



EGN



Erie Gay News

Calendar

Please note that this calendar is also online at www.eriegaynews.com/calendar.html

Jun 21 - Pittsburgh Pride Fest Info JimF@glccpg.org or www.glccpg.org

June 21 - Cleveland Pride Parade and Festival, 15th annual festival at Voinovich Park on Lake Erie downtown (East 9th St. pier) until 8 PM; 216-371-0214, www.clevelandpride.org.

June 21 - Vicky Shaw Fundraiser for COLAGE of WNY (Buffalo) COLAGE of WNY (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere.) The 4 PM show is for kids, the 8 PM show is adults only. At the Unitarian Church 695 Elmwood in Buffalo. Info www.vickieshaw.com (716) 885-2136 and www.colage.org

June 21-22 - North Coast Men's Chorus: "Bustin' Out All Over" (Cleveland) 8 PM Sat., 3 PM Sun. Wajten Auditorium, Cleveland State University www.tickets.com, (800) 766-6048, www.ncmchorus.org, (216)556-0590.

Jun 27 - Open House at Community Health Network for National HIV Testing Day (POSTPONED DUE TO RENOVATIONS) 1202 State St, Erie PA For more info, call the Community Health Center at (814) 454-4431 or browse to www.community-healthnet.com

Jun 27 - National HIV Testing Day
Jun 28 - Rainbow Cinema night (Bob's, Erie PA) 7 PM *The Broken Hearts Club*, a comedy about a group of gay friends who don't appear to have a lot in common except "playing on the same team," but when times get tough, these friends are more like a family. Starring

Dean Cain (*Lois and Clark* and *Ripley's Believe It or Not*), Zach Braff (*Scrubs*) and John Mahoney (*Frasier*). 9 PM *In and Out*, an all-star comedy about a small-town high school teacher who is "outed" at the Academy Awards ceremony by one of his former students, a superstar actor. Starring: Kevin Kline, Tom Selleck, Joan Cusack, Matt Dillon, Debbie Reynolds, Bob Newhart and Wilford Brimley. For more info, call Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833, email info@eriegaynews.com or sign up for the Menspace list at <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

Jun 28 - 2nd Annual Gay Prom at The Village (Erie) 133 W 18th St, info call (814) 452-0125. "Night and Day" is our theme for this year's prom.... Join us for sequins, feathers, tuxes and limos! Balloon arch and prom photos, complimentary breakfast... Dancing and *gay-ity*.... Music by Rashima....*21 and over*.

Jun 29 - Pride Toronto For info: www.pridetoronto.com

Jul 2 - "Always Our Children" meets Catholic Charities, 329 W 10th St., Erie PA. Support group for Catholic parents of gay children (814) 456-2091.

Jul 3 - Laura Presutti at Aromas (Erie) 7-9 PM. At 2174 W. 8th St. Light jazz guitar and vocals.

Jul 4 - 6 - Fourth of July Weekend at The Village (Erie) 133 W 18th St, info call (814) 452-0125.

July 4 & 5 - Fourth of July Weekend at The Zone (Erie)



*John the E-"fan"-gelist.
 Pride Picnic recap and group picture
 on page 10*

(continued on page 3)

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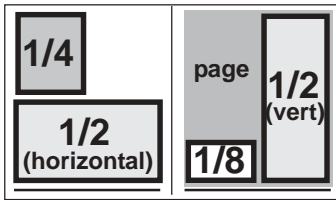
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On the Cover...

“John the E-’fan’-gelist”
by Deb Spilko



EGN Ad Rates



Ad Size	Price/Issue	Dimensions
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Page	\$160 (\$144 prepaid)	7-1/2" high X 6" wide

call 456-9833 or email info@eriegaynews.com
Deadline for ads is the 15th



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Erie PA 16502-1105
(814) 456-9833

info@eriegaynews.com
www.eriegaynews.com

Editors: Deb Spilko & Mike Mahler

Deadline: the 15th of each month.

The *Erie Gay News* is published monthly as a source of news, events, information and support for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered people (GLBT's), their families, friends & supporters in the Erie and Northwest Pennsylvania Area.

We welcome and encourage all readers to submit timely news, comments and opinions of interest to local GLBT's for publication in these pages. We will consider for publication any nonfiction article, blurb or illustration graphic which upholds this spirit. Please include your contact information with any piece that you submit.

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

Views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the EGN staff.

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Thank You:

To Paul Grubbs, Jeff M and Jerry McCumber for Folding and Dave S, for distributing last issue. Thanks! Thanks also to Bob for proofing.

If you're interested in helping out, contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or info@eriegaynews.com for date/time.

1711 State St, Erie. For info call (814) 459-1711 or browse to www.zonedanceclub.com

Jul 5 - Laura Presutti at Papa Joe's (Erie) 8-10 PM. At 402 W. 8th Street.

Jul 6 - Three Rivers Cruise (Pittsburgh PA) Boarding time 4:30 PM to 5. Leaves at 5 PM, docks at 8:30 PM. Party till 9 PM. Tickets \$20 in advance. Available at the Zone, 1711 State St, Erie and all Pittsburgh Bars. \$25 (if available!) at the boat. There may be a bus chartered to the cruise from Erie, check at the Zone.

Jul 12 - Laura Presutti at Scotty's Jazz & Cigars (Erie) 10-12 PM. At East 3rd & German.

Jul 13 - Summer Jazz Brunch at The Village (Erie) Featuring Bob's Ox Roast and assorted other summer favorites. Noon till whenever. 133 W 18th St, info call (814) 452-0125.

Jul 14 - PFLAG Erie/Crawford County Meets (Erie PA) Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie PA support group meets 2nd Monday each month, 7-9 PM at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Hwy (Rte 97), Erie PA. Also Straight Spouse Network focus group meets ad hoc (call for location/time for this meeting.) Call Maureen (814)-898-8341, email

pflagerie@adelphia.net or write to PFLAG-Erie, PO Box 133, Harborcreek PA 16421..

Jul 15 - DEADLINE for August Erie Gay News print edition

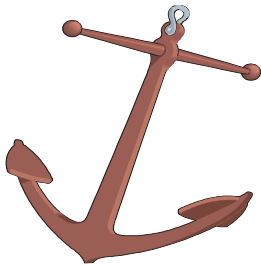
Jul 19 - Laura Presutti at Poe's Cafe (Erie) 7-9 PM. At 2508 Peach St.

Jul 19 - 10% Network & Menspace meets: Camp out at Jim and Greg's (Venango PA) For more info, Contact Don or Martin at (716) 484-9659 or donjaye@hotmail.com or Mike Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or info@eriegaynews.com for details/questions or visit <http://jamestowntenpercent.tripod.com> or <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

Jul 20 - Talent Night at Rascals (Jamestown NY) 701 N. Main (716)484-3220.

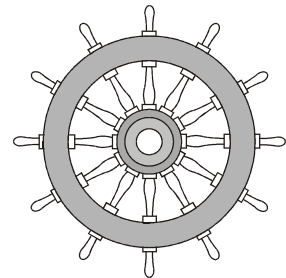
Jul 24-27 - Dancin' Weekend (Cleveland) Weekend of dance parties, benefits the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland, Sunday's party kicks off at 1 PM at the Tower City Amphitheater. "This outdoor festival will feature the turntable talents of DJ Rob Engel and DJ David Knapp, and performances by Lunge Kitty, SAFMOD's stilt walkers, and a fashion show with the Organ Grinders Ball Models." (216)357-2223, email jprice@atfgc.org websites: www.aidstaskforce.org or www.erieparty.com

Three Rivers Cruise



Sunday, July 6
In Pittsburgh

*Boarding time 4:30 PM till 5
Leaves at 5 PM, docks at 8:30 PM
Party til 9 PM.*



Tickets \$20 in advance

(available at the Zone, 1711 State St, Erie and all Pittsburgh local bars)
\$25 (if available!) at the boat. Check with the Zone about bus trip to cruise!

Jul 26 - Farewell Michelle Michaels & Onya Marks at the Village (Erie) 133 W 18th St, info (814) 452-0125.

Jul 26 - Laura Presutti at Eclectic Etceteras (Edinboro) 8:30-10:30 PM. 118 Erie St. Edinboro PA.

Jul 27 - Good Luck & Goodbye to Dana & Katie at the Village (Erie) 133 W 18th St, info (814) 452-0125.

Aug 2 - 10% Network meets: Picnic (NY) For more info, Contact Don or Martin at (716) 484-9659 or donjaye@hotmail.com or for details/questions visit <http://jamestowntenpercent.tripod.com>.

Aug 6 - "Always Our Children" meets Catholic Charities, 329 W 10th St., Erie PA. Support group for Catholic parents of gay children (814) 456-2091.

August 8 - Indigo Girls at Chautauqua Institute (Chautauqua NY) www.chautauqua-inst.org tickets: tix@chautauqua-inst.org

Aug 9 - k.d. lang in Concert (North Tonawanda NY) New Melody Fair Box Office: (716) 694-2760 Tickets from Ticketmaster.

Aug 11 - PFLAG Erie/Crawford County Meets (Erie PA) Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie PA. Details: See "Regularly Meeting Groups" section.

Aug 15 - Deadline for September Erie Gay News print edition

Aug 16 - Village Masquer-AIDS Benefit Ball (Erie) - The Village, 133 W. 18th St, info call (814) 452-0125.

Aug 16 & 17 - Book It! Sale (Erie) "The third annual fundraising event to benefit Crime Victim Center will be held at the agency, 125 West 18 Street. Saturday 9 AM - 2 PM and Sunday 11 AM - 2 PM. Books for all ages and interests, games, puzzles, videos, tapes and CDs will be sold. There will be a bake sale, silent auction of nature photographs taken by a local artist, back-to-school basket raffle and live remotes by Classy 100. Please stop by and browse - you never know what you might find!"

Aug 24 - 25th Annual "We are Family" NOCI Picnic (Cleveland) Benefits GLBT and HIV/AIDS organizations. Info at www.noci-online.org 11 AM till 8 PM At German-American Cultural Club, 7863 York Rd., Parma OH. New this year—open to all ages. (16 and under must be accompanied by parent or guardian). Outdoor dancing, entertainment, fashion shows, games for the kids.

Aug 28 - Sep 1- Asians & Friends International Friendship Weekend (Pittsburgh PA) Asians & Friends Pittsburgh is hosting the 14th annual Interna-

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tional Friendship Weekend (IFW) from August 28 through September 1. IFW is a yearly convention bringing chapters of Asians & Friends, as well as anyone else interested, from all over the globe together to meet, socialize, and share their insights on their gay and Asian heritage. The weekend consists primarily of gay men, but it is open to everyone. Weekend features workshops, panel discussions, tours, dinner/dance boat cruise, Mr. and Miss IFW Pageant, plays and receptions. Information: Paul Alarcon at (412) 521-5451 or email afpgh@hotmail.com or www.afpgh.org.

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for ads, articles, calendar
announcements, letters and emails
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Tuesday 9:30 am - 1:00 pm

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No Appointment Necessary

Erie County Health Department
Monday 9:00 am - 11:00 am
Wednesday 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Thursday 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Appointments can be made at the following locations:

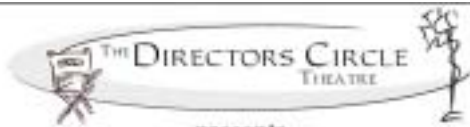
Erie County Health Department
Erie Office, Outreach Services
(814) 451-6727

Erie County Health Department
Cory Office - (814) 663-3891

Hispanic American Council
(814) 455-0212

Multi-Cultural Health Evaluation
Delivery System (MHEDS)
(814) 453-6229 or (814) 453-4728

All services are free and confidential.
Specially trained outreach workers are available
for in home appointments. (HIV testing only)



presents

The Children's Hour

by Lillian Hellman

directed by
Kathi Grant

Opens Friday, July 11 at 8pm

Thurs., Fri. & Sat. through Aug. 2 at 8pm
with 2 Sunday matinees, July 20 & Aug. 3 at 2pm

A riveting drama of intrigue, Hellman's play is about innocence, betrayal, gossip and the devastating effects of a lie.

For reservations call 814-451-0036

14 East 10th Street, Erie, PA 16501
www.directorscircletheatre.com

Area Theater

Some local productions of interest to GLBT audiences

Children's Hour at Directors Circle Theatre Opens July 11. Thursday, Friday, Saturday through August 2 at 8 PM. Sun. matinees July 20 & August 3 at 2 PM. Directed by Kathi Grant. New location at 14 East 10th St. (814)451-0036 www.directorscircletheatre.com

Tent Meeting at the Roadhouse Theatre, 145 W. 11th St., Erie PA Box office: 456-6666. Fridays and Saturdays June 6-28. With Sean Morgan and Scott McClelland. www.goerie.com/roadhouse

West Side Story at Straw Hat Theatre, Ashtabula Arts Center 2928 W. 13th St., Ashtabula OH 4 (440)964-3396 www.ashartscenter.org July 11-13, 17-20, 24-26, **Directed by:** Darrell Lowe and Debra Greene-Lowe **Book by:** Arthur Laurentis **Music by:** Leonard Bernstein **Lyrics by:** Stephen Sondheim

Supreme Court: Day of action

GLBT activists have called a National Day of Action in response to the historic US Supreme Court ruling on the Texas sodomy law.

There will be rallies around the country on the day the US Supreme Court delivers its ruling. That day may be Monday June 23 or Monday June 30.

Below are listings for rallies scheduled in our area; to check for others go to Chicago Anti-Bashing Network at www.cabn.org

CLEVELAND: 5:30 PM - Location to be determined. A protest or a celebration, depending on what the court decides, sponsored by the Lesbian/Gay Community Center of Greater Cleveland. Info: , www.lgcsc.org/expressgaynews.com

PITTSBURGH: 5 PM - Senator Santorum's office Co-sponsored by RESYST and the Rosenberg Institute for Peace and Justice. For information: David Meieran, (412) 421-7716, dmeieran@123mail.org, or check out RESYST's web site, www.thomasmertoncenter.org/resyst/sodomy

"This is a tremendously important case for gay people and for everyone who believes in basic freedoms. Laws that criminalize oral and anal sex by consenting gay couples are an affront to equality, invade the most private sphere of adult life, and harm gay people in many ways.

"Texas's law and others like it are widely used to justify discrimination against gay people in everyday life; they're invoked in denying employment to gay people, in refusing custody or visitation for gay parents, and even in intimidating gay people out of exercising their First Amendment rights."

*— Ruth Harlow
Legal Director, Lambda Legal*

PFLAG News

Working with GLBT Kids

by Maureen Koseff
PFLAG-Erie/Crawford County

The Millcreek School Board has amended its harassment policy to prohibit harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity, thanks to the hard work of McDowell Gay-Straight-Alliance (GSA)!!!!!! Congratulations to the GSA kids and their sponsor, Stephanie Williams. We are so very proud of you! In February, a small group of McDowell students asked PFLAG to help them form a GSA. With the stellar guidance of Stephanie Williams, they conducted projects to enhance community awareness of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) issues, and proposed changing the school district's harassment policy. After some excruciating and at times, humiliating, encounters with people who opposed these initiatives, they finally succeeded in establishing a GSA at McDowell High School and, at the end of May, the revised Millcreek School District's harassment policy was approved. These accomplishments, which are precedent-setting achievements, will go a long way to build tolerance and make a safer school environment for current and future students, teachers and staff.

PFLAG is partnering with the Erie County Health Dept. to promote the health and well-being of young GLBT people. We are establishing a library where videos and books about GLBT issues can be borrowed. We hope this project will increase understanding and help GLBT young people accept themselves. Besides the library project, we plan to host periodic pizza parties for high school and college students, and to do a project for national AIDS awareness day, December 1st. Stay tuned...



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On June 11, PFLAG members Marcha Vecchio and Maureen Koseff are scheduled to speak at a working luncheon sponsored by the Erie County Social Services Department, Office of Children and Youth. The purpose of our presentation is to help social workers understand the needs of GLBT youth, and suggest ways to help families accept them.

Lobbying

While at a college reunion in Washington, D.C., Maureen and Alan Koseff took the opportunity to visit the offices of Senators Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Rick Santorum (R-PA) and Representative Phil English (R-PA). We met with a staff member in Senator Santorum's office and in Rep. Phil English's office. We discussed the need for understanding of GLBT issues and equal rights for GLBT people, and left materials for them to read. Most of Senator Specter's staff was on leave, so we were only able to leave him a note, and some materials. One item we left in each office was a "Diversity Pledge" for the congressmen to sign, stating that, in their offices they would not

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*In Erie contact us at:
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814-456-8849 or 800-400-AIDS*

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WWW.NORTHWESTALLIANCE.ORG

EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO PREVENTION



PFLAG

(continued from previous page)

discriminate against anyone based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The forms are supposed to be signed and sent back the PFLAG-national. We will let you know if any of them get returned to PFLAG.

On the local front, remember that in April, two bills were introduced in the PA state senate. We urge you to support them. They comprise the PA Civil Rights Initiative. Ms. Rita Adessa, Executive-Director of the PA Lesbian and Gay Task Force, described the history and content of these bills during PFLAG's educational forum on May 18. The bills are:

Senate Bill 608: Amends the PA Human Relations Act to include sexual orientation and gender identity or expression as a protected category; expands the act to include education, along with employment, housing, public accommodations; strengthens the authority of the Human Relations Commission and the Dept. of Education to support a multi-racial-multicultural-gender-fair education system; and restores some of the enforcement mechanisms of the act.

Senate Bill 609: amends the postsecondary Fair Practices Act to protect GLBT students.

We hope that you will do 3 things:

1) Thank Sen. Vincent Hughes (D-Phila.), prime sponsor of the bills (VHughes@dem.pasen.gov);

2) Contact Sen. Jane Earll and ask her to support these bills.

3) Help get these bills introduced in the PA House.

MEETING NOTES: PFLAG's next support group meeting is Monday, July 14, from 7-9 PM at the Unitarian Church, Erie. The straight spouse network meetings are held in a private home, as needed. Please call Maureen at (814)-898-8341 for the time and place of the next meeting.

As part of PRIDE WEEK, 2003, we are hosting a PFLAG fundraiser: a bingo party. The date and location have not yet been confirmed. Dinner will be available during the bingo party. Since no liquor will be served, we encourage people under 21 to join us. Stay tuned...

Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) support group meets 2nd Monday each month, 7-9 PM at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Hwy (Rte 97), Erie PA. Also Straight Spouse Network focus group meets ad hoc (call for location/time for this meeting.) Call Maureen (814)-898-8341, email pflagerie@adelphia.net or write to PFLAG-Erie, PO Box 133, Harborcreek PA 16421..

Youth

NY House and Senate pass Safe Schools legislation

From Empire State Pride Agenda

As we go to press this has not been resolved. To find out what happened, visit the Empire State Pride Agenda website at www.espany.org

Albany, New York, June 12, 2003- Two days after the New York State Assembly approved a safe schools measure that addresses widespread acts of bias-based bullying, discrimination and violence in the state's public schools, the State Senate took up and passed its own version. Known as the Schools As Safe Harbors Act (Safe Harbors) (S.4023), the Senate overwhelmingly passed the bill yesterday by a vote of 54 - 4.

The Assembly bill that passed 136 - 8 on Monday is the Dignity For All Students Act (Dignity) (A.1118) and is the safe schools bill around which a coalition of over 165 groups in the state have come together to pass into law. The coalition, known as the Dignity For All Students Coalition (Coalition), includes educators, parents, students and civil rights leaders committed to the idea that all students must be safe in school from harassment and discrimination. Empire State Pride Agenda (Pride Agenda) and Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) are co-facilitators of the Dignity Coalition.

"We are pleased that both chambers of the Legislature agree that schools must be safe places for all students to learn," said GLSEN Executive Director Kevin Jennings. "While there are important differences between the two versions that must be resolved, we are hopeful that 2003 may finally be the year that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students get to go to school safe from violence and harassment."

In the few days that remain in the 2003 session, the Pride Agenda will be working with the leadership in both chambers to reach agreement on a final version that is acceptable to Coalition members and provides safe environments for learning.

Sign up for our email list!

<http://erieglbt.eriegaynews.com>

National News Briefs

by Bob

A First for Episcopal Church

Although Rev. V. Gene Robinson has become the first openly gay man elected a Bishop in the Episcopal Church, the church's National General Convention must still confirm his selection. Robinson was chosen Bishop of the New Hampshire Episcopal Church over three other candidates. The vote by New Hampshire clergy and lay Episcopalians could face opposition at July's National General Convention. In 1998, Bishops in the worldwide Anglican Communion, which includes the Episcopal Church in the United States, approved a resolution calling gay sex "incompatible with Scripture."

ExxonMobil equality drive fails

A shareholder drive to get oil giant ExxonMobil to add sexual orientation to its equal employment opportunity (EEO) policy failed again this year, despite an increase in support for the measure. Preliminary results show that 27.1 percent (or \$55 billion worth) of ExxonMobil shares voted in favor of the resolution, an increase of 15 percent over last year's vote. This is the fifth time shareholders voted on changing the company's policy. ExxonMobil, the largest oil company in the world, is one of only 10 in the Fortune 100 to exclude sexual orientation from its EEO policy.

Texas anti-gay marriage law passes

The Texas House of Representatives has passed legislation tightening the state's current "defense of marriage" law. The legislation, which has also passed the Texas Senate, makes it illegal for Texas to recog-

nize gay civil unions and gay marriages performed in other states. Gov. Rick Perry (R) will sign the bill into law.

Canadian marriage rights progressing

While U.S. state and federal governments continue to oppose same-sex marriages of any kind, the opposite seems to be taking place in Canada. Courts in the Canadian province of British Columbia recently ruled that the federal government must grant marriage rights to gays and lesbians. Similar court rulings have also been handed down in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. While the federal Canadian government can appeal the court rulings, most observers feel such appeals would be unsuccessful in the federal courts.

Volvo marketing campaign

Volvo, the Swedish carmaker, has launched a major marketing/advertising campaign targeting gay families. The company has promised to donate \$500 per car to the Human Rights Campaign for the first 10 cars sold or leased between now and Sept. 30, if the customer provides the dealer with a coupon associated with the campaign.

Where can you pick up EGN?

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www.eriegaynews.com

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Pride Picnic Family Port

You can view this and dozens of other photos from this year's Pride Picnic in color on the Erie Gay Ne



trait 2003

ews website at www.eriegaynews.com after June 23.



Photo by Brian Skelley

Pride Picnic 2003 Recap

by **Michael Mahler**

About 270 people, an all time record, came together to celebrate the 11th annual Pride Erie Picnic at Presque Isle, Beach 11 on June 14, 2003. Once again, we had hot dogs and hamburgers and folks brought a yummy assortment of dishes. There were about 225 people at last year's picnic, which was the previous record amount for attendance.

Thanks to Coca Cola of Erie for donating soda, Paper Moon, Plymouth Tavern, Two Friends Italian Market and Antler's Pub for donating cases of water, plates and etc. We are also grateful to the Zone for donating the hamburgers, cheese and hot dogs, and the Village for donating buns and ice.

As has always been the case, folks brought their friends, families and pets. We had people from Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio. We also had a wide range of ages and backgrounds attending. One attendee emailed afterwards that he liked the Erie picnic more than one of the nearby cities because it was more like family, whereas the other city's felt more commercial and less personal. Two women from San Francisco were back in the Erie area for a graduation ceremony and joined us at the Pride Picnic after hearing about it.

Again, we really feel that the picnic was such a success because so many people interacted one on one with others who may not have known about the event. All of us working together help our community to have an event to be extra proud of!

Thanks to Paul Grubbs, Don, Ken Blood, Dave Amy, Keith Roumfort, Matthew Miller, and Patrick for setup/truck driving. One of the original truck drivers wasn't able to make it, so extra special thanks to Paul Grubbs, Don and Ken Blood for stepping in when needed.

Big thanks also to Dave Amy, Keith Roumfort, and Bob for cooking. We had a slight bit of a difficulty when we realized only 1 spatula had been packed for cooking. The cooks mysteriously balked at the possibility of turning meat with their bare hands and facing third degrees burns (wimps!), so thanks to Larry for emergency cookware delivery. Many thanks to everyone for bringing such a delicious array of food!

There were some info tables and personnel on hand. The Health Department had safer sex info, and the Hispanic American Council as well. Steve Glassman of SPARC was able to get almost 150 signatures to send to elected officials to amend the PA Human Relations Act, our state's version of civil rights legislation. People who signed had to be PA residents and over the age of 18, so not everyone was able to sign. Trigon had a display about the upcoming Pride Weekend happening on September 12-14. The Green Party also had info, as did the Crime Victim Center, PFLAG and other organizations.


We would like to thank Rashima for being dot mistress and diligently passing out numbered stickers, so we knew how many people attended. It was very edifying to see that we had a slight increase and that there were so many first time people.

We took the picture in a slightly different spot at the beach than in years past. Folks also played volleyball and caught up with old and new friends. Big thanks to Deb Spilko, who took photos throughout the day and Brian Skelly, who took the group photo!

Big thanks to those who helped with clean up, including Dave Amy, Keith Roumfort, Brian Skelly, Matthew Miller, Larry, and Evan.

And, as always, many thanks to those of you who talked with friends, or mentioned in chat rooms, and otherwise helped us get the word out. Thanks to everyone who came and made the day so enjoyable!

For next year's picnic, we are considering trying to move to the larger space at the Cookhouse, by Beach 6. This would have the additional advantages of having electricity, and much more space (the pavilion is only rated for 80 people, but the cookhouse is rated for 240), and the info area spills into the end of the end of where food is), and it is also located closer to the entrance, so missing something wouldn't mean having to do without.



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Election

Larry Sawdy nominated for special election

by Bill Bartlett

The Green Party of Erie County nominated Larry Sawdy to run for the office of State Representative in the 3rd district in a special election. The election will be held July 22 to fill the unexpired term of the late Karl Boyes.

Sawdy will face Democrat Brian McGrath and Republican Matthew Good. He is a retired public school teacher and member of PSEA/NEA- R and has been long active in local GLBT causes.

Sawdy currently serves on the boards of: NW PA Chapter of the ACLU, Erie County Abolitionists Against the Death Penalty, and Congregation Anshe Heses.

He was a long time Democrat committeeperson and was elected as a delegate to the Democratic convention in 2000, after which he joined the Green Party.

In accepting the nomination Sawdy said, "The establishment parties, with their corporate agendas, have managed to disenfranchise the majority of our neighbors from the political process. I represent a clear alternative, committed to grassroots democracy, and working towards a sustainable future. As a candidate I fully endorse the 10 key values of the Green Part. These are:"

- > Social justice and equal opportunity
- > Ecological wisdom
- > Nonviolence
- > Decentralization
- > Community based Economics and economic justice
- > Feminism and gender equity
- > Respect for diversity
- > Personal and global responsibility
- > Future focus

Contact information for the Larry Sawdy campaign: www.friendsoflarry.com (814)833-7031 or email friendsoflarry@yahoo.com The 3rd District encompasses Millcreek, Waterford Borough, Waterford Township, McKean Borough, McKean Township, Franklin Township, District 4 of Fairview.

Community Announcements

Pride Rally organizing

by Abbey Atkinson

We are going to be having two business meetings pertaining to the pride rally this year. We have a lot of work to do and need to get everyone together that is planning on participating. There is so much work to do and even if you are not planning on attending we need input and work help. We are having two meetings in case of work and not being able to attend.

The first meeting will be on Thursday June 19 at 6 PM at Papa Joe's Pepperoni Cafe located on 8th Street. The second meeting will be Sunday June 22 at 2 PM. We are hoping to possibly go to Two Friends Italian Market which is located on 10th and French.

If you have any questions feel free to email erierainbowpride@aol.com If you can not get to either of those meeting and want to help out in any way contact us and we can meet up some other time.

Some weekend really soon we really should all get together and do a car wash. I will let everyone know two weeks ahead so maybe you can get off of work.

I think I covered everything but there is a chance I may have missed some items. Thank you all so much and hope to see you all really soon.

Trying to start something??

Announce it here!

Please include contact information

Red Hot Halloween

*Benefits the Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force
& Pittsburgh International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival*



Thurs, Oct 30, 2003

@Sanctuary in Pittsburgh's Strip District

Visit www.patf.org for more info

Bike riders wanted

I am looking for a bike riding partner, or for those that are interested in riding for both exercise, and fun. Please contact: Fred May, 202 W. Main Rd Lot @21, Conneaut Ohio 44030. Telephone, 440-599-1460 (leave message, and number) Email, fred@suite224.net . Thanks hope to hear from someone.

Book It!

The third annual fundraising event to benefit Crime Victim Center will be held at the agency, 125 West 18 Street, Saturday August 16 from 9 AM - 2 PM and Sunday August 17 from 11 AM - 2 PM. Books for all ages and interests, games, puzzles, videos, tapes and CDs will be sold. There will be a bake sale, silent auction of nature photographs taken by a local artist, back-to-school basket raffle and live remotes by Classy 100. Please stop by and browse —you never know what you might find!

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HIV/AIDS

Patty Puline
Erie County Dept. of Health

HIV is not a gift

"I gave my lover everything, including HIV. I didn't mean to. We made a mistake. Maybe deep down we felt it would be better if we both had it. ... 'HIV is not a gift.'"

—Gay City Health Project

Want ad in POZ Magazine: *"POZ 4 POZ - Looking to meet other poz men who are slightly older (30 - 45) and mature. If you're neg, not into the drug scene, ... and I find you attractive...no worries, I don't discriminate! if I'm interested I will get back to you. Please, no bug chasers, and boyz...in my opinion a Mercedes is a gift...HIV is not a gift! I'm gonna choose to be selfish and keep my virus all to myself, thanks."*

— Anonymous, Aspen, Colorado

People need to know the actual risk of HIV, and the difference between what is safe or unsafe. They need to assess their own personal risk. Most people do not know if a sex partner could be HIV positive! Correct and up to date HIV information needs to be shared between partners. Review these definitions and share the information.

What is AIDS? What causes AIDS?

AIDS stands for acquired immune deficiency syndrome and is a condition in which the body's immune system becomes so deficient, or damaged, that it can no longer defend the body against viruses or bacteria that can cause disease. People with AIDS die of illnesses that normally do not threaten people whose immune systems are complete and strong. (Opportunistic Infections)

Scientists have learned that HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus, causes AIDS. This virus has the ability to enter certain cells of the immune system, disable them, and use them to make more HIV. These cells are called T-cells. They are key cells of the immune system that fight off infections. .

People who are infected with HIV usually do not have recognizable symptoms for several years, even as many as ten or more years. Nevertheless, the virus is at work in the body fluids, destroying T-cells and making more copies of itself.

Many people have been infected with HIV and don't know it, and they can infect others without knowing it. HIV is transmitted through blood, seminal fluid, vaginal secretions and breast milk. Everyday casual contact cannot transmit HIV.

Most common methods of transmission include:

- > Anal or vaginal sex (without using condoms).
- > Sharing drug-injecting equipment, including needles and works.
- > Sharing body piercing or tattooing needles.

For sexually active people, using condoms and plenty of lube when giving or receiving anal or vaginal sex best prevents HIV infection. If you have cuts or sores in your mouth or if you've had recent dental work, use a condom when giving oral sex or avoid oral sex altogether. *HIV can be transmitted* even before HIV antibodies appear in the bloodstream, which may take from three to six months.

Testing

Oral antibody testing (ORASURE) is available for HIV and is the most common test used by health professionals right now. Follow up confirmatory tests include the ELISA or the WESTERN BLOT (both blood draws).

Antibodies may take from three to six months to develop, so repeat testing may be necessary. Results may take up to two weeks. Face to face follow up is done with each person who is tested for HIV.

Remember, viruses are incurable. There is no cure and no vaccine for HIV. Education is the key to prevention. HIV counseling and testing is available through the Erie County Dept of Health. You can browse our website for HIV information, www.ecdh.org, or you may call 451-6700 to schedule an appointment. We also have street outreach counselors who offer HIV testing on a personal basis, scheduled at your convenience. All HIV services are confidential.

National HIV Testing Day

"Take the Test, Take Control" is the slogan for National HIV Testing Day, which is held annually on June 27th. Remember that HIV testing is available at the Erie County Dept of Health on a regular basis. ***Take the test, take control!***

How we will win our rights in PA

by Steve Glassman, SPARC

SPARC was founded nearly seven years ago to build support among organizations and individuals for the expansion of civil rights protections in the Commonwealth to include lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Pennsylvanians. Last year the Statewide Pennsylvania Rights Coalition worked with friendly legislators and its organizational partners across the state to pass an historic bill which expanded the protections of the Ethnec Intimidation Act to include "actual or perceived... gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, and ancestry". In a state where all three branches of government were controlled by the Republican party this legislation passed both the House and the Senate by a two thirds majority and was quickly signed into law by former Governor Schweiker. We now have one of the most inclusive hate crimes laws in the country and we have proven that Pennsylvanians care passionately about equality, justice, and fairness for everyone who lives here. We have also established a base of support for further

legislative victories and helped our elected officials understand why all future civil rights legislation must be inclusive of both "sexual orientation and gender identity or expression".

SPARC is currently leading a coalition of prominent organizations and individuals across the Commonwealth in an effort to successfully amend the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (PHRA) and the Pennsylvania Fair Education Opportunities Act (PFEEOA). While strengthening amendments will address additional remedies, penalties, legal fees, and other deficiencies in the current acts, the impetus for this well thought out, strategic campaign is the addition of "sexual orientation and gender identity or expression" to the protected classes in both pieces of legislation. This is a long term struggle which we anticipate will take a minimum of three to four years to achieve and we are in this for the long haul.

There is a great deal of educational work to do with our elected officials in both houses of the legisla-

(continued next page)

SPARC congratulates the Erie LGBT community for yet another successful Pride Picnic and wishes to thank you for the hospitality and participation during SPARC's "Meet and Greet."

Join today and become part of the solution!

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Please circle one: *Individual Student Organization Donor* Donation Amount: \$ _____

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All information is confidential and not shared with any other sources

PA rights

(continued from previous page)

ture to achieve full civil rights protections in this state, and SPARC is the coalition which has proved its ability to effectively accomplish this task both in Harrisburg and across the Commonwealth. This year we have already met with more than forty supportive members of the leadership of both parties in both houses to listen to their advice and to develop a strategy which will successfully accomplish our goal. We are working with the members who have already proven their willingness to support progressive, LGBT inclusive civil rights laws and are committed to seeing these two bills become law.

In November of 2002 this same coalition of active partners successfully passed an important and historic piece of legislation which for the first time in Pennsylvania's history included lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in a state law. We worked six long years to achieve this goal and we accomplished it by building long term relationships with most of the elected officials in both houses of the legislature, Republicans and Democrats alike. The bill ultimately passed the Senate and the House by a two thirds majority proving that there is a more receptive climate than many imagined for this kind of legislation if it is sensitively and appropriately handled. This coalition hired a well respected, politically sophisticated lobbying firm to work with us during the final months of the campaign and SPARC did the first ever polling on LGBT issues in the state to determine the level of support for this issue with results that topped a 70% favorable response rate. SPARC has recently received a \$15,000 grant from the Human Rights Campaign to do similar, but more extensive, polling for the issues surrounding these bills. Major funding for our work comes from The Gill Foundation, The Funding Exchange, The Greater Harrisburg Foundation, The National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce, and numerous private donors across the Commonwealth.

While you will undoubtedly see other versions of this bill to amend the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act only the version advocated by SPARC has been crafted in conjunction with the attorneys at the

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) and the Center for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights. Since the PHRC is the enforcement agency for these two laws we sought and received, at the request of the Republican and Democratic leadership, the Commission's approval for this particular legislation in a formal resolution which was passed in October of 2002. Legislators will be seeking the advice and comments of the PHRC on this bill, and the Commission has already been well represented in all of the legislative leadership meetings organized by SPARC. These two bills, with reserved numbers of SB706 and SB707, are being prime sponsored in a bipartisan fashion by Senator Joe Conti (R. Bucks County) and Senator Allen Kukovich (D. Westmoreland County) along with 13 co-sponsors from across the state.

Following our successful strategy in amending the Ethnic Intimidation Act we have once again decided to work on passage of these bills in the Senate first followed by an effort in the House of Representatives. We have also been asked by our Senate supporters to wait until the budget negotiations have been finalized before making a formal introduction of these bills. We have agreed to do this because of the potential jeopardy in which Temple University may find itself due to its recent introduction of domestic partner benefits. There have been threats by several conservative legislators to defund Temple for this reason, and our friends in the legislature advised us not to introduce one more potentially controversial issue for the opposition to use against our community in an attack on one of our most prestigious universities. We understand the importance of cooperation without sacrificing either our integrity or our objectives.

For these reasons we ask you to support only SPARC's version of the Amendments to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and the Pennsylvania Fair Educational Opportunities Act. Supporting other versions of the bill will only lend confusion to this effort and will waste the time and energy of activists across the state who are well meaning but whose efforts will be spent on bills that are not viable in the legislature. Thank you for your time and attention to this compelling issue.

Stephen A. Glassman, AIA

Co-Chair, SPARC

Commissioner, Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission

**Deadline for next issue (August)
July 15**

Entertainment Notes

by Deb Spilko

On stage

Melissa Etheridge performs at Scene Pavilion in Cleveland on August 23, that's at 2014 Sycamore St. Tickets from Ticketmaster Also at the Scene Pavilion is **Mariah Carey**, who'll be there August 3. **Joan Jett and the Blackhearts** will be at Gateway Park in N. Tonawanda NY August 30, info (716) 694-1176.

On the air

In **Nathan Lane's** new sitcom **Charlie Lawrence** he plays a gay Congressman with a conscience (CBS Sundays at 8:30 PM) . . . Bravo will premier a couple new series in July **Boy Meets Boy** is a gay dating reality show, and **Queer Eye for the Straight Guy** is a reality show in which straight guys get made over by five gay guys . Also on Bravo, looks like they'll be running **Gay Weddings** 11:30 AM - 3 PM on July 13. Visit www.bravotv.com for airdates.

Books

The **15th Annual Lambda Literary Awards** were presented in Los Angeles May 29. The awards "honor the best and the brightest the community has to offer." Check out the finalists and winners at www.lambdalit.org

Travel

Seems like a lot of people in our area who love **Toronto** are feeling torn about traveling there, especially since the city was blasted with another wave of **SARS** infections. It doesn't help that the information is sometimes contradictory. Actually, it's so new that *nobody* has all the facts. I've found the best source for up-to-date information on SARS in Toronto is *The Toronto Star*, which you can read online at www.thestar.com (check for "SARS Outbreak" in their index). You can also call Ontario's Health Infoline (toll-free) at 1-888-668-4636. If you do visit Toronto, public health agencies ask that you watch your health for at least ten days after leaving (that may be extended to something like 16 days) and report if you show symptoms. By the way, health providers are now asking that you call ahead if you think you may have symptoms of SARS, so that precautions may be taken to avoid exposing others. Here again is a list of symptoms (from the

CDC): "In general, SARS begins with a fever greater than 100.4°F ... Other symptoms may include headache, an overall feeling of discomfort, and body aches. Some people also experience mild respiratory symptoms. After 2 to 7 days, SARS patients may develop a dry cough and have trouble breathing."

Theater

The Children's Hour

The Directors Circle Theatre announces the opening of Lillian Hellman's **The Children's Hour**. A serious and adult play, it is one of the greatest successes of this distinguished writer.

Two women, Martha (played by Maripat Grant) and Karen (Carolyn Lynn) run a distinguished school for girls in 1950s New England, along with fading actress Lilli Mortar, Martha's meddling aunt. A malicious youngster, Mary Tilford, starts an entirely unfounded scandal, accusing the women of lesbianism, that precipitates tragedy for all involved. The production is directed by Kathi Grant, assisted by Chad Santos, and also stars Kathy Tusnick, Ruth Thoma Andrews, Brenda Perry, Abigail Taggart, Kelsey Applebee, Jenn Highgill, and Patrick Hiller.

Going into its eighth season, the Directors Circle, now located at 14 E. 10th Street in the heart of downtown, presents its 7th annual gay-themed summer play. Past shows in the series have included *Women Behind Bars*, *Last Summer at Bluefish Cove*, *The Boys in the Band*, *Bent*, and last season's highly-acclaimed *The Twilight of the Gods*.

The play will open Friday, July 11th and play Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays through August 3 with two Sunday matinees. Evening performances are at 8:00 PM, matinees at 2 PM. Call the box office at (814) 451-0036 for reservations and specific matinee dates, or check out www.directorscircletheatre.com Ticket prices are \$10 general admission, \$7 for seniors and students. Support your local gay arts groups! You won't want to miss this stellar cast in a superb performance!

-by Michael Weiss

Erie County HRC: Recent events

by Deb Spilko

As of this writing, this is the most current information available about the status of the Erie County Human Relations Commission (HRC), which faces the possibility of being eliminated from the county's 2004 budget. For more detailed information, or to be kept updated, check the note at the end of this article. :

Staffing

Willie Damper Jr., who had been the commission's Chief Compliance officer, has taken another job with the county. This leaves only a secretary to staff the local office at this time. Cases are no longer being accepted by the Erie County HRC; complainants are being referred to the state Human Relations Commission office in Pittsburgh.

State HRC appeals to Schenker

The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission sent a letter to the Schenker administration asking that he not defund the Erie County Human Relations Commission. Homer C. Floyd, executive director of the state's Human Relations Commission, said the state was overloaded with cases, that it often takes longer to resolve cases on the state level, and that local commissions can be more efficient at resolving cases. He also said that local commissions often extend rights not available on the state or federal level; Erie County, for example, protects sexual orientation. When asked to comment, Schenker would not respond to the letter himself, but referred it to Peter Callan, the county's personnel director. Callan dismissed the state HRC's concerns, saying the local commission is "inefficient." He said discrimination issues are also dealt with by other agencies, such as the state's Human Relations Commission (Information from Erie Times-News May 30, 2003)

Times-News gives "Thumbs Down"

Schenker received a "Thumbs Down" from the Times-News editorial page on May 31. The piece questioned why Schenker refused to meet with the local HRC, preferring to send an aide. It suggested that his real motives were not economic. "But the suspicion is that in gutting the local HRC, Schenker is tossing a bone to his right-wing supporters," they wrote.

Erie CO HRC meets to discuss situation

The Erie County Human Relations Commission met on June 2 to discuss the future of the commission. Several commission members expressed frustration that Schenker would not meet with them, and that his information about the commission seemed to be inaccurate.

Also at the meeting were a number of concerned persons. Those who spoke included Bishop Jesse Gavin, president of the African-American Concerned Clergy of Erie and vice president of the ecumenical group Congregational Action to Lift with Love (C.A.L.L), Rebecca Pruveadenti, board member of the local chapter of the National Organization for Women, Reid McFarlane, chairman of the commission's advisory committee, and AnnDrea Benson, an attorney who has been doing pro bono legal work for the Erie County Human Relations Commission.

Schenker agrees to meet HRC

Well into the commission's June 2 meeting, a staff member came into the meeting and said that Schenker would meet with commission members in executive session (commission members only). Commission members were directed to another location to meet with Schenker. When the members returned, they related their discussion with Schenker. Erie County HRC Chairman William F. McCarthy said that during the session, Schenker had stated that his efforts to defund of the HRC were entirely related to the county's financial situation and were not motivated by religious right bias. McCarthy stated that this at least focused the discussion onto one issue.

Schenker apparently decided to meet with the concerned community members, because he unexpectedly came to the meeting room while the commission members were still discussing the executive session. He told the group that he hadn't heard from people who wanted to keep the local commission, and that most of the mail he had received had been opposed to keeping the local commission. He said the county's financial crisis was "severe," that there were services that the county was mandated to provide, those services were given priority in the new budget, and the Human Relations Commission was not one of those

HRC (continued from previous page)

services. He told those in attendance that the 2004 budget would not contain any county funding for the local commission. At one point, seeming flustered by comments he was hearing, he told the community members that if they didn't like what he was doing that they could vote for someone else in the next election.

Schenker replies to state HRC

The June 4 issue of the *Erie Times-News* reports that Schenker has agreed to ask the state's Human Relations Commission for assistance in keeping a commission presence in Erie County. Reportedly, he is suggesting a \$50,000 grant from the state, or using someone from the Pittsburgh regional office of the PA Human Relations Commission, who would travel to Erie. Schenker indicated that his decision to write the letter was in response to the June 2 meeting with the local commission and to the letter of concern from the state's Human Relations Commission. The initial reaction by the state HRC was that they weren't in the position to give the county a grant.

Additional information

To stay updated and notified of any important meetings or events related to the future of the Erie County HRC, subscribe to the Erie GLBT list. Subscribe at <http://erieglbt.eriegaynews.com>

A more detailed version of this update is at the Erie Gay News website www.eriegaynews.com

To access all recent local newspaper articles on the Erie County HRC, go to the Erie Times-News website at www.goerie.com and in the search field type the keyword: "HRC"

To let Rick Schenker know how you feel about defunding the Erie County Human Relations Commission send a letter or email to:

Rick Schenker, County Executive
140 W. 6th Street
Erie, PA 16501
rschenker@eriecountygov.org

Please copy Erie Gay News on any correspondence you send to the County Executive's Office! It is important that we have an accurate count of who has contacted his office!

Advice about getting married in Canada

From Lambda Legal

On June 10, the high court of Ontario, Canada's most populous province, ruled that the exclusion of same-sex couples from civil marriage infringes human dignity, harms families, and violates the constitution. The court ordered an immediate end to this cruel discrimination. Within hours, same-sex couples began marrying.

American couples, different-sex or same-sex, may go to Canada to marry. Canada, like the United States, has no residency requirement for marriage (though it does have a one-year residency requirement for divorce). See www.cbs.gov.on.ca/mcbs/english/marriages.htm for a description of how to marry in Canada.

If you are thinking about getting married, you may want to visit the Lambda Legal website, which features an important advisory for people considering taking advantage of the new law.

Thinking of Getting Married in Canada? is a joint advisory from Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, Lambda Legal Defense & Education Fund, National Center for Lesbian Rights, ACLU Lesbian & Gay Rights Project, and Freedom to Marry. Read it by going to www.lambdalegal.org



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pflagerie@adelphia.net

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