MOCHA on the move: agency re-locates to 189 N. Water St.
By Susan Jordan

The MOCHA Center is moving from 107 Liberty Pole Way to 189 N. Water St. The opening reception is set for Oct. 15, from 4-7 p.m.

Executive Director Bruce Smail told The Empty Closet, “We have had a five year lease and renewed it once. But this space used to be a police station and isn’t the most user-friendly. Water St. is a main street and we have the entire river side of the building – the lower level. It’s changing in that way.”

Bruce Smail said that MOCHA is planning new initiatives to go with the new space. MOCHA Consulting Services will be doing speaking engagements and competen-
cy trainings, using the largest room as a training center. He noted, “The center will be open to various populations; the goal is the health and wellness of LGBT communities of color. We’re trying to help other health organizations and providers to offer more inclusive programs and services for LGBT people of color. Some are about diver-
sity, some social justice, some are basics about LGBT people of color.

MOCHA will employ a team of 10 consultants from different fields – education, mental health, health providers and more – who will do the trainings on site, and reach out to other organizations as well.

Bruce said, “There will be a fee for the services initiative. Each training is at cost. It’s our effort at being creative. How do we build new funding streams for our programs?”

He went on, “We’re one of the few organizations in the country that were founded by black gay men to do work around HIV. We have to go beyond and also address some of the knowledge and service angles that we should be doing. Who better to do this training than an orga-
nization founded by black and Latino gay men of color?”

Gay Alliance Annual Meeting to highlight changes in bylaws
For over 40 years, the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley has relied on generous donors to help fulfill its mission of improv-
ing the lives of LGBTQ people. Executive Director Scott Fearing says, “Donors play an integral part in ensuring that our community members have an organization to champion LGBTQ life and cul-
ture. We thank you for your sup-
port over our many years.”

Fearing notes that chang-
es in the non-profit world, including changes to New York non-profit law, have prompted the Board of Directors to direct our Governance Committee to review and reconstitute updates to the organization’s bylaws to bring them into line with cur-
rent “best practices.”

The difference between being a ‘donor’ and a ‘member’ of The Gay Alliance has long confused our community supporters. Fearing said, “You may not be aware of it but our organizational bylaws require a distinction between a ‘donor’ and a ‘member.’ The bylaws are the policies and pro-
cedures that may not yet be wel-
coming our community. The Red Cross Out and the Empire Justice Center, for instance, he said, “are national organizations that we have to deal with. We are one of the few organizations in the country that were founded by black gay men to do work around HIV. We have to go beyond and also address some of the knowledge and service angles that we should be doing. Who better to do this training than an organization founded by black and Latino gay men of color?”

Fearing noted that the Alli-
cance education program is 274 percent over budget as far as income. Its Safe Zone trainings are now nationally recognized and the Alliance will do train-
ings for many community col-
leges in California, as well as many other places. A local Safe-
Zone training is set for Novem-
ber, and Fearing said, “People will be flying in from all over the country.”

He traced the changes that have come about since he was appointed ED a year ago. “It’s been an incredible journey,” he said. “When I came on as ED the organization was finan-
cially very strapped…three weeks after I came on board we lost NYS funding – one third of our operating budget. A lot of changes have happened: we had to shrink in order to grow…. Then we got a phone call saying a community mem-
ber had passed away and left us $250,000. This was safely invested and is bringing in a yearly income. Our goal is to keep that investment growing.”

He described the evolution of the Gay Alliance over the past 40-plus years, concluding, “We won’t have the resourc-
es and funds to hire staff to do everything. We need the community. How can we work together to meet community needs? What can we do to take care of ourselves and help our own? How can we overcome the divisions within our own com-
nunity and become stronger and move forward together? We deserve the best.”

Fearing said that the Alli-
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munity resources like Ima-
gerOut and the Empire Justice Center. For instance, he said, “Big Brothers/Big Sisters is starting an LGBT youth pro-
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vide the structure to make that happen. It’s hearing from the community and seeing what we can bring to the table – we can’t do it alone.”

How has the Alliance’s role changed after 41 years? Scott Fearing said, “There’s a major shift in the work we do. Forty years ago our primary purpose was to help people survive in a hostile world. We need to move from mere survival to helping people thrive.”

He described the two major areas the Alliance will be work-
ing in. The first is “Reaching Out” – education and training in a campaign to address sys-
tems that may not yet be wel-
coming to LGBTQ people. Second is “ROC Our” – enriching life for and empow-
ering our community. The Red Ball and Pride are two examples of what Fearing called “Out and queer, working and celebrating.”

MOCHA staff at the farewell reception on Sept. 12: Front Row - Yaritza Pinoire, Jasan M. Ward. Back Row - Joshoan LaMourt, Kathryn France, Michael Wilson, Bruce E. Small, Christopher C. Goodwin.

Over 60 attend Gay Alliance Community Forum; participants offer proposals for change
By Susan Jordan

Over 60 people came out on a rainy Saturday, Sept. 13 at 10 a.m. to talk about the future for the Gay Alliance and the Roch-
ester LGBTQ community’s cur-
tent needs.

The forum took place in the big room at the Auditorium Center formerly used by the Youth Group. A summary of the results of the recent com-
munity survey was made avail-
able to everyone.

Gay Alliance Executive Director Scott Fearing started things off by saying, “We’re having a conversation about where the Gay Alliance is going. There is an idea the Alliance is a huge organization with a lot of money. That’s not true – but we do have a lot of people with big hearts.”

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(Community continues page 3)
### Perspectives

#### The Empty Closet Editor

**SUSAN JORDAN**

### Gay Alliance Executive Director

**SCOTT FEARING**

#### Workplace protections, marriage equality are connected

Most national LGBTQ organizations have dropped their support for ENDA, the proposed law (long stuck in the House) which would give gay Americans protection from workplace discrimination, because it has been so watered down by religious exemptions as to be meaningless. After the Supreme Court ruling on Hobby Lobby, which apparently gives employers the right to control their employees’ bodies and personal lives, based on the employers’ (not the employees’) “religious freedom,” many people feel it’s pointless to give churches and religious groups, or for that matter corporations and individuals, any religious exemption from anti-discrimination laws. Why exempt the very people who are doing the discriminating? Even with all those exemptions, ENDA has been stuck in the House of Representatives, just because of the mindless, intransigent bigotry of House Republicans. If even the watered down version of ENDA is unacceptable to the Republicans in the House, why not replace it with the stronger Senate version?

Openly gay Congressman Jared Polis (D-CO) is trying to do just that. He filed H.R. 678 to “ditch” the House of Representatives, the proposed watered down version of ENDA: S 815. A discharge petition is a parliamentary procedure wherein if a majority of members of the House of Represe ntatives sign the discharge petition, the measure may be “discharged” from committee and be brought directly to the floor for consideration.

Scott Lively, the Executive Director, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund, said, “The new, fairer version of ENDA that the Task Force and many others in the LGBT community have been calling for has now emerged in the US House with both strong protections for LGBT employees and a new reasonable religious exemption — treating LGBT people the same as other protected classes. Thank you Leader Pelosi and US Representative Polis for your moral and political leadership in moving this forward. LGBT people need strong protections from discrimination and we have waited too long for anything less. Legal equality is legal equality. We urge law makers to seize this moment and support the discharge petition.”

Of course, House Republi cans are not going to support the discharge; as of Sept. 26 none had done so, even though some had sponsored the original bill. Marriage equality and workplace protections are equally important. Both are basic human rights — although the extremists say gays are not human — and human beings have families they need to support.

Today we stand on the cutting edge of research into human nature — the frontier of knowledge about sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. Do we want to keep learning or do we listen to those who, out of prejudice, fear and the need to control, want to shut down scientific inquiry and social change?

Our right to be our authentic selves, to love the people we love and to create our own families, if we wish, is inextricably linked to our right to work in order to support those families.

#### Changing the World

It was in the fall of 1980, a time before many of you readers were born, that I first said, “I am gay.”

My coming out was kicked in the butt a few years later when HIV/AIDS arrived on the scene and I was drawn into community organizing as a way to keep my friends alive.

In that brief period between my coming out and focusing on what was then called “gay cancer,” I learned an important message about what it meant to be “gay.” At that point in American history, multiple civil, or social justice, global peace, and environmental movements were going strong. Reagan had just arrived on the scene.

As I celebrated being gay, I celebrated the fact that I was part of a movement to overturn the misogynistic, sexist patriarchy that dominated society. The women’s movement and its female leaders were basic human rights — although the feminists say women are not human — and human beings have families they need to support.

Today we stand on the cutting edge of research into human nature — the frontier of knowledge about sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. Do we want to keep learning or do we listen to those who, out of prejudice, fear and the need to control, want to shut down scientific inquiry and social change?

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#### Name

**Address**

**City/State/Zip**

**Phone**

**E-mail**

### Gay Alliance Membership Levels:

- **Gold Level:**
  - $150.00 Advocates
  - $200.00 3rd Place Champion
  - $300.00- 4,999 Triangle Club
  - $500.00- 5,999stoneWall
- **Silver Level:**
  - $200.00- 2,999 Visa
  - $250.00- 2,999 Visa
  - $300.00- 2,999 Visa
- **Bronze Level:**
  - $100.00- 1,999 Champion
  - $150.00- 1,999 Champion
  - $200.00- 1,999 Champion

**Benefits: Subscriptions to The Empty Closet mailed to home or work, plus privileges at each level. Phone: 585-544-8640 or mail to: Gay Alliance, 875 E. Main St., Suite 100, Rochester, NY 14606. Home delivery of The Empty Closet is free with your annual membership.**

### Gay Alliance Board of Trustees

David Zona, President, Jessica Muratore, Vice-President, W. Bruce Gorman, Secretary, Peter Mohr, Treasurer, Jason Barnecut, Chris Hilderbrant, Emily Jones, Jeff Lambert, William Schaefer

### Gay Alliance partnerships continued from page 1

**City of Rochester**

**Absolut/Malibu**

**Silver Level**

- 3 Olives Baccardi

### Ameriprise

- **Ameriprise Canandaigua**

### National Bank & Trust

### Corning Inc.

### Equal Grounds Coffee House

### Hatter Secret and Emery LLP

### ImageOut

### Jaegermeister

### Kittleberger Florist and

### Nedonic Artisan Chocolate

### Victory Alliance

### Wegmans

### Woods Oviatt Gilman LLP

### Champion Level

### Mass Mutual of Buffalo

### Park Avenue

### Merchants Association

### Pride @Work

### Third Presbyterian Church

### The Woolbright Group

### HCR Home Care
At one of the LICK planning meetings: L-R - Anne Tischer, Ramona Santorelli, Marilyn Traver, Tracey Cartwright, Alisha Mills, Sue Cowell, Martha Malek, Valerie A. Hall, Bart Wolpert, Turner, Laurie Migliore, Jeanne Kennedy. Men are joining too! Photo: Bess Watts.

**Get ready for fun! Introducing LICK Events! Day Party Sundays**

Starting Oct. 26, some Sunday afternoons will be a lot more fun for Rochester’s 21 and over LQBTQ community.

The Gay Alliance, in response to many requests, has formed LICK Events. A member-organized social event planning team. LICK planners hope to have at least one Sunday Day Party each month, with the kick-off event scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 26, noon to 6 p.m. at ONE Nidgeth, 1 Ryan Place (at East Ave. by Alexander).

Look for $2 mimosas from 12-2 p.m. Kitchen opens at noon and features “meet up” food packages and drink specials, plus sporr fans can watch wide-screen football downstairs at 1 p.m. (Bills vs. Jets). DJ Reigo plays dance music upstairs – 6 – 9 p.m. There will also be a pool-tasting upstairs for the adventurous.

RSVP to 546-1010 to reserve a table or to watch the game with your group downstairs. Everyone 21 and over is welcome. A $2 donation is requested to get in. The venue is wheelchair accessible.

**Future Sunday Day Party Sundays will feature** varying venue locations and music styles including salas, Motown, disco and more. Some demo-graphic-celebrating dances like “Men & Friends” and “Women & Friends” have been requested by the community and are under consideration.

If you would like to participate in this fun and energizing “assets mapping and programming & relationship-building” workshop that will be the foundation for the new “community committee,” The approach is based on the well respected work of John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight, authors of Building Communities From the Inside Out.

They point out that community building is poorly done when focused on needs, problems and deficiencies. Instead the Gay Alliance process will focus on finding and activating the assets, skills and associations of our own members while developing the relationships that make success possible. If you have an interest in being professional and spaces, programming and services. Alliance bookkeeper Chris-


topher Hennelly proposed a youth shelter. Center and community groups (some may think of these as “Tea
dances”) each month, with the future LICK events scheduled for Sun-

day, Oct. 26, noon to 6 p.m. at ONE Nidgeth, 1 Ryan Place (at East Ave. by Alexander).

Local and State

**Call for submissions: 2015 David A. Garfinkel Essay Scholarship**

This is an opportunity for CUNY and SUNY community college students to receive cash prizes, improve their research and writing skills and highlight their academic achievement on their resumes.

The 2015 David A. Garfin- kel Essay Scholarship For CUNY and SUNY Community College Students is now open. The deadline for submissions is December 1, 2015.

**Brooklyn youth project urges parents not to reject gay kids**

Via pressrelease:

For many LGBTQ youth in Central Brooklyn, being rejected by parents or family members can lead to a risky and dangerous behavior. Project Accept LBTQ Youth (ALY), a CAMBA HIV prevention initiative, is working to change this by encouraging parents, guardians and families to accept their queer young people.

Funded by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene through Public Health Solutions, Project ALY is mounting a multi-pronged effort to change parents’ attitudes. The goal of this effort is to build awareness, overcome biases, strengthen families and help young people gain self-esteem and self-worth – lowering their risk of future mental or health problems, including HIV infection and substance abuse.

The current initiative includes a recently launched social marketing campaign, which com- prises billboards, outdoor ads, and Facebook and Twitter posts, combined with community outreach. Parents and family members are encouraged to attend small-group meetings to discuss LGBTQ issues and their own experiences and concerns. In a novel approach, Project ALY enlists supportive parents of LGBTQ youth, who share their stories and become role models for others who are not yet accepting.

Parents and family members who struggle with acceptance will come to understand the harmful effects that disapproval and rejec- tion can have on LGBTQ youth,” said Lisa Koffler, CAMBA Pro- gram Manager for Prevention Services. “This will help break the silence, remove stigma and motivate change throughout the community.”
By Jean Paul Zapata on gaystarnews.com
Vivian Boyack, 91, and Alice "Nonie" Dubes, 90, exchanged vows over the weekend of Sept. 6. After being in a relationship for 72 years, the couple was married... at First Christian Church in the city of Davenport.

"We've had a good time," Dubes told the Quad City Times. Throughout their time together, Boyack and Dubes have been avid travelers visiting all 50 states in the US, all Canada’s provinces and England twice. Boyack was a longtime teacher in Iowa where I was then going, and my teacher, said... after the ceremony. “My plan at that time was to teach in the school where I was then going, and my teacher would move on to another school.”

Swiss court recognizes two gay men as parents
By David Hudson on gaystarnews.com
A court in Switzerland has made the historic decision to recognize two men as the legal parents of a child born to a surrogate mom in the United States – despite surrogacy being illegal in the country.

The two men, who live together in a registered partnership, are originally from the St Gallen region of northeast Switzerland. They became fathers through the use of a surrogate mom in California, with the child being conceived through artificial insemination, a donor egg and the sperm of one of the men.

In California, where surrogacy is legal, the child’s birth certificates listed the men as the child’s fathers, recognizing that the surrogate mother and her husband did not wish to exercise their parental rights. However, under Swiss law, the same situation would have left her husband would still normally be considered the parent.

The two men petitioned authorities to be listed as the child’s fathers in the Swiss national registry and were supported by the St Gallen Department of Home Affairs. However, the country’s Federal Office of Justice (FOJ) appealed against the position to the St Gallen administrative court, prompting the court to make a ruling.

In doing so, the court decided to recognize the Californian birth certificate, ruling that the child’s welfare was the most important priority in the case. "The administrative court recognized the American judgment," said Karin Hochl, the lawyer who represented the men.

The court stated that a note of the child’s gender should be recorded on the Swiss birth certificate – partially upholding the FOJ’s complaint that the two women could be listed as fathers to the child. The FOJ may still appeal the decision by taking the matter to the Swiss Federal Court but has not yet announced whether it plans to do so.

In Switzerland, there is a good record for LGBT rights with regards to registered partnerships, an equal age of consent and anti-discrimination laws in relation to employment and the provision of goods and services. However, when it comes to family-building, there remains a ban on same-sex couples adopting, stepchild-adoption, and on lesbians accessing IVF treatments.

- See more at: http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/switzerland-recognises-two-gay-legal-fathers-1235288084#.thx.xOtXoxsXydpuf

Appeals court upholds N.J. ban on “ex-gay” torture of youth
The Third Circuit Court of Appeals has upheld New Jersey’s ban on the “ex-gay” torture of LGBT youth. A similar ban has been recently upheld in California. This is yet another loss for NARTH, the Liberty Counsel, and Alliance Defending Freedom.

-JoeMyGod.com

From Garden State Equality: The New Jersey law prohibits licensed therapists from subjecting minor patients to “sexual orientation change efforts” (SOCE), which the law defines as the practice of seeking to change a person’s sexual orientation, including, but not limited to, efforts to change behaviors, gender identity, or gender expressions, or to reduce or eliminate sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward a person of the same gender.

Writing for the court, Circuit Judge D. Brooks Smith held that "over the last few decades a number of well-known, reputable professional and scientific organizations have publicly condemned the practice of SOCE, expressing serious concerns about its potential to inflict harm," and that “[m]any such organizations have also concluded that there is no credible evidence that SOCE counseling is effective.”

The constitutionality of the New Jersey law was challenged in August 2013 in a lawsuit filed by anti-LGBT groups primarily representing therapists who engage in the prohibited practices. The case was assigned to federal district judge Freda Wolfson, who held that the law was a valid exercise of the state’s authority to regulate medical professionals to protect public health and safety. That ruling was appealed and heard by a three-judge panel of the Third Circuit in July 2014.

While applying a higher standard of review, the Third Circuit upheld Judge Wolfson’s judgment that the law is constitutional, holding that provisions of the law do not violate the First Amendment, and that the law is “aimed at ensuring that New Jersey law is consistent with New Jersey’s anti-discrimination laws.”

Shannon Minter, NCLR’s Legal Director, said, “This decision means that New Jersey youth will no longer be protected from cruel and damaging practices that have been rejected by all leading mental and health professional organizations. The court of appeals ruling makes clear that state-licensed therapists do not have a constitutional right to engage in discredited practices that offer no health benefits and put LGBT youth at risk of severe harm, including depression and suicide. We thank Acting Attor-
ney General John Jay Hoffman, Deputy Attorney General Susan Marie Scott, and the entire legal team at the Office of the Attorney General for their work defending this essential law."

The New Jersey law, known as Assembly Bill A3371, had seventeen primary and co-sponsors in the Assembly and was signed into law by Governor Chris Christie on August 19, 2013. In the Governor’s Statement Upon Signing, Governor Christie noted the “critical health risks” posed by conversion therapy, including “depression, substance abuse, social withdrawal, decreased self-esteem and suicidal thoughts.”

Martina Navratilova proposes to girlfriend at US Open

During a break from her commentary for the men’s matches at the U.S. Open on Sept. 6, tennis star Martina Navratilova popped the question to girlfriend Julia Lemigova -- a moment that was telecast on the Jumbotron to the cheers of the crowd.

Speaking to the Associated Press later, Navratilova said, “It came off. She said yes. It was kind of an out-of-body experience. You’ve seen people propose at sporting events before, in movies, in real life. Here it was happening to me. It was like I was watching myself do it.”

Later that day, Navratilova also won a “Champions” double match with Jane Novotna against Tracy Austin and Gigi Fernandez. So, all in all, a good day for the tennis legend. -Torweland.com

Conservative Jewish denomination orients openly gay Israeli rabbi

By Andrew Potts on gaystarnews.com

The Conservative Judaism Jewish denomination has ordained its first openly gay rabbi two years after clearing the way for gay and lesbian Jews to serve as religious leaders.

British-born Mike Goldstein, 49, became the first openly gay man to become a Conservative Jewish rabbi after finishing his studies for the rabbinate earlier this year at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

Last month he was installed as rabbi at the Adat Shalom Emanuel Synagogue in the city of Rehovot in Israel.

Rabbi Goldstein has been married to British-born Mikie Goldstein, 49, and his husband is currently Israel’s ambassador to the Ivory Coast.

Speaking about gay people during a Crimean government session on Sept. 3, the region’s de facto leader Sergei Aksyonov said, “We in Crimea do not need such people.”

In comments reported by the Russian news agencies Interfax and Itar-Tass, Aksyonov said that if the LGBT community tried to hold public gatherings, “our police and self-defense forces will react immediately and in three minutes will explain to them what kind of sexual orientation they should stick to.”

He added that Crimean children should be brought up with a “positive attitude to family and traditional values.”

Russia annexed Crimea after a referendum that was deemed to be illegal by the United States and European Union.

Aksyonov is believed to have ties to the Russian mafia. He has twice been investigated for murder, but has evaded prosecution.

-JoeMyGod.com

Gambia approves life sentences for “aggravated homosexuality”

Via the Associated Press:

Gambia’s National Assembly has passed a bill imposing life imprisonment for some homosexual acts, officials said on Sept. 8, potentially worsening the climate for sexual minorities in a country with one of Africa’s most vocal anti-gay leaders.

The bill amending the criminal code was passed last month and brings life sentences for “aggravated homosexuality,” minority leader Samba Jallow told The Associated Press. That is a charge leveled at repeat offenders and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Jallow said that while his National Reconciliation Party did not condone homosexuality, he voted against the bill along with one other lawmaker.

“We in our view, (homosexuals) did not commit a crime worthy of life imprisonment or any treasonable offense,” he said.

“Homosexuals were and are punishable by up to 14 years in prison under a Gambian law that was amended in 2005 to apply to women in addition to men. The bill now awaits approval by Presi-

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Crimine leader, twice investigated for murder, says gays “have no chance”

Crimi’s top policitian on Sept. 3 said that gay people “have no chance” now that Russia has taken over the region.

Via the Guardian:

Speaking about gay people during a Crimean government session on Sept. 3, the region’s de facto leader Sergei Aksyonov said, “We in Crimea do not need such people.”

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-JoeMyGod.com

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Gambia continues page 6
GAYS DEMAND MORE THAN ONE UNIT IN NYC ST. PATRICK’S DAY PARADE

Empire State Pride Agenda Executive Director Nathan M. Schaefer stated on Sept. 5, “The news that the organizers of the St. Patrick’s Day Parade will allow one LGBT group – OUT at NBC Universal – to march under its own banner for the first time strikes us as disappointing and self-serving.

“As it stands, the organizers of New York City’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade to allow LGBT people to celebrate both their Irish and LGBT pride by welcoming and including LGBT groups among its participants. We commend Mayor de Blasio, the New York City Council and sponsors like Guinness for continuing with our community by refusing to march or participate in this year’s parade, which set the stage for the organizers to rethink their discriminatory practices and make this initial step in the right direction. The organizers of the St. Patrick’s Day Parade stand alone in its continued exclusion of LGBT participants while business and political leaders stand on the side of LGBT equality and inclusion.

“As New York’s lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy organization, we call on all leaders, community members and allies to demand that the organizers go even further. We call on them to take a bolder stand for inclusion by welcoming other groups that truly represent lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans to march in 2015.

“New York is known for its diversity and inclusive spirit. Discrimination against LGBT people in New York City is illegal, and we’re proud to host the country’s largest LGBT pride parade down the very same street, in fact, on which we’re denied participation every year.

NOTE: Gay units have been welcome and have demonstrated at the St. Patrick’s Day Parade for 45 years.

Oregon grandmother faces harassment in trailer park

A grandmother in Rainier, Oregon has been living out and proud (with a rainbow flag outside her home) at the same trailer park for 25 years without any trouble but when a new property manager was hired she suddenly felt threatened.

For more information or to register, email sflur@proactivewny.org or call 716-852-7743 x 3412.

Man charged with first degree murder of Memphis trans woman

By Daniel Hudson on gaystarnews.com

A man has been arrested and charged with the murder of a transgender woman in Memphis, Tenn. Alejandra Leos was shot dead just a few feet away from her north Memphis home on 5 September. Police initially misgendered Leos but friends and family later confirmed that Leos identified as female.

On Sept. 6, local police arrested 21-year-old Marshall Pegues, with whom Leos was in a relationship, and charged him with first-degree murder.

A friend of Leos, Melissa Smith, described her as a generous and kind person who was often helping those in need: “You don’t have a jacket? I’ll give it to you. You have a point where if you didn’t have no place to sleep [Leos] would help you. Here come and lay on my couch. Don’t worry. Don’t worry. You can stay here.”

Collectors' delight

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**Candidates to Watch**

Gary Pudup, candidate for State Assembly 134th District

*By Susan Jordan*

Gary Pudup is running for State Assembly (134th District). He is a former police officer and director of the Rochester chapter of the NYCLU. Pudup, 59, lives in Greece, and is running for the seat formerly held by Republican Bill Retliech.

This is Pudup’s first attempt to run for public office – it is also the first attempt for his opponent, Republican Peter Lawrence, who was appointed as a federal marshal by the Bush-Cheney administration.

Pudup signed the League of Women Voters pledge to openly debate and conduct a fair campaign free of lies and slurs. When asked if he will debate his opponent, he replied, “You tell me. We had invited him to debate, personally and formally. I’ve spoken to him and to his campaign manager, and they have refused. According to the Democrat & Chronicle, Bill Retliech urged him not to sign the pledge. This is an open seat now, neither of us has been elected before, and how will people know what we stand for if we don’t debate? That’s what separates the man from the boy. I’m ready to talk to any- one, and can’t imagine why my opponent isn’t.”

Pudup has spoken about what he learned from his late father-in-law John McCrone. He told The Empty Closet, “You have to be a realist and be a community developer.”

He noted that his wife and daughter are employed in the educational system. “We live in an era of tight budgets, teachers the resources to do their job. Teaching is a vocation, and teachers are so much more than just teachers. I have no sense of that.”

On the topic of LGBT rights, Pudup said he absolutely supports GENDA and marriage equality. “I was involved with fairness for LGBT people when I worked with the NYCLU,” he said. “I heard Todd Plank talk about marriage equality and how civil unions were not a viable option. My wife Kathy and I decided that was something we wanted to be involved with. We like to think we were among the first straight allies. GENDA’s a no-brainer.”

Pudup feels that New York sets an example of fairness and equality. He said, “One thing I like about running for the Assembly is that New York is becoming a beacon for equality. After marriage became legal in Massachusetts and Vermont, people in the sky didn’t fall and it was actually good for the economy. When Republicans said that it would destroy New York, that it would lead to the downfall of marriage, I found that ridiculous.”

“If people see that marriage equality, women’s equality, tax fairness, etc. succeed in New York, they’ll know that can work in their states. It’s important people know that we have made great strides in Albany, to show the rest of the country. I think we can be a leader,” he said. Pudup defines himself as a progressive, but says, “Maybe we need to say there’s nothing wrong with being a liberal. Our past successful periods as a country, because of progressives and liberals.”

He feels that conservatives have demonstrated liberalism and divided Americans. “There is a powerful emotion and vote-getter,” he said. “But that’s no way to have a nation. You can’t build a nation on hate and fear. I want this to be a state where EVERYONE has a voice. People talk at my candidate forum, but the jackpot – I was born a white gay in the suburbs..... I understand the privileges and opportuni- ties I had, and I think everyone should have those opportunities. I’d be a strong advocate for the people because it’s the people who need to do. Publicly speak for themselves. Look at my contributors – people, not big corporations. I’m hoping to run for the people.”

Gary Pudup’s Republican opponent Peter Lawrence will be interviewed in the November Empty Closet.

Ted O’Brien, NYS Senator 55th district

*By One Overmyer*

Senator Ted O’Brien (D-55th) was first elected to the state legislature in 2012. The district includes parts of Monroe and Ontario Counties, and is one of the most culturally diverse districts in Upstate New York. It stretches from Irondequoy on the shores of Lake Ontario to Naples in the heart of Finger Lakes country, and includes significant portions on the east side of the City of Rochester.

Since taking office, Ted has said he has been a leading voice for upstate community interests in Albany, delivering tax relief for hardworking families and small businesses, securing investments in job creation and workforce development and fighting to root out corruption. Ted O’Brien is the ranking Democrat on the Senate’s Banks and Environmental Conservation committees.

Senator O’Brien has been a leading advocate for equal rights for women and minorities throughout his public service career. Ted continues to be a leader in the fight to pass all 10 points of the Women’s Equality Act.

O’Brien told the EC, “The fight for women’s equality is a crossroads in New York State. This year’s election will play a key role in determining whether we will be a state that treats all citizens equally regardless of gender or one that is content to let New York’s women continue living as second-class citizens. We must pass the entire, 10-point Women’s Equality Act so that we can finally receive equal pay, that equal work, are better protected against domestic violence and sexual harassment, and are guaranteed control over their own reproductive health care choices.”

O’Brien added that lawmakers and must oppose right-wing efforts to hold 9 decades, stood with advocates in the fight for sexual and gender identity protection benefits in Monroe County, and was an early supporter of marriage equality.”

He added, “While New York has made tremendous progress in recognizing the rights of the LGBT community in recent years, we have much more work to do. I am a proud supporter of GENDA and legislation to ban so-called gay conversion therapy, among other important initiatives, and look forward to working with ESFA and my colleagues in the State Senate to pass these bills during my next term.”

When asked what he would like to say to the readers of the EC, O’Brien said, “As a lifelong resident of Monroe County and the father of two young daughters, I am proud to live in a state that treats its citi- zens with respect and dignity while giving them the opportunity to succeed on the merits of their hard work. I am proud of my work in the State Senate to reduce the cost of living and doing business in Upstate New York, put more money in the pockets of working people, and stand up for the rights of minorities, women, LGBT individuals. I will continue fighting to give New Yorkers a government that reflects the character and pride of the people it serves.”

According to the NYS Board of Elections, as of April 1, 2014, there are 195,251 registered voters in the 55th NYS Senate District. There are 74,048 Demo- crats (25% of registered voters), 75,136 Republicans (27% of registered voters), and 45,965 in other parties (15% of registered voters). Additionally, there are 9,632 Independence Party voters, 2,955 Con- servative Party voters, 560 Working Families Party voters and 231 others. General Election Day is Tuesday, November 4.

Ted O’Brien’s Republican opponent Rich Funke did not respond to a request from The Empty Closet for an interview.
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Saturday, November 1, 8 p.m.
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RochesterPFLAG@gmail.com
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LUCKY DIAZ AND THE FAMILY JAM BAND
Sunday, November 9, 2 p.m.
Pre-performance activity (make your own musical instrument; 1 p.m.)*
Suggested for children of all ages and their families; 60 minutes with no intermission
Clever lyrics combine with irresistibly fresh pop beats to create a catchy indie-music sound and songs that explore the joy of childhood.
Sponsored by Barbara and John Lovenheim
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One-of-a-kind and limited-edition works by 46 master craft artists
Saturday 10 am–5 pm · Sunday 11 am–4 pm
Preview Party Friday 7–9 pm (call for tickets)
Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, NY 585.276.8900 · mag.rochester.edu

Above: Kazie Birch Shaw, Gary Zack, E. Douglas Wunder and Lynn Varrington are among this year’s exhibitors.
Make Estate Planning a Key Part of Your Life Plan

MetLife is offering Planning with Pride: A Closer Look at Estate Planning for the LGBT Community, a complimentary educational workshop designed to help the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community gain a greater understanding of recent legislation, your unique concerns and what strategies are available to protect your loved ones. This workshop is designed to empower LGBT individuals and families to plan with confidence.

Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2014
Time: This session will be offered at 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM, or you can attend the evening session at 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Address: MetLife - 400 Meridian Centre, Suite 101, Rochester, NY 14618

Light refreshments will be served.

Don’t miss this educational opportunity—register today!

By Phone: [585] 241 - 5231
By Email: slight@metlife.com

Susie L. Light
Senior Financial Planner
Financial Services Representative

MetLife

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**Making the Scene**

**IMAGEOUT FAIR** took place Sept. 11 at the Museum and Science Center. Tickets and the 2014 Film Festival program were available, and there was a free screening of “To Be Taker”. Photos: Lorraine Woerner McGowan

**GAY GAMES REVISITED**: More from August’s Gay Games in Cleveland.

**My Own Private Rochester: Kelly Clark and Paulette Hall**

By Susan Jordan

Kelly Clark, former Gay Alliance Intergenerational Program Director, is now working toward her Ed.D. at St. John Fisher. Her partner Paulette Hall is working for an associate degree in human services and religious studies at MCC and has taken on a leadership role at the Damon City Campus.

Kelly is originally from Buffalo and has three grown children who are all in school. Paulette was born in Rochester (her older siblings were born while the family lived in Georgia).

The two live now in Corn Hill with their beautiful Italian greyhound Speedy and two female cats, Lily and Nicky. Lily plays with Speedy — Nicky doesn’t think that’s such a good idea.

Kelly is busy doing research for her thesis, “Adolescent Masculinity and Homophobia,” while Paulette is finishing her last two courses and will be done in December; further study at Nazareth or Colgate may in the future. She is also busy with her commitments at the Damon campus and as deacon in the Rochester branch of Unity Fellowship Church, based in L.A.

Paulette said, “The spiritual aspect is my life — an integral part of my being.” At one time she was deacon at Lake Avenue Baptist Church, supporting pastor Peter Carmen. Kelly said, “I’m involved with UFC as a supportive member. Right now we don’t have a pastor, so we are venturing into the city to do special events like community discussion with young adults at MOCHA, twice monthly. We talk about their lives and topics like forgiveness. We had a women of color retreat last month. We’re focused right now on service to the community, rather than Sunday morning services. They often attend services at the Unity Fellowship Church in Buffalo.

When not hard at work, they enjoy and appreciate many favorite people, places and things. Kelly said, “One of my favorite people in town is Dr. Peter Caprino of United Way. He’s a great mentor in terms of level-headed leadership and is very giving to the community. Now he’s also one of my professors.” She is also an admirer of Rev. Mickeyson, head of Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School. “I heard him speak and thought he’s a person who’s able to take religious doctrine and turn it into something easily understandable to the general population. He’s very down to earth and a great community resource.”

Paulette is impressed with the local spiritual people and churches open to LGBT people. She said, “I’ve been inspired by Third Presbyterian Church’s Ralph Carter and Carol Quallick. We love Ralph and Carol was very influential to me when I was coming out. I also admire Downtown United Presbyterian Church and Spiritus Christi.”

Kelly and Paulette’s favorite places include Equal Grounds, where they had their first date. “So that’s a special place for us,” Kelly said. They both spend most of their time in their respective campus libraries. When they have time off, Paulette, a film buff, loves the Cinema, while Kelly enjoys walking Speedy in Mt. Hope Cemetery, which is also an arboretum. They like to eat out at the Gate House on Goodman St., Pomodoro on University Ave, and the Tangie’s on Lake Ave.

Paulette said, “When I first moved to Corn Hill I liked the Clarissa St. Reunion. I also like the George Eastman House – Kelly took me there for our anniversary. It’s a jewel! So beautiful and opulent. And the Jazz Fest! Two thumbs up for the Jazz Fest!”

Among their favorite Jazz Festival musicians are singer Janelle Monae and pianist Bob James.

Kelly said, “We do IMAGEOUT and Pride and the Gateway Festival, which is every other year, at the Eastman School or other venues. They bring in classical musicians of African descent from all over the country, and typically have a black conductor.”

About Rochester in general, Paulette said, “I love the fact that it’s holding its own in the arts and music department.”

Kelly commented, “For me, there’s always something cool and fun to do, and always something free.”

On an ideal Saturday night, they would go to the Little Theatre for a movie and then listen to the free jazz in the café. Paulette would take out of town visitors to High Falls, the Gate House, George Eastman House, Pittsford Wegmans and the Strong Museum. Kelly would choose the memorial Art Gallery and Highland Park, and as a former Buffalonian, a trip to Niagara Falls. Her only complaint about Rochester was, “They could do a better job of shoveling the snow off the sidewalk in the winter!”

Kelly and Paulette’s favorite Jazz Festival memories are of Lila Downs, who “right out of the gate” put on an unforgettable performance.

**Speedy.**

Kelly and Paulette at the South Wedge Mission, where Unity Fellowship Church has an office. Photo: Susan Jordan

Kelly and Paulette said, “When I first moved to Rochester, the Spiritual Reality Project was held downtown. We both attended the first one.”

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**IMAGEOUT’s Paul Allen, Doug Schacht and Michael Gamilla.**

**Members of Team Rochester: Dr. Matt Fleig (half marathon) with Eric Schoen (10K and half marathon).**

**ImageOut’s Paul Allen, Doug Schacht and Michael Gamilla.**

**Kelly and Paulette at the South Wedge Mission, where Unity Fellowship Church has an office. Photo: Susan Jordan**

**GAY GAMES REVISITED**: More from August’s Gay Games in Cleveland.

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Among their favorite Jazz Festival memories are of Lila Downs, who “right out of the gate” put on an unforgettable performance.
subjected to harassment from the new manager Maureen Schmaing, KOIN adds: “I'm tired of being yelled at, screamed at, vulgar language, being accused of doing stuff we are not doing,” said Powell. "I've watched enough that I had to come down here myself and stop the manager from yelling at her the way he was,” said Pierce.

When confronted, the park's manager denied she was targeting Powell because she is gay. "I've watched enough that I had to come down here myself and stop the manager from yelling at her the way he was,” said Pierce.

"I urge Governor Scott Walker and Attorney General J. B. Van Hollen to treat LGBT couples as second-class citizens will not stand in a court of law. “I urge Governor Scott Walker and Attorney General J. B. Van Hollen to respect the Court's ruling and the spirit of the U.S. Constitution. In ruling after ruling, it has become unmistakable that the promise of America is everyone should be treated equally and with dignity. Today's ruling brings us one step closer to fulfilling that promise. "A recent survey of the rights of the LGBT community, Pocan has been married to his husband Phil since 2006; Wisconsin’s Attorney General has called the Supreme Court to reverse this ruling.

Lily Tomlin is first out lesbian to win Kennedy Center honor

By Greg Hernandez on gaynewsonline.com

Comedy icon Lily Tomlin has become the first out lesbian to be selected for the prestigious Kennedy Center Honors.

It was announced on 9 September that Tomlin will be honored in December alongside singer Al Green, actor Aaron Hanks, ballerina Patricia McBride, and singer-songwriter Sting.

Given annually since 1978, the Kennedy Center Honors have grown to become one of the most prestigious honors for any performer. They recognize living artists for lifetime contributions to American culture through the performing arts.

"From the days of their early television and theatrical appearances, Lily Tomlin has made us laugh and continues to amaze us with her acting talent and quick wit,” Kennedy Center Director David M. Rubenstein said in a statement. Tomlin rose to fame in the early 1970s on the comedy sketch show "Laugh-In" and has since gone on to conquer films and the Broadway stage. She was Oscar nominated for her performance in "Nashville" and has also starred in such films as "All of Me, Nine to Five, The Incredible Shrinking Woman, Flirting With Disaster, A Prairie Home Companion, Short Cuts and Big Business," among many others.


Tomlin, 75, is a newlywed after marrying longtime partner Jane Wagner last year. At the time of their wedding, the couple had been together for 42 years.

While Tomlin is the first out lesbian to be selected for the Kennedy Center Honors, several openly gay men have been honored, including singer-songwriter Sting, Edward Albee and Elton John.

Danish's new trans law may be best in world

By Jo Morgan on gaynewsonline.com

Denmark's gender recognition law went into effect the first week in September, and is being described as one of the best trans laws in the world.

The first in Europe of its kind, it is based on the self-determination of the individual. It abolishes any requirements for medical interventions, such as psychiatric diagnosis, sterilization or hormonal treatment.

Simply, all trans people must do is fill out a form and apply to receive a new social security number for their gender and matching personal documents such as a passport, driving license and birth certificate.

Margrethe Vestager, the Minister for Economics, said, “It will make life easier and more dignified for the individual, for example when you are asked for ID in shops. But some trans activists are not convinced.

“With some non-gender conforming and gender fluid people criticizing the lack of ‘third gender,’ others say there are other issues.

Transgender Europe said they were ‘concerned’ about the waiting period of six months, as well as the age requirement of 18 years. According to Danish lawmakers, this measure was introduced to prevent trans people from making hasty decisions they would later regret.

"However, this implied delay in the procedure prevents trans people from changing their documents quickly when necessary, for example when applying for a job, travelling internationally or enrolling in education," a spokesperson for TGEU said.

"Furthermore, TGEU is concerned that the waiting period may also perpetuate misconceptions of trans people as being ‘confused’ about their gender, instead of encouraging them to change their documents quickly so that they can participate fully and freely in all aspects of life."

They refer to the findings of WPATF, the leading organization on transgender health care, that say there are no legal or rational reasons to insist on limiting legal gender recognition of 18 and older.

“As trans people come out at an increasingly young age, it is crucial for the social recognition and acceptance of their identities, as well as for their self-esteem and personal development, that they are not excluded from legal recognition and, as a consequence, from education and employment opportunities,” TGEU said.

"TGEU encourages the Danish government to closely monitor the implementation of the law and to remove all provisions that delay quick access to legal gender recognition."

Stamps commemorating Finnish gay erotic artist Touko Laaksonen, who published his drawings under the name Tom of Finland, have been the biggest sellers in the history of Finland’s Posti postal service, with people pre-ordering the stamps in 178 countries. The stamps went on sale on Sept. 8, with the biggest overseas orders coming from Sweden, Britain, the United States and France.

An exhibition of Tom of Finland’s drawings and letters is being held in Tampere’s new postal museum to coincide with the release of the stamps and there were long queues outside the museum when the stamps began being sold there yesterday. The demand for the stamps has taken the postal service by surprise.

“We haven’t seen this kind of interest before in Posti’s history and we probably won’t again soon,” Posti development chief Markku Penttinen told Finnish news service Yle Uutiset.

Op/Ed: Anti-gay witchhunt continues at Catholic schools

By John M. Becker on The Bilerico Project

As regular Bilerico readers know all too well, Roman Catholic leaders in the United States are engaged in a massive, unholy crusade against LGBT civil rights. One of the primary fronts in the bishops’ bigoted battle is the nation’s Catholic schools, where gay and lesbian teachers are losing their jobs left and right for horrible offenses like coming out of the closet, getting engaged, or marrying the person they love.

Sadly, three recent examples show that that pattern continues unabated.

Cor Jesu Academy, an all-girls Catholic high school outside of St. Louis, Missouri, is facing a firestorm of criticism after administrators fired two lesbian faculty members, Olivia Reichert and Christina Gambaro. The couple married in New York this summer, and the school discovered their marriage after they say they received a copy of a mortgage application with both women’s names on it.

The school says the women violated the moral contract that faculty members are required to sign, pledging to live lives that are in compliance with Catholic teaching. But as the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reports, the couple is rightfully calling shenanigans: “We understand that, as a Catholic institution, Cor Jesu has an obligation to ensure that its employees serve as Christian role models. However, because they do not enforce the witness statement in any other way, this is a blatant case of discrimination,” Reichert wrote in a statement to the Post-Dispatch.

The terminations have caused an outcry among school alumnae, who’ve created a private Facebook support group that asks members to call and write letters of protest to Cor Jesu administrators. Unfortunately for the school, the move also comes in the midst of a major fundraising campaign to raise money for a new chapel, gym, student commons, and parking, and to pad its endowment fund. As a result of the firing of Reichert and Gambaro, some alumnae are ending their financial support of the school and urging others to do the same.

Unfortunately, the couple has no legal recourse, as it’s perfectly legal in Missouri to fire an employee based on sexual orientation. They’re handling the situation with grace and aplomb, telling the Post-Dispatch that they’re grateful for the time they had and the memories they made at Cor Jesu, and that they hope the kerfuffle will “guide the Catholic school system towards greater tolerance and acknowledgment of LGBTQ issues.”
In the Detroit suburb of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, a lesbian chemistry teacher was unceremoniously fired from her job at Marian High School last month after she notified administrators that she is pregnant. Webb says she had no doubts it was because of her “being pregnant and bringing pregnant outside the Catho-
lic way.”

CBS Detroit reports:

“Webb says she declared an offer to resign with health insurance, but without pay or other benefits, through the spring semester. "I really felt like resigning was a lie; to me, that was willingly leaving," Webb told the newspaper. "I was kind of compelled to just let people know the truth."

Webb hasn’t yet decided if she’ll pursue legal action against the school, but she said she wanted to stand up for change in the face of injustice.

“My job can’t be saved but the torment that the poor LGBT students at Marian must be feeling (right let’s be real they exist too) the other LGBT staff (again let’s be real people) and those that are silenced by fear can be helped,” Webb wrote in her post. “Speak out against hate wherever you see it.”

Webb said she valued her time at the high school, but she had to come out with what she sees as a human-rights issue. “This is definitely not a crusade about being gay. This is about the right to exist, to be who you are... I guess they’re only “pro-life” if your par-
corian mother and her wife – that’s exactly the bus in order to stick it to that child’s les-
Hate overcomes rule of law as Jamaican withdraws challenge to anti-sodomy law

The Associated Press reports:

A young Jamaican gay rights activ-
ist who brought an unprecedented legal challenge to the Caribbean island’s anti-
sodomy law has withdrawn the claim after growing fearful about violent backlashes, advocacy groups and colleagues said Aug. 25.

Last year, Jaghai started Aug. 28 and was set to run until June 29, 2014: There was a massive event was “nothing more than a ‘celebra-
October 8, 2013: A mob firebombed the abandoned building in Montego Bay which was the former home of murdered teen, Dwayne Jones, and where his sur-
viving friends continued to live. No one was arrested.

June 14, 2014: A mob attacked a young man at a shopping mall in May Pen, Clarendon because he was allegedly seen putting on lipstick.

June 29, 2014: There was a massive assault on the LGBT community in Kingston with alleg-
Bahasmas’ first Pride canceled due to death threats to organizers

The first gay pride event in the Baha-
mas was cut short after one of the event’s organizers received death threats on his Facebook page, reports the Nassau Guardian.

The Bahamas Pride Weekend, which started Aug. 28 and was set to run until Sept. 1, was “designed to inspire, edu-
cation and lead to the diversification of the Bahamian flag”

However, organizer Victor Rollins said he received the threats after he posted pictures of attendees holding pride flags along with Bahamian flags.

Rollins also said that only one LGBT person from the other event organizers, all of whom were foreigners.

He also indicated that local talk shows were particularly vocal in their opposi-
tion to the event. Many claimed that God would judge the Bahamas for allowing a gay pride event to take place.

According to The Bahama Journal, Dr. Myles Munroe, President of The Bahama Faith Ministries International, said that the fact that the LGBT community was officially given permission to host the event was “nothing more than a ‘celebra-
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Halloween History: the cycle of the seasons

By Susan Jordan

Halloween is coming up and once again the wheel of the seasons is turning. For millennia this has been the time when people believed, the veil between this world and the Otherworld grew thin and ghosts of one’s ancestors could return as ghastly guests, for that one night. People left food offerings for them or decorated somber with candles.

Halloween was also one of the special times during the year when LGBTQ people enjoyed the freedom to assume a hidden sexual orientation or gender identity. Many traditional folk festivals of the Christian era involved cross-dressing, defiance of the binary and reversal of the “normal” order of things – for instance, servants would pretend to be masters and vice versa. After the sacred days had passed, the usual rigid gender roles, sexual orientations and class hierarchies would be restored.

Ancient peoples, whether hunter/gatherers, pastoralists or farmers, saw the seasons as an eternal cycle – a cosmic spiral of life that turns inward to death and then outward again. As the earth turned back toward the sun, herds came up to mountain summer pastures and farmers planted crops. There were four Quarterly fire feasts in the Iron Age Celtic religion (which according to scholar Anne Ross suggested tombs with candles).

The Hag or Hagge (Gaelic caelbred), a blue-skinned Giantess, represented Winter and the death of the year at Samhain and she ruled the burial mounds – but she was also the goddess of wisdom with a magical life-giving Cauldron; a midwife and healer, and protector of children, young animals and the wilderness (the deer were her “cattle”). She brought winter by striking the ground with her staff, and in spring she either turned into a standing stone (that is, a megalith like a standing stone (that is, a megalith like a standing stone) or into the beautiful young Maiden – the Life Force that brings water, earth and air. Like the wise women and men of many Nature traditions today, her priority was protecting the people and all living beings. Have a Blessed Halloween!


(Ninth from page 13)

sex couples’ lawful marriages.

This is the first time the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has heard a freedom to marry case since holding in SmithKline Beecham Corporation v. Abbott Laboratories that discrimination based on sexual orientation requires heightened scrutiny – a presumption of unconstitutionality – by the courts.

Evan Wolfson, president of Freedom to Marry, released the following statement: “The 9th Circuit should swiftly move to do what all three other federal appellate courts ruling on marriage this year have done: require equal treatment under the law and uphold the freedom to marry. We clearly have momentum, but until marriage discrimination ends nationwide, families in states like Nevada and Idaho will continue to endure unjustified harm, indignity, and deprivation of constitutional rights.”

The decision by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals will have a direct effect on more than 12,400 same-sex couples estimated to be living in Nevada, Idaho, and Hawaii, including service member Rachael Robertson and her partner Amber Beiere. Robertson is a veteran and served in the Idaho National Guard, including a tour of duty in Kirkuk, Iraq. Since the Supreme Court struck down the core of the so-called Defense of Marriage Act in June 2013, 39 state and federal courts have upheld the freedom to marry, with only two courts ruling the other way. Every appellate ruling has been in favor of the freedom to marry, including the Utah and Oklahoma cases in the 10th Circuit, the Virginia case in the 4th Circuit, and the Vermont and Indiana cases in the 7th Circuit. Freedom To Marry

Circuit Panel eviscerates what’s left of anti-equality arguments

By Ati Ezra Waldman on towleroad.com

A soft-spoken attorney representing Idaho started his state’s anti-marriage equality argument by suggesting that allowing gays to marry violates the “bonding right” of children that they will be raised by their biological mothers and fathers.

It took Judge Marsha Berzon just 15 seconds to ask her first question: “What is that word you’re using before ‘right’?” Judge Berzon can hear just fine; it’s just that she had never heard anyone make such a ridiculous claim before. The rest of the hearing followed similarly.

Judge Stephen Reinhardt, a Carter appointee and liberal leader of the appellate courts, was joined by Judge Berzon, a sharp-minded progressive appointed by President Clinton, and Judge Robert Gould, another Clinton appointee, in a nearly two-hour long interrogation of attorneys from Idaho and Nevada that may not have been as bombastic as Judge Posner’s treatment of attorneys from Wisconsin and Indiana in the Seventh Circuit, a hearing which resulted in a marvelous unanimous victory (“Go figure!”), but was every bit as damaging to the forces opposed to marriage equality.

It also brought marriage equality full circle. Judge Reinhardt was the judge that wrote the first decision from a federal appellate court on marriage equality, affirming District Judge Vaughn Walker’s pioneering rejection of California’s Prop 8. We all know how that case turned out.

And we know what’s happened since: a Supreme Court decision in United States v. Windsor striking down the Defense of Marriage Act and a long streak of pro-marriage equality decisions from the lower federal courts, including several appellate courts.

Yesterday’s hearing reminded us how far we have really come. Some of the arguments and much of the tone were
different this time around. The judges’ questions were very much directed to a similar, though less visible, frustration with the misdirection and misleading statements from the anti-equality attorneys as Judge Posner. The tone of the hearing suggested that marriage equality supporters are finally out of the closet, followed a tidal wave of an emerging consensus of the legitimacy and monarity of marriage freedom for all.

This is not the first time marriage equality came before the Ninth Circuit. In fact, it was Judge Reinhardt who, along with two other judges, heard the appeal of the Prop 8 decision and after a delay involving the Supreme Court of California, issued a narrow decision affirming Prop 8 unconstitutional.

The decision was limited to California because it argued that the reason why Prop 8 was unconstitutional was not because banning gays from marrying in general violated the Equal Protection or Due Process Clauses, but rather because the taking away of rights, as Prop 8 did, after the California Supreme Court mandated equal marriage in In re Marriage Cases, violated the rights of gay Californians.

The decision’s narrowness was based on pretext-like reasoning, but makes sense in context: as I argued before, Judge Reinhardt wanted to offer the Supreme Court a way to support marriage equality without going too far ahead of public opinion.

Today, there is no such concern. It makes sense that the argument — and the decision — would want different things now.

Judge Berzon asked the most direct questions, sifting through the muck of Idaho’s nonsensical arguments about children needing to be raised by their biological moms and dads, but just ban gays from marrying. These are two very different and clearly unrelated things.

But the message of the man-woman marriage is that we need to create a stable bond that is in the best interests of the child, argued the Idaho attorney. “In marriages,” Judge Berzon wondered. How is it, she asked, supportive of stable marriages and a benefit to children to have them raised outside of supportive same-sex marriages rather than inside supportive same-sex marriages?

After several agonizing stutters: The worst thing the state can do to undermine the message of stability is to create something new — namely, “genderless marriage.” With that, Judge Berzon had had it. She called out Idaho on its argument that man-woman marriages provide the added benefit of complementary parenting skills and, an argument that is not only sexist and based on traditional notions that women nurture and men discipline, but also a completely unconstitutional basis for discrimination.

Federal Judge: Arizona must list widower on death certificate

On Sept. 12 a federal judge ruled that the state of Arizona must respect the marriage of military veterans Fred McQuire and George Martinez, for the purposes of being listed as married on a death certificate.

McQuire and Martinez were together for 45 years and married in California in July. Martinez passed away shortly after being diagnosed with Stage IV pancreatic cancer, and Arizona state officials refused to list McQuire, the surviving partner, on the death certificate. McQuire, who is also battling a life-threatening illness, is barred from receiving Social Security survivor’s benefits or veterans benefits, and is also at risk of losing his home, as a result of not being listed on Martinez’s death certificate.

Evon Wolfson, president of Freedom to Marry, released the following statement: ‘Couples in America should not have to play ‘now you’re married, now you’re not’ depending on which state they are in when a tragedy strikes, and states should not pick and choose which marriages they will respect and which they will not. In Arizona we did not pass a law or Constitutional protection protecting all of us. It is good that the court has ruled Arizona it may not with-hold accurate legal recognition or the surviving spouse in this compelling case, but Americans should not have to figure it out by case, state by state, year by year for the freedom to marry and equal protection that the Constitution guaran-tees. It’s time for the Supreme Court to take up one or more marriage cases and affirm the freedom to marry nationwide once and for all.”

Since the Supreme Court struck down the core of the so-called Defense of Marriage Act in June 2013, 39 state and federal courts have upheld the freedom to marry, with only two courts ruling the other way. Every appellate ruling has been in favor of the freedom to marry, including the Utah and Oklahoma cases in the 10th Circuit, the Virginia case in the 4th Circuit, and the Wisconsin and Indiana cases in the 7th Circuit.

Another older couple seeks marriage

From the editorial board of the Arizona Republic:

Marriage equality can sound like a political issue. It’s been the subject of intense courtroom drama. But to Beverly Sevcik and Mary Baranovich, it’s personal. It’s about whether the Constitution protects their individual rights. That’s why Baranovich said this week that the Supreme Court may be preparing to bring down the gavel on discriminatory laws.

It’s time the Supreme Court provided justice and clarity. Sevcik and Baranovich have been together for 42 years, and they’ve been reporters they’d up a set of marriage rings and official recognition of their commitment to each other. They wish to be able to state their love the same respect, dignity and legal recognition it gives “traditional” married couples, as Ninth Circuit Judge Mary S. Berzon said this week, a train that “has left the station.” Eventually laws that define marriage as purely a heterosexual privilege will be swept away. It is wrong to write discrimination into law.

But timing matters. Sevcik is 76 and Baranovich is 78. To them — and many, many other couples like them — this is more than a legal and philosophical argument. It’s central to their lives. They need the Supreme Court to speak up for their individual constitutional rights.

Chase Caplepper

Lawsuit defends trans teen told to remove makeup for driver’s license photo

In March, 16-year-old South Carolina resident Chase Caplepper was told by the state’s Department of Motor Vehicles to remove the makeup he wears on a daily basis, otherwise he would not be allowed to take his driver’s license photo.

The DMV employees claimed that he did not “look the way a boy should” and was not allowed to wear a “disguise” in his photo as he needed to “look male.”

Chase was removed as much makeup as he could so he could get his license but reported feeling humiliated after the incident.

In June, the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund (TLDEF) stepped in and sent a request to the DMV, asking that Chase be allowed to re-take his photo with the make-up he wears every day. That request was unanswered. Now, the organization has filed a federal suit on Chase’s behalf.

“All — brought by Chase’s mother Teresa Caplepper on his behalf as a minor — asks the court to rule that denying Chase freedom of choice to display his makeup in his license photo constitutes sex discrimination and violates his right to privacy and equal protection under the United States Constitution. It also seeks a ruling under the U.S. and South Carolina Constitutions that the DMV’s photo policy is unconstitutionally vague, too broad, and less DMV employees arbitrate, any gender non-conforming person to look like they think a boy should look like. The court should look out, without regard for the rights of the people they are supposed to serve.”

“Clothing and makeup reflect who I am,” Chase said. “The Department of Motor Vehicles has made me feel like I am different. They forced me to remove my makeup simply because my appearance does not match what they think a boy should look like. I just want the freedom to be who I am without the DMV telling me I’m something I’m not.”

Read more: http://www.wtoleroad.com/FixzaMC5f3En2
Melanie Guid-May has had two bouts with breast cancer. Recently she and her partner Debs, and Prof. Nan Vandenburg of the University of Miami and Rochester's Breast Cancer Coalition, spoke with The Empty Closet about resources for women and about the top risk factors for most lesbians, bi women, trans men and women and genderqueer individuals.

Melanie said, “I had two different breast cancers. The first when I was 25 in Chicago. I hadn’t had a mammogram, and I found a sore spot in my breast. I then got a mammogram. It was in a very early stage. I had a lpectomy and radiation.”

“The important thing about this story is the social support. Lesbians with cancer are likely to get more support from friends than from their biological families, for a variety of reasons, such as their families disowning them. Lesbians need to find support from other lesbians. Bi women tend to have worse outcomes than lesbians or heterosexual women, since they may be ostracized by both groups.”

She identified the basic risk factors. “The most important thing to focus on is that lesbians have more risk factors for breast cancer than heterosexual women, so it’s very important that they know the factors and are mindful of ways to keep themselves from being at risk.”

“The first factor is null parity – not having children. This is a risk because 70 percent of all breast cancer is fed by estrogen. Women who have given birth and who have breast fed have less exposure to estrogen. Women who get their periods early in life or who go through menopause later, are at greater risk.”

“FTM trans men still have risk for breast cancer, and so do MTF trans women who take estrogen. FTM people may take too much testosterone, and it mutates into estrogen. “Another risk factor is body mass. Lesbians have a higher body mass than heterosexuals, and fat, or adipose tissue, produces estrogen.”

“The third factor is alcohol. For those who drink, drinking high quantities of alcohol not only increases fat, but also a biochemical phenomenon causes alcohol, when metabolized, to increase estrogen. Tobacco is also high risk for cervical cancer – and lesbians smoke more.”

“The fifth factor is not getting screened. No mammograms, no clinical breast exams. This is a problem because lesbians and women with non-traditional gender presentation may feel uncomfortable or afraid in typical ‘pink’ environments at breast clinics. Other issues include not having financial resources for health care – hopefully that has changed with Obama-care – and the fear of coming out to care-givers. That’s one of the main barricades to LBT women getting health care.”

Melanie said she got most support, after leaving Chicago and LCCP, from her church, Lake Avenue Baptist, and Debs added that they had received support from the Episcopal church as well. And they both emphasized the importance of the help they had received from the Breast Cancer Coalition. “The one on one counseling was very helpful,” Melanie said.

Prof. Vandenburg said she would be willing to facilitate a lesbian/bi/trans cancer support group here in Rochester. She noted, “We want women to know they have a resource that can provide peer support on things like how to deal with radiation side effects.”

“The primary message is, be aware of your risks and take action. Exercise, eat more fruits and vegetables, be moderate in drinking and get screened.”

Melanie said, “There are healthy choices we can make, but we also live in a toxic environment. Educate yourself about environmental factors! Until we start talking about them, cancer will be just a personal problem – but it is a POLITICAL ISSUE. We as lesbians need to be aware of that. What’s happening to the earth is happening to US.”

Local resources
In the kitchen

By Susan Jordan

Paul Hoffman knows a lot about cooking and about food. He told The Empty Closet, “My family was in the restaurant business. I was the third of four generations in the business. The restaurant was north of Albany and had a very imaginative name – Hoffman’s!”

“My dad assumed I’d take over but I said no thanks. Dealing with personnel issues seemed overwhelming. I was interested in dentistry and have been a dentist since 1977, when I graduated from dental school.”

Paul loves to cook though, and is in the Men’s Cooking Group. He said, “It’s in my blood. I knew what it was all about – a lot of people get into the business without knowing what they’re getting into. Cooking is a passion that has never left me. It’s relaxing. I find it extremely creative. Cooking for friends is great.”

One enjoyable aspect of cooking as a hobby is all the shopping. “I enjoy going grocery shopping and to specialty stores,” Paul said. “I think Wegman’s is wonderful; there are a lot of choices. It’s also safe in that Wegman’s presents good quality. I have this other peculiarity: when I was in the business, I’d have to accept or refuse stock. I got used to inspecting food very closely.”

Paul enjoys different cuisines from around the world, but doesn’t always try to replicate them, although he enjoys experimenting. “The first time I went to an Indian restaurant I was in awe,” he said. “I find there are great Chinese and Indian restaurants locally, so I think I’m better off going there than trying to cook their food.”

“I like to cook short-order things, looking in the cupboard and seeing what I should use up. Being creative and finding ways to use the ingredients.”

Paul does a lot of traveling with his partner, and has had close encounters with tigers (chained) and scorpions (crawling on his shoulders; they didn’t sting). He said, “We go almost every year to Thai-Land and branch out from there. I’ve traveled through Asia and Europe and a little bit in South and Central America, I do like to check out the local foods. I have a Vietnamese partner, so I’m familiar with Southeast Asian food – although he usually leaves the cooking to me! Vietnamese and Thai cooks deal a little more with fresh herbs than Chinese cooks, although they use herbs too.”

Locally Paul seeks out innovative restaurants. He notes, “I love Rocco’s, which they use herbs too.”

“Rocco’s is a Vietnamese restaurant, Pho Duong Dong, at 182 Onzora. Paul’s Eggplant Stew

This is a variation on French Rata-

touille or Italian Caponata. It’s a versatile side dish, main dish, a topping for pasta, or even a filling for an omelet. It takes advantage of wonderfully fresh vegetables and always seems more delicious than just a sum of its parts.

1 large Onion, diced
1 Green Bell Pepper, diced
1-2 Stalks Celery, diced
3 Cloves Garlic, minced
1/3 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
2 Medium Eggplants, peeled and cut into 1 inch cubes
1 - 28 ounce can Chopped Tomatoes
1-2 Bay Leaves
Few sprigs Fresh Thyme or ½ tsp dried Thyme
1/2 tsp Cinnamon
3 Whole Cloves
1 tsp grated Orange or Tangerine Rind
2 tsp Capers
1/2 tsp Crushed Red Pepper Flakes
2 tsp Salt +/- to taste
Few grinds of Fresh Black Pepper
Place the first five ingredients in a large frying pan on the stovetop over medium low heat, stirring from time to time until the vegetables are soft and wilted but not brown. Add the eggplant to the mixture and cook it until it’s soft. Add the remaining ingredients and bring the stew to a simmer over medium heat. Simmer for about 20 minutes. Taste for seasoning and correct to taste.

This dish is open to countless variations. It is vegan and delicious as is, but can become a hearty main dish with the addition of browned ground beef, pork or sausage. It’s even better the next day.

Increasingly people are turning away from processed foods and seeking out genetically organic produce – not all supermarket food labeled “organic” really is. Kelly said, “We’ve gone all organic because number one, it’s good for our health. Mom and I have immune system disorders that are complicated by the chemicals we ingest from the world around us. We can’t control the quality of the air we breathe or the chemicals in food at the grocery store. I can’t grow organic meat on my property, but I can grow organic fruits and vegetables – and that’s much less expensive than buying them even at a farmer’s market. I know 100 percent what goes into my food because I put it there!”

Kelly grows the following vegetables: corn, green beans, five types of tomatoes, broccoli, peppers, purslane, two kinds of winter squash, summer squash, herbs, cucumbers, celery, red and white potatoes, asparagus, cauliflower, two kinds of peas, beets, tomatoes, carrots, sweet potatoes and seven kinds of leafy greens. She also grows amaranth, a type of grain, but hasn’t tried eating it yet. As for fruit, her garden includes an apple tree, raspberries, strawberries and blueberries. She freezes as much as possible so as to have organic vegetables all winter; she has yet to experiment with canning. She noted, “I make sun dried tomatoes in my oven and then freeze them. And I freeze mass quantities of tomato and tomatillo sauce. We make basil pesto and freeze it in ice cube trays.”

Right now a big project is learning to grow vegetables in alternative ways, i.e. on the patio or windowill or in the house under a grow light. Kelly explains, “In my Two Spirit community, more and more people I know have found out they have cancer. In the past couple of years we’ve lost two of our Two Spirit medicine people. Another elder dear to us nationwide is now struggling with cancer.”

“Native people are losing their elders faster than we can learn what they have to teach us. In the Two Spirit community, our elders are even more valuable to us because our community is so small. People in the cities live in food deserts – if they don’t have a car they have to depend on fast food, the corner quickie-mart or the bodega. They would love to grow their own food but don’t have space. So I want to experiment – will try to use small, inexpensive grow lights in my house this winter. If I can figure this out, I can share the information with other folks.”

In the organic garden: Kelly Baumgartner. Photo: Susan Jordan

In the organic garden: Kelly Baumgartner

Kelly Baumgartner is an organic urban farmer and artist. She is partly of Cherokee descent and is a member of the NE Two Spirit Society, a group for LGBTQ Native Americans, which will have its annual meeting in Salamanca this month.

Kelly lives in the 19th Ward with her mother and started her organic garden when she moved there nine years ago. She said, “I had an organic garden growing up – for some years we were vegetarians and so we grew our own vegetables and fruit.”

She deals with pests organically and feels it’s better to have slightly lower yield than high yield full of chemicals. “I fertilize with organic compost that I buy or make myself, from kitchen and yard scraps. I don’t buy compost from farms but from an organic plant and soil dude,” she said.

Increasingly people are turning away from processed foods and seeking out gen-
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No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey — you are welcome here.
20th century trans* history

By Evelyn Bailey

This month Shoulders to Stand On continues with the history of Transgender men and women as they came to the fore in the 20th century.

From 1900–1914, a cross-dressing Carnival Group in the North of England was recorded by filmmakers Mitchell and Kenyon, in which all the men dressed as women and judging by the crowd’s reaction, it was found perfectly acceptable.

In 1910 Magnus Hirschfeld coined the term “transvestite” which referred to the sexual interest in cross-dressing.

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In 1910 Magnus Hirschfeld coined the term “transvestite” which referred to the sexual interest in cross-dressing.
Growing Up

By Eric Bellmann

"What will we do without 'Fash-
ion Police'? There are only a few sure-thing
no-go-to programs these days, but the show
veg out in front of the TV; endless
reruns of "Law and Order", "Project Runway" or whatever is
ON HGT,

You can be venustuous and con-
sider "Dating Naked" or "Botched" but
they wear thin in my sad world and there's no
thing matching "Fashion Police".

And there she was, her plumpness
obscured by mostly black clothes light-
shaped by a swath of fur and clunky
jewels. Visuals were beside the point. It
was the words, the stories, the timesh-
ly comments that fascinated viewers.
Me, yes. Sally, that paragon of well
dressed Southern gentility, yep. And you?
Most folks my age found her distasteful. But as
Joan would say, "Oh, grow up!"

It's been a hard season for Robin Williams.
I had to shut my mouth and avert my eyes. I
loathed him. His needless
creeped me out. I avoided his movies
like the plague.

Yes, he was adorable as Mork and a few
early movies were great: "The
Hudson" and "Good Morning
Vietnam". Eventually his work became a blur.
Always, always interspersed with lines:
rough forever shining into schtick. He sucked
the air out of the room. In his passing, he
had gloriously displayed the absurd, the
blank, a rarity. I had seen her on Broad-
way in "Applause". She won a couple of Totes. She was the quintessential New
Yorker, kind to taxi drivers, pleasant to
clerks, untroubled by tourists when she
walked her dog outside the Dakota.

Bacall made it to 89. Williams was 63.
And there she was, her plumpness
always "Family Feud". But nothing
is always "Family Feud". The popes
of me under 60 have a clue who she was.)
I have plenty of material from days
gone by, saved boxes of letters. I have
Grandma Olive's Day Books. Grand-
pa Carlisle's annotated, handmade cook-
books. Boxes of old and photos. My
journals, 1962 through yesterday. I am
also gathering poetry seeds using my cur-
rent events (less action-packed than days
of yore). And from my older-ness point of view, I am in a slump. The busyness in my
bird-yard and bustle in my brain.

At least once a year. Temp. 80, humidity
always 98%. Joan would say, "Oh, grow up!
"It's the obtuse refer to Joan Rivers as a gay
icon. What is a gay icon? The writers say
we rally around women who are survivors (might
be a little too mild). Like that sort of right at
least for dolphins like myself! God alone
knows what the under $50 value.
What approach do they have for resilience/
perseverance?

At a Thanksgiving party several years ago
I write about my favorite Joan.

"Well, it's always had a book nearby. We read after
school, monthly, I scoop-up
MeredithElizabethReiniger@gmail.com

Cleaning My Closet
BACK WHEN, HERE NOW

By Meredith
Elizabeth Reiniger

My 1998 plans for retirement were
simple. Each day would read. Smoke
pot and eat cup-
cakes. Cheese dou-
dles, popcorn,
milk chocolate truffles, thickly-buttered
cranberry muffins, plump-ripened plums, whole pancakes, potato chips with
without dip. I did none of that. Of
Okay, maybe the pie.

When I was a kid I tried, unsuccess-
fully, to empty my head. Said to my
self, "Write". Until now. Amended it: "OK, NOW I will start my
stop-thinking test-run. Rather quickly I
realized my bag was stuffed tight. I
found stuck in on-position.

So have I lived with this dizzying-busy world. A few years back, I
attended a creative writing
workshops, cramming schedules, reviews and regrets, monitors and marvels. Ah, my
dear, old, wrinkly gray thing. It is constantly
streaming down as a sludge.
From that flow, monthly. I scoop-up about
a thousand words and dump them
into an empty closer. I know for sure that
more lard won't make it stop. Absolutely,
writing has been one of my major
retirement chair-exercises.

When I turned 70 (turned: arrived
roling over instead covered up for),
my past began percolating to the
surface. I thought I should write about those
words while I could. I started calling fuscating
recollections, penning them into my
every-present journal, and then stacking folders into a stuffed-up shoebox.

Knowing that I always need an audi-
ence, I emailed my email to my friends, relatives (by blood? yees?) This led to a new project,
Letters to My Sister. I am creating a col-
green, joie de vivre. I hope you're for-
joyed, hey, I'll whip-off seventy poemed
chronicles and have them ready for Leslie's 80th birthday. Reality-altered date is 2016.

I have plenty of material from days
gone by, saved boxes of letters. I have
Grandma Olive's Day Books. Grand-
pa Carlisle's annotated, handcrafted
cookbooks. Boxes of old and photos. My
journals, 1962 through yesterday. I am
also gathering poetry seeds using my cur-
rent events (less action-packed than days
of yore). And from my older-ness point of view, I am in a slump. The busyness in my
bird-yard and bustle in my brain.

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Faith Matters
A GAY ICON GONE

By Rev. Irene
Maurice

You either loved Joan Rivers or you
dared her.

Her stand-up red carpet caracals, and colorful
over-the-top outlandish insinuation, shock humor, ribaldy, just name a few of her
work styles. Or, as was as lethal
as it was legend.

For example, for commenting on a 2013
Super Bowl commercial model Heidi Klum, Razors — uninfiltered and unembellished—stated the
following: "If you don't like either of them
her bow was when they were pushing Iowa into the
oven, get you read that correctly.

"When some groups complained the
comment was anti-Semitic, she retorted
that the only people who had a right to
complain were Nazis," the New York
Times reported.

"Rivers not only used the word ‘tran-
sy,’ which many transgender people
find offensive, but she used it (in 2014)
to describe Michelle Obama, and then
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made her an icon. Rivers’ time, energetic, contribution, action and love for the LGBTQ community made her a hero. The self-proclaimed “Queen of the Gays” thanked us every chance she got.

“My gay fans have been wonderful from day one,” Rivers told The Advocate just past May 1. “I remember when I was working at the Duplex in Greenwich Village in New York at the beginning of my career and the one time someone would laugh at my jokes the gay were guys. I think if I had started out in straight clubs and bars I never would have gotten anywhere.” Her embrace of us goes back decades.

In the 1990s Rivers used her talk show “The Joan Rivers Show,” as a vehicle to promote both unabashedly and unapologetically LGBTQ visibility in the media.

In the fight to legalize marriage equality in New York State Rivers offered her celebrity endorsement, stating, “All New Yorkers believe in fairness, that’s why we should support marriage equality. For good sales, come on guys.” And when New York State legalized same-sex nuptials, Rivers, as an ordained minister in New York State, happily offered to play the role — that’s what I knew.”

In 2014, during the same-sex marriage debate in New York, Rivers went out of her comfort zone and belted out an entire “You’re so old you fart dust!”

Rivers’ transition to a woman. Playing opposite the then 81-year-old and 80-year-old Barbra Streisand and Julie Andrews in “The Mirror Has Two Faces” was one of the selling points that helped the film become a box office hit.

Rivers was a loud, brash, irreverent Phi Beta Kappa Barnard College grad who mastered her craft well. This 81-year-old nipped-and-tucked caustic comedian was a cause célèbre that would be greatly missed by many.

RIP

**What’s Bothering Brandon?**

**By Brandon W. Brooks**

Being a native of Rochester, I have come to know, like many of you, that we inhabit a city steeped in history.

We are not the countryside — a void that most people believe us to be — but rather a place of vast changes going on in their internal landscape.

Trans* people are also used to negative reactions from cisgender culture to their identity and expressions. Intense scrutiny of the private aspects of a person’s life can leave one feeling as though the questioner is preparing for some form of personal attack. Probing into highly personal matters often leaves people feeling vulnerable, especially if they don’t know who else is listening, or have no control over who will learn the details.

Also, it’s not the most interesting thing about most transgender people. One thing that I’ve learned is that everyone that you pass on the street has a fascinating tale to tell of their lives. For trans* people, while their transition may influence and be a part of that story, it is rarely the central focus of their life for very long. Many trans* people have reached a comfortable place in presentation and expression, would prefer to leave the intense discomfort that this “second puberty” can cause behind. They want to pursue their interests and live their lives like any other human being.

It is possible to be supportive or responsive while observing and encouraging the same etiquette that would be expected for any highly personal situation.

For cisgender readers, please take this into account when interacting with transgender friends or relatives — if they don’t bring up aspects of their transition, it’s safest to assume that their transition is very visible or casual. Otherwise, please be firm with those who push and want to know more than you are willing to provide — enabling them in this pursuit encourages the idea that the public is entitled to know the most intimate details of our lives.

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be. We are the “Burnt-Over District” of New York State. We are that part of the state that New York City dwellers don’t understand; the part that is (thankfully) abstracted from all the commotion of our downstate neighbors. We have the Fox sisters, and we talk to dead people. We understand the difference between the woods “woods” and “forest”, the difference between “overcast” and “light pollution.” We have hard hearts, and even harder winters. One might even say one causes the other.

As most of my readers are already aware, I am a huge fan of Mt. Hope Cemetery; that sprawling 96-acre stretch of rare High Victorian architecture, beautifully undisturbed eskers, kettles and grottos in the south east of our fair city. Over my years of walking its paths, speaking with friends, and scouring the Internet, I have come across many accumulated rumors, ghost stories, and accounts of strange happenings taking place within Mt. Hope’s stone walls. A history written in stone and zinc I truly could not resist. Being that it is now officially October, and therefore Halloween Time, I found it apropos to share with you, dear readers, what I have discovered and have verified by the current president of The Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery, Marilyn Nolte.

For those of you who do not know, The Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery is a wonderful organization founded in 1980, dedicated to preserving the history and cultural potency that is Mt. Hope Cemetery, for all of Rochester. It remains a staunch defender of the cemetery’s resting residents, meticulous historical archives, and gorgously exceptional High Victorian structural design – an organization after my own heart. They have successfully restored the Moorish-style Gazebo, the cast-iron Florentine fountain, and countless other monuments and memorials throughout the cemetery. The list (which can be found in their detailed archives) goes on...

When I met with Nolte I had several questions, stories, rumors and reports to be answered and verified. I chose the most interesting to report in this column, namely information concerning The Fandango tower, and whether or not Mt. Hope possessed catacombs or any sort of tunnel system. I also asked after the reported satanic activities that have taken place at Mt. Hope, specifically concerning the missing skull of Civil War General Elisha G. Marshall.

Calling and leaving a message for President Nolte concerning these rather unassuming inquiries, I assumed would not result in the interview for which I longed. However, I was quite pleased and excited to receive a phone call from President Nolte confirming a meeting time, only the next day. I was welcome in my query, and was made to feel that I could ask almost anything.

I met with President Nolte on a rainy Tuesday evening, although there was sadly neither thunder nor lightning involved. Entering the northern gatehouse, our meeting began in earnest. I related to President Nolte the numerous stories I have heard over the years about the cemetery, its history and more recent rumors concerning vandalism, and even grave robberies.

My first question concerned an edifice that once stood tall over Mt. Hope’s highest summit; The Fandango. The Fandango was an observation tower that allowed its visitors a clear view of the city of Rochester, as well as the Genesee River emptying into Lake Ontario. This tower, removed in the late 19th century, has a strange history involving what is now known as The Rochester Mirage.

Early one April morning, visitors to the tower were shocked by the sight afforded to them. It appeared as if the landscape of Rochester had been dramatically altered beyond immediate recognition. It was soon determined that what was being witnessed was not Rochester at all, but in fact the shore of Canada over 50 miles away. Witnesses described being able to see trees, buildings and other minute details of Canada in vivid detail, as if Canada’s shore were a mere hundred feet away.

Most chalk up this strange, day-long phenomenon to Fata Morgana: a distortion where extreme atmospheric temperature inversions can result in optical illusions. President Nolte confirmed not only that The Fandango tower actually existed (and was wooden in composition), but that the so-called Rochester Mirage truly took place as well. Further Internet research also confirmed this happening. Unfortunately I was unable to discover any images of The Fandango tower; however President Nolte assured me that Mt. Hope’s extensive archives possessed such a thing. How delightful indeed!

My next inquiry, I must admit, was my most pressing; were there truly catacombs or some sort of tunnel system running through Mt. Hope Cemetery? Now I must say, with America being so young, I did not presume that catacombs existed at Mt. Hope, being that we have never run out of burial space. However I did not entirely quell this hope, and asked after this burning question nonetheless. President Nolte smiled, and denied that Mt. Hope possessed such a gem as catacombs. The many crypts and mausoleums, she was sure to add, do sometimes run deeply underground, as well as into hillludes and eskers.

Possibly sensing my disappointment (I do love a good subterranean intrigue), President Nolte did confirm the existence of an underground tunnel system that runs under the northern portion of Mt. Hope, near the original chapel and Florentine fountain. I was at the edge of my seat at this point. But alas, this tunnel system works as a method of continually draining water from the land, which would soon turn back into swampland without the tunnels. These tunnels run underneath Mt. Hope, due west for the Genesee River, where they empty.

One of my last questions concerned a report of an event that took place in June of 2000; the desecration of the tomb of Civil War General Elisha G. Marshall. General Marshall, ennobled alongside his first wife, served in the American Civil War for the union, of course. His burial site, an aboverground tomb adorned with a bushel of wheat, was broken into and his body scattered in a strange, reportedly satanic ritual of sorts. Most likely due to a group of college-aged dilettantes with a bone to pick (no pun intended), this act resulted sadly in General Marshall’s skull never being recovered, which remains missing to this day. President Nolte did confirm these happenings, the still-missing skull of General Marshall, and the vandalism that took place to both his person and tomb. She did not, however, confirm that this act was in any way satanic in nature.

Before we parted ways, I asked President Nolte one last question: had she ever seen anything out of the ordinary, specifically ghosts. She smiled politely, and confirmed my curiosity by stating that she had never experienced anything odd or unnerving during her work with Mt. Hope Cemetery, Darm.

Overall, I found President Nolte to be a vault of information (a willing one at that) and such a good sport. I left with many of my questions answered, but with so many more to investigate. I hope my readers can find the time to explore Mt. Hope Cemetery (also a beautiful arborium) this autumn season, before the snows of winter encumber your easy passage from the world of living to that of the dead. Who knows, perhaps you may find more than just stones waiting for you there.

Questions, comments or critique? Please feel free to e-mail the author at brandonb@gayalliance.org!
CNY LGBTQ CHILD WELFARE COALITION

The Central New York LGBTQ Child Welfare Coalition presents Foster Families: A Mini-Fair for Building Foster/Adoptive Families and Allies, on Nov. 1, from 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., at Park Central Preby-"tarian Church, 504 E. Fayette St., Syracuse 13204.

LGBTQ youth are disproportionately represented in foster care, current foster/adoptive families and youth involved with the child welfare system. This conference is open to prospective foster/adoptive families, current foster/adoptive families and youth involved with the child welfare system. Established in November 2012, the Coalition has 20 active members, and meets bi-monthly in Syracuse.

DIGNITY-INTERNATIONAL

On Oct. 1, we will celebrate the first ever TAGR Trans Halloween dance. This is a social event for the trans community in Rochester. We are very pleased to be partnering with Rainbow SAGE for this event. On Oct. 1 at 6 p.m. we will all converge at the Open Arms Community in Rochester.

We get ready to celebrate our 39th anniversary on October 12. We'll start with a Second Sunday Liturgy of the Word and then it is off to dinner at a local restaurant. Reservations are needed by Oct. 7 and all are welcome to join us. For more information, events and times, please check out our website at www.rnytg.org and join us in design -ing theDreamer.org and join us in designing the future, please register at: www.AwakeningTheDreamer.com.

On Dec. 6, we will start our celebration of the holiday with Cocoa, Cookies and Games. We will be singing traditional Carols around the piano while exchanging gifts and enjoying some hot cocoa. We also want to remind parents that it is time to start the transition process.

We are going to continue to host our annual Thanksgiving Potluck with members of Trans Alliance of Greater Rochester, SAGE, PFLAG and the Gay Alliance Youth of Western New York.

ROMANS

The summer is unofficially over... so what's next?

The ROMANS (Rochester Male Naturists) will move all naked fun indoors, that's what we'll do. Our September meeting happened on the last weekend of the month to give our members time to "recover" from their exciting summer activities and Labor Day weekend madness.

From October on, over the winter months and in addition to our regular monthly meetings, we will join Naturist Rochester at their monthly nude swims at a gymnasium and the occasional Men Only Swims in a private home. Details will be posted in the nude swim page of our website.

If you are interested in social nudity in the Rochester and Twin Areas and would like to get together with like-minded nudists in an all male environment, the ROMANS may be the right group for you. ROMANS is a social club for gay and gay-friendly male nudists (or naturists) over 21. For more information, please check out our website at www.wny-nromans.com. You can also contact the ROMANS at message line 585-281-4964, by E-mail wny-nromans@yahoo.com, or by regular mail at PO Box 92293, Rochester, NY 14692.

SAPPHIC SINGLES ROCHESTER

Sapphic Singles – a meet-up group for professional lesbian women in and around the Rochester area – meets the third Saturday of each month at an upscale restaurant for a singles social dinner.

This group is for professional LGBT women who reside in and around the Rochester area. Sapphic Singles hosts monthly social events and dinners at various upscale restaurants around the Rochester area so that women can meet other professional-like-minded LGBT people. This group is open to all LGBT women, including deaf and LGBT men.

The cost is $5 per year (this helps with meet-up fees). The first month is free. For more information, event dates and times, please contact our meet-up group here: http://www.meetup.com/Sapphic-Singles-Rochester/

Email: sapphicinglesetsro@gmail.com
Phone: 585.313.3037
LIKE us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Sapphic-Sin-gles531257381227755

TRANS ALLIANCE OF GREATER ROCHESTER

Our regularly scheduled Planning Group meeting is on Saturday, Oct. 11. Come to the meeting to hear what’s going on and being planned! Please come with your ideas and suggestions. We need all of our members’ support for all these things we want to do.

Then on Wednesday, Oct. 1 we will have “Being Trans... Being Healthy... Being Aware: the elevated health and cancer risks of being Trans” from 7-9 p.m. The presenters will include Dr. Sha-nay Pennington, FACP and Dr. U. R, who is a member of WPATH World Professional Association for Transgender Health (we’re told that her presentation is amaz- ing – it brings a wider perspective including information on long-term hormone use for other Trans groups).

Our other presenters are Patrick Fisher of Us Too, a prostate survivors support group and Kris Bullock, Director of the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester. They will have information on the local breast cancer survivor support groups for prostate and breast cancer.

According to a survey of over 6,450 transgender and gender non-conforming study participants done by the National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force par-ticipants reported that when they were sick or injured, many postponed medical care due to discrimination (28 percent) or inability to afford it (48 percent). 19 per-cent reported being refused medical care due to their transgender or gender non-conforming status, with even higher numbers among people of color in the survey. This report is a percent of the sample reported having to teach their medical providers about transgender care.

Plan on coming and learn what you can do to keep yourself from being one of these statistics. This event will be at the Open Arms Community Center 707 East Main Street almost across the street from Delta Sonic. There is plenty of park-ing in front and to the side of the building.

On Saturday, Oct. 5 from 1-5 p.m. we will be holding the meeting of the Groups IV “Return to Rochester” when a number of the upstate and beyond trans groups got together to recognize, talk about what is going on in their communities and plan for the future for us in New York State.

This meeting will actually be in the same place where the first “Meeting of the Groups” happened way back in 2012. We will have people talking about sev- eral events happening for the Trans com-munity in Rochester.

Then after a break for some dinner we will convene the Open Arms Community Center at 7 p.m. for the first ever TAGR Trans Halloween dance party. Entrance will be $5 per person ($3 for presale tickets and $4 for presale tickets for those who purchase presale tickets and come in costume). A raffle ticket will be provided for those who purchase presale tickets and come in costume. There will be prizes (including a raffle, a costume contest and DANCING!)

Trans... invisible and silent no lon- ger... invisible and silent no more...

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SENSITIVE TO LGBT ISSUES
LGBT EXPERIENCED CLINICIAN

585-325-5100
Rainbow Theatre Festival tackles God in 3 plays

Bread & Water Theatre tackles many challenging topics in its theatre productions and its annual Rainbow Theatre Festival is no exception. Over the course of one month, the theatre will be exploring themes of sexuality and religion through three plays of outstanding merit.

These plays are The jeweler’s Shop by Karol Wojtyła (Pope John Paul II), God of Vengeance by Sholom Asch and Confessions of a Nightingale written by Charlotte Chandler and Ray Stricklyn, based on actual conversations with Tennessee Williams.

Rainbow Theatre Festival 2014 will be presented at 172 West Main St., Rochester, October 24 and running through November 24. Friday and Saturday performances are at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday performances are at 2 p.m. Single ticket ranges from $8-$24 and may be purchased at BreadandWaterTheatre.org. No patron will be turned away for an inability to pay. For more information, call (585) 271-5522.

Love is “one of the greatest dramas of human existence” writes Karol Wojtyla, the man better known as Pope John Paul II. In this illuminating three-act play he explores the joys — and the perils — of love and marriage. The action unfolds in two settings at once: a street in a small town, outside the local jeweler’s shop, and the mysterious inner landscape of personal hopes and fears, loves and longings. Karol Wojtyla, Pope John Paul II — had long been involved with the theater. As a student of literature, then priest, he was a bishop and archbishop, he acted, directed, wrote dramatic criticism, made a Polish standard periodical, Oedipus Rex, and authored six plays. Bread & Water’s production of this new English version of the original intensions of the text includes gay, lesbian, and gender non-conforming characters.

Performances: Oct. 24, 25 at 7:30 p.m.; Oct. 26 at 2 p.m.

Sholom Asch’s 1906 play has been reinvented and in the process was transformed from a classic morality tale into a drama of fierce power. Rivkele is the daughter of a brothel owner promised in marriage to a respected scholar. Manke is the father’s most desired prosti- tute. Against all odds they fall in love, but his profession costs him his happiness.

Performances: Oct. 31, Nov. 1, 2 and 8 at 7:30 p.m.; Nov. 2 at 2 p.m.

Lend Me a Tenor

When Michael Gamil- la, Chair of the Programming Committee for ImageOut, began working with the festi- val 12 years ago, the terrain was much different. For the most part, the festival was the only place where many LGBT films could be seen. But with chang- es in the industry and newer streaming services like Netflix, viewing LGBT films has become more mainstream, particularly for younger audiences.

The current challenge is to offer something unique to attract people to attend the festival. “At ImageOut, we try very hard to keep it relevant,” Gamilla said. The mission of ImageOut is to bring high quality arts and culture to Rochester. Part of that mission is ImageOut introduces film lovers of any sexual ori- entation experience is seeing how other cultures. Part of the learn- ing experience is seeing how different. For the most part, ImageOut has grown significantly in 22 years, with a membership of 425 people under 21.

“The Jeweler’s Shop” continues page 28

“The Circle” continues page 28
Gay Alliance co-hosts “Out at Geva” affinity nights this season

New for the 2014-2015 season, Geva has inaugurated “affinity” performances – designated performances that allow members of the community to see a show, share their experience and meet other like-minded arts enthusiasts.

Affinity nights this season sometimes include a pre- or post-show reception in the price of a ticket. Besides being a fun way to network, these performances give patrons the chance to visit before the show and to talk about the performances with other attendees.

The performances are Good People: Oct. 21-25, a play written with the Gay Alliance, is the LGBTQ community’s perfect way to make new friends or catch up with old ones while enjoying Rochester’s finest theatre. A free, pre-show reception gives the chance to visit before the show and to talk about the performances with other attendees.

Patrons will need to mention “Out at Geva” when reserving tickets for these performances. Their name will then be included on a guest list for the free reception. Subscriptions are available as well for these performances.

Danny Hoskins to head Blackfriars Theatre

Blackfriars Theatre (Blackfriars) welcomes Danny Hoskins as its new Artistic Director and Managing Director of the organization.

Mr. Hoskins inherits the position from Blackfriars current Artistic and Managing Director, John Haldrup, who will step down as artistic leader of the organization after the close of the 2014-2015 season. Mr. Hoskins will serve as Associate Artistic Director through the current season, working closely with Blackfriars’ Board of Directors and staff, and take the reigns of the company on July 1, 2015, when Mr. Haldrup takes his final bow after 35 years.

Hoskins said, “I am a great believer in the work that has been not written yet or some- thing that has not been told before. That is the way I knew I was a writer. In this role, I would love to play. Warren Beatty in a big role or a film about broth- ers and family with Dennis Quaid. Peter Gallagher and Robert Wine. Be a part of a strong ensemble in a HBO series like "Six Feet Under." Work opposite Judi Dench, Jarod Leto or Jeremy Irons, but that is just the tip of the iceberg. Be a part of something from the ground up, whether it is a musical, play or film. Flesh something out with a great writer and put my authentic skin on a piece.

What are the greatest challenges and the greatest rewards of being in "The Book of Mormon"? A huge challenge is keeping it fresh after 700 or so shows. Rewards? Getting the chance to help tell this story and perform moments over 700 shows are showing.

This show is a huge success and I keep going back to gratitude for the amazing audience who came to see us. There is nobody like the real life experience of taking a risk with total strangers and enjoying themselves. We have also played in some gorgeous venues while on tour.

Gay Alliance gives talkbacks at “The Penguin Tango”

The Gay Alliance Speakeasy Board has been invited to offer "Talkback" sessions following three performances of "The Penguin Tango," which opens this season at the First Niagara Center with Dennis Quaid, hue and DREW Grubbs in a lot of the Nothwestern theatre that was going on at that time, and that fed into my love of Broadway North. In 1998 I drove from Toronto to Vancouver, BC to pursue a film and television career and became a part of the vibrant film and television industry. I also had a few roles in plays and TV series in the area.

I worked on playing leads in summer stock theatre this year, and had a number of leading roles in various productions, and am currently working on the new Broadway show "Blackbird." In 2000, I booked this character role with Blackfriars Theatre. I have a very personal investment and affection for these performances. Tennyson Williams, Eugene O'Neill and Arthur Miller to name a few.

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Reading features play about Bradley (Chelsea) Manning

On Oct. 25, the Hourglass Play Reading Series will present the world premiere reading of The Radicalization of Bradley Manning, by Tim Price, directed by Maria Scordis. The reading will take place at Blackfriars Theatre, 795 E. Main St., at 3 p.m. The cast includes. A limited income necessarily closes off the possibility of employment and discrimination. The history of employment discrimination is a chapter in the history of Ghanziani and gay and lesbian individuals, a subject left wholly ignored by Ghanziani.

Reading the history of housing discrimination in Ghanziani's analysis, it is evident that African Americans and lesbian areas, a subject left wholly ignored by Ghanziani.

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have been institutionally forced to live in specific regions, unlike whites whose options have largely been limited more by economics and social preference, the racial composition of gay areas should come as no surprise. Ghanziani’s focus on Chicago could have been a particularly meaningful illustration of this: the two main “gayborhoods” of Chicago, where he conducted his in-depth interviews, Andersonville (in Edgewater, in the northern part of the city) and Boystown (in Lakeview, south of Edgewater but still in the northern part) are both more than 80 percent white. There are clear policy-based reasons for why African American Chicagoans live in the southern part of the city, left unaccounted for in Ghanziani’s text.

The lack of policy considerations in the text also leaves out the role of anti-discrimination laws and marriage equality in shifting what areas are available to LGBT tenants and homebuyers, as well as what recourse those individuals have against discrimination. Areas with such protections dramatically limit housing options, especially when juxtaposed with economic constraints, leaving GLBT residents with fewer options and more likely to cluster together; as those protections have come into being in some places, the “gayborhoods” in areas with these more progressive policies seem to have faded, while areas with fewer protections have growing gay districts.

Ghanziani, a professor of sociology, emphasizes the social component of gay and lesbian life, it leaves out critical aspects of housing mobility and neighborhood composition. As a consequence, it fails to provide the in-depth analysis the subject so clearly deserves.

The inability of GLBT residents to exercise options, especially when juxtaposed with economic constraints, leaving GLBT residents with fewer options and more likely to cluster together; as those protections have come into being in some places, the “gayborhoods” in areas with these more progressive policies seem to have faded, while areas with fewer protections have growing gay districts.

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Gay Alliance Volunteer-of-the-Month:
BJ Scanlon

Congratulations to BJ Scanlon for being chosen as the Gay Alliance Volunteer-of-the-Month for October! This handsome, single young chap came to Rochester six years ago to work with the runaway and homeless youth program at the Center for Youth Services (CYS), as a part of the Rochester AmeriCorps Program. He knew right away that Rochester was for him, and decided to start making it home.

The Street Outreach team at CYS made weekly stops at the Gay Alliance’s Youth Program. BJ was delighted with the young people at the Gay Alliance and soon found himself learning and using hip new lingo.

In 2009, he began volunteering with the Gay Alliance Youth Program, chaperoning dances and special events. He soon became a regular facilitator for the Friday night Youth Group.

In March of 2012, BJ became a member of the Gay Alliance Speakers Bureau, a merry band of travelers who provide educational workshops and discuss LGBTQ issues in classrooms, corporate settings, and non-profits. BJ has also volunteered in the Gay Alliance offices, at Roc Pride and for the Red Ball.

BJ currently works for the City of Rochester City Council as their Senior Legislative Analyst, and is an avid participant and advocate in local politics.

He also likes to have fun in the local comedy scene, with stand-up comedy. Most recently he was approached by an old woman from the audience who smiled and politely said, “Nice job;” she paused momentarily and as he was turning around she added, “keep working at it,” and he will, you bet he will.

BJ is an indispensable member of the Gay Alliance Youth Program and the Speakers Bureau. We are so thrilled to have him as a part of our team. Thank you so much BJ! We wouldn’t know what to do without you!

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

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

Facilitators: Jeanne Gainsburg, Gay Alliance Education Director and Rowan Collins, social justice activist and educator, join forces to bring you this fast-paced, dynamic and interactive workshop.

A dynamic mix of interactive exercises and lecture make for a fast-paced, intense and valuable learning experience.

The SpeakOUT Training will run on Friday, November 7 from 6-9pm and on Saturday, November 8, from 8:30am-5pm and is $75 per person. It will be held at Asbury First United Methodist Church at 1050 East Ave, Rochester, NY 14607. To register, go to the Gay Alliance website: www.gayalliance.org and click on the SpeakOUT slide. Please direct all questions to jeanneg@gayalliance.org or 585-244-8640 ext. 14.

*ASL interpretation available if requested by October 30.
Gay Alliance Speaking Engagements August 2014
- InQuery Grant Writing Seminar, twice
- Inclusive Schools at the Pittsford Central School District
- Gender Spectrum at Coming Inc.
- SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Certification Course at Lehigh University
- Communicating Respectfully at Enterprise Holdings
- SafeZone Training for the RA’s at SUNY Brockport
- SafeZone Training for the RA’s at Eastman School of Music
- SafeZone Training for the RA’s at Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Quotes from Evaluations in August:
"Most beautiful workshop I have attended in a while. Theory to Practice." 
"Fabulous! She is one of, if not the most, effective educators I’ve encountered in a training."
"Honest. Articulate. Open. Humorous in moments. Great confidence! Reflective, careful listeners. This workshop should be required for all staff, teachers, parents and students."
"Nothing could make this presentation better! Need part 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. Left me wanting more!! Loved every second: Thank you, thank you, thank you!"
"I had full faith in the presenter’s expertise. She modeled great communication skills and empathy. I had had many trainings/diversity courses and this was among the very best."

Gay Alliance Youth Program
Our 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!
Gay Alliance Youth (Ages 13-20)
Fabulous Fridays: 7-9pm
The Gay Alliance
875 E. Main Street, 5th floor
Rochester, New York 14605
Gay Alliance Youth Gender Identity Support Group (Ages 13-18)
Tuesdays: 5:30-6:30pm
The Gay Alliance
875 E. Main Street, 5th floor
For more information:
dawnb@gayalliance.org

The Gay Alliance
875 E. Main Street, 5th Floor
Auburn Center Rochester, New York 14605
Phone: 585-244-8640
Web: gayalliance.org

Gay Alliance Youth Bookkeeper.

Coming in November:
Understanding the Challenges: Cultural Competence Training for providers of services to older adults

By Jeanne Gainsburg
Please join us for this fast-paced, dynamic, informational cultural competency training geared towards senior service providers.

We will focus on understanding the unique barriers to care faced by LGBTQ older adults, how to create an environment at senior service agencies that is inclusive and welcoming for all people, and how to ensure that LGBTQ older adults at your agency are able to acknowledge their life experiences and age with dignity and respect.

Understanding the Challenges: Cultural Competence Training for Providers of Services to Older Adults will take place on Friday, Nov. 21, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (check in at 8:30 a.m. in the Carter Room at the Rochester Red Cross (50 Prince St, Rochester 14607).

The cost is $125 per person, which includes a light breakfast, a full lunch and our LGBTQ Cultural Competence Training Manual. Register three or more individuals from your agency and receive a discounted registration fee of $100 per person. To register, go to www.gayalliance.org and click on the yellow slide: Register Now.

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 both collectively and separately. We educate and advocate for civil rights for all and for the eradication of homophobia.

The Gay Alliance, 875 East Main Street, Rochester, New York 14605 • Phone: (585) 244-8640 • Fax: (585) 244-8266
Website: www.gayalliance.org • E-mail: info@gayalliance.org • Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm • Board President: David Zona
Board Vice Presidents: Jessica Mursatone, Executive Director: Scott Fearing, Education Director: Jeanne Gainsburg
Database: Kat Wiggall Bookkeeper: Christopher Hennelly Office Administrator: Tristan Wright

The Empty Closet: Editors: Susan Jordan E-mail: susanJ@gayalliance.org Phone: (585) 244-9030 Designer: Jim Anderson Fax: (585) 244-6240 Advertising: (585) 244-9030 Ad Sales: Brandon W. Brooks E-mail: brandonb@gayalliance.org
DAILY
Free HIV Testing
9am-7pm. Trillium Health, 259 Monroe Ave. www.rochesterfrontrunners.org

David Bohett Cyber Center
Gay Alliance 5th floor lounge. Mon.-Thurs. 11am-3pm, Fri. 11am-1:30pm. 875 S. Main St. 244-8640. www.gayalliance.org

MONDAYS
L.O.R.A. Coffee Social

LORA Sunday Blooming Out Groups for Women
2nd & 4th Mondays of the Month. 7 pm. Private Location. Call for info! Contact Person: Wanda Martinez. Email: saktinnanz@aol.com. Phone: 585-338-1864. More info: www.loragroup.org. Events: https://www.facebook.com/groups/L.O.R.A.14464/ Email: info@loragroup.org

Rochester Historical Bowling Society
7pm. Clover Lanes
Gay Alliance Library & Archives, Every Mon. Wed. 6-9pm. David Bohett Cyber Center. 5:30-7:30pm, first floor, 875 S. Main St. 244-8640.

Bored That Busy?
Formerly 3rd Presbyterian LGBT Support Group. First Monday of the month. 5:30-7:30pm. www.empirebears.com 244-8640.

HIV Positive Men’s Support Group
Every Monday at Trillium Health Center for Positive Living, 259 Monroe Ave.

Frontrunners/Frontwalkers

Steps Beyond Stems
Crafter Sunday 7pm, Mondays, 7-8pm, 289 Monroe Ave.

TUESDAYS
The Social Grind
17 S. Fitzhugh Street. 12:30-4:30pm. 7:30-9pm at Equal Grounds, 750 South Ave. Email: oihot@gmail.com for information

Adult Families of Trans (AFTY) Group
Trillium Health Center, 640 South Church Street stop on Main Street at the County Office Building. 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 5:30-7pm. Contact Person: Marilou Pare. Email: mpare566@rochester.rr.com. Phone: 585-338-1864.

LGBT Healthy Living
Veterans support. Second, fourth Tuesdays, 10-11am. 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month, 5pm-7pm at the Center. Phone: 585-232-6720. Email: info@lgbtthealthyliving.org

THURSDAYS
Presbyterians for Lesbian and Gay Concerns 6:30pm, first Thursday. 77-7849

GAYLES (Gays & Lesbians of Bausch & Lomb) Meets every third Thursday in Area 67 conference room at the Optical Coatings Lab. 585-9977

Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus
Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. 640-1355

Free confidential walk-in HIV testing
M, W, R 9 am-7 pm; T, F 3-9 pm. Trillium Health, 259 Monroe Ave. 640-1355

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

Gennon Valley Gender Variants
7-9pm, Equal Grounds, 750 South Ave. OV Variants@yahoogroups.com

LORA - Buffalo Women’s Coffee Social

FRIDAYS
Gay Men’s AA meeting
2nd & 4th Sundays, 6:30-8:30pm. Closed meeting. Emmannuel Baptist Church, 815 Park Ave.
Gay Alliance Youth
Fridays, 7-9pm. Gay Alliance, 875 S. Main St. 244-8640
GLBTI Motorcycle Group
Second Fridays, 7-9pm. Various locations. RochesterGLBTIbikers@yahoo.com; 467-6456; mcgroup@frontinternet.net.

LORA GaYmes Night

Monthly LITO Women’s Bingo Night
Third Friday, 7pm, at Bingo Empire. Contact: PhyllisDflennaments@yahoo.com; 585-943-1320 text/talk.

SATURDAYS
Rochester Rams Bar Night
Third Saturday, 5pm-9pm, Bachelors Forum, 670 University Ave. www.rochesterrams.com

Gay Men’s meeting
Every Saturday, 5pm-9pm, Bachelors Forum, 670 University Ave. www.rochesterrams.com

New Freedom/New Happiness Group
Meets 2nd Sunday of the Month, 11:30am - 1:30pm. AIDS and Recovery 1124 Culver Road (Covenant United Methodist Church) This is an NA meeting that is open to all addicts who have a desire to stop using. Although it is not specifically a gay-oriented meeting, it is welcoming to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, as well as to anyone who is affected by HIV and/or AIDS

NEW Freedom/New Happiness Group
7pm. First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. Rochester. Contact Person: Thelma Edsall. Telephone: 585-943-1320. The group is one of the last 18_kid_16 12 Corners. Use the stop just past the top of the hill @ Park Ave. Walk one more block to Highland Ave. Or take the #1 Park Ave. to the corner of East and Winton and walk one more block south (uphill) on Winton. This is an open discussion meeting. All issues – as relates to their alcoholism/addiction and recovery – are fair game.

FRIDAYS
Gay Men’s
7pm. Immortal Baptist Church, 915 Park Ave. Contact Person: John Beck. addictions@glbt.org

SATURDAYS
New Freedom/New Happiness Group
7pm. First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. Rochester. Contact Person: Thelma Edsall. Telephone: 585-943-1320. The group is one of the last 18_kid_16 12 Corners. Use the stop just past the top of the hill @ Park Ave. Walk one more block to Highland Ave. Or take the #1 Park Ave. to the corner of East and Winton and walk one more block south (uphill) on Winton. This is an open discussion meeting. All issues – as relates to their alcoholism/addiction and recovery – are fair game.
**Wednesday 1**

- Being trans... being healthy... being aware. Facing the elevated health risks of being transgender.
- Open Arms MCC Community Center, 707 E. Main St.

**Thursday 2**

- Queer & Ally Group course on LGBT history, 7-8:30 pm and every con- secutive Thursday through Oct. 30, First Unitarian Church, 220 S. Winton Rd. Evelyn Bailey, instructor. Refreshments will be served. The series is $25. Pre-register at showclix (LGBT Health Care). More information: annet@gayalliance.org

**Friday 24**

- Opening night, Rainbow Theatre Festival, presented by Bread & Water Theatre. “The Jeweler’s Shop” by Carol Wooly (Pope John Paul II), 7:30 pm. Three plays run through Nov. 24, 172 W. Main St. Tickets $8-$14 and may be purchased here or by calling 716-852-7743 x 3412.

**Saturday 25**


**Saturday 11**

- Awakening the Dreamer. Sympos- ium presented by the Rochester Team of the Pachamama Alliance. Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St. Call Open Arms at 585 271 8478 to see if space remains. Suggested donation $10; includes catered lunch. More information on Pachamama Alliance at pachamama.org

**Sunday 12**

- Dignity Integrity. DJ 39th anniver- sary party in my little Theatre 1, 6:30 pm. “The Circle,” docudrama, at Little Theatre 1, 9:30 pm. Festival runs through Oct. 30.

**Saturday 9**

- Out of the Closet and Into the Ex- pression Room: Perspectives and Analysis of LGBT Health Care. 7 pm, Rochester Academy of Arts, 707 E. Main St. info@www.da-arts.com. Registration closed Sept. 25.

**Sunday 15**

- Empty Closet deadline for November issue. 244-5030, susan@gayalliance. org.

**Saturday 17**

- NE Two Spirit Society annual gather- ing. 1251 Atlantic Ave., Brooklyn, NY. For LGBTQ Native Americans.

**Sunday 18**


**Tuesday 21**

- Gay Alliance Community Councils Formation workshop. 6:30-8 pm, Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St. 7:45 pm: To come active participate in the formation of the new Community Councils, which will address programming initia- tives. More information: marina@gayalliance.org

**Sunday 26**

- LICK Sunday Day Party, noon to 6 pm at ONE Nightclub, 1 Ryan Place (off East Ave. by Alexander). DJ Rejin 2-6 pm. $2 mimosas from 12-2 pm. Kitchen opens at noon. Widescreen football down- stairs at 1 pm (Billis vs. Jets). $2 donation requested. RSVP to 546-1010 to reserve space for brunch or watch the game with your group downstairs. Everyone 21 and over welcome. Backchair accessible.

**TUESDAY 4**

- Election Day Get OUT and vote.
The Empty Closet is the official publication of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley, Inc., as stated in the bylaws of that organization. Its purpose is to inform the Rochester gay community and to provide an impartial forum for ideas and exchange ideas and seek to educate.

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., as stated in the bylaws of that organization. The publication of the name or photograph of any person or organization in articles is not an indication of the sexual or affectional orientation of that person or the members of that organization. For further information, please write to The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St., Rochester, NY 14605, call (585) 244-9030 or e-mail: empcloset@gagv.us.

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ImageOut: The Rochester LGBT Film & Video Festival

10 Days of Exciting, Colorful, Explosive LGBT Cinema
October 10-19, 2014

Opening Night

BFFs
Program 1: Friday, Oct. 10, 8:00 PM, Little Theatre

THE CIRCLE
Program 2: Friday, Oct. 10, 9:30 PM, Little Theatre

Your Opening Night Ticket includes the Festival Eve Party at 140 ALEX on Thursday, Oct. 9

Spotlight Features

FOUR MOONS
Saturday, Oct. 11, 8:00 PM, Little Theatre

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
Sunday, Oct. 12, 1:00 PM, Little Theatre

Centerpiece Films

LITLING
Program 3: Wednesday, Oct. 15, 6:30 PM, Little Theatre

ALEX & ALI
Program 4: Thursday, Oct. 16, 6:30 PM, Little Theatre

Closing Night

The Way He Looks
Program 5: Saturday, Oct. 18, 9:30 PM, Little Theatre

Immediately following the screening of The Way He Looks, join us for the Closing Night Party at the George Eastman House.

Online Ticket Sales End Thursday, Oct. 9 at 5:00 PM

ImageArt!

Personal Pronouns

ImageArt presents personal/pronouns, a juried exhibition that addresses the roles of gender and gender identity at Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince Street, Rochester NY.

A concept of gender and gender identity that challenges the traditional binary assumption has been creeping into American consciousness in the past years, and even among progressive thinkers it has proven to be full of complexity, subtle interpretation, changing trends, and personal preference. The gender spectrum is experienced and played out as a component of our culture but also as a very basic element of our own sense of identity. While this is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the LGBT community, even here there exists radically different degrees of acceptance and understanding.

The exhibition continues through Sunday, October 19th. Visit the ImageOut website for gallery hours.