

March 2008



EGN

Erie Gay News



Drenched Fur 4 sets record for registrations!

by Gary Snyder

Drenched Fur 4's weekend (April 4-6) is arriving quickly. This year the committee is looking forward to hosting the largest number of attendees in Erie to date.

In less than two months, more people have registered for this year's bear run weekend than ever before and we're not done yet. As of press time, we have less than 50 registration run packages available. However, if you're unable to attend the whole weekend, we still have some great options for you to enjoy the fun!

On Friday April 4, we'll be kicking things off at 7 PM with our meet 'n greet function which includes the first of several opportunities to pick up some things you can't find anywhere else at the vendor mall. We'll then head up to Splash Lagoon for our private function event from 10:30 PM until 2 AM. We'll have the whole water park resort to ourselves, which means the long lines, noise and crowds are a thing of the past. Walk-ins will not be possible, so get your \$25 admission ticket in advance (by March 15) while you can. Both Friday and Saturday nights will have our After Hours get togethers (with cover charge) at the Avalon Hotel starting at 1:30 AM. On Saturday April 5, we're bringing back our Evening of Entertainment Events at the Avalon Hotel's Niagara Ballroom. Advance ticket holders can purchase an all night admission for just \$35 That ticket includes buffet dinner service at 7 PM, followed by the premier of two comedic acts: Opening Act, Erie's own Uncle Pete followed by Headliner William Brown at 8:30 PM. Then it's on to the Wet 'n Wild Dance, DJ'd by world traveled and renowned DJ Tony Ruiz, starting at 10 PM (included with a limited number of full evening events advance tickets).

So there are lots of options available to enjoy the good times and fun during this year's 4th installment of Drenched Fur. If you're interested in joining us for



Latoria Theatre co-owners Roxanne and Linda at the dance they held at the newly-renovated Oil City theatre on Feb 16. See more photos on page 19.

Photo: Ken Kula

Splash, all of Saturday evening, a limited number of advance tickets can be purchased on-line. If you'd rather enjoy time with us for the comedy and/or dance, feel welcome to simply pay the door cover charge upon arrival. If you're interested in joining us to get wet and/or have a meal, laughs and boodie, check out the Drenched Fur website at www.drenchedfur.com/nonrunreg to get your advance tickets now. For questions/details, contact Gary the run coordinator at gnsnyder@drenchedfur.com or 814-384-0463.

Erie Pride Rally Scheduled: June 29

Erie's LGBT community will show its pride Sunday, June 29, as they come together for the 2008 Erie Gay Pride March/Rally.

As in past years, the event will get started with a march down State Street from The Zone Dance Club to Perry Square where the rally will be held. The Rally itself will feature speakers, entertainment, vendors and much more.

This year's Pride March/Rally was organized by
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Classified Ads are now available for as little as \$10 for 30 words! See page 6 for more info.

EGN Rates & Data

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| QUARTER PAGE | FULL PAGE | HALF PAGE VERTICAL |
| HALF PAGE HORIZONTAL | EIGHTH PAGE | |

| AD SIZE | PRICE/ISSUE | DIMENSIONS |
|------------|-----------------------|---|
| EIGHTH | \$30 - \$27 Prepaid | 1 ⁵ / ₈ " high X 2 ⁷ / ₈ " wide |
| QUARTER | \$50 - \$45 Prepaid | 3 ¹ / ₂ " high X 2 ⁷ / ₈ " wide |
| HALF VERT. | \$90 - \$81 Prepaid | 7" high X 2 ⁷ / ₈ " wide |
| HALF HORZ. | \$90 - \$81 Prepaid | 3 ¹ / ₂ " high X 6" wide |
| FULL PAGE | \$160 - \$144 Prepaid | 7 ¹ / ₂ " 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
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Editors: Deb Spilko and Mike Mahler
Ad Design: Mike Lipiec
Deadline for next issue: Mar 15 (Saturday), will be out night of Tuesday, Mar 25.

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 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.



To the Zone for hosting, James von Loewe, Jack Walburn, Tom, Jeff, Jay P K and Joe Tottleben for folding; Jay P K, James von Loewe, Deb Spilko, Jerry McCumber, Jack Walburn, Paula and Dylan for distribution, Bob for proofreading, Mike Lipiec for ad layout & etc. If you're interested in helping out, contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or info@eriegaynews.com.

Community News

Erie Gay Pride, Inc., Erie County's newly incorporated LGBT organization. Erie Gay Pride is looking for volunteers to help plan and organize this year's events. If you are interested in getting involved, please call Brian at 1-866-229-1974 (toll free). Get involved and show your Pride!

Men's Greet 'n Chat upcoming events

by Michael Mahler

The Men's Greet and Chat welcomes all gay and bi men looking for a friendly and informal social environment.

The next get together will be on Tuesday, Mar 18 at 7 PM at New York Lunch, 922 East Ave, Erie PA. Kathy Dahlkemper, Democratic candidate for US Congress for 3rd district PA, is expected to be stopping by as well.

Other upcoming Greet 'N Chat get togethers include Tuesday, Apr 29 at 7 PM Nunzi's, 2330 E 38th St, Erie PA and Tuesday, May 27 at Perkins, 2714 W Lake

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

Karaoke at the Zone

from Zone Dance Club

You asked for it, so we're going to do it! Coming soon to the Zone it's Karaoke! Check back here soon for more information on the first Karaoke party, or watch the Zone's website at www.thezonedanceclub.com

Grab your friends and head to the Zone so you can practice for the next American Idol competition. Don't worry if you can't carry a tune in a bucket, it's all about the fun! Watch for more details SOON!

Come on OUT! for Trivia Night

Come on OUT!, a new monthly GLBT social networking group, will once again, be hosting its popular Trivia Night Thursday, March 27, at the Zodiac Dinor, 2516 State St. Come on Out! offers the regional GLBT community an opportunity to get together in a

(continued on page 4)

COMING SOON...



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Community News

(continued from page 3)

social setting, have fun and make new friends.

The March 27 Trivia Night at the Zodiac Diner will begin at 7 p.m. Bring your own team of four people or come and join a team and make new friends. Prizes will be awarded to the winning team. Come on Out! and enjoy the fun.

For more information, call Brian at 1-888-749-7073 (toll free) or check out our new web site: <http://comeonouterie.googlepages.com>.

Come on OUT! is presented in cooperation with Erie Gay Pride, Inc., Erie's new GLBT community organization.

Another Busy Year for Crime Victim Center

The Crime Victim Center of Erie County provided assistance to 6,099 victims, their family members and witnesses to crimes last year. More than 1,100 of the victims were children - victims of sexual or physical violence. Services include 24 hour-a-day crisis intervention, counseling, court accompaniment, case status notification and assistance in filing claims for Crime Victims Compensation. Crime Victims Compensation - a state fund of money - awarded 132 claims for victims in Erie County last year totaling \$216,050. The Center has helped victims receive \$2.5 million from the fund over the last 20 years.

Community educators presented 552 prevention/education programs to 16,514 students in area schools on topics such as sexual abuse, bullying, Internet safety, sexual harassment and date rape.

The Center also offers counseling one day a week at its satellite offices in Corry, Edinboro and Union City. There are victim advocates on site in the District Attorney's Office, Juvenile Probation and the Housing Authority of the City of Erie.

For more information about programs and services, call (814) 455-9414.

**DEADLINE for next issue is
MARCH 15**

PA Rights

Update: Senate Bill 1250, the "Marriage Protection Amendment"

by Jake Kaskey

Education and Outreach Coordinator, Equality Advocates Pennsylvania

On Feb. 14, Senate Bill 1250, the "Marriage Protection Amendment," was referred to the Judiciary Committee in the Pennsylvania State Senate. This legislation was introduced with 17 co-sponsors, the same number of Senators who co-sponsored similar legislation last session. Four Republican Senators who co-sponsored similar legislation last session are currently not co-sponsoring SB 1250.

Erie County's two State Senators, Mary Jo White and Jane Earll, are currently not co-sponsoring this legislation, but both serve on the Judiciary Committee. For this bill to be voted on by the full Senate, it must first be passed out of the committee.

As many people as possible are needed to call and meet, face-to-face, with these important Senators and ask them to oppose moving Senate Bill 1250 out of the Judiciary Committee. Those living in Sen. Mary Jo White's district, may call her office at (814) 432-4345. Sen. Jane Earll can be contacted at (814) 453-2515. If you are unsure which district you live in, simply click on the "legislator locator" link at <http://equalitypa.org>.

This truly is a profound opportunity for to slow any momentum to pass this legislation, and stop the bill in committee. Senate Bill 1250 is an amendment to the constitution that would define marriage as solely between one man and one woman, and prohibit civil unions among other things. Those opposed to this amendment need to step up and make their voices heard.

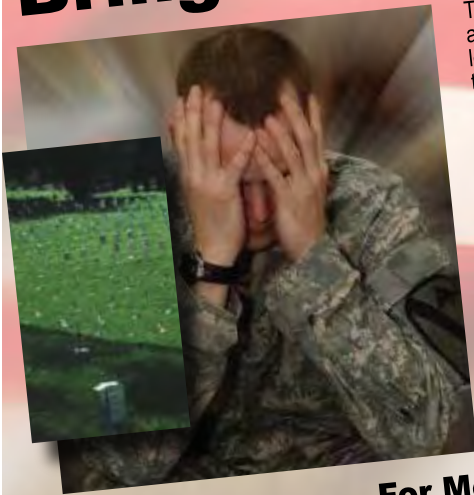
If you have any questions, please call me at (215) 731-1447 ext. 14 or e-mail jkaskey@equalitypa.org.

Stay updated!
Subscribe to the **Erie GLBT Mailing List**
visit www.eriegaynews.com

**Sunday
March 9, 2008 Downtown Erie**

**5 YEARS
TODAY!
MANY!**

Bring the Troops Home Now!



To mark five years since U.S. armed forces invaded Iraq, a massive Rally and March is scheduled in Erie on Sunday afternoon, March 9, 2008, and local candidates for Congress will tell where they stand on pulling our troops out of Iraq.

This public event starts at 1:30 p.m. with a rally and speakers at the gazebo on Perry Square. At 2 p.m. we will march through downtown Erie, led by U.S. military veterans, to St. Patrick's Cauley Center, 215 East 4th street. Marchers will carry symbols of the 4,000 brave American service men and women who lost their lives in Iraq.

At 3:00 p.m. in Cauley Auditorium, a presentation about the war's costs will be followed by a Forum during which congressional candidates for Pennsylvania District 3 will share their views on ending the Iraq war. All candidates were invited by the Erie Peace Initiative to participate in this Forum. All but one -- the incumbent, Phil English -- agreed to do so.

Please Join us!

Sponsored by Erie Peace Initiative

**For More Info Call 814-460-5522 or 864-8818:
Web: <http://nwpeace.org> or www.eriepeaceinitiative.org**

AFTER-EVENTS still being planned.

Calendar

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

Mar 1 (Sat) - Shari Gross at Billie's Jazz and Blues Club (Avalon Hotel) 9 PM to 1 AM. The entrance is off of Peach Street right on 10th and Peach, by the signs that say "Benjamin's" and "Billie's". Hope to see you there!

Mar 15 (Sat) - O'Zone Dance Party! (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA) Feeling Lucky? Join your friends for some four-leaf fun at our St.Patrick's Party! Wear Green! Have some green beer or dance an Irish jig! Catch the leprechaun and he might give you his pot of gold! Food, Fun, Friends! Get into your Zone! The Gay rainbow ends here! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Web: www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Mar 18 (Tue) - Men's Greet 'n Chat (New York Lunch, 922 East Ave, Erie PA 16503) 7 PM. Monthly week night social group for gay/bi men. All are welcome! Kathy Dahlkemper, Democratic candidate for US Congress for 3rd district PA, is expected to be stopping by as well. Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814)

456-9833. Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

Mar 22 (Sat) - Easter Bunny Hop! (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA) Hop on into the Zone for a night of FUN! The Easter bunny will be handing out Easter eggs filled with candy and treats! Guys - hunt for a nice big basket! Ladies - find a cute cuddly chick! Dance on down the Bunny trail! Join your friends for a "hopping" good time! Happy Easter from your friends at the Zone! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Web: www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Mar 23 (Sun) - Zone OPEN Easter Sunday! (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA) Easter Sunday with your "Gay Family and Friends" at the ZONE! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Web: www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Mar 25 (Tue) - Erie Gay News folding/distributing work party at Zone Club 133 W 18th St, Erie PA) 7 PM. PLEASE NOTE! New location! 21 and over, please. Help us get out the print edition of Erie Gay News. We will be folding and distributing the copies.

(continued on next page)

NEW NEW NEW NEW
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For an application to be listed (no charge), current editions, and prices, mailing labels, etc. please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Renaissance House, PO Box 533-EGN, Village Station, New York, NY 10014 646-213-0263 or email gypages@gmail.com

<http://gayellowpages.com>

Calendar

It's also a great way to hang out and chat with folks!
 Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833.
 Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to www.eriegaynews.com.

Mar 27 (Thu) – Trivia Night, sponsored by Come on OUT!, Erie's new GLBT monthly social group, 7 p.m., at the Zodiac Dinor, 2516 State St., Erie. Bring your team of four or join a team. Presented in cooperation with Erie Gay Pride, Inc. For information call Brian at 1-888-749-7073 or http://comeonouterie.googlepages.com.

Apr 4 (Fri) - Zone's Bear Bar Night! (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA) The Zone welcomes all the guys from Drenched Fur IV to a night of Dancing and fun! Hungry? Grab a bite to eat from the Zone Kitchen, Try a Zone Twister Cocktail & join your friends on the Video Dancefloor as fellow bear DJ TC plays your requests! Welcome to the Zone! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Web: www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Apr 24-27 (Thu-Sun) - Cleveland Leather Awareness Weekend Wyndham Hotel, 1260 Euclid, Cleve-

land, (216)252-2148, www.clawinfo.org.

Apr 29 (Tue) - Men's Greet 'n Chat (Nunzi's Place, 2330 E 38th St, Erie PA 16510) 7 PM. Monthly week night social group for gay/bi men. All are welcome! Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to http://menspace.eriegaynews.com.

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Theatre

Allegheny College Playshop Theatre Presents Stop Kiss

The Allegheny College Playshop Theatre continues its 2007/2008 season with Diana Son's deeply moving play *Stop Kiss*. Mark Cosdon, Assistant Professor of Theatre, directs the production. *Stop Kiss* will be performed Thursday, February 28 – Saturday, March 1 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, March 2 at 2:30 p.m. in Arter Hall, located on the Allegheny campus. Following Friday's performance, Terri Clark, MPH, will lead a post-show discussion. All are invited to attend.

Stop Kiss is a contemporary love story centered around two young women. Their deep, intimate friendship moves tentatively towards love, when suddenly the two are the victims of a particularly heinous hate crime. In the maelstrom of ensuing media scrutiny, the two women are forced to reevaluate their commitment to each other. First presented in 1998 at New York's Public Theater, the New York Times called *Stop Kiss* "a sweet, sad, and enchantingly sincere play."

Director Mark Cosdon states, "Stop Kiss is a warm, tender love story. It's very funny, mirroring the experiences of many in those first days of romance. Yet what Son manages is to create an unsettling, honest inquiry into the nature of sexual identity." Cosdon continued, "It's a play I admire and I'm eager to present it to our audiences."

Stop Kiss features a talented ensemble of Allegheny performers, including Lizzy Pecora (Pittsburgh, PA) as Callie, Carrie Miller (Pittsburgh, PA) as Sara, Shaun Hayden (Wilmette, IL) as George, Brian Henderson (Wilmington, DE) as Peter, Katy Grant (Pittsburgh, PA) as Mrs. Winsley/Nurse, and Corey O'Connor (Pittsburgh, PA) as Detective Cole. Marianne Broome (Pittsburgh, PA) serves as the production's stage man-

ager. Visiting Assistant Professor of Theatre Ellen E. Jones designed sets and lights. The costume designer is Gail Kralj. Jim Sumerfield is the sound designer.

Tickets for *Stop Kiss* are \$7.50 for adults; \$5.00 for non-Allegheny students, senior citizens, and Allegheny employees. With identification, Allegheny students are admitted at no charge. Please note: *Stop Kiss* includes language and situations some may find offensive. For more information or to order tickets contact the Playshop Theatre Box Office at (814) 332-3414.

On Stage

Selected performances of possible interest to GLBT audiences.

Feb 28 - Lez Zeppelin in Pittsburgh at Diesel Club Lounge. All-female Led Zeppelin cover band. www.dieselpgh.co

Feb 29-Mar 22 - "Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks"
Presented by Buffalo United Artists.

Mar 1 - Shari Gross performs at Billie's (Avalon Hotel & Conference Center/Billie's Blues and Jazz Club, 16 W 10th St, Erie, PA) 9 PM - 1 AM. Contemporary blues. Phone: (814) 459-2220. Email: info@avalonerie.com. Browse to <http://www.avalonerie.com>.

Mar 2 - Ani DiFranco in concert at Carnegie Library Music Hall, Homestead PA www.righteousbabe.com

Mar 15 - k.d. lang in concert University at Buffalo www.ubcfa.org/

Mar 28 - Bernadette Peters with the North Coast Men's Chorus and the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, 8 PM, Allen Theater, 1407 Euclid Ave., Cleveland www.ncmchorus.org or 216-556-0590, then from Playhouse Square at 216-241-6000 or www.playhousesquare.com.

Apr 4 - Melissa Ferrick on concert in Cleveland, OH at Beachland Ballroom & Tavern www.melissaferrick.com

Apr 29 - Erie BROADWAY Series presents "Hair-spray" at Warner Theatre 7:30pm Call (814) 452-4857 or (814) 456-7070. Purchase at the Erie Civic Center box office, Ticketmaster outlets or www.ticketmaster.com.



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DRENCHED FUR 4

is coming to
Erie!

April 4th-6th, 2008

Not registered? Check out www.drenchedfur.com for full run info!
Can't do the whole weekend? Pick and choose 1, 2 or 3 what you want to do!

Friday
Night at



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1

Private After Hours Event

\$25/person

10:30PM-1:30AM

*Jeff at
Splash
Lagoon*



Saturday
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The **Avalon**
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2

An Evening of Entertainment
\$35/person 7PM-2AM

Join us for Buffet Dinner Service w/Cash Bar,
Entertainment Event w/opening Act Erie's Own
Uncle Pete, Headliner: Comedian William Brown,
Wet'n Wild Dance with Guest DJ Tony Ruiz
Limited Tickets Available



Uncle Pete



William Brown



DJ Tony Ruiz

3

Entertainment & Dance
\$8/person in advance

8:30PM-2AM Both comedian & dance
open to public with Cover.

Visit www.drenched.com/nonrunreg for On-line
ticket purchasing with PayPal payment option.
For info, contact Gary at or 814.384.0463
gnsnyder@drenchedfur.com

Letters

In support of Hillary Clinton

I wanted to write voicing my strong support, as a gay man, for the candidacy of Hillary Rodham Clinton. A number of years ago, I attended the New York Gay Pride Weekend. I believe it was the summer of 2001. Suddenly, my friend and I heard the crowds going wild from blocks away. The roar of the crowd grew stronger and stronger as this celebrity of obvious fanatical appeal drew closer. We couldn't imagine who it could be. Suddenly appearing before us was Hillary Rodham Clinton dressed in a bright spring colored jacket. She was surrounded by delighted gay men and women. She was waving enthusiastically to the adoring and flabbergasted crowds.

We were all overwhelmed on that singular day that a former First Lady and a United States Senator was taking the bold and public step in recognizing and celebrating the gay constituents of her state and of her country.

I felt compelled to write to ask my gay brothers and sisters to walk with her now. Do it because she has tirelessly worked to improve conditions for the poor and the working class. Do it because she was the first person to present a universal health care plan to Congress when she was the First Lady. Do it because she and her husband have fiercely supported equal rights for women and persons of color. Do it because she has decades of experience and is highly connected nationally and internationally. Do it because the Clinton years were the most prosperous in recent memory, leaving the country with no national debt. Do it because she has high ideals, but also pragmatic, published solutions to the many critical problems facing us today. Do it because she will begin to implement those solutions during her first day in office.

Lastly do it, because she doesn't just talk the talk. She walks the walk, just as she did in support of gay pride on that sunny and happy day in New York City. Thank you.

Neil Donohoe
Boston

Heading Out of Town?

Looking for bars, accommodations, restaurants,
—or just general visitors' information?
Visit the Resources section at www.eriegaynews.com.

Do you know the signs of an abusive relationship?

- Does "IT'S HIS/HER WAY OR THE HIGHWAY" apply to the relationship?
- Does one partner get blamed for everything that goes wrong? "IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!"
- Is the relationship full of put downs and disparaging comments?
- Is jealousy off the charts?
- Are there constant calls and "tracking" of the partner?

1475/082



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Java Buzz

Brother Bean lights up the Venango scene

by Gwen

My name is Gwen Kahler and—together with my husband, Bruce—I opened Brother Bean Global Coffee House in December 2005. I am 48 years old, very happily married, and the mother of three very cool and non-conforming young adults. I am fairly outgoing, enjoy meeting new people, always have more ideas than sense, am a risk-taker, and generally enjoy life and consider mine to have been an adventure thus far.

In addition to providing a delicious selection of espresso drinks, teas, sandwiches and soups, I have worked to build an excellent music venue in Venango County. We have live performances every Saturday night at 7 pm. My goal is to have a variety of musical styles and always be a place that provides a welcoming and comfortable environment. Our performers have come from the immediate area and from across the country. Please spread the word that I am looking for musicians who want to play a coffeehouse. Please check our myspace page for the schedule of events and to listen to the musicians that will be appearing. myspace.com/brotherbeancoffeehouse

We also have a game night every Friday night starting at 6:30 pm. We have games from all over the world. Come with friends, sit, talk, play! Our Game-master Guy will be here to explain new games. We stay open until 10 pm on game night and ask that everyone be out by 10:30 so our staff can go home! This weekly event has become a multigenerational party night. I have found it very rewarding to walk through the coffeehouse and see families with preschoolers, preteens with friends, teens, young adult couples, and even dating senior citizens enjoying the evening! Now that's community!

The first and third Thursday of each month we run a book discussion group. Our choices of books and subjects deal with civil rights, government abuse of power, the misuse of our military, and local activism.

I like to meet people and hope that lots of folks will check out Brother Bean in Seneca, PA and enjoy it as much as I do!

We created Brother Bean Global Coffee House with the goal of making a place where people would meet and spend time and become community. The

decor speaks to you “spend time, snuggle in, be welcome.” I feel like it's my own giant living room and all these wonderful people come to see me all day long! I hope you will come and see me soon! *Brother Bean Global Coffeehouse is at 2803 State Route 257, Seneca, PA. Phone: (814) 677-0232*

Zodiac Diner performers

2516 State St, Erie PA. (814) 455-3543

Zodiac has now added acoustic performers on Friday night, open mic comedy on Saturdays. Proudly here to support the community. Contact the Zodiac for organization fundraisers. Having monthly dinner parties at 7 PM on March 20, Apr 24 & May 22. Tickets are \$10 and include food buffet, dessert, beverages. For more info, call the diner at (814) 455-3543.

Intermezzo readings

12 Park Place, Fredonia NY www.intermezzocoffeehouse.com
Phone: (716) 672-6070.

March 29 is -Medium Saturday, 11:30-3:30 PM, Readings are \$20 for 15 minutes, and \$40 for 30 minutes. Appointments can be made ahead of time; walk-ins will only be taken if someone who has an appointment is a no-show.

Eclectic Etceteras line-up

118 Erie St., Edinboro, PA www.myspace.com/eecoffeehouse.

Feb 29 from 5-7 pm Title Me Wrong Acoustic Set

Apr 4 - Frank Marzano 5-7pm

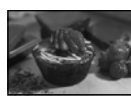
Apr 11 - Veterans Status 5-7pm

Apr 12 - Patchouli 1-3PM

Apr 19 - Solace Sovay 1-3 pm

Intermezzo Coffeehouse

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A Time to Give

Rev. Richard A. Moyer

Pastor Community United Church

When I was growing up we lived in the inner-city. My mother thought that it would be a good idea for me to be exposed to some activities outside our neighborhood. She decided that I should join the Boy Scouts.

Her decision was good for me. I enjoyed the camping, the cookouts and the camaraderie.

But there was another part of scouting that didn't appeal to me at all. It was the annual candy sale.

We were required to be door-to-door salesmen. I was shy and reserved and it wasn't easy for me to ring the door bell of a stranger's house and try to force my way inside so that I could make my well-rehearsed sales pitch.

I was surprisingly successful. I think it was because people took pity on me.

The Boy Scouts had a great idea. We would sell candy right before Easter, hoping that those who answered the door would be thinking about filling bas-

kets in the near future with chocolate bars and other assorted candies we had for sale.

But there were also limitations related to pre-Easter candy sales. Since we were selling candy during Lent, those who wanted an excuse had the perfect response: "I can't buy from you; I've given up candy for Lent!"

Giving up something for Lent is an age-old tradition and discipline that probably goes back as far as the Second Century. Lent has always been seen as a time to break old habits that aren't good for us anyway.

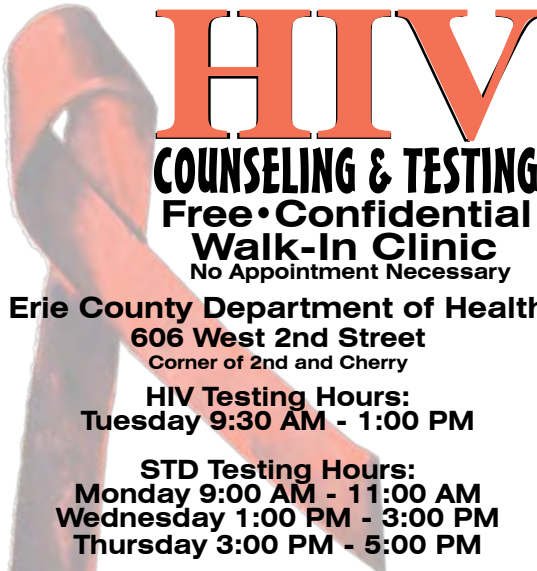
But Lenten promises are like New Year's resolutions; they usually are forgotten soon after they are made. To give up something during the 40-day Lent may not be a bad idea.

A friend of mine told me that he is determined to quit smoking during Lent, and another spoke to me about trying to do something about his drinking problem. Both might be able to benefit by their decisions, but giving up something that doesn't do us much good, or denying a pleasure, is only a small part of the larger meaning of the Lenten Season.

Lent comes to its conclusion just after Good Friday. Jesus gave everything he had, his very life when he was crucified. In John's Gospel we read that "God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son." Lent isn't so much about giving up as it is about giving.

For those who observe Lent (and those who do not) this is a good time of the year to think about what we can do to share our lives with others. Every world religion adheres to the Golden Rule in some form. If we do unto others as we would have others do unto us, this world would be a better place. If we follow the Golden Rule we find opportunities to give!

Use this time of year to give a little more of your talent and time to help make someone else's life a little better. Use this season to let go of past mistakes, hurts and failures, and look to the future with hope and anticipation that spring is just around the corner. And think not so much about what you should give up as about what you can give!



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Buffalo Churches Apologize & Welcome Gay People

Buffalo, New York (January 11, 2008) — In an open letter to gay people in Western New York, leaders of Episcopal congregations in Buffalo offered an apology and asked forgiveness from gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. The letter further emphasized that they offer gay people, welcoming and loving religious congregations.

An email sent to Buffalo GLBT media outlet Outcome by The Reverend Armand John Kreft, Rector Church of the Ascension, offered their support of GLBT people in their battles with hatred, bigotry, prejudice and violence.

The full text of the letter follows:

Contact: The Reverend Armand John Kreft, Rector Church of the Ascension 716-884-6362 COTAB@Verizon.net

Date: January 11, 2008

An Open Letter to the GLBT Community:

We leaders of Episcopal congregations in Buffalo want to offer our apology and ask forgiveness from the Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender community. For centuries the institutional church and organized religion have slandered, tortured, disenfranchised and sometimes murdered members of the community. We ask forgiveness for using our Sacred Scriptures to wrongly justify hatred, bigotry, prejudice and violence against those of different affectional orientation and gender identification, both in the past and, unfortunately, still today.

As leaders of congregations, some of us openly gay and lesbian, we are humbled and vow to use our influence to change not only our religions but our laws that seek to marginalize the GLBT community. If you would like to seek an organized religion, we would urge you to attend as many different denominations and spiritual paths as you can. There are several that will welcome you. If you wish to seek an Episcopal

Church, those of us listed below promise a welcoming and loving community for you, and/or your partner and your children.

EPISCOPAL CHURCHES OF THE CENTRAL ERIE (NY) DEANERY

St. Paul's Cathedral Church, 128 Pearl Street, Buffalo NY

Church of the Ascension, 16 Linwood Avenue at North St., Buffalo NY

St. John's – Grace Church, 51 Colonial Circle, Buffalo NY

Church of the Good Shepherd, 96 Jewett Parkway, Buffalo NY

St. Phillips Church, 18 Sussex Street, Buffalo NY

Chapel of St. Anthony of Padua, 1114 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo NY

Ephphatha Church of the Deaf, 96 Jewett Parkway, Buffalo NY

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National News Briefs

by Bob

California Court to Hear Gay Marriage Arguments

The California Supreme Court will hear arguments in the gay marriage legal battle on March 4, assuring that a ruling will be issued by June.

The legal challenge hearings will be conducted in San Francisco, where the same-sex marriage issue began four years ago when Mayor Gavin Newsom temporarily issued marriage licenses to gay couples.

Since then, San Francisco city officials and civil rights groups have challenged California's ban on gay marriage, arguing that it deprives same-sex couples of the same legal rights as heterosexual couples.

In 2006, a divided California appeals court upheld the state ban, overturning a San Francisco judge who had declared it unconstitutional. The state Supreme Court will be reviewing that appeals court ruling and must rule within 90 days of the arguments.

University Ends Campus Blood Drives in protest of anti-gay rules

In protest over anti-gay regulations, San Jose State University in California has suspended all on-campus blood drives.

In announcing the decision, university President Don Kassing said that federal donation guidelines that forbid gay men from donating blood conflict with the school's non-discrimination policy regarding sexual orientation.

Since 1977, the Food and Drug Administration has forbidden the Red Cross and other organizations from collecting blood from sexually active gay men. This and several other FDA donation restrictions ultimately make less than 38 percent of people in the United States eligible to donate blood, according to the American Red Cross website.

"I recognize the importance of giving blood and we know that universities are significant sources of blood . . . however lacking further action by the FDA, we are guided by the clear mandates of our non-discrimination policy," Kassing said in an email to students. He said the suspension will continue until the FDA reevaluates its policy.

The university's decision has been commended by some gay-rights groups, but has blood banks worried other universities and institutions will follow suit and cancel blood drives, causing a shortage of blood.

Louis Katz, executive vice president of the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center, a member of the American Association of Blood Banks, said all blood centers are forced to adhere to the FDA's regulations in order to use donated blood.

"Canceling blood drives is not a good thing," Katz said. "When you cancel blood drives the blood supply decreases including for gays who go to HIV clinics for transfusions."

Some gay activist groups see the FDA's restrictions as targeting the gay community for a universal disease.

"It is unfortunate that such a restriction had to be put in place, but we commend San Jose State University," said National Gay and Lesbian Task Force spokeswoman Roberta Sklar. "With proper testing anyone can be shown to be safe to give blood. The FDA restrictions are completely discriminatory and have no basis on science," she said. "It perpetuates homophobia for an illness that is treated the same in gays as anyone else."

Curbs on Gay Group at Justice Department Reversed

U.S. Attorney General Michael B. Mukasey has reversed a decision that had barred a Justice Department gay advocacy group from using the e-mail, bulletin boards and meeting rooms at the department. At the same time, Mukasey issued a revised equal-employment-opportunity policy barring discrimination against any group.

The policy against the group was put in place five years ago by then-Attorney General John Ashcroft and continued by his successor, Alberto Gonzales.

Mukasey informed leaders of DOJ Pride last week that the department would give it the same rights as all other DOJ employee organizations, said the group's president, Chris Hook. In a statement, Mukasey said the department will "foster an environment in which diversity is valued, understood and sought" and maintain "an environment that's free of discrimination."

National News Briefs

Hook noted that the five-year ban on DOJ Pride's activities within the department hurt the organization. As a result of "what some would term a hostile environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees, the membership rolls have suffered," Hook said.

"As you can imagine," he added, "it is difficult to let employees know of the group's existence when they are not informed of it in official department literature, or only through word of mouth." Hook said the group had more than 200 members when the ban was handed down in 2003.

Under the Clinton administration, DOJ Pride had more freedom, holding its annual pride celebration in the Justice Department's Great Hall. Under the Bush administration, the group was told it would have to pay more than \$2,000 to lease the space, including payments for security, Hook said. Pride celebrations were instead held in small conference rooms reserved by employees and group members.

Recently, when the group organized "DOJ Pride on Ice," a skating event, it was barred from placing a notice on the bulletin board in the department's headquarters building, Hook said. Other events such as meetings, forums and brown-bag discussions also could not be posted, he said.

Justice Department spokesman Peter Carr declined to respond to the specific allegations made by Hook. He said that Mukasey now will permit DOJ Pride to use bulletin boards, easels and the department's e-mail system.

Memorial to Gay Nazi Victims Nears Completion

A new memorial to the gay victims of Nazi Germany should be ready within months, German officials said.

The \$890,000 memorial will be located in Berlin's Tiergarten Park, across from the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, German Culture Minister Bernd Neumann said. Homosexuality was banned under the Nazis and tens of thousands of people, primarily men, were arrested. Many were sent to concentration camps.

The memorial is the first one constructed in Germany to remember gay victims of Nazi persecution, although such memorials exist in Amsterdam and

San Francisco.

The German parliament approved the memorial in 2003.

The true number of gay men killed during the Nazi reign is not known, since laws forbidding homosexuality were kept in Germany long after World War II ended. An estimated 15,000 gay men were sent to concentration camps during the Nazi era, but some believe as many as 600,000 could have been killed.

Unlike other groups, the ongoing stigma facing survivors of the camps meant few survivors came forward to tell their story. Those who did speak talked of torture, beatings and being mauled by dogs.

Recurring events

Always Our Children, Catholic Charities, 329 W. 10th St, Erie, PA. Mar 5, Apr 2 at 7 PM. For Catholic parents of GLBT children. First time attendees should call facilitator before attending meeting. Phone: (814) 456-2091.

Deadline for print edition of Erie Gay News. Mar 15, Apr 14. EGN, 1115 W 7th St, Erie, PA. Contact: Michael Mahler. (814) 456-9833. info@eriegaynews.com.

Folding/distributing work party for print edition of Erie Gay News. Mar 25, Apr 22 **At the Zone**, 133 W 18th St, Erie PA. Contact: Michael Mahler. (814) 456-9833. info@eriegaynews.com.

Lake Erie Alliance for Democracy (LEAD) **Mar 3, Apr 7.** Chris Mitchell. Phone: (814) 899-8920. Email: president@erielead.org. Browse to www.erielead.org

PFLAG Erie/Crawford County. Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie, Mar 10, Apr 14. 7180 New Perry Highway. 7 - 8:30 PM. Contact: Mark Hoovler pflagerie@eriegaynews.com. Ph: John at (814) 454-1392.

Support group for those dealing with loss Mar 11 at 7 PM, Mar 20 at 10 AM, Apr 8 at 7 PM, Apr 17 at 10 AM. Hospice of Metropolitan Erie, 202 E 10th St, Erie, PA. Ph: (814) 456-6689. Email: hospice@velocity.net.

NY Court: State must honor Canadian marriage

From Empire State Pride Agenda

February 6, 2008 - On February 1, an appellate level court in the Rochester area issued an opinion (Martinez v. County of Monroe) saying that the state of New York must respect the Canadian marriage of a same-sex couple. This means that, unless and until another appellate level court in New York State issues a contradictory opinion, this decision is binding on all courts in the state.

So for now all same-sex couples with Canadian marriage licenses are legally entitled to the 1,324 rights and responsibilities the state gives to all other married couples. The court's reasoning indicates that the same is true for same-sex couples in marriages that were legal where conducted, such as those in countries like Spain or South Africa or states like Massachusetts when it was marrying out-of-state couples. This decision continues what has become a common practice in both the public and private sectors here in New York of extending things like health insurance, retirement benefits, discounted automobile insurance rates and bereavement leave to these married couples. With the Martinez decision, this practice has an even stronger force of law behind it.

It is important to note that none of the federal rights and responsibilities of marriage are available to any married same-sex couples in the United States until the federal Defense of Marriage Act is repealed or invalidated. It is also important to note that the Martinez decision is about marriage only, and does not speak to how civil unions or domestic partnerships should be treated under the law here in New York.

This area of law dealing with same-sex couples is very much in a state of flux. There are other cases with decisions pending in lower and appellate level courts across the state on the issues of marriage and civil unions, and the Martinez decision itself can be appealed to New York's highest court, the Court of Appeals.

We realize how this state of legal uncertainty poses challenges and frustration for same-sex couples seeking to protect themselves and their families. For example, it is uncertain how same-sex married couples should file their state income taxes, where married

status is closely connected to federal filing status. Because each legal situation is unique and fact-specific, we advise same-sex couples to consult an attorney before deciding what actions are best to take for their particular families.

One thing is certain though -- while this decision is good step forward for our families, this issue will only be settled once and for all when we have a law saying that same-sex couples can marry here in New York State.

There has been powerful and important movement in this direction. Last year, Governor Spitzer introduced and the New York State Assembly passed, in a bipartisan 85-61 vote, legislation to allow same-sex couples to marry. Now, the only remaining step is for the State Senate to do what the Governor and the Assembly have done and that is to support legislation allowing same-sex couples to marry.

The Empire State Pride Agenda is working hard to change hearts and minds of New Yorkers on marriage for same-sex couples. We are also actively engaged in the political process to make sure marriage equality will become a reality. Every New Yorker is a vital part of this effort and you can be part of this by becoming a Marriage Ambassador, by joining over a thousand New Yorkers in Albany on April 29 for LGBT Equality & Justice Day or by calling Nora Yates, Field Director, at 518-472-3330 x 301.

Visit Empire State Pride Agenda at www.prideagenda.org

Helpful numbers

Gay and Lesbian National Hotline

1-888-843-GLNH www.glnh.org/index_.html

Covenant House Nineline (youth)

1-800-999-9999

Trevor Helpline for Suicidal Gay Youth

1-800-850 8078

Erie Hotline (814) 453-5656

Youth

Guide for LGBT support sent to every high school in Ohio

The Northeast Ohio chapter of GLSEN has announced the release of "Ohio Educator's Guide to GLBTQ* Resources: A Guide for Creating Safe Schools for ALL Youth." The culmination of several years of effort by dedicated Chapter volunteers, this 143-page manual provides school administrators and classroom educators with research studies, model anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies, staff training and curriculum resources, support for gay-straight alliances, and referral sources for additional information and assistance.

GLSEN stands for Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.

Anthony Glassman of the Cleveland Gay People's Chronicle notes that "GLSEN was hesitant to promote the resource guide outside of their own newsletter, fearing a backlash from conservative state administrators and anti-gay activists.

"However, both in their own newsletter and in conversations with the Gay People's Chronicle, they expressed pride in the long work they have now completed."

"No other chapter has undertaken the distribution of so large a body of material to so wide an audience," noted Gene Ashley, one of the chapter's directors, "every one of Ohio's nearly 1,200 high schools."

The GLSEN is a national organization that strives to assure that each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression.

You can view or download a copy of the guide at the chapter's website at www.glsen.org/northeastoh
Contact info: GLSEN - NE Ohio, MPO Box 0472, Oberlin, Ohio 44074-0472 Phone: (216) 556-0960; Email: info@glseennortheastohio.org

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Picnic Update

Plans are shaping up for the 16th Annual Pride Picnic on Saturday, June 28 from 1 to 6 PM at the Rotary Pavilion at Presque Isle. Our next meeting will be Sunday, March 16 at 2 PM at Panera's Yorktown, 2501 W 12th St.

We will have children's activities. Also, if you are interested in performing as an entertainer or other forms of volunteering, please contact us. Check back here regularly for updates, or contact Mike at (814) 456-9833 or info@eriegaynews.com.



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for our list of locations



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Lic. NCTMB/ACE

Michael Dithers

by Michael Mahler

It's been a fairly busy month. We are just beginning to plan for the 16th Annual Pride Picnic on Saturday, June 28th from 1 to 6 PM at the Rotary Pavilion at Presque Isle. Full details and registration are at <http://picnic.eriegaynews.com>.

We have also set up groups at MySpace and Facebook for friends, fans and supporters of Erie Gay News. Check them out at <http://groups.myspace.com/eriegaynews> and <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=8425024033>.

I had a wonderful time at the recent dance at the Latonia Theatre in Oil City. They had a great turn out, and everyone was very friendly. I went with Ken, who took the photos on the inside back cover of this issue. After the dance, we followed some of the folks to a local straight bar. It was okay and we were dancing, but at one point, there seemed to be a possibly hostile straight couple. Ken can definitely take care of himself, but I am fairly sure that my role in any sort of physical confrontation is to cry and scream like a 9 year old girl. So, we left as it was getting late anyway.

Putting on one of the other hats that I wear (specifically, the pointy one), the United NeoPagan Council of Lake Erie is going to begin putting out a bimonthly print publication beginning in late June. There are different folks working on the other newsletter, but we will have combined folding/distribution work parties. (Yay! More people to take stuff around.)

One of the reasons I wanted to do this was to possibly incidentally boost the advertiser/distribution base for Erie Gay News. (In fact, one of the members of UNCLE works in Erie and lives in Edinboro, and he was up for taking newsletters there, which would save us on postage.) I very strongly believe that one of the best ways to build community is to interact with folks outside of the GLBT community. Usually, If you want folks to come to your stuff, you need to go to their home turf and step outside your comfort zone.

Also, keep an eye peeled for the issue coming out after this. We will be having questions and answers from candidates in our area running for US Congress, PA State Senator and PA State Representative. And don't forget to vote on April 22!

Photo Gallery from Latonia Party

On February 16, 2008, several folks organized a very nice dance at the Latonia Theatre in Oil City, PA. About 75 people attended. Everyone had a wonderful time! These photos were taken by Ken Kula. To see all of the photos, as well as photo galleries dating back to 1995, browse to www.eriegaynews.com/gallery.php





March 15
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Saturday March 15

O'ZONE
St. Patrick's Party!

-Wear GREEN!



Saturday March 22

Easter Bunny Hop!

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