal is dignity in health care for our patients and their families, who can face significant challenges in securing adequate healthcare.”

The new Exchanges will help create a system that encourages innovation in health care before patients require more costly treatment. It increases the number of primary care practitioners and moves to research and eliminate the disparities that many Americans currently experience in accessing healthcare, expanding initiatives to increase the diversity of healthcare professionals and strengthen cultural competency training with the same LGBT patients – which will definitely impact care for LGBT patients.

For more information on the New York Health Benefit Exchange, contact Community Health Advocates at 888-614-5400 or www.cha@cssny.org. The new web portal, www.HealthCare.gov, helps individuals and small businesses find health insurance coverages. Further information on health care reform is available at whitehouse.gov; healthref orm.gov and energycommerce.house.gov.
Killer Goes Free: Open Season On Transwomen?

By Malley J. Livingston

On November 14, 2008, 22-year-old LaTeisha Green and her brother Mark drove to a friend’s house where a neighborhood party was taking place on Seymour St. in Syracuse. Mark was driving and Teish was in the front seat passenger seat. Teish was shot at close range by an assailant shooting homophbic slurs in front of numerous witnesses. The killer was convicted of manslaughter in the first degree as a hate crime, the first hate crime conviction in the State based on sexual orientation. The killer was found guilty and sentenced to 25 years.

The killer is now free. The Fourth Department Appellate Division, sitting in Rochester, overturned the conviction, finding that the jury’s verdict was inconsis- tent and that the judge in the lower court erred in failing to instruct the jury to cure the defect in their verdict.

The trial testimony and prosecution evidence established these facts. Mark and Teish arrived at the party on Seymour St. and Mark parked on the side of the road where he and Teish wait- ed for friends. A group of people on the other side of the street began shouting homophobic slurs and insults.

One of them, Dwight DeLee, went into his house and retrieved a rifle and then approached the car where Mark and Teish were still waiting.

As he approached the vehicle DeLee was heard shouting “we don’t play that faggot shit”, “we do not play with these faggo tees” and “get you faggots, get the F**k out of here”. DeLee then pointed his rifle into the car and fired one shot, which injured Mark and fatally wounded Teish. She died shortly after the attack of exten- sive internal bleeding.

DeLee’s maliciousness didn’t end there. Prior to his trial, he was warned by the trial judge not to threaten any of the prosecution witnesses. Despite that warning, the father of two key prosecution witnesses was shot in an attack the police initially believed was in retalia- tion for his children testifying against DeLee. The witnesses who gave state- ments implicating Green in the shooting shortly after the crime was committed later changed their testimony at trial and refused to implicate DeLee.

Despite this sudden change in test-imony from key witnesses, the jury convicted DeLee on a charge of man- slaughter in the first degree as a hate crime. The hate crime statute, which included sexual orientation, was passed in 2000 but the Green case was the first time that it was successfully used to lengthen the sentence of a murderer motivated by homophobia and transpho- bia. The 25-year sentence was both a vin- dication of the wisdom of the hate crime law, and a tremendous relief to the Green family and the rest of the Syracuse TG community whose safety would surely be at risk if DeLee had received a shorter sentence, especially given the possibility of parole and early release.

The entire LGBT community here in Syracuse is in shock that any court would, on a technicality, let a killer like DeLee go free and is organizing its response. The DA’s office is seeking permission to appeal to the Court of Appeals in the hopes that a higher court will reinstate the conviction. That motion will soon be decided by Judge Erin Peradotto, one of the judges on the panel that heard the appeal in Rochester. If she denies the motion, the case is over and DeLee will remain free. If she grants the motion, the DA will at least have a chance to put DeLee back behind bars where he belongs.

The number one killer of trans-people is not lunatics like Dwight DeLee. The leading cause of death in our community is despair. The attempted suicide rate among trans-people is 41 percent. That appalling statistic is the result of the discrimination we face in every facet of our lives from employment to health care to housing and on and on and on. Discrimination, for our community, is a life and death issue.

The New York State Senate, and espe- cially Senator Dean Skelos, has blocked passage of GENDA, the Gender Expres- sion Non-Discrimination Act, for six years. The bill has passed the Assembly six times but the Republican majority leader, Skelos, has never even allowed the bill on to the Senate floor for a vote.

DeLee killed one trans-woman. Skelos with his willingness to continual- ly block the passage of GENDA has injured thousands of trans-people across the state. Some kill with guns, some kill with indifference.

For updates on the developments in this case wind information on how to par- ticipate in our community’s response to this outrage, go to transgenderalliance.com.

Malley J. Livingston has been a Syra- cuse attorney since 1989. She is President of the Transgender Alliance, Board Member of Sage Upstate, and Member, appointed At-Large, of the Citizen’s Review Board.
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(March from page 11)

11 million undocumented immigrants, including at least 267,000 undocumented LGBT people living in this country, should have a real pathway to citizenship and need to be able to stay with their families. We believe these are issues that cut across all lines of gender, race and ethnicity, and demand solutions that protect human rights and ability and immigration status. It’s time to join forces and demonstrate our collective power.

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Transgender Law Center
Unity
The National Latino/LATG
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LGBT groups joined in anniversary event

The 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington was recognized with a week-long series of events culminating in a rally and march on Aug. 24. The march called on Congress to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, a restoration of the Voting Rights Act, comprehensive immigration reform, and several other key priorities of the civil and human rights movement. (See Emcee Closet News at www.GayAlliance.org)

The March demonstration also highlighted the role of Bayard Rustin, the openly gay executive director of the origi-

nal March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, who was posthumously award-
ed the Presidential Medal of Freedom on Aug. 8. (See page 4)

Parents, doctors say school district sex ed misinforms youth

On Aug. 8 parents and physicians filed an update to lawsuit against Clovis Uni-
fied School District, seeking permission from the court to obtain new information about how the district’s revised sex education is still out of compliance with Cali-
fornia law.

Last August the plaintiffs sued the dis-

trict for violating the state’s comprehen-
sive sex education law. The lawsuit was brought by two parents in the district, the American Academy of Pediatrics Cali-
fornia District IX and the Gay-Straight Alliance Network. The plaintiffs are repre-
sented by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) with pro bono assistance from the law firm Morrison & Foerster. (See Barrett LLP.

The new challenge in the lawsuit comes after the district adopted a new high school curriculum in June over par-
tions objections. The curriculum contains dangerous misinformation about sexual health and teaches that all people, even consenting adults, should avoid sexual activity until they are married. Both the high school and intermediate school sex education remain in violation of California law.

“I’m frustrated and I just don’t under-
stand why the district refuses to provide accurate sexual health information for all students,” said Aubree Smith, a plaintiff in the suit whose daughter just gradu-
ated from Clovis High School. The sex education in Clovis schools is still fail-
ing students and provides misinformation that can be confusing people and putting them at risk.

The updated lawsuit points out these problems: The textbooks that Clovis Unified uses for sex education in both high school and intermediate school provide medically inaccurate and misleading information in violation of California law. In a list of ways to prevent STDs, for example, the high school textbook never men-
tions condoms, instead telling students to respect themselves, get plenty of rest, go out as a group, and practice absti-
nence. This is not just an omission of information, but a distortion that cre-
ates an inaccurate picture of how teens can protect themselves, which puts their health at risk.

The information that the district does provide about condoms and contracep-
tion is undermined and contradicted by the district’s reliance on other inaccurate and misleading material. (The core cur-
riculum is based on the textbooks men-
tioned above.)

The curricula also contain sexual ori-
entation bias, which violates California law and is harmful to teens’ health. For example, many of the materials teach that sexual activity is only acceptable between a man and a woman who are married and that any sexual activity outside marriage is emotionally, physically and morally detri-
lental, even among adults.

Sex education in Clovis also violates the law by promoting gender bias and stereotypes. One video, “No Apologies: The Truth About Life, Love, Sex,” tells students that most boys will lie about hav-
ing an STD in order to get “sexual favors” while girls only engage in sexual activity “to get love in return, cause that’s what they really want.”

“Sex Still Has a Price Tag,” a video by Pam Stenzel that the district approved for use in June, provides misinformation about STDs, and tells students that con-

oms are not effective. Stenzel recently faced wide criticism after a speech at a as West Virginia high school during which she told students, “If you take birth con-

rol, your mother probably hates you.”

“Clovis Unified is in clear violation of the law and is knowingly putting students at risk,” said Mau-

sa Goodman senior staff attorney at the ACLU of Southern California. “Teens should have a real pathway to citizen-
ship and people from all backgrounds should have a real pathway to citizen-
ship. It’s time to join forces and demonstrate our collective power.

Lily Tomlin, Jane Wagner may marry (dressed like chickens)

Comedy great Lily Tomlin is ready to make it legal with Jane Wagner, her part-
nier of more than four decades and jokes the couple may dress as chickens, reports E!'s Marc Malkin.

Tomlin, who’ll turn 74 on Septem-
ber 1, told Malkin that she and her long-
time partner and collaborator Wagner, 78, never expected same-sex marriage to become legal in their lifetime. Now that the Supreme Court has struck down Prop. 8, the couple, who reside in California, are considering their options.

“I don’t really need to get married, but marriage is awfully nice,” Tomlin said. “Everybody I know who got married, they say it really makes a difference. They feel very very happy about it.”

Being the iconic funny lady she is, don’t expect the woman who’s made us laugh in films such as Nine to Five and Big Business to have a traditional wedding.

“No rings, no bridal dresses,” she added. “Maybe we’ll be dressed like chick-
ens.”

Photo: Oliver Mottris/Getty Images

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FROM 1973 TO 2013 – 40 YEARS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZING, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM: BACHELOR FORUM, CONGRATULATIONS!

By Evelyn Bailey

What 40 years ago was Fernand’s by the "tracks" is now the newly renovated, up and coming Bachelor Forum on the corner of University and the Atlantic Ave. in the NOTA area!

The story based on oral tradition goes something like this. When Arnie Pegish was a young leather motorcycle queen, he frequented Fernand’s at 1065 East Main St. near the intersection of Goodman and Main. Arnie decided he would decrease the outrageous amount of money he thought he was spending on beer by buying the Bachelor Forum with Wally and Vinnie Wheeler. So in March of 1973 Arnie bought Fernands and the story begins.

In April, 1973 the following ad appeared in The Empty Closet newspaper: “Come See Vinnie, Pat & Arnie At Rochester’s Newest Club, Fernand’s Beef And Bun, Featuring Recording Star Tom Totz, 1065 East Main At Goodman.”

In June, 1973, just two months later, the name changed and the Bachelor Forum was open for lunch and dinner complete with a decanter of wine for $1.95 and “homosexual entertainment”! In the early days the Bachelor Forum held dinners in the “Vintage Room” to support the Albany lobbying efforts by the New York State Coalition of Gay Organizations (NYSAGO), the Gay Brotherhood, and the Gay Alliance. The Forum continues to be the official home bar of The Rochester Rams, M. C., and the Empire Bears fraternity.

The Forum had live bands and popular films were shown free on charge on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday evenings. The Bachelor Forum hosted monthly pageants to choose Mr. Forum, a hunk of stud, and Miss Forum, the best looking drag queen, each of whom would receive engraved trophies. Aggy Dune began performing at the Forum as a drag queen. You could dance to live music at the Forum on Thursday, Friday or Saturday between 9 p.m. and 1 a.m.

The Bachelor Forum for many years was synonymous with the Vinnie-Vickie Cups. The Vinnie Cup Award, first presented in 1975, is given in honor of Vinnie Wheeler, Arnie’s partner, who left the community with a challenge for everyone “to do your part to help make the gay community one of the strongest in the country.” The Vinnie Cup Award is presented to an individual who has made significant contributions to Rochester’s gay community.

In December of 1973, the Bachelor Forum kitchen was officially named “Miss Vickie’s Kitchen” after Vinnie Ruse, who was a bartender at the Forum and an activist for human rights. Two of Vinnie’s most notable humanitarian contributions were that she prepared many dinners for gay men and women who did not have any place to go on Thanksgiving, and sent many housebound brothers and sisters meals on wheels at the beginning of the AIDS crisis. Single handedly Vickie and the Forum became the forerunner of “Meals On Wheels.” In 1984, in honor of Vickie, Arnie Pegish established the Vickie Cup Award, given to a woman in the community who has given outstanding service, whether paid or volunteered, to the general community, including the gay and lesbian community.

In 1989, because of urban renewal, the Bachelor Forum moved to its current location at 670 University Ave. in the heart of Art Walk. The Forum permitted Art Walk Rochester’s urban art tract to erect the sculpture Thrre Pride Symbols outside in honor of the LGBT community’s history.

Over the years the Bachelor Forum has undergone many changes. Arnie’s motorcycle no longer hangs in the Forum. The Rams still call the Bachelor Forum home, and meet there monthly. Leather night and bar night are regular occurrences at the Forum. The Rams continue the Forum tradition of doing a pumpkin run in October to bring pumpkins to shelters and children in the community to help celebrate Halloween, and they stage a holiday toy drive each year. These events reveal the true nature of the Rams brotherhood.

Arnie Pegish died in July 2007. Almost exactly one year later, the executors of the estates of Richard Towner and Arnold Pegish agreed to sell Peter Mohr The Bachelor Forum, Inc. Peter had always wanted his own bar. He had sold Arnie Pegish on the idea of owning the Forum when he died. In August 2008 Peter became the new owner of the Bachelor Forum. At that time, John Danis, executor of Arnie’s estate, said, “From the day of Arnie’s death last July to today, Peter has done a remarkable job not only maintaining the bar, but growing it. I shot a great deal of gratitude and am happy that he will be the one to carry the Bachelor Forum into the future.”

Peter is taking ownership of the Bachelor Forum, Peter has renovated the bathrooms, upgraded computer access, upgraded the television, and most recently has given the Forum a complete facelift externally and internally, with tall windows opening up the interior to sunlight. Peter’s finger is on the pulse of the community, and the Forum will continue to respond to meet the expectations and needs of its customers.

Peter wants to continue the legacy of Arnie Pegish and Richard Towner to the Rochester community. Donna Ventura, president of the neighboring ArtWalk Tub Wall Parking, said, “Peter Mohr’s loyal friendship to Arnie Pegish and dedication to the business, The Bachelor Forum, are to be commended. He is truly an asset to the community as a business entrepreneur.”

The Forum is a bar that welcomes diversity, contributes to the economy of Rochester, and continuously supports the gay community’s fight for equal rights. “Hello Darling, how are you?” is Peter’s greeting to the Bachelor’s customers, who are more than just faces in a crowd. Peter takes an interest in people, and wants his customers to feel comfortable and at “home” when they walk through the door. The Bachelor Forum is a unique kind of place—a sort of neighborhood bar where everyone’s a friend, even if they’ve never seen each other before. There’s a devoted crowd of regulars who love having a good time and help others to have a good time, too. So drop in and introduce yourself.

There are many Shoulders that make the Bachelor Forum a neighborhood bar where “everyone knows your name”. Shoulders To Stand On is proud to recognize the Bachelor Forum’s 40 years of being a friendly, no-attitude bar and gathering place for the area’s leather/levis and bear communities. Shoulders To Stand On proudly celebrates one of the Rochester LGBT community’s oldest beacons of support, vision and activism – The Bachelor Forum!}

History Corner


On Saturday, September 7th, 1973, the GAGV Center at noon. Bring swimsuit and dish to pass. $1 contribution towards food.

SAT 15 SEPT: ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS to meet at GAGV Center, 812 Brown St. (rear). Membership: $5.50 membership dues collectible.

SUN 23 SEPT: SOCIAL: “OPEN HOUSE FOR GAYS & FRIENDS” Official opening of GAGV Center for all gays. Come and bring a friend. Refreshments, entertainment, coffee house atmosphere. Our big event of the year. 7:30 pm ‘til... 11:30 pm.


SUN 30 SEPT: PROGRAM: “GAY OPPRESSION” What it is, how it feels, and how to deal with it. 7:30 pm, GAGV Center, 812 Brown St. (rear). Membership night: $5.50 membership dues collectible.

Announcing the 2013 Pride Picnic Raffle Winner: Daniel Gervais

David Totten is the winner of the 2013 Pride Picnic Raffle, consisting of an Edibles gift certificate for dinner at a bar/bakery of his choice, Ristorante da Dan and Lounge, and two tickets to the world premiere of Shoulders To Stand On.

Congratulations David – enjoy a wonderful evening out!
And, when Nellie, didn’t the gay world he and I lived in get a whole lot better at near warp speed? Sure bowed me over. Gay marriage in New York State for one. The end of DOMA. And lots of little things: more celebrities outing themselves, parties marriage announcements in The New York Times, greater visibility at every turn. Indeed, good times.

But while all this change was occurring, while I relished my role as coach and therapist, something either grew or evolved within me. I got tired of being a cheerleader.

What brought it into focus was that I got sick. Twice. Chronic bronchitis that took forever to remedy. Brought me low. I wanted attention and asked for it. And I didn’t get what I wanted. I was sick. Twice. Chronic bronchitis that took forever to remedy. Brought me low. I wanted attention and asked for it. And I didn’t get what I wanted.

It’s been tempting to define myself in this way. To claim that all the various ways I’ve been able to separate myself from the world have all been acts of self-defense. But as I’ve gotten older, I’ve come to see that they have all been expressions of a deeper longing to be known, to be loved, to be understood.

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hell are fava beans? I come from a fam-
ily that believes meatloaf with macaroni and cheese is a fancy meal. so, no, the roast duck is probably not going to work for me.

How about the weight loss systems that add points from fat and carbohy-
drates? Great, that’s just what I need. It’s not bad enough I’ll be on a diet, but they want me to do math besides. Perhaps I could have it in a word problem — if there were four Twinkies on a train from Chicago going 60MPH and two Klond-
dike bars in a refrigerator truck from NYC going 45MPH, which bedtime snack would you receive first? Forget it — I’ll just eat the Chips Ahoy we already have in the cupboard!

Actually, I seldom eat ice cream or cookies or doughnuts, but I do love pasta, rice and bread — any bread — muffins, biscuits, bagels, rye, pumpernickel or whole wheat — honestly, I love them all! I should have a T-shirt that reads “I’ve never met a carb I didn’t like.”

“I’ve never met a carb I didn’t like.”

And then it struck me — it was per-
fekt. I’m not big either! At my doctor’s appointment later this month, I’ll try-

gulp explain to the doctor: “No, I didn’t lose the 10 pounds, but don’t worry, I’m just fluffy.”

“Fluffy” makes me sound more love-
able anyway. Now if you’ll excuse me, I think I may have a few more sunny days that I’ll be able to spend in the ham-
mock reading some comic books!

Contact David at davidfr67@q.com

Cleaning My Closet

MOVE IT, REMOVE IT, MOVE-ON CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

By Meredith Elizabeth Reinger

In conclusion, I needed to uncel-
brate a legal mar-
riage. July 30th arrived — the day that might have been my third wed-
ding anniversary. Might have been our thirteenth year of sharing life with all its intricacies, integrations, and intima-
cies. If Deception had not slashed wed-
dings rows with piercing shards of pain.

The end.

In the beginning, I started recon-
struction of my new reality, I refused to die from divorce. I dyed. Red.

I had specifically chosen Party Atti-
rades for my July 30th ReBirthDay. Started with little shock parties as, one by one, I visited friends, appearing with my lovely gray hair transformed into astonishing dangling ear-
lings. And this creature did not like getting brushed. The cat wasn’t afraid of the dust mop or the vacuum cleaner, but if she even saw the brush in your hand, she would freak out and hide behind the couch.

It just got worse, so finally, in des-
eration, we had to take her to the pet groomer to be shaved. Needless to say, she didn’t like being shaved any more than she liked being brushed, but some-
how, with lots of kitty drama, she got through it and was cleaned up.

And what a surprise — under all that long, thick, tangled fur she wasn’t actu-
ally a large cat, at all. She was really fair-
ly skinny and muscular. Bernie shrugged and said: “I guess she wasn’t big, she was just fluffy.”

sage cousin Lanie. When I emailed pictures of Refar-
bished Me to my far-away beloveds, I created a variety of subject lines. Put together, they formed my Good News
Release. One declaration: “My way of
healing.” To ally cousin Kathy: “This is the affirmation I see in the mirror.” For my two concerned sons: “A way to joyful living.” To one of my major anchors: “I did survive… and played… and risked.” To a special supporter: “Going crazy wild and loving it.” Sent to all who did survive… and played… and risked.

To a special supporter: “Going crazy wild and loving it.”

So, I made happy plans. I had an early start with the one who offers unconditional love and faithful atten-
tion, my Dachshund/Rat Terrier. Merri-
ly, I and Vegas Sebastian partied around the ponds. He, sniffing morning mes-
ages, and I, gathering mental pictures of beauty to stuff into my heart, bounces down the trail.

Next activity: I met a dear friend for coffee, toast, and laughter. Afterwards, we strolled in morning sunshine until we found a suitable rock. She perched there while she glued and sprinkled a party on my arm. Gigglng, I exclaimed: “Here I come, New Day! Look! Look at my spar-
king purple, pink, teal, gold, and silver Glitter Tattoo.”

I did not doubt that I needed to schedule serious work. It was imperative that I meet with Counselor Nancy. She helped me keep my feet going forward and my head attached. Together we found words that reminded me to nur-
ture my Self, to celebrate my Self. And as always, she coaxed me closer to stability.

The finale of my New Day was a fes-
tive dinner party at the Gatehouse in Rochester’s Neighborhood of the Arts. I dressed in fantastic garments acces-
sorized with astonishing dangling ear-
rings. (Lots of choices… my sister had just given me twenty-four pairs to help me play dress-up.)

All gussied up, I chauffeured my spe-
cial friend, of twenty-four years, to the city. It was important to me to be with someone who has known me before, during, and after a variety of pits, paths, and pursuits of happiness.

Our delightful dinner started with exotic cheese-stuffed figs, wrapped in bacon, drizzled with a balsamic reduc-
tion. I ordered a Highland Park salad because it had edible orchid petals. It seemed the appropriately frivolous thing to do. (I have to admit that I liked it bet-
ter when they used whole orchids, but things change and petals are better than no floweriness at all.)

Dessert… of course! Off we went to funky South Wedge to visit Hedonist Park. their salted caramel ice cream is transcendent. And presented in a dark, sturdy waffle cone they make on site… those cones are so good they could sell air in a waffle cone. I chose their regular size, which is really two scoops. In my youth, “regular” was one puny scoop. I have to admit this change made me dance.

As darkness fell, the First Day of my Next Chapter ended. Wrapped in gentle cuddles from my four-legged Beating Heart, I reviewed my love-filled day and slipped into sweet dreams of my peace-
ful, renewed life.

Nonetheless, every surprise-now and unexpected-then, I feel the bumps of inevitable AfterShocks. Oh yes, I had, once upon a time, believed that 2 prom-
ises shared in privacy plus 1 domestic partnership plus 1 spiritual wedding plus 1 legal marriage equaled forever. Not so. After I had pl ammeted into the excur-
sion inferno, I could finally feel the math, feel the searing truth… ten good years of marriage plus three bad years equals zero.

It is no surprise that I wanted, need-
ed to tell my story. I knew that distrust-
ing wads of Bad speeds recuperation. At crisis onset, I did worry that I might push away my friends with Oh-no-not-
that-again. Then they reached out. My

THE BACHELOR FOR LUNCH

ROCHESTER’S OLDEST, NEWEST GAY BAR

ROCHESTER’S BIGGEST, GAYEST HAPPY HOUR

3 FOR 2 HAPPY HOUR 7 DAYS A WEEK.

SCAN THIS CODE FOR UPDATES AND A SCHEDULE OF EVENTS.

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THE EMPTY CLOSET
sister and my long time friends were willing to listen, to listen, to listen. Daily wall conversations.

Sometimes I just needed their ears because, somehow, uttering Dreadful almost brought to the surface of my mind. Often times I needed their per- spectives to help me understand that I had simply, experienced yet another life event. I realized I must write. I had to see in print what I was thinking and acting.

To remind myself to enjoy every moment, every second. Had to have me fight.
Word of Mouth

“Mayor Tom Richards’ leadership on marriage, equality and transgender issues is outstanding. His administration has promoted our equality in hiring and has ensured that we have the first Trans inclusive policies in the State. Tom Richards has ensured Rochester will continue to lead this state and nation on issues of equality and fairness.”

- Matt Haag, Rochester City Councilman

“Mayor Tom Richards from day one has demonstrated his belief in full equality for all. He is a problem solver our City desperately needs in this critical time. Others may have talked about our issues. But Mayor Tom Richards gets results for the LGBT community. He has consistently stood by us. Now is the time for us to stand by him.”

- Harry Bronson, New York State Assemblymember

“We are grateful to Mayor Tom Richards for his leadership in fighting for marriage equality and for promoting the principle—in the work place and beyond—that all people are entitled to be treated with fairness, respect and equality.”

- Bess Watts and Anne Tischer, Labor and Community Activists

“I feel fortunate to have a Mayor, in Rochester, who supports equality for all LGBT people, who understands the challenges facing transgender people, who treats us with respect and I believe is genuinely committed to helping us to achieve our basic rights. Thank you Mayor Tom Richards for your leadership and support for transgender rights.”

- Pamela Barres, Transgender Activist

DIGNITY-INTENSITY

D-I 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 month of September 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 Dinner.
5th Sunday: Special Presentation on Transgender Issues.

Our Potluck theme for September is “Abundant Autumn Apples”. There are lots of recipes out there using apples... they aren't just for pies, you know! Bring lots of recipes out there using apples… “Abundant Autumn Apples”. There are by a Potluck Dinner!

The women's social group Let's Meet will gather on Sept. 27 at the Genesee Brewery Restaurant at 6:30 p.m. Let’s Meet stands for “Lesbians Evolving Their Singleness (by) Meeting (and) Eating Enthusiastically Together.” For information call Ramona at 585-490-1424.

ROMANS

After enjoying a variety of outdoor nude activities during the summer months, the ROMANS are moving indoor with regular meetings at members' homes and hot tubbing where available. A special activity during the winter months is to join the Rochester Naturists in their monthly nude swim. This is a popular event that takes place inside a centrally located gym in Rochester with a large swimming pool, 10-man hot tub, steam rooms and saunas, exercise machines and volleyball court.

Rochester Naturists is a mixed group so this is not a male only event but nudity is mandatory. The first swim will take place in October. ROMANS members traditionally get together for a clothed dinner before each swim. This is a good opportunity for potential members to meet and greet some ROMANS members before joining. The swim and dinner schedule is on our website.

ROMANS is a social club for gay and gay-friendly male nudists (or naturists) over 21. For more information, please check out our website at www.wnyromans.com. You can also contact the ROMANS at message line 585-281-4964, E-mail wnyromans@yahoo.com or via regular mail at PO Box 92293, Rochester, NY 14692.

Equal=Grounds, 750 South Ave. Family, friends and allies are welcome!

OUT & EQUAL

Out & Equal will hold its September Second Thursday Networking event on Sept. 12 at the Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave., from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

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21st Annual Festival • October 11-20, 2013

IMAGEOUT
THE ROCHESTER LGBT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL

FESTIVAL FAIR
Your first opportunity to purchase Festival tickets.

Thursday, September 12, 2013
Doors open at 6:30pm, Eisenhart Aud.
Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Ave, Rochester, NY 14607

The Palm Court at the Rochester Museum & Science Center – One of the grand spaces in the Eisenhart Auditorium Complex where this year’s Festival Fair will be held.

FESTIVAL FAIR (FREE!)
Time: 6:30pm - 9:30pm
• First opportunity to purchase Festival tickets. Buy your tickets early – Opening Night typically sells out!
• Become a member and enjoy benefits!
• Talk to members of the Programming Committee about this year’s hottest films!
• Volunteer to help out during the festival!
• Have special needs? Our Outreach Committee will be on hand to answer questions.

PALM COURT LOUNGE
Time: 6:30pm - 9:30pm
Hang out and mingle with friends to discuss films and plan your Festival experience!
• Cash Bar
• Complimentary light hors d’oeuvres
• Relax at a table as you review the program – we’ll be showing a continuous loop of film trailers to inform your film decisions.

Wish You Were Queer 4 is the fourth annual benefit show and sale of original postcard-size artwork on paper by established, emerging, and aspiring artists (that could include you!). The exhibition and sale will open at the Visual Studies Workshop, 39 Prince Street, Rochester, NY on Friday, October 4 and continue through Sunday, October 6. All works will be sold first-come, first-served for $10 each. Submission deadline is Friday, September 20, 2013. For more information visit the ImageOut website. All proceeds support ImageOut, a program of ImageOut.

www.ImageOut.org
Look for Festival Programs distributed around Rochester and posted on our website in early September.

The Avenue Pub
38 Year Landmark in the Gay Community

Happy Hour Specials
Every Day of the Week 4pm - 8pm
Half Priced Well Drinks & Draft Beer
$1.00 off all Top Shelf Drinks

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FOOTBALL??
Sundays are “Football Fundays” with Katie! Starting September 8th • Open at NOON! Kitchen Open during the games!

Monday Night Football
2 for 1 Well Drinks & Drafts
Free Pizza
10pm – 2am

Steak Night
Wednesdays!
6pm – 11pm
Come enjoy a great dinner on our patio or inside!

Frankie & Jewels
7pm - 10pm
Thursday, September 19th
Get out and Enjoy the End of Summer with your Friends at The Pub with our Huge Outdoor Patio

Serving Rochester’s
38 Year Landmark in the Gay Community

The Avenue Pub
2 for 1 Well Drinks & Drafts
Free Pizza
10pm – 2am

Fabulously FUN Fridays!
Enter to Win a Pub Gift Certificate!
Come out for the Famous Fish Fry!

Updates are posted daily with drink specials and events!
On the Fringe: some highlights of this year’s Festival

Karl Rogers of Red Dirt Dance. Photo: Nick Fancher.

The Fringe Festival is back, presented by First Niagara. Here are just a few of the many, many performances scheduled for this month.

Method Machine presents “Wing-Man”. Flying out of the sawdust and onto the one-person theatrical stage at the Rochester Fringe Festival, physical comedi- an and former Big Apple Circus clown Mark Gindick physically and authen- tically builds a romantic rela- tionship with the audience in the pursuit of ideal romantic love and intends, as a live the- atrical artist, “to restore faith in the "world wide web" of comic humanity.”

“Wing-Man” garnered the Best One-Man Show award at the United Solo Theatre Fes- tival in New York City and in September will play the United Solo Theatre Festival Europe in Warsaw, Poland. “Wing-Man” is presented in partnership with Method Machine and The Next Little Big Thing Productions from NYC.

In 2010, Mark Gindick was featured in the PBS six-part series “CIRCUS!” which followed the Big Apple Circus around the country. He can be seen whipping it up with Meryl Streep in “Julie & Julia,” and has appeared on “The Late Show with David Letterman” and “Late Night with Conan O’Brien.”

“Merger—a Dance Concert. Rochester based international dance artists James Hansen and Heather Roffe will present a concert of choreography entitled "Merger-A Dance Concert" on Sept. 25 (6 p.m.), Sept. 27 (9:30 p.m) and Sept. 28 (noon) at the Geva Theatre Center Nextstage. Tickets are $16 and available at the Geva box office or on-line at http://rochesterfringe.com/shows/show/merged-a-dance-concert

"Merger" blends physically and ex- citingly modern dance with visual art, pop culture, and theatre to produce a concert that is simultaneously thought prov- ing to seasoned dance viewers and accessible to first time audi- ence members. The cutting edge edge choreography will be performed by Rochester’s most celebrated dancers and guest artists such as Sandy Lacy, former dancer with the Bill T. Jones Dance Compa- ny in New York City and former Ballet Spokane Company mem- ber Vanessa Yatzko.

Heather Roffe has performed nationally and internationally with Garth Fagan Dance Com- pany and nationally in her own work at several New York City venues. She is also a collabo- rating director, performer, and choreographer with Roches- ter’s critically acclaimed Future- Pointe Dance Company which regularly tours and performs across the country. She has been described as “One of the most dramatic and exciting danc- ers in our region.” (Democrat and Chronicle), “Cutting Edge” (City Newspaper) and "Striking" (npr.org).

James Hansen has a 15-year career in NYC dancing with the Egdeleyk Ballet and Sean Curran Dance Company. His choreography has received rave reviews including “A wonder- ful example of how much the human body can communicate.” (Backstage NY), “A thoughtful meditation on group dynamics,” (NY Times) “Breath taking” (Richmond Times Dispatch) and “mesmerizing” (Nordik’s Portfolio Weekly).

He has been produced by some of the most prestigious dance festivals including two years at Jacobs Pillow Dance Festival and at the International Dance Festival in Santiago, Chile.

Included in the performance will be Hansen’s recent work “Stag Line” which premiered in the Pasadena Dance Festival in April 2013. This dance includes music by Shirley Basset, Frank Sinatra and an original sound design featuring audio clips from the 1960s sit-com “Bewitched.”

Roffe’s work includes a world premiere of a new dance about fear and “profiling” and other repertoire dances. This is Hansen and Roffe’s second collaborative dance concert in the Rochester region after the sell out at Naza- reth College Studio Theater in May 2013.

Josh LeBlang, MuCCC welcomes Boston-based writer/storyteller Judah LeBlang for a humorous look at life in middle age on Saturday, Sept. 21 at 2 p.m. at MuCCC, 142 Atlantic Ave., as part of the Fringe Fes- tival.

LeBlang’s show, “One Man’s Journey through the Middle Ages,” is based on his recent memoir “Finding My Place,” which chronicles his youth growing up in Cleveland, Ohio during the 1960s and ‘70s, his ongoing attachment to that gritty city and its unfortunate sports teams, and his life today as a gay single- hard of hearing man in Boston.

Tickets are $10, and available at http://www.rochesterfringes.com

The show explores LeBlang’s misadventures in the gay mecca of Provincetown, Massachusetts during carnival week, an emo- tional trip to President Obama’s inauguration in 2009 and an episode of hearing loss, in which the author, a former teacher of deaf children and a sign lan- guage interpreter, suddenly lost most of the hearing in one ear.

LeBlang is returning to the Fringe (continue page 28)

Festival Fair kicks off 21st ImageOut season on Sept. 12

ImagOut, the Rochester LGBT Film Festival, will launch its 21st festival lineup at the sixth annual ImageOut Festival Fair on Thursday, Sept. 12, 6:30-9 p.m., at the Rochester Museum and Science Center’s Eisenhart Auditorium, 657 East Ave.

This will be the general pub- lic’s first chance to learn about this year’s Festival lineup and purchase tickets prior to the start of online ticket sales. The eve- ning will include hors d’oeuvres, a cash bar and trailers of this year’s festival. A free film pro- gram will commence at 8 p.m., with a 20 minute Programmers’ Preview of the 2013 Festival selections, followed by the Sun- dance Official Selection and Frameline Outstanding Docu- mentary Award winner “Valen- tine Road.”

The Fair and screenings are free and open to the public.

The 21st ImageOut Film Festival will run from Oct. 11 to 20, and will feature a mix- ture of over 90 narrative fea- tures, documentaries and short films shown in three venues in Rochester (The Little Theatre, The Dryden Theatre at George Eastman House, and The Ingel Auditorium at the Rochester Institute of Technology). Sing- le ticket prices will range from $7 to $15, with $2 in-person discounts for young adults 24 and younger and seniors 65 and older. Tickets for the festival can be purchased online at www. imaginout.org from Sept. 15 through Oct. 10.

The Festival Fair also offers the community the opportunity to interact with ImageOut committe- e members in programming, outreach, theatre operations, ticketing, special events and development. There are many opportunities for volunteer- ing and Board and committee members, as well as newly hired Development Director John Wil- liams, will be available at the Fes- tival Fair to answer questions.

Free film special programs are a part of the Festival Fair: 8 p.m. - Programmer’s Pre- view of the Fall Festival. Come hear the ImageOut Programming Committee preview their 2013 selections and offer the insider scoop on the edgiest, sexiest, funniest, most fabulous films that you will see this year. The Programming Committee has been working round the clock and has traveled to festivals from San Francisco to Berlin to select this year's best dramas, com- edies, thrillers, documentaries, and shorts. Programmers will be happy to talk about their favorites and recommendations, between the exciting trailers for the 2013 Festival picks.

8:20 p.m. – “Valentine Road” directed by Marra Cunningham. ImageOut is very excited to offer this Festival Fair free screening of the award-winning documentary “Valentine Road.”

Middle school is never an easy time of life: full of changes, cliques, emotions, and waves of powerful emotion. Transi- tioning from childhood to adulthood is even more difficult for kids who are transgendered. After years of suffering, young Larry King (who also goes by the name Leina) finally finds love and confidence at Casa Pacifica, a sanctuary for abused chil- dren. Thriving in his new home, Larry begins applying makeup and dressing as a girl, which causes a commotion at E.O. Green Middle School.

When Larry asks tough boy Brandon Mchenry to be his valentine, Brandon’s older brother Ryan Lewis (playing Larry King) resents this attention and is anxious to be happy to talk about their favorites and recommendations, between the exciting trailers for the 2013 Festival picks.

Valentine Road explores the aftermath of that tragic event on many levels. Rivet- ting interviews, creative animat- ed sequences, and an inspiring soundtrack (including Mackl- emore & Ryan Lewis hit “Same Love”) combine to make this a must-see film.
Fringe continued from page 27
MuCC, after a successful show in July. He has performed to sold-out audiences in Cambridge and Boston, Mass. and at various community centers, churches and synagogues in the Northeast and Midwest. The show has been called "poignant," "rhythmic...his words and voice in sync," and "totally engaging." His readings and events have been featured in the Boston Globe, Cleveland Plain Dealer, Boston (Jewish Advocate), Edge Publications, and in various gay publications.

He is the author of the "Life in the Slow Lane" column for Bay Windows, (Boston) Jewish Advocate, Edge Publications, and "Field of Blue Children," choreographed for Evans and the great American Ballet Theatre star Cynthia Gregory, performed to virtual flute improvisations. Brief commentary by Bill Evans. Show Length: 60 minutes; Ticket Price: $15; Genre: Theatre; Venue: The TheatreROCS Stage at Xerox Auditorium; Ages: 5+; Show Dates: Sept. 20, 21, 28.

Bill Evans Dance Company in Concert. Award-winning contemporary composer and choreographer Garth Fagan, M.F.A. in Dance, Eastman School of Music to combine to create an experience that is eloquent, poetic, dynamic and highly entertaining.

World-class artists perform Evans’ "Tino for Amicia" and "Oeuvre for Jacqui" to viewers’ pictures, stories and poems about their field of "Children," choreographed for Evans and the great American Ballet Theatre star Cynthia Gregory, performed to virtuoso flute improvisations. Brief commentary by Bill Evans. Show Length: 60 minutes; Ticket Price: $15; Genre: Dance; Venue: Eastman School of Music; New Rehearsal Hall; Ages: All; Show Dates: Sept. 19.

Everybody Loves to Celebrate: The Interactivity Of Creativity and Innovation is a TED Talks-like, audience-participating, pre-concert event presented by RTT assistant professor in NTID’s Cultural and Creative Studies Department, Theresa Virts. The singer, dancer, actor, choreographer, director, producer, educator, artist and poet will address themes of dance and pedestrian movement on our daily lives. Show Length: 60 minutes; Ticket Price: Free; Genre: Performance Art; Venue: The Little Theatre; Ages: 5+; Show Dates: Sept. 28.

“Glee” may move from TV to Broadway  
By Daniel O’Carroll on gaystarnews.com

America’s hit TV musical-comedy “Glee” could be making the move from high school corridors to the sidewalks of Broadway with talks of a live stage musical. According to The Hollywood Reporter, co-head of television network Fox Gary Newman announced the plans for a stage musical during a shareholders presentation. “We launched a live stage business with a sold-out arena concert tour in 2011, and now a live stage musical is in the works,” Newman said. It seems like the next logical step for the musical-based phenomenon, with the news following the recent revelation by Fox’s Entertainment president Kevin Reilly, who revealed the show would likely bow after the sixth season. Rumors of a stage adaptation have been floating around for a while now with Broadway.com reporting in 2010 Glee’s co-creator Ryan Murphy had mentioned a Broadway version was “definitely happening”. If the recent talks are anything to go by then Murphy was “definitely on to something.” With the inclusion of original songs cropping up in the TV series since season two, it seems like the waters have constantly been tested for the success of original Broadway numbers – or will Broadway gain just another jukebox musical? Despite “Glee” having a host of Broadway veterans in the cast, no announcement has been made as to whether or not the series regulars will make a stage appearance. No official details about the production have been made. - See more at: http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/glee-become-live-stage-musical-broadway130813#sthash.OnIvokL...dpug

Wear white at Trilium’s White Party, Sept. 7  
By Stacy Lambe, out.com

Rochester’s White Party, a fundraising event to benefit Trillium Health (formerly AIDS Care), will return to the historic Century Club of Rochester located at 566 East Ave. on Sept. 7. The event will begin at 7 p.m. and will include musical entertainment, food, drinks, and auction items. Chris and Lisa Cove, longtime supporters of Trillium Health, are honorary chairs along with Kevin Keilly, who revealed the show would likely bow after the sixth season. Rumors of a stage adaptation have been floating around for a while now with news following the recent revelation by Fox’s Entertainment president Kevin Reilly, who revealed the show would likely bow after the sixth season. Rumors of a stage adaptation have been floating around for a while now with Broadway.com reporting in 2010 Glee’s co-creator Ryan Murphy had mentioned a Broadway version was “definitely happening”. If the recent talks are anything to go by then Murphy was “definitely on to something.” With the inclusion of original songs cropping up in the TV series since season two, it seems like the waters have constantly been tested for the success of original Broadway numbers – or will Broadway gain just another jukebox musical? Despite “Glee” having a host of Broadway veterans in the cast, no announcement has been made as to whether or not the series regulars will make a stage appearance. No official details about the production have been made.

Travel

Adirondacks Road Trip Part 2  
By Merle Exit

The day begins with the Adirondack Museum in Blue Mountain Lake. There are over 20 structures thus warranting at least a half day taking in the history, structures, lifestyle, flora, non-human creatures and overall “lay of the land” that include activities for both adults and children. There is a cafe with both hot and cold foods with windows that overlook...yes, the lake. We launched a live stage business with a sold-out arena concert tour in 2011, and now a live stage musical is in the works,” Newman said. It seems like the next logical step for the musical-based phenomenon, with the news following the recent revelation by Fox’s Entertainment president Kevin Reilly, who revealed the show would likely bow after the sixth season. Rumors of a stage adaptation have been floating around for a while now with Broadway.com reporting in 2010 Glee’s co-creator Ryan Murphy had mentioned a Broadway version was “definitely happening”. If the recent talks are anything to go by then Murphy was “definitely on to something.” With the inclusion of original songs cropping up in the TV series since season two, it seems like the waters have constantly been tested for the success of original Broadway numbers – or will Broadway gain just another jukebox musical? Despite “Glee” having a host of Broadway veterans in the cast, no announcement has been made as to whether or not the series regulars will make a stage appearance. No official details about the production have been made.

“True Blood” actresses join NOH8 campaign  
By Stacy Lambe, out.com

Vamps, witches and Arlene show pride... On Aug. 18, the sixth season of HBO’s “True Blood” came to a close (with a few surprises like Alexander Skarsgard’s full frontal). While fans make sense of the last episode, we look back on the cast’s participation in the NOH8 campaign. Over the years, tons of celebrities have posed for Adam Bouska in support of marriage, gender and human equality and the show’s cast is no different. Above: vampire Patsy (Kristin Bauer VanStraten).
Gay Alliance Volunteer-of-the-Month: Lance McPhee

Congratulations to Lance McPhee for being our Volunteer-of-the-Month! Lance came on the scene at the Gay Alliance as a 2012 Pride volunteer. Since that time he has volunteered at the SAGE Picnic, Fall Rainbow Dance, the Red Ball, the Big Gay Prom and the Gay Alliance Library and Archive bookshop. He has always been a reliable volunteer who is willing to jump in and offer help wherever it is needed, but during Roc Pride 2013 Lance really wowed us! He was at the Festival site all Day Friday, all Day Saturday and Sunday morning. He then continued his volunteer work on Sunday afternoon at the Empty Closet in Rochester, New York, in a total of 35 hours of volunteer work over the weekend, much of it including very hard labor!

One might think that the Monday after Pride we would find Lance lying flat on his back on his couch popping Ibuprofen like m&m’s, but lo and behold, there he was again at the Gay Alliance office helping us move our Pride equipment back into storage in the basement.

We are so grateful for Lance and his dedication and commitment. On behalf of the Roc Pride Committee Members and the Gay Alliance Staff and Board, we thank him for all of his help during Pride and throughout the year.

Volunteer Appreciation event is Sept. 24 at the Bachelor Forum

Dear Exceptional Gay Alliance Volunteers!

Please accept our invitation to the 2013 Volunteer Appreciation Happy Hour Event which will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 24 from 5:30 p.m. at the Bachelor Forum (670 University Ave.) as a way for us to thank you for all of the time and energy that you have given the Gay Alliance this past year.

Peter Mohr, owner of the Bachelor Forum, has generously offered pizza and a free drink to all of our excellent volunteers. Please RSVP by Thursday, Sept. 19. Hope to see you there!

Jeanne

Gay Alliance offers SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Workshop

The Gay Alliance has received numerous requests for our SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Workshop for offices and organizations in New York State, as well as from around the country. Jeanne Gainsburg, Gay Alliance Outreach Coordinator, and Scott Fearing, Gay Alliance Executive Director, join forces to bring you this fast-paced, dynamic and informational training. Jeanne and Scott have worked together for seven years, building the successful Gay Alliance Education Programs, including our SafeZone Training. The year the Gay Alliance ran nearly 50 SafeZone trainings as part of our almost 200 presentations.

The workshop will take place on Friday, Oct. 25 at the Red Cross (50 Prince St) in Rochester from 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. The full day program created to develop confident, knowledgeable and effective Safezone trainers, who can develop and maintain sustainable SafeZone Programs on college campuses and in workplace to create environments that are culturally relevant and supportive to LGBT individuals. The SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Program is an interactive course that includes activities, small group discussions and opportunities for practicing skills as educators. Topics covered include: Educational Philosophy and How We Learn; Suggested Exercises for Increasing Knowledge; Suggested Exercises for

The Rainbow Ride: A Dream Come True

By Jeanne Gainsburg, Gay Alliance Outreach Coordinator

My favorite moment of Roc Pride 2013 was not riding down Park Ave as the Wizard of Oz Twister in the Pride Parade. Although that was a blast! Nor was it that moment when I turned the corner on my way to get more ice for the volunteer water cooler, and was halted in my tracks by the unbelievable crowd at the Pride Festival. Amazing!

It was the Rainbow Ride.

The Rainbow Ride took place on Friday, July 19 and was a way of honoring the Ride For Pride bikers, support crew and sponsors who raised over $22,000 for the Gay Alliance. It was also the opening ceremony for Pride that I have been envisioning for years and seeing it come to life gave me goose bumps! The Rainbow Riders left from the Gay Alliance, rode in rainbow formation from red to purple, through the streets of Rochester, past the Bachelor Forum, Boulder Colfax on Park Ave, Jines, 140 Alex, Equal Grounds and Tony D’s on Corn Hill Landing, then down Court Street to the Sqaure where a white support lane and an active crowd waiting for us to kick off the Rainbow Flag Ceremony.

I was red from the pride, waving at cars and greeting passersby with “Happy Pride!” As the lead rider, I was usually met with a blank stare. It was like the “?” over people’s heads as they tried to figure out what I was doing. By the time the green and blue riders were passing, however, I could hear cars honking and people yelling “Happy Pride” back at the riders.

Our last rider wore white. Toronto Pride runs a white float in their Pride Parade to represent all the countries where they cannot celebrate pride for fear of violence. I was moved by the idea and decided my final rider should wear white to represent all the people in the world who cannot show their true colors. The event was made even more wonderful as the final rider in white was my son, Hayden. My son, my son, my husband and a ton of my closest friends. It was exactly as I had pictured it and no other moment during Pride weekend could top it.

As we entered Manhattan Square Park, we handed a rainbow windsock to the Pride Performance Ensemble Color Guard who then began their show under the 50-foot flag that had been donated to the Gay Alliance by the won- derful folks at Outlandish. It was a beautiful opening ceremony. I hope the Rainbow Ride, and our rider in white, will become an annual tradition at Roc Pride!

Thank you again to all our Ride For Pride bikers, support crew and sponsors for turning the Rainbow Ride into a real- ly Shift Happen!

Summer Presentations

6/12: LGBT 101 at Corning Community College
6/20: GBT Issues in Home Care at Dayton VA Medical Center
6/26: Transgender Issues in Social Work at Rochester Outpatient VA Clinic
6/27: Transgender Issues in Social Work at Strong Memorial Hospital
7/11: LGBT 101 at General Work at GPRC MSW Program
7/26: Transgender Basics at Corning, Inc.
8/8: Transgender Issues in Medicine at Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic
8/12: LGBT 101 at Coalition of Black Trade Unions Statewide Conference
8/21: Who’s Who Panel at SUNY Brockport
8/21: SafeZone Training at SUNY Brockport
8/21: SafeZone Training at Eastman School of Music
8/28: LGBT Panel Presentation at Monroe #1 BOCES Dignity Act Coordinators

The Rainbow Ride: A Dream Come True

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Thank you again to all our Ride For Pride bikers, support crew and sponsors for turning the Rainbow Ride into a real- ly Shift Happen!
Sage returns to Artisan Works
Just walk in the door at Artisan Works, 565 Blossom Road in Rochester, and you will never forget it. Be sure to join us on Sunday, Sept. 8 as Rainbow Sage visits Artisan Works.
Come and check out tons of art in every format you can think of. See the Marilyn Monroe or the Frank Lloyd Wright rooms. Check out the old-time firehouse, complete with a fire truck. The art is all around you. Space is limited so sign-up is required. You can sign up at the Senior Center or contact Jessica at SAGE@GayAlliance.org.

Coffee & Conversation
Do you like to drink coffee, have a pastry and talk with friends? Then be sure to mark your calendar for Coffee & Conversation with Rainbow Sage. The date is Tuesday, Sept. 17 and the time is 6:30–8:30 p.m. The location is Equal Grounds at 760 South Ave. Our host will be our new volunteer Jessica Gibson.
This is a great opportunity for new people to come and check us out. Come on in and you want to find us, we will be the group having fun. See you then!

Rainbow Sage welcomes Dignity-Integrity Rochester
Rainbow Sage is looking for ways to make connections and we are starting with a dinner to welcome Dignity-Integrity Rochester on Sunday, Sept. 15 at 6:30 p.m. The dinner will take place at the senior center.
What is Dignity-Integrity all about? As lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and inter-sexed persons of faith, together with our families and friends, we formed a small faith community with regional and national connections in the struggle for justice in church and society.
Dignity-Integrity/Rochester (D-I/R) was chartered in 1975 as the first combined chapter of the national organizations of Dignity/USA (Roman Catholic) and Integrity, Inc. (Episcopal).
Many of us call D-I home, feeling unwelcome, unsafe or un-affirmed in our home churches. All of us belong as a prophetic challenge to those in authority and as a ministry to those who have felt wounded or abandoned by organized religion. Our fellowship is a vital witness to all that our lives and loves are whole and holy.
Be sure to join us on Sept. 15 for this time of fellowship. For more information on Dignity-Integrity Rochester, go to http://www.d-rochester.org/index.html.

The Story Of Greta (1998 – 2013)
By Roza Eismen
(mother to Greta)
It is difficult to start a story of loss — but I know as I begin, it will be a soothing experience telling about the kitty, Greta, who was a part of my life for 15 years.
She was a British Shorthair, dark gray, that particular breed being very mellow and honey, a little shy, very loving once she got to know you and very sweet. As my friend Linda explains, “She was kind and loving, the best kitty anybody would want”.
Linda took her death pretty hard. She accompanied me to the Animal Shelter. That was probably the hardest part of saying goodbye. Some people opt to leave their pets behind or have them cremated. I am glad we decided to keep Greta and place her body next to my apartment in a little garden area. She will always be here with me, as I lay on my couch, she is just on the other side of the brick wall.
Greta had a beautiful life with me. I took extra special care of her the last year of her life. Instead of hiding under the bed or being “invisible”... she would come out more often to eat, use her litter box and cuddle with me. She needed attention and, in her own way, was saying good-bye to me.
I actually wanted to “keep her going” when it looked like she was getting frailer and losing weight. She was definitely a fighter. I saw her hop into the litter box, taking quick steps because her hind legs were becoming weaker, and always she would make it. I could go on and on about Greta. But I just want to leave this obit/story in mid-air... because really, there is no end to this story.

SAGE Calendar September 2013
Tuesday, September 3
No Program – Labor Day

Thursday, September 5
Yoga 11-11:30 a.m.
Lunch 12 noon – PICNIC DAY.
Please bring a dish to pass. GAGV will be providing the meat and drink. The location will be decided that day so the yoga folks can join us. Please be at the center by noon.

Tuesday, September 10
Yoga 11-11:30 a.m.
Lunch 12 noon.
Papa Giga’s Food Truck will be out in the parking lot. It is known as “Rochester’s Italian Kitchen on Wheels”. Afterwards we will be playing a game that will help us get to know each other better.

Thursday, September 12
NO YOGA TODAY
Lunch 11:30 a.m. Let’s all go to the MAG, that is, The Memorial Art Gallery. We will be taking a tour and lunch can be bought at Tapas or bring a brown bag lunch. Lunch will be 11:30-12:30 and the tour begins at 12:45 p.m. There is a $4 fee for the tour. Please sign up at the senior center and let Jessica know if you have any special needs at Jessica at SAGE@GayAlliance.org. To learn more about the Memorial Art Gallery go to http://mag.rochester.edu/

Tuesday, September 17
Yoga 11-11:30 a.m.
Lunch 12 noon. It’s Game Day and lunch will be provided by GAGV. Thanks GAGV for all that you do, we really appreciate it.

Thursday, September 19
Yoga 11-11:30 a.m. It’s Movie Day so bring a brown bag lunch and snacks to share with the group for during the movie. It is movie roulette — bring your favorite movie and we will vote on the one we want to see and then watch it as a group. If this works, we hope to make it a monthly event.

Tuesday, September 24
Yoga 11-11:30 a.m.
Lunch 12 noon. How does your garden grow? It is a potluck (bring a dish to pass) and garden exchange. Bring fruits and veggies to exchange with others or bring seeds to share and grow. We will have a speaker on gardening too. Bring your green thumb!

Thursday-Saturday
September 26-28
The Big LGBT Community Rummage Sale
A fundraiser to support Rainbow SAGE programs! Donate items for the sale, then come and purchase items! Watch the SAGE and Gay Alliance Facebook pages for drop off times, shopping hours and other details.

Please Note: All programs are subject to change. We will do our best to notify everyone of changes. We encourage car pooling, but participants are responsible for their own transportation. We will meet at the location of the events unless otherwise stated.
BISEXUALITY RESOURCES

AMBiology (University of Illinois); Bay Area Bisexual Network; Bi Cafe; Bi Definition: Milwaukee; BiNet USA; Bisexual Organizing Project (BOP); BOP Directory; Self Help Network.org; Trans Support Network.

Bisexual Vistas (Network); The Bisexual Resource Center (email bis@bisexualresource.com).

CULTURAL


DAVEY SERVICES

Deafness and hearing loss resource.

Defending Against Abusive Violence (DAADV): 215 North Main Street, Rochester, NY 14607; (585) 283-0587; DAADV-home@rochester.rr.com; (585) 469-8678; Fax: (585) 423-1054

Light Rail Rainbow for the Deaf (LRAD) Meetings: see Saturdays, 6-9pm. For location, information, and newsletter, write to LRAD, PO Box 39033, Rochester, NY 14603.

Spectrum LGBTI & Straight Alliance of Rochester, NY 14607; Main Phone: 585-545-2700; 315-781-8303

Threshold
All The Community Center, 145 Panamint Ave, 585-545-4750. Provides confidential HIV, STD testing and information. Lists non-profit agencies offering STD testing, including the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus.

Center for Health and Behavioral Training of Monroe County
855-775-5555; Monroe County Health Department, 1350 Broadway, Rochester, NY 14623. (585) 255-4111; Monroe County Health Department, 1350 Broadway, Rochester, NY 14623. (585) 255-4111; Monroe County Health Department, 1350 Broadway, Rochester, NY 14623. (585) 255-4111.

MOCHA Center of Rochester
Our mission is to improve health and wellness by providing culturally competent health care and social services.

LGBTQ+ Center of Rochester
1007 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14609. (585) 339-9800. Offers a wide range of programs and services, including a mentoring program, youth support groups, and a bi-weekly support group for LGBTQ+ youth.

MOM Community Health
1007 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14609. (585) 339-9800. Offers both medical and social services, including a mental health support group, a youth support group, and a mentorship program.

Women of Color Center
1007 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14609. (585) 339-9800. Provides medical and social services to women of color, including a support group for women of color, a mentoring program, and a youth support group.

Women’s Health
In addition to the resources mentioned above, there are also numerous LGBTQ+ health centers and organizations in Rochester that provide additional support and resources for the LGBTQ+ community. These organizations often offer support groups, counseling services, and other resources to help LGBTQ+ individuals navigate the healthcare system. Some of these organizations include the Spectrum LGBTIQ & Straight Alliance of Rochester, NY 14607; Main Phone: 585-545-2700; 315-781-8303, and the Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus www.thegmc.org.
Ongoing Calendar

MONDAYS

L.O.R.A. – Coffee Special

Gay Alliance Library & Archives, David Bohlen Cyber Center. Every Mon./Wed. 6-10pm. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th. 675 East St. Main, 1st floor. 442-2220

Brothers Keeper
Support group for men over 30. Third, Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30pm. MOCHA Center, 107 Liberty Place. 426-2100

HIV+ Mixed Men’s Group
Wednesdays, 11:30 am-12:30 pm. Trillium Health, 259 Monroe Ave.

Gay Alliance Youth
Wednesdays, 3:30-7pm, Gay Alliance Youth Center, 875 E. Main St. Prince St. entrance, first floor, 244-8840 x 13.

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

Gay Alliance Library & Archives, David Bohlen Cyber Center. Every Mon./Wed. 6-8pm. First floor, 875 E. Main St. 244-8840

Empire Bears
Every Wednesday, 6pm dinner at The Win- tonian. www.empirebears.com

THURSDAYS

Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gay Concerns
6:30pm, first Thursday. Ralph, 271-7649

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

Pride at Work
First Thursday, 5:30pm. 167 Flanders St. off Thurston Rd. 426-0882

GLOBAL (Gays & Lesbians of Bausch & Lomb)
Meets every third Thursday in Area 67 conference room at the Optic Center. Voice mail: 339-2284.

Gay Alliance Youth
Thursday, 3:30-7pm, Gay Alliance Youth Center, 875 E. Main St. Prince St. entrance, first floor, 244-8840 x 13.

Coming Out Being Out Youth Support Group
6:30-7:30pm; ages 13-18 Gay Alliance Youth Center, 875 E. Main St. Prince St. entrance, first floor, 244-8840 x 13.

Gay Men’s Chorus
DownTown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 6:30-9pm, 423-0650

Free confidential walk-in HIV testing
Every Thursday night in Area 6, Trillium Health, 259 Monroe Ave. 244-2220

Gay Alliance Youth Gender Identity Thursday, 6:30-7:30pm, Ages 13-18, Gay Al- liance Youth Center, 875 E. Main St. 1st floor (Prince St. entrance). 244-8840 ext 60

Out & Equal Rochester
Social/business networking, 5:30-7:30pm. Changing venues. E-mail: fingerlakes@outandequal.org

Gay Men’s Ally Group
Gay Men’s Alcoholics Anonymous
740 Marshall Rd., Chili, 10:30am, 271-8478

GAY ALLIANCE VOLUNTEER APRECEATION NIGHT!

If you volunteered for the Gay Alliance in 2013, you are invited to the Big Appreciation Night get-together, September 24, 5 to 7 pm at the Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave. Enjoy pizza and a free drink! Please RSVP by Thursday, September 19.

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!
September

SUNDAY 1
Dignity Integrity. Episcopal Mass/Healing Service, with music. 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. Service followed by Labor Day picnic.

SATURDAY 7
White Party benefiting Trillium Health. Century Club of Rochester, 566 East Ave. 7 pm. Featuring live musical entertainment by Krypton 48 and Trinidad and Tobago Steel Drum Band, drag performances, music by DJ Naps, food, drinks and auction items. Wear white! For more information or to purchase tickets, visit website at: www.TrilliumHealthNY.org. For current updates on event details, visit the official website: www.RochesterWhiteParty.com

SUNDAY 8
Dignity Integrity. Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word, with music, 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

TUESDAY 10
Primary day. Get OUT and vote!

THURSDAY 12
Out & Equal Second Thursdays networking. 5:30–7:30 pm, Bachelor Forum, 670 University Ave.

ImageOut Festival Fair. Free. First opportunity to buy tickets for October Festival – they sell out fast! 6:30–9:30 pm, Eisenhart Auditorium, Museum & Science Center, 657 East Ave. Cash bar, complimentary hors d’oeuvres in Palm Court Lounge. Programmers’ Preview, 8 pm; “Valentine Road” 8:20 pm.

SATURDAY 14
LGBT conference, Chautauqua Institute, Chautauqua NY. Workshops: “Gen Silent” screening, Buffalo Gay Men’s Chorus concert. $30 general, $25 seniors, students; includes dinner, reception. For more information and to purchase tickets, see RainbowRedconnection.net.

SUNDAY 15
Dignity Integrity. Quiet Episcopal Mass in the Chapel. 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

MONDAY 16
Empty Closet deadline for October issue. 244-9030; susanj@gayalliance.org.

SUNDAY 22
Autumn equinox Dignity Integrity. Evening Prayer, followed by a Potluck Dinner. 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

TUESDAY 24
Gay Alliance Volunteer Appreciation. 5:30 pm at Bachelor Forum (670 University Ave). Pizza, free drink.

FRIDAY 27
Let’s Meet. Women’s social group. Genesee Brewery Restaurant, 6:30 pm. RSVP to Ramona, 585-490-1424.

SUNDAY 29
Dignity Integrity. Special presentation on transgender issues, 5 pm, St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.


Classifieds

Classified ads are $5 for the first 30 words; each additional 10 words is another $1. We do not bill for classifieds, so please send or bring ad and payment to: The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500, Rochester, New York 14603.

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 ads over the phone. Pay when you place your ad. We will accept only ads accompanied by name and phone number. Neither will be published, but we must be able to confirm 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

Children’s Ministry thriving at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church for toddlers to tweens. Join us for vibrant, inclusive, progressive worship on Sundays at 10:30am. info@openarmsmcc.org. (585) 271-8478.


SERVICES

Man to Man Rubdown. Relax with this experienced, fit, healthy, middle-aged, non-smoking GWM. Central location. Private home. Incalls/outcalls. Reasonable rates. cell/585-773-2410 or home/585-235-6688 or email:magichands@rochester.rr.com.

Ask questions. Established life coach opens your direction about goals, issues, using classic tarot symbology and fascinating, confidential discussion. $65 hr. in your home/office. kivawanndottle@gmail.com.

Wedding Space and clergy services available. Celebrate your special day at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church info@openarmsmcc.org. (585) 271-8478.

Handyman: Simple repairs or full renovations, no job is too large or small. Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical, Interior & Exterior. 35 years experience. Call Alan & Bill 585-204-0632 or cell 304-517-0832.

Hate to paint or clean gutters? I have tall ladders! Dale’s Pleasure Painting and Gutter Cleaning has very reasonable rates for painting year-round and gutter cleaning in the spring or fall. 585-576-5042.

Dale dale.furlong@yahoo.com.

Martin Ippolito master electrician. Electrical work, telephone jacks, cable TV, burglar alarm systems, paddle fans. 585-266-6337.

ROOMMATE/HOUSEMATE WANTED

Looking for housemate to share large suburban home. Off street parking, internet, cable, telephone, hot tub, furnished private bedroom. All included in the rent. 266-4582.

FOR SALE OR RENT

Bed & Breakfast

by Greg Fox

FINALLY YOU'RE HOME!

You waited up for me?

"Course I did!

Finally, I'm home!

I wanna know why ya' sent me home from your big awards dinner?

Why?

Because I was made aware of your... profession. By a colleague. In a most humilitating way, drew.

A PROSTITUTE?!

Haha... Ain't they calling 'em escorts these days?

YOU WOULD PARE THE HECK TO MAKE THIS LANCE...

Dunno what the heck to make of this...

I DUNNO WHAT THE HECK TO MAKE OF THIS...

I'm leaving tomorrow morning for a three-week business trip to Europe.

I ain't goin' nowhere! N' we ain't done talkin' about this, lance...

Should I be expecting an invoice for your services?

Save the macho man act for your paying clients, drew.

I've certainly had my fill...

I QUIT AGREE!

Which is why I've decided on a plan of action... to remove an unfortunate situation.

That should give you more than sufficient time to move out of here, and establish yourself elsewhere.

I quite agree.

which is why I've decided on a plan of action... to remove an unfortunate situation.

All right, lance... This is gettin' outta hand!

I dunno what the heck to make of this...

I dunno what the heck to make of this...

I'm leaving tomorrow morning for a three-week business trip to Europe.

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Empty Closet

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The Empty Closet is the official publication of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc., as stated in the bylaws of that organization. The opinions expressed in it are the views of all members of that organization. For further information, please write to The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St., Rochester, NY 14605, or call (585) 444-9393 or e-mail empcloset@gagv.us.

Part of our purpose is to maintain a middle position with respect to the local community. The Empty Closet may, at its discretion and on a space available basis, print advertisements that do not print negative or offensive advertisements, that are explicitly racist, sexist, ageist, ableist or homophobic. Advertisements that contain nude drawings or photographs, nor does it print advertisements that it believes violate the local laws in any other way. The Empty Closet does not print advertising that states that the person pictured 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, ageist, ableist 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 politician and no matter in whose interest the ad is being produced. A negative advertisement is defined as one that focuses upon unwholesomeness or the political area, a candidate or a political party. The opinion of the Editor is that such advertisements are biased at best, and are not true to the purpose of our publication to maintain a middle position with respect to the entire community. We must be careful 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 reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. We will print letters at the Editor’s discretion and on a space available basis. Only one letter by the same writer in a six-month period is allowed.

We will not print personal attacks on individuals, nor will we print advertisements that contain nude drawings or photographs, nor does it print advertisements that it believes violate the local laws in any other way. The Empty Closet does not print negative or “attack” advertisements, whether they relate to a product or politician and no matter in whose interest the ad is being produced. A negative advertisement is defined as one that focuses upon unwholesomeness or the political area, a candidate or a political party. The opinion of the Editor is that such advertisements are biased at best, and are not true to the purpose of our publication to maintain a middle position with respect to the entire community. We must be careful 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.

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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, nor does it print advertisements that contain nude drawings or photographs, nor does it print advertisements that it believes violate the local laws in any other way.

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 information about who placed them and a method of contact. 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.

Editor-in-Chief: Susan Jordan
Staff Reporter: Dix Overmyer
Graphic Design: An Anderson

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PFLAG MEETS THE 3RD SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH
Meetings are at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church, 740 Marshall Road, Rochester, NY 14619, from 1 to 3pm. Questions? Call: 585-244-8640 and leave a message, or e-mail: pflag@gayalliance.org - Join us!

FALLOUT FROM THE "ATTACK" AD

The truth, that you're a prostitute.

My profession? What's wrong with being a social worker?

You can drop the act, do you know the truth.

Save the macho man act for your paying clients, drew.

I've certainly had my fill.

All right, lance... This is gettin' outta hand!

I dunno what the heck to make of this...

I'm leaving tomorrow morning for a three-week business trip to Europe.

I ain't goin' nowhere! N' we ain't done talkin' about this, lance...

Should I be expecting an invoice for your services?

Save the macho man act for your paying clients, drew.

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CARE HAS MANY FACES.
AND ONE HOME.

Healthcare, as some may see it, is a big, faceless system. Impersonal. Indifferent. One size fits all.

Trillium Health is different—different from that perception. More like you. Of every culture. From every background. Warm, welcoming and caring.

Most of all, we’re like you in that we want a clear solution when it comes to our healthcare options. You may have known us as AIDS Care. Now we’ve expanded our focus to provide a more comprehensive, inclusive and proactive approach for everyone seeking better health.

We figure that might be you.