Evelyn Bailey receives the AAUW Community Education Award from Barbara LeSavoy. Photo: Ove Overmyer

AAUW presents education award to Evelyn Bailey
By Susan Jordan
The American Association of University Women included an award to Evelyn Bailey of Shoul
den To Stand On in their Inter-
national Women’s Day event on
March 8. The AAUW advances equity
for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthro-
py and research.
The event, which took place
at 494 East Ave., focused on
the theme “Unfinished Business:
Politics, Education and Work”. Women still do not make the
same pay as men for equal work;
the national bill to reform the
way the military handles rape
and sex abuse cases, sponsored by New York Sen. Kristen Gil-
ihan, was filibustered success-
fully by the Republican Party
this winter, and many other civil
rights are still denied to women
in America in 2014. Indeed,
reproductive rights won decades
ago are under attack across the
country by the radical Right.
Kate Cerralli, director of the
Susan B. Anthony Center for
Women’s Leadership at the Uni-
versity of Rochester, spoke about
the upcoming 125th Anniver-
sary Celebration of the National
Council of the Women of the U.S.,
which was held at Hunter
College on March 28.
Deborah Hughes, Director of
the Susan B. Anthony House,
presented her Votes for Women
History Trail 2020 Community
Quiz Project.
Barbara LeSavoy, director of
AAUW (continue page 6)

Pride Agenda hosts GENDA forum here on April 9; lobby in
Albany April 29
The Empire State Pride Agenda will host a Forum on the
Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act on Wednesday,
April 9 at 6 p.m. at Downtown Presbyter Church, 121 North
Fitzhugh St.
For more information, please contact Shailah Saleh at sailahg@
prideagenda.org or (518) 649-8135.
Equality & Justice Day takes place this year on Tuesday, April
29 in Albany. Kye Allums, the first
transgender NCAA Divi-
sion 1 college athlete, will be
taking the stage for the rally at
the Capitol on Equality & Jus-
tice Day.
Equality & Justice Day is the
New York LGBTQ community’s
opportunity to play a key role
in campaigns, meet legislators
face to face, build crucial skills
and conference with hundreds
of New York’s most dedicated
change-makers.

By Eileen Fay
In the AIDS Education Post-
er Collection at the University of Rochester (available online)
there is one from ACT UP that says “Our anger comes from our
pain.”
Such is the theme of Larry Kramer’s autobiographical play
The Normal Heart, which pre-
miere in New York City’s Pub-
lie Theater in 1985 and was
staged more recently at the Jew-
ish Community Center in Bright-
onton from March 8-23. Starring
Stephen Cena as Ned Weeks,
the play chronicles the journey
of a Jewish gay man living in
New York City from 1981-84 as
he struggles to bring the growing
HIV/AIDS epidemic to national
attention during the Reagan era.
With the exception of Dr.
Emma Brookner (Kerry Young)
and Ned’s brother Ben (Roy
Wise), all the characters are gay
men who are forced to con-
front the growing danger in their
midst.
Ned is a very driven, passionate individual who finds
meaning in fighting injustice. As a Jew, he is very aware of a how
a political reality
of a culture that isn’t just
pride is when we demand recog-
nization it grants to
the bodies pile up so does sym-
pathy for his desperation.
Likewise, his colleagues at
the foundation, Tony Beat-
wright (Darlando Eanon) and
Michael Marcus (Daniel Mejka)
sink from a general cheerfulness
into a mire of fear, stress, and
paranoia even as they develop
moments where diplomacy is
breathtaking. And when one of the bodies is uncer-
tainly buried, Ned is rendered
with an indescribable sense
real strength of leadership in the
power of society with full recognition
of a culture that isn’t just
prideagenda.org or (518) 649-
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The Normal Heart” panels focus on
today’s HIV, political realities

Ukraine and Uganda... page 7

“The Normal Heart” panels focus on
today’s HIV, political realities

ThE eeMPty cLOstet NumbEr 477 A puBLicAtIOn of thE gaY AllIANCE APRIL 2014

Evelyn Bailey receives the AAUW Community Education Award from Barbara LeSavoy. Photo: Ove Overmyer

“Normal Heart” panels focus on
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today’s HIV, political realities
Uganda, Ukraine and U.S.A.

The Interview this month (see page 7) actually consists of two statements, one by Richard Lusimbo, exiled from his home in Uganda, and the other by the Reverend Jim Mulcahy, exiled from his adopted home in Ukraine.

Richard, 27, is a member of Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG). As a known gay outed by a tabloid paper, if he goes home he is in danger of being arrested and put on trial for “aggravated homosexuality” – penalty, life in prison.

Rev. Jim’s visa expired just before the Russian invasion of Crimea, and the State Department won’t issue him a new one, as Ukraine is deemed too dangerous for Americans. Now an Orthodox priest, he hopes to obtain a visa for Moldova and travel from there to Ukraine, to obtain a visa for Moldova and travel from there to Ukraine, and the other from there to Ukraine, to continue his work helping oppressed LGBTQ people.

North American and Western European evangelicals have incited homophobia for over 30 years in Eastern Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, South America and elsewhere. They have thrown gasoline on the fires of hate, advocating not merely for anti-gay discrimination, but for imprisonment and even death for LGBTQ people – either via legal execution or mob violence.

Scott Lively is one of those evangelicals. He is currently

--either via legal execution or sentencing to prison – or as one minister put it, confine us behind barbed wire and watch us die.

Since that is not likely to happen any time soon, they content themselves with trying to ban our marriages, destroy our families and make all kinds of discrimination legal, on the grounds of “religious freedom.” It seems they cannot be spiritually free unless they have the power to harm the many people they hate.

They were thrilled by the passage of the Ugandan Anti-Homosexuality Act, which among much else mandates that anyone who does not turn in the gays they know – including their own children – will be subject to arrest.

The sad and ironic thing about Uganda is that they – and the governments of Nige-

ria, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Cameroon, among others – are buying the evangelicals’ mess that homophobia is a foreign perversion imported into heterosexual Africa by western gays, inspired by Satan. The reality of course is that homo-

gay is a natural part of human sex-

uality, and the only thing being worshipped in Africa is the val-

ues of the racists, slavers and colonizers of the past. Formerly colonized countries are now following the lead of the heirs of colonialism – the western ultra-conservatives who secretly despise and seek to control their former colonies.

The Empty Closet Editor

Susan Jordon

Gay Alliance Executive Director

Scott Fearing

Assessing the moment

The Gay Alliance finds itself at a unique place in our organi-

zation’s 41-year history. Many of the social and personal chal-

lenges that led to the creation of the organization have changed drastically.

Other groups that struggled for social inclusion have stood at this juncture. While each group faced different types of bias, different forms of discrimination, and different challenges from the medical and legal systems, the common experiences of being made into second class humans and citi-

dens presents us with valuable lessons.

Look to the women’s move-

ments, or the racial justice move-

ments, and to the Deaf and Disability rights movements, as examples of others “outsiders” who have struggled for inclu-

sion and you will clearly see that achieving legal equality does not end bias and discrimina-

tion. “Never again,” the cry that we often hear from the Jew-

ish community, is an important and powerful reminder that his-

try is prone to repeat itself. Like these other communities we must remain united and vigi-

lant.

Nationally we see LGBTQ organizations moving from doing work that can be described as “therapeutic” to work that focuses on “empowerment.”

LGBTQ community is NOT built upon by an illness, but by the power of self identity. We take pride in doing work that not only helps people survive but helps them to thrive.

For forty-one years the Gay Alliance has played an impor-

tant role in leading discussions of LGBTQ issues. This is our posi-

tion we hold with honor and a role we will continue to play.

As we have endeavored to restructure our work, we sought out advice from experts in orga-

nizational change. One thing was made clear to us. To create a strong organization we needed to answer the question What do we do better than anyone else?

For the Gay Alliance the answer to that question is as simple as it is complex. What we do better than anyone else is to champion LGBTQ rights, life and culture.

The Gay Alliance is the local expert on the LGBTQ communities. We are the place to call. We answer questions, make referrals, provide educa-

tion, inform and connect. We champion individuals as we champion social inclusion – we champion LGBTQ life and culture.

It is time today, as we honor our history and we hold a vision for our future.

As we do our work, we value, honor and respect all other human identities because we know that LGBTQ people are as diverse as all human kind. We are as gender diverse as we are racially, economically, genera-

tionally and ethnically diverse. We have different abilities and disabilities, we speak different languages and have a variety of faith traditions. Each of these diverse identities is fully wel-

come in our work because we understand that they are essen-
tial to who we are.

Because we champion LGBTQ life and culture, so we envision a future where all members of the greater Roches-
ter area LGBTQ communities, at all stages of their lives, are respected as fully participating citizens, living lives that are safe and stable.

The Gay Alliance Board of Trustees

David August, President, Jessica Muratore, Vice-President, W. Bruce Gorman, Secretary, Peter Mohr, Treasurer, Jason Barneault, Chrisilderbrandt, Emily Jones, Jeff Lambert, Jeff Markarian, Steve Santacroce, William Schaefer, Chris Woodworth

Gay Alliance partnerships continued from page 1
who have sex with men but do not toward the disease.

both the evolving prevention in 2014” was held to discuss The Normal Heart
By Adam Young
are inextricably linked. As the healthcare.” What this is, essen-
cover her x-ray and cast because her arm in a bicycling accident
and trans* folk, have some of the lowest insurance rates, yet
reminding us that same-sex point out, “When people are
as demonstrated by both the Bible Belt.
very isolated, as are LGBT peo-
by a single organization based
very community in higher
whole range of conditions, such
has grown from focusing pri-

Indeed, LGBT healthcare
Victory Alliance at the Univer-
discussion. Panelists includ-

Jeff Barhite passed away last month. Dr. Jeff Barhite of Trillium Health wrote, “Jeffrey
long time friend and advocate for our legacy Community Health Network (CHN), and more, recently, Tril-
He was a former Developer and Manger at CHN who conceived of the successful fund-raiser Knock AIDS for a Loop. This fundraiser, the first of its kind in the area, closed the Inner Loop for a day. Skaters solicited sponsors to support CHN and enjoyed skateing on the traffic-free

We thank Jeffrey for a job well-done and send our conden-
city and wide circle of friends.”

From Dan Meyers: Quoting is often a metaphor for sticking a story together. For our friend Jeffrey it was a way of life. He wrote in ss quin
quilts as an artist making

But his masterpiece is the quilt of friends, colleagues, and neighbors he carefully selected (and he was choosy) and lined up in harmony to set off each section of the loop, together with his wry humor, take no prisoners pronounce-

The curious career path of J. Barhite makes an interesting quilt. But his masterpiece is the quilt of friends, colleagues, and neighbors he carefully selected (and he was choosy) and lined up in harmony to set off each section of the loop, together with his wry humor, take no prisoners pronounce-

Jeff loved the Maine seacoast, and volunteered at St. Joseph’s Neighborhood Center. Jeffrey will be missed by many of his friends who touched him with his humor, warm smile, and heartfelt embrace.

Sid Metzger
Remembering Sid Metzger, HIV/AIDS social worker

Two communities, Rochester NY and Ogunquit Maine, lost a good friend and community leader on February 13, 2014. Jeffrey Barhite, 64, known for his wit, dedication to the fight against HIV/AIDS, and his expertise in the field of fundrais-

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Jeff loved the Maine seacoast, and volunteered at St. Joseph’s Neighborhood Center. Jeffrey will be missed by many of his friends who touched him with his humor, warm smile, and heartfelt embrace.
Father murdered daughter, lesbian partner, mom says

The Houston Chronicle reports: The father of one of two women whose bodies were found last week on the Bolivar Peninsula was arrested Thursday in connection with the deaths.

James Larry Cosby, 46, of Houston, is charged with two counts of tampering with evidence in the deaths of his daughter, Britney Cosby, and Crystal Jackson, according to the Galveston County Sheriff's Office. Both women were 24.

Deputies said Cosby is in the Galveston County jail in lieu of $500,000 bail. Charges against him, deputies added, may be upgraded to capital murder as the investigation continues.

Cosby was arrested after investigators interviewed him about the case following a vigil in Houston for the slain women, said Galveston County Sheriff Henry Trocheous.

Police have revealed that Jackson was murdered by gunshot and that Cosby’s daughter was gay.

“His name has to go away because he was not like the idea of her being gay,” Loranda McDonald told KHOU-TV. “But, if I told him, there’s nothing we could do about that. Who’s he is? We can’t change her lifestyle.”

Cosby, a registered sex offender, was released from prison after 12 years in October. His daughter and grandmother allowed him to move in and live in the garage.

The murder weapons have not been recovered and Britney’s car, a 2006 Kia Soulento, is still missing.

In the house, pools of blood were discovered and fingerprints were found on a piece of paper that was found on the bodies. And in his bedroom, the Quran was open to a page condemning homosexuality.

But there is a further mystery. The man that dumped the bodies as seen on CCTV cameras appears to be far shorter than Cosby, who is 6 feet five inches.

But Cosby’s mother is certain her ex is involved. She said she left the man over his violent tendencies. “I think they should lock him up, don’t let him out,” she said. “Give him the chair, I want him to suffer.”

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the people of Michigan. The momentum towards LGBTQ equality is accelerating as yet another federal court finds that denying same-sex couples the fair-ness and dignity of marriage is uncon-stitutional," said Cary L. Mose, ACLU of Michigan executive director. "Public opinion has changed drastically since 2004 when voters amended the Michigan constitution to exclude same-sex couples from marriage. Today, across the political spectrum, Michiganders recognize that allowing same-sex couples to marry is a matter of fundamental freedoms, eco-nomic security, and family values."

The lawsuit was filed by private attor-neys on behalf of an Oakland County lesbian couple – April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse – who have been together for more than a decade and are raising three adopted children. The children, however, are only able to have legal parent-child relationships with one of their parents because Michigan courts have interpreted state law to only allow couples to jointly adopt if they are married. The couple wants their children to have the security of having legal ties with both of them.

The decision says that the state has no basis to exclude lesbian and gay couples from marriage, and the ban cannot be used to deny a child of a same-sex couple a legal relationship with both parents. Michigan’s constitutional amendment not only prohibited marriage, but virtu-ally every form of recognition of same-sex relationships, including civil unions, domestic partnerships, and even domestic partner health insurance coverage. "At its core, this case is about protect-ing Michigan families," said Jay Kaplan, ACLU of Michigan LGBT Project staff attorney. "We are thrilled that the court found that there is no reason to deny loving, committed same-sex couples and their families the protections that come with marriage. By doing so, the court has underscored the American value that freed-dom is for everyone.”

Judge Bernard Friedman held a two-week trial in February that was primarily devoted to expert testimony about the well-being of children raised by same-sex parents. In his opinion, Judge Friedman rejected the state’s claim that only het-erosexual couples make optimal parents, writing “there is simply no scientific basis to conclude that children raised in same-sex households fare worse than those raised in heterosexual households.” He also said: “In attempting to define this case as a challenge to ‘the will of the people’, state defenders lose sight of what this case is truly about: people. No court record of this proceeding could ever fully capture the personal sacrifice of these two plaintiffs who seek to ensure that the state may no longer impair the rights of their children and the thousands of others now being raised by same-sex couples.”

Statements from attorney Dana Nessel and plaintiff April DeBoer: Dana Nessel: “Although ours was not the first case to put the parenting ability of gays and lesbians on trial, we fervently believe that it will be the last. Our trial record proved that gays and lesbians love and cherish their partners and their chil-dren just as much as heterosexual families do. Their families are no different and no less deserving of the equal protection of all state and federal laws.”

Plaintiff April DeBoer: “Our family is exquisite. We have waited so long for the day when I could call Jayne my legal wife and when both of us could have peace of mind knowing our three children would finally have two legal parents. Knowing that day will soon be upon us means the world to us.”

Michigan’s governor announced March 25 that he would not recognize the legal marriage performed on March 20 until the appeal had been settled.

18 horrors Ugandans now face under the Anti-Homosexuality Act

By Tris Red-Smith on gaystarnews.com...

...The full horror of Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Act is already shrouded in myth. Most know it’s draconian, few realize just how bad it is. The confusion has been fuelled by government lies, media mis-re-presenting and the factual text of the act has only just become available. It was originally dubbed the ‘Kill the Gays Bill’ but the death penalty was replaced by life imprisonment before it became law.

So here we explain the letter of the law and what it means for LGBTI people in Uganda.

And some of the worst risks of the law aren’t even mentioned in the act – it actually encourages mob attacks, police blackmail and media harassment.

Life in jail

1 Gay or lesbian sex is now punishable by life imprisonment, even for a first-time offence.

2 ‘Sex’ in this case means not just anal or oral sex, but any sexual contact at all.

3 Touching another person with the intention of homosexuality can be pun-ished by life in jail. Even if they are touched through clothes. A kiss, holding someone’s hand or even patting them on the back – if deemed by the court to be an attempt to have sex – can land you in jail for life.

4 If you ‘attempt’ to have homosexual sex you can be jailed for seven years. The word ‘attempt’ is not defined, but it could be something as innocent as sending a sexy text message or asking someone out.

5 Those considered guilty of ‘aggra-vated homosexuality’ including ‘repeat offenders, anyone with HIV’ or where you are having sex with under 18s, even if you are boyfriends or girlfriends and just a few days older.

6 An ‘attempt’ to commit ‘aggravated’ homosexuality could land you in jail for life. In other words, you could end your days in prison, just for asking someone for a second date.

Attacks and blackmail

7 A large part of the bill focuses on ‘victims’ – those falsely lured or forced into homosexuality against their will. They are guaranteed anonymity so jour-nalists and others can’t name them.

8 As well as going to jail, those found ‘guilty’ of lesbian and gay sex may be forced to compensate their ‘victims’ for the ‘physical, sexual or psychological harm caused’. There is no limit on the amount of compensation a court may order you to pay.

9 Experts say all this may make the law a ‘blackmailers’ charter’. So-called ‘victims’ may report cases in the hope of getting compensation.

10 The law says ‘a victim of homosex-uality shall not be penalized for any crime committed as a direct result of his or her involvement in homosexuality’. This could mean a ‘victim’ could assault a gay man or lesbian but it would be the gay man or lesbian who would be prosecuted, while the ‘victim’ would get away with it.

11 The bill also offers seven years of life in jail.

(18 horrors . . . see page 12)
**PAGE ONE**

**Heart** continued from page 3

For more information about HIV testing, prevention and treatment options, contact The Tri-Valley Health at 1-800-266-9292, www.trivalleyhealth.org. For more information regarding the HIV vaccine trials, please contact (585) 756-2325, www.rochester-victoryalliance.org. For information on testing the latest benefits for HIV on today's African American community, contact The MOCHA Center, 420-1400; 107 Liberty Pole Way.

**LOCAL AND STATE**

**Metzger continued from page 3**

work/ case management in a community setting outside a hospital.

Said joined CHN in 1990 and retired in 2001, where he managed a team of skilled and dedicated caregivers who were good friends and worked together at CHN and were personal friends as well. He had a desk in his office, and a computer on his desk, and, more importantly, for starting a Support Group for mothers of children with blindness.

"Cora and her son, Fred, were my patients. I say both because Fred was blind, and Cora was his caregiver – and his eyes. She came to every appointment with him. She was also his advocate. I can still hear her voice as he led him down the hall.

This way, Fredie. Good morning, doctor. And can you smile for one, please, despite one. One of my many memories of Fred was his wit. Blind and still able to see the humor.

"I thought his determination must have come from Cora. She was a tiny woman, but she was tenacious. And tough. – if this was the way it was, then we’ll deal with it. And deal with it, she did.

"Cora was the inspiration for what became a Mothers’ Support Group or the Mothers’ Network. Constance Mitchell, one of the first HIV social workers anywhere on the planet.

"Sid, as she was called, was another powerhouse. First met her on the inpatient units at Strong Memorial Hospital when we were starting the HIV program there. We got to know each other a bit, liked each other – I admired her because she ‘got it’. We could have a conversation and accomplish something and, to this day, I like that kind of interaction. When it clicks, it clicks, and that’s a beautiful thing.

"When we opened Community Health Network in 1989, we were swamped with patients – by mid 1990, we had 450 patients and were desperate to create a social work to do for us. To become known as case management but was called social work in those days.

"She answered the phone for the first two years – so we grabbed Sid from Strong and we were on our way. ‘What’s the matter with you? – What is this about you?’

"We laughed about all this the time because our Founder’s Day Award in 2012. I said: ‘Don’t know – social work stuff. You’ll figure it out.’

"She did it; honestly believe she’s the ‘inventor’ of HIV social work in a community medical setting. She was 1090, give or take.

"So Sid and Cora became friends. She and Sid talked for hours – we were still busy back then. Cora had not been done – before – on a daily basis. There were two drugs at that point that suppressed HIV, but made people sick. We learned to expect the unexpected, but never quite accepted the fact that we could have figured this out before it actually happened.

"This brings me to another story of blindness.

"Another young patient, Scott – a talented graphic artist and early activist. Always a question, ‘What can you do?’

"I can still see him – he was treated and, all of a sudden, he no longer needed new glasses. It’s like a window shade and everything’s dark.”

"Shit, I thought to myself. I looked into his eyes – it was a thing of beauty. It was compelling.

"Shocked, I thought – ‘Don’t just catch a break here for a minute? The answer was always the same: ‘We push.

"The work is too important not to do that. The work is too important. You’ll figure it out.’

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"The work is too important not to do that. The work is too important. You’ll figure it out.’

"We laughed about this all the time because our Founder’s Day Award in 2012. I said: ‘Don’t know – social work stuff. You’ll figure it out.’

"She did it; honestly believe she’s the ‘inventor’ of HIV social work in a community medical setting. She was 1090, give or take.

"So Sid and Cora became friends. She and Sid talked for hours – we were still busy back then. Cora had not been done – before – on a daily basis. There were two drugs at that point that suppressed HIV, but made people sick. We learned to expect the unexpected, but never quite accepted the fact that we could have figured this out before it actually happened.

"This brings me to another story of blindness.

"Another young patient, Scott – a talented graphic artist and early activist. Always a question, ‘What can you do?’

"I can still see him – he was treated and, all of a sudden, he no longer needed new glasses. It’s like a window shade and everything’s dark.”

"Shit, I thought to myself. I looked into his eyes – it was a thing of beauty. It was compelling.

"Shocked, I thought – ‘Don’t just catch a break here for a minute? The answer was always the same: ‘We push.

"The work is too important not to do that. The work is too important. You’ll figure it out.’

**NYC issues trans-inclusive student policy**

By Parker Marie Molloy on The Advocate

March 10 The New York City Department of Education unveiled guidelines to support gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students in all New York City public schools.

The guidelines encourage schools to use a student’s chosen name—and pronouns whenever possible— including on student ID cards. The notable exception being on official documentation, such as a transcript. Additionally, the guidelines address students’ rights to use locker rooms, restrooms, and other accommodations that conflict with their gender identity.
Divinity School hosts lecture on Christian Faith and LGBT Experience on April 22

Since 1994, a collaborative of area churches and the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School have sponsored a series of lectures called Christian Faith and LGBT Experience. In the fall the group invites a local speaker and in the spring a national speaker.

On April 22, at 7 p.m., the Divinity School will host a national speaker for the LGBT Lecture. The speaker will be The Rev. Dr. Barbara K Lundblad, Professor of Preaching at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Her title is "Words Made Flesh: LGBT Experience and Preaching." The lecture will be held at CRCDS and followed by a Q and A.

The theme for the lecture week is KAIROS CRCDS. On the 23rd, the Gandhi Institute from the University of Rochester will be presenting at the JC Wynn Lecture on the 24th. Jeremiah Wright will be the speaker for the African American Legacy lecture.

NYC couple attacked in subway hate crime; witnesses do nothing

J.P. Masterson and his partner Peter Moore had been celebrating their 16th anniversary when they were attacked by a man on the W. 4th Street subway station in Greenwich Village early on the morning of March 6.

“I f--king hate faggots,” is what the suspect, believed to be about 5'8”, 170 pounds, and in his late 20's, said to the couple before striking Masterson and pushing him toward the tracks, they say. Masterson added that he was very disappointed that when the attack happened, no one on the crowded subway platform called police or did anything. There were about 50 people on the platform at the time, he said.

“I want my New Yorkers to step up and help me out, because you know, at the end of the day, we’re all just people,” he said.

J.P. asked as he waited to undergo surgery, Masterson vowed that he is bruised, but not broken. “You might beat me down, and I might look real grotesque right now, but I’m still standing,” he said. -Towleroad.com

Interview

Richard Lusimbo of Sexual Minorities Uganda

A lot of fear has engulfed our community

By Unugullege Richard Lusimbo

On the 24th February the President of Uganda signed into law the Anti-Homosexuality Act 2014. This was done on live telecast on TV. The following day we woke up to shocking news with the red pepper, a local tabloid, publishing what it termed as the “Top 200 Homos”.

This issue included names and pictures of people perceived to be gay. Many of the names included people who were not out to their families and community.

With this kind of publication a lot of fear has engulfed our community, as people have gone into hiding in fear for their lives. Some have left the country or changed towns for safety reasons. Some have chosen not to keep in contact with us, as they fear that they will be outed. Going without communication, we are afraid that something would happen to them without us knowing. But all this has come to be because of the outing by the media.

On Friday 28th February, I was up to a call from a friend who had seen a copy of the red pepper that day. She told me that I was on the cover page, my picture, with the headline, “Top Guys speak out” and “How we became Homos.”

With such misleading headlines, I just didn’t know what to do after this news. I felt weak and I could not move out of the house as I was afraid of what could happen to me.

I was intended to travel that same day to San Francisco, but I couldn’t as I had not received my renewed passport and I didn’t know how I could get it, now that I was on the cover page. I later managed to get my passport but missed my flight, only managing to travel the following day. Some of my family can’t speak to me and neither can my friends who were even tolerant. With the law signed and with such misleading media, people just don’t want to get in trouble for associating with you.

This form of reporting is cutting us from our families, friends and the entire community, leading us into isolation.

I especially wonder if any members of SMUG have been arrested and charged under the new act. No one has been charged yet, as far as I know.

The cover of Red Pepper that outed Richard

I am preparing to return to Ukraine

By Rev. Jim Mulcahy

Since 2010, I have spent increasing amounts of time living in Ukraine, which has become my adopted country. My work there is to bring a voice of progressive Christianity and to spiritually support LGBT Christian groups and individuals not only in Ukraine but also in Russia and other post-soviet states.

If you’ve watched the news, Ukraine has been at the forefront because of Russia’s occupation of the region called Crimea, a peninsula bordering Russia. Starting in late fall 2013, a peaceful movement called EuroMaidan began with the gathering of large numbers of Ukrainians and supporters in a central square in Kyiv called International Square. They formed in reaction to the negative policies of the president and the ruling party, triggered by the failure of the Ukrainian president to move forward in negotiations with the European Union.

Most Ukrainians did not and do not want a closer relationship with Russia. There is a lot of propaganda about ethno-Russian fights and the majority of ethnic Russians in Ukraine are in favor of close ties with Russia but in no way want to lose status of Ukraine. They want to be citizens of Ukraine, not of Russia.

These are extremely dangerous times. As I write this, there are 30,000 Russian troops in the region of Crimea. The Russian Duma has welcomed the separatists from Crimea. ThenKatya Russia has its sights on cities in the south and east of the country. Russia refuses to recognize the newly formed government in Kyiv, the capital.

We don’t know if diplomacy will work to keep Ukraine unified. We don’t know if there will be a shooting war. We don’t know if international sanctions will be applied or will work. We see signs of a new Cold War developing between the US and Russia.

During the days of the Maidan demonstrations in Kyiv, they were peaceful until the government loosed riot police on the unarmed demonstrators. The churches responded in full support of the demonstrators and offered daily prayer services and liturgies for the demonstrators. There were always priests among the demonstrators, often standing between the demonstrators and the riot police. LGBT organizations were clearly present among the demonstrators and there was a great deal of unity and inclusion. Saving the independence of Ukraine was more important than bias and prejudice.

So, as I write this, I am preparing to return to Eastern Europe towards the end of March. I will go first to Moldova and then by bus into Ukraine in my home city of Krivyi Rih in south central Ukraine.

I do not know what will happen to Ukraine in the upcoming days before my return. I do not know if the country will be whole or fractured by partition. I do not know if my city will be Ukrainian or Russian. But I do know that my LGBT brothers and sisters will still need a voice of progressive Christianity. I do know that they will still need support.

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Doug Rice is the original organizer of ArtWalk, and is now managing director of MuCCC (Multi-use Communi-
ty Cultural Center), 142 Atlantic Ave., where plays and all kinds of performances take place.

Doug, the son of Presbyterian minister Rev. Jim Rice, grew up in Rochester from age 2. Rev. Rice, a supporter of social jus-
tice issues, came to Rochester because of the 1964 riots and the family lived in the South Wedge and later in Brighton.

Today, Doug lives in "the heart of the Neighborhood of the Arts" – aka NOTA -- off University Ave., with his two cats, Pixie and Muuckie. He res-
cued the latter after the kitten was discovered in the wheel well of Kevin Indovino’s car, parked outside MuCCC.

Community building is of prime importance to Doug. Art-
Walk was his project, in collaboration with local artists and activists, to create a space for Rochester-area art groups to hold a festival each year on Uni-
versity Ave., including art displays, poetry readings, music and dance performances and more. Few will forget Thom-
as Warfield’s choreography for front-loaders!

Doug said, "Art Walk was originally about community projects and involvement. The City, however, forced us to cre-
ate a corporation (as a museum) because the city said it was not their role to manage artists."

The last real ArtWalk was held in 2008. "It was fully fund-
ed through 2011," Doug said, "but the city said we couldn’t pay the artists and couldn’t fea-
ture local Rochester artists – they had to be ‘world class’."

When Doug and community members wanted to place sculp-
tures symbolizing the LGBT community outside the Bach-
dor Forum, former City Engi-
nee George Stamm held the project up for nine months on the grounds that it was "por-
nographic". Doug commented, "He’s gone but his mentality remains. But I have met with the new Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Services, and he said he would not have let that happen."

Doug says that MuCCC, is his favorite organization; the building was erected in the 1880s as a mission and became a church in the 1890s. When the congregation grew too large for the building in 2006, it ceased to be a church and is now a com-
munity arts and culture center. Doug has sold the MuCCC building to a non-profit. He says, "I just enjoy being able to bounce around immersed in one or another group. I really like to hear the stories of longtime residents. There’s been a fam-
ily living in a house across the street from MuCCC for about 25 years. You can always find someone who’s been in the area their whole life."

His favorite lunch place is Paño’s Burritos on Culver Rd., and he likes Starry Nights and Eddies on University – "anywhere I can walk to." He walks to the Forum and goes there "in phases". He also likes the new Genesee Brewery overlooking the High Falls. "I like anywhere where you can look at the falls – and the food is good!"

As a movie buff, he frequents the Little, the Dryden and the Cinema. Doug also likes the Public Market, especially the art fair they hold in September. On an ideal Saturday night, he jokes, "I’ll stay at home and watch TV! I’m recovering emotionally from ArtWalk and am less outgoing now than I used to be."

About Rochester, Doug says, "Rochester is more than one city. It has a long tradition of fasci-
nating pro-active people who risked their lives and fortunes to make a difference – including blue collar people."

Building community is important to me and to all of Rochester. There are a lot of great neighborhoods in the city. Most houses when I moved into NOTA were owner-occupied or owned by someone who still lives in the community – like me. I own 10 houses and live in a one-bedroom apartment in a house I own – two other couples live there too. The best thing I ever did was downsize!"

Doug Rice at MuCCC. Photo: Susan Jordan

My Own Private Rochester: Doug Rice

By Susan Jordan

Doug Rice at MuCCC. Photo: Susan Jordan
AT THE LGBT HEALTH MONTH KICKOFF PRESS CONFERENCE IN ALBANY: From left to right, NYS Assembly Members Harry B. Bronson and Richard Gottfried, NYS Senator Neil D. Breslin, Pride Agenda Director of Governmental Projects and Community Development Jonathan Lang, Pride Agenda Executive Director Nathan M. Schaefer, Rev. Hawk Stone, Trans Women of Color rep Danielle Carter and Director of Membership at the Sylvia Rivera Law Project Reina Gossett. The Pride Agenda is advocating for an additional $300K for LGBT health and human services in this year’s budget. The New York State LGBT Health and Human Services Network (the Network) is a coalition founded in 1994 and administered by the Pride Agenda Foundation, consisting of 53 nonprofit organizations that provide care to LGBT New Yorkers and families.

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talking positively about LGBTI people could see their directors sent to prison. Friendly companies operating in Uganda a UGX100, $40 €30) fine. Gay- an LGBTI equality organization – will friendly films or offering office space to – which can include distributing gay- years and the marriage license for the ceremony, the jail term is up to seven equality is banned in the constitution. And it's impossible to 'marry' someone of sex, you could get life in jail. But the executed. LGBTI people for fear they will be pros- lords are unwilling to rent homes to 'brothel' part of the law may mean land - having a same-sex couple stay with them. So someone could end up in jail just for a 'marriage'. That's even if no money has changed hands and they are lifelong partners. It could land you in prison for five years. Anyone who 'aids, abets, counsels or procures' people to have gay or lesbian sex or use fraud or 'false pretense' to 'con - jail for people who 'detain' others to have gay or lesbian sex. If you conduct a same-sex marriage ceremony, the jail term is up to seven years and the marriage license for the premises you did it at could be cancelled. 17 'Promoting homosexuality' – which can include distributing gay-friendly films or offering office space to an LGBTI equality organization – will get you five to seven years in prison, and a UGX100,000 ($40 €30) fine. Gay-friendly companies operating in Uganda could see their directors sent to prison. 18 Under this part of the law, even talking positively about LGBTI people on Facebook or Twitter could see you jailed and fined.

Trans protections bill passes Maryland Senate

On March 4 the Fairness for All Marylanders Act, a bill that would prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations and credit, passed the full Senate after having been voted out of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee the week before. The Maryland Senate voted 32-15 to approve a bill protecting transgender people from discrimination in housing, employment, and other areas. SB212, the Fairness for All Marylanders Act, was introduced by State Sen. Rich Madaleno (D-Montgomery County) earlier this year.

The bill now moves on to the House. Read more: http://www.towleroad.com/#zzz2v1PwkLm

It is critical that the Maryland legislature gets to the unfinished business of protecting transgender citizens from discrimination,” said Human Rights Campaign President Chad Griffin. “No one should ever have to worry about losing their job or accessing safe and affordable housing simply because of who they are. We hope Maryland’s fair-minded lawmakers will act on this critical bill quickly.

Forbes: seven of the world’s billionaires are openly gay, one trans

Forbes reports that seven of the world’s billionaires are openly LGBT. With a combined net worth of nearly $1 billion, the select group of LGBT ten-figure fortunes includes media moguls David Griffin, PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel and Hyatt hotel beneficiary Jennifer Pritzker, one of the Pritzker family’s 11 billionaires. In August 2013, Jennifer became the first and only transgender billionaire in the world when she announced she would be identifying herself as a woman for all business and personal undertakings. A retired army lieutenant colonel, she is CEO of private wealth management firm Tawani Enterprises in Chicago and has a personal net worth of $1.8 billion. “This change will reflect the beliefs of her true identity that she has held pri- vately and will now share publicly,” a statement in Crain’s Chicago Business explained.

Among the openly-gay hyper-wealthy are Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana, the duo behind fashion power house Dolce & Gabbana. The retail-rich pair are joined by Michael Kors, who became a billionaire this year. Some of these businessmen and women have used their fortunes to advocate for gay rights. Jon Stryker, heir to the Stryker Corp, medical equipment family fortune, is one of the world’s most prolific donors to LGBT charities.

The seven listed above represent 0.4 percent of Forbes’ list of 1645 billionaires worldwide.

Illinois GOP legislators who voted for marriage equality keep their seats

Despite bitter campaigns by NOM and the Illinois Family Institute, all three GOP Illinois state legislators who voted for same-sex marriage won their primary elections on March 18, although one may face a recount. They were gonna be punished!

Via the Washington Post:

When the Illinois state House passed a bill to legalize gay marriage last fall, just three out of 47 Republicans voted for it. On Tuesday, none of them lost. State Rep. Tom Cross (R) cruised to a 14-point victory in the primary for state treasurer while state Rep. Ed Sullivan (R) easily won renomination in his district. The third, state Rep. Ron Sandack (R), narrowly edged out his opponent by fewer than 200 votes, according to an
unofficial tally.

The close margin could mean the race goes to a recount. Sandack and Sullivan both faced pressure from third-party groups looking to oust them over their gay marriage votes. In Sandack's case, the issue became a central focus.

A coalition of nearly 200 Democratic lawmakers signed a letter to President Obama which calls for an executive order in an anti-gay flyer. The Windy City Times had threatened legal action against the Illinois Family Institute for using their photo of Sandack in an anti-gay flyer.

Kerry to send experts on genetics to Uganda

On March 18, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry announced plans to send experts to Uganda to speak with President Museveni about homosexuality and whether it's a choice.

Museveni appointed his own "scientist" to the task to determine whether homosexuality was genetic or a choice, and after hearing from them, signed the Anti-Homosexuality Law.

Buzzfeed reported earlier on a State Department forum at which Kerry spoke: "I talked personally to President Museveni just a few weeks ago, and he committed to meet with some of our scientists so that we could engage him in a dialogue as to why he did not do anything on legislation. He's consistent in what he's doing, and he said, 'We welcomed that and said that he was happy to receive them and they can engage in that kind of conversation, maybe we can reach a point of reconsideration.' He added that the State Dept. was still formulating its response to the Ugandan human rights abuses: "There's been already a review taking place," Kerry said, to examine policy towards all countries where homosexuality is criminalized. "Twenty nations around the world have changed their laws."

195 Democrats ask Obama for executive order on ENDA

With ENDA continuing to fruitlessly spin its wheels in the US House, today a coalition of nearly 200 Democratic lawmakers signed a letter to President Obama which calls for an executive order barring anti-LGBT employment discrimination by federal contractors. Not one Republican signed the letter.

Chris Johnson reports at the Washington Blade:

In a letter dated March 18, 148 House members and 47 senators — making for a total of 195 lawmakers — urged Obama to sign an executive order barring federal contractors from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity as part of his plan for a "Year of Action" in 2014.

"As we continue to work towards final passage of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) with strong bipartisan support, we urge you to take action now to protect millions of workers across the country from the threat of discrimination simply because of who they are or who they love," the letter says. "We are committed to doing all that we can in Congress to get ENDA to your desk this year; however, there is no reason you cannot immediately act by taking this important step.

The letter says "time is of an essence" for a signature on the executive order because even when that happens, a process that "will take more than a month, if not longer" to implement the directive fully will be necessary. In the House, the letter was circulated by the LGBT Equality Caucus along with Reps. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) and Luis G. Grijalva (D-Calif.).

ENDA's chief sponsor in the Senate Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) circulated the letter in that chamber with Sens. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.) and Tom Harkin (D-Iowa).

According to a study published by the Williams Institute, there are an estimated 400,000-600,000 LGBT employees in the federal government. Towleroad has posted the full letter with the names of all of the signers.

Dalai Lama says gay marriage is OK, bullying "totally wrong"

By Andrew Potts on gaystarnews.com

The Dalai Lama has told veteran US talk show host Larry King that he doesn't have a problem with same-sex couples being allowed to marry but stopped short of saying it was acceptable in Buddhism.

The Dalai Lama made the comments in an interview aired March 10 on Ora.tv, saying it was up to individual countries whether they legalized same-sex marriage.

"That I think is a personal matter," the Dalai Lama said of the international debate over the rights of LGBTI people. "I think that's an individual's business," the Dalai Lama said, "That, you should follow according to your own tradition.

"Bullying - that's totally wrong, that's a violation of human rights." The Dalai Lama said Buddhism held that there were various forms of sexual misconduct but for non-believers he just hoped their relationships were safe and fully consensual. He said same-sex marriage was an "individual business. If two people ... really feel that way, it's more practical, satisfactory, and both sides fully agree, then OK."

Hundreds call for LGBT rights at Idaho statehouse

At the Idaho Statehouse in Boise on March 17, hundreds of demonstrators circled around the building to greet lawmakers and push for "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" to be added to the Idaho Human Rights Act.

Idaho's Republican lawmakers have repeatedly declined to hold a hearing on possible changes to the state's human rights act for several years. Supporters of the "Add the Words" movement say updating the human rights act would protect LGBT people in Idaho from discrimination in housing and employment.

Last month, police arrested 32 LGBT activists at the state Capitol who were protesting lawmakers' refusal to bring up the issue.

Read more: http://www.towleroad.com/1vxx2wIbfh/SX

Illinois AG goes go-ahead to Chicago area marriages

Illinois' marriage equality law can take effect statewide immediately, according to guidance issued March 6 by Attorney General Lisa Madigan, the Sun-Times reports:

"In a letter to Macon County Clerk [Illinois continue page 14]"
Researchers are reporting that injections of long-lasting AIDS drugs protect monkeys for weeks against infection, a finding that could lead to a major breakthrough in preventing the disease in humans.

Two studies by different laboratory groups each found 100 percent protection in monkeys that got monthly injections of antiretroviral drugs, and there was evidence that a single shot every three months might work just as well. If the findings can be replicated in humans, they have the potential to overcome a major problem in AIDS prevention: that many people fail to take their antiretroviral pills regularly.

Human trials will begin this year. The human trial expected to start later this year will be small, enrolling only 175 people in the United States, South Africa, Malawi and Brazil. Dr. El-Sadr, of Columbia, said the study should take up to three years before a larger trial to see if the injection method works in people as effectively as it does in monkeys.

The marriage equality law was passed last month after a judge's ruling. In June 1. Cook County and Chicago marries unconstitutional. In June, Madigan's letter said.

The letter goes on to say that although the ruling in Lee is not binding on any other counties, a "consistent stream" of federal court rulings have declared restrictions against same-sex marriage unconstitutional.

The marriage equality law was not supposed to take effect until June 1. Cook County and Chicago began issuing licenses last month after a judge's rulings.

Major advertiser drops homophobic Ugandan paper after outing

Last month a Ugandan tabloid published a list of that country's alleged "top 200 homos." Following a petition campaign by All Out, one of the paper's major advertisers has pulled out. Via press release:

Orange, a subsidiary of France Télévisions, announced its decision to pull their advertising from the website of Red Pepper, a prominent tabloid, from page 13)

Kunta, the New York Times:

Quarterly injections may be future for AIDS treatment

Via the New York Times:

Researchers are reporting that injections of long-lasting AIDS drugs protect monkeys for weeks against infection, a finding that could lead to a major breakthrough in preventing the disease in humans.

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The marriage equality law was not supposed to take effect until June 1. Cook County and Chicago began issuing licenses last month after a judge's rulings. Read more: http://www.towleroad.

Major advertiser drops homophobic Ugandan paper after outing

Last month a Ugandan tabloid published a list of that country's alleged "top 200 homos." Following a petition campaign by All Out, one of the paper's major advertisers has pulled out. Via press release:

Orange, a subsidiary of France Télévisions, announced its decision to pull their advertising from the website of Red Pepper, a prominent tabloid, from page 13)

Kunta, the New York Times:

Quarterly injections may be future for AIDS treatment

Via the New York Times:

Researchers are reporting that injections of long-lasting AIDS drugs protect monkeys for weeks against infection, a finding that could lead to a major breakthrough in preventing the disease in humans.

Two studies by different laboratory groups each found 100 percent protection in monkeys that got monthly injections of antiretroviral drugs, and there was evidence that a single shot every three months might work just as well. If the findings can be replicated in humans, they have the potential to overcome a major problem in AIDS prevention: that many people fail to take their antiretroviral pills regularly.

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Strokes can happen in anyone's neighborhood

By HCR Home Care

James Mullen lives in your neighbor-
hood; you probably have seen him around. Maybe he is your brother, your cousin, or your neighbor.

He is quiet in the morning, but the life of the party at night. He has been like that for years, and anyone who knows James finds it hard not to like him. When he started acting silly one night and falling down, everyone thought he was just being himself and goofing off.

But that night was different from most others. Actually, that night his life was changed forever. A stroke can do that to you, and a stroke did just that to James. Once he got his friends to finally recognize he wasn’t having a coronary, they drove him to the emergency department of a local hospital where he remained for about ten days.

Strokes occur more often in the United States than you may think. Stroke is the third leading cause of death, killing more than 350,000 American Adults every year. And about four million people live with post-stroke affects.

There are many risk factors that can cause a stroke, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, smoking, high cholesterol, lack of exercise, excessive alcohol consumption, lifestyle, ethnicity, and diet. Symptoms of stroke include weakness or numbness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body, a sudden confusion or trouble talking or swallowing muscles were damaged by the stroke).

HCR Home Care worked with James until he was able to receive outpatient rehabilitation services at a local center to continue his therapies. While James may not be able to party as he used to, he is still walking around, living independently by himself, and spending time with his friends. He is pretty happy about that. A stroke came on suddenly and changed his life, but forever, because of his therapies and the detailed care of his stroke team, James is living on his own, just where he wants to be.

Learn the National Stroke Association’s Act FAST test:

FACED: Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is their speech slurred or strange?

TIME: If you observe any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Home Care HCR is a local provider of Home Care services, and the first contact with the proper assistive device, like a cane. The Speech Pathologist worked with James to get him use to a loud voice regularly and encouraged him to eat soft foods to prevent choking. Nurses who worked with James made sure he understood his new medications and how to feed himself through the gastrostomy tube (tube inserted into his stomach because his swallowing muscles were damaged by the stroke).

Alzheimer's support groups are available in Rochester area

More than five million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease, the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. As the disease progresses, it can become isolating not only for people with Alzheimer's, but also for those caring for them. Apprentices are faced with demanding tasks and can often feel like no one understands, but they're not alone. More than 15 million Americans are providing unpaid Alzheimer's care, and support groups can help establish essential connections with others going through the same thing.

The risk of isolation is even greater for LGBT adults because of the stigma and discrimination they face in their daily lives. Adding the stress of Alzheimer's caregiving can make it difficult to establish an adequate support system, particularly because LGBT adults are often single and without children.

By attending regular support groups, such as those offered by the Alzheimer's Association, Rochester and Finger Lakes Chapter, can provide caregivers with much-needed social interaction and connect them to other useful resources.

Family and friends can provide helpful support, talking with someone who has had similar experiences allows group members to learn what to expect and how to plan, as well as ways to cope with and manage caregiving tasks.

"Because we're all at different stages, we sort of guide each other," says Barbara Lopa, who started attending a local support group after her husband Mike was diagnosed with Alzheimer's nine years ago. The support group coordinators also provide guidance, serving as an indispensable wealth of knowledge for those with Alzheimer's and their caregivers.

Not only do members supply their fellow caregivers with honest advice and recommendations, they often form lasting relationships that reach far beyond the monthly meetings. "We've become friends, all of the caregivers," Lopa says, "We see each other socially now."
The poll shows marriage acceptance at all-time high nationwide

A March poll shows support for marriage equality nationwide has hit an all-time high, the Washington Post reported.

Half of all Americans believe that gay men and lesbians have a constitu-
tion's guarantee of equal protection that would allow discrimination against gays based on religious beliefs. And that would allow workplace non-discrimination protections for LGBT employees.

Lebanese judge rules gay sex should not be criminalized

Via the Lebanon Daily Star:

A judge presiding over a case pros-
cuting homosexuality has ruled that a notorious piece of legislation criminal-
izing gay sex is not valid, a decision that has won praise in Lebanon.

The Legal Agenda, a quarterly mag-
zine published by the non-govern-
mental organization of the same name, reported March 4 that, in January, Judge Naji al-Dahdah cleared a trans-
sexual woman of having a same-sex rela-
tionship with a male inmate, a decision that has been widely praised in Lebanon.

The poll also shows that Americans oppose bills like the one in Arizona that would allow discrimination against gays based on religious beliefs. And there is strong support for gay adoption.

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Choosing suburban life
By Susan Jordan

Last month LGBTQ Living focused on city life; this month we talk to two lesbian couples and two gay men who live in Perinton, Pittsford and Brighton.

Angela Bonazenga and Cathy Lewis live in a beautiful modern house in the Perinton hills. Three-story windows look out onto a deck and a view that seems completely wild, but neighbors’ homes are not far away. Nuthatchs and chickadees hunt for seeds. This doesn’t sound like the Perinton they know. They have yet to see a bear, although one was reported about four miles away a few years ago.

Tom Privitera. Photo: Susan Jordan

Tom Privitera lives off East Ave. in Pittsford with his two cars. He retired last August as WNY regional staff director of the Public Employee Federation, a state-wide labor union including all kinds of professionals, service workers, scientists and judges working for New York state.

He sometimes worked in criminal justice, i.e., for the Rochester Police Department in City Court, and transitioned into the labor movement in 1978, where among other jobs he worked for AFSCME. He was very much involved in winning labor support for gay rights (especially LGBT inclusion in labor contracts) and since 2004 for marriage equality. He and Bess Warrs founded Pride at Work Rochester chapter c. 2007.

Tom grew up in the city, on Jay St., and went to high school in the city and to MCC when it was on Alexander St. He married and moved to Chili around 1970. After his divorce, he and his then-partner bought a house on Harvard and Edgerton. But by 1987, re-assessment of neighbors and being poor, they moved to a small house on gay-bashings on Monroe Ave., one of which involved him, caused him to move to the suburbs.

Tom says, “We were attacked by three men... who told us to get off the side walk... I grew up on the south side of Pittsford neighborhood!” He fought back and the bashers ran away. Tom adds, “This was one factor that drove us out of the city.”

Tom became leader of the Pittsford Democratic Committee in 2005; there were five parties on the town board. In 2006 there were 42 people on the committee, and the first Democrat ever had been elected to the Pittsford zoning board.

Tom’s current house was built in 1954. He bought it in 1999 and has done major renovations. The current project involves enlarging the back patio, which is now becoming an all-window enclosed porch with flagstone floor and a huge brick fireplace.

Tom’s home is in a quiet wooded area, and is filled with momentos of his family and life, including a lot of Asian art. His neighbors are friendly and he has had no problems. He plans to remain there perpetually and says, “They’ll have to take me out of here feet first!”

Jean Thibodeau and Sophie. Photo: Susan Jordan

Jean Thibodeau, a self-employed CPA, lives on the opposite end of Perinton from Angela and Cathy – he is just over the border from Pittsford. He grew up in the town of Fairport and is a life-long resident.

Jean’s office is in his house, and his staff is there every working day. He lives with his cute, friendly dog Sophie, a Lhasa Apso he adopted when she was rescued from an abusive situation and taken to Lollipops Farm, where he volunteers.

Jean Lazzeroff and Cindy Garcia. Photo: Susan Jordan

Jean Lazzeroff and Cindy Garcia live in Brighton.

Jean is a retired social studies teacher and Cindy is a manager in the corporate world. They live with their cats Nathan and Ming in a 1964 house in a quiet Brighton neighborhood, with a lot of tall trees – yet they are just a few minutes from the city.

The two have done a lot of decorat ing, with a new driveway and garage and a renovated kitchen, which is an ongoing project. They also have a cottage with a pond in Honeoye. They like to go kayaking all around the area and have also just bought a pontoon “party boat”. As “big wine fans” they often travel to the Finger Lakes, the Hudson Valley, Napa and Washington State.

Bill Moore, Brighton town supervisor, told The Empty Closet, “I’m glad you are speaking with Brighton residents for your LGBTQ Living article... it is very important to me that Brighton be a community where the LGBTQ community and all of our residents feel good about being here.”

Jean and Cindy agree. Jean says, “Brighton has always been a very gay-friendly town. This is a great neighborhood with a wonderful neighborhood association, which has a lot of families and adult activities. I grew up in Brighton and went to Brighton High School, and so did my daughter. We like that it’s close to everything, I’d be hard pressed to live somewhere far from the city.”

Jean added, “There’s a measure of acceptability – everybody’s friendly and they respect us for who we are.”

Jean and Cindy feel that Brighton’s good schools are a major factor in why they wanted to live there. “The other thing I think is fab ulous – we have a very wooded yard and Brighton picks up the leaves in the fall months!”

Jean said, “I love the seasons. Where I grew up it was always sunny. I love winter if there’s snow.”

Jean said, “I love to ski cross-country.” Cindy interjected, “And snowshoe! It’s just a great location.”

Proximity to the Thruway is another advantage, since they travel to Boston frequently to see their children and grandchildren. In short, “comfortable” seems to be the word they use for Brighton.
Thank you to all the establishments who participated in Gay Alliance DinesOUT 2014, your generosity helps us to continue doing important work. Remember to visit these places often and let them know that you appreciate their support of the Gay Alliance.

Thanks also to everyone who “dinedOUT,” we met hundreds of people who were out enjoying themselves!

A special thanks to Ms Lady Dee, Kellie Ronald and Brad Flowers for your efforts to make DinesOUT 2014 a success.
The Staff and Board of the Gay Alliance would like to extend its gratitude to Peter Mohr whose support extends well beyond his commitment as the Treasurer for our Board of Directors. Thank you for your generous help with The Red Ball, DinesOUT, Ride for Pride, Youth Prom, ROC Pride, our Volunteer Recognition and Shoulders to Stand On.

Thank You
Peter Mohr

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By Evelyn Bailey

Last month Shoulders To Stand On looked at the founding of the Mattachine Society and its influence on society’s attitudes towards homosexuals. This month STSO will look at the Lavender Scare, and next month the identification of homosexuality as a diagnosable mental disorder in the DSM-I, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

The United States in the 1950s experienced marked economic growth — with an increase in manufacturing and home construction amongst a post-World War II economic boom. The Cold War and its associated conflicts helped create a politically conservative climate in the country. Fear of communism caused public Congressional hearings in both houses in Congress whilst anti-communism was the prevailing sentiment in the United States. Conformity and conservatism characterized the social mores of the time, until Rock and Roll music entered the scene. The 1950s are noted in United States history as a time of compliance, conformity. Gender roles began to change during this time. Women were encouraged to work out of the home much like they had during the War, and began to fight for their rights and desire outside employment. Homosexuality and juvenile Delinquency were just the tip of the metaphorical iceberg that mothers were blamed for. The image of home and family changed, and the idea of a domestic housewife no longer applied to much of the country as many worked outside the home.

In 1950, the same year that Senator Joseph McCarthy claimed 205 disappeared homosexuals were working in the State Department, Undersecretary of State John Peurifoy said that the State Department had tolerated 91 homosexuals to resign. McCarthy then added the claim that gay men and lesbians were even more dangerous than Reds. Because the psychiatric community regarded homosexuality as a mental illness, gay men and lesbians were considered disaffected, thus constituting a security risk. U.S. government officials assumed that homosexuals were blackmailed by the federal government who would provide them classified information rather than risk exposure. The fear of this supposed homosexual menace began to take hold of the Lavender Scare. The Lavender Scare drew more than a thousand federal agents over many years, not a single case was ever convicted. The purges created a sense of anger and malice in the gay community that sowed the seeds of the gay rights movement.

In 1965, years before Stonewall, Kameny and a small band of brave men went to court in front of the White House, in what is believed to be the first gay rights demonstration in the nation. Kameny went on to devote his entire life to the fight for LGBT rights, and just before his death he saw his achievements honored by President Obama.

In the 1950s, Americans also felt the effects of the Red Scare. Though the climate of fear and repression began to ease in the late 1950s, the Red Scare has continued to influence political debate in the decades since and is often cited as an example of how unfounded fears can compromise civil liberties. The Red Scare made credible the Lavender Scare even though after several investigations over many years, not a single case was ever found of a homosexual who actually gave up secrets in order to avoid being blackmailed. Senator David Johnson points out that the so-called Lavender Scare was actually deeply ingrained in the fabric of McCarthyism, and long outlived it. Johnson further argues that the government’s repressive action significantly helped to unite gays and lesbians through a shared repressive experience, and this, ironically, helped to spur the modern civil rights movement.

People continued to lose their jobs through the 1950s, 60s, 70s, and 80s. In 1995, President Clinton officially rescinded the policy that had been put in place by President Eisenhower in 1953, and for the first time in four decades, LGBT people could freely work for the civilian agencies of the federal government. Clinton, however, also instituted the controversial military policy, "Don’t ask, don’t tell," Congress voted and the policy last year.

Today, there are still 29 states in the country in which it is perfectly legal to fire people simply because they are LGBT — a direct result of our government’s homophobic policies that were put in place in the 1950s and have continued to the present day. Employment Non-Discrimination Act has passed the Senate but has not passed the House and shows no signs of movement in that direction.

As reported by the Huffington Post, on March 6, 2014, Sens. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.) and Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) circulated a letter among their Senate colleagues that calls on President Barack Obama to issue an executive order extending workplace nondiscrimination protections to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans.

According to Merkley’s office, the effort is bicameral; the LGBT equality caucus is bicameral; the LGBT equality caucus is bicameral; the LGBT equality caucus is bicameral; the LGBT equality caucus is bicameral; the LGBT equality caucus is bicameral; the LGBT equality caucus is bicameral; the LGBT equality caucus is bicameral.

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History Corner
A Monthly Newspaper of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley
812 Brown St. at West Main, Rochester, NY 14601
(716) 436-7670, March, 1974 Number 54

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27-28 APR: NYS CGO CONFERENCE: Syracuse.
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Growing Up

The Neighborhood

By Eric Bellmann

Sunday morning I am heading out for a walk from my apartment building on the second floor in the 33rd Ward of New York. I am heading for a park near my apartment, which is an oasis in a busy urban neighborhood.

I was thinking about my childhood neighborhood, which was not far from where I grew up. I remember walking with my friends, playing in the streets, and exploring the nearby park.

I realize that I am not the only one who misses the childhood neighborhood. Many people have fond memories of their childhood homes.

I wonder if it would be possible to recreate a childhood neighborhood in the city. It would be a wonderful way to bring people together and create a sense of community.

I think about the people I knew growing up, and how much they have changed since then. Some of them are still close friends, while others have moved on to different lives.

I am grateful for the memories I have of my childhood neighborhood. It is a place that I will always cherish, and I hope to return one day.
Blasphemy is clearly conveyed in the video, since Katy Perry (who appears to be岗品金 and opposition of God) engulfs the believer and the word God in flowing flames. One reason for lodging the petition so that people from different walks of life, different religions, and different parts of the world, agree that the video promotes blasphemy, using the name of God in an irrelevant and distasteful manner would be considered inappropriate and inappropriate.

While clearly Perry is no enemy of Islam her new video was seen nonetheless as giving a black eye to the faith. And unlike previous public offensives of the Muslim faith – Indian novelist Salman Rushdie, Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh, English editor Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and the Danish newspaper Jyllands Posten, to name a few – there were no threats to the career of Katy Perry born in Cairo or Paris. No farouf issued to have her hunted down, stoned or put to death.

However, the question of Perry's freedom of expression versus Islam's religious sensibilities ranges even after Perry excused the offending footage. And proponents of free speech argue that since 9/11 their rights are now easily violated or put on hold for fearing violence or committing blasphemy.

But people on the other side of this debate like thief that realizations on religious expression have risen rapidly since 9/11. The Pew Research Center corroborates legislation asserting that 75 percent of the world's population where religious restrictions are already in place have indeed imposed harsher laws. And countries that never had religious restrictions in the 21st Century, like France, now areOmega Muslim women wearing the niqab.

The debate between Perry's freedom of expression and Islamic religious sensibilities reminds us that we all now reside in a more interconnected and religiously pluralized world.

So in this, I cannot help but wonder, are we really becoming more culturally sensitive or merely thin-skinned?

A Few Bricks Short

By David Hall

This month's column is a bit short because there has been a rough month in the house. Cold, wintry weather with little light, and a week of spring in sight.

The power went out twice, so there was no warmth in the house. Bernie and I actually had to talk each other – it was horrible! The worst part was that over the past month we were fraught with illness. I love the word “fraught”. I know it's a bit melodramatic sounding, but I really do cry.

“I need to do laundry! That hamper is so fraught!”

“Look, I just spilled my cup and it was fraught with coffee!”

“Ouch! I just stubbed my toe and it is fraught with pain!”

Sometimes after a good meal, I push open the door and ask: “Honey, are we really becoming more cultural sensitive or merely thin-skinned?

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Sometimes after a good meal, I push open the door and ask: “Honey, are we really becoming more cultural sensitive or merely thin-skinned?

The first night I had Honey-Nut Cherri- os. The second night I had Raisin Bran. The third night I had Honey-Nut Cheerios. The second three slices of toasted bread – one with peanut butter and jelly. I just can’t understand why I don’t own any more cooking show on the Food Network.

So there, I was responsible for my food preparation, feeding the cats and caring for my sick husband. I was totally fraught! This must be how Governor Chris Christie felt a lot of the time – a bridge fraught with traffic, those noisy news reporters fraught with questions, all those-staff members fraught with subpoenas.

So you’d be glad to know that things are looking up now – at least for me, if not for Governor Christie. Bernie is feeling better. The snow is melting – hey, the first fraught day of spring was last month, for goodness sake. Last night we had a great dinner and it didn’t come from a cereal box or a fast food restaurant.

I suppose the lesson is that everyone’s life is fraught with responsibilities these days; we just have to try to mitigate the effects. Oh yeah, mitigate it another word I love! I think life is fraught of opportunities you mitigate...

Contact David at davidhil59@gmail.com

Brian’s Views

PLANNING FOR OUR FINAL YEARS

By Brian McNab

Planning for your final years is a fascinating experience when there’s no imminent threat of death. If a religious sensibility thinking more and more about it.

People over their 80s might laugh at me, feeling that at age 66 I’m still very young. And maybe I do. After 10 years ahead of me to prepare for death. But I nevertheless spend an increasing amount of time imagining what it will feel like to say “goodbye” to Ray, or to have him do the same to me. I brought it up with him a couple of days ago, and he replied: “Stop it. You’re going to make me cry.”

Maybe it’s because I plan ahead with everything else in my life that I am now thinking about the horror of having another person wipe my bottom. I won’t have the grace to laugh. You see. But when did my body start changing so dramatically?

Liposuction would take care of the love handles and the belly that seem to be growing. You’re going to make me cry.”

The problem is the belief that these are things that all “real” women embrace (by which they mean cisgender women). It’s a societal stereotype of what a woman is supposed to be. It manifests itself in a slavish devotion to beauty culture and an embrace of harmful and outmoded gender norms.

I’m not saying that there’s anything wrong with liking makeup, jewelry, and heels. The problem is the belief that these are things that all “real” women embrace (by which they mean cisgender women). I know cisgender women who don’t wear makeup, don’t wear heels, don’t wear jewelry, don’t wear bras, don’t shave anywhere, like wearing hoodies and jamies, like wearing flip flops, like wearing “stompy” boots or work boots, and cut their hair short.

But you can’t live, or be yourself, or think, or work, or do anything else.

We fear the horrible marginalization we experienced in our youth. We never want to have to endure such proselytizing, judgment, or loneliness again. Whatever it is, we want to feel safe and valued.

Despite the often-quoted Bette Davis statement, growing old is for sissies. We’re not saying that the unique challenges we face making grow old not something we want to do without forethought. Aging among other things requires awareness, honesty, acceptance, planning, and gratitude. Unrealistic expectations of how good and easy it will be for us is the only true suffering. Maybe it’s not silly to start thinking about it now.

Transmissions

By Laine Delaney

In a few of my attempts at outreach and reception with trans communities outside of the places where I’ve noticed quite a bit of gender-bending and gender policing among transwomen (I suspect that it’s not just among transwomen, though), I must be careful to not offend anyone.

This gender-bending and gender policing threatens to express itself through disguise and rejection expressed towards transwomen who don’t feel that is crucial. [What is crucial?] Social stereotype of what a woman is supposed to be. It manifests itself in a slavish devotion to beauty culture and an embrace of harmful and outmoded gender norms.

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You can try any one of those qualities or all of them and still be a woman. When I’ve brought this up in the face of this sort of ostracization, the response is sometimes, “Women do these things – ugly women”.

I’m not saying that people are struggling for the legitimacy of their gender identity reinforcing the stereotypes held by our culture. Of course, some women do these things – ugly women.

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tion that it does not even begin to numerically approximate the number of women. As always, something that I find especially hideous is people thinking that they have to knock each other over in order to stand up for themselves.

Women have been fighting for centuries now to be free from patriarchy. I am always fully engaged in a battle of who to pretend that I am Lady Mary Crawley, well-loved, asocial disagreeableness for glad to say goodbye to it. I would even if it is still March, and these longed for annoyances rises to unheard of heights, and I wake up actually wanting to interact with humans (imagine!).

It is true that I have often seen large and thriving fetish communities in other cities such as San Francisco, New York, Chicago and especially London. I am always with a tinge of jealousy, why these communities were not also present (to my knowledge) in Buffalo. Nonetheless, there is much smaller than these cities, which might account for the very little information is (or for information). It is very difficult to regard to fetish and kink communities in the area. I also considered the fact that these communities involve a certain level of clandestineness.

I decided to conduct a little private eye work and to see what I could discern about Rochester’s fetish communities. What actually existed, and why these communities were so small. One wonders if the situation is that, it is very cheeky and hack, black veils were involved.

I had a goal to speak with current Bachelor Forum owner and operator Peter Mohr. I wanted to know if Mohr felt Rochester’s fetish community had waxed and waned over the decades, both in size and presence, and why this was exactly.

The Bachelor Forum, for those who do not know, is the home bar for Rochester’s very own Leathermen/mannysuckles community, The Bartering Rams M.C., or The Rochester Rams for short. Cell phones, crack-smoking fraternities, and motorcycles, The Rochester Rams provides the gay male community with an open and friendly opportunity to communicate, meet and spend time with like-minded gay men. Much like many other Leathermen and motorcycle clubs Rochester’s Rams is a vital component needed in order to unify, organize and spread the love of leather and motorcycles among Rochester’s gay male demographic. Mohr was sure to point out that despite now having only four local members (down from 12 in its hay-day), The Rochester Rams has been going strong for over 40 years. And for Rochester, I’d say they are doing a damn good job.

The Bachelor Forum has also hosted the Empire Bears, a Bear community officially established in 1995, who have made their strong presence in Rochester known through community outreach programs, night and weekend events, fundraisers, game nights, annual participation in the pride parade, and commitment to the GAGV. In an attempt to widen and reinforce the roots of the LGBT community itself, the Rochester fetish community has been working hard to accommodate for the needs of gay Leathermen, Rubbermen or the Bear community exclusively. Indeed, when speaking to the community Mohr states, "We once had a very healthy scene and a lot of brotherhood to assist me. "The 2000s is when the community started to decline again," Sims states, perfectly consistent with the internet’s increase in accessibility and bandwidth speed at this time.

Whether it’s the internet, the LGBT generation gap (don’t get me started), or the LGBT community turning against itself, the Rochester fetish community (and the worldwide fetish community), particularly among gay men, has died down considerably. When asked about Rochester’s Rubberman community I was told by Mr. Mohr that this community was essentially nonexistent in Rochester. Mohr states, "We once had a young man with a very cute and very bear-like, and gear-play, and we hosted an event at The [Bachelor] Forum. Unfortunately, this event turned out to be 'encouraging'."

This troubled me.

I must give Rochester credit, however, for what it does currently provide in regard to fetish-based community support groups. Rochester is home to the Rochester Kink Society, a largely grassroots organization catering towards Rochester’s BSDM and fetish demographic, as well as Rochester’s annual Erotic Arts Festival. However both the KKS and the annual Erotic Arts Festival are not, as one would expect, organizations or events that accommodate for the needs of gay Leathermen, Rubbermen or the Bear community exclusively. Indeed, when speaking to RK’s Event Coordinator and Chairperson Kat, I was informed that RK’s “…is perfectly nonexistent. It just does not value one fetish ever other…." Kat was also sure to add that RK’s “…may not have a steady stream of gay men… but that RK’s participating community has “…effectively doubled from 70 to 200 members in the past five years… At least someone is getting it right.

It appears as if an entire facet of our LGBTQ history, is disappearing before our very eyes. This very well may be due to the internet and the generation gap, where young LGBTQ people simply don’t care to connect in person, or worse the LGBT community sacrificing part of its identity and inheritance in an attempt to assimilate more quickly with mainstream, heteronormative culture. Either way, the commitment to cultivate and maintain resilient fetish communities has flagged.

I would really love to see the Rochester fetish community reacting more strongly against this invalidating, morally condemning shift towards sexual repression. Until then, I am faithfully bothered.

Questions, comments or critiques? Please feel free to e-mail the author at: brandonb@ gayalliance.org

What’s Bothering Brandon?
LEATHERMEN, RUBBERMEN AND BEARS: AN ENDANGERED SPECIES
By Brandon W. Brooks

Spring has a way of bringing us all back to life, back into the warmth. My energy reserves begin to rise as I prepare myself for the long days ahead, my tolerance for coldness increases as the earlier, wintry weather so close, it can sometimes be difficult to maintain a healthy amount of energy to deal with the challenges of spring. I have often seen large and thriving fetish communities in other cities such as London. I am always with a tinge of jealousy, why these communities were not also present (to my knowledge) in Buffalo. Nonetheless, there is much smaller than these cities, which might account for the very little information is (or for information). It is very difficult to regard to fetish and kink communities in the area. I also considered the fact that these communities involve a certain level of clandestineness.

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DIGNITY-INTEGRITY

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 April, 2014:

1st Sunday: Episcopal Mass/Healing Service, with music.
2nd Sunday: Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word, with music & Blessing of the Palms.
3rd Sunday: Episcopal Mass to celebrate Easter Sunday.
4th Sunday: Evening Prayer, followed by a Potluck Dinner.

Join us if you can this Easter season. Palm Sunday falls on the second Sunday so our Liturgy will include a Blessing of the Palms. On the third Sunday we will meet in the church to celebrate Easter.

Our fourth Sunday Potluck theme for April is “Easter Eats”. This is a new theme for us and I think it sounds like fun! I am sure that there will be more than just jelly beans and Easter eggs. No time to cook or shop? Just ask a friend or two and join us for food and fun!

You can call the Hotline at 585-234-5092 or check our website at www.dirochester.org for updates on services and activities.

EMPIRE BEARS

Spring is here!!! As I write this, not so much. Maybe by the time you read it... I hope.
April 10-13, we’ll be in Erie at Drenched Fur, a great weekend with a few hundred men, pools, hot tubs, a water park, food, comedy, dancing, and did I mention a few hundred hot hairy men? At least it’s all inside.

The BEARS are looking forward to warmer weather, getting out into the woods, hiking, enjoying nature, camping. Join us for a weekend at Jones Pond or Hillside, where members have lots of fun. The campgrounds open at the beginning of May.

The Bears can be found having supper with Becky at Carabba’s on West Henrietta Rd at 6 on first Mondays and third Wednesdays. Other Wednesdays we check out other diners, drive-ins and dives. Members are bowling at Olympia every other Sunday. We’re at the Cinema for a movie quite often. We had a great time at the BGMC concert in March. Join us and get out of your cave.

ROMANS

The last nude swim at Harro East came and went, and ROMANS members have to wait until the next season to enjoy this privilege again with Naturist Rochester.

ROMANS members are looking forward to some networking opportunities with other nude groups during the summer months.

We will invite members of local nude groups to our regular meetings at members’ backyards with a swimming pool, we will mingle with members of Buffalo’s In-the-Buff at Jones Pond Campground and RV Park one weekend in June, we will hang out with Toronto’s TNT members at the World Pride on another weekend in June, and we will join gay nudists from all over the world at the Gay Naturist International’s Naked Fest in August at Camp Rambleswood in Maryland.

The ROMANS is also working on attending a Males Au Natural (MAN based in New York City) function in Manhattan to socialize with some big city nudists to exchange ideas and learn from one another.

Summer is for nudists. Take off your clothes to feel the freedom. Come join us for some nude fun. ROMANS is a social club for gay and gay-friendly male nudists over 21. Please check out our website at http://www.wnyromans.com/. You can also contact the ROMANS at message line 585-281-4964, by E-mail wnyromans@yahoo.com or via regular mail at PO Box 92293, Rochester, NY 14692.

ROCHESTERNYGRRL

Time to get your girl on! Social gathering for Crossdressers and Allies takes place 4-6 p.m., Saturday, April 19 in a safe and welcoming environment at Gay Alliance, 875 E. Main St., fifth floor.

Girls’ night out follows this event, 6 p.m. until...

Changing space is available. For more information, see https://groups.yahoo.com/group/rochesternygirls/!

ROCHESTER RAMS

The Rochester Rams invite you to join us for our “Stuff Yer Baskets” bar night on Saturday, April 19, at the Bachelor Forum bar from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. It will be a great night to show off your Easter good-ies in leather, latex, spandex or just plain ol’ levis.

Tradition continues with our annual Can-Am bar night hosted by the men of Spearhead from Toronto. Can-Am is one of the busiest and hottest nights of the year. Join us on May 17 at the Bachelor Forum from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.

The Rochester Rams is the oldest leather/levi club in Western New York state. We hold general meetings open to the public in our clubroom located in the basement of the Bachelor Forum on the Wednesdays preceding bar night. Upcoming meetings are April 16, May 14 and June 18. For more information, please see our website at www.rochesterrams.com.

TRANS* ALLIANCE OF GREATER ROCHESTER

Our February meeting was facilitated by JoAnne Metzler. Raquel Acredos-Pagan, who has had extensive experience in art therapy, came to our meeting to help facilitate greater expression through visual art and the creation of symbolic self-portraits.

Raquel helped to show us ways of communicating things that are often difficult to convey through words. It was a productive, helpful and fun session for all involved, and we’d like to thank Raquel again for coming out and making this a wonderful and informative meeting!

Starting in April we will be having two meetings a month. The first meeting will be on the second Saturday of the month at the Gay Alliance, fifth floor, 875 E. Main St. and will be our Planning Meeting where we discuss potential topics for upcoming meetings and side projects related to and sponsored by the Trans* Alliance of Greater Rochester. All are welcome at the planning meeting; we would like to hear suggestions for projects and events as well as subjects for upcoming meetings. The second monthly meeting will be our standard Support/Education meeting, and will be held on the last Saturday of the month.

There is still some question as to what is taking place for the April session of our Support/Education meeting. We will post it on our Facebook group and on our website at http://rnytg.org/ as soon as we have this information available. We hope to see you there!

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THE EMPTY CLOSET • THE GAY ALLIANCE • NUMBER 477 • APRIL 2014
Frank Viveros talks about the new “Phantom of the Opera”

By Susan Jordan

A new production of The Phantom of the Opera takes the Auditorium Theatre stage April 16-17. This production of the well-known musical features new staging and sets and a cast and orchestra of 52.

To purchase tickets, call 800-745-3000 or visit Ticketmaster.com, or the RBTL box office, 885 East Main St. Tickets start at $37.50.

Frank Viveros, who plays the role of "Ubaldo Piangi," originated the role of Blowsie The Blowfish in Disney’s Finding Nemo: The Musical, and Iron Chef in off-Broadway’s Yellow Brick Road. His favorite past roles include Carolina, or Change (Bus/Dryer), Once on this Island (Agwe), Buddy (Aplo), Song for a New World (Man 1), Children of Eden (Cain), Sweeney Todd (Beadle).

Viveros answered some questions from The Empty Closet: What is your take on your character, Ubaldo Piangi? I love Piangi the way I love the Real Housewives franchise. He is desperate for the spotlight and doesn’t always come across as the most competent when he tries. For the past two years, BEDCO has performed at the Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival; these will be the company’s 48th and 49th performances in Rochester in the past 10 years.

The 40th Anniversary Gala Program will include Roch- ester premieres: Claire Porter’s See You Around; William Evans’ Portrait of a Lady; William Evans’ Multiple Marga- rets; Placido Domingo, Celia Cruz, Whitney Houston, Chuck Cooper.... All for completely different reasons but each very important to me. What would your ideal role be, and would it be on stage, TV or film? Do you have a pref- erence?

I love the stage and it will always be my first love. At the end of the day I’m a storyteller, so I hope the ideal role hasn’t been written yet and when it is, it won’t matter which platform it’s on as long as I am ready to play it and enjoy it.

Bill Evans Dance Company to perform April 13

The Bill Evans Dance Co. will perform at Hochstein Per- formance Hall, 50 Plymouth Ave. N, on Sunday, April 13, at 4 and 7 p.m.

Bill Evans told The Empty Closet, "Don Halquist and I have been committed life partners for 28 1/2 years, and were legal residents of Vermont in August of 2009."

The Company gave its first performances at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., in the summer of 1975. For sev- eral years, the company was the most-booked professional U.S. dance ensemble. The company has appeared in all 50 U.S. states, throughout Canada and Mexico, and in 20 other coun- tries. For the past two years, BEDCO has performed at the Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival; these will be the company’s 48th and 49th performances in Rochester in the past 10 years.

The Hot L Baltimore runs at Blackfriars (795 East Main St.) through April 12. Performances are Thursdays, April 3 and 10, at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays, April 4 and 11 at 8 p.m.; Saturdays, April 5 and 12 at 8 p.m., and Sunday, April 6 at 2 p.m. Tickets are $28.50, $36.50 and $50 and available in person at Blackfriars Theatre, online at www.blackfriars.org, or by calling 585-454-1200. If available, tickets can be purchased at the door beginning one-hour prior to performance. Box Office hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Saturdays, noon to 4 p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and Discover are accepted at no additional charge. Parking is available on site. Handicapped seating is available. For more information regarding Blackfriars Theatre, visit their website at www.blackfriars.org.
“More Than Us!”also will feature silent and live auctions. Tickets are $55 each and go on sale soon. The ticket includes dinner, dessert, and show. The cash bar and doors open at 6 p.m., with dinner served at 7 p.m. and show at 7:30 p.m.

Sponsorships are available at levels of $250, $500, and $1,000. Please visit thegrmc.org to learn more about the event, tickets, and sponsorships.

**Geva presents Essie Calhoun Award to Thomas Warfield**

Geva Theatre will present its annual Essie Calhoun Award for Diversity in the Arts to Thomas Warfield, choreographer, teacher and founder of PeaceArt International, on April 11 at Geva.

The award ceremony will precede a performance of “I and You” by Lauren Gunderson at 5 p.m. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., followed by a reception.

To RSVP for the event, contact Mary Ragus at 585-420-2049 or mragus@gevatheatre.org by April 7.

**“Shoulders To Stand On” will screen at MuCCC on April 28 benefit**

The documentary “Shoulders To Stand On: The LGBT History of Rochester NY,” will be screened at a Pay What You Wish benefit for GAGV and MuCCC on April 28 at MuCCC, 142 Atlantic Ave. at 7:30 p.m.

In the 90-minute video, directed by Kevin J. Indovino, Rochester takes center stage in a documentary about a city that has always been at the forefront of social change and justice.

Shoulders to Stand On begins by exploring a not-so-distant past: before Stonewall and before the birth of the gay rights movement. We discover a city at the height of prosperity, a city steeped in history and yet overshadowed by secrets.

Before the 1970s, the fear of losing jobs and family kept gay men and women underground, living double lives. Meeting places and local watering holes were constantly under the scrutiny of police; raids and payoffs were common, unchallenged practices of the day.

But in 1969, the Stonewall Riots would provide the spark that ignited voices across the nation. With the insight and courage of a small group of university students, Rochester’s Gay Liberation Movement was born. Their voices quickly propelled Rochester into one of the most progressive and influential LGBT communities in the country.

Inspired by the spirit of a city renowned for the legacies of Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass, Rochester’s LGBT community would set the bar for gay activism and religious tolerance. It would lead the way to put the first openly gay candidate into an elected office in New York State. It would rise to the fight against AIDS, bringing together an entire community with care and education. The Flower City and its corporations would number of infected gay men, the closeted gay community is equally resistant to Ned’s call for gay men to become abstinent, at least until the virus is better understood, he is repeatedly called out for his hypocrisy as he formerly engaged in the same promiscuous behavior he is trying to rally people to stop.

Skillfully directed by Brian Coughlin, each actor was successful in portraying the range of societal attitudes toward the disease, from the initial indifference of Ned’s brother Ben (portrayed by Roy Wise) and reluctant, closeted committee members to force people’s attention to the seriousness of HIV during the early 1980s in New York City.

Presented by Trillium Health for LGBT Health Month, the production powerfully highlighted an era of apathy and jumbled self-identity, as both straight and gay people are bent on ignoring the devastation caused by the disease.

The towering stone façades of the set inscribed with both “HIV-“ and “HIV+” powerfully represent the opposition faced by Weeks from all sides as he unabashedly fights to establish an organization dedicated to educate and assist people affected by the disease. While straight people are too embarrassed to help the increasing number of infected gay men, the closeted gay community is equally resistant to Ned’s call for gay men to become abstinent, at least until the virus is better understood, he is repeatedly called out for his hypocrisy as he formerly engaged in the same promiscuous behavior he is trying to rally people to stop.

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Skillfully directed by Brian Coughlin, each actor was successful in portraying the range of societal attitudes toward the disease, from the initial indifference of Ned’s brother Ben (portrayed by Roy Wise) and reluctant, closeted committee members to force people’s attention to the seriousness of HIV during the early 1980s in New York City.

Presented by Trillium Health for LGBT Health Month, the production powerfully highlighted an era of apathy and jumbled self-identity, as both straight and gay people are bent on ignoring the devastation caused by the disease.

The towering stone façades of the set inscribed with both “HIV-“ and “HIV+” powerfully represent the opposition faced by Weeks from all sides as he unabashedly fights to establish an organization dedicated to educate and assist people affected by the disease. While straight people are too embarrassed to help the increasing number of infected gay men, the closeted gay community is equally resistant to Ned’s call for gay men to become abstinent, at least until the virus is better understood, he is repeatedly called out for his hypocrisy as he formerly engaged in the same promiscuous behavior he is trying to rally people to stop.
president Bruce (portrayed by Jake Pucel), to the explosive arguments between Ned and his partner, Felix (portrayed by Carl DelBono), to the exhausted, guilt-ridden breakdown of Health Administrator Mickey (portrayed by Daniel Mejia) as the uphill battle for support begins to take its toll. Not even closeted assistant to the mayor Hiram Keesler (portrayed by Peter Doyle) is willing to ally himself with the cause.

The play occasionally throttles back and takes a few good-natured pokes at gay stereotypes. Felix is a fashion writer (of course) for the New York Times, and Tommy (portrayed by Darlando Eanon) makes a flirtatiously obvious pass at Ned. However the play most often focuses on Ned’s efforts to raise straight and gay people’s understanding that being “gay” doesn’t automatically represent promiscuous sexual behavior, and that HIV is destroying serious relationships, not solely discarded barflies after one-night stands.

In addition to almost everyone’s seeming indifference to the disease, a great deal of emotional turmoil is created by the lack of biological understanding of the disease itself, and thus the lack of concrete answers, solidifying the xenophobic era. Polio-stricken Dr. Emma Brookner (portrayed by Kerry Young) is constantly torpedoed with desperate questions from confused, infected men, which she cannot answer.

The play successfully portrays the time period during the infancy of HIV, when attitudes slowly began to change and people began to stop associating the term “sick” with homosexuality. The underlying theme suggests that while much progress has since been made toward understanding HIV and that homosexuality is not itself an illness, much work remains to be done, both in defeating the global epidemic and in defining LGBTQ people as human beings.

The view from the Portsmouth Harbor cruise

On the road to Portsmouth

By Merle Exit

Portsmouth, NH is on the list of “Gay Destinations”, although not obvious. Lanie and I took a road trip from Queens along with an itinerary of the “hot spots” beginning with two that will acquaint us with the area: Strawberry Banke and the Portsmouth Harbor Cruise.

Strawberry Banke is a ten acre museum of historic renovated homes and businesses that formed in a neighborhood once known as Puddle Dock. Since the history covers 300 years don’t expect the “period costume living museum” atmosphere of places such as the ilk in Williamsburg or Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts. In most of the 42 buildings on their original site you will find a docent in each building and a scheduled “time period owner” in one.

For instance, going to the Shapiro House I encountered Mrs. Shapiro, a Ukrainian Jewish immigrant in 1919 who was tending to household tasks. She described the foods that she was making as well as her family’s journey to the United States. Due to her Hebrew Calendar, the holiday of Succoth was being celebrated. A Sukkot was erected in the garden just outside of the home.

Strawberry Banke is open from May 1 to October 31 but there are guided walking tours and special events from November 1 to December 30. Visit the houses at your own pace using a Visitor’s Guide site you will find a docent in each building and a scheduled “time period owner” in one.

The Music Hall, located at 28 Chestnut St., is a Victorian-era theatre that features curated entertainment from all over the world, the oldest theatre in New Hampshire. Although we were unable to attend a performance, we did have a guided tour of the lobby, 900-seat auditorium, state, backstage, and even the bathrooms. No kidding, even if you don’t have to pish, you must see these stunning fancy bar-up-to-date barhrooms. When asked if anyone wanted to perform on the stage, it didn’t take much for me to reenact a scene from the Wizard of Oz. Can I place this on my resume? www.themusichall.org.

Where to stay: Port Inn is clean and comfortable. Microwave and refrigerator in the room, heated outdoor pool, and continental breakfast is included. www.portsmouthgaslight.com. Restaurants: Blue Mermaid Island Grill has Caribbean with a continental breakfast is included. www.portsmouthgaslight.com; Portsmouth Gaslight Company – American with other influences and “Downtown Pizza” downstairs www.portsmouthgaslight.com; Portsmouth Brewery brews their own beer as well as having hearty American fare. www.portsmouthbrewery.com.
Ride For Pride 5: We Put The Ride In Pride!
By Jeannine Gainsburg
On June 14, about 50 dedicated riders will be hitting the pavement to help raise some much-needed funds for the Gay Alliance. All of the money raised (minus a small percentage that FirstGiving charges to process your credit card) will go directly to the Gay Alliance. Last year our 40 riders and crew raised $22,000. This year our goal is $25,000!

If you would like to support one of our amazing riders, please go to our website at: https://www.gayalliance.org/events/ride-for-pride.html and click on the rider’s name. You will be redirected to their secure donation page at FirstGiving, then follow the simple instructions. If you would rather not donate online, you can send the name of the rider you would like to support, along with a check made out to the Gay Alliance, to Gay Alliance/Ride for Pride, 875 East Main St., Suite 500, Rochester NY 14605.

Please help us make our goal this year! Your support at any level is appreciated by so many.

Every time I see an adult on a bicycle I no longer despair for the future of the human race.” - H.G. Wells

Youth Update: Day of Silence is April 11 at Triflum; Fabulous Friday look-in is April 18
By Dawn Balnis
April is here and hopefully with that the snow is gone. Triflum Health on April 11 will be hosting Day of Silence this year. Please check out their website for further information. We encourage the youth to participate in this moving and important event.

April 18 Fabulous Friday will be hosting a lock-in at Open Arms MCC. We will be locked in from 7 p.m. - 7 a.m. There will be lots of activities planned, including movies, games, food, etc. Please keep an eye out on our Twitter (@GAYYouth), Facebook and email for more updates.

80s Zombie Prom is only one month away. Are you ready to dance it out ‘80s style during the zombie apocalypse? This year the prom will be held at the Diplomat Party house on Lyle From 9 p.m. and goes until 11 p.m. Tickets will be available soon. We will have a makeup artist who can make you into a rad zombie if you want. Come dressed in ‘80s style or whatever you feel comfortable in. Humans and zombies are all welcome.

Gay Alliance Volunteer-of-the-Month: Tara Winner
Congratulations to Tara Winner for being chosen as the Gay Alliance Volunteer-of-the-Month for April!
Tara received her Masters of Library Science degree from the University of Buffalo in 2006 and a Masters of Arts in History from Binghamton University in 1999. As a librarian cataloger at the Brian Sutton-Smith Library and Archives of Play at the Strong, Tara is busy making sure that this vast collection is accessible from around the world, but she also makes the time to help out with the library collection at the Gay Alliance.

Tara has been volunteering for the Gay Alliance Library & Archives since 2009, primarily cataloging the large book collection. She heard about the library program by visiting a table at the Pride Festival and is now a member of the Library Leadership Team.

In addition, Tara has worked as a grant-funded archivist for the Shoulders to Stand On archives project, and was a major volunteer contributor to the Forging Alliances History Panel exhibit that was unveiled at Pride 2013.

“Tara is such an important member of our team,” said Gerry Szymanski, Gay Alliance Library & Archives Director. “From raising funds for our Pride banner, to working hard on converting our non-fiction book collection over from Dewey Decimal to LC, her dedication each week and beyond to helping the library and the Alliance is nothing short of amazing!”

We are so grateful to have Tara as part of our Library and Archives volunteer team. On behalf of the Gay Alliance staff and board, we thank you for all of your hours, your commitment and your support.

Gay Alliance Youth (Ages 13-20)
- Fabulous Fridays, 7-9pm, Open Arms MCC 707 E. Main Street, Rochester 14605
- Gay Alliance Youth Gender Identity Support Group (Ages 13-20) Thursdays, 5:30-6:30pm Gay Alliance Library (1st floor, off Prince St. lobby) 875 E. Main Street

For more information: dwmb@gayalliance.org

The Gay Alliance
875 E. Main Street, Fifth Floor (Auditorium Theater) Rochester, New York 14605 Phone: 585 244-8640

The Gay Alliance is a non-profit agency, dedicated to cultivating a healthy, inclusive environment where Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) people are safe, thriving, and enjoying equal rights. We are a coalition of individuals and groups working to empower LGBTQ people to affirm their identities and create an atmosphere where the diversity can thrive collectively and separately. We advocate and educate for civil rights for all and for the eradication of homophobia.

The Gay Alliance, 875 East Main Street, Rochester, New York 14605
Phone: (585) 244-9030 Fax: (585) 244-8246 Website: www.gayalliance.org Email: info@gayalliance.org Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Board President: David Zonia Board Vice Presidents: Jessica Muratore Executive Director: Scott Fearing Education Director: Jeannine Gainsburg Database: Kat Wiggall Youth Intern: Dawn Balnis Bookkeepers: Christopher Hennessy

The Empty Closet: Editors: Susan Jordan Graphic Designers: Jim Anderson E-mail: susan@gayalliance.org Phone: (585) 244-9030 Fax: (585) 244-8246 Advertising: (585) 244-9030

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

By Jeanne Gainsburg

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and this year we are paying a special tribute to the wonderful volunteers who dedicate three hours every week to helping us out in the office. Without these amazing people our lives would be extremely stressful. I asked each of them to share a few sentences about themselves and, in honor of their work on the Gay Alliance phones, answer a completely random question.

I’m Bill DeStevens. I was born and raised in Oswego. I now have a nephew and a lesbian family from a very early age. I moved to the community and provides an opportunity to learn from the experience. Kerry, what is your favorite movie quote? “I’ll have what she’s having” – When Harry Met Sally.

I’m Dee Nepomuceno, a Filippino transwoman who likes the colors purple and light green, adores cats, has a penchant for cooking and loves to smile a lot. Dee, if you had a warning label, what would yours say? “You make me wanna be a better man.” - As Good As It Gets.

I’m Kerry Hanratty. I love my family. I spend a fair amount of time researching our genealogy. I enjoy volunteering because it allows me to give back to the community and provides an opportunity to learn from the experience. Kerry, what is your favorite movie quote? “You make me wanna be a better man.” - As Good As It Gets.

I’m Marilyn Traver, a 45-year-old transgendered lesbian. I’m widowed. I used to be a 45-year-old transgendered lesbian. I’m also the current Coordinator for the Steering Group of T*AGR (Trans* Alliance of Greater Rochester). This is the local trans* education/support group that has been in existence almost continuously since 1997. JoAnne, what do you wish would come back in fashion? "Attention batistas: high octane fuel only.

I’m Jenna Vanas and I struggled for my years with my sexually, mostly because it was not viewed even in my generation as acceptable and I always dream of a wedding, I have a backyard in hotels, which consists of 18 years in the industry and I am very proud of myself for staying in such a caring path for that long. Jenna, what is your favorite movie quote? "You make me wanna be a better man.” - As Good As It Gets.

I’m JoAnne Metzler and I prefer film over digital. Marilyn, what do you wish would come back in fashion? “Big hair from the ’80s.”

KT Schwartz lives with his partner, Caitlin and pet rabbit, Bunny. He is genderqueer and a journalist, he writes regularly at janitorqueer.com. KT, what do you wish would come back in fashion? “The hammy code.”

I am Bill DeStevens. I was born and raised in Oswego. I was very fortunate to have gay role models and an accepting family from a very early age. I now have a nephew, a transitioning nephew and a lesbian niece, all of whom are loved and fully accepted as they are. Bill, if you had a warning label, what would yours say? “Warning: Interactions might lead to bouts of joy and laughter!”

I am Laura Buttigieg. I live in Farmington with my family, girlfriend and stepson. I am an amateur phlegm-rather and I prefer film over digital. Marilyn, what do you wish would come back in fashion? “Big hair from the ’80s.”

I’m Jenna Vanas and I struggled for my years with my sexually, mostly because it was not viewed even in my generation as acceptable and I always dream of a wedding, I have a backyard in hotels, which consists of 18 years in the industry and I am very proud of myself for staying in such a caring path for that long. Jenna, what is your favorite movie quote? “You make me wanna be a better man.” - As Good As It Gets.

Cristin Monahan is a Long Island transplant who fell in love with Rochester for its relaxed atmosphere, vibrant LGBT community, and non-existent traffic. After graduating from UR, where she majored in History with a focus in gender and sexuality in Bolshevik Russia, she moved to the South Wedge with some college friends, and has been here ever since. Cristin, if you had a warning label, what would yours say? "Attention batistas: high octane fuel only.

I am Bill DeStevens. I was born and raised in Oswego. I was very fortunate to have gay role models and an accepting family from a very early age. I now have a nephew, a transitioning nephew and a lesbian niece, all of whom are loved and fully accepted as they are. Bill, if you had a warning label, what would yours say? “Warning: Interactions might lead to bouts of joy and laughter!”

I am Laura Buttigieg. I live in Farmington with my family, girlfriend and stepson. I am an amateur phlegm-rather and I prefer film over digital. Marilyn, what do you wish would come back in fashion? “Big hair from the ’80s.”
Check our monthly and ongoing calendar as well as the community section for more groups and events. For further information, call the Gay Alliance at 244-8640 or visit www.gayalig.org. Gay Alliance Youth Group info: pages 30-31.

BISEXUALITY RESOURCES

AMBi Los Angeles, American Institute of Bisexuality/Univ of California, Bi:Vars Annual Biennial, Bi Cafe; Bi Definition: Milwaukee; BiQuest USA: Bisexual Organizing Project (BOP); Bi-Sexuality Resource Network: CarnesBio - Columbus, Ohio; Dalla/ Fort Worth Bi:Vars Bi Sexual Health Program: Los Angeles Bi Task Force: New York Area Bisexual Network; Robin Cohn’s Site: Seattle S BeWriters Network: The Bi Sexuality Resource (email bro@bisexual.net)

CULTURAL

Rochester Women’s Community 234-694-8950
Rochester Gay Men’s chorus www.thermc.org

FAMILY

CFTV Centrify Family: Care, meeting support, workshops, webinars, workshops, information, cftv@centrify很不错.

Rochester Gay Moms’ Group Support group for lesbian moms and wannabe moms, focusing on recreational and support areas. Support: RochesterGayMoms-subscribe@yahoo.com.

Lesbian & Gay Family Building Project Has formed! A group for parents and families who want to build their families. Contact: the first free social networking site to support lesbians of color, launched 2009. OurSistersOfColor.org provides information, support, more.

herited

Elders

Gay Alliance Rainbow Oasis Many monthly get togethers, same time, every month. 140 McC Аге СТ, 585-855-8847/ SAGE@gayalig.org

DEAF SERVICES


Lilac Rainbow Alliance for the Deaf (LRAD) Meets second Saturday, 6-9 pm. For location, information, contact: Jowee, 233-1523. Spectrum LGBTQ & Straight Alliance RIT/NTID student group. <speculum@rit.edu

Death Services

Proving year-round training in prevention and education, treatment. Risk Reduction Plus Team offers services to HIV positive persons, families. Spanish bilingual, regardless of ability to pay. Caring, confidential support, more.

Charitable Catholics AIDS Services A multilingual and bicultural staff providing services to a diversity of people infected and affected with HIV. Coordinated around health care, housing, education to members of the LGBT community. No nudity policy on member profiles. Currently 10,600 members.

Highland Hospital Breast Imaging Center 500 Red Creek Drive, Rochester 14623-4586. 585-262-4300. Breast cancer screening services for uninsured and underinsured women.

Elisabeth Wende Breast Clinic 170 Sawgrass Drive, 442-8343. Dr. Wende Logan-Haug and an all-woman staff provide mammograms.

Self Help for Women with Breast or Ovarian Cancer (SHARE) 525-2828. 522-3747. Alternatives for Battered Women 222-3744.

Victim Resource Center of Wayne County New York VV 800-456-1172; office 7200, Health Services After Hours: 585-258-0640; M-F 3pm-5pm, 1-866-53SHARE or 1-866-537-4273.


LGBT HEALTH

For a list of LGBT-friendly and competent health and human service providers in the Rochester and Finger Lakes area, go to yoursite.com/page(s) at www.everybodygood.com.

Trillium Health

HCR Home Care

We provide a full multidisciplinary team consist- ing of social work, physical, occupational, and speech therapists as well as home health aides who have completed the eight-hour cultural competence training provided by the Gay Alliance. For more information, contact us at 585-227-1930 or visit online at HCRHealth.com

Anxiety at Genesee Valley

See www.gayalig.org Resource Directory under “Health” for Gay Alliance referrals to phys- icians and other health care services and providers.

CRS Depression-Bipolar Support

The Depression-Bipolar Support Alliance of Central New York Support Group Adult Group meets the third Thursday of every month from 6-7:30 pm at SAGE Upstate, 431 E. Ferry St., Syracuse, NY 13202.

TRANSGENDER


ando, 2.2% of the Rochester Metro Area population in 2010. Rochesterians who identify as transgender are no different than other Rochesterians in age, race, ethnicity, level of education or income. However, many transgender residents said they have faced discrimination in some areas of life, such as housing, education, employment and health care. They also are concerned about their ability to get the health care they need.

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**MONDAYS**

**L.O.R.A. Coffee Social**


**Sibling Support Group**


**WEDNESDAYS**

**Identity Group**

The Identity Group is for LGBT identified individuals who have a developmental disability. The group meets Wednesdays 3-4 pm at ARC Health Services (2060 Brighton Rd.). For more information, contact Delaina Fico, LMSW. Email: dressifyfemme@aol.com. More Info: www.loragroup.org and https://www.facebook.com/groups/L.O.R.A.14464/.

**THURSDAYS**

**Protesters for Lesbian and Gay Concerns**

6:30 pm, first Thursday, Ralph, 271-7679.

**Gay Alliance Youth Gender Identities Support Group**

Thursday, 5:30-6:30, GAGV Library, 1st floor, off Prince St. 865, 875 E. Main. Ages 13-18. 244-8640.

**Pride at Work**

First Thursday, 5:30-7:30, 1184-Buffalo Road, Rochester. Email: gayalliance@rochester.rr.com.

**GLOBAL** (Gays & Lesbians of Bausch & Lomb).

Meets every third Thursday in area 67 conference room at the Optic Center. Voice mail: 338-8977.

**Gay Men’s Club**


**FRIDAYS**

**Gay Men’s AA meeting**

Fridays, 7-9 pm, Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main, 244-8640.

**GLBTQI Motorcycle Group**

Second Fridays, 5-8 pm, Various locations. Rochester GLBTQIbikers@yahoo.com; 467-6456, im dope.com New York.

**GARA’s Night**


**Crystals Meth Anonymous**


**GAY OR BISEXUAL MEN WANTED**

If you are an gay or bisexual man who has sex with men and is interested in participating as a research participant for a study titled "Sexual Risk Taking Among Gay and Bisexual Men that is being conducted by SUNY-Brockport and Trillium Health. For more information, please call 716-792-6166.

**SATURDAYS**

**GAY OR BISEXUAL MEN WANTED**

Over 18? SUNY-Brockport and Trillium Health are conducting a study on attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms toward various health risks among gay and bisexual men in the Rochester area. For more information, please call 716-792-6166.
Classifieds

Classified ads are $5 for the first 20 words; each additional 10 words is another $1. If we do not bill for classifieds, please send or bring ad and payment to: The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main Street, Suite 500, Rochester, New York 14605.

Payimg 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.

Hotel visit, in call in my home or out in your residence. Reasonable rates. Discretion appreciated and practiced.

April 2014

TUESDAY 1
Gay Allamor Support Group. Is your queer human pet responsive enough to your needs? Get better access to hamburger, tuna fish and more! Learn how to motivate your human to let you sleep on the furniture. Meets Tuesdays. Email us at meowgrrrr@looflirpa.org.

THURSDAY 3

SUNDAY 6
Dignity Integrity, Episcopal Mass/Healing Service, with music, 5 pm at St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

MONDAY 7
Your Queer Career with Riley Folds. 6 to 7 pm, Nazareth College, Folds will discuss topics from his book “Your Queer Career: The Ultimate Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Job Seekers.” Free and open to the public. Sponsored by Nazareth’s Career Services Department.

Intersectionality Between Race and LGBTQ Identity Panel. presented by Gay Alliances of Monroe County, Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St. Free. Part of month-long “Stand Against Racism” ini- tiative organized by WYCA, Gay Alliance partnering with National Coalition Building Institute, MOCHA Center, Open Arms MCC, Young Audiences of Rochester and Center For Youth.

WEDNESDAY 9
Forum on Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA). Hosted by Empire State Pride Agenda. 6 pm at Downtown Presbyterian Church, 121 North Fitzhugh St. Free. Email for more details.

THURSDAY 10
Empire Bears at Drenched Fur, Erie, Pa. through April 13.

SATURDAY 12
Two Allamor Support Groups. 6 to 7 pm, Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St. $7.50. Special for Annual Support Drive. Open to the public. Contact the church for more information.

Sunday 13
Dignity Integrity. Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word, with music, Blessing of the Palms. 9 am at St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

Bill Evans Dance 40th Anniversary Celebration. Rochester Civic Center, 50 Plymouth Ave. $40 online or at door. General Admission, $15, $20 at the door. Special guest, Parris (reserved seats, center section), 4 pm at door. College of St. John, 150 Main St. info@bedo2014.brownpapertickets.com.

TUESDAY 15
FRIDAY 19
RIT Colorfest, weekend conference for LGBTQ Students, 4 pm at St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. $40. Email rittourist@gmail.com for more information.

SATURDAY 19
11am-7pm. Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St. Main Church Twitter @ GAGYouth.

SUNDAY 20
Easter Dignity Integrity. Episcopal Mass to celebrate Easter Sunday, 5 pm at St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St.

TUESDAY 22
Earth Day

FRIDAY 26
Rochester Alliance gay straight alliance. NYC. $10 each. Email meowgrrrr@looflirpa.org.

Saturday 26
Tours’ Alliance of Greater Rochester, Support/meeting, 6:30-7:30 pm, Rochester, 707 E. Main St. info@openarmsmcc.org (585) 271-8478

SERVICES
Rochester’s Best Man to Main Rubdown. Unwind with this degree, employed, fit, friendly, healthy, Italian GWM. Middle aged, 5’8”, 165 lbs., 32” waist, non-smoker, & d free, HIV nega- tive. My 10-plus years experience guarantees your relaxation and satisfaction.

Children’s Ministry thriving at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church for toddlers to tweens. Join us for vibrant, inclusive, progressive worship on Sunday at 10:30am. 740 Marshall Road off Chili Avenue. info@openarmsmcc.org (585) 271-8478

Hotel visit, in call in my home or out in your residence. Reasonable rates. Dis- cession appreciated and practiced. Don’t delay, call me today at 585-773-2410 (cell) or 585-255-6648 (home) or e-mail me at: magicminds@rochester.rr.com.

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

Handyman: Simple repairs or full ren- ovs, no job is too big or small. Car- pentry, Plumbing, Electrical, Interior & Exterior. 35 years experience. Call Alan & Bill 585-204-0532 or cell 304-517-6832.

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

Have to paint or clean gutters! I have tall ladders! Dale’s Pleasure Painting and Gutter Cleaning has very reasonable rates for painting your roof and gutter clean- ing in spring or fall. 585-576-9042. Email dale.turpin@yahoo.com.

HOUSEMATES
Seeking employed housemate to share large suburban home. Off street parking, internet, cable, telephone, furnished private bedroom. Rent includes food (you cook or I cook or we cook together). Call 266-4582.

Library & Archives

Hours: Every Monday & Wednesday: 6-8pm 875 E. Main Street, (off Prince St. lobby) 1st Floor, 585.244.8640
The Empty Closet is published by The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley 875 E. Main Street, Suite 102
Rochester, New York 14605 © 2014. All rights reserved.

Editor-in-Chief: Susan Jordan
Staff Reporter: Dave Osmeyner
Managing Editor: Jim Anderson
Ad Sales: Brandon Brooks (brandont@gayalliance.org)

Advertising policy:
The Empty Closet does not print advertisements that contain nude drawings or photographs, nor does it print advertising that states 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 specifically racist, sexist, anti-gay, or homophobia will be refused. Advertisements that are false, racist, sexist, anti-gay or otherwise objectionable shall 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” ads that fail to provide unpalatable information that the information in the ad is true or not in any way the object of the publication. Negative advertisements are defined as any advertisement that attacks a person or organization, or which states, “vote for him or her,” or, “they aren’t quite the way my Mama makes ‘em, but...”

The Empty Closet maintains, within legal boundaries, neutrality regarding products, political candidates and parties. However, “attack” ads that fail to provide unpalatable information that the information in the ad is true or not in any way the object of the publication shall be refused.

Submissions:
For submission submit news items, ads, photos, letters, stories, poetry, ads, photographs or art by mail or in person to the Empty Closet office by the 15th of the month.

Submissions are due by the 15th of the month at:
4605 Main St., Rochester, NY 14605, call (585) 244-9030 or e-mail emp@pflag.org

Publications:
The Empty Closet is published 11 times a year (December and January combined) by The Empty Closet Press for The Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc.

Advertising:
The Empty Closet is the official publication of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc., located in the kaybode of that organization. Its purpose is to inform the Rochester gay community about local and national gay-related news and events; to provide a forum for ideas and exchange ideas and seek to educate.

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 such advertisements or any actions taken by an advertiser. The advertisement must be paid for by the advertiser or by the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley and can be refused.

Lay all your cards on the table, write all your ads and there it is.

Letters to the editor:
The purpose of columnists, editorial writers and other contributing writers is their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or The Empty Closet. We will print letters to the editor’s discretion and in a space available basis. Only one letter by the same writer in a six-month period is allowed. We will neither print personal attacks nor replies to them.

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