



EGN



Erie Gay News

Pride Picnic update and volunteers needed!

Things are progressing well for the 2005 Erie Pride Picnic. Our next meeting will be on Sunday, May 15 at 2 PM at the Rotary Pavilion at Presque Isle in Erie PA, which is where the picnic will be. Contact us to find out more about other details.

We really need some volunteers this year for the Pride Picnic on Saturday, June 25 at the Rotary Pavilion at Presque Isle. The picnic itself lasts from 1 to 6 PM, but we will also need a few folks earlier to help with set up, and a few folks later to help with cleanup. (Probably a half hour in either direction.) We will be serving food from 2 to 5 PM and taking the Family Portrait at 4 PM. Tasks that we need help with include keeping soda stocked; kitchen - servicing and setting out food; cooking; and transporting food from the grill to the serving area. We will also need help with staffing the check in table.

VERY IMPORTANT! This year we are asking for volunteers to serve 1 hour shifts in the kitchen and at the registration table! If everyone pitches in, then everyone gets to enjoy the day and not be inconvenienced. Please contact Mike Mahler about volunteering. It's also a great way to meet people and make friends.

You can read more about the Pride Picnic at <http://picnic.eriegaynews.com> (it's also linked at www.eriegaynews.com/pride).

We are also encouraging folks to preregister online for the Pride Picnic at www.eriegaynews.com/pride/register.php. You can sign up whenever you like. (We have already had a few folks register.)

We have had someone volunteer to coordinate a Pride Weekend in the fall, but we do not have very many folks to work on that. If you want to help out with that, please get in contact ASAP. If we don't have sufficient staff/organizers, we will skip fall Pride this year.

For more info, contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or info@eriegaynews.com

—by Mike Mahler

Toronto Pride Bus Trip - June 24 -26

The Erie GLBT Community Center is planning a Bus Tour to Toronto for the entire Pride Weekend from Friday, June 24 through Sunday, June 26. This year is the 25th Anniversary of Toronto Pride and we will be in for a great time!

The weekend includes deluxe Motor Coach leaving from Cleveland and picking up passengers in Erie and Buffalo on the way, plus 2 nights at the Delta Chelsea Hotel. VIP Room at hotel. Shop at duty free store on the way home. Cost is only \$249 per person/double occupancy. If you're traveling alone, we can pair you up. **SPACE IS LIMITED Deadline May 11, 2005.** Travel is being handled by Carlson Wagonlit Travel. For more information or reservations, call Jack at 1-800-786-8728 ext 222.

—From Brian



More community news on page 4!

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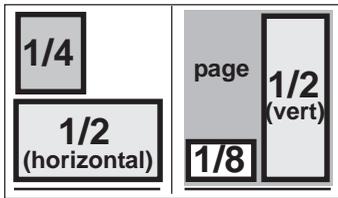
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Transgender Coordinator

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Ad Size	Price/Issue	Dimensions
Eighth	\$30 (\$27 prepaid)	1-5/8" high X 2-7/8" wide
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Half (vert)	\$90 (\$81 prepaid)	7" high X 2-7/8" wide
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



Erie Gay News
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Erie PA 16502-1105
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info@eriegaynews.com
www.eriegaynews.com

Editors: Deb Spilko and Mike Mahler
Ad Design: MAL
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 NW PA 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 don't necessarily represent those of the EGN staff.

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Thank You:

To Phil Bennett, Wes Eades, Sean Faulkner, James von Loewe, Allen Lozell, Lynne Rhodes, Heather, Gary Snyder and Tim for folding; John & Paula King, James von Loewe, Wes Eades, Gary, Dave S, and Jerry McCumber for distribution; and Bob for proofreading. MAL for ad layout & etc. Thanks! If you're interested in helping out, contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or info@eriegaynews.com for date/time.

Saturday, May 7th

Our Mother's Day Mommy Dearest Party



(No Wire Coat Hangers!) an evening dedicated to the Mother of them all **Joan Crawford.**

Tuesday, May 17th

9 PM until 11 PM

The Shout Outreach Team will be giving FREE and confidential HIV tests. at Trance. Free Raffles and Snacks – Bring a Friend! Because we care!

Friday, May 20th

The Grand Opening of our "Oasis" Patio Bar!

Featuring Erie's own "Bob Bearfield" singing and playing acoustic guitar.

Friday, June 3rd

HOT HOT HOT
We are thrilled to present from Cleveland and Bounce – the **Outrageous Jheri Michaels!**

Friday, May 27th

Our own Melody



will join us to kick off the Memorial Day Weekend.

Saturday, May 28th

We're having a cook-out starting at 4 PM on the Oasis Patio Bar – cum in your bathing suits from the beach.

Monday, May 30th

Eat – Drink – and be Mary
The cook-out Part two will start at 4 PM.

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST

Friday, June 17th



OUR FIRST TRANCE DIVA PAGEANT!

To become a contestant see Lee.

Please help us welcome the newest members of our staff at Trance: "Andrew," Jacob and Shane, the "Shooter Boys!"



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(continued from cover)

“Art in the Park” submissions

Two Dimensional Regional Artists: (excluding photography) are invited to participate in “Art in the Park” art show July 1-4 to be held in the Waterwheel Overlook Building. This art show will kick off a summer-long program of weekly art shows and the Findley Lake Art Walk. The purpose of this event is to showcase the talent of our region and attract art buyers.

For information please contact (before May 13th 2005) Chuck Gallagher, Village Frame Wright, 2809 Rt. 426, Findley Lake, NY 14736 (716) 769-7474.

—Merchants of Findley Lake, New York

Erie GLBT Community Center 1st Annual Gay Cruise Fundraiser

Exclusive Atlantis 15th Anniversary Caribbean Cruise on board the Celebrity Millennium March 5, 2006. Travel is being handled by Carlson Wagonlit Travel. For more information or reservations, call Jack at 1-800-786-8728 ext 222.

—From Brian

Resource Directory update

Please note that we are updating the GLBT Resource Directory. Currently, www.eriegaynews.com has an online directory of GLBT and GLBT friendly resources. A letter requesting directory updates is going out with this issue to business and organizations currently listed, but we would also like to invite businesses and organizations that do not receive the letter to send their info to us. We are looking for resource name, address, city, state, phone, contact person, email, website and hours/meeting schedule where applicable. Resources can also request that we forward their info to national listings, such as the GAYELLOW Pages.

We are also asking about distribution of copies of the print edition of Erie Gay News. If you are currently carrying print copies of Erie Gay News, or would like to carry them, please let us know the number of copies desired per month.

We will be updating the resource directory online as we get each entry. The Erie Networking Group is also planning on producing a print version of the Resource Directory.

We are asking that resources send in their new/updated info by May 15. Even if there are no changes, we ask that you return your form so that we can be sure that we have current and correct info.

You may either mail the form to 1115 W 7th St, Erie, PA, email info@eriegaynews.com or fill out the online form at www.eriegaynews.com/resaddreq.php



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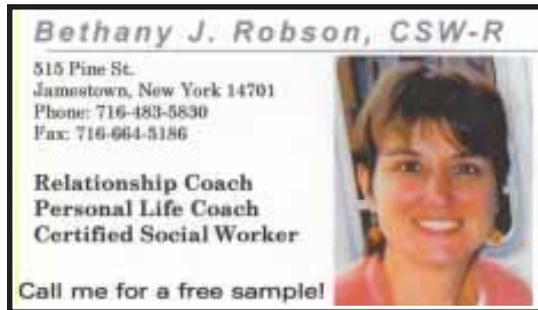
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Calendar

This calendar is also online at www.eriegaynews.com/calendar.html

Apr 22-24 - 14th Annual Rainbow Wranglers Roundup (Cleveland) GLBT Country/Western dance weekend. www.rainbowwranglers.org/

Apr 23 - 10% Network Movie Night (Martin and Don's, Jamestown, NY) The movie will be *Touch of Pink*. A gay Canadian living in London has his perfectly crafted life upset when his devoutly Muslim mother comes to visit. See www.imdb.com/title/tt0374277/ for details. Contact: Don. Email: jtown10-owner@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://jamestowntenpercent.tripod.com/>.

Apr 23 - Glow Party at the Zone! Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "One of your favorite parties is back! Glow sticks and Black-lights- Dance in the dark! - Get ready as we dim the lights low so you can shine! Wear black or white or glow body paints if you dare." Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com

Apr 23- The Black and Blue Ball at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. "Wear your Hottest Leather, Latex, Fantasy. Let Trance work out your 'Kinks!'" Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

Apr 25 - May 1 - National Celebration 2005 (Philadelphia, PA) www.equalityforum.com/

Apr 27 - 'The Guys' get together at Moonsense 5442 Peach St, Erie, PA. 7 PM. Informal get together to hang out at this local coffeeshop Contact: Michael Mahler. Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

Apr 29 - Erie Gay/Straight Alliance at Aroma's Coffeehouse 2174 W 8th St, Erie, PA "Join us for coffee and chat." Email: phobbs101@aol.com. Call Parris at (814) 825-2669. Browse to <http://hrc.meetup.com/101/events/>.

Apr 29 - May 1 - Cleveland Leather Awareness Weekend (Cleveland), annual weekend of leather-related events, benefits the Leather Archives and Museum, Cleveland Lesbian-Gay Center and other community organizations, host hotel Embassy Suites in downtown Cleveland, featuring silent auction, International Leather Family Dinner, field trips, vendor/education mart, parties and more, (216) 252-2148, www.clawinfo.org

May 4 - Always Our Children meets Catholic Charities, 329 W 10th St, Erie, PA. For Catholic parents of GLBT children. Phone: (814) 456-2091.

May 5 - Cinco de Mayo Party! (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA) Get into your Latin groove as we play a little hot salsa, drink a few cold coronas, and fiesta the night away! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com.

May 13 - Vertigo Party (Butler, PA) Vertigo is BYOB vertigov@aol.com. www.webspawner.com/users/vertigov.

May 7 - Menspace meets (Bob's, Erie, PA) 7:30 PM. Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

May 7 - Mommy Dearest Party at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA "No Wire Coat Hangers! We're looking for Joan Crawford Look-alikes. An evening dedicated to the Mother of them all." Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email:

Tuesday, May 17th

9 PM until 11 PM

The Shout Outreach Team
will be giving FREE
and confidential HIV tests.
at Trance.

Free Raffles and Snacks
Bring a Friend!



ERIE'S NEWEST
DANCE CLUB
SERVING THE GAY & THE LESBIAN COMMUNITY!
1607 Raspberry Street
Erie, PA 16502
814.456.3027

Because we care!

Calendar

lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

May 7 - HEAVEN - 6th Annual Spring White Party! (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA) A night of fantasy and fun! One of our biggest events of the season! WEAR WHITE! -white denim-white lace-white underwear- white toga! -just wear anything WHITE! - PRIZE for Best Fantasy Costume dressed in WHITE!! Grab your angel wings and come dance on cloud 9! New club, bigger party! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com.

May 7 - Martika, Tiffany & Sabrina w/Special Guest Miss Jamestown (Jamestown, NY) "Also be sure to sign up for our Dating Game!" 701 N. Main St. (716) 484-3220.

May 9 - PFLAG-Erie-Crawford meets Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie, PA 7 PM - 9 PM. Regular monthly meeting Phone: (814) 898-8341. Email: pflagerie@eriegaynews.com.

May 9 - LEAD meeting Emmaus Soup Kitchen, 218 E 11th St, Erie, PA. 7 PM. Progressive politically-involved folks (many former Kerry/Edwards volunteers) will meet to discuss several political issues. Contact: Brit Holmberg. Phone: (814) 459-3536. Email: bholmberg8@yahoo.com. Browse to www.erielead.org.

May 10 - Last day to apply for an absentee ballot in the PA Primary Election

May 10 - Support group for those dealing with loss Hospice of Metropolitan Erie, 202 E 10th St, Erie,

PA. 7 PM. Also meets May 19 at 10 AM. Phone: (814) 456-6689. Email: hospice@velocity.net

May 14 - 2 Girls Alone at Two Friends Italian Market (10th and French Streets) 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM Email twogirlsalone@att.net for more information, or for a pizza coupon to use that night!

May 15 - Deadline for June 2005 EGN.

May 15 - Pride Picnic committee meets Rotary Pavilion Presque Isle, Erie, PA. 2 PM. Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: info@eriegaynews.com.

May 17 - Free and Confidential HIV Testing at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA 9 PM - 11 PM. The Shout Outreach Team will be giving FREE and confidential HIV tests at Trance. Free Raffles and Snacks – Bring a Friend! Because we care! Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

May 19-29 - Inside Out Lesbian & Gay Film Festival (Toronto) www.insideout.on.ca 219 - 401 Richmond Street West, Toronto, ON CANADA M5V 3A8 inside@insideout.ca

May 20 - Grand Opening of "Oasis" Patio Bar at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA Featuring Erie's own Bob Bearfield singing and playing acoustic guitar Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

May 21 — Imperial Court of Buffalo Coronation 2005 Sphere Entertainment Complex, 681 Main St. (716) 852-3900 \$60 per person, "Picture ID is required for admission. Doors open at 6:00 PM. Includes 4 Hours Open Bar! A Buffalo Coronation

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www.artaloneendures.com

Calendar

Tradition! New This Year... 2 Hours of Hors d'oeuvres at the ball!" Tie-In events around town, May 19-22. Visit <http://icob.impcourt.org/inout.html> The Imperial Court raises funds for the Buffalo GLBT Community and AIDS related charities.

May 21 - Erotica - 6th Annual Levis, Leather, Fetish Party! at Zone Dance Club 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA "May 21 is Armed Forces Day. A steamy night of erotic fantasies! Let your inhibitions run wild and come dance in our dungeon!! Wear levis, leather, military, uniforms, underwear, fetish gear, or come in fantasy costume! Dress as: leather daddy- slave boy - construction worker -western cowboy - diva dominatrix -naughty nurse - sexy stripper -or show off your skin art and piercing- not sure what to wear?- just wear black! -- Sorry *no nudity!* The Zone's version of fantasy fest! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com.

May 27- Performance: Melody Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA "Our own Melody will join us to kick off the Memorial Day Weekend." Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com.

May 28 - Cook-out on the Oasis Patio Bar at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA 4 PM. "We're having a cook-out starting at 4 PM on the Oasis Patio Bar- cum in your bathing suits from the beach." Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

May 28 - Spring Garden Party at Youngstown Pride Center (Youngstown, OH) 7-10 PM, 1105 Elm St. (330) 74-PRIDE www.youngstownpridecenter.com

May 29 - Zone's Party Bus to the Pittsburgh Gay Picnic! 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA "Hop on board as we start the party early! Grab your friends and let us be your designated driver so you can have a good time! Reserve your tickets early because only a limited number of seats are available! Tickets available at the bar. Wear your Zone T-shirts and represent Erie! Please don't drink and drive—be safe! Come with us!" (814) 452-0125. www.thezonedanceclub.com.

May 29 - Pittsburgh Memorial Day Festival South Park Fairgrounds, 1900 Brownsville Rd, South Park, PA 11 AM. PLEASE NOTE! New day and location!! "Just think, you don't have to call off or play hooky on Tuesday to benefit Steel City Softball League. Sponsored by the Delta Foundation. Pre-Sale tickets \$20, gate admission \$25. 21 & over/ID required. Tickets can be purchased in the Erie area at The Zone. Live Entertainment, Country Line Dancing, Club Dancing with several local DJ Favorites, The Dunking Booth, Bar Wars & all the yummy food, snacks, and of course, beverages! (Wink wink)." For directions or other info, call, email or check the website. (412) 683-7676 ext 3. Email: MemorialDayFestival@comcast.net. Browse to www.members.aol.com/scslpgh.

May 30 - Cook-out Part Two at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA 4 PM. "Eat - Drink - and be Mary. The cook-out Part two starts at 4 PM." Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

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Calendar

Jun 1 - Always Our Children meets Catholic Charities, 329 W 10th St, Erie, PA. For Catholic parents of GLBT children Phone: (814) 456-2091.

Jun 3 - Miss Erie, Pageant 2005! - Fire and Ice at Zone Dance Club 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "Join us as we crown the new Miss Erie! - An elegant evening of entertainment! Applications and rules available at the bar." Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Jun 3 - Performance: The Outrageous Jheri Michaels at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. "We are thrilled to present from Cleveland and Bounce - the Outrageous Jheri Michaels." Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

Jun 3 - Vertigo Party (Butler, PA) Lyndora Firehall, 114 Whitestown Road, Butler, PA. www.webspawner.com/users/vertigov.

Jun 4 - 100+ Family Garage Sale at Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie, PA 9 AM - 3 PM. The church is located 1/2 mile north off Exit 27 on I-90 and approximately 2 1/2 miles south of the zoo at W 38th & Perry Hwy. Numbers at the door at 8 AM. There will be tools, pools, dishes, toy fishes, shirts, skirts and even sinks and drinks. The list is endless. To donate items call Deb at 459-2332. Contact: Deb. Phone: (814) 459-2332. Email: uuerie@juno.com.

Jun 4 - Menspace meets Marshall and Tom's, 4304 Harding Drv, Erie, PA. 7:30 PM. PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE! Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

Jun 6 - LEAD meeting Emmaus Soup Kitchen, 218 E 11th St, Erie, PA. 7 PM. Progressive politically-involved folks (many former Kerry/Edwards volunteers) will meet to discuss several political issues. Contact: Brit Holmberg. Phone: (814) 459-3536. Email: bholmberg8@yahoo.com. Browse to www.erielead.org.

Jun 12 - Gay Day at Conneaut Lake Park (Conneaut, PA) Details next month.

Jun 13 - PFLAG-Erie/Crawford meets Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie, PA. 7 PM - 9 PM. Regular monthly meeting Contact: Maureen. Phone: (814) 898-8341. Email: pflagerie@eriegaynews.com.

Pride events

June 5 - Pride Buffalo www.pridebuffalo.org/

June 18-Cleveland Pride Voinovich Park www.clevelandpride.org/

June 18 - Pittsburgh Three Rivers PrideFest 2005 www.glccpgh.org

June 18-Pride Hamilton www.gay905.com/hamiltonpride/events.shtml

June 25- Erie Pride Picnic at the Rotary Pavilion at Presque Isle. Details on first page of this issue.

June 26 - Pride Toronto (Toronto) www.pridetoronto.com/index.htm

Jul 2 - Pride London (London, Ontario) www.pridelondon.org/

July 27-31 - Hotter Than July (Detroit) www.hotterthanjuly.com/ "The Midwest's Oldest Black Same-Gender-Loving Festival" www.hotterthanjuly.com/

July 28-30 (tentative date) Toronto Black Gay Pride www.torontoblackpride.com/

July 30 PrideFest 2005 Central Pennsylvania www.harrisburgpride.org/

Aug 1-7 -Black Gay and Proud Celebration (Cleveland) www.blackoutunlimited.org (216)937-2268



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On stage

Selected area events that may be of interest to GLBT audiences

April 3-30

Shear Madness performed April 3 through 30 by Studio Arena Theater at The Tralf, 622 Main St., Buffalo, NY Box office & Info Line: 716-854-3068 www.newtralf.com

April 8-24

PAX by Deborah Levy, April 8-24 at Allen Street Dance Studio 85 Allen Street, Buffalo, NY <http://alleyway.com/pandorasbox/> "Four women seek solace and understanding in the aftermath of a great tragedy in this haunting and surprisingly funny play by British playwright Deborah Levy. Directed by former Artistic Director, Ellen Opiela, PAX examines the permanent wounds of war, particularly as it affects women. With its poetry and theatricality, PAX promises to be a stunning evening of theatre."

April 26-June 26

Rock Hudson As April 26 to June 26 New Phoenix Theater, Buffalo, NY (716)853-1334

May 1

Ani DiFranco performs May 1 at Shea's Performing Arts Center 646-660 Main St., Buffalo, NY www.sheas.org/

May 5-15

Chicago May 5 - 15 at Shea's Performing Arts Center 646-660 Main St., Buffalo, NY www.sheas.org

May 21-Jun 25

The Mystery of Irma Vep at Roadhouse Theatre for Contemporary Art, 145 W 11th St, Erie PA. by Charles Ludlum, starring Jeff Rodland and Sean Morgan who will be playing all the roles both male and female. Ludlum was the artistic director of the infamous Ridiculous Theatre Company in New York. The troupe was known for producing hilarious farces, often written by Ludlum, and always casting men in drag in all the female roles. Performances are scheduled for Friday and Saturdays evenings at 8 PM, May 14 - June 25, 2005. The production will be directed by Brad Harrington (814) 456-5656. www.goerie.com/roadhouse.

May 22

Mary Chapin Carpenter performs May 22 at the Allen Theater in Cleveland, Ohio.

May 23

Sophie B. Hawkins Club Cafe 56-58 South 12th Street Pittsburgh, PA (412) 431-4950 7:30 PM www.clubcafelive.com *Over 21 Show*

May 24

2005 PILGFF Variety Show This event will be held at the Club Cafe 56-58 South 12th Street in Pittsburgh's Southside. Fundraising event for the Pittsburgh International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival. "comedy and laughter, singers and songwriters..." www.pilgff.org

May 25

Sarah McLachlan "Afterglow Tour 2005" May 25 at the Mellon Arena 66 Mario Lemieux Place Pittsburgh www.mellonarena.com/

June 5

Suzanne Westenhoffer, Songwriter/performing artist **Ember Swift**, **Buffalo Gay Men's Choir**, and **Universal Grille Band** Main Stage, Buffalo Pride www.pridebuffalo.org

June 9-11

Judy Gold at JR'S Last Laugh 1402 State Street, Erie (814) 461-0911. Judy's website is at www.judygold.com

June 17

Sleater-Kinney, Dead Meadow Beachland Ballroom, Cleveland, OH www.beachlandballroom.com

June 19

Cyndi Lauper at Seneca Niagara Casino, Niagara Falls NY. www.senecaniagaracasino.com

Websites and email lists for area performers:

Greg Ropp www.gregropp.com

Jocelyn Porter Project

www.jocelynporterproject.com

Leah Zicari www.leahzicari.com

Two Girls Alone <http://twogirlsalone.iuma.com> *email list: twogirlsalone@att.net.*

*Register online for the
June 25 Pride Erie Picnic at
www.eriegaynews.com/pride/register.php*

Drenched Fur turnout is a “splashing” success!

By Gary Snyder, aka Gar-Bear

Well the weekend has come and gone and it's back to life as I once knew it before the fur invasion began. Despite the blasted snowstorm that blanketed Erie and the surrounding areas with lots of thick white stuff that weekend, everyone was able to get home and stay safe, luckily.

Now that time has marched on and we've had the opportunity to get some perspective we're very pleased with the way the weekend went overall. To break it down: 80+ furry boys got wet and attempted to dunk children and drooled over some real 'daddies' at the Splash Lagoon Indoor Water Park. Yeah – the place is BIG and BUSY! Just ask the guys who were there about the fun they had there. From all accounts, no real complaints were filed that we're aware of from either the attendees or the business. (Thanks for behaving boys!) The host bar, Trance Dance Club, had over 150+ big boys that turned my hometown on its ear. LOL. And on behalf of the Trance Dance Club owner Lee and his staff, thanks for being great customers and showing them a great group of guys.

For those of you who missed Kendall's performance at Trance, he's just beginning to ramp up performances all over the nation it seems. Anyone wishing to get info on Kendall can check out his web site at www.kendallshead.com and thanks again to the hot Irishman who's the brother I never knew I wanted. Love ya man!

The committee is regrouping and tabling the option of repeating the event. So, anyone with photos from the weekend, PLEASE feel free to send them to us here at drenchedfur@hotmail.com AND IF you have any suggestions, ideas, comments, compliments/complaints – PLEASE feel free to email them to us as well!

We're *serious* about hearing anything you have to say. If ya wanna bitch – do so! The only way we can work to make things better is to be honest and see what we can do to improve upon the past. Keep in touch and check back every now and then for updates on developments. Until the next event – Hugs and Woofs from the Drenched Fur Committee!

Feedback Quotes:

Last weekend was nice! Thanks!

Peter, Erie, PA

Just wanted to let you know that Thom and I had a WONDERFUL time last weekend. I hope you will do this again next year

Jerry, Columbus, OH

Grrrrrr..... you guys planned a great weekend! Hope you enjoyed it, too. Everyone I talked with had a great time. GREAT JOB!!

Thom, Columbus, OH

Just wanted to get a note out to you and thank you for a very fun time. Water slide park was great. The bar and the food supplied there was awesome; you guys did a great job. Much fun was had.

Dennis & Bill, Cleveland, OH

Thank You SOOOO much for having me there. Of course I would love to play it again if it happens next year (and of course it should)!!! Your event was a big success and it can only get bigger.

Kendall, Buffalo, NY

Big thanks to everyone for putting on such a thoroughly nifty weekend! I had a marvelous time (I even blogged about it.) Congrats again on a fabulous job!

Michael, Erie, PA

Had a great time at the first-ever Bear event—Drenched Fur—in Erie, PA this past weekend! It was nice seeing so many Bears converging to Erie! Thanks go for all the work in bringing this event to fruition!!! Hope to see this event return again next year!

Randy, North Kingsville, OH

GREAT TIME! From the time we arrived at the waterpark, we were greeted by warm fuzzy faces. Even though the park was thoroughly packed, we all still had a great time sharing the hot tub and slides for a funfilled afternoon. Nice to see and meet other Bears from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York, always with a smile and a greeting. Thanks for your insight. . . to

hold such an event this time of year. We hope you hold such an event next year. You can count us in!
Chuck & Rick, Girard, OH

Thanks for putting such a great time together for us all. K & I had a nice relaxing time. We couldn't believe how many guys showed up from Cleveland, Erie, Rochester and Buffalo, not counting about twenty-five from Pittsburgh. Thank you for putting this all together, you did a fabulous job!
Mark & Ken, Pittsburgh, PA

Thanks for all of the work that you did for Drenched Fur last weekend.
The printed schedules and maps helped a lot and the discounted room rate at the hotel was excellent. Everyone that I talked to had a great time. :) That event really brought a lot of people together.
Tom, Doylestown, OH

We wanted you to know we had a very nice afternoon, met and talked with some very nice guys. We wanted to thank you for your efforts in organizing the event. If there is a 2nd annual event, we plan on attending for all the activities. Be well!
Jack & Ed, Pittsburgh, PA

Women's festivals

July 7 - 10

National Women's Music Festival, held in Columbus, Ohio. (317)713-1144, www.wiaonline.org/nwmf.

August 5 - 7

Women's International Music Festival, held in Akron. (330) 219-0409, www.wimfest.com.

Aug 9-14

Michigan Womyn's Music festival (near Hart MI) 30th Anniversary celebration www.michfest.com/home.htm

September 17

Ohio Lesbian Festival, 16th annual all-day music festival at Frontier Ranch, 8836 York Rd. at U.S. 40, ½ mile west of Kirkersville, Ohio, 15 miles east of Columbus; 614-2673953; www.ohiolba.org.

13TH Annual ERIE PRIDE PICNIC

Saturday, June 25

Presque Isle

at the Rotary Pavilion
1 to 6 PM,

Food served from 2 to 5 PM
Family Portrait at 4 PM.

Games! Food!

Full kitchen

Large cabin

**Near beaches, bike trail,
bike surrey rental**

Modern, indoor restrooms

We are encouraging folks to preregister online for the Pride Picnic at www.eriegaynews.com/pride/register.php. You can sign up whenever you like. (We have already had a few folks register.)

Information:

www.eriegaynews.com/pride/

“Latino Men, HIV and secrets”

By Patty Puline, Michelle Palmer
Erie County Department of Health
“See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil”

“*Ojos que no ven, corazon que no siente*” is an expression commonly used in the Latin culture. This reflects the belief that sometimes it is better not to talk about painful things so that you do not upset people who are close to you. Drug use and HIV status are some of the subjects people do not want to speak about. This is one of the reasons that the voices of HIV+ Latino male drug users have remained silent during the epidemic.” *Dr. Lydia Santiago, Dallabrida & Associates, 2002*

Hispanic American Council of Erie, HACE, provides a special HIV initiative project, **Proyecto Latino**. The goals are simple: Provide outreach and offer HIV prevention education to the Latino community, and the LGBT within that culture.

Sarita Rodriguez and Ricky Cruz are the newest workers on the front lines of AIDS prevention and education. Their project “**Proyecto Latino**” is taking it to the streets and keeping it real in the community.

But, barriers exist for outreach workers who try to reach Gay Latino men. Stigma and discrimination from within the culture that exists toward the *machismo* is an embedded and reinforced belief that says if you're an Hispanic man, being gay is not acceptable.

Gay and Lesbians in the Latino community are a taboo subject. It is not talked about within family settings, and is taking place behind closed doors. Issues like Latino men, HIV, and LGBT are usually talked about with someone else who is going through the same thoughts, feelings, or relationships.

Proyecto Latino acts as an advocate for gays to come forward and become facilitators for their friends. It cuts across the old standard of silence, to embrace a cultural acceptance for Latino GLBT within their community. For instance, to start a group to support Latino LGBT, it is important to have a Latino lead that group. To penetrate these barriers, help is needed from within the community, reaching out to the community.

HIV and gay issues should not remain secretive among the Latino community. For many reasons,

Latino men have not been accepted when revealing such information about themselves. They may think that “ojos que no ven corazon que no siente, is better than telling the truth, or fear that the truth may harm family members, friends or the GLBT community.

More importantly, straight HIV+ Latino men have remained silent as well. They have not been encouraged to speak out. The HIV community tends to focus more on HIV in the lives of gay men, women, and African Americans.

Latino outreach workers will attend Gay Pride events, and extend outreach services to Latino LGBT from Proyecto Latino, and will participate in the Gay Pride Picnic, and Gay Pride Rally this year.

How can Gay Latinos reach HACE?
Proyecto Latino
Hispanic American Council of Erie
Erie, PA 16503
(814) 455-0212 Fax: 453-2363

Proyecto Latino could be a new beginning to bridge the gap between HIV positives, Latinos, and GLBT, and serves to bring new understanding to the Latino community.

For more information on HIV and educational programming, or prevention efforts, contact Patty Puline at 451-6543 or email her at ppuline@ecdh.org
Vaya con Dios!

Resource Update!

Please note that *Erie Gay News* is updating our list of area resources. We want to hear from you! Please fill out the add/update form online at www.eriegaynews.com/resaddreq.php or call Mike Mahler at (814) 456-9833. Submissions are due by May 15!

National News Briefs

by Bob

Gay Man Leading GOP Attack on Hillary Clinton

Although the 2006 senatorial elections are more than a year away, New York Republicans have already launched a \$10 million fund-raising campaign aimed at defeating Democratic Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, and a gay man is leading the charge.

Arthur Finkelstein, a longtime GOP strategist, is lining up donors for the "Stop Her Now" campaign with the goal of raising funds to defeat Clinton's senatorial re-election and derailing her possible presidential bid in 2008.

While Finkelstein has been leading the charge against Sen. Clinton, who has a good record of supporting gay rights, he has come under criticism himself. In December, Finkelstein and his partner of 40 years were married in Massachusetts where gay marriage is now legal. In addition, Finkelstein told the

New York Times that he believes "visitation rights, health care benefits and other human relationship contracts that are taken for granted by all married people should be available to partners," a philosophy contrary to Republican Party doctrine.

Former President Bill Clinton recently called Finkelstein's campaign against the former First Lady "sad."

"I thought one of two things. Either this guy believes his party is not serious and is totally Machiavellian in its position (on gay issues), or as David Brock said in his great book *Blinded by the Right*, there's some sort of self-loathing or something." Clinton was referring to former conservative Brock's statement that when he use to attack the political left, he was expressing his own gay self-hatred.

Finkelstein's supporters called the former Presidents comments "stereotyping" by suggesting that because someone is gay they have to be a Democrat.

(Continued on next page)

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Find us at gay-friendly stores like
Body Language, Cleveland 216-251-3330
Rainbow Pride Gift Shop, Buffalo 716-855-0222
and many others at <http://gayellowpages.com/2buy.htm>

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212-674-0120 Fax: 212-420-1126
Email: gayellowpages@earthlink.net
<http://gayellowpages.com>

National News

Poll Shows People More Accepting of Gay Athletes

A new poll recently conducted by *NBC/USA Today* shows that a majority of Americans believe there is nothing wrong with openly gay male athletes participating in sports.

The poll, which is published in *Sports Illustrated*, notes that 86 percent of those interviewed agree that it is okay for openly gay men to play sports, but some respondents backed off a bit when asked if such a player would hurt the team.

"It was like, I'm OK with this, but if you press me, I have some doubts," said Doug Schoen, one of the pollsters.

Other poll results were mixed as well. When asked if Americans were more accepting of gay athletes today than they were 20 years ago, 79 percent of those responding said yes. However, 62 percent agreed that the reason there is so little news coverage of gays in sports today is that Americans are not ready to accept gay athletes.

The poll results were also mixed among professional athletes. But Cincinnati Reds slugger Ken Griffey, Jr. said he would have no problem accepting a gay teammate.

"Wouldn't bother me at all. If you can play, you can play," Griffey said.

Lutheran Church Proposes New Clergy Rules

Gays and lesbians in committed relationships could become pastors in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ECLA) under a new proposal submitted by the Church Council after its recent meeting in Chicago.

Currently the ECLA only expects gay pastors who are celibate for life. Gay pastors who have sexual relationships face disciplinary action.

Under the proposed policy change however, the bishop of an ECLA synod could obtain an exception for a gay clergy candidate, provided the candidate presents "evidence of intent to live in a life-long, committed and faithful same-sex relationship."

Carlos Pena, ECLA vice president and chairman of the Church Council, told the *Chicago Tribune*, "I think it's a good reflection of where we are as a church."

"We need to create some opportunity for candidates who are living in a committed relationship to be ordained," Pena added.

But one gay pastor sees the church's move differently. Rev. Jeff R. Johnson, the openly gay pastor of University Lutheran Chapel in Berkeley, CA, said the proposed process puts obstacles in the way of Lutheran gays and lesbians.

"I'm against the proposed rule because it creates unnecessary obstacles," Johnson said. "What the church should do is remove the discrimination. What the church has done is created a policy of exception making gay and lesbians jump through more hoops than straight people if they want to be ordained."

Civil Unions Bill Passes Connecticut Senate

The Connecticut Senate has passed a civil union bill that would make Connecticut the first state in the nation to voluntarily adopt such a law. The bill was approved by a 27-9 margin.

If the bill wins approval in the Connecticut House, it will be up to Republican Gov. M. Jodi Rell whether or not to sign the bill into law. Rell supported failed GOP amendments that would have codified marriage as between a man and a woman. However, she has not taken a stand on the bill itself. According to the Associated Press (AP) Rell has said she supports the concept of civil unions.

If signed into law, the bill would permit same-sex couples to inherit each other's wealth, make life-or-death health decisions and remain together in nursing homes. The law is modeled after a 1999 statute in Vermont, which was passed after a court order demanded equal rights for same-sex couples.

Democratic State Sen. Andrew McDonald, a gay man who is co-chairman of the Judiciary Committee, told the *Connecticut Post* that the bill was inspired in part by a gay couple who lived together for 35 years. When one died, the survivor had to pay \$90,000 in state succession taxes, something that would have been waived for a married couple.

National News

Canadians Split on Same Sex Marriage

As the Canadian Parliament gets ready to vote on same-sex marriage legislation, the general public is still split on the issue, according to a new poll conducted for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

The poll revealed that 44 percent of Canadians support the country's plans to allow same-sex couples to marry, while 52 percent oppose it. The result comes as Parliament prepares to vote on an amendment that would destroy the planned legislation.

Canada's Conservative party wants the bill downgraded, with full marriage open only to heterosexual couples. However, the governing Liberal party wants to push forward and allow gay marriage to take place. Same-sex couples can already marry in certain Canadian provinces, including Ontario and Quebec, after courts ruled it was illegal to bar them.

If the bill is passed into law, Canada would become the third country to allow full marriage rights to same-sex couples. The Netherlands and Belgium already do so, and the government of Spain planning to do so before the end of the year.



Helpful numbers

Gay and Lesbian National Hotline 1-888-843-GLNH www.glnh.org/index_.html
Covenant House Ninline (youth)
1-800-999-9999
Trevor Helpline for Suicidal Gay Youth
1-800-850 8078

Oral HIV Testing LOCAL TREATMENT

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Use Protection!
Get Tested!
Get Treatment!**

45% of new HIV infections are between Men Who Have Sex with Men.

Community Health Net offers:

- FREE Oral HIV Testing
- Primary Medical Care
- HIV Specialty Care
- Dental Services
- Vision Care

**No Insurance!
No Problem!**

We Can Help!

**Call 814-454 - 4530 ex.233
for more information**



This ad is made possible by a Federal Grant under the Ryan White Care Act of 1990.

13TH Annual

ERIE PRIDE PICNIC 2005

Saturday, June 25

at the Rotary Pavillion at Presque Isle.
1 to 6 PM, Food served from 2 to 5 PM
Family Portrait at 4 PM.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!

This year we are asking for volunteers to serve 1 hour shifts in the kitchen and at the registration table! If everyone pitches in, then everyone gets to enjoy the day and not be inconvenienced. Please contact Mike Mahler about volunteering. It's also a great way to meet people and make friends. You can read more about the Pride Picnic at <http://picnic.eriegaynews.com> (it's also linked at www.eriegaynews.com/pride).

We are also encouraging folks to preregister online for the Pride Picnic at www.eriegaynews.com/pride/register.php. You can sign up whenever you like. (We have already had a few folks register.)

The Northwest Pennsylvania Rural Aids Alliance

is pleased to sponsor

Positive Living Support Group

It is open to anyone that is HIV positive and would like to share ideas, experiences and support with others. All participants will be treated with confidentiality.

Anyone interested in participating in this group or for more information contact:

Sue Bobosky at:

1-800-359-AIDS
24 37



This & That

by Deb Spilko
Co-Editor

If you haven't ever visited Canada, or if it's been a long time since you have done so, let me just say that on a recent visit I discovered that the border crossing really feels like an international border now. I guess it has to do with the so-called war on terror, and it is really sad to see "the longest unguarded border in the world" turn into something else. At any rate, you needn't let that keep you from enjoying a trip to Toronto or elsewhere, but just keep in mind it's not like driving into the next state. You *will* need appropriate border-crossing ID or you will probably be turned back; make sure all passengers on the trip have this. You may be questioned, you may be asked to get out of your vehicle, and they may have a dog come by to sniff at your belongings. No big deal if you aren't bringing drugs or weapons into their country, but just be prepared. And when they ask where you are going, I think it's fine to tell them if you are going to a GLBT event... they'd have to be pretty much used to all the Americans coming through there on the way to gay events.

President Bush is questioning the proposal to require US citizens to have a passport to be able to return to their own country from Canada, Mexico and other US neighbors. The proposal was made by the State and Homeland Security departments. Bush tells about how he learned about this move: "When I first read that in the newspaper about the need to have passports, particularly today's crossings that take place, about a million for instance in the state of Texas, I said, 'What's going on here?'" Exactly my thought, what *is* going on here? Excuse me, but is this how the president should have heard about such a serious, major policy change—by reading about it in the freakin' newspaper? Could these people be any more out of control?

Anyway, for the time being, appropriate border crossing ID remains the same: government-issued ID (driver's license or state ID) and proof of citizenship (birth certificate is a good choice here).

Found a website we haven't listed before: Toronto Pronto is put together by the Gay Toronto Tourism Guild. They have information on events, organizations, bars, same-sex marriage, accommodations, businesses, and so on. www.gaytorontotourism.com

Michael Dithers

by Michael Mahler, Co-Editor

I hope that everyone is having a great month! Things have been rather busy here.

I am very glad that the Erie Gay/Straight Alliance got as many responses as we did for our first try. You can see the results and some background info in this issue. Please note: we are not endorsing any candidates. We are just trying to help you make an informed decision. Don't forget to vote on Tuesday, May 17! It is really quick to do, and you get to feel smug the rest of the day for having done your civic duty.

Speaking of May 17, kudos to Shout Outreach and Trance for having a night of free and confidential HIV screening. Please note: they are using the Orasure test, so no need to worry about needles or having blood drawn. It's a very simple, totally painless procedure, and you come back for the results in 2 weeks.

We should shortly have the Pride Guides from Interpride. Some of you may have seen these last year. They were printed on glossy stock and had info about Pride observances from across the globe.

Apparently being a glutton for punishment, I have been also been helping a bit with planning the first Erie Pagan Pride Day, which will be on Saturday, September 10 at St. Nick's Grove.

2 amusing anecdotes: One of the guys involved, Rich, is a welder and also a bodybuilder. He had previously referred to a wife. Have you ever walked mid-way into a conversation? At one point, TJ pointed to Rich and said, "Bottom." "Oh?!", I thought, my interest piqued (although I was puzzled as I was pretty sure that he was straight.) "Yeah, and Jeremy as Puck!" TJ continued. "Ah!", I thought, "We may both be speaking English, but we ain't talking the same language."

Rick was also our primary contact with securing the site. I think he was worried that when talking with the clergy member that was the representative for the site, that there might be some resistance if he knew it was for a Pagan group. But we figured that it would likely come out anyway, so better to be upfront. So, Rich came out of the broom closet (a phrase Pagans tend to use), and things were fine. Just like with GLBT folks, most of the time being direct and honest in dealing with people means less stress and more respect for all concerned.

WE CAN HELP !

ERIE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

606 West Second Street • Corner of West 2nd & Cherry Streets

HIV & STD COUNSELING & TESTING

Oral HIV testing now available

No Appointment Necessary

WALK-IN CLINICS



MONDAY

12 noon - 3:30 pm

TUESDAY

9:30 am - 1:00 pm



MONDAY

9:00 am - 11:00 am

WEDNESDAY

1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

THURSDAY

3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

HIV & STD CLINIC 451-6700

Appointments can be made at the following locations:

Erie County Health Department

Erie Office
Outreach Services
814.451.6732

Corry 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).

Voter's Guide - Erie County

Compiled by the Erie Gay/Straight Alliance

The Erie Gay/Straight Alliance sent out questionnaires to candidates in Erie County races. This article contains the candidates' responses to these questions.

Candidates names appear in the order in which their responses were received.

The Erie Gay/Straight Alliance can be contacted at phobbs101@aol.com

Erie County Executive

Not responding: Thomas P Loftus (D), Art Oligeri (R)

1. Please describe your interaction with the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender community. If elected how would you support and participate in LGBT based events and organizations?

Mark A Divecchio (D): Would support events.

Dale R McBrier (R): Other than friends, I have no relationships to date with any organization.

2. Do you support the appointment of competent LGBT people to the staff of public officials?

Mark A Divecchio (D): Yes.

Dale R McBrier (R): If they are qualified and the best candidate possible then I see no distinction based upon sexual preference.

3. Will your office human relations policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity?

Mark A Divecchio (D): Yes!

Dale R McBrier (R): Yes!

4. What steps will you take to provide legal protection for same sex couples and their families?

Mark A Divecchio (D): Have taken steps through the Human Relations Commission.

Dale R McBrier (R): The same afforded all citizens under the Constitution!

5. What would you do to support safe schools that are free of harassment and violence against sexual minority youth?

Mark A Divecchio (D): County has Sheriff Deputies and Probation Officers -- need to train them on specific non-discrimination practices

Dale R McBrier (R): I support any education program designed to teach young people the value and appreciation of *all* our people.

6. How would you support aggressive investigation, prosecution and punishment of crimes committed against people because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity? What would you do to encourage strong tracking and reporting of hate crimes?

Mark A Divecchio (D): Hate crimes should be treated with same respect as any other crime.

Dale R McBrier (R): I support strong tracking and reporting of hate crimes. Hate crimes are infective and need to be addressed aggressively. Discrimination of all kinds needs to be fought! I support the first sentence - simply said, I will work to ensure that all forms of sexual discrimination disappear from our culture.

7. How will you support the rights of transgender people and protect their right to legally change gender status, ex. driver's license, passport?

(continued on next page)

Voter's Guide - Erie County

Mark A Divecchio (D): Justice serves the Human Relations Commission.

Dale R McBrier (R): It should be their choice.

8. Do you support the rights of LGBT people to the following:

- A. *Legal recognition of gay relationships?*
- B. *Second-parent adoption?*
- C. *Protection from workplace discrimination?*
- D. *Health/insurance benefits for the partners of GLBT city/municipal employees.*

Mark A Divecchio (D): a. yes, b. yes if all parties are agreed, c. absolutely, d. only if union is legalized.

Dale R McBrier (R): A) Yes, but there needs to be a legally binding relationship. B) Yes, based on stable household standards. C) Yes. D) Yes - with legally binding relationships.

Erie County Council District 2

Not responding: Joe Giles (D)

1. Please describe your interaction with the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender community. If elected how would you support and participate in LGBT based events and organizations?

Vicki L Taylor (R): I have several close gay friends, co-workers and associates. I pledge that as a county council person I would attend appropriate events to help draw attention to their many legitimate concerns.

2. Do you support the appointment of competent LGBT people to the staff of public officials?

Vicki L Taylor (R): Yes. Absolutely. What is important is the competence of a staff member and not his or her sexual preference. I am opposed to discrimination in all forms.

3. Will your office human relations policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity?

Vicki L Taylor (R): Yes.

4. What steps will you take to provide legal protection for same sex couples and their families?

Vicki L Taylor (R): County council has limited power to aid in this effort, however, I will support and fund enforcement of anti-discrimination laws and hate crime provisions of state law.

5. What would you do to support safe schools that are free of harassment and violence against sexual minority youth?

Vicki L Taylor (R): This subject matter is outside the jurisdiction of County Council. I would work to see that the District Attorney has the funding and support for prosecution of perpetrators.

6. How would you support aggressive investigation, prosecution and punishment of crimes committed against people because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity? What would you do to encourage strong tracking and reporting of hate crimes?

Vicki L Taylor (R): I will work to make sure that the District Attorney's office has the funds to enforce hate crime laws and prosecute perpetrators. I am not knowledgeable at this time on what can be done to track and report hate crimes. I will look to your organization and other similar organizations for information.

7. How will you support the rights of transgender people and protect their right to legally change gender status, ex. driver's license, passport?

Vicki L Taylor (R): This issue also appears to be outside the jurisdiction of county council. However, I am opposed to all forms of discrimination. I will maintain an open door to all Erie groups concerned about discrimination and if there is something that County Council can do I will work with those groups to get it done.

8. Do you support the rights of LGBT people to the following:

- A. *Legal recognition of gay relationships?*
- B. *Second-parent adoption?*
- C. *Protection from workplace discrimination?*
- D. *Health/insurance benefits for the partners of GLBT city/municipal employees.*

Voter's Guide - Erie County

Vicki L Taylor (R): This is dependent upon the availability of funding sources and status of labor negotiations. I am not aware of the costs involved and would have to study this issue thoroughly before taking a public position.

Erie County Council District 4

Not responding: Dale DeCecco (D), William D Buseck (R)

1. *Please describe your interaction with the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender community. If elected how would you support and participate in LGBT based events and organizations?*

Gary P Zielonis (D): I have not had any interaction in the past. I would be willing to meet anyone and discuss issues of concern to the group. I am not closed-minded on social issues regarding the LGBT community and would entertain any education offered.

Ronald Whitey Cleaver (D): Won't participate – Would consider support based on the event.

2. *Do you support the appointment of competent LGBT people to the staff of public officials?*

Gary P Zielonis (D): I support the appointment of competent people, period. The fact that they were LGBT would not be a deciding factor either way.

Ronald Whitey Cleaver (D): Yes (Cleaver underlined the word "competent" in the question)

3. *Will your office human relations policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity?*

Gary P Zielonis (D): My "office" would not directly hire anyone. My policy could only be that of County government in general. I do not favor discrimination of any kind, race, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.

Ronald Whitey Cleaver (D): Doesn't fall under the office I am running for.

4. *What steps will you take to provide legal protection for same sex couples and their families?*

Gary P Zielonis (D): County government in Pennsylvania does not control this subject area. I would encourage the state legislature to provide legal protections.

Ronald Whitey Cleaver (D): Whatever the law provides

5. *What would you do to support safe schools that are free of harassment and violence against sexual minority youth?*

Gary P Zielonis (D): I believe the Erie School District and Millcreek School District already provide a safe environment. Each has policies in place. If these policies prove not to be strong enough to protect sexual minority youth, I would encourage the respective Boards to strengthen their policies. I do not have any info on the Iroquois School District (Wesleyville Section of District 4.)

Ronald Whitey Cleaver (D): I would support the dists No Harassment and No Violence Policy

6. *How would you support aggressive investigation, prosecution and punishment of crimes committed against people because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity? What would you do to encourage strong tracking and reporting of hate crimes?*

Gary P Zielonis (D): I believe all crimes should be investigated, prosecuted, and punished. The District Attorney, as an independently elected official, has control of prosecution, and judges determine punishment based on court proceedings. The appropriate police jurisdiction controls investigation. I could only urge them to do their sworn duties. Tracking would probably need state legislative action.

Ronald Whitey Cleaver (D): I support aggressive investigations in all crimes. I wouldn't rate them on a scale of 1-10.

7. *How will you support the rights of transgender people and protect their right to legally change gender status, ex. driver's license, passport?*

Gary P Zielonis (D): This is not a County function. Again, I would encourage the State and Federal legislators to provide such protections.

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Ronald Whitey Cleaver (D): If the law allows it fine, I'll support it. The position I am running for has very little import for most of these questions.

8. Do you support the rights of LGBT people to the following:

- A. *Legal recognition of gay relationships?*
- B. *Second-parent adoption?*
- C. *Protection from workplace discrimination?*
- D. *Health/insurance benefits for the partners of GLBT city/municipal employees.*

Gary P Zielonis (D): A) Yes - as civil unions. B) Yes - I know the men involved in the Erie County Court case. C) Yes. D) Yes, but only in context of civil unions. If there is a small group political discussion venue, I would be willing to listen to any inputs and share my view in more detail.

Ronald Whitey Cleaver (D): C) I support 100%. A B D There are many unanswered questions concerning these 3. Before I could support or not support AB & D I would certainly need additional information then just a questionnaire.

Erie County Council District 6

Not responding: Michael Leyda (D), William McLellan (D), David E Mitchell (R)

Erie City Mayor

Not responding: Joe Sinnott (D), Barry Grossman (D), Tim Zarnick (R), Jack Anderson (R)

1. Please describe your interaction with the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender community. If elected how would you support and participate in LGBT based events and organizations?

Tim Pearson (D): No interaction so far. I would support like any other event or organization.

Linda Bebko-Jones (D): My interaction with the Lesbian / Gay / Bisexual / Transgender community has been the same as with any other group in the community. As Mayor my participation in GLBT events would remain the same, i.e., I would continue

to make every effort to attend any events as my schedule permits.

Mary Elaine Taylor (D): I visited The Zone just before Saint Patrick's Day in hope to solicit help with my campaign for Mayor of the City of Erie. I was treated very well and as always by the folks, and by those in attendance that night and given literature before my departure.

I have always had and have Lesbian, Gay and Transgender friends. They do so enhance my life and are true and loyal friends after all these years. I would love to have the lesbian, gay, transgender participation and help in this election. I know of the intelligent, competent, organizational and communicative skills this strong community does have. I love the exhibit of fashion and color skills displayed during social events.

Rick Filippi (D): I believe all people are part of our Erie community. I have always operated city hall in an inclusive manner. On a personal level, I have friends and associates from all walks of life, including the gay community. As your Mayor I have participated in LGBT events and would continue to do so.

2. Do you support the appointment of competent LGBT people to the staff of public officials?

Tim Pearson (D): Competent people period
Linda Bebko-Jones (D): A person's sexual orientation and/or gender identity would never be a part of my decision on hiring, qualifications will always be the deciding factor.

Mary Elaine Taylor (D): If I were elected Mayor, I would employ LGBT in order to provide safe schools, free of harassment and prohibit discrimination and violence. I would encourage LGBT as part of my staff because of their strong tracking and reporting commitment to aggressive investigative skills.

Rick Filippi (D): Not only do I support the appointment of competent LGBT people, I have appointed such to the highest levels of my staff.

3. Will your office human relations policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity?

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Tim Pearson (D): If there is no policy in place I will have one written.

Linda Bebko-Jones (D): Definitely just as it will prohibit discrimination based on race, religion, gender or ethnic background.

Mary Elaine Taylor (D): See #2.

Rick Filippi (D): Yes, we currently prohibit discrimination based on sexual discrimination and will continue to do so.

4. What steps will you take to provide legal protection for same sex couples and their families?

Tim Pearson (D): Whatever Pennsylvania law provides. My influence would be in terms of benefits.

Linda Bebko-Jones (D): As a State Legislator I have supported and fought for legislation that would provide legal protection for same sex couples and I will continue to do so.

Mary Elaine Taylor (D): Ultimate goal, the right to choose; sexual orientation, and their families, and rights to employment status. My goal is to provide legal protection for LGBT, AND ALL HUMAN BEINGS. Gender Id's such as driver's license, passports are legal recognition needed for health/insurance, employment and second-parent adoptions, among other things.

Rick Filippi (D): As Mayor, the best way I can work to provide protection for same sex couples is to work through the Commonwealth. In particular, as a member of the PA League of Cities, I believe we can take a proactive role in lobbying for legislation that will provide the kind of protection that you deserve.

5. What would you do to support safe schools that are free of harassment and violence against sexual minority youth?

Tim Pearson (D): I have always supported safe schools. There are policies in place now to protect students.

Linda Bebko-Jones (D): The best way to prevent such harassment and violence is to insure that such behavior is punishable. While education on the issue can be helpful for some, the threat of punishment is the only real deterrent.

Mary Elaine Taylor (D): I would employ LGBT in order to provide safe schools, free of harassment and prohibit discrimination and violence.

Rick Filippi (D): Unlike some other cities in the Commonwealth the Mayor does not have oversight of the Erie school system. I do however believe that as Mayor I can call for change from our local school board and directors. Additionally, as I indicated above, I believe that lobbying Harrisburg for fundamental change and laws is critical.

6. How would you support aggressive investigation, prosecution and punishment of crimes committed against people because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity? What would you do to encourage strong tracking and reporting of hate crimes?

Tim Pearson (D): All crimes should be investigated, prosecuted, and punished. My influence would only be with the investigation side.

Linda Bebko-Jones (D): First let me make it clear that such crimes are indeed "hate crimes" and need to be treated as such. I have always supported the strong tracking and reporting of hate crimes and continue to support it.

Mary Elaine Taylor (D): See #2

Rick Filippi (D): Hate crimes are intolerable and unacceptable. I am very proud that violent crime is down by 30% since I took office in 2002. One of the reasons I appointed Erby Conley as Public Safety Director was because of his commitment to diversity in the police and fire departments, his commitment to diversity training with the men and women already in place and because of his experience with the State Police where many of these types of tracking systems are in place. We will continue to work to train and diversify our public safety offices and to monitor and track hate crimes.

7. How will you support the rights of transgender people and protect their right to legally change gender status, ex. driver's license, passport?

Tim Pearson (D): I would not have any influence as mayor on these issues.

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Linda Bebko-Jones (D): I have supported legislation to provide these protections in the past and will continue to do so.

Mary Elaine Taylor (D): See #4.

Rick Filippi (D): Again, as Mayor the best way I can help is to continue to lobby on a state and federal basis.

8. *Do you support the rights of LGBT people to the following:*

- A. *Legal recognition of gay relationships?*
- B. *Second-parent adoption?*
- C. *Protection from workplace discrimination?*
- D. *Health/insurance benefits for the partners of GLBT city/municipal employees.*

Tim Pearson (D): A) No B) Yes C) Yes D) No

Linda Bebko-Jones (D): A) Gay relationships should be afforded the same legal rights as heterosexual relationships. B) The criteria for adoption should always be the willingness and ability to care and love for a child and not sexual orientation. C) All workers should be protected from workplace discrimination regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. D) If a city or municipality offers health insurance to heterosexual couples who are not mar-

ried then the same benefits should be offered to gay and lesbian couples.

Mary Elaine Taylor (D): See #4.

Rick Filippi (D): A) Absolutely B) Yes C) Yes D) Yes. Thank you for this opportunity to speak to your community about issues of importance. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with your committee or to speak at any of your functions. Again, thank you for taking an active role in our political process.

Erie City Council

Not Responding: William Bill Watson (D), Ian Murray (D), Mark Aleks Aleksandrowicz (D), Carl Anderson (D), Curtis Jones, Jr (D), Lonny Gatlin (D), Jim Casella (D), James H Eichler (R)

1. *Please describe your interaction with the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender community. If elected how would you support and participate in LGBT based events and organizations?*

Jim Casey (D): Open minded without prejudice!

Rubye Jenkins-Husband (D): I will continue to attend any constituent activity as my schedule permits. In the past, I have been able to attend some of your public events

Michael Benedict (D): We have a lot of great organizations and coalitions in Erie, where there are people standing up for civil rights or human rights, that's where I'll be.

James N Thompson (D): No interaction didn't know about Pride Picnics will support.

2. *Do you support the appointment of competent LGBT people to the staff of public officials?*

Jim Casey (D): Certainly

Rubye Jenkins-Husband (D): I support the appointment of any qualified staff; however, the office of City Council does not have appointments=hired by the administration.

Michael Benedict (D): I support the appointment of any competent person to the staff of public officials.

James N Thompson (D): Yes -- no discrimination!

**Pennsylvania
Primary Election
is
Tuesday, May 17**

To find out where you vote, or for other information, contact your county Voter Registration office.

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3. Will your office human relations policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity?

Jim Casey (D): Certainly! I have been Council's liaison to Personnel Office for 4 years.

Rubye Jenkins-Husband (D): I oppose discrimination

Michael Benedict (D): I will not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

James N Thompson (D): Yes.

4. What steps will you take to provide legal protection for same sex couples and their families?

Jim Casey (D): Steps of cooperation.

Rubye Jenkins-Husband (D): I support the office of Human Relations.

Michael Benedict (D): In our last labor contract, we (UE) negotiated with my employer (GE) for full benefits and rights for domestic partners. I believe this is something that City Hall should also extend to its employees.

James N Thompson (D): Difficult to answer because office has nothing to do with those decisions.

5. What would you do to support safe schools that are free of harassment and violence against sexual minority youth?

Jim Casey (D): I support safe schools for all students.

Rubye Jenkins-Husband (D): To support the programs such as Human Relations that will protect the rights of all people.

Michael Benedict (D): Kids can be mean. When someone finds a way to stop harassment and violence in children and young adults, they will probably win a Nobel Peace Prize. In the meanwhile, I think we all need to lead by example and hopefully children will learn from what they see us doing.

James N Thompson (D): Police Officers - no jurisdictions.

6. How would you support aggressive investigation, prosecution and punishment of crimes committed against people because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity? What would you do to encourage strong tracking and reporting of hate crimes?

Jim Casey (D): If this required legislation, I would support aggressive and enforcement.

Rubye Jenkins-Husband (D): To have our state and federal laws protect the rights of all our citizens.

Michael Benedict (D): I would ask the district attorney if there is any help I could provide for the investigation. I would also consult the GLBT community on how I could support their needs. Basically, I would help in any way that I could.

James N Thompson (D): Political office has no jurisdiction -- would encourage.

7. How will you support the rights of transgender people and protect their right to legally change gender status, ex. driver's license, passport?

Jim Casey (D): If this is an issue of City Council, I believe in equal rights. The question of *how*, I don't know.

Rubye Jenkins-Husband (D): Review of our current state and federal laws.

Michael Benedict (D): My door will always be open to anyone in the GLBT community when it comes to issues of concern. I will stand beside you in fighting against discrimination and for equal human rights.

James N Thompson (D): Certainly.

8. Do you support the rights of LGBT people to the following:

A. Legal recognition of gay relationships?

B. Second-parent adoption?

C. Protection from workplace discrimination?

D. Health/insurance benefits for the partners of GLBT city/municipal employees.

Jim Casey (D): A) Yes. B) Yes C) Yes D) If allowed by law, Yes!

Rubye Jenkins-Husband (D): My belief is: when you provide for the equal rights of all people - you protect the rights of all classes of people.

Michael Benedict (D): A) Yes B) I don't know enough about it to answer the question C) Yes D) Yes

James N Thompson (D): a. yes, b. yes, c. yes, d. yes

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Millcreek Township Supervisor

1. *Please describe your interaction with the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender community. If elected how would you support and participate in LGBT based events and organizations?*

Brian McGrath (D): I am not aware of Millcreek ever being requested for support from the LGBT community. The township has been supportive of the Erie County HRC and has provided funding for its work.

Joy Greco (R): I know a number of persons of the LGBT community and have always been supportive in whatever way I can be. I have attended the summer picnics, a couple of rallies, and am always available by phone or email to hear your concerns.

2. *Do you support the appointment of competent LGBT people to the staff of public officials?*

Brian McGrath (D): I support the appointment of competent people to our staff, regardless of sexual orientation.

Joy Greco (R): Yes, I support the appointment of *any* competent, qualified people to these positions regardless of orientation or any other factor. The key words are "competent" and "qualified."

3. *Will your office human relations policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity?*

Brian McGrath (D): Absolutely.

Joy Greco (R): I single-handedly caused the rewrite of the Erie County Human Relations Commission policy to include the words "sexual orientation s a protected class. I was also responsible through communication and mediation for getting sufficient Council votes to override any possible veto by the County Executive, who was opposed to the inclusion.

4. *What steps will you take to provide legal protection for same sex couples and their families?*

Brian McGrath (D): As is the case with all Constitutional or legislative rights, Millcreek law enforcement will protect those rights.

Joy Greco (R): This is under the jurisdiction of the federal and state governments, but I would uphold

any such legislation you are able to get through these government bodies. Everything takes time (women couldn't even vote when the Constitution was written), but keep fighting for your cause and you will eventually prevail.

5. *What would you do to support safe schools that are free of harassment and violence against sexual minority youth?*

Brian McGrath (D): I am not involved with school district policy, except as the answer to the previous question applies.

Joy Greco (R): Any type of harassment toward any individual, teacher, administrators or anyone else should be dealt with immediately and strongly by the school administrators and boards. They should have a policy in place to punish the harassers. This should apply to society in general, not just in schools.

6. *How would you support aggressive investigation, prosecution and punishment of crimes committed against people because of their perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender identity? What would you do to encourage strong tracking and reporting of hate crimes?*

Brian McGrath (D): Hate crimes disgust me. I would make certain that our police force aggressively investigate such crimes. I would work with state legislators to provide a statewide system for reporting and tracking hate crimes.

Joy Greco (R): This is a matter for law enforcement and the courts. However, I wholeheartedly support pursuing, investigating and prosecuting wrongdoers to the fullest extent of the law. If legislation needs to be stronger, then you should pursue those changes, and I will uphold the laws.

7. *How will you support the rights of transgender people and protect their right to legally change gender status, ex. driver's license, passport?*

Brian McGrath (D): See #4.

Joy Greco (R): I believe some people have inner feelings that a metamorphosis of their gender is the road to happiness and self esteem. Medical science can make this occur and, of course, they then have

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all the rights to change their driver's licenses, passports, bank records, deeds or whatever. Americans should learn to have compassion, civility and understanding toward all.

8. *Do you support the rights of LGBT people to the following:*

- A. *Legal recognition of gay relationships?*
- B. *Second-parent adoption?*
- C. *Protection from workplace discrimination?*
- D. *Health/insurance benefits for the partners of GLBT city/municipal employees.*

Brian McGrath (D): See #4. Local municipalities are responsible for helping to enforce such legislated rights, not to provide that legislation.

Joy Greco (R): A) Yes. B) Yes. C) Yes. D) Once there is legal recognition of gay relationships (see A above) I believe that this is a natural progression to allow benefits.

Final Comment: I can't promise anyone that I will agree with them on every single issue, but I promise to give every issue a fair hearing. I work for all the taxpayers and believe my main task in the County Council job I've held for the past 14 years and in the Supervisor job I am seeking is to be a "guardian" of the tax dollars, yours and mine. I respectfully ask for your endorsement and votes.

Thanks

The Erie Gay/Straight Alliance would like to thank all of the candidates who responded to this questionnaire, and informing our community on where they stand on issues affecting us. We also thank Parris Hobbs and Bob for creating/editing the questionnaire, Tara and Heather for follow up phone calls and taking/transcribing responses and to Parris and Dave for voter registration volunteer efforts.

Additional information

Many of the candidates listed here have not held office before and some of the current/previous office holders may not have voted on GLBT-related legislation. However, Erie County passed a GLBT-inclusive Human Rights Ordinance in 2002 after a rather lengthy process. County Councilmember Mark Divecchio was an early champion of including equal protection under the law on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. County Council member Joe Giles also helped play a pivotal role.

On September 10, 2001, it appeared the board of the Human Relations Commission might withdraw the GLBT related language in the proposed ordinance, and Giles showed up at the meeting and encouraged them to include it and let County Council decide. At a County Council meeting on January 8, 2002, County Council members Joy Greco and Fiore Leone announced their intention to vote for the ordinance, which made clear that there was then a majority of votes on County Council in favor of the inclusive ordinance. Greco, Divecchio and Giles were all helpful behind the scenes, and in keeping our community informed.

The only County Council member to vote against the ordinance, David Mitchell, immediately asked County Executive Rick Schenker not to veto the legislation. (Schenker had long been opposed to including protections on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.)

When County Executive Rick Schenker effectively tried to kill the HRC by defunding it, Erie City Council unanimously passed a resolution supporting continued funding on October 15, 2003. Councilmember Ian Murray said basically that this was a no-brainer and council should vote 7-0 and that he was behind it 100%. Councilmember Rubye Jenkins-Husband enthusiastically commented that she supported the resolution "200%" Also voting in favor were Jim Thompson and Jim Casey.

When County Council voted on funding the HRC, all council members (including Divecchio, Giles, Mitchell and Greco) voted in favor.



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The Link, New York, New York, Pittsburgh Eagle,
Real Luck Cafe, Zebra Lounge**

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