

January 2006



EGN



Erie Gay News

Toasting the New Year!

Jonathan:

My New Year's Toast: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men-on-Men, Women-on-Women, and Men-and-Women on each other. And Peace, Blessings, and Prosperity like we've never known it for 2006. God Bless The World."

Franco Tompeterini:

My toast for this New Year is the following: For a prosperous and healthy new year to our gay and lesbian community. That we all learn to respect one another's life styles and live in peace and harmony with all of our community.

Robyn:

My toast would beI would like to thank my friends and family, without them I wouldn't be where I am right now nor would I be who I am without their support and love.

Ginger:

Here is my New Year's Toast: Here's to all the lesbian, gay, bi, trans, and hetero folks. I would like to see us all work together and put aside our petty differences to defeat the Pennsylvania Marriage Amendment. No matter what kind of life you walk, this amendment discriminates against at least 10 percent of the population of Pennsylvania. Let's see it defeated. Happy New Year.

Dave:

Here's my toast for the new year: "Here's to good luck and prosperity and to my remaining friends in Erie and my new friends out here in Denver. I look forward to my return visit in 2006 and a Hairy Navel Martini (maybe 2) made by Joe at Trance".

Mark:

Peace and Love to everyone, and a special toast to my Anthony!!!!

Lynne S.:

Here's to a year.. that starts a forever.. in which no child goes hungry, gets abused, or is unloved. Here's to a forever where all the World is at Peace. Here's to a new era of respect and compassion - for ourselves and each other. And here's to a year that starts a new ideology of appreciation for blessings everyday - mixed with a little laughter, music & joy!

Karen:

Peace to all, love to all, tolerance for all, and lips is lips!

Jo:

Here's to you and here's to me
Friends forever shall we be
and if we ever disagree...Screw you here's to me
Love ya, Jo.

Out & About

Tara and Jo, following their performance as a lesbian couple in The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told, held in conjunction with World AIDS Day at Trance.



PHOTO: Deb Spilko

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Erie Gay News
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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.

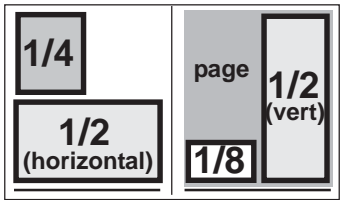
We welcome and encourage all readers to submit timely news, comments and opinions of interest to local GLBT's for publication in these pages. We will consider for publication any nonfiction article, blurb or illustration graphic which upholds this spirit. Please include your contact information with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

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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

Thank You:

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With Our
Very Special Guest Star:
Melissa St. John
from West Palm Beach

On Saturday December 31st
You are invited
to the
Trance
2nd annual

SNOW BALL

WEAR YOUR WHITEST WHITE

Check out our website to see pictures of last year's Snow Ball. FREE Champagne and Food Buffet.

A Moonsense & Trancesense Series

MONDAY, JANUARY 8th
Drag 101: The Drag Queens

7:30 PM at Moonsense with Hotspots at Trance

MONDAY, JANUARY 23rd
The Drag Kings

7:30 PM at Moonsense with Hotspots at Trance

Trance & Moonsense Cafe are combining for a night of fun and entertainment!

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13th 11 PM Dance Bar **Friday Night Drag** Around the World in an Hour

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21st LEE'S JURASSIC BIRTHDAY PARTY "She's Old!"

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28th **Slumber Party** Cum in your favorite Jammies!

LOVE HURTS
WEEKEND

FRIDAY, February 10th 11 PM
Broken Hearts, Love Hurts Drag Show

SATURDAY, February 11th
Love Hurts Party
Wear your Reddest Red for Prizes!

SUNDAY, February 12th 9 PM
Love's Revenge Movie Night

TUESDAY, February 14th
2 for 1 Drinks for Whole Hearts
Couples get one heart at the door.

Singles get a half a heart at the door when they find matching heart, 2 for 1 drinks for that couple.



ERIE'S NEWEST
DANCE CLUB

SERVING THE GAY & THE LESBIAN COMMUNITY!
1607 Raspberry Street
Erie, PA 16502
814.456.3027

Visit our Website at: www.trancedanceclub.com

Community News

Queen of Hearts Grand Re-Opening December 23

WARREN, Ohio—The new location for Queen of Hearts is scheduled to open December 23. Queen of Hearts is located at 1977 Ridge Avenue SE, Warren Ohio just down from Pat Catan's Crafts and across from the Ridge Avenue Bowling Alley.

The new location has 10,000 square feet of space. Jagermeister will sponsor the Grand Reopening of the Queen of Hearts as well as the Celebration of the 8th Anniversary of The Queen of Hearts

Hours will be Monday thru Saturday 4 PM to 2:30 AM and Sunday 1 PM to 2:30 AM Phone (330) 395-0111 Web: www.royale-hearts.com/

—from *Queen of Hearts*

Fall Pride Planning Committee meets

Please note that the planning committee for the Fall Pride Weekend will be meeting the 3rd Sunday of each month at 2 PM at Panera's in the Yorktown Plaza, 2501 W 12th St, Erie PA. The next meeting will be Sunday, January 15 at 2 PM. The Fall Pride Weekend itself will be held either the last weekend in September or the first weekend in October.

If you would like to be on the email list for the planning committee, you can sign up at http://www.eriegaynews.com/mailman/listinfo/event_eriegaynews.com. You may also contact Dan Burdick at (814) 602-0252 or eriegaypride@yahoo.com or Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or info@eriegaynews.com.

Moonsense January 2006 schedule

Monday's Activities

01/02 Ladies Night: Massage, Psychic Readings, Manicures, Facials 6:30-9

01/06 Drag Queens 101 History of the Drag Queen 7-9

01/16 Ladies Night: Massage, Psychic Readings, Manicures, Facials 6:30-9

01/23 Drag Kings: History of the Drag King 7-9

Tuesday's Activities:

01/03 Philosophy Night: Come shed light on the philosophical minds of Erie 01/10 Spoken Word: Read poetry, short stories, tell jokes or a monologue

01/17 Philosophy Night: Come shed light on the philosophical minds of Erie

01/24 Spoken Word: Read poetry, short stories, tell jokes or a monologue

Thursdays Karaoke 7-10

Fridays Open Mic Night 8-11

Saturday Music schedule

01/7 Elias Originals - that will move you.

01/14 Carrie Sample - Her sound is amazing, she sings from the heart

01/21 Chris Squier - Singer songwriter

01/28 James Madison - *Jazz, Jazz, Jazz.*

—from *Jo Hyatt*

Cher extravaganza DVD contest

Win a copy of the *Cher Extravaganza - Live at the Mirage* DVD! Erie Gay News has 10 copies to give away! To be in the contest, **you must enter by December 30**. You need to include a mailing address where the DVD can be shipped. We will let the winners know after December 30. Limit 1 entry per person. For more details, and to enter the contest, look on the home page of the Erie Gay News website at www.eriegaynews.com



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and National Artists
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Frame Staining.

Hardwood Gifts By Mike Gallagher
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2809 Route 426 Findley Lake, NY 14736
716-769-7474 New Artists Welcome



Stay updated!

Subscribe to the Erie GLBT Mailing List
To subscribe visit www.eriegaynews.com

PFLAG News

PFLAG Erie & Crawford Counties

by Mark, President, PFLAG Erie & Crawford

Our Chapter Officers & Board would like wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season and a Great 2006!

We would like to thank a family member of our group, who donated a new coffee maker to our Chapter. This will help us through all of these cold winter months, especially. The Chapter is in the midst of continuing with Chapter Memberships' Renewals. We have received several, however, if you haven't already, please try to send your renewals or first-time enrollments into the Chapter before January 15. \$25 Annual. Thank you. Note: Membership is not required to attend any support meetings or participate in the Chapter Public Events. Our Chapter is working to set up a self-help Library with our resources and materials to be available for our Members and general, Erie-area community. Our library already contains videos, DVD's, books, pamphlets and other literature relating to or dealing with GLBT-PFLAG concerns, etc. We have found a volunteer computer technician to help with the electronic records, inventory and card catalog and are seeking a donation, possibly, of a locking, medium to large filing cabinet or bookshelf on wheels. We have a fairly good supply and variety of inventory at this time, but will welcome any additional donations of books, etc. and/or funds to help this project grow.

We are in the early stages of our 2006 PFLAG Erie and Crawford Counties Fundraising planning. Most recently, we began networking as a Chapter, with a local Mental Health Non-Profit Association for GLBT referrals, concerns, and speakers. More to follow later on this.

Our meetings will continue throughout the winter months. When the weather conditions are severe, we may not meet. Our next meeting is Monday, January 9. PFLAG Erie & Crawford Counties Chapter meets the second Monday of each month, from 7 - 8:30 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 Perry Hwy (Route 97, go north from exit # 27 off of Interstate 90). Contact by email address is: pflagerie@eriegaynews.com; US Post Office address: PO BOX 8914, Erie, PA 16505. Phone number (John) is (814)-454-1392, feel free to leave a message. Hope to see you at our January meeting!

New Year's Eve accommodations

Here is some information about accommodations in the areas that are included in area New Year's Eve celebrations (see page 12). Inclusion on this list should not be seen as an indication of how GLBT-friendly they are, or the general quality or availability of accommodations.

Downtown Erie

These are the hotels and motels that are closest to the GLBT bars and other events listed in the New Year's Eve list:

Avalon Hotel 10th & State (814) 459-2200
www.avalonerie.com

City Motel, 344 East 6th St. (814) 455-7594

Downtown Super 8 205 West 10th St. (814) 456-6251

Ramada Inn Downtown 18 West 18th Street (814) 456-2961

Other Erie hotels and motels tend to be around Presque Isle and the Millcreek Mall area. For other accommodations go to www.visiteriepa.com

Jamestown NY (Downtown)

Holiday Inn 150 W Fourth St.,- Jamestown, NY 14701
-716 664-3400 or 1-800-HOLIDAY

Best Western 200 W 3rd Street (716) 484-8400

Buffalo NY

Buffalo Convention and Visitors
Bureau www.buffalocvb.org/home.html

Butler PA

Pennsylvania Visitors Network <http://pavisnet.com/butler/>

Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh CVB www.pittsburgh-cvb.org/

Warren OH

Trumbull County Tourism & Information Center
<http://tourism.co.trumbull.oh.us/>

**DESIGNATED DRIVERS
SAVE LIVES**

Calendar

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

Dec 21 - Open Circle for Yule/Winter Solstice
Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie, PA. 7 - 10 PM. "Organized by GLBT-friendly Covenant of Brighidshaven. Doors typically open at 7 PM, ritual typically at 7:30 PM. Bring a dish to pass for the potluck feast. Please note that a \$3 donation is requested to help defray the cost of renting the space." For information contact Jeremy by email at prosperotter@yahoo.com. Browse to www.u-n-c-l-e.org.

Dec 23 - "Divas in Toyland Holiday Show" at Zone Dance Club 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "The Sexy Ladies of the Zone, along with the Diva Dudes invite you and your friends to come enjoy an Enchanting Evening of Christmas Magic! Show starts at 10:30 so get here early for a good seat." Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Dec 24 - Christmas Eve at Zone Dance Club 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "Come enjoy a few Holiday cocktails with friends and relax and enjoy the beautiful Holiday sights and sounds of the Season. Prizes, giveaways, and reindeer games, and Santa might just show up and hand out a few gifts." (814) 452-0125. www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Dec 24 & 25 - "Santa Claus is Coming to Trance" Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. "You are cordially invited to spend Christmas with your friends and Santa at Trance! There will be a surprise Christmas Show." Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

Dec 25 - Christmas Day at the Zone Dance Club 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "We will be open at 8 o'clock for a relaxing night with friends and family. (or a chance to slip away and have some real fun!) (814) 452-0125. www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Dec 28 - Equality PA (Southwest Region) meets
Ginger Hill UU Congregation, 174 S Main St, Slippery Rock, PA. 7 PM. Reid at (724) 735-4407 butlerdiversity@yahoo.com.

Dec 31 - 2nd Annual Snow Ball at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. "Wear your whitest white. With our very special guest star Melissa St. John. Free champagne and food buffet. Check out our website to see pictures of last year's Snow Ball." Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

Dec 31 - New Year's Eve Blast! at Zone Dance Club 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "Don't miss out on Erie's biggest and best gay New Years Eve party!! Champagne toast, buffet, party favors and giveaways. Wear red or black—or dress in glamorous holiday attire! Happy New Year from the staff of the Zone.. Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Jan 4 - Always Our Children meets Catholic Charities, 329 W 38th St, Erie, PA. Support group for Catholic parents of GLBT children (814) 456-2091.

Jan 4 - "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>.

(continued on page 8)



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Erie Gay News - January 2006

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).

Calendar

Jan 21 - Menspace meets (Rich's, Erie, PA) 7:30 PM. Monthly social group for gay/bi men. Contact: Michael Mahler. (814) 456-9833. info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

Jan 21 - "Snowball— 7th Annual Winter White Party!" at Zone Dance Club 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. Snowflakes are falling all over the Zone!! The holidays are over, but Winter is still here, now its time to Celebrate our first big BIG Party of the Year! It may be cold outside but we are going to warm you up! Erie's original Winter White Party that started at the Zone— seven years ago!! Wear *white*—or dress in layers, because we are going to heat things up! Prizes, Giveaways, Contests, and an Avalanche of fun! Get into the Zone! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to <http://www.thezonedanceclub.com>

Jan 21 - "Lee's Jurassic Birthday Party" at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. "*She's Old!*" Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

Jan 23 - Be Ye Kind One To Another (BYKOTA) meets Unitarian-Universalist Parish House, 346 Chestnut St, Meadville, PA. 7 - 9 PM. (814) 724-1832. bykota@eriegaynews.com.

Jan 23 - "Drag 101: The Drag Kings" at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. Part of Moonsense/Trancesense series. Starts off at Moonsense at 7:30 and moves to Trance. Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to www.trancedanceclub.com.

Jan 25 - "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>.

Jan 25 - Equality PA (Southwest Region) meets 7 PM. Support group to empower and support our GLBTQ community, Ginger Hill UU Congregation, 174 S Main Street, Slippery Rock. Contact: Reid. Phone: (724) 735-4407. Email: butlerdiversity@yahoo.com.

Jan 28 - Slumber Party at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. "Cum in your favorite Jam-

mies!" Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

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

Feb 3 - Vertigo Party (Butler, PA) Lyndora Firehall, 114 Whitestown Road, Butler, PA. "We supply everything Cups, Ice, Mix, just BYOB" vertigov@aol.com. www.webspawner.com/users/vertigov.

Feb 4 - Bob Bearfield at Moonsense Cafe 5442 Peach St, Erie. 9:30 - 11 PM.

Feb 5 - End-ZONE Super Bowl Party at Zone Dance Club 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "Watch the game with us on our new BIG Screen TV and cheer your favorite team to Victory! The kitchen is open all night with specials on all your favorite munchies and 2 for 1 wings. Super Bowl 40—a night of Food, Fun, Friends, and *Football!* Get into the End-ZONE and score a Touchdown!"

Feb 6 - Be Ye Kind One To Another (BYKOTA) meets Unitarian-Universalist Parish House, 346 Chestnut St, Meadville, PA. 7 PM - 9 PM. "We are a cross-denominational Christian group of/for LGBT people – encompassing spiritual nurture, discussion of LGBT issues, and mutual support. *All are welcome!*" Phone: (814) 724-1832. Email: bykota@eriegaynews.com.

Feb 10 - "Broken Hearts, Love Hurts" Drag Show at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. 11 PM. Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

Feb 11 - "Love Hurts" Party at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. Wear your Reddest Red for Prizes! Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

Feb 12 - Lake Erie Alliance for Democracy (LEAD) meets 218 E 11th St, Erie, PA. 6:30 - 8 PM. Contact: Cindy Purvis. Phone: (814) 453-4113. Email: cindypurvis@velocity.net. Browse to www.erielead.org

Feb 12 - "Love's Sweet Revenge" Movie Night at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. 9 PM. Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email:

Calendar

lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

Feb 13 - PFLAG meets Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie, PA. 7 PM - 8:30 PM. Contact: Mark H. Phone: (814) 454-1392 (John). Email: pflagerie@eriegaynews.com.

Feb 13 - "College ID Night: Speed Dating Trance Style" at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

Feb 14 - Valentine's Day at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. "2 for 1 Drinks for Whole Hearts. Couples get one heart at the door. Singles get a half a heart at the door when they find matching heart, 2 for 1 drinks for that couple." Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

Feb 14 - Hospice Support group for those dealing with loss Hospice of Metropolitan Erie, 202 E 10th St, Erie, PA. 7 PM. Also meets Feb 16 at 10 AM. (814) 456-6689. hospice@velocity.net.

Feb 15 - "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>.

Feb 15 - Deadline for March 2006 edition of Erie Gay News EGN, 1115 W 7th St, Erie, PA. Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to www.eriegaynews.com.

Feb 20 - Be Ye Kind One To Another (BYKOTA) meets Unitarian-Universalist Parish House, 346 Chestnut St, Meadville, PA. 7 PM - 9 PM. "We are a cross-denominational Christian group of/for LGBT people - encompassing spiritual nurture, discussion of LGBT issues, and mutual support. *All are welcome!*" Phone: (814) 724-1832. Email: bykota@eriegaynews.com.

Feb 25 - "Pretty Pretty Princess Turn About Party" at Trance Dance Club 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

On stage

Selected area cultural events that may be of interest to GLBT audiences.

Jan 22 - Tegan and Sara at The House of Blues, Cleveland OH. www.teganandsara.com/index.php and <http://images-staging.musictoday.com/stores/cake112305.asp>

Feb 7-12 - "Dame Edna: Back with a Vengeance" Shea's Performing Arts Center, Buffalo NY. "The Tony® Award winner and all-new therapeutic comedy extravaganza with international mega-star, housewife, journalist, talk show host and guru!" <http://www.sheas.org/>

Feb 18 - "Megan Mullally and the Supreme Music Program" University of Buffalo Center for the Arts www.ubcfa.org/

Mar 17 - Queen + Paul Rogers HSBC Arena, Buffalo NY. <http://www.hsbcarena.com/>

Mar 20 - Queen + Paul Rogers Mellon Arena, Pittsburgh PA. <http://www.mellonarena.com/>

Mar 21 - Queen + Paul Rogers Quicken Loans Arena, Cleveland OH 216-241-2121

Apr 13 - May 1 - "I Am My Own Wife" Pittsburgh Public Theatre <http://www.ppt.org/>

Feb 23-26 - Michael Feinstein in concert Heinz Hall Pittsburgh PA

Apr 26 - "Rent" Warner Theatre. Erie Broadway Series. Charge tickets (814) 452-4857 or (814) 456-7070 or purchase at the Erie Civic Center Box Office, 809 French St. all Ticketmaster outlets or on-line at www.ticketmaster.com \$49.50, \$39.50, \$29.50 www.erieevents.com/warner.html

Websites/email lists for area performers

Bob Bearfield www.bobbearfield.com

Carrie Sample www.rockerie.com/thescene/bands/103

Jocelyn Porter Project
www.jocelynporterproject.com

Leah Zicari www.leahzicari.com

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

New Year's Eve 2006

compiled by Deb Spilko

ASSORTED

Papa Joe's Pepperoni Cafe 402 W. 8th, Erie. (814) 455-1292. Open till 9 PM on New Year's eve. "One-day on advance orders."

papermoon 14th & State St., Erie (814)455-7766. "Two seatings for your convenience. First, limited menu until 7PM. Second, six-course dinner with open bar and live entertainment. Dancing and party favors for an evening of celebration beginning at 8:30 PM."

"Playhouse Bouquet" Erie Playhouse, 13 W. 10th St., Erie PA. "A potpourri of Broadway and Hollywood musical magic." Full orchestra, and David Matthews hosts. 7:30 PM. (814) 454-2852. www.erieplayhouse.org/

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OUTSIDE ERIE

The Queen's New Year's Eve Party (Warren OH) 1977 Ridge Avenue SE, Warren Ohio. Phone (330) 395-0111 Web: www.royale-hearts.com/

Vertigo New Years Eve Party (Butler PA) "Party will include noisemakers and hats, monogrammed champagne bottle and glass, a complimentary champagne toast to bring in the New Year, and all the dancing and good times you can handle! Tickets are on

sale at CK Sound at 112 West New Castle St, Butler. 1/2 block off Main St. \$15 presale/\$20 door. To reserve your tickets please send checks to CK Sound or stop in (724) 283-3009) 12-5 Mon-Sat. Checks payable to CK Sound." www.webspawner.com/users/vertigo/index.html

Sneakers New Year's Eve Party (Jamestown NY) 100 W Harrison St., Jamestown NY. Phone: (716) 484-8816

New Year's Eve in Buffalo's Allen St. District Many of Buffalo's GLBT and "all welcome" spots are within walking distance of each other. Bars, cafes, restaurants, shops, etc. Get maps and info at these websites: *Outcome Buffalo* www.outcomebuffalo.com/barmap-test.htm *AllenStreet.com* www.allenstreet.com *Out in Buffalo "Phonebook"* www.outinbuffalo.com

First Night Buffalo www.firstnightbuffalo.org

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Drenched Fur Committee Plans Next Big Splash

By Gary Snyder,
aka Gar-Bear

Well it's the beginning of a new year, resolutions made and we reflect on the past year's achievements. Our community has much to be proud of in accomplishments

and firsts. One such milestone was the creation of the first bear event weekend titled Drenched Fur. For those of you that might not quite recall what I'm talking about, just think back in April to that freak winter snow storm that hit Erie for April Fool's Day weekend. Despite the weather, the event was a huge success with 80+ guys at Splash Lagoon Indoor Water Park and over 150+ bears/admirers that turned Erie on its ear; showing up at bars, restaurants and raiding the local PLCB stores. Now it's time once again to get the plans in order for another successful and energizing weekend.

Work has already begun for this year's weekend with some improvements and modifications based on what we learned from last year. But help is still needed to make this year's weekend even bigger and bring to our community a reputation for the city of Erie that we live in a great place to visit and play. This year's planning committee will be meeting on Saturday January 14th at 4 PM at Moonsense Café, on upper Peach Street (across from Millcreek Community Hospital).

Folks interesting in learning more about the plans for this year's activities, and helping volunteer, can join us for a run through of the work done to date. Several exciting things are lined up and we can use your assistance. Transportation is being added this year's weekend for all event attendees that purchase a run package. In addition, all Splash Lagoon participants will also receive their very own Drenched Fur '06 beach towel. Entertainment and a dinner are also planned for the Saturday night line up. Anyone with a background in event/convention planning, volunteer coordinating, catering, transportation, promotions, sponsorship, media recording and Internet design will



DRENCHED FUR II

be gladly appreciated for their assistance. Volunteers may be compensated a partial or full run package charge in lieu of their time and assistance provided. For run information, check out the website at www.DrenchedFur.com to look at pictures from last year, get registration info and or drop us a line at: info@drenchedfur.com or call (814) 384-0363 and we'll see you on January 14th!

Stop Santorum

by Deb Spilko

"This is an issue just like 9-11, we didn't decide we wanted to fight the war on terrorism because we wanted to. It was brought to us. And if not now, when? When the supreme courts in all the other states have succumbed to the Massachusetts version of the law?"

—**Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA), comparing same-sex marriage to terrorism.**(Allentown, PA *Morning Call* February 25, 2004).

Just thought I'd kick off with yet another memorable quote from our illustrious U.S. Senator.

The local **GLBT Vote mailing list** will keep area people updated on all local and area efforts to defeat Santorum. If you aren't already subscribed, you can do so at the Erie Gay News website. On the top menu, highlight List and then GLBT Vote.

Democratic State Treasurer **Bob Casey** has been beating Santorum in recent polls. A Quinnipiac University poll showed Casey leading Santorum 50-38.

Casey is being treated as the frontrunning Democratic candidate. However, there is a bit of controversy over the choice of Casey (some have called him "Santorum lite"). The choice of which Democratic candidate runs against Santorum will, of course, be made in the May primary election. For some people, Santorum is so extreme in his beliefs that even "Santorum lite" would be a major improvement. At any rate, to find out more about the **Democrats who are running for the U.S. Senate seat** now held by Santorum, visit their websites, listed below in alphabetical order.

Bob Casey www.bobcaseyforpa.com/

Chuck Pennacchio www.chuck2006.com/

Alan Sandals www.forourfuture.us/

A Sample of Carrie at Trance

By G. Snyder

Soulful & Enchanting. Those are the words I would use to describe **Carrie Sample's** style and talent. Her voice reminds me of a young Stevie Nicks and just as ravishingly attractive in a lithe lesbian chic fashion mixed with a dash of spunkiness a la Cindy Lauper.

My initial introduction to Carrie was an amusing one in which I abandoned a girlfriend of mine to have a conversation with Carrie while both of them swapped stories of how their current long distance relationships were doing. A few weeks later I ran into Carrie during the Katrina Benefit at Trance in September. Yet again, I fell in love with Carrie's witty personality and artistic sense. In emceeing the show, I had asked her for some description to use in introducing her, yet she didn't want any real fanfare or big deal made of building her up for the crowd. This surprised and humbled me to know that a young woman of talent and beauty was not really one for accolades. And then at the beginning of December, I was excited to learn of Carrie's upcoming solo performance at Trance and made a point of coming out to support her art and talent. In the past few years I've found myself drawn to artists in the first stages of creating and cultivating their talent and Carrie is no exception. What amazes me more than anything is that she too has begun to evolve her talent in just the past few years. Standing there on stage, just a girl and her guitar, I was drawn into her vocal beauty like magic. Now I realize this all sounds brilliant for Carrie, but honestly – this girl is talented *and* fun loving!

I realized for myself, listening to Carrie is like revisiting my favorite lesbian performers. She's softer than Melissa and yet has the heart of the Indigo Girls. While listening to her perform I caught nuances and qualities that spoke to me from a love of two artists locally I've heard and enjoy. Later it became evident as to why I kept thinking of Carrie's performance as something in the realm of Tegan and Sara with Ani DiFranco thrown in for flare. As Carrie moved from one song to the next, I felt myself drifting to that place where you drive cross country and jam to great road trip music as the countryside passes by; there's nothing like great traveling music to bring a smile to your face.

On this particular night, Carrie performed several songs of her own, along with a few covers. Her charm was delightful as she apologized for arriving to the performance without her full arrangement of usual repertoire. And despite her concerns, she did a great job showing heart and talent. From her newer songs 'Fireworks in the Rain' to her mentor song 'Not Sorry,' Carrie gave of herself and it showed with lyrics like "With my dreams, they are my friends" and "I used to have a crush on her. . .".

After the intermission, Carrie moved on to her second set and described 'Afraid of the Dark' as a cheesy folksy girlie song, which I personally debate – but that's just me. Then she revealed some of her artistic styling background in doing two covers from the duo of Tegan and Sara performing 'Frozen' and 'Good-bye.' Carrie also delighted the audience with an introduction to a new song she performed for the first time title 'New & Improved.' With her performance wrapping up, Carrie did two more covers starting off with her version of Blondie's hit 'The Tide Is High' which was refreshing and well received. Finishing the night with the debut hit for Tracy Chapman, 'Talking Bout A Revolution,' Carrie showed a tender side in delivering those lyrics to close out the night.

After the performance, I spoke with Carrie about her show and background. Like a newly rabid fan, I quickly asked if she had a CD put together yet of her work along with a web site. She laughed and explained that shes still in the beginning stages of her musical path. Hearing that there was a producer in the audience, I secretly crossed my fingers in hopes that Carrie may find herself working on recording an album in the near future.

Discovering Carrie Sample is a charming and exciting experience; like being on the cusp of creation taking place. I suggest you check out one of Carries performances when you have a chance and help support our own local talents here in Erie. To listen to some of her sample songs and find out when shes performing, check out: www.rockerie.com/thescene/bands/103. Carrie's next performance date is Saturday, January 14th at Moonsense Café, at 5442 Peach Street at 9 PM – See you there!

The Desperate Need for GLBT Unity

Caillean Maureen McMahon Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Alliance

These past few weeks, we have been treated to the revelation of a Vatican instruction to remove gay seminary Professors. We have heard the statements of the leader of a religious group pinning the pedophile scandal upon gays.

Winning at his words, we learned of the stated intention of a possible Prime Minister of Canada to end same-sex marriage there. Gays and Lesbians saw Focus on the Family pull funds out of Wells Fargo because of the bank's stance of supporting equality for Gays and Lesbians and a New Hampshire state committee based it' "majority report and recommendations" on the weary myth that same sex marriage was not a right because homosexuality was a choice, not a genetic predisposition. A group of pastors prayed publicly for God to stop a proposed ordinance that would ban discrimination against the GLBT community and described us as "perverts" and "an abomination."

These things give us a sense of moral outrage. They remind us that we are the victims of discrimination. Events like this force upon us feelings of being marginalized and scapegoated politically and they should do just that.

Such things are reprehensible acts, positions rooted in medievalism. We need to take offense at this kind of prejudice. But at the same time our GLBT community is fragmented by the same kind of behaviors and thinking. We are guilty of the same prejudices; we practice the same kind of discrimination at a more subtle level but to our own detriment. The GLBT can treat members of our own community as badly as our opponents treat us as a group.

Accept the premise that our opponents have spent three decades painstakingly organizing in order to push what they call a "moral agenda" legislatively.

They proudly brag that they did so. Acknowledge that we have lost significant political clout in many places. The number of states that passed anti-gay amendments that have been interpreted to remove even domestic partner benefits speaks eloquently to that. Reflect on the fact that nearly a third of our number voted for a political party and a President that are overtly opposed to our longing for equality and that a

number of our community assist in the defeat of our ambitions. Having looked at the power arrayed against us and our relative political weakness, now consider that we weaken our own community through prejudice and infighting amongst ourselves.

We marginalize members of our own community. Lesbians who come out later in life are "not really Lesbians," neither are Les-boi-s, married Lesbians, post-op trans or intersexed Lesbians. Sometimes we say "we were born Lesbian, they chose what they are, it isn't the same." Sounds frighteningly like the conservatives who quote pseudo-scientists statements that "Gays and Lesbians don't deserve special rights because they choose their diseased lifestyle" to my ears.

Gay men occasionally object to this or that activist speaking for them on the grounds that they are different and that they do not wish to be identified with the men who are risking all being publicly and definitively out on the behalf of us all. "Not looking gay," some are quite willing to marginalize those "who do."

New York State politics embraced this kind of divisiveness when it passed SONDA, ostensibly a bill to protect gay and Lesbian rights, but one that with the agreement of the leadership of the Empire State Pride Agenda, in the end only protected those who activist Jamie Hunter described as "Gay Republican Stockbrokers in suits and Femme Lesbians" that was a favor bestowed by Governor Pataki in exchange for political support. The leadership now admits that the exclusion of the "others" in the GLBT community was a mistake. The exclusion grew out of a willingness to define who is or is not part of our community,

(continued on next page)

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GLBT Unity

(continued from previous page)

who does or does not have authenticity to speak, and who we are or are not willing to have represent our views. The exclusion weakened us politically and fragmented the GLBT community.

To the public at large, a gay man is a man who is attracted to and sleeps with men. Leather, sexual practices, "manliness or effeminacy" cut no ice as far as public identification and understanding of gay. Those outside of the queer community do not make the distinction when they support or oppose our rights.

A lesbian is a woman who is attracted to and sleeps with women. It is as simple as that. Issues of leather, butchness, femmeness, boi-ness, age of coming out, marriage of convenience or not, or medical history are unimportant to straights looking at us politically at this moment in history.

We do not have the luxury of indulging in fractious infighting over issues that the public outside of the queer community do not even recognize. We cannot afford to marginalize or define anyone out of the family at a time that we need the participation, presence and gifts of every member. As Benjamin Franklin said "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately." Otherwise, we might find ourselves as Martin Niemoller did after every other marginalized group in Germany had already been taken off and his turn came: "And then they came for me, and by that time, no one was left to speak up." Divided, marginalizing some of our own community, we are weak. United and accepting we are not only politically more powerful, but we are living an ethical example that we can demand that the straight community copy and extend to us.



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Training: “Healthy Relationships”

by Patty Puline
Erie County Dept of Health

The Erie County Dept. of Health is proud to collaborate with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to offer the latest training for HIV positives and their partners. The title of the training is “**Healthy Relationships**” and is one of the latest D.E.B.I. (Diffused Effective Behavioral Interventions) workshops approved by the CDC for HIV grantees. (www.effectiveinterventions.org)

How has HIV impacted relationships through the past 20 years? Men, women and children that are living and struggling with HIV are stressed; this epidemic is affecting their lives and the lives of those that are caring for them. This training affords opportunities for discussion and exploration in private settings.

The theme of the training is going to be on the HIV prevention and personal education during the cycle of life of HIV infection. This premise is based on what is happening in HIV care and treatment as well as what people are interested in regarding new information. There will be specific workshops for persons living with HIV, which would discuss topics such as adherence, secondary prevention, self-empowerment and self-esteem. There will also be specific topics on prevention and harm reduction.

Participants will learn: Disclosure skills for HIV positive adolescents and adults; Prevention Education for Persons affected; Heterosexual HIV Prevention; Harm Reduction and Identifying Behavioral Risks.

Patty Puline is the coordinator for “Healthy Relationships,” and will begin scheduling groups in January. Please call her if you are interested, as group size is limited to ten participants.

Please call me if I can be of further assistance.
Patty Puline, Erie County Dept of Health
(814) 451-6543 ppuline@ecdh.org

Book Review

The Sexual Spectrum: Exploring Human Diversity, by Olive Skene Johnson, Ph.D., (Raincoast Books, Vancouver, 2004, 277 pages)

Olive Skene Johnson is a retired neuropsychologist who is also the mother of two gay sons. The strong point of her book is her ability to combine science with personal experience, and present the material in layman’s language, with great wit and acumen. Her theories are well-founded in research and placed in historical perspective. Every conclusion has accompanying supporting details, presented in a reader-friendly manner. This book is sufficiently authoritative to be used as a text book, yet simple enough for a person totally unfamiliar with the issues of sexuality to comprehend and enjoy.

She interviews gay, bisexual, intersexual and transsexual people and tells their stories. She truly depicts the various sexualities in the sexual spectrum, making it easier for someone unfamiliar with homosexuality to understand the differences between gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people and clarifies terms such as swingers, transvestites and paraphiliacs. She deals with topics such as the maleness and femaleness of the brain; biology and sexual orientation, and the role of communication and relationships. She presents very well-organized discussions of religious opposition to homosexuality, stereotypes and legal rights for sexual minorities.

This book covers a lot of topics that are important to understanding homosexuality; yet, it is not heavy. Dr. Johnson’s unique professional and personal experience, provides the reader with a deeper understanding of sexual diversity and why we should celebrate it.

Reviewer: Maureen Koseff, PFLAG NWPA Representative



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for our list of locations

National News Briefs

by Bob

Ford, Wells Fargo Thumb Nose at Religious Right

Wells Fargo Bank and Ford Motor Co., recent targets of right-wing religious groups because of their gay-friendly policies, have both said they will continue to support the GLBT community despite threats of economic pressure.

Recently, Focus on the Family withdrew its funds from Wells Fargo, citing "ongoing efforts to advance the radical homosexual agenda," according to Jim Daly, chief executive officer of Focus.

It appears that Focus on the Family's chief complaint against Wells Fargo is the bank's support of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). Wells Fargo matches contributions made to the GLAAD media campaign fund. However, the bank said that Focus on the Family's decision would not affect its policies toward the GLBT community.

"Wells Fargo firmly believes it is our responsibility to serve every segment of our community, and

we view our support for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community as part of our broader commitment to diversity," Wells Fargo spokeswoman Melissa Morey said.

Meanwhile, Ford has become a target of the American Family Association (AFA). Last spring, AFA launched a boycott of Ford due to its corporate pro-gay policies. But after discussions with Ford in June, the AFA suspended the boycott and lifted it completely this month, just as Ford decided not to renew advertising campaigns for its Jaguar and Land Rover brands in gay publications, including *the Advocate* and *Out* magazines.

However, after meeting with representatives from gay and lesbian organizations, Ford reversed that decision and announced it will resume advertising Jaguar and Land Rover vehicles in gay-themed publications.

"I think we're back in gear with Ford," said Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce. "They responded to each of the concerns we raised in a positive way. It's a great outcome."

Not only will Ford resume buying corporate ads featuring Land Rover and Jaguar, it will begin advertising Ford's other brands in gay-themed publications as well, according to Joe W. Laymon, Ford's group vice president for corporate human resources. In the past, Ford had not purchased advertisements for the Ford, Mercury and Lincoln brands in gay-oriented publications.

Laymon stated that he hoped this ad policy will "remove any ambiguity about Ford's desire to advertise to all important audiences and put this particular issue behind us."

Anti-Marriage Petitions Delivered in Massachusetts

Supporters of a proposed 2008 ballot initiative to eliminate gay marriage in Massachusetts have delivered petitions with more than 170,000 signatures to the commonwealth's secretary of state.

The right-wing Massachusetts Family Institute and its supporters are trying to overturn the 2003 court ruling that made Massachusetts the only state with gay



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National News

marriage. The proposed initiative also seeks to ban same-sex civil unions.

Since the anti-gay marriage ballot question seeks to amend the commonwealth's constitution, it also must win support of at least 50 members of the 200-seat Legislature in two successive legislative sessions before it can go on the 2008 ballot.

The Legislature itself has proposed a constitutional amendment that would have banned gay marriage but allowed civil unions. That amendment won initial approval but failed earlier this year in a second round of voting.

Critics of the anti-gay marriage initiative accused supporters of deceiving people into signing. They claim that in some cases, citizens were asked to first sign an unrelated petition on alcohol sales before supporters flipped to a second petition without specifying that it was for the gay marriage ban.

The Catholic Church supports the petition drive, as does Republican Gov. Mitt Romney.

Couples in U.K Register Civil Partnerships

Lesbian and gay couples in the United Kingdom have been lining up at government offices throughout the country to register their relationships under Britain's Civil Partnership Act.

The new laws that went into effect this month stop short of legalizing same-sex marriage, but permit civil ceremonies that give same-sex couples the same social security, tax, pension and inheritance rights as married couples. After registering their partnerships, couples must wait at least 15 days before holding a ceremony.

The Civil Partnership Act is being celebrated by the majority of same-sex couples as one of the most important legal changes affecting lesbians and gays in the U.K. However, many say this is only the start of a ball rolling that will result in equality for lesbian and gay people.

(continued on next page)



Meet Sharon Peterson RN
Sharon has been with the Alliance for 3 years, she's just one more of the dedicated people you'll find at the Alliance waiting to help you.

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For more information, contact:

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National News Briefs

(continued from previous page)

South African Court Opens Door to Gay Marriage

South Africa's highest court has ruled it is unconstitutional to prevent gay people from marrying, paving the way for the country to become the first African country to legalize same-sex unions.

However, the Constitutional Court has given the country's Parliament a year to make the necessary legal changes, disappointing many activists.

"We were thinking we would be calling our friends today and inviting them to our wedding," said Fikile Vilakazi, of the Forum for the Empowerment of Women, who proposed to her partner more than six months ago. "Now they are asking us to wait another year."

After apartheid ended in 1994, South Africa recognized the rights of gays in its' new constitution, becoming the first country in the world to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. However, the government has opposed attempts to extend the definition of marriage to include same-sex couples.

Despite the constitution's nondiscrimination clauses, heterosexual married couples in South Africa have numerous rights that are denied to gay couples, including the ability to make decisions on each other's behalf in medical emergencies and inheritance rights if a partner dies without a will.

Schools Can Not "Out" Students

A federal judge in Los Angeles has ruled that schools do not have the right to reveal a student's sexual orientation without his/her permission.

The ruling was the result of a lawsuit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on behalf of Charlene Nguon, a senior in the Garden Grove Unified School District in conservative Orange County, who claimed the principal violated her privacy rights by telling her parents she was a lesbian.

The school sought to have the lawsuit dismissed, but Judge James Selna of the U.S. District Court in the Central District of California allowed the suit to move forward.

Nguon was repeatedly disciplined during the 2004-05 school year by Santiago High School Principal Ben Wolf for displaying affection for her girlfriend.

"Brokeback" Draws Critical Acclaim

The New York Film Critics Circle and the Los Angeles Film Critics Association have become the latest groups to name the cowboy romance "Brokeback Mountain" as the year's top film. The film, which was released this month, already won top honors at this year's Venice Film Festival.

Both the New York and Los Angeles film critics selected Ang Lee as best director for the film in which Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal play cowboys who fall in love in Wyoming during the summer of 1963. The New York critics also gave best-actor honors to Ledger for his performance.

The film has also received seven Golden Globe nominations including best dramatic picture, best dramatic actor (Ledger), best supporting actress (Michelle Williams) and best director (Lee).

"Brokeback was an old-fashioned romance that also fulfilled the group's impulse to be daring and original," said Gene Seymour, film critic for *Newsday* and president of the New York Film Critics Circle. "It combines the best of both these elements."

The film has been receiving rave reviews from the media as well. *Rolling Stone*, *The New York Times* and the *San Francisco Chronicle* have all called the film one of the year's best.

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DignityUSA Condemns New Vatican Seminary Admissions Instructions

Washington, DC – The leaders of DignityUSA strongly condemn new Vatican admissions instructions which discourage gay men from applying for admission to Catholic seminaries worldwide, citing several problems with the forthcoming communication. The official document, expected early next week, has been reported in the New York Times and other news outlets to advise seminary directors against admitting any candidates for the priesthood “who are actively homosexual, have deep-seated homosexual tendencies, or support the so-called ‘gay culture.’”

Statement of Debra Weill Executive Director, DignityUSA

The Vatican continues to erroneously focus on gay men as the cause of the Church sexual abuse crisis while neither addressing the root causes of the crisis nor disciplining in any fashion the bishops who share responsibility for it, instead choosing to issue a blanket repudiation of gay priests and gay seminarians.

These instructions discuss sexual orientation in ways which contradict contemporary understanding of human sexuality and clearly indicate Church leaders are ill-informed on the subject. This willful ignorance of human knowledge about sexuality by anyone claiming to be a moral teacher is morally dishonest and incredibly harmful to the entire Church and must be condemned. Gay men have served the Church well as priests and bishops since the early days of the Church and will continue to do so. This new instruction will lead to a more secretive, hostile environment in some seminaries and throughout the Church which will be harmful in many ways, including driving gay men even deeper into the closet.

The continuing inability of seminary preparation to help our future priests and bishops integrate an understanding of their own sexuality into a mature emotional and spiritual life is another example of the Church's adolescent understanding of all sexuality. Catholic seminaries should be looking at the sexual maturity of the seminarian not the sexual orientation and should apply the same crite-

ria to everyone regardless of perceived sexual orientation.

We look to the Church for leadership regarding sexual theology and there is none. The Vatican is taking another misguided, self-destructive step at this very critical time. The priest shortage is severe not only in America but also in many other countries. Discouraging gay seminarians and telling all gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Catholics—including gay religious and currently ordained priests and bishops—how little we are valued further harms the entire Church. The Church will lose many good priests and members in the future because of this statement.

In the face of this latest move by the Vatican, we remain hopeful that many Catholic seminaries will continue to admit and provide a welcoming environment for gay candidates for the priesthood. Many American bishops recognize the outstanding contributions faithful gay priests and bishops have made and continue to make in service to the Church. We encourage gay men who have been called by God to courageously respond to their calling and apply for seminary admission. It would be another step backward for our Church if the antiquated Vatican views and fear of human sexuality kept well qualified and sexually mature gay men from serving the Church as God has called them to serve.

DignityUSA is the nation's foremost organization of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Catholics, their families, friends and supporters. Founded in 1969, it is an independent non-profit organization with members and chapters across the country. DignityUSA works for full inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in the life of the Church and Society. www.dignityusa.org

Having a
Valentine's Day Event?
Let us know by January 15th!

The Other Victims of Abuse

by Amy Blackman

Intimate partner violence. When we as a society think about this subject, most often, we envision a woman being abused by a man. Crime Victim Center would like to inform others about a different perspective to violence: that of the male victim with either a male or female offender. The National Institute of Justice and the Center for Disease Control estimate that, in the United States, 835,000 men are victims of domestic violence each year. A large majority of those men choose to remain silent about their victimization.

Abuse against men can range from physical to emotional, and even sexual. Physical abuse can be across the spectrum, from slapping and hitting to stabbing. Female offenders are less likely than men to use their fists as weapons and more likely to use another type of instrument, such as a knife, baseball bat, or other heavy object, putting men at risk for serious physical injury. Emotional abuse can include insults, put-downs, isolation and manipulation. Sexual abuse may involve unwanted touching or forced sexual acts. Many of the incidents of abuse are the same for men as for women.

Our society sets us up to believe that men should be strong and in control. When a man is battered, some people may think he is weak and cowardly. He may be laughed at or scorned. These are some of the reasons why a man may not report such abuse. He may feel embarrassed or be ashamed about what has happened to him. He may suffer from low self-worth due to the constant barrage of put-downs. He may be in denial, not wanting to admit that a woman (or another man) has inflicted physical or psychological pain upon him. He may be worried about the reactions he might get from law enforcement if he were to report.

The challenge then is this: to examine your own beliefs and reactions. How would you react to a male in your life telling you of physical abuse? Would you laugh? Would you be supportive? Would you know where to direct him? By reaching out and learning about **all** aspects of violence, you help to end the stigmatism and misconceptions about abuse. If you or someone you know has been the victim of intimate partner violence, we can help. Counseling, court advocacy and a 24 hour hotline are available at the Crime

Victim Center. Please call 455-9414 for help or more information.

Amy Blackman is Community Educator at the Crime Victim Center of Erie County, Inc. The CVC is a comprehensive victim service agency whose mission is to reduce the impact of crime through counseling, education, and advocacy. CVC provides free and confidential services to victims of crime, victims' significant others, and witnesses to crime.



Wanted for Armed Robbery

An incident occurred on Sunday, December 4, 2005 at 2 AM in the back parking lot at Trance Dance Club, 1607 Raspberry Street. The robber was a white male, early to mid 20's, 5'5" to 5'7", light colored hair (short), thin build, moustache and thin goatee and glasses. If you have any information, please contact Det. Sgt. Barry Snyder, Erie Police at (814) 870-1506.

Michael Dithers

I was very sorry to hear of Dave Amy's mother passing on. He had sent me an email while leaving Denver asking me to let folks know. I sent it along to the Menspace list, and between that and the grapevine, several folks did turn out, which made me feel good that our community supported someone in a time of need. I had a brief neurotic attack when Dave sent the email that if his mother had a different last name or there was something else odd that I would get the wrong funeral and send folks off to the wrong place. ("I don't know - Mom died and all of these gay guys are showing up. What gives???" "You know, I always thought your cousin Lenny as a little 'light in the loafers.' I bet they're his friends!") Thankfully, no such problem.

It was also very nice that the Erie Times News had an article on Thanksgiving about the Grego family moving along after the death of Jeff. The reporter wrote about the family facing this horrible loss on the front page of the section, and then divulged that it was a family headed by a gay couple inside the section. The article was very moving and hopefully made some people thing.

I had a very good time being part of the cast of the dramatic reading of Paul Rudnick's *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told*. I should explain that I usually end up doing theater when someone is desperate. Basically, there is the sound of the bottom of a barrel being scraped and I end up on stage. This was definitely the most fun I have ever had as reading the part of a disabled lesbian rabbi. Everyone in the cast was very nice, and the audience was pretty responsive.

I hope that everyone is having a happy holiday season! I had sort of a semi-heated discussion with my co-worker, who was lamenting what he seemed to feel was the so-called War on Christmas. I don't freak out when I get overtly Christian greeting cards or if someone says Merry Christmas, even if it isn't the holiday that I celebrate. However, it seems to me that if someone's critical sense of spirituality is derived by what a cashier at a cash register says while handling them a credit card slip, well, they might want to reconsider why they are at K-Mart, rather than a church. Ironically, many conservative Christian clergy in this country were against observances as we celebrate them today of Christmas because they thought it was too

Pagan and also too popish. Heck, who looks at that part of the world and thinks of snowmen, reindeer and fir trees?? I have to admit to an impish thought about the co-worker. They happen to be vegetarian, and I thought of leaving a small can of canned sausages on his desk because "Jesus wants you to eat dead cow meat!" Actually, I did have a very nice Yule/Solstice with the coven, so the religious aspect of the holiday season feels like it's covered.

Since I tend to not use vacation time, I am off on vacation from the middle of the month through the end of December. (The dogs are quite happy that Daddy is home so much.) However, my first day off, I spent some time working on the web site for Drenched Fur site. Check it out at www.drenchedfur.com. Gary gave me some photos from the event this past spring, so those are posted as well. I then followed this up with some Microsoft Access consulting for a friend, and then some small modifications to the Pride registration page, which will be useful for both the Pride Picnic on June 10, and the Fall Pride March/Rally, which looks like it will probably be September 30. Yup, I spent my first day off from my job as a computer programmer doing computer stuff!

Please note that there are planning committee meetings for both Drenched Fur and the Fall Pride event coming up the 2nd weekend in January. Check the calendar and the respective articles for more details. Hopefully, we will get enough people to make both of these successful. We will probably start meeting about the Pride Picnic in early March. The Pride Picnic has a bit more of an established routine, and tends to be simpler to plan, although we can always use volunteers for that as well. (Hint: the elves do NOT come and take care of things in the night.)

Please note that we are having the giveaway at www.eriegaynews.com for the Cher Extravaganza DVD. 10 winners will be selected. So, enter to win by December 30! We are always happy to help folks get stuff.

Have a great month and a wonderful New Year!

Stay updated!
Subscribe to the Erie GLBT mailing list.
www.eriegaynews.com

Get into the Zone for
Erie's BIGGEST and BEST New Year's Eve Party!

The Zone 2006

New Year's Eve

BLAST!

Saturday, December 31st

Cover Charge Only **\$3** Which Includes: Champagne Toast, Buffet, Party Favors and Give-Aways, and a night of FUN at our BIGGEST Party of the Year!

January at the Zone...

Erie's ORIGINAL Winter White Party that started at the Zone 7 years ago...

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Snowball

Winter White

Wear White!

*or dress in layers -
because we are going to
HEAT things UP!*

Party

Saturday, January 21st

The Zone 133 West 18th St. Erie, PA 814-452-0125
Dance Club www.thezonedanceclub.com