



### April Fool's Day Bash in Franklin

Come to the April Fool's Day Bash at Venango County Coon and Fox Club, Franklin, PA, 8 PM - 1 AM.

We have begun a chapter of GLENDA (Gay and Lesbian Neighborhood Development Association). It is our hope to work toward bringing a better image of the GLBT community in Venango County and other areas. We are holding an April Fool's Day Bash at the Venango County Coon and Fox Club in Franklin on Saturday, April 1st from 8 PM until 1 AM. Tickets are \$5.00 in advance or \$6.00 at the door. It is a BYOB event. Nonalcoholic beverages and snacks will be provided. We will be holding raffles and giving away door prizes. There will be a DJ playing from 9 PM - 1 AM. Directions: From Erie: South on I-79

and take the Meadville exit. Take Route 322 East into the City of Franklin. At the intersection with the traffic signal (first one you come to - Buyers Fair, BP and Checkpoint Automotive on each corner) veer to the left onto Route 417 North. Take that up to the blinker light (passing Country Fair and the Rocky Grove High School). At the blinker turn right onto Front Street and take that to the T intersection with Route 8. Turn left on Route 8. Go approximately 1/4 mile (passing Allegheny Toyota, Crivelli Chevrolet.) At the Super 8 Motel, turn left onto 2 Mile Run Road. Take that road about 1.4 miles (narrow, curvy road runs along creek). The Coon and Fox is on the right. Email: glendanorthwest@yahoo.com.

—from Venango County GLENDA



*John Daly King is thinking spring!*

### “Arthur's World” exhibit in Pittsburgh

The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh is hosting an exhibit for fans of the *Arthur* PBS series and books.

In this interactive, near-life size exhibit, visitors can spend time with the gang from *Arthur*; explore Mr. Ratburn's classroom and the Elwood City Library, hang out in the Read Family kitchen and even tuck into sleepover tents in Arthur's backyard. A video monitor shows you what it would look like if you joined Arthur and his friends on television.

The *Arthur* series was created by Erie area native Marc Brown. His characters and stories teach young children how to deal with real-life situations, and strongly promote tolerance of others. (They're also lots of fun!) Visit the *Arthur* website at [www.pbskids.org/arthur](http://www.pbskids.org/arthur)

The “Arthur's World” exhibit continues through May 7. The Children's Museum is at 10 Children's Way, Allegheny Square, Pittsburgh, PA 15212. Information: (412) 322-5058 or [www.pittsburghkids.org](http://www.pittsburghkids.org)

—from Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

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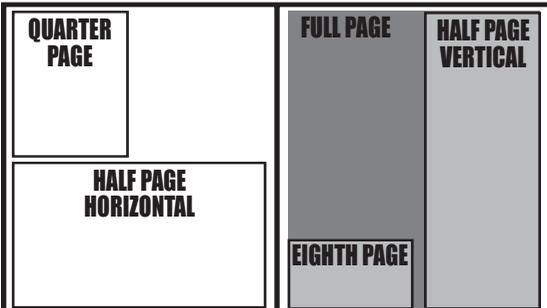
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On the cover: *John Daly King things spring. Photo by Deb Spilko*



**CALENDAR LISTINGS**  
*Are Free!*

All listing entries must be received by the 15th of the month.

AD SIZE	PRICE/ISSUE	DIMENSIONS
EIGHTH	\$30 - \$27 Prepaid	1 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub> " high X 2 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> " wide
QUARTER	\$50 - \$45 Prepaid	3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " high X 2 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> " wide
HALF VERT.	\$90 - \$81 Prepaid	3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " high X 6" wide
HALF HORZ.	\$90 - \$81 Prepaid	7" high X 2 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub> " wide
FULL PAGE	\$160 - \$144 Prepaid	7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> " high X 6" wide

Camera ready art or manuscript and/or photos, illustrations and logos must be received by the 15th of the month. Photos and illustrations should be PDF or TIFF and HIRES. All hardcopy ads submitted will be reproduced as close as possible.



**Erie Gay News**  
 1115 West 7th St.  
 Erie PA 16502-1105  
 Phone: (814) 456-9833  
 Fax: (270)423-6217  
 info@eriegaynews.com  
 www.eriegaynews.com

**Editors: Deb Spilko and Mike Mahler**  
**Ad Design: Mike Lipiec**  
**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.

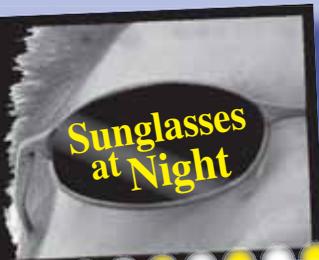
Views and opinions expressed in this publication don't necessarily represent those of the EGN staff.

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## Thank You:

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**April Fools Day**  
**Saturday, April 1st**  
**Wear your Sunglasses at Night!**  
**Prizes for the Wildest Sunglasses!**  
**Don't be a Fool...Play it Safe!**



**Friday, April 14th • Friday Night Drag**  
**A Tribute to Stage and Screen**  
**Showtime 11 PM**



**Saturday, April 22nd**  
**GLOWLIGHTMAGIC**  
**DISCO PARTY**  
**Featuring: The Glow Sorcerer Buddy Dobson**

*Easter Bonnet Parade*  
**Sunday, April 16th**  
*Prizes for the most Outrageous Bonnet*

Sunday Nights on TV at 9 PM  
**DESPERATE** *Housewives*

**MONDAY NIGHTS ARE**  
**College ID Night at Trance**  
**Dance Bar Doors Open at 10 PM**

Guess What?????????????????????????????  
**WEDNESDAY**  
 Nights are Trivia nights starting at 8 PM

**EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT**  
**KARAOKE**  
 Starting on at 9 PM

**UPCOMING**  
**EVENTS!**  
**IN JUNE!**  
**2nd ANNUAL**  
**MISS TRANCE**  
**DIVA PAGEANT**  
**Trance & Shout Outreach's**  
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**Proceeds going to Erie Gay Pride**



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# Community News

*(continued from cover)*

## HRC director visits PFLAG

PFLAG Erie & Crawford Counties thanks the new executive director of the Erie County Human Relations Commission (HRC), Attorney Joseph B. Aguglia, for attending our meeting on March 13.

Attorney Aguglia spoke and answered questions about the mission and specific functions of the HRC in Erie County, which is once again handling complaints about discrimination. The areas of discrimination that the HRC covers are housing, employment, and public accommodations. The categories protected by the country HRC ordinance are: race, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, gender identity and sexual orientation. Atty. Aguglia may be reached at: 1001 State Street, Suite 322, Erie, PA, 16501; (814) 451-7021; email: jaguglia@eriecountygov.org. PFLAG thanks all those who attended this meeting and welcomed Atty Joseph B. Aguglia to our Community.

Our chapter is still working (ongoing) to setup a self-help library with our resources and materials to be available for our members and general, Erie-area community. We are still in search of either donations to buy or a used donation of a locking, mobile bookstand-type or cabinet to house and store the library. Please contact John at (814) 454-1392, if you are able to assist or give some direction for our need.

Our next meeting is Monday, April 10th. PFLAG Erie & Crawford Counties Chapter meets the second Monday of each month, from 7 PM - 8:30 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 Perry Hwy (Route 97, go north from exit # 27 off of route 90).

Contact: email: pflagerie@eriegaynews.com;  
Mailing address: PO BOX 8914, Erie, PA 16505.  
Phone number (John) is: (814)-454-1392, feel free to leave a message.

—Mark H, President, PFLAG Erie & Crawford

## Unitarian Universalist Congregation 100+ Family Garage Sale coming up

This great event is coming up on June 3rd!! Mark your calendars and clean out that 'stuff' that's cramping your lifestyle.

We accept donations of clean wearable clothing, sporting goods, electronics, furniture, toys, household items, holiday items, and books (except condensed or encyclopedias) We already have a bathroom sink so we're waiting for the kitchen sink.

Box your items and bring them to the church at 7180 New Perry Highway, starting May 28<sup>th</sup>. If you know of someone moving or if you have large items, we will arrange to pick up the items. This is one of the churches largest fund raisers and recycling programs. We would also appreciate help so if you're so inclined, we need volunteers the week before setting up for the sale.

More information will follow in the next issue. Any questions, call Lynne Stephens at 868-1438 or Deb Cable at 459-2332. You may also call the church office at 864-9300 between 9 AM to 1 PM.

—from Lynne & Deb at the UU

**Trying to start something?**  
*Put it in "Community News" section!*  
(Deadline is the 15th of the month)



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# Community News

## Remembering & Honoring Crime Victims

April is a very significant month! April is **Sexual Assault Awareness Month, Child Abuse Prevention Month** and **National Crime Victims' Rights Week** will be observed April 23-29. The theme this year is "*Victims' Rights: Strength in Unity*" and it marks the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of commemorating victims, increasing awareness of their issues and promoting victims' rights.

This is also a time to recognize victim service providers and allied professionals who work for and on behalf of victims every day. One of the ways the Crime Victim Center will be doing that is with their Second Annual Awards Luncheon on April 26. Erin Connelly, Assistant District Attorney, and Robert Rocki, Director of ERIE EARN-IT Program, will be honored for their roles in *reducing the impact of crime* for victims in our community. The luncheon will be held at the Ambassador and reservations are \$25.

The Crime Victim Center will also be hosting a Victims' Rights' Rally on April 24 at City Hall. Victim assistance agencies and other organizations will staff informational tables in the lobby area from 3 - 5 PM with the rally beginning at 5 in City Council Chambers. This event is free and open to the public. For more information about any of the events and observances, call (814) 455-9414.

The Crime Victim Center is located at 125 West 18 Street in Erie but has satellite offices in Corry, Edinboro, Girard and North East.

—Submitted by *Angela Porfilio*,  
Director of Development.

## Voices needed for Chorus

*Voices needed!* We've started rehearsing and are looking forward to the May concert. Rehearsals are still from 8 - 9:30 PM on Mondays at the Rehearsal Hall of Memorial Auditorium on the Edinboro University main campus. We're going to move the rehearsals to Erie and will let you know when we have a rehearsal space. Please remember everyone is welcome to attend and participate. You don't need to be ready for American Idol, Broadway, or the Met – just a willingness to sing and have a good time. For more information or to check on the rehearsal location, please contact Justin Turpin, the director, at [jturpin81@yahoo.com](mailto:jturpin81@yahoo.com) or check out the chorus website at <http://adeptt.edinboro.edu/users/dburdick/egmc.htm>. Direction to the rehearsal hall are on the website.

—Dan Burdick

## Pride 2006 Update

Plans for the Erie Gay Pride 2006 are moving along well. The March and Rally are scheduled for Saturday, September 30, 2006. The March will gather at Noon and start at 1 PM. The Rally will begin at 2 PM in Perry Square. The committee has been working hard and you are welcome to participate. The next planning meeting is scheduled for Sunday, April 23, 2006 at 2 PM at Panera at the Yorktown Plaza on West 12<sup>th</sup> Street. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (814) 602-0252 or [dburdick@edinboro.edu](mailto:dburdick@edinboro.edu).

—Dan Burdick, Erie Gay Pride 2006 Coordinator



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# Community News

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## Moonsense events for April

April is an exciting month for the Moonsense Cafe  
Every Monday in April 5:30-6:30pm 4/3, 4/10, 4/17,  
4/24 The very talented Carrie Sample will be playing  
Folk Music.

1st and 3rd Monday 7-9pm 4/3 & 4/17 Spa Night  
(Facials, Nails, Massage & Psychics)

Every Tuesday in April 5:30-6:30pm 4/4, 4/11, 4/18,  
4/25 Local Guitar Teacher Luc Gaydos Struts his  
stuff playing very difficult Classical guitar riffs

2nd and 4th Tuesdays 8-9pm 4/11 & 4/25 Spoken  
Word Come and share or just listen either way it's an  
awesome night.

Every 3rd Tuesday of the Month the "Nonsense Play-  
ers" are teaming up with Moonsense and the Trance  
to bring you: Improve, Skit and Stand-up Comedy.

April 18, 8-9pm at Moonsense and 10-11pm at the  
Trance Dance Club.

Every Wednesday in April 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26  
Jazz Jazz Jazz 5:30-6:30pm with James Small Lignons,  
Tremendous performer, blessed to have him.

Also Every Wednesday "Swing Swing Swing" 7-9pm  
Come learn to dance, practice, share what you know  
or just enjoy the fresh sound of "Matty B & The Ho-  
Dads"...*Live*

Thursdays in April 4/6, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27 Family  
Karaoke 7-10 PM For the nonsmoking family crowd  
we have singers ranging from 3 to 83 years old.

Fridays in April 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28

Open Mic Night 8-11pm Wide genre of musicians,  
call ahead if you would like to perform....868-1783

Saturdays in April 4/1, 4/8, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29 Live  
music, different performers every month, 8-11pm.

4/1 Joseph Allen Popp's Weirdo Theater

4/8 Jack Be Nimble

4/15 Johnny Cash Tribute

4/22 Brown Eyed Susan's

4/29 Mean Max, Val Chestnut and Jerry Gaff

Every Saturday Afternoon Karaoke 4-7pm

"Common Ground" 4/8 & 4/29 1-3pm Cathi Mitch-  
ell puts on a talent show with performers from all  
walks of life definitely something to check out and  
support.

Saturday 4/1 Cee Williams with his band of mad men/  
women perform a Poetry Slam 1-4pm

Moonsense Cafe is at 5442 Peach St, Erie PA

—From Jo Hyatt

## Blue Heron Inn "Girls Night Out"

FINDLEY LAKE, NY March, 2006 —Spring  
is in the air ... the earth reawakens, new growth and  
new beginnings abound — what about you?

Arbonne International and the Blue Heron Inn  
invite you to celebrate the arrival of spring at "Girls'  
Night Out" on Wednesday, April 5.

Arbonne International is a Swiss skin-care com-  
pany whose products, which have grown to include  
both inner and outer health and beauty products, were  
developed by a team of Swiss biochemists, biologists  
and herbalists. Based on botanical principles these  
products are unparalleled in quality, safety, value and  
results.

The Blue Heron Inn is a restaurant, bed & break-  
fast & eclectic retail shop located on Findley Lake's  
scenic north shore. The Lakeview deck & side porch  
pub make the Blue Heron Inn a popular year 'round  
destination. The nature-inspired accommodations  
make guests feel like they've traveled a million miles  
away even though Findley Lake is right around the  
corner from most of the NY, PA & OH tri-state area.

Independent Arbonne consultants Jennifer  
Vergotz, Marian Taylor & Carol Peterson will teach  
you how to rejuvenate your skin with pure, safe & ben-  
eficial plant-based products. Learn make-up applica-  
tion techniques and tips while experiencing remark-  
able products that are truly good for your skin. In ad-  
dition to product introductions, the consultants will  
conduct beauty make-overs along with the latest in  
jewelry and accessories provided by Nostalgia @ the  
Blue Heron Inn.

The evening will feature a complimentary choco-  
late fountain, light refreshments and cash bar. Door  
prizes will include an Arbonne "basket of beauty",  
Arbonne beauty makeover or a one-night stay at the  
Blue Heron Inn.

The event will take place Wednesday, April 5  
from 6 - 9 PM at the Blue Heron Inn, located on  
Main Street in Findley Lake, New York. Admission is  
free, however, attendance is limited to advance reser-  
vations. The first 20 guests who register will receive a  
complimentary gift. Reservations may be made by  
phone at 716.769.7852 or by e-mail at  
stay@theblueheroninn.com.

—from Blue Heron Inn

# Calendar

This calendar is also online at  
[www.eriegaynews.com/calendar.html](http://www.eriegaynews.com/calendar.html)

**Mar 22 - Equality PA (Southwest Region) meets**  
Ginger Hill UU Congregation, 174 S Main St, Slippery Rock, PA. 7 PM. Contact Reid at (724) 735-4407  
[butlerdiversity@yahoo.com](mailto:butlerdiversity@yahoo.com).

**Mar 22 - Open Circle for Ostara/Vernal Equinox**  
Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie, PA. 7 PM - 10 PM. "Held 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." Any questions? Feel free to contact Jeremy by email at [prosperotter@yahoo.com](mailto:prosperotter@yahoo.com)  
Browse to <http://www.u-n-c-l-e.org>.

**Mar 24 - 26 - Drenched Fur Weekend (Erie, PA)**  
2nd Annual Bear event. Various venues. Contact: Gary. Phone: (814) 384-0463. Email: [info@drenchedfur.com](mailto:info@drenchedfur.com). Browse to <http://www.drenchedfur.com>.

**Mar 24 - "Bears in the Woods Party: Boot Camp" at Zone Dance Club** 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "The Zone welcomes all Drenched Fur Weekend II attendees for a night of Food, Furry Friends and Prizes at the Zone's Bar Bear Night!! Dress in military or survival gear for a night of prowling in the wilderness! Don't forget your coupons guys! Cosponsored by Jones Pond Campground, an all-male clothing-optional camping resort in Angelica, NY <http://www.jonespond.com/> Info for the 2006 camping season will be available at the Zone!" —*Drenched Fur*. (814) 452-0125. Browse to [www.thezonedanceclub.com](http://www.thezonedanceclub.com).

**Mar 25 - "2nd Annual Bear Bar Night" at Trance Dance Club** 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. 9 PM. "Elijah Black performs live at 9 PM. Also a buffet dinner. If you are not registered for Drenched Fur, you can get tickets at the door or in advance from Peter by email at [eriepeter@gmail.com](mailto:eriepeter@gmail.com) or call (814) 384-9785. The \$10 tickets include admission, the buffet and performance. If you *are* registered already for Drenched Fur, then this is included in your run package." —*Drenched Fur* Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: [lee@trancedanceclub.com](mailto:lee@trancedanceclub.com). Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

**Mar 29 - "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](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com). Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

**Mar 31 - "Rhiannon's Birthday Bash" at Trance Dance Club** 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. Let your hair down - or take it off! Contact: Lee. Phone: (814)

*(continued on page 8)*

## MOVIE EXCHANGE

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# Calendar

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456-3027. Email: lee@trancedanceclub.com. Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>.

**Mar 31 - Denise Russell at Zone Dance Club** 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "The Funny Lady returns for a night of comedy and fun!"—*The Zone* Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to <http://www.thezonedanceclub.com>.

**Mar 31 - Apr 2 - Three Rivers Leather Club 15th Annual "Collar a Fool" (Pittsburgh, PA)** Info: David Grinnell (412)321-4963 or [drgrinnell@aol.com](mailto:drgrinnell@aol.com) / Dave Vey: [pghdav@aol.com](mailto:pghdav@aol.com) Browse to <http://www.trlc.net>.

**Apr 1 (Sat) - GLENDA April Fool's Day Bash (Franklin, PA)** 8 PM - 1 AM, Venango County Coon and Fox Club in Franklin. Tickets are \$5.00 in advance or \$6.00 at the door and it is a BYOB event. Snacks and nonalcoholic beverages, DJ, raffles and door prizes. Details and directions on front page. Email: [glendanorthwest@yahoo.com](mailto:glendanorthwest@yahoo.com).

**Apr 1 - April Fools Day at Trance Dance Club** 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. "Wear your Sunglasses at Night! Prizes for the Wildest Sunglasses. (Don't be a Fool...Play it Safe!)"—*Trance* Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: [lee@trancedanceclub.com](mailto:lee@trancedanceclub.com). Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>

**Apr 1 - "Brokeback Bunkhouse Night - Boots and Boxers Party" at Zone Dance Club** 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. "We want to see what real cowboys wear under their Wranglers! Guys- Wear cowboy shirts, boxers, long-johns, leather chaps, and boots, Ladies- get out your daisy-dukes and bandanas for some boot-scootin' fun! Don't worry you can keep yer' Wranglers on if yer' a might bit shy! Prize for sexiest Cowboy and Cowgirl!"—*The Zone* Ph: (814) 452-0125. [www.thezonedanceclub.com](http://www.thezonedanceclub.com).

**Apr 2 Empire Pride Agenda's Buffalo Brunch (Buffalo)** Browse to [https://www.prideagenda.org/events/buffalobrunch\\_2006\\_intro.htm](https://www.prideagenda.org/events/buffalobrunch_2006_intro.htm)

**Apr 3 - Lake Erie Alliance for Democracy (LEAD) meets** 218 E 11th St, Erie, PA. 7 - 8:30 PM. Contact: Cindy Purvis. Phone: (814) 453-4113. Email: [cindypurvis@velocity.net](mailto:cindypurvis@velocity.net). Browse to [www.erielead.org](http://www.erielead.org)

**Apr 3 - 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!*" Ph: (814) 724-1832. Email: [bykota@eriegaynews.com](mailto:bykota@eriegaynews.com).

**Apr 5 - Always Our Children meets** Catholic Charities, 329 W. 10th St, Erie, PA. For Catholic parents of GLBT children Phone: (814) 456-2091.

**Apr 7 - Vertigo Party (Butler, PA)** Meridian Vets Club, Eberhart, Butler, PA. "We supply everything Cups, Ice, Mix, just BYOB" [vertigov@aol.com](mailto:vertigov@aol.com). [www.webspawner.com/users/vertigov](http://www.webspawner.com/users/vertigov).

**Apr 9 - Pride Picnic meeting (Brian and Larry's, Erie, PA)** 2 PM. Planning for the Pride Picnic, which will happen June 10. More details about the picnic are at <http://picnic.eriegaynews.com>. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: [info@eriegaynews.com](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com). Browse to [http://eriegaynews.com/mailman/listinfo/picnic\\_eriegaynews.com](http://eriegaynews.com/mailman/listinfo/picnic_eriegaynews.com).

**Apr 10 - PFLAG meets** Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie. 7 PM - 8:30 PM. Contact: Mark H [pflagerie@eriegaynews.com](mailto:pflagerie@eriegaynews.com) or John (814)454-1392.

**Apr 11 - Hospice Support group for those dealing with loss** Hospice of Metropolitan Erie, 202 E 10th St, Erie, PA. 7 PM. Also meets Apr 20 at 10 AM. (814) 456-6689. [hospice@velocity.net](mailto:hospice@velocity.net).

**Apr 14 - Friday Night Drag: "A Tribute to Stage and Screen at Trance Dance Club"** Showtime 11 PM. 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. Contact: Lee. Ph: (814) 456-3027. Email: [lee@trancedanceclub.com](mailto:lee@trancedanceclub.com). Web: [www.trancedanceclub.com](http://www.trancedanceclub.com)

**Apr 15 - Movie Night at Unitarian Church of Jamestown** 1255 Prendergast Ave, Jamestown, NY. 7:30 PM. Email: [info@gayjamestownny.com/](mailto:info@gayjamestownny.com/). Browse to <http://www.gayjamestownny.com/>.

**Apr 15 - Deadline for May 2006 edition of Erie Gay News** EGN, 1115 W 7th St, Erie, PA. Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: [info@eriegaynews.com](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com). [www.eriegaynews.com](http://www.eriegaynews.com).

**Apr 16 - "Easter Bonnet Parade" at Trance Dance Club** 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. "Prizes for the most Outrageous Bonnet." Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: [lee@trancedanceclub.com](mailto:lee@trancedanceclub.com). Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>

**Apr 17 - Be Ye Kind One To Another (BYKOTA) meets** Unitarian-Universalist Parish House, 346 Chestnut St, Meadville, PA. 7 PM - 9 PM. "We are a

# Calendar

cross-denominational Christian group of/for LGBT people – encompassing spiritual nurture, discussion of LGBT issues, and mutual support. *All are welcome!*" Ph: (814) 724-1832. Email: bykota@eriegaynews.com.

**Apr 19 - "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 21 - Freaky Deaky Disco Funk Party at Zone Dance Club** 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA "Come celebrate our favorite DJ TC's birthday. Wear your favorite retro outfit! Dance the night away to the oldies of the 70's, 80's, 90's and today! Happy Birthday TC! Special appearance by the fabulous Michelle Michaels." —*The Zone* Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to <http://www.thezonedanceclub.com>.

**April 21 -23- Rainbow Wranglers Round Up (Cleveland OH)**, 15th annual weekend of country and western dancing fun benefits the Cleveland LGBT Center, includes dances at the Shed, 2901 Detroit Ave., and Saturday night Colonel's Ball at Grays Armory, 1234 Bolivar Ave.; [www.rainbowwranglers.org](http://www.rainbowwranglers.org).

**Apr 22 - "Glowlight Magic/Disco Party" at Trance Dance Club** 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA. Featuring the Glow Sorcerer Buddy Dobson. Contact: Lee. Phone: (814) 456-3027. Email: [lee@trancedanceclub.com](mailto:lee@trancedanceclub.com). Browse to <http://www.trancedanceclub.com>

**Apr 23- Planning meeting for Fall Pride Event** Panera's at Yorktown, 2501 W 12th St, Erie, PA. 2 PM. Meeting to plan for Erie's Fall Pride event. The event will be held on September 30. Contact: Dan Burdick. Phone: (814) 602-0252. Email:



Meet Miriam Pastor, she has worked with the Alliance for the past 4 years as an HIV educator, speaker, adherence counselor and advocate. You'll find her in both the Erie and Clarion offices.

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### For more information, contact:

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Renaissance Centre  
Erie, PA 16501

**814-4568849 or 1-800-400-2437**

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# Calendar

eriegaypride@yahoo.com. Browse to [http://eriegaynews.com/mailman/listinfo/event\\_eriegaynews.com](http://eriegaynews.com/mailman/listinfo/event_eriegaynews.com)

**Apr 24 - Victims' Rights Rally at Erie City Hall.** Rally beginning at 5PM in City Council Chambers. Free and open to the public. For more information about any of the events and observances, see article in "Community News" or call (814) 455-9414.

**Apr 26 - 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](mailto:butlerdiversity@yahoo.com).

**Apr 29 - Performance: 2 Girls Alone at Two Friends Italian Market** 25 E 10th St, Erie, PA. 7 PM - 9 PM. 2 Girls Alone will perform at Two Friends Italian Market (at 10th and French Streets in Erie) on Saturday, April 29 from 7 PM to 9 PM Time subject to change. For more information and a pizza coupon good for that night, email [twogirlsalone@att.net](mailto:twogirlsalone@att.net). Phone: (814) 461-9966. Email: [twogirlsalone@att.net](mailto:twogirlsalone@att.net)

**May 1 - Be Ye Kind One To Another (BYKOTA) meets** Unitarian-Universalist Parish House, 346 Chestnut St, Meadville, PA. 7 - 9 PM. Phone: (814) 724-1832. Email: [bykota@eriegaynews.com](mailto:bykota@eriegaynews.com).

**May 1 - Lake Erie Alliance for Democracy (LEAD) meets** 218 E 11th St, Erie, PA. 7 - 8:30 PM. Contact: Cindy Purvis. Phone: (814) 453-4113. Email: [cindypurvis@velocity.net](mailto:cindypurvis@velocity.net). Browse to [www.erielead.org](http://www.erielead.org)

**May 3 - Always Our Children meets** Catholic Charities, 329 W. 10th St, Erie, PA. For Catholic parents of GLBT children Phone: (814) 456-2091.

**May 5 - Vertigo Party (Butler, PA)** Meridian Vets Club, Eberhart, Butler, PA. "We supply everything

Cups, Ice, Mix, just BYOB." [vertigov@aol.com](mailto:vertigov@aol.com). [www.webspawner.com/users/vertigov](http://www.webspawner.com/users/vertigov).

**May 8 - PFLAG Erie/Crawford County meets** Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie, PA. 7 PM - 8:30 PM. Contact: Mark H pflagerie@eriegaynews.com. Phone: John at (814) 454-1392.

**May 9 - Support group for those dealing with loss** Hospice of Metropolitan Erie, 202 E 10th St, Erie, PA. 7 PM. Also meets May 18 at 10 AM. Ph: (814) 456-6689. Email: [hospice@velocity.net](mailto:hospice@velocity.net).

**May 10 - "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](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com). Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

**May 15 - Deadline for June 2006 edition of Erie Gay News EGN**, 1115 W 7th St, Erie, PA. Contact: Michael Mahler. (814) 456-9833. [info@eriegaynews.com](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com).

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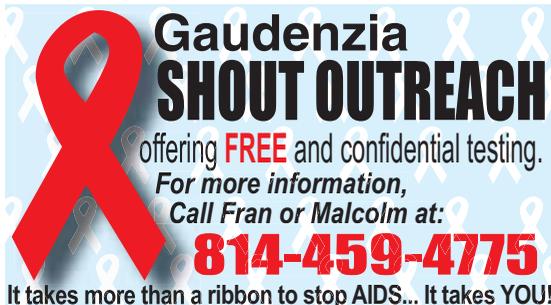
**May 21 - Planning meeting for Fall Pride Event** Panera's at Yorktown, 2501 W 12th St, Erie, PA. 2 PM. Meeting to plan for Erie's Fall Pride event. The event will be held on September 30. Contact: Dan Burdick. Phone: (814) 602-0252. Email: [eriegaypride@yahoo.com](mailto:eriegaypride@yahoo.com). Browse to [http://eriegaynews.com/mailman/listinfo/event\\_eriegaynews.com](http://eriegaynews.com/mailman/listinfo/event_eriegaynews.com).

**May 24 - Equality PA (Southwest Region) meets** Ginger Hill UU Congregation, 174 S Main St, Slippery Rock, PA. 7 PM. Contact Reid at (724) 735-4407 [butlerdiversity@yahoo.com](mailto:butlerdiversity@yahoo.com).

**May 28 - Pittsburgh Memorial Day Festival** South Park Fairgrounds. More details next issue.

**May 31 - "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](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com). Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

**Jun 18 - Gay Day at Cedar Point**, unofficial, unsponsored event. Wear red or rainbow colors, [www.firelandspride.org](http://www.firelandspride.org), <http://ajw.freeshell.org/sanduskygaypride>.



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# On stage

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

**Mar 31-Apr 8 "The Casual Sex Diary"** presented by Buffalo United Artists at Main Street Cabaret, Buffalo. (716) 886-9239 <http://www.buffalobua.org/>  
April 1 and 2 - "S Wonderfool," North Coast Men's Chorus spring concert, 8 pm Saturday, 3 pm Sunday, Waetjen Auditorium, Cleveland State University, 2001 Euclid Ave, <http://www.ncmchorus.org>, [info@ncmchorus.org](mailto:info@ncmchorus.org), 216-556-0590.

**Apr 4-9 - Paula Poundstone** at Hilarities 4th Street Theatre, 2035 E. 4th Street Cleveland, OH (216) 736.4242 (HAHA) [www.pickwickandfrolic.com](http://www.pickwickandfrolic.com)  
Apr 7 Red Hen 10th Anniversary, celebrating ten years of Cleveland's feminist theater, with special performances from past productions, 7 pm, Café Limbo, 12706 Larchmere Blvd, Cleveland, 216-556-0910.

**Apr 8 - Augusten Burroughs** at Cleveland Playhouse Square <http://www.playhousesquare.com/>

**Apr 9 - "Clarence Darrow: The Search for Justice"**  
A one-man show starring Gary L. Anderson, America's renowned Darrow portrayer. Two shows: 2 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 7180 Perry Hwy (PA Rt. 97), Erie and 7 PM at the Roadhouse Theater, 145 West 11th St., Erie Suggested Donation: \$15/adv. \$20/door , \$10 Student/Senior. For Tickets, mail check — payable to NW PA Chap. AU — to: P.O. Box 6579, Erie, PA 16512. Free childcare for 2 PM show, if requested by April 2. Reception to follow 2 PM show. For tickets and info, call (814)455-9730.

**Apr 7 - KC & The Sunshine Band** Cleveland, OH House Of Blues <http://www.hob.com/>

**Apr 15 - Renaissance City Men's Choir Spring Concert "Lush Life"** 8 PM at Pittsburgh Theater.

**Apr 15 - "Take Action" Tour** Cleveland OH, House of Blues. <http://www.takeactiontour.com/>

**Apr 17 - "Take Action" Tour Pittsburgh PA Club Zoo.** <http://www.takeactiontour.com/>

**Apr 23 - Tret Fure** in concert at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 Perry Hwy, 4 PM. Tickets \$15 available at Aromas Coffeehouse and [www.tomboygirl.com](http://www.tomboygirl.com)

**Apr 26 - "Rent"** Warner Theatre. Charge tickets (814) 452-4857 or (814) 456-7070 Box Office, 809 French St. all Ticketmaster outlets or online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) [www.erieevents.com/warner.html](http://www.erieevents.com/warner.html)

**Apr 29 - Kathy Griffin** at Cleveland Playhouse Square <http://www.playhousesquare.com/>

**Apr 29 "Take Action" Tour** Buffalo, NY at Icon <http://www.takeactiontour.com/>

**Jun 3-4 Melissa Ferrick** at Pride Buffalo [www.pridebuffalo.org/](http://www.pridebuffalo.org/)

Websites/email lists for area performers

**Judith Avers** [www.judithavers.com/](http://www.judithavers.com/)

**Bob Bearfield** [www.bobbearfield.com](http://www.bobbearfield.com)

**Carrie Sample** [www.rockerie.com/thescene/bands/103](http://www.rockerie.com/thescene/bands/103)

**Jocelyn Porter Project**

[www.jocelynporterproject.com](http://www.jocelynporterproject.com)

**Leah Zicari** [www.leahzicari.com](http://www.leahzicari.com)

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



**Bethany Robson**  
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## ‘Marriage amendment’ battle widens, but we can win

by Ben Turner

On March 15, something strange — and outrageous — happened in Harrisburg. On a largely party-line vote of 15-13, without having any hearings first, the House State Government Committee narrowly sent the proposed “marriage amendment” to the state Constitution to the full House. Several members expressed concerns about this amendment, which would go much further than Pennsylvania’s 10-year old law that bans recognition of same-sex marriage. The amendment would ban civil unions, domestic-partner benefits and interfere with inheritance and medical decision-making rights for unmarried couples, both same-sex and opposite-sex alike. (Tell your straight friends!)

A similar amendment in Ohio even made it harder or impossible to prosecute many cases of domestic violence.

What the committee did is like closing the barn door after the horse has already gotten out. It’s really rare in Harrisburg. Ironically, if someone had tried that with a pro-gambling bill, the chairman of the same committee and his far-right allies would have screamed bloody murder.

If you live in Erie County’s 2nd House District, please thank Rep. Florindo Fabrizio (D-Erie) — he voted against sending the bill to the full House without having hearings first. All of the Democratic members of the committee voted against this rush to judgment, joined by one Republican from suburban Philadelphia.

As Sen. Joe Conti (R-Bucks) said recently, the amendment is “mean-spirited, and timed for political gain before the upcoming primary election.”

So now the battle shifts to the entire House of Representatives. And here’s some good news — we can still win. Because the committee didn’t do its job, a lot of legislators have concerns or unanswered questions. Advocates for the LGBT community have found that the more people find out about this amendment, the less they like it. No surprise, really — who’s in favor of more domestic violence, denying health coverage, keeping people out of their loved ones’ hospital rooms, or people losing their homes after they’ve just lost the love of their life?

It is important to call only your own representative and senator. Calling legislators who don’t represent you can irritate our friends in the legislature and doesn’t really gain us anything. The only exception is when you have a unique connection to a legislator — for example, if you’re related, or went to high school together, or you have a common background such as accounting or nursing that would be relevant. (The “marriage amendment” would affect unmarried couples’ taxes and health care, including medical decision-making rights.)

Otherwise, it’s best just to call your own representative and senator and to let them know you live in their district at the start of the call. You can find out who your legislators are at [www.legis.state.pa.us](http://www.legis.state.pa.us), at the top right of that website. Please be polite when contacting your legislators — that’s more effective in conveying your concerns.

Part of the reason the far right is pushing this amendment so hard is that LGBT Pennsylvanians have won several victories in recent years. In 2004, our allies defeated a set of 51 anti-gay amendments in the House by a two-vote margin. In 2003, Governor Rendell added gender identity to the previous executive order that already protected state employees from discrimination based on sexual orientation. And in 2002, the state Supreme Court ruled that same-sex couples had to be allowed to do second-parent adoptions everywhere in Pennsylvania, and the legislature passed a law that added sexual orientation and gender identity to the protected categories in the state’s hate-crime law.

As of March 15, the House version of the “marriage amendment” had lost five cosponsors while gaining only one — that’s incredibly unusual. Together we can win this battle.

To keep up with the latest on this amendment as well as positive legislation in Harrisburg, please sign up for “GLBT votes” updates at [www.eriegaynews.com](http://www.eriegaynews.com) or send an email to [crstonewalldems@gmail.com](mailto:crstonewalldems@gmail.com).

*Ben Turner is co-chair of the Harrisburg-area chapter of the Stonewall Democrats ( [www.capitalstonewall.org](http://www.capitalstonewall.org)). He has worked in politics for nearly 10 years.*

# National News Briefs

by Bob

## Films About Gays See Mixed Oscar Results

Okay, so *Brokeback Mountain* didn't win the "Best Picture" Oscar this year. It was still a milestone year for the GLBT community, even before the first Oscar was presented.

*Brokeback Mountain*, *Capote* and *Transamerica* all dealt with gay or transgender characters. They all drew critical acclaim and received a combined 15 Academy Award nominations.

Even though an Oscar sweep wasn't in the cards for these films, gay advocates said the number of Oscars earned wasn't as important as their impact on Hollywood and America.

"The films lead to conversations, and conversations lead to greater awareness, a level of comfort with gay and lesbian Americans," said Neil Giuliano, president of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation.

Others weren't surprised that the gay-themed films found mixed success at the Oscars. "I think America sent a message to those in the industry that this isn't something that they're interested in, and hopefully this was something that weighed heavily on them as they voted for these pictures," said Alan Chambers, president of Exodus International, a Christian organization that promotes "freedom from homosexuality."

At the same time however, Chambers acknowledged that Hollywood will likely keep pushing the envelope with more films dealing with gay themes.

Even with all of the jokes, the attention that these gay-themed films generated helped gay cinema,

said Jennifer Morris, co-director of the San Francisco International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgendered Film Festival, which is marking its 30th year in 2006.

"That's the best thing about these films, especially with *Transamerica* and *Brokeback Mountain*," Morris said. "This really was a groundbreaking year."

## Court Upholds Campus Military Recruiting

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled unanimously that colleges accepting federal money must allow military recruiters on campus, despite university objections to the Pentagon's "don't ask, don't tell" policy on gays.

In making its ruling, the Justices rejected a free-speech challenge from law schools and their professors who claimed they should not be forced to associate with military recruiters or promote their campus appearances.

"A military recruiter's mere presence on campus does not violate a law school's right to associate,

*(continued next page)*

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for our list of locations

# National News

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(continued from previous page)

regardless of how repugnant the law school considers the recruiter's message," wrote Chief Justice John Roberts.

The Court's ruling upheld a law that requires colleges that take federal money to accommodate military recruiters.

Many of these same universities ban recruiters from public agencies and private companies that have discriminatory policies.

"This is an important victory for the military and ultimately for our national security," said Jay Sekulow, chief counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice.

College leaders have said they could not afford to lose federal help, some \$35 billion a year. Joshua Rosenkranz, the attorney for the challengers of the law, said that the case called attention to the military policy.

"We lost a skirmish in a much larger civil rights battle for the rights of gays and lesbians, which is a movement we are winning," he said.

In writing his opinion, Chief Justice Roberts noted that there are other, less drastic options for protesting "don't ask, don't tell."

"Students and faculty are free to associate to voice their disapproval of the military's message," Roberts wrote. "Recruiters are, by definition, outsiders who come onto campus for the limited purpose of trying to hire students — not to become members of the school's expressive association," he wrote.

## New GOP Leader, Same GOP Platform

Although Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives have elected a new leader to replace Tom DeLay, don't expect any changes in the GOP's strong anti-gay platform.

The new House Majority Leader, Rep. John Boehner of Ohio, has a long record of supporting anti-gay initiatives in Congress. According to *The Advocate*, Boehner was one of the sponsors of the proposed Federal Marriage Amendment which sought to amend the U.S. Constitution to ban same-sex marriage.

In addition Boehner has consistently voted against hate-crimes legislation, including the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act which passed the House last year. He has also opposed legislation outlawing employment discrimination based on sexual orientation.

And there is still more. *The Advocate* notes that Boehner supported a bill that would have allowed the federal government to restrict the placement of gay-themed literature in school libraries. Boehner also voted to prohibit gay couples living in Washington, DC, from adopting children.

## Alito Thanks Gay Foes For Support

In a letter to anti-gay crusader James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, newly appointed Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito thanked Dobson for his organization's support during Senate confirmation hearings.

"As I said when I spoke at my formal investiture at the White House last week, the **prayers** of so many people from around the country were a palpable and powerful force," Alito said in the letter. "As long as I serve on the Supreme Court I will keep in mind the trust that has been placed in me."

Alito's letter went on to say, "I hope that we'll have the opportunity to meet personally at some point in the future."

Dobson, who not only opposes LGBT civil rights, but is also an abortion opponent, had urged listeners to his radio program to contact their Senators to support the nomination of Alito.

But Alito's letter is drawing fire from other groups, such as **Americans United for Separation of Church and State**, which said it compromises Alito's ability to be impartial on the bench.

"He's not sounding like a fair and independent judge," Barry Lynn, the organization's executive director said in an interview with the Colorado Springs Gazette. **Focus on the Family** is based in Colorado Springs.

Lynn expressed concern that the note could be interpreted as a pledge to rule as Dobson wants on key issues, such as gay marriage, abortion and church-state separation.

# National News

"This strongly suggests Alito is going to do just what he was entrusted to do - change the law dramatically in many key areas," said Lynn.

"I think this is grossly inappropriate conduct on the part of Justice Alito," he said, noting he's never heard of a Supreme Court justice writing such a letter. "It sounds like he's carrying a right wing agenda instead of being a justice for all the people."

## Phelps' Church Backs Down, for Now

Members of the small Kansas church lead by anti-gay zealot Rev. Fred Phelps said it will stop picketing soldiers' funerals in states with new laws against the practice.

"We're not going to get arrested. We obey the law," said Shirley Phelps-Roper, Phelps' daughter, an attorney and member of the Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, KS.

The church members have outraged families and communities across the country by protesting at soldiers' funerals with signs that read "God Hates Fags" or "God Made IEDs," a reference to roadside bombs frequently used in Iraq and Afghanistan. Members of Phelps' church claim that soldiers are being struck down by God for defending a nation that tolerates homosexuality.

In response to these tactics, several states have passed or are considering legislation restricting the presence of pickets at funerals. Violators can be fined or jailed.

Phelps' followers recently canceled demonstrations at funerals in Oklahoma, Indiana, Missouri and Wisconsin, states that have new laws limiting such protests.

Shirley Phelps-Roper said the church is discussing legal challenges to these laws. "We're waiting until all the legislatures are over to see what tattered shreds they've left the Constitution in," she said.

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## STOP SANTORUM

### Santorum's only Republican challenger drops out

by Deb Spilko

John Featherman entered the race for the U.S. Senate as a "reasonable Republican." He is strongly opposed to the extremist stances taken by Rick Santorum, who presently holds that seat. He wanted to represent voters who don't want, as he says, "a senator who's a jerk ... [and] want to be able to go out, make their money, keep their money, but not have someone who's insulting gays, who's insulting women."

On his website he minced no words. "I am pro-gay marriage and pro-gay rights," he stated. "Although Rick Santorum has the right to differ with me, why does he have to degrade gays by offensively saying 'It's not, you know, man on child, man on dog, or whatever the case may be?'"

Featherman's website prominently featured his stands on the issues, which stood in strong opposition to Santorum's rightwing viewpoints.

For "reasonable Republicans" in Pennsylvania who had hoped to at least be able to cast a vote to show that they do not approve of their party's extremist turn, the news this month was dismal. On March 15, John Featherman announced he was dropping out of the race, after the state Republican party challenged his application to be on the ballot for the May primary. Featherman stated that it would be too difficult to respond to such a challenge.

Featherman's website, which may still be up at this writing, is at <http://www.featherman.com/>

*This column will appear regularly until the fall 2006 elections. For more information on Rick Santorum (particularly of GLBT interest), visit Stop Santorum Now at [www.stopsantorumnow.org/](http://www.stopsantorumnow.org/)*

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## Catching up with Tret Fure

by *Kate Hentz*

To catch up with Tret Fure these days, you have to cover a lot of ground. This multi-talented singer-songwriter has just landed back home in Madison, Wisconsin following a busy month touring in the upper Midwest, punctuated by a week at the North American Folk Alliance conference in Austin, Texas where, along with performing in several venues, she attended the annual board meeting of Local 1000, the Traveling Musicians' Union where she is acting Vice President.

The breather at home has allowed Tret to take time to continue to write as well as spend time working her retail store, *Tomboy girl*. Tret also runs her own management business and is very busy booking her tours and running her publicity firm. "What's nice about being home is waking up in my own bed with my own family day after day."

This brief respite comes to an end in late March when Tret will head west for a swing through California, east again for several dates in the northeast, then south to Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, and Kentucky. Tret has made Erie, PA a regular stop on her tour schedule; "Erie fans are so great, and so appreciative of my work. I am writing some great new tunes, so fans planning to attend the Erie show can expect to be pleased and surprised with this year's offering."

On the heels of her much acclaimed 2005 release, "Anytime Anywhere," Tret is turning out some gorgeous newly written songs that are making their way onto her set list among the treasured favorites from "Back Home," "My Shoes," and "Anytime Anywhere." "My Love for You" and "Leap of Faith" come to mind as two sure hits first heard by this writer last Fall at the Provincetown, MA concert.

That show was a highlight of the annual Ptown Women's Week, well attended by fans who have come to be known as "Tretheads" for their faithful peregrinations to catch a Tret concert anywhere in the country. Longtime Fure devotees know that performances by Tret are always a moment-in-time experience. Heather Dilorenzo of Greensboro, NC explains the universal appeal of Tret's performances: "I continue going to Tret's concerts because not doing so would be like visiting the National Gallery of Art only once.



Every visit reveals a new work, a different perspective, sometimes an entirely new collection of masterpieces, so to keep attending concerts is to see an ever-changing, ever-evolving work in progress, both in Tret's music and in her spirit."

Don't miss the opportunity to catch up with Tret Fure when she comes to the Unitarian Universalist Church, Sunday April 23 at 4 PM, 8170 Perry Highway in Erie. Tickets are \$15, on sale at the church, at Aromas Coffeehouse, 2174 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Erie, or on line at [www.tomboygirl.com](http://www.tomboygirl.com).

***Stay updated!***

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## To the Cathedral of St. Paul: Thank You!

by Deb Spilko  
Co-Editor

I would just like to weigh in on the kerfuffle over the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

You can catch up on it by reading the March postings from Michael Mahler's blog <http://www.eriegaynews.com/mahlerblog/>

One of the things that has allowed Michael and myself to work together for so long is that we feel we can disagree with each other's viewpoints on some fairly big issues. This is going to be one of those times.

I would like to take you back—way back to the early 1980s. It was a more closeted time, and Erie had little to offer in the way of “gay community.” Around this time, an Episcopalian lesbian by the name of Ann W. went to the Dean of the Cathedral of St. Paul and told him that she felt lonely and alienated, and that there were no places in Erie County to meet other gay Christians.

The Dean was very sympathetic, and offered the Cathedral's space for meeting with other gay Christians. He and one of the church office workers began quietly meeting with Ann and other gay people, offer-

ing friendship and community in a supportive environment. The group would later become known as PALS, providing --as they used to say-- a “safe” space for gay people to talk and socialize and be themselves. The Cathedral would later provide a space for Integrity, a group that is geared toward the spiritual needs of GLBT persons in the Episcopal community.

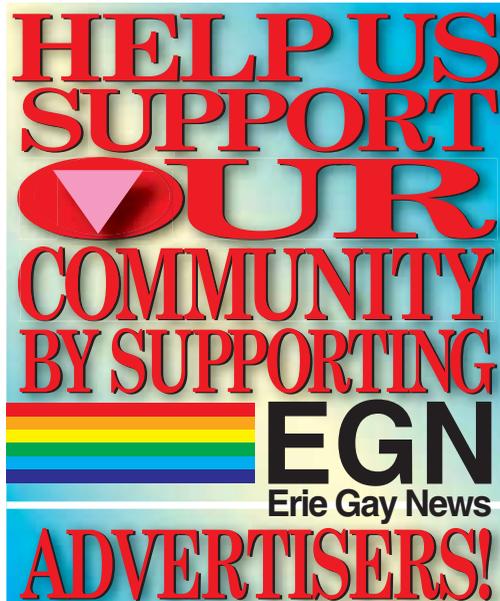
The Episcopal Church would later provide monies for developing AIDS education--to the best of my knowledge, in fact, they provided the first AIDS education monies and resources in the northwestern Pennsylvania region. Their commitment to the issue of HIV/AIDS—both in the community and worldwide— was very strong; among other actions, they brought in the AIDS Quilt for several years, hosted the HIV/AIDS education network meetings, and setting up a food pantry to provide for persons with HIV/AIDS.

I am sure there are other projects and actions I have left out, but this at least starts to give an accounting of their contributions and support.

The Episcopal church nationally and locally has made a sincere effort to reach out to GLBT Christians, in terms of time and resources.

I really don't know what is going on in St. Paul's or in the Diocese of northwestern Pennsylvania right now, and as an agnostic it would be uncomfortable for me to comment on decisions they have made within their particular community of faith. Although some recent actions related to the GLBT community seem a bit clumsy or mishandled, I really don't want to see them get a black eye over this. I would hate to have them get the feeling that “no good deed goes unpunished.”

The Cathedral of St. Paul and the Episcopal Church have, over the years been very supportive of the GLBT community. While many Christian denominations were shunning or condemning us, the Cathedral and the Episcopal Church offered support and a spiritual home. I have never had the chance to thank them for the support and resources they have so generously offered in the past, so at this point I would like to say to them, “Thank You!” for all you have done for our community.



# Michael Dithers

I hope that everyone had a good month. I have been rather close to being overwhelmed with organizational stuff the past few weeks. As I write this, we are days away from Drenched Fur, which is looking like it should be pretty successful. (There will be a write up at <http://www.drenchedfur.com>.) The Drenched Fur planning committee has been meeting every Sunday since the beginning of the month, but the Sunday before last I also had the first meeting for this year's Pride Picnic (which is on June 10 at the Rotary Pavilion - full details are at <http://picnic.eriegaynews.com>) and today I also had a meeting for the Pride March/Rally (which is September 30 and details for that are at <http://eriegaypride.eriegaynews.com>.) So, I have joked that maybe in April I need to become a hermit or a straight truck driver in Arizona or something. I hope that all 3 events are well supported. It can be a challenge juggling stuff. I also have been doing stuff with the United NeoPagan Council of Lake Erie and am helping out a small event with the Erie Bloggers in the Wild get together.

I have had a few odd exchanges related to me being a teetotaler of late. I saw someone out and was a tad tired and distracted. The next day, I saw them in the chat room and he made a reference to me being 3 sheets to the wind. "Excuse me?" I said. He then asked if I was tipsy. I explained that I was a lifelong teetotaler and have never been drunk in my life. One of the bar owners happened to also be in the chat room and was amused, since he knows that I don't drink.

A few weeks later, I was out playing trivia and went back to get a Coke and water for our team. The straight bartender asked, "Hmm, do you ever get wild and actually have a drink?" I explained that nope, and having decided I would not drink when I was about 10 or so. He asked why, and I replied that my father's side of the family had a history of alcoholism and substance issues, and that it had been kind of traumatic. (Neither of my siblings drink either.) He then said, "What a shame! You'll never sample one of my martinis." I smiled and replied, "I could say something similar about you being straight."

So, everything I have done in my life, I have done stone cold sober! I frequently joke that I have other redeeming vices.

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