



Erie Gay Community Newsletter

Lesbigays 'Make' Parade of the Century



Community Finds Substantial Support in Erie

Editors Note: EGCN invited Greg Valiga to share with our readers the amazing story of the Bicentennial float. We asked him to include the whole story, from the very beginning, including his own feelings and perceptions.

By Greg Valiga

It's January and I'm reading an article in the Erie Times about this huge parade the bicentennial commission is creating. Heidi Streich and Larry Sawdy think the community should build a float. The idea has some merit, but I surely do not want to be on any float committee—work with the League keeps me busy enough. I try to kill the idea by mentioning the possibility of violence and I use an old standby—we can't find someone to work with the media when the news breaks. After discussing the idea, Heidi eventually convinces me. I reluctantly agree to call the commission for guidelines and to get a sense of their position.

The phone conversation surprises me. Michael Fuhrman, Director of Bicentennial Events, is enthusiastic about the possibility. He relates that the commission wants to have floats from as many different groups as possible. The guidelines forbid the conveyance of any type of political or hate message. Nothing can be handed out along the route, and we must adhere to the

(continued on page 10)

We did it!

Volunteers can take a moment to applaud each other on successfully rebuilding the gay & lesbian float

The members of the EGCN staff & Bridges would like to say:

Thank You!

To everyone of all orientations, creeds, races & beliefs:

Lesbigay Straight
 Blue-Collar White-Collar
 Male Female
 Black White
 Old Young
 &
 In Between

Thank You!

For Giving Support
 Donating Time & Money
 Writing The Papers
 Calling Officials
 Rebuilding The Float
 &
 Working Together

Thank You!

For Helping to Make the Lesbigay Float
A Real Celebration
Of the Erie Community!



May, 1995

Erie Gay Community Newsletter

c/o EGC Coalition
 PO Box 3063
 Erie, PA 16508-0063
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The *Erie Gay Community Newsletter* is published monthly as a voice for lesbians, bisexuals, gay men and their friends & families in the Erie area. A source of information, support and affirmation. A vehicle for celebrating the goodness and diversity of our community. *EGCN* is a cooperative effort between lesbigay groups and individuals to help our community develop and thrive.

Contributors: Our deadline is the 15th of the month! We welcome and encourage all readers to submit news, comments and opinions for publication in these pages. **Before submitting please send SASE for writer's guidelines.**

We will consider for publication any material which broadens our understanding of our lifestyles and each other. Views and opinions appearing in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of Bridges, the EGCN staff or their component groups.

We will not publish any material which promotes hatred or discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, race, gender, religion, age, class, physical ability or any other reason. We do not support exploitation of minors.

All materials submitted must be signed so we can contact the authors should we need to consider editorial revisions. However, within these pages, articles may appear anonymously, upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed. If you wish to have your full name published, you must send a written and signed note that gives us permission to do so. This publication will not "out" anyone.

Advertisers: Reach Erie's lesbigay community directly! Space in EGCN is now available for as little as \$20 for an eighth-page ad! Call (814) 456-9833 or (814) 734-8155 and ask for EGCN's Advertising Coordinator for more details.

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This Month's Cover...
Applauding the Float
 Photograph by Mike Miller



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Places to get EGCN...

- Ashtabula**
Leeward Lounge, 1022 Bridge St.
- Eric**
Barnes & Noble, 5909 Peach Street
Cup-a-Ccino's, 18 N. Park Row
The Embers, 1711 State Street
Lizzie Bordon's, 3412 W. 12th
NW. PA Rural AIDS Alliance, Baldwin Bldg.
Unitarian Universalist Congreg of Erie,
7180 New Perry Hiway
Well Being, 710 Beaumont
- Edinboro**
Book Shelf, 200 Plum
Earthshine, 131 Meadville Street
Identity (formerly EGO) meetings
- Jamestown NY & Warren PA**
AIDS Community Services, Tue Mansion
Nite Spot, 201 Winsor, Jamestown
Rainbow Connection, Warren 726-1808
Sneakers, 100 Harrison, Jamestown
- Meadville PA**
Allegheny College Bookstore
CSGLBP Meetings
- Venango County**
Oil Region Book Store, Oil City

Bridges Pride Picnic

June 10, 1995 2:00 PM

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Calendar

☛ = New or Modified Group/Event this issue

Important Note: Events listed here are specifically gay or of interest to a lot of lesbian people. If you know of an event that should be listed here, please get the info to us in writing by the 15th of the month. For out of town events, call a day or two before to confirm that it is still on; mistakes can occur and circumstances can change at the last moment. *New email address!* From Internet MikeMahler@aol.com or from CompuServe, 70431,1622 or fax to (814) 452-1392

June 3—Womynspace: "Dance Fever" "Kick-off the summer by kicking up your heels. Music. Laughter. Lots of fun. Newcomers always welcome." Info: call Sal at 454-2713.

June 3—GIFT-Pride Cruise (Cleveland) Along Lake Erie shore and Cuyahoga River, dance music. Two & a half hours. \$15 adv/\$20 gate. (216)252-8933.

June 3-4—Black & White Men Together/Pittsburgh 14th Anniversary Celebration (Pittsburgh) In conjunction with June's Pride activities. Saturday: "Welcome Mat is Out" Luncheon at 12:30 p.m.; *Private tour of Pittsburgh* at 2:30 pm; "The Grill's a-Grinning Cookout" at 5 p.m.; *Pittsburgh Presentation of "Still/Here" by the Bill T. Jones / Arnie Zane Dance Company* at Benedum Center 8 p.m.; *Dancing and Cocktails at Pegasus* at 11 pm. On Sunday: "One for the Road" Brunch at 10:30 am. Price for the entire weekend, inc. orchestra seat at Benedum Center, is \$35 for BWMT members, \$45 for nonmembers. Anyone interested in joining BWMT in their fourteenth anniversary celebration may call Paul at (412)-323-3808.

☛ **June 4—AIDSWalk '95 (Buffalo)** Info (716)847-0212.

June 4—Annual Gearing Up for Summer Party (Buffalo) Noon-7p.m. Ellicott Creek Park Island,

2800 Niagara Falls Blvd., Tonawanda. Hot dogs, salad, soft drinks, beer, good company for \$8.00. Rain or shine.

June 4—"At the Boat" INCORRECT DATE LISTED LAST MONTH SEE JUNE 10 (Cleveland) (216)621-0766.

June 5—HIV & AIDS: A Women's Agenda (Clarion PA) NW PA Rural AIDS Alliance in association with PA AIDS Education and Training Center, 8:30-4:30. Info 1-800-349-2437.

☛ **June 5—This Boy's Life (1993)** HBO 3:50 a.m. Story of a straight teenage boy and his stepfather. Contains an upbeat subplot about the boy and a gay friend who has a crush on him. The gay boy's character is well-developed, and the friendship between the two kids is handled with sympathy.

June 9—Melissa Etheridge in Concert (Cleveland area) Blossom Music Center, Cuyahoga Falls. (216)566-8184.

June 9-10—Murder Mystery Weekend at Jones Pond (Angelica NY) Friday a mock murder will be committed. Solve the mystery by Sunday morning. Info (716) 567-8100.

June 10—2 girls alone! at Cup-a-Ccino's 9-midnight. 18 North Park Row.

June 10—Bridges Picnic at Presque Isle Call 833-3258 for more info. "Bridges extends a cordial invitation to the entire Erie community to celebrate our 'coming out' at the third annual Pride Picnic on Presque Isle. The picnic will be at Cabin 2 at Waterworks. See the ad on page 3 for details. Bring along your friends and share the best our community has to offer—namely YOU, the extraordinary lesbians of Erie, PA."

June 10—Country Western Weekend at Camp Davis (Boyers PA) Gay and lesbian campground. Info (412) 637-2402.



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INTEGRITY

A Christian-based spiritual and support group sponsored by the Episcopal Church that welcomes people of all faiths.

Meetings are the 2nd Sunday of the month, 6 pm at St. Paul's Cathedral, 133 6th St., Erie, PA

Our mailing address is: Integrity-NWPA,
PO Box 1782, Erie, PA 16507-1782

For more information call (814)774-0903

✦ **June 10—"HIV/AIDS: A Call to Compassion A Call to Commitment"** (East Aurora NY) Day of workshops. Sponsored by Episcopal Diocese of W. NY (716) 881-0660.

✦ **June 10—"At the Boat" (Cleveland)** Dinner, entertainment, cash bar on the William G. Mather, a lake freighter that is now a floating museum. Benefits AIDS Task Force of Cleveland. Reservations (216)621-0766.

✦ **June 10-11—Allentown Arts Festival (Buffalo)** 11 a.m.-6 p.m. This event attracts about 400,000 people. It's Buffalo's biggest outdoor festival, and although it isn't gay per se, it's held in Buffalo's gay district, (Allentown) and lots and lots of gay people come out and enjoy themselves. Allentown is on Allen, Franklin, and Delaware Streets. Because of the festival being there, you'll have no problem figuring out where Allentown is. Tip: because festival parking might be tight around the neighborhood, park your car at foot of Min St. and take subway back (get off at Allen stop).

✦ **June 11—R.E.M. & Luscious Jackson (Cleveland)** Gund Arena. Tickets @ Ticketmaster.

✦ **June 11—Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994)** The Movie Channel 8 p.m. Comedy.

✦ **June 13—Melissa Etheridge, Paula Cole in Concert (Pittsburgh area)** Coca-Cola Star Lake Amphitheater. On sale at Ticketmaster.

✦ **Jun 13—Community Forum with Candace Gingrich (Buffalo NY)** Sponsored by Human Rights Campaign Fund at Bulger Communications Center, Buffalo State campus at 7:00 pm.

✦ **June 13—HIV/AIDS Support Group of St. Mark's** Newcomers welcome! Info Cheryl Weber at 825-1085 or 452-6113.

✦ **June 14—"Art for AIDS '95" (Pittsburgh)** Info from Persad Center (412) 441-9786.

✦ **June 15—Mae West...and the Men Who Knew Her** A&E at 7 a.m.

✦ **June 15—Out There** 8 p.m. Comedy Central.

✦ **June 16—Menspace Cookout** At 7 p.m. "Hot dogs, hamburgers, corn on the cob and more. Call 835-6712 for details and directions. Don't miss out on the fun!"

✦ **June 16—Basement Lounge Performs at Cup-a-Ccino's** Eccentric pop. 9 p.m.-midnight.

✦ **June 16—Rock Hudson: Tall, Dark & Handsome** 8 p.m., midnite on A&E. Profiles the gay Hollywood sex symbol of the 1950s and 1960s who was the first celebrity to disclose that he had AIDS.

✦ **June 16—"No Limits!" Show at Lizzy Bordon's** Traci and Men of Desire 11:30 p.m., cover charge. 3412 W. 12th, Erie.

June 16-17—2nd Annual Classic Car Show at Jones Pond (Angelica NY) Finger Lakes Region Lambda Car Club. Auto rally, awards ceremony, bonfire, DJ/Dancing, meals covered, judging. Gay men's campground. Info (716) 567-8100.

June 16-18—Buffalo Pride Weekend 1995 See details in our Pride Month feature, this issue or call Tamara Smith at (716)883-0128.

June 17—Cris Williamson & Tret Fure in Concert (Buffalo) Marquee at the Tralf, 8 p.m. (doors open 6:30 p.m.). Part of Buffalo Pride Celebration. Cris was one of the pioneers of lesbian music. Tickets at all Ticketmaster locations or from Marquee Box Office (716)852-0522.

June 17 (Tentative)—10% Network Meeting in Fredonia "We will be meeting for a potluck supper at a Fredonia member's home, taking a private tour of the Fredonia Opera House and then return to the member's home for dessert. Please note that the date is tentative." Call John at 716-484-7285 for details.

June 17—Cleveland Lesbian-Gay-Bi Pride '95 March, festival, & fun. March assembles in parking lot behind Trinity Cathedral, corner East 22nd and Euclid, at 11 a.m., and steps off at noon. Festival, on Public Square begins when march arrives (festival goes till 6 p.m.) Info (216)595-8788.

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✦ **June 17—North Coast Men's Chorus Pride Concert: "A Family of Friends" (Cleveland)** With songwriter Jamie Anderson. 7:30 p.m., Euclid Ave. Congregational Church, 9606 Euclid Ave. Info (216)473-8919.

✦ **June 17—Social Night at Camp Davis (Boys PA)** Dance/Group Fire 7pm. Info (412)637-2402.

✦ **June 18—The Conformist (1971)** Showtime 2:50 a.m. Italian movie that explores the emotional causes of fascism. A man who wants to repress his homosexuality and conform to society, and joins the Italian Fascists. He also marries an apparent lesbian, who is an antifascist.

✦ **June 19—Coming Out Under Fire** 10 p.m. on WNED (Ch. 17 PBS-Buffalo). Documentary about gay men and lesbians in the military during World War II.

✦ **June 20—HIV/AIDS Support Group at St. Marks** Transportation if you need it. Info: Cheryl Weber at 825-1085 or 452-6113.

✦ **June 21—TV Industry Observes: "Day of Compassion"** National television shows will devote programming to AIDS awareness and people affected by HIV/AIDS. Some are listed here. Check your *TV Guide* and daily newspaper's TV listings on this day as well.

✦ **June 21—Longtime Companion (1990)** Encore 9 p.m. Shows the impact of AIDS on a circle of gay New Yorkers who are friends. Shows one day out of a year, from 1981 through 1989.

✦ **June 21—Philadelphia (1993)** Showtime 9:45 p.m. Academy-winning AIDS drama.

✦ **June 21—And the Band Played On (1993)** Docu-drama about the early days of the AIDS epidemic. HBO 3:30 p.m.

✦ **June 21—Jim Bakker: Crime in the Name of God** 9 p.m. A&E

✦ **June 21—Sentinel (1977)** Trashy horror flick with lesbian spooks. WGN 3 a.m.

June 22—Patti LaBelle (Buffalo) Melody Fair, tickets at Ticketmaster and (716) 852-5000.

June 23-24—Pride Weekend at Jones Pond (Angelica NY) Details (716)567-8100.

June 23—Rainbow Social Club Dance & Bar-B-Que (Pittsburgh) Related to Pride events (see below), get together with this friendly group at Prospect Drive in Schenley Park, info (412)731-4781. Drug- and alcohol-free.

June 24—1995 Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Pride Parade and Festival (Pittsburgh) Mellon Park in Pittsburgh's East End, Fifth Avenue between Shady Ave. & Beechwood Blvd. Details in our Pride Month section, this issue, or call Three Rivers Pride Committee (412) 422-3060

✦ **June 25—Columbus Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual Pride March and Festival (Columbus OH)** Gather at Goodale Park, march to Bicentennial Park for festival. Info (614)229-7764. Also hilarious "**Bat-n-Rouge Drag Softball Game**" Info (614)229-7764.

June 25—"Do the Lake—It's Erie!" (Painesville OH) Beach party at Headlands State Park put on by Youngstown LGB Group. To locate: Watch for rainbow flag. Potluck, barbecue, volleyball, swimming. Bring dish to pass, games, swimsuit, and place setting. Drug- and alcohol-free. Kids and newcomers are welcome. Rain date July 23. Info: Judy at (216) 793-2737 or Jean at (216)744-4126.

✦ **June 29—Law & Order: "Silence"** A young politician's death leads police to a blackmailer of gay men, but his victims are too afraid of public scandal to testify. A&E at 11 p.m.

June 30—Legends of Motown with Martha Reeves, the Temptations, Four Tops and Spinners (Pittsburgh) Coca-Cola Star Lake Amphitheater (800) LAKE MCI.

July 1—Womynspace: "Fun in the Sun Picnic at the Peninsula" "All details available at June

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coffeehouse or by calling Jackie 734-8752. Bring a dish, games, bikes, come early...stay late...ENJOY! Newcomers invited. Info re: coffeehouse call Sal at 454-2713."

✦ **July 1—Flea Market Weekend at Camp Davis (Boyers PA)** 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Independence Day Covered Dish Sunday at 7 p.m.

✦ **July 1-2—4th of July Weekend at Jones Pond (Angelica NY)** Weekend show. DJ/dancing.

✦ **July 2—Toronto Pride March, Rally, & Events** Big event (300,000 last year) in this fantastic Canadian city! Live music, speakers, beer garden, entertainment, march, pavilion booths. All activities are on Church Street between Carlton and Bloor. Info (416)392-6874. Make hotel reservations early!

✦ **July 2—2 girls alone! at Cup-a-Cccino's** From 9 p.m.-midnight. 18 N. Park Row

✦ **July 7-8—Foot-o-Cross Rally at Jones Pond (Angelica NY)** Walking rally on grounds Info: (716)567-8100.

✦ **July 9—Integrity: Eucharist, Discussion of Movie Priest** 133 W. 6th, 6 pm, Cathedral of St. Paul.

✦ **July 14—Mary Chapin Carpenter (Chautauqua)** 8:15pm. \$23. For info, call 1-800-836-ARTS.

✦ **July 14-15—Christmas in July Weekend at Jones Pond (Angelica NY)** Lighting, decorating of campsites w/prizes, (716)567-8100.

✦ **July 14-16—"Michigan Warm-Up" Women's Camping Trip** Info: Jean at (216) 744-4126. Put on by women of LGB Youngstown. Women from other communities welcome.

✦ **July 15—On WLKK-AM: HIV/AIDS Educators DonPaul Lucas and Charlene Bushyeager** 5-6 p.m. on *Visions*. Lucas will talk from a personal perspective of someone living with HIV. Bushyeager works for the Northwest PA Rural AIDS Alliance.

✦ **July 15—10% Network Picnic (Westfield NY)** "Folks from Erie, Warren, and elsewhere are welcome to join us!" Info: John at (716) 484-7285.

✦ **July 15—Saturday Night Feverfest (Pittsburgh)** Village People, K.C., Trammmps. Coca-Cola StarLake Amphitheater. Tickets at Ticketmaster or (800) LAKE MCI.

✦ **July 15-16—Rochester NY Pride Parade & Picnic/Gay Day at Seabreeze** Parade & Picnic Saturday, Gay Day Sunday. Info (716)244-8640.

✦ **July 16—Day at Geauga Lake Amusement Park (Cleveland area)** Info (216)453-8252.

✦ **July 16—"Dancin' in the Streets" (Cleveland)** Street party with couple thousand people, fundraiser for AIDS Task Force of Cleveland. Erieside Avenue just north of Municipal Stadium 1-10 p.m. Info (216)621-0766.

✦ **July 18-23—Starwood Festival (Sherman NY)** Annual national festival for folks into earth-centered spirituality. It's a gay-friendly space, and every year at the festival there is a Faerie Encampment, i.e., an area in the festival campgrounds where gay men camp together. There are a few lesbians here, though they seem to prefer the women's festivals. Fee is \$95. Preregistration a MUST! (Deadline June 30). ACE, 1643 Lee Road #9, Cleveland Heights OH 44118. (216)932-5421.

✦ **Jul 21—Johnny Mathis in Concert (Chautauqua)** 8:15pm. \$23. For info, call 1-800-836-ARTS.

✦ **July 21-22—Leather I Weekend at Jones Pond (Angelica NY)** Leather themed event at gay men's camp ground. Info (716) 567-8100.

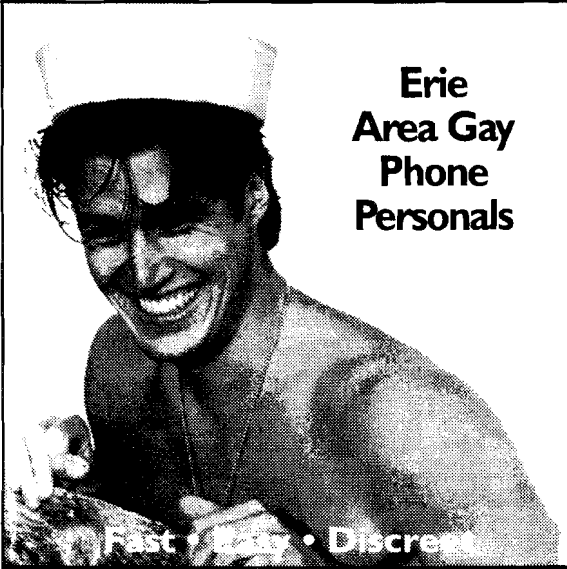
✦ **July 22—Christmas in July/Gift Exchange at Camp Davis (Boyers PA)** 8 p.m. Gay & lesbian campground. Info (412) 637-2402.

✦ **July 28-29—Mardi Gras at Jones Pond (Angelica NY)** Costume Ball on Saturday night. Gay men's campground. (716) 567-8100.

✦ **August 5—Womynspace: No Gathering**

Festivals & Conferences

✦ **June 30-July 2—Gay & Lesbian Parents Coalition National Conference (California)** Info (202)583-8029.



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Lesbian Music

Ladyslipper Music now offers a 24-hour a day "Ladyslipper Listen Line," allowing people to sample new releases. Ladyslipper carries virtually all lesbian music, plus all kinds of women's music, as well as a lot of music by gay men. To get their catalog, contact them at P.O. Box 3124, Durham NC 27715 or (919) 683-1570 ... **Jill Sobule's** new song and video "I Kissed a Girl" celebrates a girl's first kiss of another girl ... **Melissa Etheridge** made the cover of June 1 *Rolling Stone*, (complete with the declaration "She's the Boss"). It's the first time an openly-lesbian performer has made the much-envied cover.

The **Michigan Womyn's Music Festival** celebrates its 20th anniversary this August, and it looks like they'll be having a lot going on. The festival (often referred to by lesbians as simply "Michigan") is the biggest of all the women's festivals, attracting around 7,000 lesbians every year. 300 workshops, movies under the stars and current films and videos at Media Tent), theater, August Night Cafe, comedy, dancing, 140 craftswomyn selling their wares, and a whole lot more. Among the many acts performing will be **Ferron, Rhiannon, Holly Near, Kate Clinton, Mary Watkins, Topp Twins, Girls in the Nose, Toshi Reagan, June & Jean Millington Band, Kay Gardner & Nurudafina Pili Abena, Dance Brigade, Linda Tillery, Reel World String Band, Margie Adam, Edwina Lee Tyler, BETTY, Vicki Randle, Marga Gomez.** For more information contact WWTMC, Box 22, Walhalla MI 49458. Also, if you've never been there, write for their "Tips for First Timers."

On TV This Month

These movies and programs are on more than once during the month. Mark your calendar!

Arthur Ashe: Citizen of the World HBO 6/5, 6/16, 6/27
Backbeat (1994) Bio-pic about the early days of the Beatles. Explores the relationship between John Lennon and Stu Sutcliffe, speculating that there was an attraction between the two men. Showtime 5/8 8p.m., 6/28 11:45 p.m.
Mrs. Doubtfire (1993) HBO Comedy. 6/2, 6/7, 6/18, 6/24, 6/28,
Orlando (1992) Showtime 6/1, 6/5, 6/24, 6/28
Paula Poundstone: Cats, Cops and Stuff Comedy Central 6/8 at 9 p.m., 6/25 2 p.m.
Special Night with Elton John On Disney, 6/11 9p.m., 6/21 8 p.m., 6/30 10 p.m.
Threesome (1994) Comedy about three college roommates, one of them a gay man.
Women's Sports: Big 10 Hilltop 6/11 5 a.m., ESPN, **Soccer** ESPN2 at 4 p.m. on 6/6, 6/8, 6/13, 6/15, 6/20. 10 p.m. 6/13 and 6/20. **Pro Beach Volleyball** 2 p.m. on Sportschannel and KBL.
Zorro, the Gay Blade (1981) Cinemax 6/4, 6/14, 6/26. Gay retelling of the Zorro legend; Zorro may be too stereotypical for some tastes.

Elizabeth Mayberry-Johnson, Ph.D.

*A clinical psychologist providing individual, adult therapy.
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Pride Month Celebration

Buffalo Pridefest

Tuesday, June 13 **Community Forum with Candace Gingrich** (through the Human Rights Campaign Fund) at Bulger Communications Center, Buff State Campus at 7:00 pm

The weekend festivities begin with a **Pride Show** at Buffalo State's Houston Gymnasium at 7:30 pm.

Sat. June 17 - **Parade** assembles at 1:00 at the Red Cross parking lot at the corner of Delaware Avenue & Summer St. Step off at 2:00. Any marchers are welcome! Large groups or floats should register with Tamara Smith at 716-883-0128. A **rally with entertainment & speakers** will follow at Niagara Square. There will be **post parade parties** after the rally. More info at the rally. Sites include Comptons, Underground, Club Heat & others.

Sunday June 18 - **Gay & Lesbian Pride church service** at the Unitarian-Universalist Church at Elmwood & Ferry at 11:00 am. A coffee hour will follow with refreshments. There will be a **family picnic** at Front Park at 12 noon. Bring meat to grill. There will be grills, snacks & pop provided. At 3:00 the **Queen City Softball League** will play games at Front Park. See you there!

Pittsburgh Gay Pride Celebration

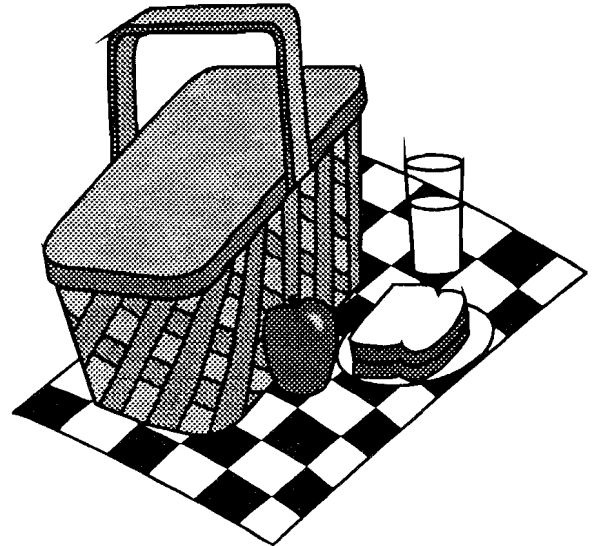
This year, the Pittsburgh Lesbian Gay and Bisexual Pride Celebration '95 will take place in Shadyside, where the parade will proceed through Shadyside and into Mellon Park. Pittsburgh's 1995 Pride theme is "We Are Your Neighbors."

June 24 - The **Parade** will kick off at 12:00 noon (lineup location TBA) and end at the **Festival** site, Mellon Park, where **speakers, comics and musicians** will entertain you from 1:30pm to 4:30pm. **Vendors and information tables** from various community organizations and businesses will provide a veritable bazaar of food, merchandise, brochures and activities throughout the afternoon. All primary access routes will be *wheelchair accessible* via existing paved walkways and all main stage activities will be *sign language interpreted*. To register to march in the

Parade or as a vendor/info table in the Festival, please call Brenda at 412/247-1545.

In addition, throughout the weeks before, community organizations will sponsor their own Pride events. Already several community organizations have made plans: GLAD will be hosting guest speaker, Professor Harjie Likens (June 11) and will be showing the movie, *Serving in Silence* (June 20). Several local bars/clubs will be sponsoring Three Rivers Pride Fundraisers (Pegasus June 7; Donny's Place June 16; Eagle June 23). The Pittsburgh Interfaith Pride Coalition will host their *annual nondenominational worship service* (June 21). The Gay and Lesbian Community Center (GLCC) of Pittsburgh will be hosting the famous New York comic, *Lisa Kron*, at the Rosebud (June 22). And, the Rainbow Social Club (RSC) is sponsoring a *Cook-out and Dance* (June 23).

Three Rivers Pride Committee will be collecting cans of food to be donated to local organizations who help feed the hungry. We are hoping to turn this year's theme "We Are Your Neighbors" into action by doing something for people in need in Pittsburgh. Cans will be collected during the Parade (Saturday June 24, (noon Shadyside) and at the Festival (1:30-4:30pm Mellon Park, Shadyside). Info: 412/422-3060.



Lesbigays 'Make' Parade of the Century

Continued from Page 1

theme. Fuhrman agrees to send an information packet to me and "strongly recommends" we submit an entry. Exciting stuff, I think.

In February, Heidi begins to spread the word about the float, and tacks signs in both bars. We really needed to find committee members, especially take charge types. I talk to a woman who has been in the media before and she seems open to accepting the challenge. We call some organizations and leave messages; a small blurb is placed in EGCN. The response is minimal. David offers his help and Larry Levasseur agrees to get things organized. It is at this point that I step back to take on the increasing workload the League demands before each election. I have the gut feeling that the idea is going to fall flat, and I'm indifferent about it because of mounting stress over LGLV's Voters' Guide. Why should I be concerned, I reason, if there is no movement in the float planning?

Skepticism about the float begins. I fully understand that some would not want to be involved because of the possibility of failure or a reluctance to raise money.

Although I never remember hearing a definite reason for the mixed feelings, I assume that most people are frightened to death of the publicity and exposure. After all, I am, too.

As I understand it, a proposal was adopted and sent to the Commission just before the April 1st deadline. A few weeks later, Larry announces the idea was accepted. We would learn later at a fund-raiser sponsored by the League that Abby Conley strongly

influenced the approval by the Commission. Through her efforts, we were assured a position other than the back of the parade. Abby was also involved in the decision to allow Bridges to place a copy of EGCN in the time capsule.

Heidi and I look over the proposal while visiting Larry one night. We are startled to find that the design lacks any mention of the lesbian community as sponsors. Larry knew and dealt with some members of the

Commission, and seemed to think it would be OK with them to simply add our name to the float, and to change some things. Heidi and I are concerned when we discover a clause in the material returned from the commission that states the float could be rejected from the parade if deemed inappropriate. Imagine spending time and money on a project just to have it pulled at the last minute! I'm reminded of a failed project the League tried to pull off a month before—we tried to set up a table at the Indigo Girls concert outside the Warner only to be denied security and threatened with arrest by the Erie Police at the last minute. I was not interested in subjecting myself to that again. I later confide to Heidi that I wouldn't be involved in the project if we

made changes to the original design because it was deceptive. She agrees and assures me she will call Fuhrman to get his opinion.

Heidi discovers that Fuhrman was surprised the committee hadn't included a sponsor name on the float. He states that minor changes are fine, the wording is fine, and the pink triangle idea is fine. He expresses encouragement. I feel much better, but I'd rather see it in writing. I say nothing.



The committee proceeds to peddle 50/50 tickets—eventually selling \$158 worth. Contributions from businesses, however, were hard to come by. I'm happy to be involved in two organizations which vote to donate \$25 each.

The first scheduled work party is held two weeks before the parade on a sunny, warm Saturday. The seven people who show enjoy the work, camaraderie, and hospitality of Larry. Larry displays the leadership abilities that the committee would soon become dependent upon. He guides us through erection and priming of the main float display. Problems are easily solved and we brainstorm to come up with a change in the "Erie's Growing Workforce" slogan. We eventually come up with the alternative "contributing to Erie's prosperity", despite concern about changing the main theme of the float. I am incredibly happy with the sense of community. I feel connected in a way I rarely experience.

Dave becomes ill and cannot help with the lettering. Days begin to tick away. The committee has spent around \$300 and can't seem to get commitments for the balance. Others on the committee scramble to find someone to fill Dave's shoes. Heidi recruits me to draw and letter one side; she will do the other. I feel an obligation to help. The strain it is putting on Heidi and Larry begins to creep into me. I begin to wonder why more people aren't involved or donating.

Doubts enter my mind about the viability of the project. Though Larry is willing to foot the bills, he expects to be repaid, and I worry about our ability to raise cash after the float is finished. I dwell on these thoughts throughout the week and finally decide to recommend the project be scrapped. I make plans to enjoy the weekend after Larry leaves a message that he is feeling the same way.

It is now one week before the parade, and we are arguing about proceeding or stopping and cutting our losses. I am irritable because the weather is beautiful and I had planned to enjoy the Saturday afternoon biking and forgetting my problems. The few individuals present work through the problems and decide to forge ahead. I feel better for expressing my concerns, however, and I realize I am now intimately involved and will have to devote a large portion of my free time to the float.

I spend my entire Sunday sketching the logo and running back and forth from my apartment, generating computer stencils for the lettering. We all get excited when we discover that the lesbian and gay community float is listed among the parade units in the Sunday Times-News. We are apprehensive about the outcome of the listing.

Monday goes by quietly. I spend the entire morning finishing the logo, lettering, and painting by myself. Sally Meiser and Heidi show later to help Larry.

I make plans to paint for two hours Tuesday morning. I paint on the ladder and feel good about my work. A man stops and it looks like he is going to do some lawn work next door. He is friendly and attractive; he questions me about the float. I reveal the gay and lesbian community is

sponsoring it, and he responds with "cool." I suddenly realize that he is actually working in Larry's yard and I feel the flush of embarrassment. "Oh God," I think, "I've outed Larry to the lawn help!" He finishes and gives me a message to relay to Larry. I re-tarp the float and go home.

After cleaning up Tuesday morning, I receive a call from Carol Pella, Newswatch 35. She wants an interview about the controversy surrounding the float.

(Cont'd on next page)



I sense exactly what is happening and I ask, "The shit has hit the fan, hasn't it?" I question her about details. She tells me an individual is making noise about the float—he is appalled that it will be in the parade and he refuses to take his grandchildren, citing concern about addressing questions from the children about the identifying words "lesbian, gay, and bisexual community" on the ends of the float. The local talk radio shows are going nuts over the issue. My blood pressure rises and I begin my all-too-familiar stammering. Feeling pressure to make a quick decision, I rise to the occasion and say yes. I feel I've been pushed without responding appropriately for the last time. I call Larry for support and he rushes over just as the camera arrives.

Wednesday ushers in a full-blown media circus. I interview with Mark Guy Findlay on WLKK after Kathy Harris of PFLAG. I am encouraged after hearing her. The interview goes well—I begin by responding to his pre-interview banter about being upset over a caller referring to him as Mark 'Gay' Findlay. "I'm really surprised you would be upset about being called gay," I joke. "Well, I'm an old homophobe from way back," was his reply. He asks and I relate my feelings on homophobia at my place of employment, PHB Die Castings in Fairview. I respond to his question about the float being political by saying it is no more political than any other float or business identifying themselves in the parade.

The float committee has difficulty focusing on the actual remaining work. We hear about angry calls being received by Mayor Savocchio, the Bicentennial Commission, and the Times Publishing Company. I decide to fax the Commission office on official LGLV letterhead, thanking them for including us in the parade. The float committee learns that Michael Fuhrman has called Joel and I from the League, requesting a "personal meeting" about his concerns over the float. I am confused about the request after I specifically state in the fax that the float is NOT a League project. Joel accepts and is taken to dinner by Fuhrman. Joel relates Fuhrman's concerns to Larry and me.

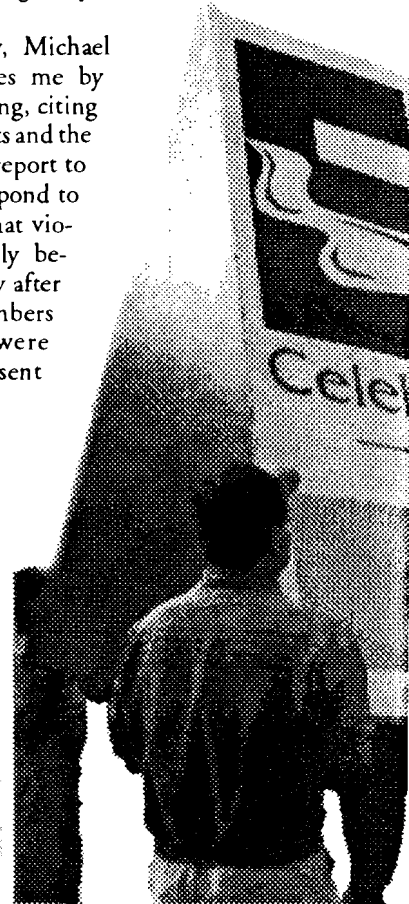
John Horan, Vice Chair of the Commission, visits the float site. He informs the committee that the float is acceptable; nothing is offensive about it. He pledges to support us and offers that he will resign in front of the media before the parade if the Commission flip-

flops on its decision to allow the float to remain. During a conversation with Larry, he suggests that we remove the word "bisexual" from the float. Larry agrees.

After learning about the conversation with Joel, I decide to investigate the amount of opposition and threatening phone calls to the Bicentennial Commission. After speaking with Becca Martin, I learn that 50 calls were received against the float, and 12 in favor. There were no threats to the office or staff. A number of calls were coming from the North East area, and I cringe. The League of Gay and Lesbian Voters had been denied rental of Skateway Roller Rink for fundraisers because a fundamentalist church in the North East area threatened to pull their monthly business. I fully expect that these zealots are behind a good portion of the uproar.

On Thursday, Michael Fuhrman infuriates me by requesting a meeting, citing many violent threats and the fear of his staff to report to work. I angrily respond to his insinuations that violence had suddenly become an issue only after Commission members and his office were threatened. "I resent

Teamwork
Volunteers working
together to lift the float
onto the flatbed.



the fact that you believe that violence is suddenly an issue. Gays and lesbians live with the threat of violence every day of their lives." Fuhrman's intentions are obvious: pressure the community to influence the float committee to voluntarily pull the float from the parade. I calmly explain that Joel and I were not on the float committee and questioned him about contacting League people about float committee concerns. He answers, "You were the person who initially contacted me about the float and I recognized your name on the fax. Since I didn't know who was on the float committee, I called you."

After a phone conversation with Larry, we decide that I should be the only spokesman for the committee. I express uneasiness about being involved in the decisions of the committee, and Larry invites me to join. I agree. We discuss my apprehension about having walkers along the parade route and we decide to forbid it. We also discuss a possible compromise with the

Commission—take all of the identifying words off the ends of the float.

Larry reasoned that we had received enough media attention to make everyone aware of the float with the pink triangle. Larry relays the decision to Horan.

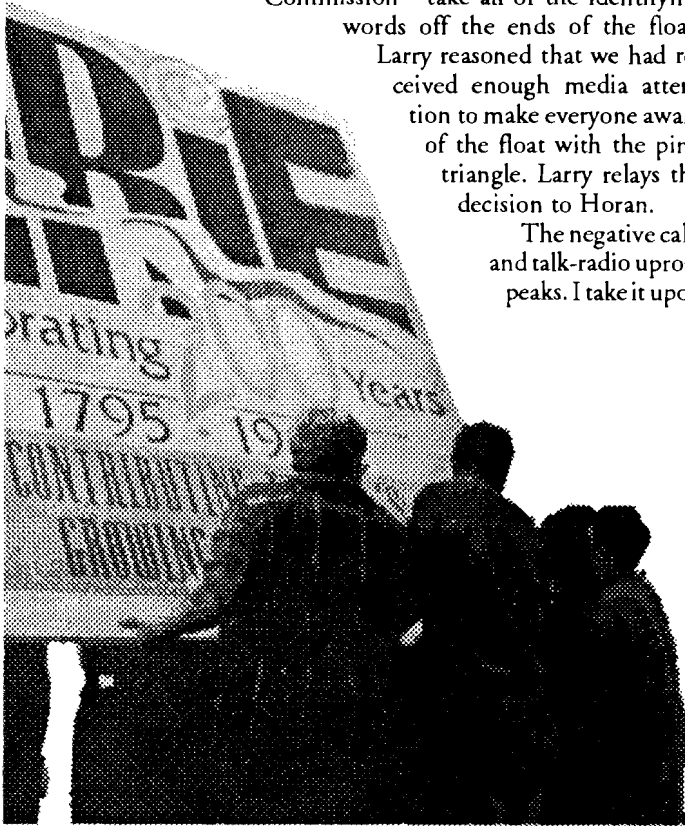
The negative calls and talk-radio uproar peaks. I take it upon

myself to begin a phone war with the hate mongers. My remaining free time before work is spent placing calls to friends, business associates, and anyone supportive of our views. I urge them to call the Commission office and express support. The negative tide begins to turn.

The Bicentennial Commission requests a meeting with the float committee. We wonder who is behind the meeting. We can't understand why Fuhrman would again call Joel after we talked to him. The committee can't meet because of work commitments. The Commission meets without float committee representation and decides all identifying wording and symbols must come off, including the pink triangle, as in the initial plan. They would then issue a statement to the media. A small news item appears in USA Today.

I learn about the decision immediately upon returning home from work on Thursday. Heidi gives me the details as I try to listen to the dozen or so messages on my answering machine. She feels disappointed, but she is still positive. I hang up and call Larry. This is a definite defeat, and I am becoming very angry. During the course of our conversation, Larry lets his dogs out and I hear, "Oh my God, Greg, come over here, come over..." The phone dies and I know that the float has been damaged. I bolt from my apartment to Larry's place and I can see the exposed float with the fluorescent paint. We are both shaken. We hear a noise and begin circling his home; my heart is leaping out of my chest. There is nobody around. It is difficult to calm down. Larry's eyes well up and I begin pacing, inspecting the damage. "Never assholes", "fags", and "fuck you" are among the graffiti. Larry calls the police; I run back home to call Heidi and to close and lock my door. I punch her number in and a man answers—it confuses and upsets me more. He identifies himself as a reporter from the Morning News and he wants a comment on our reaction to the Commission's news release. I'm stunned. "The float was just vandalized, can you send a photographer right over?" I ask. I am still breathing heavily from the run back, and I can't collect my thoughts enough to make any sense. He presses me for a comment. I tell him that I don't know what to say, and, off the record, that I'm upset with the Commission's decision to meet without our representation. He tells me the paper is soon going to press, and asks again for a comment. The reporter misquotes me and I spend more time trying to explain

(Cont'd on next page)



what I had just said to him. Abruptly, I hang up and call Heidi again. She will be right over.

We begin placing calls to the local media, and Chris Young of LGLV-Pittsburgh gives us guidance and support. He offers to set up a reward fund. Heidi expresses her concern about increasing violence against the community; she calls the local bar and tells them to be careful. Heidi and I do some interviews and we finally begin to calm down. A friend drops by from the local bar; she lends support and her opinion about what to do. Feeling dejected and spent, we all agree to wait until the morning to make any decisions regarding the float.

I return home and boot up the computer. My plan is to post an Action Alert on the Internet—an electronic mail message distributed throughout the country requesting some type of urgent action. Because I am tired, the process takes a long time. Finally, I force myself to relax and sleep.

Friday begins very early for me. I didn't get much sleep, but I am invigorated. The phone begins to ring off the hook, and I am frustrated that I can't shower and shave. Requests for interviews and comments pour in. It looks like the day will be beautiful, and I am ready to recommend that we rebuild. I make the call to Larry, and he agrees. We are both excited and ready to show Erie that we're fighters. We both hoot and holler over the phone. Plans are made to set up an office at the work site. I record a new message on my answering machine, directing calls to Larry's, so I can clean up. The phone rings constantly and I smile.

What we witness at the building site is incredible. People show up with food, money, and supplies. We pack 'em in around the float, all willing to do their share. Larry uses his cellular phone and we share his cordless. We can't get away long enough to actually help with the float, and it becomes a running gag. We

finally recruit a secretary. Individual acts of courage become apparent—straight people and closeted lesbians show their faces on camera in support of the effort. Larry and I are beaming. Tears come to my eyes at different points, like when a friend calls me to her car to listen to a gay man defend himself on talk radio. A gay man donates two small rainbow flags he purchased at two consecutive pride parades in North Carolina. I promise we will use them. For perhaps the first time, I am very proud of Erie and our lesbian community. We have become the true symbol for the spirit of the Bicentennial.



Calls come in from Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Washington, DC. The news goes out on the Associated Press wire. A gay man from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation informs us that Church members are furious about the vandalism and he is leading an effort to jam the Bicentennial phone lines with positive calls.

Abby Conley arrives and immediately pitches in. At 6 pm, we estimate there have been about 70 volunteers throughout the course of the day. The 30 or so are blowing up balloons, painting, and fitting the skirting around the flatbed. Harry Miller of La Bella Bistro arrives with a fantastic food spread, a group of volunteers, and offers more money. Miller is one of those individu-

als who feel an obligation to the community and appreciates the efforts of local lesbian organizations.

Larry places floodlights around the area and four of us stand guard over the float throughout the night. I return home around 5 am to get my clothes ready and take care of neglected business.

Physically, I feel horrible. I have eaten and rested little for days. I'm running on pure adrenaline at this point.

Back at Larry's, we have coffee and begin final preparation. The float looks fantastic in the glow of the

early morning sun. We joke that the float should win the 'perseverance' award. Larry confides that he had a bad dream about a violent attack on the float. I leave to shower and collect my thoughts. I'm ready for the show, ready to take on the bigots, but I feel skeptical that we will be permitted in the parade. We depart for our staging area at 9 am with sunscreen, cell phone, aspirin, and mace. The float creeps along West 6th. People smile and wave. Traffic is heavy at 12th and Greengarden; a traffic cop waves us through the intersection.

We feel nervous excitement. Other floats have lined up at the staging area, and we admire them. A parade volunteer arrives and we register the float. She looks for our entry on her document and can't find us listed. My blood pressure rises. Another volunteer joins us and they then relate that our position has been changed for security purposes. We will be the last float, behind the Sheriff and before a group of fire trucks. More security will be provided. Larry thanks them for their help and the Commission's concern for our safety. After they depart, we feel manipulated again, but what are we going to do now? After some discussion, we feel the move was an attempt to keep us out of the spotlight—TV coverage will have ended and people would be leaving the parade route by the time we arrived.

Since we hadn't eaten, we make plans to pick up some food. Dave, a friend who has begun the process of working through his fear of coming out, arrives to wish us luck. I think about the long journey Dave is just beginning, and I am happy to be able to provide some encouragement and support. This is the reason I became active in the lesbian rights struggle, and Dave is one of the stipends.

We begin the long wait and become mostly silent. The breeze turns into a gusting wind and our balloon design disintegrates into a giant blob. We eat and breathe dust. Occasionally, an observer will walk by and offer a kind word. We thank them profusely.

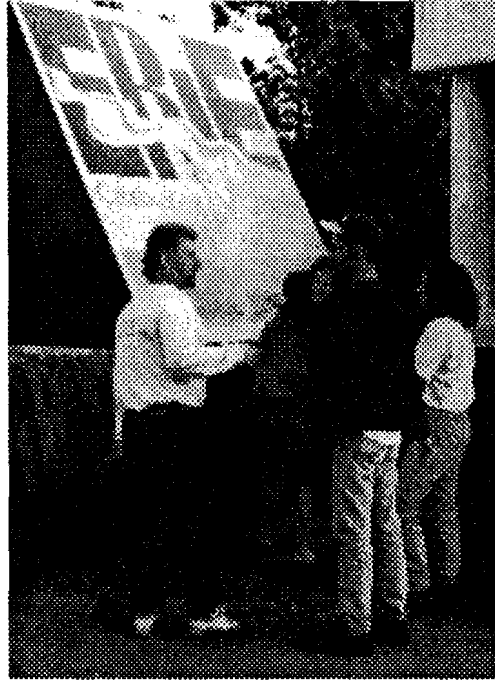
Abby Conley arrives and lightens the atmosphere. She will ride with us in the cab. Her attitude and drive is what inspired me to come out in the media and take a strong stand. I will be forever grateful.

The parade bogs down. We hear rumors that people have had heart attacks and the large balloons are holding up the parade. We feel vulnerable—most of the units have left, and we are among only a few floats in a sea of dust. Heidi has visions of violence.

The float is finally ushered onto the parade route at 4:30. Tension builds. We are jammed into the cab and are uncomfortable. We wonder aloud where all the security is; our float seems to be alone. Larry guides the flatbed slowly and Heidi chides him for following the preceding unit too closely. As we approach Liberty Street, couples and families leaving the parade wave and cheer. We see the crowd ahead. I'm feeling anxious and tired.

Suddenly, people are everywhere. I feel as if we have just surfaced from a long swim underwater; we are happy to be breathing the air and experiencing the reality of our own environment. Police suddenly swarm around us. Some people wave and applaud politely, but the majority look rather shell shocked. Is it because of our appearance, or are they just exhausted from the length of the parade? We begin to recognize faces. The support encourages us to wave and offer thanks to the crowd. Our grumpiness fades and we feed on the crowd reaction. Lesbians are cheering and jumping up and down, essentially outing themselves. Gay men wave and point to their clothing

(Cont'd on next page)



which bear pink triangles, large and small. A gay man, Bobby, enters the street and begins to walk with us. I feel the swell of emotion. A man rushes the float with his son and proclaims he is from New Jersey; he is ecstatic we have persevered. They follow us.

We arrive at the first reviewing area. The announcer seems to be confused about our presence, but he finally lets the crowd know the float is by "the gay and lesbian alliance". I laugh. We don't get much of a reaction from the crowd. As we turn onto State Street, we feel tension. Heidi comments that the crowd seems hostile. I don't know what to expect. An odd man unfolds a sign that reads "Jesus save Erie, PA". He is twitching and talking to himself. He avoids looking directly at us, as if we are the queer Medusa.

The crowd now erupts into applause when our float is announced. A large group of lesbians burst with enthusiasm. Lesbians seem to be everywhere, and they are not afraid to show their support. Are we still in Erie? We hand out our rainbow flags to a few who are walking with us. A family now steps out to follow. We are proud and empowered. Heidi and I are bouncing around the cab and we all shout thanks while giving the thumbs up sign.

Perry Square is mobbed with people. We receive an enthusiastic greeting and an incredible ovation when we are announced. I see Mayor Savocchio, Judy Lynch, and Commission people standing and applauding. Representative Bebko-Jones is jumping up and down and nearly falls off the reviewing platform. Larry is honking the horn and Heidi, Abby and I are going wild.

We turn onto Third Street to disband. A reporter greets us with a barrage of questions and a woman takes some balloons off the float for her child. We sigh and laugh. We have finally finished our incredible journey, and we can relax now. Larry drives us back home and we are greeted by Joy Greco, who congratulates us.



The Float Committee (Greg, Larry, Heidi and Dave Tingley) would like to thank all of the many people who helped make the float a success!

The Float Committee would also like to extend a cordial invitation to the entire Erie community to celebrate our "coming out" at the third annual Pride Picnic on Presque Isle. The Picnic will be at Cabin 2 at Waterworks. See the ad in the front of this issue of EGCN for details. Bring along your friends and share the best our community has to offer — namely YOU, the extraordinary lesbians of Erie, PA.

Michael Dithers

by Michael Mahler

What a rollercoaster of a month it's been! I was only involved a bit with the float, but I did feel that it showed us some important things about our community.

I feel that the most important, the most real thing that we can take away from this was that there is goodness and decency in people. I was crushed when I heard about the vandalism. I was annoyed (though not surprised) by the hate talk radio. But all of that was more than made up for by seeing all the people who showed up to show their support and rebuild the float in the space of 24 hours. There were about 70-80 folks there through out the day.

For those of you who weren't there, let me tell you how inspiring and uplifting it was. We had several calls from people who wanted to help, including Terry Kime, from the Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie, who wanted to know if there was anything her congregation could do to help. Many of them did pitch in. (They also collected \$67.35) We had senior citizens, young married couples with their small children, gays, lesbians, straights, everyone.

It really meant a lot to me to have our float in the parade along with everyone else's. Despite what some homophobes may think, I think what all of us want is simply to be accepted and to be part of our community, just like everyone else. Blessings to all the many hard-working folks who made that possible!

Local News

Local News—W NY

Transitions

DIED: Jimmy Smith, 39, on April 11, from complications due to AIDS. Smith lived in Buffalo but was a native of Jamestown. He was an activist and entertainer who raised thousands of dollars for his favorite causes, especially for AIDS organizations and projects. He helped organize the Gay Olympics, was a dancer, a producer of many shows, owner of the Miss Gay Buffalo and Miss Gay Paramount Buffalo pageants, and co-owner of Bulldog Lil's till 1993. His most recent full-time employment was as manager of the former Underground bar.

(Information thanks to *Volumé* in Buffalo)

Local News - NW Pa

Cup-a-Ccino's News

Some changes, variations, news, and such at Cups: Poetry Night is on hold for awhile while coordinator Heidi Streich takes a little time out. Thursday nights will be Open Mic. Sign up with Lance Elbaum. Drum Circle every Monday evening. Play or come to listen. "No kit drums please."

There's a Cup-a-Ccino's Walking Club. If you're interested in tromping around with them ask at the counter.

Thanks to Cups' management for posting a sign urging people to call the Bicentennial Commission to vote on the presence of the gay/lesbian/bisexual community's float in the parade.

Transitions

BORN: To **Lucinda Marsh**, on May 9, a baby girl named Mollie Grace, 8 lbs 8oz and 21" long. Mollie was born at home and the midwife was Salena Walter. The family (including Mollie's older sister JoEllen) are all doing well!

Families

Day of Prayer

May 14—Mother's Day was declared a National Day of Prayer for Sharon Bottoms and all gay and lesbian parents in danger of losing their children. The declaration was issued by the Metropolitan Community Church, which ministers primarily to lesbians and gay men.

Australian Rights

SYDNEY, May 2—Same-sex couples in the Australian state of New South Wales are now entitled to family leave rights.

Support Your Partner

By *T. Alicia Manus, C.M.A.*
Education Outreach Worker, C.M.A.
Erie Co. Dept. of Health

Some couples today should consider HIV testing. Each person in the relationship can act as a support person for the other. A simple **Release of Information** form can be signed when couples consider HIV testing and would like their partner to take an active role as their support person in this process. The couple *will be made aware of the test results* and in signing the release form, each party should understand the laws that govern confidentiality. Under these laws, the HIV counselor **cannot** release any test results to anyone other than the person being tested without written permission from that person.

For more information on Free Confidential Counseling and Testing, call the Erie County Department of Health, HIV/AIDS Education and Training at 451-6700.



Media Watch

By Al Kielwasser

Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation
San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

FRIENDLIER TELEVISION

Though not part of the main cast, a lesbian couple has made a notable contribution to the mix of characters on the NBC series *Friends*. In the May 11th episode, Carol (one half of the couple) is in labor. The plot twists around the interactions between Susan (Carol's lover) and Ross (Carol's ex, and the father of the baby).

At the hospital, Ross and Susan fight over helping Carol. Carol eventually kicks them both out of the delivery room, but the fight continues. Each seems jealous of the other's impending relationship with the new baby. Ross complains that Susan will be with the baby every night, while Susan bemoans Ross' biological ties to the child.

The conflict is resolved on a particularly affirming note. An observant friend reminds both Ross and Susan that this baby is especially lucky, to have so many people care for it—an experience many children lack.

Send encouraging feedback to Warren Littlefield, Vice President of Entertainment, c/o NBC Viewer Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York NY 10112, tel. 212-664-2333.

HEART ATTACK

With the Paramount Pictures release of *Braveheart*, the film's producer/director/star—**Mel Gibson**—continues his career in gay-bashing.

In this much-hyped film, gays are (once again) singled out for gratuitous contempt. The ostensibly "fact-based" epic portrays Edward II (believed by historians to be gay) as an excessively foolish and vain homosexual, deserving of the audience's ridicule. In screenings thus far, audiences have consistently laughed (on cue) every time the character appears on screen, and have even cheered as Edward's lover is tossed out a window to his death.

In their rush to pay homage to Mel Gibson, the mainstream media have ignored *Braveheart*'s homopho-

bia. The New York Times instantly declared the film "a stroke of brilliance."

Gibson has been further flattered by his appearance on the covers of several major magazines, including the May issue of GQ, and the June issue of US.

In her six-page GQ cover story ("Mad Mac"), Stephanie Mansfield never once mentions the possibility of *Braveheart*'s homophobia, even though she was treated to a pre-screening of the film before its final edit and release. In "Wild at Heart," US magazine's Jancee Dunn offers—over the course of five dense pages—only a parenthetical comment about the film's anti-gay bias. Of Edward II she writes, "It's a part that could have been written by Andrew Dice Clay, and one which critics will be sure to seize upon." Nevertheless, US opted to use Gibson's face on the "subscription cards" tucked into each magazine. Apparently, homophobia sells.

In its "Summer Movie Preview" issue (May 26) Entertainment Weekly also gives ample page space to *Braveheart*. Once again, homophobia is utterly ignored (the editors did manage, however, to include a photo of Gibson's oft-discussed butt).

The myopic hype continued on Larry King Live (CNN, May 26). Appearing on the popular show, Gibson said of his *Braveheart*: "It's the kind of film I always wanted to see when I was growing up."

Unfortunately, *Braveheart* IS the kind of film that too many children already see; Hollywood consistently markets unbalanced homophobia to youth audiences. Is it any wonder that young men perpetuate most of the anti-gay violence in this country?

Bleating our further praise for *Braveheart*, Larry King told Mel Gibson: "You ought to be damned proud!" Like King himself, not one caller to the worldwide broadcast ever raised (or was allowed to raise?) The subject of homophobia. Instead, every call came from a gushing Gibson fan.

While *Braveheart* appears inconsistent with historical fact, it certainly IS consistent with Mel Gibson's own history of contempt for gays. He has regularly made a point of ridiculing the gay community, publicly suggesting that gay men and gay sex are disgusting and unnatural. Gibson has also stated that he feared being perceived as gay because he is an actor. "I became an

actor despite that," he told one interviewer, "But with this look, who's going to think I'M gay? It would be hard to take me for someone like THAT."

Obviously, there's nothing BRAVE about being homophobic. Everyday, lesbians and gay men are attacked and assaulted. And like a COWARDLY school-yard bully, Mel Gibson just keeps cheering on the bashers.

** Send much needed feedback to any or all of the following: Sherry Lansing, Chair, Paramount Pictures, 5555 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles CA 90038, tel. 213-958-5000 (Ext. 8393); Arthur Cooper, Editor-In-Chief, GQ, 350 Madison Avenue, New York NY 10017, tel. 212-880-8800, e-mail gqmag@aol.com; Jann S. Wenner, Editor-In-Chief (and a gay man who should know better), US: The Entertainment Magazine, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10104-0298; Entertainment Weekly, 1675 Broadway, New York NY 10019, e-mail JamesS5089@aol.com (online comments can also be posted to America Online, keyword EW); Larry King Live, c/o CNN, and Ed Turner, Executive Vice President, CNN, One CNN Center, P.O. Box 105366, Atlanta GA 30348-5366, tel. 404-827-1700, fax 404-737-3323.

** For a contrasting perspective on some of the same historical material, rent a copy of Derek Jarman's film *Edward II*. [EGCN Editors' Note: The Movie Stop carries *Edward II*]

QUEER FOLK

Celebrating 35 years in the entertainment industry, folk music legends **Peter, Paul & Mary** have issued *Lifelines*, a new CD that features various guest artists. One of the numbers is a duet between Mary Travers and Holly Near. The song—"Home is Where the Heart is"—was written by Sally Fingerett, and is an ode to queer families.

Written as if sung by a mother to her daughter, the lyrics touch upon the lives of various couples, with references to both lesbian and gay individuals. The chorus reminds listeners: "Home is where the heart is, no matter where the heart lives." As one fan of the new CD remarked, the song's theme is that "family values are gay values."

Significantly, Warner Brothers has released "Home Is Where the Heart Is" as the CD's first single.

**Compliments can be sent to Donna Russo, Warner Brothers Records, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, 20th Floor, New York NY 10019 tel. 212-275-4500, fax 212-275-2500. Copy your correspondence to Gerald Levin, CEO, Time-Warner Inc., 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York NY 10019, tel 212-522-1212. And don't forget to request the song when calling your local "Adult Contemporary/Middle of the Road (Soft Rock)" radio stations.

Media Briefs

Sound Bites... "As far as I'm concerned, I think that a band like Pansy Division saves People's lives. A lot of kids go through life just not knowin' what the hell they are, or what their sexuality is all about, and they just kind of go confused. But if someone has sort of the same ideas and feelings they do, and a sense of humor thrown on top of it, then it really helps" (Bille Joe, lead singer of Green Day, commenting on his group's opening act—the queer punk band Pansy Division.)



**the Erie Gay
Community
Newsletter**

We Cover the Tri-State Area!

Reporting on Events & Issues of Interest to the Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Communities



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Newsletters are mailed discreetly in a security envelope every month for a year. All information held in confidence.

HIV/AIDS News

HIV/AIDS - Sex

Polyurethane Condom Warning

The new polyurethane condoms (called Avanti) may have a high rate of breakage. Good Vibrations, a business that specializes in sex toys, books, and videos, reports that many of their customers are reporting a higher rate of breakage with the condoms. We'll keep you apprised as we hear more.

Condoms Compared

The May issue of *Consumer Reports* features a six-page article about condoms. This article provides the most up-to-date and reliable information available on the quality of various condom brands. It rates 37 brands of latex condoms, and spends some time talking about the new Avanti polyurethane condom (the magazine says researchers aren't sure how to test them), as well as lambskin condoms.

The study found that there are still big differences between condom brands. Three brands got perfect

scores: Excita Ultra-Ribbed (w/spermicide), Sheik Elite, and Ramses Extra Ribbed (w/spermicide). The Sheik Elite has come out on top of all the major condom studies. The Sheik Elite has been renamed Sheik Classic, apparently to avoid confusion with the Sheik Elite that is manufactured in Japan and performed poorly.

More information on this study will appear in the next issue of EGCN. The *Consumer Reports* article and study provide very important and practical information on safer sex. You can get a reprint for \$3.00 from CU/Reprints, 101 Truman Ave., Yonkers, NY 10703-1057.

HIV/AIDS News - NE Ohio

Leeward Fundraiser a Hit

The Leeward Lounge's annual AIDS fundraiser brought in \$1801.00, topping last year's amount. The fundraiser was held on May 20. Entertainment included a magician/juggler plus local talent. Proceeds benefit the Ashtabula AIDS Task Force.

HIV/AIDS News NW Pa

Lucas Nominated

Congratulations to Don Paul Lucas, who was nominated by Congressman Phil English for National Public Citizen of the Year, an award sponsored by the National Association of Social Workers. Lucas is president of Friends from the Heart, and commits much volunteer time to providing HIV/AIDS education. He is also the first person in Erie to publicly acknowledge that he has HIV.

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Serving the HIV-Affected Community

SHOW YOUR PRIDE!

at the Bridges Pride Picnic

Sat. June 10, 2:00pm

Presque Isle State Park

Cabin 2 across from Beach 6

Groups & Organizations

10% Network and Social Group (Chautauqua County)

Meets 3rd Saturday of the month 7-11 pm at First Unitarian Society of Jamestown. No smoking or alcohol. ☎ John at (716) 484-7285.

AIDS Bereavement Support Group

Sponsored by HIV/AIDS Outreach Ministry of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Paul. For families, partners, spouses, friends & caregivers who loved ones/friends have died with AIDS. Co-facilitated by The Rev. Canon F. Kay Johnson and Sue Kuebler. Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 8-9:30pm. Safe and confidential ☎ Kay Johnson at the Cathedral Office, (814) 452-3779

Bridges

Community building, also publishes *Erie Gay Community Newsletter* and sponsors community dances and potluck dinners/forums. ☎ Bridges, PO Box 3063, Erie, PA 16508-0063. ☎ (814) 456-9833. Email to CompuServe 70431,1622 or from Internet: mikemahler@aol.com or fax to (814) 452-1392.

Closet Culture

Focuses on social activities. Open to any lesbian, gay or bisexual 22 or younger in Erie or surrounding area. Write to: PO Box 10274, Erie PA 16514-0274. Phone ☎ (814)825-0530. The phone is private so feel free to be open if you need to leave a message.

Committee in Support of Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual People

A committee of students, faculty, & administrators who work together to educate, bring speakers, offer films, and address concerns that relate to gay and lesbian issues specific to the Allegheny Community. ☎ CSGLBP, Box 186, Allegheny College, Meadville, PA 16335. ☎ Paula at (814) 332-4356 or Erny at (814) 332-4375. Email to Roy Cerise at csglbp@alleg.edu

Erie Sisters

Nonsexual social support group for TV/TS/CD. Monthly meetings on 4th Saturday, newsletter. Meetings in even numbered months are social events held at accepting establishments. Interview with a club officer required before first meeting. ☎ Erie Sisters, 2115 W 8 ST, Suite 261, Erie, PA 16505.

Friends from the Heart

Volunteers helping deliver help with food, rent, transportation, moving and clothing to people with AIDS. Call Deb Monohon at (814) 838-0123 to see how you can help. Donations greatly appreciated.

Gay Catholic Community

☎ Ignatius at (814) 459-5442 or write to 533 East 10th Street, Erie PA 16503

HIV/AIDS Outreach Ministry of St. Paul Cathedral

Call 452-3779.

Identity (formerly Edinboro Gay Organization (EGO))

Student group for lesbian & allies at Edinboro University. Weekly meetings during fall & spring semesters. Social activities ☎. ☎ John Wetsell at 1-398-8005 or Dr. Dave Herendeen at (814)732-2555. Email to John Wetsell j663104w@vax.edinboro.edu or write to Identity/EGO, c/o Dr. Herendeen, Edinboro University, Heather Hall, Edinboro, PA 16440

Integrity

A Christian-based spiritual and support group, sponsored by the Episcopalian Church that welcomes people of all faiths. Meetings: 2nd Sunday of the month (6:00pm) at St. Paul's Cathedral, 133 West 6th Street. ☎ Integrity-NWPA, PO Box 1782, Erie, PA, 16507-1782. ☎ (814)774-0903.

Jamestown HIV Positive Support Group

☎ Eric Anderson at (716) 664-7855.

JCC Support Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Support Group

Peer counseling & support attempting to live fulfilling, open, integrated lives as lesbian/gay people in W NY & NY PA. Ages of members varies from 15 into 50's. Open to college & non-college people. Meeting date, time & place vary. Contact: Gregory P. Rabb. Write to

JCC, 525 Falconer St, PO Box 20, Jamestown NY 14702-0020 or ☎ (716)665-5220 ext 204 or (716)-664-9174.

Lambda Group AA

Alcoholics Anonymous for Lesbians. Closed discussion. Meets Sunday evenings at 8:00 pm at Unitarian Universalist Church of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway. Open to all Lesbians who think they may have a problem with drugs and/or alcohol. You are not alone. For more info call 452-2675 ☎.

League of Gay and Lesbian Voters (LGLV)

Nonpartisan voters group. Publishes Voters' Guide for elections, voter registration/education, lobbying, advocacy. Interested in clipping newspaper articles and/or writing summaries? Contact us for details. Meets first Sunday of the month. ☎ Greg at (814) 833-3258. Call before faxing to (814)833-3258.. ☎ LGLV-Erie, PO Box 8083, Erie, PA 16505-0083. Email to kidithart@aol.com

Menspace

Meets once a month. ☎ (814) 899-8507 or 835-6712 for info.

Oasis

Merged with Erie Sisters.

PFLAG

Support group for Parents & Friends of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals & Transgendered. **Erie PA Chapter:** Meets last Wed. of month. ☎ Kathy Harris at (814) 838-6020 or ☎ PFLAG-Erie c/o Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie, PO Box 3495, Erie, PA 16508. **DuBois PA Chapter:** Meets 7pm 2nd Tuesday of month. ☎ Jack & Karen Kressley at (814) 371-8962 or ☎ PFLAG-DuBois, 1191 Treasure Lake, Dubois PA 15801 **Jamestown NY Chapter:** Meets last Tuesday of the month, call for site. ☎ (716) 488-1264 or (716) 763-1529. **Ashtabula OH Chapter:** ☎ (216)964-3350

Pitt-Bradford/BIGALA

Support group for students. Meetings are Fridays, alternate Tues 12noon & 3pm. ☎ Brenda or Heidi at (814)362-7694. or write to: University of Pitt Bradford BIGALA, Attn: Director of Student Activities, 300 Campus Drive/235 Commons, Bradford, PA 16701.

Rainbow Connection (Warren, PA area)

Support group for Warren, PA and surrounding area. Meets once a month. Call for location and meeting dates/times Fred or Marshall at (814) 726-1808.

Rainbow Families (formerly Chautauqua Gay Fathers & Lesbian Mothers)

A support group for gay & lesbian parents in Chautauqua County & neighboring counties and a play group for their kids. ☎ ☎ ☎ ☎ at (716)672-6682 or Patrick at (716)881-1878. Write to: 9856 Porter Road; Fredonia NY 14063

SUNY-Fredonia B-GLAD

A support group for students at SUNY Fredonia. Group renamed B-GLAD. ☎ (716)673-3424

Support Groups for Persons with HIV/AIDS

Open to people of all faiths. Meetings: 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month from 7:30 to 9:30 pm at Catholic Charities, St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 East Grandview Blvd. Fax to (814)825-1075. For more info, call Cheryl Weber at 452-6113 or 825-1085 ☎.

Trigon

Support group for Behrend students, faculty, alumni. For more info, call Sue Daley (814)898-6164. or ☎ College Mailroom, Box 1054, Behrend College, Station Road, Erie, PA 16563.

Venango-Forest AIDS Support

Meets every Tuesday at 6:30 pm at Christ Episcopal Church, 16 Center Avenue, Oil City, PA For more info, call 800-359-2437

Womynspace Coffeehouse

An alcohol & smoke-free environment for lesbians, with a particular theme, topic or activity for each month. Meet 1st Saturday of each month at 7:30 pm. at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie. Contact Sally at (814)454-2713.

HIV/AIDS Directory

AIDS Organizations & Services:

National

- AIDS Factline 1-800-324-AIDS
- National AIDS Hotline 1-800-662-6080
- Spanish AIDS Hotline 1-800-344-7432

Ashtabula OH/Ashtabula County

- AIDS Task Force (Mary Ellen Conigli) (216) 998-1020
- HIV+ Support Group (216)350-2554

Jamestown NY/Chautauqua Co.

- AIDS Community Services (716)664-7855

Meadville PA/Crawford County

- Case Manager - Debbie Miller ... (800)359-AIDS
- Crawford Co. AIDS Coalition 337-3241
- HIV+ Support Groups Rosemary Buzzard at 333-5800

Erie PA/Erie County

- ☛ Case Manager - Deb Monohon 838-0123
- ☛ Case Manager - Mary Richardson 456-8849
- ☛ Case Manager - Cheryl Weber 825-1085
- ☛ St. Mark's/Catholic Charities Support Group Cheryl Weber at 825-1085 or 452-6113
- ☛ AIDS Network Jackie Tamarro at 451-6700
- ☛ Friends from the Heart (Direct Client Services) 838-0123
- ☛ HIV/AIDS Outreach Ministry of Cathedral of St. Paul (Episcopal) 452-3779
- ☛ N.W. PA Rural AIDS Alliance (Erie office) 456-8849 or 1(800)400-AIDS
- ☛ Well Being HIV+ Support Group 838-0123

Venango/Forest County

- Venango-Forest AIDS Support .. 1-800-359-2437
- Case Manager - Debbie Miller ... (800)359-AIDS

Warren County

- ☛ Case Manager - Deb Monohon 838-0123
- ☛ Case Manager - Tamara Shilling 1(800)359-AIDS or (814)226-2743

HIV/AIDS COUNSELING AND TESTING PROGRAMS (free):

The following locations offer free, confidential counseling, testing, and referral.

- ☛ (Corry) Erie Co. Dept. of Health 663-3891
- ☛ (Erie) Erie Co. Dept. of Health 451-6700
- ☛ Erie) MHEDS 453-6229 or 453-4728

- Jamestown or Buffalo (716)847-4520
- Meadville PA (814)332-6947
- Pittsburgh (412)578-8332
- Sharon PA (412)983-5150
- Youngstown OH (216)747-4805

Anonymous Sites:

- (Ashtabula) Family Planning Associates (\$30) (216)992-5953
- Painesville OH (216)354-AIDS
- Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force (412)242-2500

☛ = Member of HIV/AIDS Service Network for Erie County PA

Area Bars & Places

Ashtabula

Leeward Lounge, 1022 Bridge St. Open 7 days, 7 p.m. - 2:30 am, food til 1:30 am. (216)964-9935. Fri & Sat - \$1 cover, half goes into 50-50 drawn at end of night, other half goes to person taking cover. AIDS Food Pantry collection site.

Erie & Edinboro

Cup-a-Ccino's, 18 North Park Row. Mon-Wed 7:30am-11pm, Thur-Fri. 7:30 am-12 mid., Sat 9 a.m.-midnight. 456-1511. A gay-friendly coffeehouse. New expanded space, nonsmoking section, retail store. Poetry and story nights on alternating Thursdays, live music most Saturdays, some Fridays. Wheelchair accessible. Bike rack for cyclists.

The Embers, 1711 State St. 454-9171. Open Mon-Sat. 8pm-2am. Live DJ music Mon., Wed., Fri., Sat. 10pm-2am. Pool table.

Lizzie Bordon's Part II, 3412 West 12th. Open Mon-Sat., patio open Mon.-Tues.-Thurs. Bowling on Tuesday 9 pm till ? Country Line dancing Wed. 9-11 p.m. w/ live DJ. 90s dance music DJ on Fri. (11-2 a.m.) & Sat. (9pm-2a.m.) Shows on some Fridays.

Jamestown & Southwest NY

Nite Spot, 201 Winsor, Jamestown. Open Tues-Sun 7pm-2am. Closed Mon. DJ Fri & Sat 10pm-2am. Sun. Drag show, DJ after 9:30 pm, no cover. Nitely specials.

Rocking Duck Inn, 28 Genesee Parkway, Cuba NY. Near Olean, 100 miles from Erie. Gay-owned Bed & Breakfast. Call (716)968-3335 for more info.

Sneakers, 100 Harrison, Jamestown. (716)484-8816. Open 7 days a week, 2 p.m. to 2 a.m. DJ Fri and Sat 10-2. Sundays: Pool tournaments, starting 4 p.m.

Community Directory

24 Hour Counseling:

Erie Hotline 453-5656 or (800) 628-0190
Saint Vincent 452-5151
Family Crisis 456-2014
Hamot 877-6136

Community-Building Organizations:

Bridges 456-9833
Chautauqua GLB Comm Svcs .. 716-484-8439 or 679-3560

Counseling:

Deb Monohon 838-0123
Chautauqua Co. Gay Infoline (716)679-3560
Family Service of Jamestown N.Y. (716)488-1971
Great Lakes Couns (Ashtabula) (216)992-5995
Lake Erie Counseling Associates 455-4009
Family Medical (Warren PA) 726-3310
For more info, call Greg 833-3258

E-Mail Addresses

CSSLBP/Allegheny College csglbp@alleg.edu
EGCN/Bridges (Internet) .. mikemahler@aol.com
EGCN/Bridges (Compuserve) 70431,1622
Identity j663104w@vax.edinboro.edu
LGLV-Erie kidithart@aol.com

Funding and Fundraising:

Lambda Foundation .. P.O. Box 5169, Pittsburgh PA 15206 (412)521-5444
Imperial Court 266 Elmwood Ave. Buffalo NY

Health:

PA Breast Cancer Coalition 455-7833

Legal:

John Cooper, Esq. 455-3436

Political/Advocacy Organizations:

League of Gay & Lesbian Voters 833-3258

Publications:

Erie Gay Community Newsletter 456-9833

Religious Organizations:

Commitment Vows Terry Kime at 864-9300
Integrity 774-0903
Gay Catholic Community Rev. Cash at 459-5442
Unitarian Universalist Congreg. of Erie 864-9300

Social Organizations:

Menspace 899-8507 or 835-6712
10% Network (716)484-7285 or 664-5556
Rainbow Connection (Warren PA) 726-1808
Womynspace Coffeehouse 454-2713

Student Organizations/Youth:

Cmte. in Support of Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual People (Allegheny College, Meadville) .. 332-4368
Closet Culture 825-0530
Covenant House Teen Hotline .. 1-800-999-9999
Gay & Lesbian Youth of Buffalo .. (716)855-0221
Identity (formerly EGO) .. 398-8005 or 732-2555
Jamestown Comm. College Grp ... (716)665-5220 ext 204 or 664-9174
National Runaway Switchboard . 1-800-621-4000
North County Support Group (716)679-3430
Pitt-Bradford BiGALA 362-7694
SUNY-Fredonia B-GLAD .. Dr. Susan Malone at (716)673-3424
Teen Hotline (412)771-8336
Trigon (Penn State Behrend) 898-6164

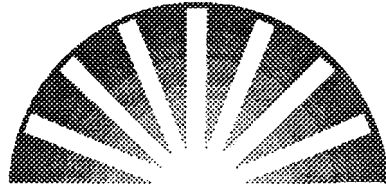
Support Groups

Rainbow Families Judy at (716)672-6682 or Patrick at (716)881-1878
Elder Action in a Gay and Lesbian Environment (716)882-2959
Erie Sisters 2115 W. 8th St., # 261, Erie, PA 16505
Lambda Group—Gay AA 452-2675
Every Sunday, 8:00 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie.
PFLAG-Ashtabula OH (216)964-3350
PFLAG-DuBois PA ... Karen or John at 371-8962
PFLAG-Erie Kathy at 838-6020
PFLAG-Jamestown . (716) 488-1264 or 763-1529

Violence and Abuse:

24 hour Hotline (Domestic abuse/Sexual Assault, women and men) (814)726-1030
Erie Hospitality House (Domestic abuse, women and men) (814)454-8161
Hate Crimes (US Justice Dept.) 800-347-4283
Jamestown - YWCA Alternatives to Violence (Domestic abuse, women and men) Daytime (716)488-2237, evenings (716)484-0052.
Women's Center of Warren & Forest Counties
24 hour Hotline (Domestic abuse/Sexual Assault, women and men)
..... 800-338-3460 or (814)726-1030
All numbers are area code 814 unless noted.

GREAT LAKES COUNSELING



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Fax:
(216) 992-5949

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7:30am-12:00mid
Sat
9:00am-12:00mid

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Quiche	Pastries	Cold Drinks
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