Gay Alliance Community Forum will envision the future on Sept. 13

The Gay Alliance Community Forum, “Visioning Our Future”, will take place on Saturday, Sept. 13, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, in the Rochester Room, first floor, Auditorium Center, 875 East Main St. The recent Community Survey results will be discussed. Gay Alliance Executive Director Scott Feating said, “Help to set the LGBTQ agenda in Rochester and Western New York! “Our Community Forum will allow you an opportunity to give us feedback on what we are doing well and where we need to step up our game. We will also be sharing the results from our recent LGBTQ Community Survey.”

Every voice matters and all community members are encouraged to come. The forum will be ASL interpreted. More information is available at info@gayalliance.org.

A trans health forum is coming up in October. “Being Trans: Being Healthy... Being Aware — facing the elevated health risks of being Trans” will take place on Wednesday Oct. 1, from 7-9 p.m., at Open Arms MCC Community Center, 707 East Main St., featuring Dr. Sharon Glezen, MD, FACP, WPATH; Patrick Fisher of Us Too! and ASL interpreted.

Lori Meath, Cancer Coalition of Rochester. The event is open to all International Prostate Cancer Education & Support Network and Dr. Sharon Glezen, MD, FACP, WPATH; Patrick Fisher of Us Too! of Open Arms MCC Community Center, 707 East Main St., featuring “Who Are We? Including Transgender New Yorkers, stating that, “the State Human Rights Office supports the State’s oldest LGBTQ newspaper. The Gay Alliance is publisher of the Gay Alliance:

Identifying LGBTQ-friendly campuses: how do U.R. and RIT rate?

By Tristan Wright, Gay Alli-

ance Office Administrator

Roughly 40 percent of Amer-
icans have a college degree, which means that just under half of us have experienced the arduous process of looking at and applying to colleges. We all brought our own pri-

orities to the process; did it have the program we wanted? Was it far enough away from our par-

ents? Could we afford it? Pros-
pective students have a host of measures of university quality to consider, provided by a number of publications which rank col-

leges and universities, like the Princeton Review and US News & World Report. In recent years, campuses have begun seeking status on a new type of ranking: LGBTQ friendliness.

There are two major rank-
ings of campus GLBTQ friend-
liness, the Princeton Review, an annual survey of over 150,000 students across 300+ campus-
es nationwide, and the Campus Pride Index, a comprehensive institutional self-review. Where the Princeton Review surveys students about their campuses, (Campus continue page 3)

AFTY (Adult Families of Trans* Youth) is now forming at GA GV

This support group for the parents of trans youth meets Tuesdays from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the Gay Alliance Suite Nopper Room (Auditorium Center, 5th Floor, 875 E. Main St.)

The group begins Sept. 9. AFTY is a group for the adult family members of trans* adolescents and youth under 20 years old. Statement of Purpose: “To provide the families of trans* adolescents with a safe forum for self-expression, and a shared network of support, and to be a central hub of knowledge and resources.”

For more information call 244-8640.

By Susan Jordan

Dr. Bill Valenti of Trillium Health says, “The big issue is to stop AIDS in New York State by 2020. PrEP stands for Pre-Exposure Prevention, which is a pro-

gram about preventing HIV transmission. Truvada is the name of the drug used to pre-

vent HIV transmission. It is not a ‘party drug’ and must be taken daily, not just before a ‘party’. Trillium offers PrEP as a structured program to help people control their health and take care of themselves. Tru-

vada needs to be taken daily so that it can build up in the bloodstream and be truly effec-

tive.”

Dr. Valenti said, “People best-suited for PrEP are people who have sex without condoms or who have had an STD in the past year. It’s also important to note that someone who is HIV negative and in a relationship with an HIV-positive person could benefit from Truvada. This also applies to heterosexual couples.”

Within the gay community there has been a lot of slut-

shaming and stigmatizing of people who want to take Tru-

vada. Dr. Valenti commented, “Over the past 30 years we have tried to de-stigmatize HIV in general. That kind of stigma and energy detract from the issue at hand – prevention and medical care.”

Jason Roberts of Trillium Health quoted a newly-single man who shared his experi-

ence with him: “I’m single now and daring – why should I put myself at risk?”

Dr. Valenti said, “We struc-

ture it so you have to come in every three months to renew the prescription and see the doc-

tor and pharmacist. So you are committed to the structure and regular office visits.

“It is vital to reduce the pool of HIV positive people and that ties in with Governor Cuomo’s initiative to end HIV transmis-

sion in NYS by 2020. We like to think of ourselves as ahead of the curve on that. We have an in-house pharmacy, so we’ve got you covered.”

Trillium pharmacist Ash-

ley Zappelli’s job is not only to check insurance but also to find any other available subsi-

dies and benefits available to reduce out of pocket expens-

es for patients. The Trillium pharmacy works with patients to obtain the drugs they need. “Every situation is a little differ-

ent,” Dr. Valenti says. “We don’t want cost to be a barrier for uti-

lizing PrEP. We will do all we can to work with our patients.”

“We believe that with the right tools and messages, the (Trillium continue page 3)
Empty Closet Editor SUSAN JORDAN

In this issue: What's coming up in September

Another summer has almost disappeared like faery gold, and fall 2014 is here. It was a good summer for the LGBTQ community, with a successful Pride and the Rochester City Council vote to add more trans-specfic language to the nondiscrimi-
nation ordinance (see interview).

Changing the World
The editor of the Empty Closet, Susan Jordan, faced her first deadline on August 15, 1989. So today, it is our great honor to publicly acknowledge the passage of 275 deadlines, marking twenty-five years of service to the Rochester LGBTQ communities.

In this issue:
- Perspectives
- Empty Closet: “I cannot think of a more influential medium to share such knowledge than what has occurred through the various articles published in the Empty Closet over this many years,” said NYS Assembly member Harry Bronson. He added, “Susan has impacted our abil-
ity to learn about and share our LGBTQ culture.”
- Ove Overmyer, longstand-
ing Empty Closet staff writer and Photograph, said “Susan has been a stabilizing local force in a world where LGBT journalism has taken a picture in mainstream media. Through it all, Susan has shown remarkable resilience, strength, dignity and regard for the intelligence of our readers and for that matter, the entire community as a whole.”
- Susan has not only witnessed history, but has documented it for all of us. From the corpo-
rate progress of “the gay 90’s” to the legislative challenges of the 2000’s, and the rise of mar-
riage equality and discussions of Trans* identities in this decade, she has faithfully served as our community’s record keeper.

Susan has been a fixture in our community for more than thirty years – she has worked with the 1970’s paper, The New Women’s Times, and was a mem-
ber of the 1980’s feminist orga-
nization, Rochester Women Against Violence before begin-
ning her long and distinguished career with the Gay Alliance.

For as long as she’s in her first edi-
torial published in the August 1989 Empty Closet: “I embark on my time as editor with an intense awareness of the poten-
tial for achievement and also the great challenge of bringing us to the passage of 275 deadlines, honoring to publicly acknowledge her long and distinguished
career because of your work. [Susan Jordan and her talents].”

“Susan has made a tremendous impact on moving our community for-
toward true equality, and I can’t thank her enough for her dedication and service!” stressed Bronson.

We couldn’t have said it bet-
ter; so on behalf of the entire Rochester LGBTQ and ally communities, Susan, thank you for sharing your passion and talents with us for so many decades, the Gay Alliance and Rochester community is stron-
ger because of your work.

Empty Closet permissions

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Gay Alliance Membership Levels:
- $100–$199 Advocate $300 Champion
- $1,000–4,999 Triangle Club $3,000–Stonewall
- $5,000–14,999 Check enclosed in the amount of
- (check #______) Please charge my credit card in the amount of
To: (check #______) MasterCard or Visa 
Credit Card #______
Expiration Date

Benefits: Subscription to The Empty Closet mailed to home or work, plus privileges at each level. Phone: 585-344-8640 or mail to: Gay Alliance, 875 E. Main St., Suite 100, Rochester, NY 14605. Home delivery of The Empty Closet is free with your annual membership.

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Gay Alliance partnerships continued from page 1

City of Rochester
Absolut/Malibu
SILVER LEVEL
3 Olives
Baccardi

Ameriprise
Canadaguia
National Bank & Trust
Corn ing Inc.
Equal Grounds Coffee
Harter Secret and Emery LLP
ImageOut
Jaegermeister
Kittleberger Florist and Gifts
Labor Federation
Macy’s
New York Life
Out and Equal NY
Finger Lakes
Outlandish
Sky Vodka
St. John Fisher
Tompkins Enterprises
Victory Alliance
Wegmans
Woods Oviatt Gilman LLP

CHAMPION LEVEL
Mass Mutual of Buffalo
Park Avenue
Merchant’s Association
Pride @ Work
Third Presbyterian Church
The Woolbright Group
Trans activist

Laine DeLaney on the new language in the city non-discrimination ordinance

By Susan Jordan

Laine DeLaney is a member of the Genesee Valley Gender Variants and the Trans* Alliance of Greater Rochester and writes the Trans*Missions column for The Empty Closet. She spoke with the EC about the effect the upgraded language approved by City Council on July 22 will have on the Trans community here.

Laine appreciates the fact that the ordinance affects all Rochester, not just city employees and businesses that contract with the city. “This affects everyone. It’s updating the current anti-discrimination ordinance.”

“The city had previously implied that the original LGBT anti-discrimination ordinance did not have to include trans people because that supposed fell under ‘sex discrimination.’ I gather that because of the increased visibility of trans issues and discrimination, and because it’s no longer taboo to discuss these issues, the city felt it would be better to cover trans people explicitly.”

She explained that the ordinance, like the GENDA bill blocked in the state legislature by Republicans, will also help cisgendered women and men, both gay and straight, who have been fired or harassed because they do not conform to conventional gender roles or family relationships. She added that the ordinance, like the expanded definition of the word “sex” in the new LGBT protections, would allow the city to charge employers with sexual orientation discrimination.

“Or the chocolate chip cookies that are no longer on the menu in one of the city’s bakeries.”

Laine said, “The Rochester ordinance will increase our con- fidence and also our loyalty to the city government, because it wasn’t necessary to do this, but they did it anyway. And it’s powerful. If someone can now have recourse if they are fired for being trans.”

This Sunday, Sept. 7, the annual Dreamer program will be Oct. 11 at Open Arms MCC.

On Saturday, Oct. 11, The ‘Awakening the Dreamer’ Symposium, a program of the Pachamama Alliance, will be presented at Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St., and facilitated by members of the Rochester chapter of Pachamama Alliance, a U.S.-based not-for-profit organization whose mission is to educate and inspire individuals everywhere to bring forth an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling and socially just human presence on our planet.

Pachamama Alliance’s Rochester chapter members are Gabrielle Hermosa, Nancy Kasper, and Tony Perri. There is a suggested donation of $10 and a catered lunch will be provided. Registration and information can be found at www.awakeningtheheart.org by calling Open Arms MCC at 385-271-8478.

To learn more about this organization and its vision visit www.pachamama.org or contact Tony Perri at tony3@ro.al.com.

September 20 workshop addresses rising to our challenges

Gabrielle Hermosa will present ‘Rising to Your Greatness, Sharing Your Journey and Transforming the World’ on Saturday, Sept. 20, from 6:30-8 p.m., at Open Arms MCC, 707 E. Main St.

Hermosa said, “We all have problems, difficulties and hardships in life. These challenges offer opportunities that shape and strengthen us. Please join me for a discussion about rising to the challenges, finding the beauty and talents we each have, and sharing them with the world. We’ll all be there together. By working together we have the power to build strong, supportive communities. With our gifts, passions and journeys, we can transform the world and make it a better place for everyone. This event is free and open to the public.”

Register now for “Out of the Closet, Into the Exam Room” on Oct. 9

Registation for the panel discussion “Out of the Closet, Into the Exam Room” comes Sept. 25. Act now to join in this informative event on perceptions and analysis of LGBT health care.

The event will take place Oct. 9 at 7 p.m. at Rochester College’s Pachamama Alliance, Monroe Medical Society and HCR Care, Trillium Health, the Gay Alliance, Monroe Medical Society and HCR Home Care.

MOCHA is moving; farewell week is Sept. 8-12

The MOCHA Center is moving to 204 South Main St. This week is Sept. 8-12, and many events are planned.

Moore said, “As we say farewell to the history that has been made at 107 Liberty Pole Way, we want to welcome you to the future of the MOCHA Center. Events will be held throughout the week. In addition, we invite cli- ents, friends and others who wish to post your memories of The MOCHA Center at 107 Liberty Pole, who have been part of our history, to email this information to info@mochathome.org.”

September 8 – MOCHA (continues page 6)
Several Ugandan rights groups in Kampala and researchers are launching independent investigations of the allegations. Local sources for the stonings say local radio stations in the zone have been broadcasting information about anti-gay incidents. Further investigation is underway.

The Safe Passage Fund also reports that 65 people have been smuggled out of Uganda in recent days.

Ugandan archbishop tells people not to harm gays

A Uganda archbishop has taken an unusual stance in his country, calling on people to not harm gay people.

John Baptist Odama, the bishop of the Church in Gulu, has reminded Ugandans that homosexuals are also human beings created in the image of God.

“Let us learn to love God’s human creatures. It is not that I am advocating for homosexual practice in the country, but we should not take laws into our hands to harm and hate the homosexuals because we all have weaknesses,” he has said.

“The country has been struggling to have a law to criminalize homosexuality. However, the struggle has been frustrated by the Constitutional Courts. People should take the laws into their hands and harm homosexuals, since they are also human beings though with different sexual orientations.”

The bishop was making the remarks at Holy Rosary Catholic Church while presiding over an opposite-sex wedding ceremony.

Earlier last month, the Constitutional Court nullified the anti-gay law that criminalized homosexuality and the promotion of homosexuality and punished both “crimes” with a life sentence in jail.

The case was argued because of cases where people who commit homosexual relations in order to marry are convicted.

Federal judge rules Fla. marriage ban unconstitutional

U.S. District Judge Robert Hinkle ruled on Aug. 21 that Florida’s discriminatory state ban excluding same-sex couples from the freedom to marry is unconstitutional.

The ruling has already been stayed, meaning that any decision won’t go into effect immediately.

Equality Florida said, “Today is the 5th consecutive victory in Florida and we leaves no doubt that this ban serves no purpose but to harm gay couples and their children. We applaud Judge Hinkle for his decision and we call on Governor Scott to lead where Attorney General Pam Bondi has failed.”

“Florida put this discriminatory ban in place and Florida should end it. Our families have waited too long already. We call on Governor Scott to join us in urging the Florida Supreme Court to take up this issue immediately.”

In total, 38 rulings since last year’s decision in U.S. v. Windsor have found that state bans on marriage for same-sex couples are unconstitutional, including two rulings by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, which has jurisdiction over Colorado. Although the right claims the judges are “liberal activists,” many were appointed by Reagan or one of the Bushes.

American Bar Association: LGBT rights are human rights

The American Bar Association resolved on Aug. 15 that LGBT rights are basic human rights.

Here’s the resolution in full:

RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association recognizes that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people have a human right to be free from discrimination, threats and violence based on their LGBT status and condones all laws, regulations and rules or practices that discriminate on the basis that an individual is a LGBT person;

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the American Bar Association urges the government of the United States Government, through bilateral and multilateral channels, to work to end discrimination against LGBT people and to ensure the rights of LGBT people receive equal protection under the law.

Beirut police arrest 27 on charges of seeking gay sex at bath house

On Aug. 13, Lebanese NGOs called for the immediate release of 27 men detained in Beirut after police received a tip from a German police station in Cologne that a group were at a Turkish-style bath house looking for sex with other men.

Lebanon’s The Daily Star reports:

On Aug. 9, a unit with the judicial police’s Moral Protection Bureau raided the Alhamam hammam after a German police told police at the Hbesh police station in Hamra that gay men sought “sexual encounters” with other men. There, the NGOs said in a joint statement.

Police arrested the owner of the ham- mam, the employees and several clients.

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Police arrested the owner of the ham- mam, the employees and several clients.

Seven Ugandans reportedly stoned to death

According to an as yet unconfirmed report, six LGBT persons have been stoned to death by a mob in rural Uganda. A seventh person was reportedly beaten to death. Via press release from the Safe Passage Fund.

Over the past week, Ugandan activists have reported the horrific murders of six LGBT individuals in a rural zone of the country: three gay men, two lesbians and a transperson. They were killed by stoning.

“One who survived (still breathing after stoning) was burnt alive using kerosene/paraffin and a match box,” stated a friend.

According to the source, a rural vigilante mob attacked the 28-year-old gay man in a different zone on Aug. 5. “I went to the scene,” wrote the eyewitness in an email. “I saved [____] when I lied to the mob that let me take him to the police.”

The witness stated that he was able to convince the mob he would deliver the victim to the police, but instead put him on a boda boda (motorcycle) and rescued him. The victim was later denied medical care, he alleged, because he lacked funds to pay.

Documentary evidence of the attack was provided, including pictures of the young gay man who died of his injuries on Aug. 11 and was buried two days later. Pictures provided from the scene show a young man sitting on the ground in a public street, his face and neck covered in blood. The sources have other details supporting the claim. The reports come from several Ugandan activists, including those who helped rescue the head trauma victim.

The reports were shared with Ombypia, Washington-based FNUR (referred to as the “Railroad”) and then the Safe Passage Fund, a fund set up to help LGBT victims of persecution.

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Police arrested the owner of the ham- mam, the employees and several clients.
All clients remain in custody at the detention center, the statement said, quoting a callo of the police station.

The NGOs – Helem, Arab Foundation for Freedom and Equality, M-Coalition, Trans People of Color Coalition, and the Lebanese Medical Association for Sexual Health – released a joint statement saying in part: “We made contact with the detainees who expressed their discomfort and confusion regarding the process of the investigation and the charges. It has also come to our attention that at the time of the raid no public security act was taken place at the Agha hammam, and the investigation at the police station revolved mainly around the detainees’ alleged homosexuality.”

“We denounce this incident as a case of homophobic practice that aims to polarize sexual rights and liberties of the individuals involved and we call on the General Prosecutor and Hbeish police station to locate the dignity of the detainees and their rights to their (sexual) bodies,” it said.

Lebanese officials informed the NGOs that none of the men were forced to undergo the widely-criticized “gay test” – forced anal probing – that Towleroad.com reported last month was being carried out by Lebanese police.

Read more: http://www.towleroad.com/#t233ANs4Lj1

Supreme Court stays Virginia marriage ruling

On Aug. 20, the U.S. Supreme Court granted a stay of the Fourth Circuit’s July 28 ruling, which held that Virginia’s denial of the freedom to marry to same-sex couples is unconstitutional.

The Fourth Circuit had declined to stay, or freeze, its decision, but the procedural action by the Supreme Court means that same-sex couples will continue, for now, to be denied the freedom to marry in Virginia as the case makes its way through the appeals process.

Eric Schraub, president of Freedom to Marry, released the following statement: “This Supreme Court’s stay of yet another freedom to marry ruling underscores the urgency of the Court’s granting a full review and bringing the country to national resolution by next year. Americans across the country are being deprived of the freedom to marry and respect for their lawful marriages, as well as the tangible protections and precious dignity and happiness that marriage brings. It is time for the Supreme Court to take the next step in what more than thirty courts have held in the past year: the right to marry is a constitutional, harms families, and is unworthy of America.”

Opponents have begun the process of seeking Supreme Court review of each of the three appellate rulings in favor of the freedom to marry so far, including the Virginia case in the Fourth Circuit and Utah and Oklahoma cases in the Tenth Circuit. Since the Supreme Court struck down the heart of the so-called Defense of Marriage Act in June 2013, 37 state and federal courts have upheld the freedom to marry, most only ruling the other way. Every appellate ruling has been in favor of the freedom to marry.

Pride at Work, LGBT groups call for action on Michael Brown killing

A coalition of 17 national LGBT and civil rights groups has issued a joint letter in support of the family of Missouri teenager Michael Brown, whose killing by a police officer has inflamed racial tensions, caused violent, excessive police reaction of protestors and prompted national outcry.

From Pride at Work: “Four days ago, a young African-American man was shot and killed in a confrontation with police in Ferguson, Mo. His name was Michael Brown and he was only days away from beginning his first year in college. The details are murky and the police still haven’t released the name of the officer who shot Brown, but one thing is abundantly clear: another unarmed, young black man has died at the barrel of a gun.”

The joint letter was penned by the Human Rights Campaign and joined by the nation’s leading LGBT equality organizations; it is copied below. Pride at Work says, “We join our brothers and sisters in the LGBT advocacy community standing in solidarity with Michael Brown’s family and calling for a speedy and transparent investigation into this tragic act.”

The letter: “When communities experience fear, harassment and brutality simply because of who we are or how they look, we are failing as a nation. In light of the recent events in Missouri, it is clearer than ever that there is something profoundly wrong in our country.

“The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community cannot be silent at this moment, because LGBT people are from all races, creeds, faiths and backgrounds, and because all movements of equality are deeply connected. We are all part of the fabric of this nation and the promise of liberty and justice for all is yet to be fulfilled.

“The LGBT community stands with the family of Michael Brown, who was gunned down in Ferguson, Missouri. We stand with the mothers and fathers of young Black men and women who fear for the safety of their children each time they leave their homes. We call on the national and local media to be responsible and steadfast in their coverage of this story and others like it – rationalized killings that have marred this nation since the beginning of its history.

“We call on policy makers on all levels of American government not to shrink from action, and we are deeply grateful to Attorney General Eric Holder and the Department of Justice for their immediate commitment to a thorough investigation.

“At this moment, we are inspired by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies … but the silence of our friends.”

ACLU
AIDS United
Center for Black Equity, Inc.
Courage Campaign
Equality Federation
Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)
GLAAD
GMHC
Human Rights Campaign
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
National Minority AIDS Council
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)
PFLAG National
Pride at Work, AFL-CIO
Soulforce
Southerners on New Ground (SONG)
Trans People of Color Coalition
Transgender Law Center
Trevor Project

Obama video message, Russian athletes are surprises at Gay Games

Via the Cleveland Plain Dealer:
Safe to say, not many sporting events would include such a drugơagneasy synchronizing “Proud Mary” as the opening number. Or anathlete from Mexico decked out in a sombrero and knee-high, red platform boots and skimpysiver shorts.

Or the delegation from the Russian Federation earning substantial cheers and a standing ovation from spectators and participants alike at The Q.

Gay Games 9 kicked off Aug. 9 with (Obama continues page 6)
Campus Pride releases list of top 50 LGBT-friendly colleges

Campus Pride announced Aug. 15 the annual Campus Pride 2014 Top 50 LGBT-Friendly Colleges & Universities. The listing highlights the positive efforts to improve safety and academic life for LGBT students as well as the top institutions leading the way.

"More than ever colleges today want to be viewed as LGBT-friendly and a welcoming place for all students. LGBT students and their safety impacts the recruitment efforts of the ever increasing number of students. Upper-level administrators are now understanding how LGBT-friendliness is key to future institutional success," the Top 50 list is proof."

This is the first year Campus Pride has released a list of the fifty "Best of the Ben." In years past, Campus Pride has only featured a "Top 25 List." The list is based on the final responses to the Campus Pride Index, a national benchmarking tool which self-assesses LGBT-friendly policies, programs and practices. The tool is free of charge and can be found online at www.CampusPrideIndex.org.

"For six years in a row, Campus Pride has seen an increase in the number of campuses coming out as LGBT-friendly and making notable improvements to LGBT academic life, so we decided to honor them as a national distinction," said Shane Windmeyer, Executive Director of Campus Pride and creator of the Campus Pride Index, a national benchmarking tool which self-assesses LGBT-friendly policies, programs and practices. The tool is free of charge and can be found online at www.CampusPrideIndex.org.

"Unlike the Princeton Review LGBT rankings, the Campus Pride Index is based in research on policy, programs and practice and is conducted "for and by" LGBT experts in the field of higher education, so we decided to update and use the Campus Pride benchmarking tool to improve LGBT life on campus. For the third year in a row, over 80 percent of participating campuses improved their ratings from the previous year. In addition, the number of campuses located in the South increased this year, as did the number of religiously-affiliated campuses and Minority Service Institutions.

"According to Windmeyer, "there is a lot to be learned" from the Top 50 campuses on this listing. Many of these campuses are specifically addressing recruitment and academic retention efforts for LGBT students as well as concerns for transgender student safety. The Top 50 also geographically mirrors more progressive areas of the country where there has been a history of LGBT support and advocacy. While the Top 50 list demonstrates the positive progress to support LGBT students within higher education, we must also commit ourselves to the campuses not on the list — in rural areas, Southern states and other types of campuses like two year colleges, historically black colleges and universities and religious-affiliated campuses — where pioneering LGBT work to create a safe learning environment is still a real struggle," Windmeyer said.

According to Campus Pride, a college had to achieve 5 stars overall in order to be in the Top 50 this year as well as have the highest percentages across the eight LGBT-friendly benchmarks for policy, program and practice. The listing this year includes colleges with student populations from 1600 to over 50,000, public and private schools alike. Each college listed on the Top 50 has a profile page with more details about the campus ratings online. The Top 50 list is in alphabetical order, as follows:

Amherst College
Augsburg College
Brown University
Central Washington University
Connecticut College
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Emory University
Harvard University
Indiana University
Ithaca College
Macalester College
Northern Arizona University
Oberlin College
Oregon State University
Pomona College
Portland State University
Princeton University
Rutgers University
Santa Clara University
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Southern Oregon University
Stanford University
Syracuse University
The Ohio State University
The Pennsylvania State University
Tulane University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, Riverside
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of California, Santa Cruz
University of Central Florida
University of Chicago
University of Illinois at Chicago
University of Maryland, College Park
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota - Duluth
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of Pennsylvania
University of Rhode Island
University of Southern California
University of Vermont
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
Washington College
Washington State University
Washington University in St. Louis

Campus Pride is the leading national educational organization for LGBT ally college students and campus groups building future leaders and safer, more LGBTQ-friendly colleges and universities. The organization provides resources and services to thousands of college students annually. Learn more online at CampusPride.org.

MOCHA from page 3

The Skinny: Come out to enjoy an entertaining yet educational movie followed by great discussion. Snacks and beverages will be served. FREE HIV TESTING! Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Location: 107 Liberty Pole Way.

September 9 — MOCHA Movie Night: "The Skinny": Come out to enjoy an entertaining yet educational movie followed by great discussion. Snacks and beverages will be served. FREE HIV TESTING! Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Location: 107 Liberty Pole Way.

September 11 — MOCHA Farewell Reception: Our final day of fun to say goodbye as we prepare to move into 899 North Water Street. Come share your memories and stories with new and old friends! Food and beverage will be served. FREE HIV TESTING! Time: 6-8:30 p.m. Location: 107 Liberty Pole Way.

September 12 — MOCHA Farewell Gala: Our final evening to say goodbye at VOGUE goodbye to Liberty Pole Way. Snacks & Beverages will be provided. FREE HIV TESTING! Time: 6-8:30 p.m. Location: 107 Liberty Pole Way.

The New York State Division of Human Rights has affirmed the state’s Human Rights Law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the case of Melina and Jennifer McCarthy, a lesbian couple whose 2012 request to wed at an Albany area farm and wedding venue was turned down after owners found out they were a same-sex couple.

New York Civil Liberties Union, which represented the couple, released the following statement:

"Marriage should be a time of celebration, not discrimination," said NYCLU Executive Director Donna Lieberman.

"This ruling sets an important precedent protecting the rights of LGBT New Yorkers, and will help ensure that businesses understand New York law and treat all patrons with the dignity and respect they deserve."

Added Jennifer McCarthy: "No one should have the happiest time of their life marred by discrimination. We hope this decision will protect all New Yorkers from having to go through the hurt that we experienced."

Liberty Ridge, the wedding venue in question, was told to "cease and desist from discriminatory practices in public accommodations" and was ordered to pay the McCarys $5,500 each and a fine of $10,000 to the state. The owners must also prove to the Division on Human Rights that they’re conducting anti-discrimination training at their workplace.

Read more: http://www.towleroad.com/Programs/JPGRSORTBEF

NYS affirms Human Rights Law ban on discrimination against same sex couples

The New York State Division of Human Rights has affirmed the state’s Human Rights Law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the case of Melina and Jennifer McCarthy, a lesbian couple whose 2012 request to wed at an
Bronson reports that the lack of job opportunities and inability to prepare our youth for successful careers have persisted for decades and our working families have paid the price. He calls this one of our biggest challenges that we face as a state and nation. Bronson has made job creation and economic development plus improving educational outcomes for our youth two of his top priorities entering the new legislative session beginning January 2015.

He added, “There are many talented people in our community doing great work and yes, we have made some progress in these areas in past couple of years. ‘It’s something I have always done throughout my career in public service, legal and business careers, and continue to do now. It’s critical to our community,” he said.

To highlight that point, Bronson mentioned that he was instrumental in securing funding for both RIT and the University of Rochester to help them create new advanced manufacturing opportunities to spur local economic growth. “Both of these local universities, which are incidentally in my Assembly District, are critical partners to government when it comes to quality of life issues. We need strong, proven representation in Albany to continue our collaboration to create jobs and grow our economy.”

Bronson, who has already secured the Democratic and Working Families Party ballot lines for November, feels that the past four years have been very productive in Albany, with several significant advances for LGBT civil rights, as well as measures which have helped New Yorkers from all walks of life. He says that transgender rights and GENDA are still a top priority for him, even though they have already passed the GENDA bill in the Assembly seven times. He said, “We need to get the Senate on board, pass this effort once and for all.”

Another LGBT issue that was huge for the legislature this past budget year was maintaining funding for the LGBT Health and Human Services Network at $3.26 million. Bronson says this result was extremely impressive given the competitive fiscal demand for providing health services altogether. Bronson said, “I took a leadership role working with the Empire State Pride Agenda. We increased the funding for runaway and homeless youth up to $2.45 million. We not only avoided a huge cut, but we got a slight increase in a very difficult economic year. I am also working to increase funding for some local health agencies, but it’s still too early to go public with any announcement at this time.”

Asked about his best memories working in the state legislature, Bronson didn’t need a moment to think about it. He quipped, “Back in 2011, one of my proudest moments in the legislature was when we passed the Marriage Equality legislation, which was so important to so many families across New York State. People say, as New York goes, so goes the rest of the nation. And now, the dominoes are starting to tumble.”

Asked what he would like to convey to the readers of The EC, Bronson said, “I am taking nothing for granted. I am working very hard to keep my seat. I would like the readers to know that this is a critical election for our community and our state. I am asking you to stand with me and fight for a better future for all of our families.”

Bronson’s major endorsements include the Victory Fund, Empire State Pride Agenda, Rochester Area Labor Federation and almost every major civil rights organization and labor union in New York State. As of April 1, 2014, The 138th Assembly District has a total of 74,398 voters. Of them, there are 32,812 registered Democrats, 18,733 Republicans and 17,449 blank registered voters. Bronson is on the Independence Party Primary ballot Sept. 9 to see who wins the line for the General Election, Tuesday, Nov. 4.
Does your family include a trans* person under 20?

Ours does, too.

Announcing the creation of Adult Families of Trans* Youth, a new weekly group for adult family members of trans* people under 20 years old.

info@gayalliance.org / (585) 244-8640

LIFE HAS COMMITMENTS

Excellus BlueCross BlueShield is proud to support the Gay Alliance of Genesee Valley.

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Visioning our Future
Gay Alliance Community Forum

The needs of Rochester’s LGBTQ communities are constantly changing. Today’s expanding LGBTQ civil rights and social acceptance call for a change in the service model of the Gay Alliance so we are embracing re-invention as ‘Champions for LGBTQ Life and Culture’. Join us as we explore this developing vision for the future of the Gay Alliance. Be an active participant as we identify the needs of our community and plan future Gay Alliance programming.

All are invited. Every voice matters.

Saturday September 13th
10:00 am-12:00pm

Auditorium Center
875 E. Main St. Rochester, NY 14605
Rochester Room, 1st Floor

Information: (585) 244-8640
or info@gayalliance.org

The next day with Jack...
So Ellen talked me into dying my hair last night. What do you think?

I don’t know...it’s a little too 90s for me.

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stronger together
Making the Scene

ON THE GREENS: At the 140 Alex Golf Tournament, which took place Aug. 3 at Island Valley Golf Course in Fairport. A BBQ dinner followed at 140 Alex. Photos: Jill Frier

ON THE GREENS: At the 140 Alex Golf Tournament, which took place Aug. 3 at Island Valley Golf Course in the area include Jines, the winning by and sitting on the porch. Jimmy Catalano in his garden. Photo: Susan Jordan

My Own Private Rochester: Jimmy Catalano

By Susan Jordan

Jimmy Catalano was born and raised in Rochester. Former owner of Edgerton Florist on Park Ave., he now works for Kittelberger Florist in Webster. He and his partner Bruce Trombley will celebrate their 25th anniversary on Sept. 20, and have lived on Park Avenue for 20 years. They have a beautiful 1902 house and two ex-racing greyhounds, Cole and Tully.

Jimmy is secretary of the Park Avenue Merchants Association, and also of the Park Avenue Neighborhood Coalition and Park Avenue Revitalization Committee; Bruce is president of the two latter. Jimmy is very involved with organizing the annual Park Avenue Festival. In 2011 he was given a “Mayor of Park Avenue” award by the Park/Meigs Neighborhood Association.

It comes as no surprise, then, that the Park Avenue neighborhood is first on Jimmy’s list of favorite places. Jimmy said, “Bruce says that we live on vacation! We’re close to our favorite restaurants and pubs, and it’s a walkable neighborhood.”

We can sit on our porch on summer evenings and end up with at least six or seven friends coming by and sitting on the porch with us.”

Jimmy’s favorite restaurants in the area include Jines, the Park Avenue Pub and the Frog Pond, and as he says, “There really are no bad restaurants on Park Ave! We go out our front door and walk in either direction and in two minutes you’re at a great place.”

Elsewhere in the city, Jimmy especially enjoys Antonetta’s on Jay St. and Mr. Dominick’s in Charlotte.

Jimmy and Cole and Tully all love the Ellisian Park Dog Park. He said, “I really do enjoy that and am thrilled we have that. I wish we had more in the city. Greyhounds are sight hounds and if they spot anything like a squirrel they take off—they can go up to 45 mph!” The Dog Park is fenced in and we can let them off the leash. They have a blast meeting the other dogs.

Jimmy’s favorite people include City Council member Elaine Spaul, a neighbor. “Elaine and I have a very close relationship on a social and I guess business basis,” he said, “since she is so committed to this neighborhood and her whole district. It’s nice having her close by because if I ever need help, I can give her a call—about something as simple as extra litter cans on the street. I also had a close relationship with former mayor and now Lt. Gov. Bob Duffy. Talk about someone I admire! He’s an amazing man.”

Jimmy loves the many Rochester festivals, especially of course the Park Avenue Festival, closely followed by Corn Hill and the Clothesline Festival. He said, “We go to the Big Ribs Festival at Highland Park every July. And of course we love the Pride Parade—right in our front yard! I love having that in our neighborhood.”

On an ideal Saturday night, besides sitting on their beautiful porch and people-watching, Jimmy enjoys dinners out with friends. He would take out of town visitors to the Pittsford Wegmans, the George Eastman House, the Strong Museum of Play and the Memorial Art Gallery. “I love touring neighborhoods like Corn Hill with our town guests,” he said. “Or the East Avenue/Clover area, with all those grand old mansions.”

Outside the city Jimmy likes Sodus Point and Sodus Bay; members of the family that owns Kittelberger’s own The Heights, a restaurant at the Sodus Bay Golf Club. Bruce and Jimmy also like travelling; their highlight trip was to Morocco a few years ago, and next year they plan to go to the Greek islands to mark Bruce’s 50th birthday.

Jimmy sums up, “I can tell you that I was born and raised here and couldn’t imagine living anywhere else. Any career I’ve had—whether waiting on tables, at Edgerton or now at Kittelberger’s—it’s always worked with the public, and people have always been so warm and loyal. The friendships I’ve made have been so long-lasting.”

The Gay Games took place in Cleveland, Ohio last month. See page 5.
Two Iranian men reportedly hanged for “consensual sodomy”

By Sean Mandell on Towleroad.com

A 19-year-old boy from Azerbaijan has reportedly been executed after his parents tried to burn him to death upon learning that he is gay.

Though accounts of the horrendous attack have protected the identity of the victim, referring to him only as “Malik”, the boy reportedly still faces danger as do many LGBT individuals in Azerbaijan.

Gay Star News reports that Malik endured three months of blackmail from anonymous individuals on Facebook who threatened to send pictures of him at a Pride parade in his parents’ names.

“[Malik’s] parents attempted to burn him with gasoline,” the LGBT Azerbaijan Alliance reports, adding that they punched and kicked him.

Even though [Malik] ran away from home, his parents continued to search for him and once found him with his friends, he and his friends were taken back by his family...meaning he has no chance to escape.
A Los Angeles gay man has filed a lawsuit after discovering that his medical record had been marked under "chronic problems." Matthew Moore, 46, who is openly gay, said he was shocked to see his sexual orientation still described as a chronic problem more than a year after he complained about the designation to the Torrance Memorial Health Association. Moore wrote a letter complaining about the designation to the Torrance Memorial Physician Network, the group to impose their agenda of discrimination and hate onto a gay patient. The Torrance Memorial Physician Network does not view homosexuality as a diagnosis, Moore said of his decision to sue. "It was another attempt by this doctor and this medical group to impose their agenda of discrimination and hate onto a gay patient," Moore said.

Lee Miringoff, the director of the Marist poll, those who know someone who's gay has skyrocketed in the last decade, she said. "It's like, 'I'm not completely different, I'm just like everyone else.' Having your story told validates your experience," she said. "It's like, 'I'm not alone anymore, and maybe I'll be OK.'" But there are also concerns. Some say the increased visibility of transgender people and transgender issues has led to a rise in hate crimes against transgender people of color. "In 2014, 74 percent of all hate crimes against gender people of color were committed against trans women of color. The trans woman fell to the ground, and the suspect continued the attack. Four days later, the 21-year-old was removed from life support and died. There was a quick arrest, the crime happened in front of a police station. The suspect was initially charged with misdemeanor assault. That was eventually dropped and, a year later, no one faces a bigger shift in public opinion. "Hard-pressed to find an issue that has had a bigger shift in public opinion," said Lee Miringoff, the director of the Marist Institute for Public Opinion in New York, who has conducted the survey. "You'd be hard-pressed to find an issue that has had a bigger shift in public opinion." And the group notes one way to honor those who know someone who's gay is to support an organization that could help explain the conflict in the nation. "The Orange Is The New Black" actress talks about a trans child being bullied and internalized a lot of shame about who I was as a child," Cox said.

Lee Miringoff, the director of the Marist poll, said she let the issue go, thinking the problem was solved. But when he obtained his medical records in May, he said he was stunned to see that while the 502.0 code had been removed, "homosexual behavior" was still listed under "chronic problems." Moore is suing both his former physician and the Torrance Memorial Medical Center. Referring to the incidence of suicide among LGBT youth, Moore told the local NBC affiliate, "I don't want any gay, lesbian, transgender or bisexual ever to hear from a doctor that their normal and healthy sexuality is anything but normal."

Son of gay dads wins national diving title at age 15

ESPN reports:

Windle is a national champion diver before he's old enough to be a licensed driver. Windle, who doesn't turn 16 on November 14, won men's 10-meter title with 527.8 points Aug. 10 to cap the final day of the U.S. national championships. Windle exceeded 90 points on each of his first three dives. He started his day by earning 103.6 points on a forward 4½-somersault tuck. That was the only 100-point dive by anyone in the six-day event. The revelation could help explain why recent violence has a specific impact of trans- women of color. "In 2014, 74 percent of all hate crimes against gender people of color were committed against trans women of color. The trans woman fell to the ground, and the suspect continued the attack. Four days later, the 21-year-old was removed from life support and died. There was a quick arrest, the crime happened in front of a police station. The suspect was initially charged with misdemeanor assault. That was eventually dropped and, a year later, no one faces punishment for the death of the intern assistant designer. For more information, visit http://lalakego.wordpress.com

Laverne Cox talks about suicide attempt as a bullied trans child

By Joe Morgan on gaystarnews.com

Laverne Cox, a trans star, and actress Laverne Cox has said she is thankful she survived her suicide attempt in the sixth grade.

"I was bullied and I internalized a lot of shame about who I was as a child," Cox said.

"While I was called sissy, I was called the f-word. I was chased home from school practically every day. There was always a kid or groups of kids who wanted to beat me up."

"When discussing her role on the hit Netflix series "Orange Is The New Black," Cox said many trans people see themselves reflected in her character. Sophia, her character, shares your story, she finds your journey validates your experience," she said. "It's like, 'I'm not alone anymore, and maybe I'll be OK.'"

"Are more than 10 transgender gay women in the U.S. that are named Laverne Cox. That's one of the reasons why people are really excited for me and just told me I was born and raised for that," Windle said. "That's what I did through the whole event."

This is the latest chapter in Windle's coming-out story. Windle was born in Cambodia and was placed in an orphanage as a baby after his parents died. He was adopted at 18 months-old and moved to the United States. He now lives in Murrierville, North Carolina.

Windle, who posted an it Gets Better video in 2011, was watching a news program on an Indiana gay pride event in 2012 when he was just 13 years old. His website catalyzed a campaign to get legislation for gay marriage for the State of the United States at the 2016 Olympics in Rio. And if that's not gay marriage, he was shocked to see his sexual orientation still described as a chronic problem.

"It was an essay prompt that found that those who know someone who's gay same-sex marriage by 61-31 percent. Those who say they don't know anyone who's gay support same-sex marriage by 57-56 percent.

This also found that Republicans oppose same-sex marriage by better than 2-1 while those who oppose it by nearly 3-1.

More at: http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/america -who-know-gay-person-twice-like-martinlawson-f31609b14#thats48RRWhi0dpuf

Poll: Americans who know gay person are more likely to back marriage equality

The attitudes of Americans towards gay men and lesbians are changing at a rapid pace with a solid majority supporting same-sex marriage. A majority say they wouldn't be upset if their child were gay and 61 percent say marriage equality is a social justice issue. The majority of Americans believe that the orientation of a Congressional candidate wouldn't matter, according to a new Markey-McKinnon poll. It found that the sea change in attitudes is being propelled by two major factors: One, people are becoming 18-29, which are overwhelmingly favor same-sex marriage. Two, the ranks of Americans who say they know someone who is gay has rocketed over the last decade and a half. And those who know someone who is gay are almost twice as likely to support same-sex marriage.

Of the over 1,235 adults interviewed via telephone for the survey, those who were overwhelmingly in favor of gay marriage, the number who actually know a gay person has surged from 30 percent in 2010 to 45 percent in 2013. Those who know someone gay are almost twice as likely to support same-sex marriage.

"It is a sea change in attitudes," said Lee Miringoff, the director of the Marist Institute for Public Opinion in New York, who has conducted the survey. "You'd be hard-pressed to find an issue that has had a bigger shift in public opinion." This world cannot handle my true colours. Goodbye."
tion from socially conservative lobbyist to homophobic firebrand. Saenz, a devout Catholic, has been a right-wing operative in Texas for many years — working on abortion and religious liberty cases as a staff attorney for the Plano-based Liberty Legal Institute as far back as 2005. However, it wasn’t until recently that Saenz emerged as one of the state’s best-known — and most extreme — anti-LGBT voices.

Court records indicate that Saenz’s ex-wife, Corrine Morrris Rodriguez Saenz, is a member of the LGBT community who was dating another woman when she filed for divorce from Saenz in August 2011. In early 2012, with their divorce still pending, Saenz would take the helm of Texas Values after the organization spun off from the Liberty Legal Institute, where he’d risen to chief lobbyist.

According to the above-linked report, Saenz successfully petitioned a court to bar his ex-wife’s girlfriend from being in the presence of his children. That order was apparently dropped when the divorce was finalized over a year later. He also reportedly tried to have his ex-wife jailed for refusing to undergo a psychological evaluation by a doctor who also evaluates sex offenders for the state of Texas. — JoeMyGod.com

PREVIOUSLY ON JMG: In addition to spearheading the drive to repeal Houston’s LGBT rights ordinance, Saenz has declared that gay activists want Christians thrown into concentration camps. In June 2012, Perkins praised Saenz for his work on the Texas GOP party plank with his anti-LGBT platform that included the assertion that “can and does” enforce the marriage ban.

In Indiana, Governor Mike Pence praised Saenz for his attempt to be dismissed as a defendant in the lawsuit, notes Zack Ford at ThinkProgress.

The Republican governor had asked the court to dismiss him as a defendant, claiming he did not have the legal authority to enforce existing marriage laws or direct state agencies on how to interpret such laws. However, in the wake of Young’s June ruling — which did not include a stay, resulting in hundreds of same-sex couples legally marrying in Indiana before the Seventh Circuit eventually granted a stay — Pence issued a memo advising state agencies not to extend benefits to same-sex couples legally married in Indiana because the Seventh Circuit eventually granted a stay — Pence issued a memo advising state agencies not to extend benefits to same-sex couples legally married in the state’s broad equality window. The governor’s chief counsel authored that memo, distributed to all state agencies, advising them that the state’s anti-equality law was still in full force, and to “function as though [Young’s] Court Order of June 25 had not been issued.”

By doing so, Young said in his ruling, the governor indicated that he has misinterpreted his duties when he told the court that he couldn’t regulate the implementation of state marriage laws.

Since Pence made those claims, “the Governor issued memoranda, through his attorney, and did what he claimed he could not do by directing executive agencies on how to proceed in enforcing the law,” Young writes.

That memo, Young writes, “clearly contradicts [Pence’s] prior representations to the court.” As ThinkProgress notes, Young points to the governor’s “specific ability to command the executive branch regarding the law,” noting that he “can and does” enforce the marriage ban.

The decision, in a case known as Bowling v. Pence, was handed down by U.S. District Judge Richard Young — the same judge who found Indiana’s voter-approved ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional in June. The Bowling case was the final legal challenge to Indiana’s marriage laws awaiting a ruling, reports Bilerico. The case was filed by private attorneys on behalf of two same-sex couples who were legally married in states that performed such unions, but who could not access benefits, including the ability to file joint tax returns, once they returned home to Indiana.

Although the decision does not address a fundamental right to the freedom to marry, Judge Young did take the opportunity to lambast Indiana Gov. Mike Pence for his attempt to be dismissed as a defendant in the lawsuit, notes Zack Ford at ThinkProgress.

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New Jersey school reverses course on trans teen's suspension
By John M. Becker on The Bilerico Project
Thorne Middle School -- the New Jersey school that allegedly told Rachel Peters her gender was wrong, that she couldn’t return to school unless she presented as male -- has reversed course, will allow Pepe to attend as herself, and will work with LGBT groups to ensure a safe and welcoming learning environment for all students, regardless of gender identity.

Garden State Equality reports: GSE Executive Director Andrea Brown just spoke with Middletown Township Public Schools Superintendent William O. George III, Ed. D. The two agreed that GSE will take the lead in training administration and staff members of Middletown Township Public Schools in LGBT sensitivity. GSE will work with partners Lambda Legal and the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) Central New Jersey chapter.

“We applaud Superintendent George for taking the right steps to affirm the health and safety of students,” says Bowen. “This is a victory for transgender students everywhere. This Middletown student and students like her are heroes for standing up for their needs. We’re excited that the community came together in dialogue to bring this situation to a happy resolution.”

Kudos to Rachel Peppe and her mom, Angela Peters, for standing strong in the face of discrimination. We take the inclusivity of our defini- tions very seriously and have listened to the concerns raised. We are looking into how we can make the options broader and clearer, as quickly as possible, by engaging with representative groups. We are committed to ensuring that all students are able to identify and remove any barriers to an inclusive environment for all students.


Smithsonian adds hundreds of artifacts to LGBT history collection

On Aug. 19, the Smithsonian Institution added hundreds of artifacts (including photographs and papers) to document LGBT history. This could be a big step for many who consider LGBT an underrepresented area of history.

The New Zealand Herald reports that included among the objects will be props from Will and Grace. Show creators David Kohan and Max Munchnick and NBC will submit scripts, drafts, and props to the Museum of American History.

Will and Grace was selected because it “used comedy to familiarize a mainstream audience with gay culture,” said Curator Dwight Blocker Bowers. “It was daring and broke ground in the same way All in the Family did in the 1970s around issues of bigotry and tolerance.”

Also included among the submissions to the Smithsonian will be the original transgender flag, Monica Helms, the creator of the flag, has donated to the same museum as Will and Grace.

Via GA Voice, said Helms: “I’m totally amazed. This is an honor for the entire trans community... I’m not going to take all the honor. All I did was create the idea, but if the trans community embraces it, it wouldn’t have become as popular.”

Also included in the Smithsonian additions will be trans sports pioneer Renee Richards’ tennis racket and the diplomatic passports of U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa David Huebner and his husband, Duane Maizene.

Read more: http://www.towleroad.com/notice/NewZealand-Continued.html

NOTE: The Smithsonian LGBT collection includes the archives of The Empty Closet and Rochester’s Helping People with AIDS.

Dept. of Labor will enforce trans anti-discrimination laws
From Patrick Schilt, director of the Office Of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, on Aug. 20:

The federal government holds con- tracts with about 200,000 establishments, and these contractors and subcontractors play an important role in making our country work. They provide food, cloth- ing, energy, transportation, medical treat- ment and thousands of essential services all across the country. As the director of the Office of Federal Contract Compli- ance Programs, I oversee the agency that enforces laws that prohibit federal employ- ers from discriminating in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, nation- al origin, disability, status as a protected veteran or sex.

Today, we issued guidance clarify- ing that sex discrimination extends to gender identity and transgender status. This follows an announcement Secretary Perez made in June that the department is updating enforcement protocols and anti-discrimination guidance to clarify that they provide the full protection of the federal non-discrimination laws that we enforce to transgender individuals. And in May, President Obama’s signing of Executive Order 13672 adding sexual orientation and gender identity as inde- pendent categories protected by Executive Order 11246, which OFCCP enforces.

So what does this mean? It means honoring our commitment to upholding equality in America’s workforce. Being entrusted with taxpayer dollars is a privi-ilege, and with that privilege comes a promise to open doors to all of America’s workers. I believe that success for OFCCP and for federal contractors isn’t simply about compliance. It’s about creating a workplace culture that actually embraces diversity. Inclusiveness isn’t just good for workers; it’s smart for business. When employees can work without fear, when they can confidently bring their whole selves to the job, companies benefit from the diverse perspectives and enthusiasm that each employee brings to the job.
The Empty Closet is #1

To the Editor:

I lived (worked and retired) in Rochester for most of my life. Presently I live in California... I do miss Rochester very much but still have friends there and do keep up with events and happenings in the gay community. The Empty Closet has been and always will be the #1 gay publication in the country. It has always been on top of the news relating to the community. Thanks to my friends there and do keep up with events.

Regards,

Mike Sciortino

The Empty Closet is #1

From our readers

The Good the Bad and the Funny... Trans' people speak out at Equal-Grounds open mic

By Eileen Fay

On July 16, patrons of Equal Grounds Coffee House were treated to an open mic night starring transgender, gender variant, and intersex people from all walks of life. Host was Shauna Marie O’Toole, founder of the Good, the Bad, and the Funny, a Facebook group “where we can share stories about being Trans” and Intersex... (and as) a place where Allies, Family, and Friends can show their support.” Established in May 2014, this was their second major event.

The twenty-odd participants were each given five minutes to speak and ranged in age from teens to seniors. Shauna opened with her own story of coming out of being a middle-aged schoolteacher and the exhilarating experience of wearing women’s clothing and makeup for the first time at a Halloween party. Masks and acting popular themes throughout the evening, as others described the struggle to conform to the gender assigned to them at birth. “I learned to act, learned to play the role of a little boy,” recalled Pam Bartes, trans woman. “I like to joke a lot and make my pain,” explained Yovi, a trans man who went on to emphasize the importance of therapy and complete medical care as part of the physical transition process.

The psychological chasm between public façade and inner truth, combined with heavy social and institutional marginalization, has led some 41 percent of the American trans* community to attempt suicide, according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. In one of the evening’s most poignant moments, Gabrielle remembered her own attempt as “the day I made God cry.”

One of the most original performances of the night was KT Schwartz’s piece, “Bathroom Dynamics: A Genderqueer Janitor’s Perspective,” which included props from KT’s line of work as an elementary school custodian. KT takes low-dose testosterone and identifies as a genderqueer person who leans male. As a biology minor, he is prohibited from cleaning the restroom while a boy is present, thereby highlighting the at times Kalketaas complications faced by non-binary people living in a binary world.

Other presentations included Thomas Adams, who performed his original poem “The Peculiar Tale of One Psychedelic Human Person,” which ended with the proclamation “Hi, I’m Thomas and I’m a boy!” JC, described how she successfully sued her school and won after a professor – in a class called Sex and Society, no less – defended a fellow student’s use of transphobic slurs as “coming from a place of learning.”

Chloe Prince and April Wilkes talked about their upcoming film project Trans Across America – Heroes and Survivors, based on the stories they collected from trans* people all over the country. Currently, they are working with physicians, therapists, and other healthcare professionals to provided free and reduced-cost services to trans* people in need. (Chloe was also creator of PinkEssence, an online support site predating Facebook and MySpace.)

Also present were Noah Wagoner and Jason Robert Ballard, co-founders of the Self-Made Men group for trans men. Jason is also founder of FTMyMagazine, while Noah has done TEDx talks on trans issues. “Every time I hear a trans woman speak I wish there was a part exchange program,” Jason joked.

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is, “No man should have to go through prostate cancer alone.” With the support of local urologists, the first meeting of the Rochester chapter was held in November 2012. “We sent word out, set a date for the meeting, and lo and behold, the room filled up,” Fisher said.

Fisher reported that local hospitals and organizations are “on board” with providing educational meetings on the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Each meeting is hosted by an urologist or other subject matter expert, followed by a Q&A portion. Support group meetings are also held at Camp Good Days and Special Times in Mendon, which also helps sponsor an annual retreat at Keuka Lake. As Chapter Leader, Fisher encourages men to attend education and support group meetings with their spouse or partner, highlighting that by the fact that his own partner Roger was instrumental in his recovery. Many men find it difficult to open up at their first meeting, particularly about sensitive side effects such as erectile dysfunction and urinary incontinence that may occur following surgery or treatment. However, men begin to open up soon after, Fisher said.

Fisher’s ultimate goal is to have awareness of prostate cancer reach the pinnacle that breast cancer awareness has reached for women. “Women have it right… they put their heads, and minds, and hearts together and created awareness,” Fisher said.

The U.S. Preventative Services Taskforce does not recommend PSA blood tests to screen men for prostate cancer. However, Fisher encourages men to take control of their health care and find their own advocate in discussing testing with their doctor. The Rochester chapter of Us Too now has approximately 200 members, with 15 urologists participating in educational meetings with the organization. “Even though 200 is a lot of growth for me, it doesn’t even begin to touch the surface of the number of men who could benefit from occasional meetings given by urologists,” Fisher said.

For more information about the regional chapter of Us Too International, including information about the location of support and educational meetings, visit https://www.sites.google.com/site/usutoorochesterny/.

About prostate cancer
According to the New York State Department of Health, it is estimated that one in six men will develop prostate cancer during their lifetime. Although any man is at risk for developing prostate cancer, men further at risk include men from age 50, African American men from age 45 and men who have a father, brother, or son diagnosed with prostate cancer. According to Fisher’s research, additional risk factors may include veterans exposed to Agent Orange and men taking testosterone supplements, including transgender women who still have a prostate.

For more information about prostate cancer, visit http://www.health.ny.gov/dis-ease/cancer/prostate/.

Patrick Fisher
Local “Us Too” Chapter seeks to spread the word on Prostate Cancer recovery

By Adam Young
When Patrick Fisher was diagnosed with prostate cancer in July 2010, he felt he could handle the diagnosis on his own. But as the side effects from the treatment began to impact his life, he realized connecting with men in a similar situation might have helped ease his recovery. The problem was the slim presence of cancer support groups for men in the Rochester area.

Fisher co-founded the Rochester chapter of Us Too International, a non-profit organization dedicated to support, education, and advocacy for men dealing with prostate cancer. According to Fisher, over 13,000 men in Monroe County and the Finger Lakes region are living with prostate cancer. The main message of Us Too is, “No man should have to go through prostate cancer alone.” With the support of local urologists, the first meeting of the Rochester chapter was held in November 2012. “We sent word out, set a date for the meeting, and lo and behold, the room filled up,” Fisher said.

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Darryl Mitteldorf
Malecare’s “Out with Cancer” program offers online support for all

By Adam Young
Malecare was initially founded in 1998 as a non-profit organization dedicated to providing psycho-social support to gay men diagnosed with cancer. The New York City based international volunteer organization grew so much that in 2005, a program was spun off to offer in-person and online support to all LGBT people. The LGBT Cancer Project: Out with Cancer was established to provide resources and support to diagnosed individuals. Another objective is to foster cultural awareness among medical professionals who treat LGBT people. “One of the things we do is work with doctors to bring them up to speed with who we are,” said Darryl Mitteldorf, LCSW, Executive Director of Malecare.

According to Mitteldorf, anal cancer is 17 times more common in gay men than straight men. An increased rate of smoking may also lead to certain cancers being more prevalent in the LGBT community, Mitteldorf said. However, there is no data to suggest that prostate cancer is more prevalent in gay men than straight men.

Mitteldorf stresses that medical providers have to ask pertinent questions in order to understand what lifestyle factors may play a role in cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment. “By doing benzing and kind intervention with these doctors, we help them to understand that cancer survivors within our community do in fact present in a slightly different way in terms of needs,” Mitteldorf said.

On the Out with Cancer website at www.outwithcancer.com, people can register with the site to begin posting questions and take part in discussions with other members. Members feel comfortable there because they can post and discuss anonymously across geographic and economic boundaries, Mitteldorf said. Website users have also exchanged contact information to talk over the phone. “It shows each individual that they’re really not alone,” Mitteldorf said.

The Out with Cancer website also offers a database of clinical trials, organized by type of cancer. Out with Cancer’s parent organization, Malecare, also offers other programs, such as Twice as Many, a national advocacy program for African American men diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Malecare plans to offer a more personalized approach to care by emailing a tailored “flash” newsletter to members with specific diagnoses beginning in the fall. According to Mitteldorf, the malecare.org and outwithcancer.com websites are also due for an upgrade by the end of the year. Mitteldorf, a social worker himself, is proud of the variety of medical professionals who volunteer their time with Malecare and Out with Cancer, including doctors, social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists.

For more information about the different programs offered by Malecare, visit http://www.malecare.org. For more information about support through the LGBT Cancer Project: Out with Cancer, visit www.outwithcancer.com/.

John Magere is at Geva with the Gay Alliance

By Adam Young
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Vanya & Sonia & Masha & Spike
Friday, May 14, 7:30pm

The LGBT Community’s perfect way to make new or catch up with old friends while enjoying Rochester’s best theatre! Enjoy a free, 40-minute pre-show reception in the Geva Café before the performance.
Pets and their gays

By Susan Jordan

Brian O’Neill and James Hansen adopted Eleanor, an English Springer Spaniel, when she was nine weeks old. She will be nine years old in November. Brian, an artist, and James, a choreographer, recently moved to Corn Hill, and Eleanor has adapted well to her new house. Brian says, “She is such a well-behaved dog, with a well-developed sense of boundaries.”

He feels that Eleanor is extremely intuitive, since she knows a day ahead of time when guests are expected. She starts watching the door four or five hours before they are to arrive. When Brian has been away and is coming back, she will get up about four hours before he is scheduled to arrive and wait at the door.

What Eleanor really doesn’t like is when both Brian and Jim go away for a while; she has a caretaker who stays with her, whom she likes, but still this is not her favorite thing. Brian said, “She doesn’t need to see suitcases to know we’re going away – she’ll hear us talking about leaving and she hides her head under the sofa to indicate she is not pleased.”

Her humans do take her on car trips. Brian said, “We visit Jim’s mom in Iowa and drive out there for Christmas and Fourth of July. We tell her she’s going to see Grandma and she gets excited! We’ve taken her to Maine and Florida in the car — she’s very good.”

The other thing Eleanor dislikes is her Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz costume, which Brian no longer dresses her in. He said, “She tolerates dog drag but isn’t crazy about it. So now I just do that in Photoshop!” Eleanor has featured online as Vivien Leigh in Gone With the Wind and as Kate Middleton, or rather the Duchess of Cambridge, whose long brown hair uncannily resembles Eleanor’s long ears.

Chris added, “They have two coats – the undercoat and the top fluffy coat. So we have to brush them weekly.”

Eleanor is a five-year-old tom and Kennedy is a nine-year-old female. Lincoln seems to have the more serene personality. Jo says, “He’s a sweetheart.” Chris says, “He’s attention-seeking and inquisitive.” Jo adds, “Mischievous but docile. He has juvenile gingivitis — got all his front teeth when he was a year old. So we have to brush his teeth every night. When it gets dark he hides, but then he resists himself.”

Chris said, “He loves pencils and pens, spoons — anything he can bat around, he will bat around.”

Jo added, “His favorite toy is those little plastic balls with bells inside, which he likes playing with at 11 p.m. And he likes heights — he likes to be up high.”

Lincoln’s favorite food is “anything off the floor,” Chris said. “Anything carb. Bread has to stay in the microwave.”

Jo agreed, “He has been known to open a package of rolls. But he won’t turn his back on any food. We think he just likes bread because we don’t want him to eat it.”

Jo and Chris live in a high-traffic area. Jo said, “They are both strictly indoors cats. We sometimes take them outside and hold them in the gazebo on the deck.”

Kennedy is the alpha cat of the household. Jo comments, “Kennedy is very high-maintenance. She wants things the way she wants them. She has anxiety issues – she wears a mother-cat pheromone collar now, which has made a world of difference. She’s a different cat with it. When she’s anxious she can be aggressive with Chris – but not me.” (Lincoln prefers Chris and Kennedy prefers Jo.)

Although Kennedy can be “difficult,” she loves Lincoln and they get along well. Chris notes, “They play together — him mostly chasing her and her tolerating it for a while. She likes to be near you and may put a paw on you, but it’s on HER terms. Unlike Lincoln (a garbage can), she is a picky eater. One day she’ll love something and the next day she won’t touch it!”

Taking Kennedy to the vet is a two-person job. But as Chris said, “She’s the alpha cat – the alpha everything.”

Jo said, “The two represent to me that animals have feelings, personalities and souls — these two are so different from each other.”
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19th century Trans* history continued

This month Shoulders to Stand On continues the history of Transgender men and women as they come to the fore in the 19th century. Joseph Lodell was born Lucy Ann Lodell in Westerlo, Albany County, NY in 1829. Lured by cheap land, Lucy’s family moved to Delaware County when she was young. Her father was unable to do much work. Lucy took up hunting and when their infant child was a few weeks old, Lucy was arrested and incarcerated in an insane asylum. He was, however, able to marry a woman.

In 1850, the Crow nation woman chief Barcherampewa was spotted by appalled white travelers in Wyoming and Montana; she was renowned for her war exploits and for having several wives. In 1860, Herculine Barbin who lived as a girl’s school, moved to Paris but continued to live in poverty, and ultimately committed suicide in 1868. Suicide is often seen by those who are gender variant as the only choice they have.

During the American Civil War (1861–1865) at least 240 biological women are known to have worn men’s clothing and fought as soldiers. Some of them were transgender and continued to live as men throughout their lives. One such notable soldier was Albert Cashier. Born Jennie Irene Hodgers, Albert D. J. Cashier (1843–1915) was an Irish-born immigrant who served as a male soldier in the Union Army during the American Civil War. Cashier was female assigned at birth, but lived as a man. In 1914 Albert developed severe dementia and was institutionalized at the Illinois state hospital for the insane. He was, however, able to marry a man. In 1915 Albert developed severe dementia and was institutionalized at the Illinois state hospital for the insane. It was not until 1930 that Albert’s secret was revealed. Official records had been a surgeon with the British Army, but Albert had been passing as male since at least 1890.

In the United States, the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified in 1868. The equal protection and due process clauses in Section 1 would implicitly include transgender and transsexual persons, as well as any other identifiable group. While the Supreme Court has not fully embraced the Amendment’s implications for transgender rights, these clauses will presumably form the basis of future rulings.

The term “homosexuality” appears in print for the first time in 1869 in a German-Hungarian pamphlet written by Karl-Maria Kertbeny (1824–1882). Also in 1869, Karl Friedrich Otto Westphal publishes the first medical paper on transsexuality, describing two cases of what he termed “die contraire Sexeslempfindung” (“contrary sexual feeling”), one being a male transvestite (the other a lesbian). In 1895 a group of self-described androgynes in New York organized a club called the Circle Hermaphrodites, based on their wish “to unite for defense against the world’s bitter persecution.”

The year 1897 saw Henry Havelock Ellis of the Fabian Society, a supporter of sexual liberation, write his six volume “Studies in the Psychology of Sex”. The books, published between 1897 and 1910, caused tremendous controversy and were banned for several years. In this same year Magnus Hirschfeld starts the mostly homosexual Scientific Humanitarian Committee in Germany.

The history of the Transgender and Gender Variant community is steeped in the history of the world. Shoulders To Stand On applauds the many men and women who lived secret lives in order to be free to be who they were. This incredible history of courage overcoming fear will continue next month into the 20th century.

2014 Pride Picnic

This year A & G Meats made a donation of $200 to the Picnic, and their own refrigerated truck to Sonny’s, who prepared the Picnic food, and who also made a donation of $250 to offset food cost. THANK YOU to both Sonny’s and A & G Meats for their support of the 2014 Pride Picnic.

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Growing Up

The Good German

By Eric Bellmann

Psychologists tell us that the German homemaker engenders an unconscious understanding that home is a place where minor vandalism thrives; twelve feet beyond the frozen door of her house. That is why pots of outdoor plants are well tended, why sidewalks are swept clean and also why she is more than likely to be watching whatever is transpiring in the neighborhood.

I had a theory: the direct opposite of the Turkish housewife whose world comes to a halt at her front door. Outside can be a mess. Inside is tidy. Nothing is in order, immaculate.

I considered myself worldly when on a passing trip through Germany, and no longer the innocent dolt. People actually speak in writing. Teacher seemed too ordinary. Now that I'm retired and people ask me what I do, I tell them “I am a homemaker”. I think that's funny. Not that it's relevant here but once upon a time I wrote a column for the English Press, and now that I write this column I discover that it seems I am a homemaker. I think that's funny. Not that it's relevant here.

Anyway, back to slugs. I had studied enough for the quiz which I could clearly see from my kitchen window and I would watch each morning as one, bare-chested and barefoot, would come out to rummage in his car for clean laundry. No doubt some of my neighbors had their own curiosities about the comings and goings at my house. For the last several years the neighborhood has been drama free, but still... When one is retired one can be bored.

So I assume, maybe hope, that as the years march along, I will continue to tend my garden and enjoy the impromptu conversations with passers who walk by and maybe there will be another bare-chested guy who will lift my spirits. Hope so.

Reiniger

Cleaning My Closet

By Meredith Reisinger

Speaking of slugs, a Banana Slug has small teeth on its tongue, so it can eat like a saw so it can eat. Just saying. I recently spotted an enormous, common everyday slug at the foot of my basement stair. A repulsive terrestrial gastropod. After I proclaimed “oh yuck,” Claudia wondered what had precipitated my yucky-ing. I answered: A German demon" she said, and then, there were two yucky-ers.

Once I had slammed the door on the last dilemma, I safely returned to the funky green tufted chair in my cozy garden room, we two morning tea-sippers revealed our innermost thoughts. Do slugs move slowly?

Weren't they my old days, the conversation would have ended with two answers: I don't know and I don't know. But in the twenty-first century, many people have an internalized impulse to search. After I proclaimed “oh yuck,” Claudia wondered what had precipitated my yucky-ing. I answered: A German demon" she said, and then, there were two yucky-ers.

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Faith Matters
AFRICAN AMERICAN SISTERS AGING WITH HIV AND CO-MORBIDITIES
By Rev. Irene Monroe

Meredith (not her real name) was thirty-two when she contracted HIV. Surrounding her was a support network of sister-friends and family who died from AIDS-related virus. Imani did not expect to reach middle age.

Now in her fifth decade of life, Imani has new and multiple challenges. She self-manages her HIV — along with her diabetes, hypertension — while searching for the cure. Her support network has dwindled.

Imani did not expect to reach middle age. All of this has gravely changed her life. Imani has new and multiple challenges. She self-manages her HIV — along with her diabetes, hypertension — while searching for the cure. Her support network has dwindled. I don’t know what the future holds.

“I’m taking it one day at a time. First, employment. The result of these stressors is depression. All of this has gravely changed her life. Imani has new and multiple challenges. She self-manages her HIV — along with her diabetes, hypertension — while searching for the cure. Her support network has dwindled.

But Imani’s not alone. African American women living with HIV — from the black community’s stigmatization to the dominant culture’s condemnation of them — has both unduly burdened their daily lives and compromised their quality of care.

While numerous datasets have surfaced about African American women living with HIV in their younger years, very little has surfaced about how they age with the disease — until recently. The journal AIDS Patient Care and STDS last month published the qualitative study “Taking It One Day at a Time: African American Women Aging with HIV and Co-Morbidities.”

As a welcoming and needed study, its findings are not surprising, and its conclusions are common sense. Imani and other African American sisters living in the community have lived longer with than HIV. And while these social determinants and co-morbidities are diseases difficult to self-manage in African American communities, HIV is no cake walk either.

Imani wondered what was being promoted via the study. And why? As I continued to read the study I think I might have found my answer.

With five focus groups conducted in Washington, D.C., comprising 23 HIV-positive women of African descent between the ages of 52-65, researchers Larri Warren-Jenebourne, Heather Dillaway, Pilar Hamilton, Mary Young and Lakshmi Goparaju reported “that, over time, HIV has become easier to manage in comparison to other illnesses based on advancements they have experienced in their HIV treatment regimens.”

One on the one hand this is great news. It paints an almost sanguine picture that there are indeed programs and patient user-friendly HIV cocktails out there for African American women.

But, the study skews, if not creates, a fallacious narrative. It implies that self-management of HIV as a sole chronic stressor (as it must be for a person — or even a person’s lifetime, especially people of color) isn’t as unmanageable, as are the co-morbidities that most African American women acquire with the disease as they age. And the reason is because of new meds and technological advancements in the field.

The report recognizes that HIV self-management and co-morbidity self-management must go hand-in-hand as a future medical protocol to provide optimal care for this demographic group. And, hopefully, with this new future protocol more African American women will have access to it.

But in now recognizing that HIV care is not a single-disease for African American women, why would researchers think for a moment, that HIV self-management — even with its new meds and technology — is less difficult in sis-
ters’ lives than everything else they must constantly juggle — and especially as they age?

Imani helped me to manage like I do the rest of my ailments and carrying on to, you know, to have a balance in every-
thing.”

By Lainie Declan
I’ve attended Pride events, watching from the sidelines, wandering quietly through them for years. I’ve always identified as bi- or pan-sexual, but never felt the pull of community strongly. I’d go to watch the pageantry and show my sup-
port, adding one more flag-waving body to the mass, reminding people that we were alone.

The first time I actively participated in Pride was Buffalo in 2012. Having made my way to the U.S. to join in the turn-around of these giant floats that covered half of my face. I half-hid behind the banner and meekly held up a sign. People screamed and groaned and cheered as we passed — I barely noticed. I was too afraid of coworkers or family seeing me. Looking back, I’d like to think that it was pretty brave of me, but if future-me had come back and told past-me about Rochester Pride 2014 I never would have believed her.

My Pride this year involved actual pride. I was proud of the trans* community of Rochester, as well as that of Syracuse and Buffalo, came together here (as we traveled to both of those cities) to add to our numbers, our visibility, our presence, and our diversity. My Pride was Buffalo in 2012. Having made my way to the U.S. to join in the turn-around of these giant floats that covered half of my face. I half-hid behind the banner and meekly held up a sign. People screamed and groaned and cheered as we passed — I barely noticed. I was too afraid of coworkers or family seeing me. Looking back, I’d like to think that it was pretty brave of me, but if future-me had come back and told past-me about Rochester Pride 2014 I never would have believed her.

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What’s Bothering Brandon?
THE POLITICS OF BEING OFFENDED
By Brandon W. Brooks

Sometimes I think back to when I was a child, growing up in the ham-
et of Macedon, and wonder where all the hate is now in being gay went. Even in this seemingly LGBT impover-
ished town, and being young and unable to acquire the information or access the opinions of a gay 20-something, I was able to find the needed archetypes of gay men. Humor seemed to be a large part of being gay from my point of view at this time.

Whether it was through television shows I would watch clandestinely out of my watchful parents’ eyes, books, or later the internet, my exposure to images of gay men all contained an element of humor. Both humor used as a defense in response to the self-awareness of our posi-
tion as gay men in a straight society, and
humor used as a means of celebrating our identity was something I found by looking through my little porthole. Being gay appeared quite fun indeed. I doubt, though, that even with the LGBT population being ever so widely present in the media, in politics and as household names, we see something missing: the humor. Everyone, including the humor-steeped LGBT population, is now on the lookout for any language, portrayals or representations of countless demographics that could be seen as in any way as offensive. There are now entire corpora of words and identities that specialize in the monitoring and correcting of offensive representations of themselves and other active demographics (such as GLAAD), which have certainly come in handy. For instance, despite finding Jack McFarland of Will & Grace humorous as a child, I still see why some would find his portrayal as offensive, or at least inappropriate from our efforts. These groups, with their tireless endeavor of monitoring, largely target those who are attempting to portray a demographic of which they are usually not a part (i.e. straight people writing for gay characters). This is all part of what we commonly refer to as being politically correct. This is also where I begin to become bothered.

What does it mean exactly to be politically correct? Political correctness refers to the enforced language, consideration, constructs and policies that concentrate on perceived discrimination against what is known as “protected classes.” This term is one of disputation, as political parties have commanded the term in regard to their own agendas, political orientation, and views of the opposing party. Here, most conservatives find these practices and labels as presumptuous, while most liberals find this to be a positive self-description. Political correctness commands those who may be less considerate to be, theoretically, more considerate.

So where does this become a problem, and why?

I first became acquainted with the perils of political correctness while earning my undergraduate degree in New York City. There I befriended many different peoples, of different backgrounds, some of red blood, others of blue, most straight, others LGBT. Amongst my ever-widening breadth of friendships, I saw something troubling brewing; the fear of discussion when it came to so-called “taboo subjects.” And by “taboo subjects” I mean anything not concerning white, straight, upper-middle class matters.

Now, my gender display could generally be classified as that of someone who is “obviously” gay. Most people I met and befriended knew that I was gay from the start, and this was certainly not a problem (hence, friends). What troubled me, however, was that in an attempt to be politically correct or inclusive, these friends would sometimes tip-toe around certain subjects or topics, especially if they were LGBT-related. When I would address their timid “unsurefootedness,” I was told that they did not wish to offend me, not because I was known to be easily offended, but because they felt that since I was gay, any challenge to LGBT-topics would be politically incorrect. And there’s that term again.

How could something that was meant to promote inclusivity actually work against its proposed purpose? It seems to me that many people are hesitant, indeed afraid even, to disclose their point of view or remain open to discussion when it comes to issues that we are bade to address in a politically correct manner. It has come to the point where we sometimes feel that the very act of broaching certain issues works as an agent of offense in and of itself. We have become verbally paralyzed; we don’t want to offend anyone, or worse, be offended ourselves.

But is the latter end of this statement completely true? I certainly feel that modernity has not only brought us a more varied sense of individuality, but also the willingness, and indeed the desire, to be offended. Many people (to be fair, many young people) are eager and looking for something to offend them personally, so they can voice their point of view. Call it a valid indignation, ruffling, or simply whining, it seems everyone is upset about something these days (including my bowered self) and ready to shout it from the rooftops of their online profiles (or newspaper column). Everyone is either waiting to be offended, or has already been offended. We live more in the age of feelings, than the age of principle or tradition, it would seem.

We no longer live in a political or social environment that provides for or facilitates in-depth, analytical or honest rhetoric amongst demographics, let alone from within them. Everything is polemical where personal opinion is King. Take this past season of RuPaul’s Drag Race for example. The opening mail segment, which always included the phrase ‘You’ve got she-mail’, has now been deemed offensive, an act of betrayal directed towards the Trans community, and has since been banned from appearing on future episodes as well as being erased from all past episodes. So you’re telling me a man who celebrates gender fluidity, indeed broadcasts it nationally, is carelessly using the term “she-mail” in an attempt to alienate, demonize, and pathologize the Trans community? Child please.

How could the gay community turn against itself in this way? How could we have lost all of our humor, our self-awareness and self-appreciation and ended up in this battle of who-can-be-more-offended, who-takes-themselves-more-seriously? Are we really accomplishing anything other than creating schisms within our extended LGBT family?

We have paralyzed others and ourselves by focusing so sharply on the exact words we choose, rather than the overall message being said. Nothing that needs to be said is said any longer, at least not without a large coating of sugar applied first. We have learned to mince our words and remain silent for fear of punishment or backlash if we do not agree with what is supposedly “correct” politically. Others choose to hide behind a computer screen or smart phone to voice their dis-ease. At least I leave my contact information with each column for critique to be sent to me directly.

The last question with which I leave you is my most astute; are we politically correct, or politically paralyzed?

Questions, comments or critique? Please feel free to e-mail the author at: brandonb@gayalliance.org
Find the friends, fun, and common interests you're looking for through the various groups listed here.

BUTCH FEMME CONNECTION & LORA KNITTING GROUP
Butch Femmes: The Rochester Butch Femmes is a monthly meeting club with two dinner outings in September. On Saturday, September 13 we will meet at Double J Diner in Brighton (across from Poole’s Market/Milkys). On Saturday September 27 we will meet at Jay’s Dine on West Henrietta Road (Rte 15) in Henrietta at 7 p.m. For further information call Kerry/Max at 585-957-6627 or email Dreszy-Femmie@gmail.com. L.O.R.A. Knitting Group is cancelled for September but will resume in October. Contact Kerry at 585 224 6601 for details.

DIGNITY INTEGRITY
D-1 Rochester meets weekly at 5 p.m., at St. Luke’s and St. Simon’s Church, 17 S. Fitzhugh St., Rochester. For more information, please visit the website. They have the following services and activities for the month of September 2014:

1st Sunday: Episcopal Mass/Healing Service
2nd Sunday: Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Word, worship, service and a meal
3rd Sunday: Episcopal Mass
4th Sunday: Evening Prayer, followed by a Potluck Dinner

Our fourth Sunday Potluck theme for September is “Do It to Me One More Time” and they continue to do know what kind of summer dish...One More Last (time) before fall”. So, find those recipes that you’ll miss until next summer and whip up a batch. No time to cook? Don’t worry, there is always plenty to share so get a friend or two and join us for a great meal!

We are celebrating 39 years of Dignity-Integrity this year and we welcome you to celebrate with us! Come on Sunday, October 12 for a service and a dinner at a local restaurant. We’re also hoping to host a Fall Cabin Party, possibly in early November, to get everyone ready for another great season!

And what can we do about it? This symposium will be a profound inquiry of a question - Where on Earth are we going? We will be joined by a Potluck Dinner!

On Saturday, October 18th you are invited and encouraged to come to the Pachamama Alliance Symposium: “Awakening the Dreamer: Changing the Dream,” which asks us all to answer two questions - Where on Earth are we going? And what can we do about it? This symposium will be at the Open Arms Community Center at 707 East Main St., almost right across the street from Delta Sonic.

On Wednesday, October 1, we will have:
“Being Trans...Being Healthy...Being Alive...The history of lived health & cancer risks of being Trans” - from 7-9 p.m. The presenter will be Dr. Sharon Ullian, FACP, from the U of R who is a member of WPATH World Professional Association for Transgender Health. We’re told that her presentation is AMAZING -- it brings a wider perspective including information from the patient’s perspective on what they can do about it and support for all these things we are doing and want to do!

Our Saturday, September 27 meeting from 3-5:30 p.m. is an open discussion support group. Everyone is encouraged to come and share related personal issues while the rest of the group can offer sympathetic ears and helpful suggestions. So come to a meeting and find out you are not only the one and you are NOT alone! We will meet at the Downtown United Methodist Church at 500 East Main St., almost right across the street from Delta Sonic.

And for all of the above information we will have a Fall is right around the corner, and so is the beginning of The Rochester Women’s Community Chorus’ new season! We are looking for singers and non-singing volunteers for our winter concert on Saturday, December 6, 2014.

Our theme this season is Simple Gifts. We will be singing songs about sharing love, music, friendship, and of course, gifts. We will also be singing some holiday music – it is a holiday concert after all.

Our first rehearsal of the new season is Tuesday, September 9. Rehearsals are from 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. we have a short break for refreshments and announcements. New singers are encouraged to arrive at 6:30 for a brief rehearsal to go over calligraphy and voice placement with the music director. We will be accepting new singers for the first three weeks of the season.

We rehearse at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church at 121 N. Fitzhugh Street at 7:30 p.m. The Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus, or RGMC, is in need of a replacement board member to replace an outgoing representative. We are primarily searching for a new member who would represent the I. B. 8 or T in LBGT and have a great interest in choral music or the arts. The position would require meeting once monthly on the fourth Monday of each month. The board meeting. They take about two hours usually. The representative would also have to be available for advising and planning forward the mission of the RGMC.

More information about board positions and the organization can be found on their website at www.thergmc.org. I am also happy to take your calls or questions at dgrundy@laudio.com or 585/877-1348. I look forward to hearing from you.

Darryl G. Tandy
RGMC Board Chair

ROCHESTER HISTORICAL BOWLING SOCIETY
Like to bowl? You should consider joining the Rochester Historical Bowling Society as we begin our 27th season on Monday, September 22. We are a mixed league of men and women with four people to a team. Our season begins on September 22 at 5:30 p.m. and is followed by food and some good conversation! And then on September 27 we welcome our bowling back to lead us in some joyous (on key) singing!

On Tuesday and Thursday mornings Rainbow SAGE does Yoga with instructor Tom Somerville from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. to help our regular Service begins at 10:30 a.m. and are followed by food and some good conversation! And then on September 27 we welcome our choir back to lead us in some joyous (on key) singing!

On Tuesday evenings we sponsor Coffee Chant and Game Night. Catch up with the week’s happenings and enjoy some games, games, games and socializing. Our Tuesday Service begins at 10:30 a.m. and goes to 8 p.m. and meets at Equal Grounds, 705 South Ave.

The night’s happening!” Cornerstone Sheep will be at the Open Arms Community Center on September 21 at 6:30 p.m. There is plenty of free parking in front and to the side of our building. For further information call Kerry/Max at 585-957-6627 or email Dreszy-Femmie@gmail.com. We can also be found on Facebook.

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Being Trans...Being Healthy...Being Aware
Facing the elevated health risks of being Trans

Wednesday October 1
7:00pm to 9:00pm
Open Arms MCC Community Center
707 East Main Street, Rochester 14605

Transgender and gender non-conforming people face heightened health risks, most of which are tied to the effects of being socially and economically marginalized. The Gay Alliance and the Trans Alliance of Greater Rochester invite you to learn more about the unique challenges of Trans Health and how to optimize healthy living. Free and open to the public. ASL interpreted.

Featured speakers:
Dr. Sharon J. Glezen MD, FAACP, WPATH - World Professional Association for Transgender Health, University of Rochester
Patrick Fisher of Us Too! ... a prostate survivors support and advocacy group
Lori Meath of the Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester

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COME OUT FOR THE BIGGEST, GAYEST HAPPY HOUR
3 FOR 2 HAPPY HOUR 7 DAYS A WEEK.

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**Dance on the Fringe**

**Catch Garth Fagan Dance at Fringe Festival**

Rochester’s Fringe Festival takes place this month. World-acclaimed Garth Fagan Dance, now commemorating its 44th season, will perform at the company’s downtown Rochester studio.

“These marvelous dancers are Fagan’s lightning rods, pulling down inspiration into the rich soil of his work.— D. Jowitt, Dancebeart.

Enjoy the unbridled energy, depth, precision and grace of Tony and Olivier award-winning Garth Fagan’s choreography, deemed “unfailingly original” (NY Times), and featuring a range of music from Brahms, Dvořák, Wynton Marsalis, Moorty Alexander and more.

75 minutes, Ticket Price: $16. Garth Fagan Dance Studio, 33 Chestnut St. Performances: Thursday, Sept. 18, 7 p.m.; Friday, Sept. 19, 9 p.m.; Saturday, Sept. 20, 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 25, 7 p.m.; Friday, Sept. 26, 7 p.m.; Saturday, Sept. 27, 7 p.m.

**PUSH Physical Theatre performs at Fringe; reality TV coming up**

Award-winning PUSH Physical Theatre: This talented group of performers inspires awe and ignites emotion with physical illusions and gravity-defying, dance-infused, acrobatic high-jinx. In addition to a busy touring season and more to reimagine theatrical lighting to produce a concert that is simultaneously thought provoking to seasoned and fresh, yet it was still accessible and, at times, even poetic — “I was flat out amazed,” and “I was captivated by... some very exciting dancing.”

“Merged II” blends physical- ly exciting dance, live music, and theatrical lighting to produce a concert that is simultaneously thought provoking to seasoned dance viewers and accessible to first-time audience members. The curving edge choreography will be performed by Rochester’s most celebrated dancers and national guest artists from Arizona and Washington.

Heather Roffe has performed internationally and internationally with Garth Fagan Dance Company and nationally in her own work and with Bill Evans Dance. She is also a collaborating director, performer, and choreographer with Rochester’s critically acclaimed FuturePointe Dance Company which regularly tours and performs across the country. Roffe has been described as “One of the most dramatic and exciting dancers in our region.”

“Merged II returns at Fringe Festival 2014”

“Merged” returns to Geva Theatre Center after last year’s critically acclaimed “Critics’ Picks” performances. This year, international choreographers Heather Roffe and James Hansen join forces with Buffalo’s Melanie Acento for “Merged II.”

**PUSH Physical Theatre.**

**ImageOut offers free screenings of “To Be Real” at Image Out Festival Fair, “Gaby!” at Fringe Festival**

Image Out Festival Fair takes place Thursday, Sept. 11. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. at the Eisenhower Auditorium, Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Ave.

The evening will feature hors d’oeuvres and a cash bar, and a continuous loop of festival film trailers. At 8:30 p.m. there will be a free screening of “To Be Real,” documentary about George Takei, gay activist and former “Sulu” on Star Trek.

TICKETS FOR THE FESTIVAL IN OCTOBER WILL BE OFFERED AT A DISCOUNT. IMAGEOUT WILL ALSO SCREEN “Gaby!” (free) as part of the Fringe Festival on Sept. 22 at 7 p.m. in the Spiegeltent across from the Eastman Theatre.
Play about Oscar Wilde is coming up at MuCoCC October 2-5

“Diversions & Delights,” by Academy Award nominee John Gay, starring Fairport’s Peter J. Doyle and directed by Michael H. Arve, will take the stage at MuCoCC Oct, 2, 3 and 4 at 7:30 p.m., and October 5 at 2 p.m. “Diversions and Delights” is a one-man play about Oscar Wilde, famous 19th century British wit and playwright who was convicted of homosexuality in one of the most notorious trials of the Victorian era.

This will be the first production of the play in a community theatre in this country. It has not been performed since Vincen-Pike’s highly acclaimed tour back in 1977. Mr. Gay has given his permission for the production.

Peter J. Doyle has been involved in theater, film, radio and television for over 40 years. He has worked with Blackfi-ars, Geva, Method Machine, Shipping Dock Theater, JCC-Center Stage, Roch-ester Children’s Theater and more. His most recent appearance was at Blackfiar’s in “It’s A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play.”

His favorite roles have included “Grapes of Wrath” (Jim Casey), “Talk- ing Heads” (Graham), “Wizards of Quix” (Charles Van Doran), “Ches” (Walter), “Glenegarry Glen Ross” (John Williams- son), Ray Cochrane in “Angels in America, Parts 1 & 2”, “August Osage County” (Charlie Aiken), “Franklin” (FDR), and most recently “Normal Heart” (Hiram Keeble).

In film he has appeared in feature productions with Robert Guillaume, Gavin McLeod, Diahann Carroll and Tom Wopat, and in over 30 short and industrial films. As a voice actor he has worked in animated films, TV commer-cials, Internet training Programs, and the occasional arcade game. On television he portrayed serial killer Arthur Shawcross on the Discovery Channel Series “Serial Killer”, and is currently in production for a sitcom from ColorStudios entitled “The Church”. He is a member of SAG-AFTRA and a graduate of Nazareth College.

“Diversions & Delights” is set in a Parisian concert hall on the Rue de la Peiperin in 1899—after his release from prison and about a year before Wilde’s death, at the age of 46. In an attempt to earn some much-needed money, Wilde is speaking to the audience about his life, his works and his love for Lord Alfred Douglas.

John Gay (born April 1, 1924) is an American screenwriter born in Whittier, Calif. Gay began his career writing episodes for television anthology series and made his film screenwriting debut in 1956 with “Run Silent Run Deep”. For television, Gay has adapted numerous literary classics, and has written television biopics, small screen remakes and adaptations of bestsellers, as well as the television movie “A Piano for Mrs. Cimino” starring Bette Davis.

Gay was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay and the Writers Guild of America Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for Separate Tables. He has been nominated once for the Emmy Award for Outstanding Writing in a Limited Series or a Special and three times for the Edgar Award for Best Television Feature or Miniseries. Advance tickets are $12, and at the door $20; $15 for seniors/students. Phone reservations: 585-234-1254 or online at www.muccc.org.
ON SALE NOW

THE BOOK OF MORMON
FROM THE CREATORS OF SOUTH PARK

WINNER 9 TONY AWARDS' INCLUDING BEST MUSICAL

WE’RE BACK!

OCTOBER 7-19 AUDITORIUM THEATRE
TICKETMASTER.COM 800.745.3000
GAY ALLIANCE NEWS FOR SEPTEMBER 2014

Gay Alliance Volunteer-of-the-Month: Lora Thody

Congratulations to Lora Thody for being chosen as the Gay Alliance Volunteer-of-the-Month for September!

Lora has been involved with Roc Pride for four years. The first year she was a parade volunteer. In 2012 and 2013, she stepped up to the plate and became a member of the Pride Committee, co-chairing the Pride Parade. This year, Lora took on the organization and management of the Pride Parade on her own!

Her whole family was involved as part of the Pride Parade planning team and her wife and son served as parade judges. Lora is the main reason the 2014 Roc Pride Parade was such a huge success!

Lora has also helped the Gay Alliance by volunteering to write for The Empty Closet and assisting with the Pride Festival and the Big Gay Prom. She has also participated in several of the Gay Alliance’s Educational Programs and Trainings.

Lora finds that her work at the Gay Alliance carries over into her workplace at Thomson Reuters, where she participates in their Pride at Work group and volunteers for similar tasks. She is currently in the process of working with others to translate “Safe Space” into something the company can use to benefit its 60,000 employees in more than 160 countries.

We are so grateful to have Lora as a part of our Roc Pride Committee and our Gay Alliance volunteer team. On behalf of the Gay Alliance staff and board and the Pride Committee, we thank you for all of your hours, your commitment, your hard work and your support. Thank you, Lora!

Pub Crawl coming up on Oct. 12


The event includes a free t-shirt, a place on the bus and drink specials at each stop. It starts at 1 p.m. at 140 Alex and ends at 8 p.m. at 140 Alex for a Drag Show. Other stops include The Bachelor Forum, The Avenue Pub and Lux Lounge.

All proceeds will support the community building work of the Gay Alliance.

Register for Gay Alliance SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Certification Program

There are still a few slots available for registrants for the Gay Alliance SafeZone Train-the-Trainer Certification Program that will take place on Friday, Oct. 10.

This full day, interactive workshop will run from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Rochester Red Cross. The purpose of this training is to develop confident, knowledgeable and effective SafeZone trainers, who can then run SafeZone trainings at their school, faith community or workplace.

Each participant will receive a SafeZone Training manual that provides a complete course guide for running SafeZone Trainings, suggestions for keeping your training fresh and updated and ongoing support from the Gay Alliance.

Registration is $125 per person, which includes breakfast, lunch and a SafeZone Training manual. To register click on the SafeZone Train-the-Trainer slide on our website at: www.gayalliance.org.

Please contact Jeanne at Jeanne@GayAlliance.org or 585-244-8640 with questions.

July Presentations

Safe and inclusive Schools at Pittsford Central School District

Communicating Respectfully with LGBTQ People at Coordinated Care Services, Inc.

Shoulders To Stand On Film and Discussion at the Third Presbyterian Church

Roc Pride Conversation on WXXI Connections with Evan Dawson

The Good, The Bad and the Funny at Equal Grounds

Communicating Respectfully with LGBTQ People at Bryant and Stratton College

LGBTQ 101 for Center For Dispute Settlement

LGBTQ Workplace Issues at Innovative Solutions

LGBTQ 101 at Warner School of Education at the U. of R.

LGBTQ Pride at the Puerto Rican Pride Peace and Prayer Vigil

Grant Writing Seminar at Center For Dispute Settlement

Working with LGBTQ Clients at the Greater Rochester Collaborative MSW Program

Quotes from Evaluations in July

“I learned plenty. I like the clear definitions provided concerning gender identity, sex, behaviors, etc. Please continue to let our community and our district’s administration know that you care about what happens in our schools.”

“Dynamic, knowledgeable. I learned how to incorporate small things into my lessons that would make a huge difference for students.”

“We could ask, share without worrying about judgment and stuff. It was awesome.”

“The candid and non-judgmental tone made it easier to ask honest questions. It was great! This was really eye-opening and thought provoking!”

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 the eradication of homophobia.

The Gay Alliance, 875 East Main Street, Rochester, New York 14605 • Phone: (585) 244-8640 Fax: (585) 244-8246

Website: www.gayalliance.org E-mail: info@gayalliance.org Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm • Board Presidents: David Zona Board Vice Presidents: Jessica Muratore; Executive Directors: Scott Fearing Education Directors: Jeannie Gainsburg

Database: Kat Wiggall Youth Intern: Dawn Balbis Bookkeepers: Christopher Henney Office Administrator: Tristan Wright

The Empty Closet: Editors: Susan Jordan E-mail: susan@gayalliance.org Phone: (585) 244-9030 Designer: Jim Anderson Fax: (585) 244-8246 Advertising: (585) 244-9030 Ad Sales: Brandon W. Brooke E-mail: brandonb@gayalliance.org
Youth Update: Goodbye and thank you!

By Dawn Baldiz

My internship with the Gay Alliance will be coming to an end on September 29, 2014. This has been one of the most wonderful years I have ever had. I’ve learned so much in my time at the Gay Alliance and will bring the skills I learned into my career as a social worker.

First and foremost I want to express my gratitude to Scott Fearing. He has been a great mentor in my journey at the Gay Alliance. I have always felt supported by Scott and knew that I could reach out when I needed help or had a question.

I cannot say enough wonderful things about the rest of the staff and volunteers at the Gay Alliance. Everyone is so friendly and helpful. I know that everyone who works for the Gay Alliance, and volunteers, have a great passion for what they do. A big thank you to Joanna, Susan, Kat, Tristan and Christopher for welcoming me and helping me along the way.

I also want to thank our Wednesday office volunteers, Kerry and Jenna, for taking on any task that I asked of them. I also want to thank Kevin Coffey, who supervised my internship and was a great sounding board. His guidance was insightful and has helped me grow as a social worker. Kelli Clark has also been an amazing resource to me and a great help in getting me acclimated to the youth program.

Most importantly, I want to thank the youth. Spending every Friday with them has been an immense pleasure. The Gay Alliance Youth are a great group of fun, smart and caring people. They are some of the most loving and accepting people I have ever met. There has not been a new kid in the group that has not been welcomed unconditionally by the regular crew.

I will continue to volunteer my time with the youth program and support my replacement in any way I can. Lastly I want to thank BJ Scanlon, Adrienne Chesser, and Keri Meagher who are the three best volunteers anyone could ask for. I have learned so much from them and greatly appreciate all of the time they have devoted to the youth and the program.

Again thank you to everyone for making me feel welcome and a part of the LGBTQA communities.

GAY ALLIANCE NEWS FOR SEPTEMBER 2014

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,
Gay Alliance, 5th floor, 875 E. Main St. Rochester, NY 14605

Gay Alliance Youth Gender Identity Support Group
(Ages 13-18)
Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30pm
Gay Alliance, 5th floor 875 E. Main Street
For more information:
dawnb@gayalliance.org

The Gay Alliance
875 E. Main St. 5th Floor (Auditorium Center)
Rochester, NY 14605
Phone: 585 244-8640

SAGE SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Tuesday 9/2
Finger Lakes Gaming Racetrack, Meet at OAMCC at 11:45am to carpool to Ractrack for a fun day at the track and Lunch.

Tuesday 9/9
Legacy At Clover Blossom (100 Mcauly Drive, Rochester 14610), we will be touring the senior living facility from 1pm-2pm. Meet at OAMCC to car pool no later than 12:15pm. Call 585-218-5000 with driving instructions to facility.

Thursday 9/11
Friendly’s senior breakfast at 10:30am on West Henrietta Rd. Aeduit will be your Host.

Saturday 9/13
Come on out to the WXXI (280 State St., Rochester 14614) open house from 10am-2pm. They will have all kinds of fun activities for all.

Saturday 9/13
Equal Grounds coffee with Rosa and Jessie or do you prefer some cocoa with whipped cream? The Grounds has it all, so come at 6:30-8pm and chat it up or play a game.

Tuesday 9/16
(Noon-2pm) Cherry Ridge housing tour with lunch at noon at the Cherry Ridge dining facility. (Plan on 2 hours for tour with lunch included, maybe a little bit longer.) Address for Cherry Ridge is: 900 Cherry Ridge Blvd, Webster, NY 14580. Please call 585-697-6700 for driving instructions to facility. Carpooling from OAMCC and leaving church at 11:30am

Thursday 9/18
(Noon-1:30pm) Who enjoys the taste of smooth coffee and the aroma of “fresh”? If that is you then hop, skip and jump over with Rainbow Sage to coffee connection (681 South Ave., Rochester 14520)

Saturday 9/20
(1-6pm) Sage picnic hosted by Audiet, stay posted for more details. Check the GAGV website and Facebook page for upcoming details.

Tuesday 9/23
Housing tour and lunch at the Legacy At Erie Station Road. We are on the move to another stop in our housing series. Have lunch with Roxanne of the Legacy staff to discuss Legacy living and amenities at this Legacy location. Address of Facility: Legacy At Erie Station Road, Henrietta, NY 14467. Please call 585-334-5006 for facility instructions.

Thursday 9/25
Brown bag lunch at 11:30am-12:30pm and 12:30-2pm: fried green tomatoes cooked up by our own chef Audiet. Birthday Party for July and August birthdays.

Tuesday 9/30
(Noon-2pm) Chapel Oaks a senior living community of St. Ann. We will have lunch at noon in the dining room at Chapel Oaks and tour to follow; we will discuss assisted living and independent living facilities.

Rainbow Sage, for LGBTQ people 50 and over, meets at Open Arms Metropolitan Community center of Western New York (707 East Main St., Rochester 14605). We have chair yoga with Tom for $5 per session from 10:30-11:30 a.m. every Tuesday and Thursday. All programs are subject to change and Rainbow Sage members are responsible for setting up their own transportation to and from any program. Please update member information or like FACEBOOK page for updates, cancellations, program changes and informative information. This month we will be visiting several senior living facilities to follow up with our housing program, please feel free to join us and gain valuable information. We will also have several presentations in October as well.
CULTURAL
Rochester Women’s Community Chorus 234-4441. (See Ongoing calendar).
Rochester Gay Men’s Chorus www.thegmc.org
Open Arms Community Center Available for parties, events and meetings; 707 E. Main St. Parking. Accepting of all. 27-8478.

DEAF SERVICES
Advocacy for Disabled Deaf Victims Main Street, Suite 300, Rochester, 585-225-5693. For location, information: rochester@rrrc.org.

LEGAL SERVICES
Empire Justice Center 315-444-6000; 5th floor, 585-423-2858. Free legal services for low-income clients seeking a name change. Other legal services for low-income clients including bankruptcy, unemployment insurance hearings, wills and advance directive documents for clients with serious illnesses.

Gay Alliance Youth Gender Identity Support Group Tuesdays 5-6-30 at Gay Alliance office. 4th floor. 875 E. Main St., A300 284-6145

Genesea Valley Gender Variants Thurs. 7-9pm, Equal Grounds, 750 South Ave. Gayallgend@yahoo.com

WOMEN
Highland Hospital Breast Imaging Center 550 Red Creek Drive, Rochester 14623; 585-467-3343. Specializing in breast health, diagnostic breast imaging and treatment and mammography outreach and education.

Breast Cancer Coalition of Rochester 640 University Ave., 585-423-0177; www.bccrc.org; info@bccrc.org. Breast Cancer Coalition provides support services that include programs designed to help those coping with a recent breast cancer diagnosis and those coping with breast cancer survivors. Includes a Breast Care Support Group to support women living with metastatic breast cancer. Information about breast cancer, lending library, a monthly educational program. All BCCR programs are no-cost support services.

Center for Community Health 585-224-3800. Comprehensive breast cancer screening services for uninsured and underinsured women.

LGBT HEALTH
Trillium Health Trillium Health is the leading provider of HIV/AIDS services in Rochester and the Finger Lakes. On-site services include HIV testing and limited STT screenings, Primary and HIV Specialty Medical once a month to provide primary care for members of the LGBT community. Contact information: Web: www.trilliumhealth.org; Main Office; 255 Monroe Ave, Rochester, 585-545-3200; Health Services After Hours: 585-545-3239. After Hours: (585) 275-7515; Fax: 585-244-6459; Finger Lakes 505-243-0912; Genesee St. 14604. 1-800-869-9777. Deals with health issues discrimination on basis of race, orientation, HIV status, etc.

Public Interest Law Office of Rochester 1-888-942-5462. (585) 205-4900 at a day. Call our office: 1-888-232-6348. Email address: cdi10@cdgc.org

Fair Housing Enforcement Project of Monroe County 585-320-2500. 1-800-869-9777. Deals with housing discrimination on basis of race, orientation, HIV status, etc.

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Crossroads Coffee House, 752 S. Goodman St.

LORA Knitters Group

Rehearsals each Tuesday, 6:30-9pm, Downtown
442-2220.

10-11am Canandaigua VA, bldg. 9, room 8,
Veterans support. Second, fourth Tuesdays,
LGBT Healthy Living

some games and
Catch up with the week's happenings and enjoy
10am-12noon and again 7:30-9pm at Equal
The Social Grind

TUESDAYS
289 Monroe Ave.

Mondays, 6pm, George Eastman House parking

Rearrants/Frontwalkers

Events: https://www.facebook.com/groups/
L.O.R.A.14464/

FRIDAYS
Gay Men's AA meeting

Tuesdays, 7:30-8:30pm, closed meeting. Emmanu-
el Baptist Church, 815 Park Ave.

Gay Youth

Tuesdays, 7-9pm, Gay Alliance, 5th floor,
485 E. Main St., 244-8640

GLBTQI Motorcycle Group
Second, Fridays, 5:30pm. Various locations.
RochesterGLBTQikers@yahoo.com, 467-6458;
bndaniels@frontnet.net.

LORA Ca'moves Night
Meets 4th Friday of the Month, 7-10pm,
Equal Grounds Coffee House, 750 S. Rochester.
Contact Person: Christine O'Reilly. Email:
christine@loragroup@yahoo.com. Phone:
Events: https://www.facebook.com/groups/
L.O.R.A.14464/

Monthly LBTQ Womyns Bingo Night
Third Tuesday, 7-10pm, 200 Winton Rd., Suite 214.

Gay Alliance Trans* Youth Support Group
2nd & 4th Mondays of the Month. 7 pm, Private
info@loragroup.org

LORA Late Bloomers Coming Out Group for
Women 2nd & 4th Mondays. 7pm. Private
info@loragroup.org

LORA Late Bloomers Coming Out Group for
Women 2nd & 4th Mondays. 7pm. Private
info@loragroup.org
Classifieds

Classified ads are $5 for the first 30 words; each additional 10 words is another $1. We do not bill for classifieds, so please send or e-mail ad and payment to: The Empty Closet, 875 E. Main St. Rochester, New York 14609.

Paying by check: checks must be made out to Gay Alliance. The deadline is the 15th of the month, for the following month’s issue. We cannot accept ads over the phone. Pay when you place your ad. We do not accept ads over the phone. Pay when you place your ad. We do not accept ads over the phone. Pay when you place your ad.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Children’s Ministry thriving at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church for toddlers to tweens. Join for in-depth, inclusive, progressive worship on Sundays at 10:30 am, 707 E. Main St. info@openarmsmcc.org (585) 271-8478.

Free 2008 Honda CRBR1000RR. Wonderful bike. Runs perfectly. I hate that I have to part with it but it’s time for me to do other things. Oil has been changed. Regularly. Paint is in excellent condition. Feel interested call (dr7557@gmail.com)

Handymen: Simple repairs or full renovations, no job too small or large. Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical, Interior & Exterior. 35 years experience. Car Alan & Sc Bill 585-204-6032 or cell 304-517-6832.

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

Want to paint or clean gutters? I have tall ladders! Do you need Pressure Washing and Gutter Cleaning has very reasonable rates for painting your round and gutter cleaning in spring or fall. 585-576-5042. Emre dade.fusion@yahoo.com.

Wedding Music and Clergy services available. Celebrate your special day at Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church, 707 E. Main St. info@openarmsmcc.org (585) 271-8478.

PERSONALS
Male partner wanted. 35-year-old male, clean-shaven, handyman, good health. Likes rock music, zombie movies, science fiction. Affectionate, with good business knowledge. Serious replies only. Write: 2052 E. Main St., Apt. 610, Rochester NY 14609.
Ad Sales: Brandon Brooks (brandobrooks@gayalliance.org)

Advertising policy:
The Empty Closet does not print advertisements that contain hate statements or photographs, nor does it print advertising that states that the person pictured in the ad is for sale, or that you will “get” that particular person if you patronize the establishment advertised. Advertisements that are explicitly racist, sexist, agesist, ablist or homophobic will be refused. All political advertisements must contain information about who paid for them and a method of contact. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. We will print advertisements that are explicitly racist, sexist, agesist, ablist or anti-gay will also be refused. All political advertisements must contain information about who paid for them and a method of contact. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. We will print advertisements.

Publications/Meetings:
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. The Empty Closet is published on the first week of the month, some by mail in a plain sealed envelope. The publication of the name or photograph of any person or organization in articles is not an indication that the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or the Empty Closet endorses the views of all – women, men, people of color, young and old, and those from various walks of life. The opinions of columnists, editorial writers and other contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect the collective attitude of the Gay Alliance of the Genesee Valley or The Empty Closet. The Empty Closet shall not be liable for any loss or expense that results from the publication (whether correctly or incorrectly) omission or exclusion of an ad. In the event of non-payment, your account may be assigned to a collection agency or an attorney, and will be liable for the charges paid by us to the publication (whether correctly or incorrectly). The Empty Closet maintains, within legal boundaries, neutrality regarding products, political candidates and parties. However, “attack” ads that fail to provide undisputable evidence that the information in the ad is true do not further in any way the objectives and policies of the Gay Alliance or The Empty Closet, including the primary tenet that The Empty Closet’s purpose is to inform the Rochester gay community and to provide an impartial forum for ideas. The Empty Closet does not print advertisements that are explicitly racist, sexist, agesist, ablist or anti-gay will also be refused. All political advertisements must contain information about who paid for them and a method of contact. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity. We will print advertisements.

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Upcoming ImageOut Events in September

Friday, September 5

**personal pronouns**

Opening Reception 6:00–10:00pm
Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince Street, Rochester, NY

ImageOut's Opening Reception for its fifteenth annual exhibition. This exhibition addresses the roles of gender and gender identity challenging the traditional binary assumptions that have been creeping into American consciousness. The exhibition will run through October 19th.

Exhibition Hours
Tuesdays-Fridays, 10:00am-4:00pm. Special weekend hours during the ImageOut Film Festival October 11-12 and October 18-19: 10:00am-4:00pm.

Thursday, September 11

**Festival Fair** (The first opportunity to purchase Festival tickets in advance.)

Doors open at 6:30pm
Rochester Museum and Science Center, 657 East Ave, Rochester, NY 14607

We’ll be hosting our annual event at the Eisenhart Auditorium Complex at the Rochester Museum & Science Center. Come early and enjoy the elegant Palm Court Lounge with fellow film enthusiasts featuring complimentary light hors d’oeuvres and a cash bar where you can purchase soft drinks, beer, wine, or your favorite cocktail.

Relax on a table in the adjoining Trailers Park as you review the program, view trailers, and plan your 2014 Festival experience – we’ll be running a continuous loop of film trailers to inform your decisions. Then head over to ticket sales to make your discounted, advance ticket purchases.

**To Be Takei – Festival Fair Free Screening at 8:20pm**

Don’t miss our Programmer’s Preview at 8:00pm in the Eisenhart Auditorium featuring insider information on this year’s hottest films. And then at 8:20pm will be a free screening of To Be Takei, the hit documentary about George Takei that had its world premiere at Sundance this year and is making the 2014 festival circuit.

Monday, September 22

**ImageOut at Fringe Fest**

Free Screening at 7:30pm
Spiegelgarden (adjacent to the Magic Crystal Spiegeltent)

ImageOut is pleased to present a free screening of Gayby at the 2014 Rochester Fringe Festival. Gayby will be screened at the “Pedestrian Drive-In” – an outdoor theater in the Spiegelgarden on Main Street diagonally across from the Eastman Theatre.

**Gayby** is the story of Jenn and Mott, best friends from college. Single by choice, Jenn spends her days teaching hot yoga and running errands for her boss. Mott suffers from comic-book writer’s block and can’t get over his ex-boyfriend. They decide to fulfill a youthful promise to have a child together – the old-fashioned way. Gayby is an inventive comedy about friendship, growing older, sex, loneliness, and the family you choose.

For more information, please visit: [www.ImageOut.org](http://www.ImageOut.org)