



Stonewall Celebration at UU on June 14

from Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie

The annual "Stonewall Celebration!" all inclusive worship service will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie at 7180 New Perry Highway (Route 97) on Sunday, June 14th at 10:30 am. Buddhist Lama, Kathy Wesley, will be speaking. John Daley King will tell the Stonewall Story. Jeremy Snyder will lead us in honoring "Our Ancestors of the Queer Spirit". There will be "a closet door" to sign in upon! Join in commemorating the momentous events of June 26, 27, and 28, 1969. It is also "PFLAG DAY" and Mark Hoovler, president of our PFLAG chapter, will bring us greetings. Coffee hour to follow.

For more info call Rev. Steve Aschmann at 440-0902 or email revaschmann@uuerie.org.

First-ever Pride Youngstown event

from Mahoning Valley Pride

Pride Youngstown is holding the area's first ever Gay Pride event on June 6th, 2009, in downtown Youngstown. Phelps Street, between W Commerce and Federal Plaza will be blocked off for the festival. The event will run from noon until 8 PM and will include live entertainment, food, fun, and activities for all ages. There will also be informative presentations that celebrate the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered) community.

Much like LGBT Pride events held in cities throughout the United States, Pride Youngstown is designed to promote awareness about the LGBT community and to provide businesses, organizations, and residents the opportunity to develop positive community relationships. The event is family inclusive, free, and open to the general public.

This first year event in Youngstown, OH has been made possible with the financial support of persons throughout the Mahoning Valley and by fundraisers held by the Pride Youngstown staff at neighborhood establishments.

Opening ceremonies begin at noon and will



Grooms Bruce and Tony with their Best Pup, Rusty at their May 16 commitment service at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie. Photo: Mike Mahler

be followed by a full day of entertainment provided by local artists. There will be food and merchandise vendors for all tastes.

A kick off party will be held the night before (location tba) and the evening will end with a candle lit vigil and an after party (location tba).

Volunteers are needed to help out with all events throughout the day.

Contact Pride Youngstown at prideyoungstown@gmail.com if you'd like to help. For more information about Pride Youngstown visit www.prideyoungstown.com

Imperial Court of Buffalo Coronation May 30

From Imperial Court of Buffalo.

The House of Couture and Cotton Candy proudly present "Court Gone Wild" May 30th at the Adams Mark Hotel in Buffalo NY.

The Imperial Court of Buffalo is celebrating 18

(continued on page 3)

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Classified Ads are available!
See page 5 for more info.

EGN Rates & Data

| | | |
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| 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
 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 for next issue: Monday, June 15;
this will be distributed the night of Tuesday, June 23.

The *Erie Gay News* is published monthly as a source of news, events, information, and support for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered people (GLBTs), their families, friends, and supporters in the Erie PA area.

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

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

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



To Mike Kohler for hosting and Keith for setting up; Andrea, Brian Simmonsen, Bruce Shrou, Bryan, Dan Wheeler, Don, Erin M. M., Gary, James von Loewe, Jerry McCumber, Johauna, Kelly Kidd, Kim, Oat and Robin Green for folding; Andrea, Bruce Shrou, Bryan, Erin M. M., Johauna, John, Kim and Paula for distribution, Mike Lipiec for ad layout & etc and Peter for proofreading. If you're interested in helping out, contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or info@eriegaynews.com.

DONATIONS FOR



EGN

Erie Gay News

is looking for donations to help make the Pride Picnic happen!

To show our appreciation, all donors will receive a **FREE web banner ad** in rotation at the Erie Gay News web site for 1 month. In addition, the top donor will get a **FREE 1 month half page ad**, 2nd top donor will get a **quarter page ad**, and 3rd top donor will get an **eighth page ad**. These ads will run in the July issue. **Layout is FREE of charge!**

APPRECIATED!

The deadline for this special offer for donors is Friday, June 5.

Contact Michael Mahler at info@eriegaynews.com or 814-456-9833 for more information.

Community News

years of noble deeds as a 501-C3 non-profit fundraising organization with assisting numerous charities in the Western New York area.

The Imperial Court of Buffalo raises funds for the Buffalo community and AIDS/Gay related charities (among others charities as well), while providing fun and entertaining events for the community. Our members not only help by raising funds, but also by volunteering time and manpower. The Imperial Court of Buffalo has assisted such events as: Cause for Celebration, Buffalo Pride, Artists and Models, Ways In Being Gay, National Coming Out Day, The Kellie McCarthy Aids Walk, The Arties, Juvenile Diabetes Walk and many, many more. If there is a cause or event which needs help, you are very likely to find members of the I.C.O.B. in regalia or not.

The Imperial Court of Buffalo and its membership sponsor a variety of fundraising events, including shows, theme parties, pageants, dinners, basket raffles, raffle tickets and red ribbon sales to name a few. Check them online at www.imperialcourtofbuffalo.com

2009 Erie Pride Weekend July 25-26

Don Craig- 2009 Pride Weekend Chairman

It's that time of the year again, when everyone starts to think about Pride. I'm pleased to announce that the 2009 Erie Gay Pride Weekend is July 25th-26th. This weekend will be bigger and better than ever before.

On Saturday, July 25th the Annual Pride Parade will take place. Those wishing to participate in the parade are asked to gather at the Zone Dance Club, 133 W. 18th Street at 12 noon. The parade will kick off at 1 PM from the Zone Dance Club and continue down State Street to Perry's Square West. The Pride Rally will begin around 2 PM. There are many activities planned including speakers, local singers, and the 2008 & 2009 Miss Erie will be performing as well as a few other performers. There will be a wide variety of vendors and displays for everyone to enjoy. This year EGP is proud to bring Jeremiah Clark of Pittsburgh to entertain us. The headliner for this year is the talented Tom Goss. Please bring your lawn chairs and enjoy this wonderful event the Pride committee has planned

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Community News

for all to enjoy.

Tom Goss and Jeremiah Clark came to Erie and performed a couple months ago and they are very excited to come back to Erie and perform in front of a bigger crowd and to get their message out. Please check out Tom's website at www.tomgossmusic.com. Let's all come and show our "True Colors" and give all of our performers a huge turnout this year and show them the Erie spirit of unity.

There will be a religious service on July 26th presented by the Erie Community United Church on 1101 West 38th Street Erie, PA.

If you're in need of some fun and relaxation join us for the 1st annual GLBT day at Waldameer Park and Water World after the church service at 12 noon. A good meeting place is in front of rainbow gardens in the theme park. Combo tickets will be offered at a discounted price. Please check out our website for additional information and to register.

Last but not least don't forget to pick up your 2009 Erie Gay Pride T-Shirt. They are red this year

and have the winning design form our t-shirt design competition. This year's winner is Patrick Hiller from Erie. T-shirts will soon be available at the Zone Dance Club, Craze, or by using the email below. The shirts are \$15.00 no matter the size. If you would like a shirt larger than an XL go to our website or email your order to eriepride@gmail.com and I will order it for you.

For more information on this years pride weekend visit our website at www.eriegaypride.org

Oil Region Indie Music Fest June 13

from Oil Region Indie

The Oil Region Indie Music Fest will be held 2:00 - 9:00PM in conjunction with the kick-off of the Seneca Summer Saturday Street Fairs. Two stages (Pipeline Alley and Seneca Street), informal busking, (jam sessions and gigging,) in the Transit Building and elsewhere; hands-on art projects and installations, local businesses are arranging for craft vendors, food vendors, etc. This is an Open Studio day. For more information visit www.myspace.com/oilregionindie



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Booker T. Washington Center
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About Collegiate Academy Gay Straight Alliance

by Nicole Steele

Having a Gay-Straight Alliance has been a dream of mine since I was in 8th grade. I knew I had to make my dream a reality when I survived some serious health problems this year. I told myself that if I survived I would start a Gay-Straight Alliance. Having a Gay-Straight Alliance is just a baby step on the path to my life goal of securing Human Rights, including Gay marriage and rights. When I decided I had to get the Gay-Straight Alliance going, I immediately started researching and getting a proposal together for my principal. The research and fine tuning of the proposal took me weeks. When the proposal was finally done to the best of my abilities I left a note for my principal to schedule a meeting. It took two different meetings with my principal to get it started. My principal seemed very supportive and I have had great support from my teachers and fellow students. With the help of my teachers, Mike Mahler, Maureen Koseff, and my mom I finally got the Gay-Straight Alliance up and running.

Collegiate Academy Gay-Straight Alliance meetings are pretty fun. We have all grown close to each other. We are currently planning group events and just recently a few of us participated in the National Day of Silence. I can honestly say that the Collegiate GSA is everything I could have hoped for and more. For anyone who is planning on starting a GSA here are a few tips:

1) Do your research! There's nothing more stressful than having a meeting with your principal, why not make it easier on you by knowing what you are talking about.

2) Make a proposal. This way you can leave a copy with your principal so that he/she can look it over if they haven't given you a definite yes.

3) Schedule a meeting with your principal. By leaving a note for him/her requesting a meeting they have the freedom of deciding when.

4) Know who your allies are. It always helps to know which teachers/ students are on your side.

5) Write a letter. Write a nice letter to your principal after your first meeting expressing your gratitude for him/her actually considering having a GSA.

6) Know your rights. If your principal rejects having a GSA, look up the Equal Access Act.

7) Make copies! Make copies of everything you do or research this way if you need to let your principal know about the Equal Access Act, you have a copy for her and a copy for yourself.

My biggest suggestion to anyone considering starting a Gay-Straight Alliance is to not get involved if your whole heart is not in it. It's a very stressful job that requires a lot out of you. Being at Collegiate Academy I can tell you first hand that you will have to schedule your time, but the benefits more than outweigh the hardships. I know that if I had quit on my dream I would have never met some of the great people that I have met and became friends with.

CLASSIFIEDS

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Transitions

Condolences to **Max** on the passing of his grandmother.

Win Great Prizes

Check out the online contests at
www.eriegaynews.com

Sign up for Erie GLBT List to get notices!

Calendar

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

May 22 (Fri) - Craze Night Club: Memorial Day Weekend Outdoor Patio Kick Off (Craze Night Club, 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA 16502) 7 PM. Doors open @ 7 PM. Entertainment by Bob Bearfield, Buddy Dobson "Glowsercerer", DJ Lori and DJ Jason G. No Cover Charge! Phone: (814) 456-3027. Browse to www.crazeerie.com

May 22 (Fri) - Vertigo Dance Party 300 E Jefferson St, Butler, PA. 8 PM. 18 and over. \$5 cover. BYOB. Email: vertigov@aol.com. Browse to www.myspace.com/butlervertigo.

May 22-25 (Fri - Mon) - Jones Pond: Memorial Day Weekend 9835 Old State Rd, Angelica, NY Military Maneuvers' Sat.-"Basic Training" Military Uniform Party; Sun. Blacklight Glow Party. Monday-11:00am Memorial Service Phone: (585) 567-8100. Email: info@jonespond.com. Browse to www.jonespond.com.

May 23 (Sat) - LBT Women of Erie go to Campbell's Pottery 25579 Plank Rd, Cambridge Springs PA. 11 AM. Going to see Master Glass Artist, Herb Thomas, who will be there creating glass vases, paperweights and other items while you watch. Rain or shine, it is under the pavilion. Phone: (814) 452-6645. Email: lbtwomen-owner@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://womynoferie.wetpaint.com/>.

May 23 (Sat) - Camp Davis: Memorial Day Holiday Luminary Weekend 311 Redbrush Rd, Boyers, PA. Potluck Dinner/ Covered Dish or Donation at 5 PM on the 24th. Donations go towards main course for those who do not have a covered dish. Contact:

Jim. Phone: (724) 637-2402. Email: campd@aol.com. Browse to www.campdavisground.com.

May 23 (Sat) - Mixers Benefit 204 Coleman St. Olean, NY (716) 372-1004 Heart & Sound Productions 5-8PM, hot dog sale, hotdog sale, Chinese auction, DJ Tommy O'kNocker Z finishes out the evening with our Black Out party. Prizes for best glow in the dark outfits and best glow in the dark face. The cover is \$3 and it get you in with a free glow in the dark bracelet. Also going to be trivia and prizes will be won! All proceeds to benefit our *Family Member* Jason, presently enduring chemo. !Come on down and support and show lots and lots of love! www.mixerstavern.com

May 24 (Sun) - Pittsburgh Memorial Day Picnic North Park Lodge, Allison PA. Tickets and info at <http://pittsburghpride.org/> \$20 adv/\$30 door Noon-6 pm

May 28 (Thu) - LBT Women go to 19th Annual Wild Rib Cook Off & Music Festival Perry Square, 6th and State St, Erie, PA) 6:30 PM - 10 PM. Mmmm-



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For more information, contact:
Erie Office: Booker T Washington Ctr
1720 Holland St, PA 16503
814-453-5744 or 1-800-400-2437
Clarion Office: 15870 Route 322
Suite 2 Clarion, PA 16214
814-764-6066 or 1-800-359-2437

**"GET TESTED: YOU NEED TO KNOW"
EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO PREVENTION**

Calendar

mmgood food! Good Music! Contact: Laurie Finch. Phone: (814) 452-6645. Email: lbtwomen-owner@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://womynoferie.wetpaint.com/>.

May 29 - 31 (Fri-Sun) - Jones Pond: Bear Weekend
9835 Old State Rd, Angelica, NY. Pirates of the Pond Weekend Bears on the High Seas; Airstream Camper Rally Phone: (585) 567-8100. Email: info@jonespond.com. Browse to www.jonespond.com.

May 30 (Sat) - Vertigo Dance Party 300 E Jefferson St, Butler, PA 16001) 8 PM. 18 and over. \$5 cover. BYOB. Email: vertigov@aol.com. Browse to <http://www.myspace.com/butlervertigo>.

May 30 (Sat) - Camp Davis: Dance to the 70's Weekend 311 Redbrush Rd, Boyers, PA. Phone: (724) 637-2402. Email: campd@aol.com. Browse to www.campdavicampground.com

May 30 - Imperial Court of Buffalo Coronation 2009 www.imperialcourtofbuffalo.com

Jun 5 (Fri) - G2H2 - Erie Gay Business Alliance social get together Plymouth Tavern, 1109 State St, Erie. 6 PM - 8 PM. Gay Guy/Girl Happy Hour (G2H2)

is a monthly get together for GLBT professionals and their colleagues and friends meet for networking. You can also sign up for the Erie Gay Business Alliance email list at <http://lists.eriegaynews.com>. Email: egb-owner@eriegaynews.com. Browse to www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=54742829807.

June 5-6 (Fri-Sat) The 100+ Family Garage Sale at The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie 9AM until 1PM each day with numbers at the door at 8AM. There is still time for your donations for the sale and you are welcome to drop off any evening 6 PM-9 PM, starting Sunday, May 31st through Thursday, June 4th. We can use clean wearable clothing, books (except encyclopedias or condensed books), furniture, house wares, etc. Join us to fill our building, assisting with set up, and making new friends. 7180 New Perry Hwy (1/2 mile north from Exit 27 & I-90 or 2 1/2 miles south of the Erie Zoo on Glenwood Park Avenue)

Jun 5 - 7 (Fri - Sun) - Jones Pond: Trailer Trash Weekend 9835 Old State Rd, Angelica, NY. 2PM Sat. - Trailer Trash Party Sponsored by the 200 Block; Flamingos in Heat; Flamingo Hat Contest Phone: (585) 567-8100. Email: info@jonespond.com. Browse to www.jonespond.com.

Jun 5 (Fri) - Zone Dance Club: 10th Anniversary presentation of the Miss Erie Pageant 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. 10 PM. Applications are available at the Zone and are due back by May 23, 2009. Contestant meeting held at the Zone on May 25 at 8 PM. Categories for this year are video/live presentation, evening gown/question and answer, and talent. The theme is "Fever" and the colors are red and black. This year we will get to meet the contestants in both male and female forms; it's very RuPaul! Phone: (814) 452-0125.

Information is Power

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814.825.2930

Calendar

Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Jun 6 (Sat) - Gay Pride Youngstown Phelps Street, between Commerce and W Federal, Youngstown, OH. Noon - 8 PM. Free to public. Email: prideyoungstown@gmail.com. Details front page of this issue. Visit www.prideyoungstown.com.

Jun 6 (Sat) - Camp Davis: Rock 'n' Roll to 45's 311 Redbrush Rd, Boyers PA. Contact: Jim. Phone: (724) 637-2402. Email: campd@aol.com. Browse www.campdaisycampground.com.

Jun 6 (Sat) - Bling Bling- Zone's Pimp-N-Ho Party 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. Come dressed to impress in your outrageous pimpin' Sugar Daddy suit, or Sassy and Sexy Lady or Lad of the Night—making sure to show off your Bling! Polish your grills, grab your magic stick, put that junk in the trunk and join us for a trashy night of fun on the video dance floor! Get your game on player! Get into the Zone! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com.

June 6-7 (Sat - Sun) - Black and Latino Gay Pride Celebration (Albany NY) primary objective is to promote the health and well-being of the LGBT People of Color community through our Health & Wellness Expo. www.blackandlatinogaypride.com/

Jun 12 (Fri) - Watchfire Alliance meets (TBA, Jamestown, NY) 7 PM. GLBT group of Chautauqua County, New York. Contact: Bethany. Phone: (716)499-4817. Email: brobson515@msn.com. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/watchfirealliance/>.

Jun 12 - 14 (Fri - Sun) - Jones Pond: Retro Weekend 9835 Old State Rd, Angelica, NY Saturday Night Fever Disco Phone: (585) 567-8100. Email: info@jonespond.com. www.jonespond.com.

Jun 13 (Sat) - 17th Annual Erie Pride Picnic (Rotary

Pavilion, Presque Isle State Park, Erie, PA 16505) 1 PM - 6 PM. Community potluck. Table setting, soft drinks and Sloppy Joes/hot dogs provided. Please also bring a donation for the Second Harvest Food Bank of NW PA. Karaoke and also children's activities. (Parents are responsible for their own children.) Family Portrait taken at 4 PM. Sponsored by Erie Gay News. Register online at <http://www.eriegaynews.com/pride/register.php>. Registering online is appreciated, but not required. Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://www.eriegaynews.com>.

Jun 13 (Sat) - Craze Glo Party Pride Celebration (Craze Night Club, 1607 Raspberry St, Erie, PA 16502) Get ready to light up the night!!! Continue the *Pride Celebration* at the *Craze Glo Party*!!!! Phone: (814) 456-3027. Browse to <http://www.crazeerie.com>.

Jun 13 (Sat) - Zone Dance Club: Rainbow PRIDE Underwear Party! 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA. *Smile*—Show your *Pride*! Join us for a night of fun as we celebrate GLBT Pride in Erie! Rainbow jello shots, glowsticks, and give-aways. Wear Joe Boxer underwear

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Calendar

and your Zone or Gay *Pride* t-shirts in rainbow colors. The Gay Rainbow starts at the Zone—Thank you for making us your #1 gay party destination! Phone: (814) 452-0125. Browse to www.thezonedanceclub.com.

Jun 13 (Sat) - Camp Davis: Skirt Night 311 Redbrush Rd, Boyers, PA. (724) 637-2402. Email: campd@aol.com. www.campdavicampground.com.

Jun 14 (Sun) - Stonewall Celebration All Inclusive Worship Service (Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie, PA 16508) 10:30 AM. The annual “Stonewall Celebration!” all inclusive worship service will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie at 7180 New Perry Highway (Route 97) on Sunday, June 14th at 10:30 am. Buddhist Lama, Kathy Wesley, will be speaking. John Daley King will tell the Stonewall Story. Jeremy Snyder will lead us in honoring “Our Ancestors of the Queer Spirit”. There will be “a closet door” to sign in upon! Join in commemorating the momentous events of June 26, 27, and 28, 1969. It is also “PFLAG DAY” and Mark Hoovler, the president of our PFLAG chapter, will bring us greetings. Coffee hour to follow. Phone: (814) 440-0902. Email: revaschmann@uuerie.org. Browse to <http://www.uuerie.org>.

Jun 19-21 (Fri - Sun) - Jones Pond: Family and Friends Weekend 9835 Old State Rd, Angelica, NY Phone: (585) 567-8100. Email: info@jonespond.com. Browse www.jonespond.com.

Jun 20 (Sat) - Camp Davis: Summer Kickoff Party 311 Redbrush Rd, Boyers, PA. Phe: (724) 637-2402. Email: campd@aol.com. www.campdavicampground.com

Jun 23 (Tue) - Erie Gay News folding/distributing work party (Mike Kohler's, 614 Cherry St, Erie, PA 16502) 7 PM. Help us get out the print edition of Erie Gay News. We'll be folding and distributing the copies. All ages are welcome. It is 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.

Jul 29 - Rt Rev Gene Robinson in Chautauqua 2PM. Rev Robinson is the first openly-gay and non-celibate bishop within the Anglican church. More details on the visit are available from the Chautauqua Institution www.ciweb.org (716)357-6200.

On Stage

Jun 4-20 - Unseam'd Shakespeare “MacBeth 3” Shakespeare's darkest work reinvented as a macabre post-apocalyptic gender-bending play for three actors, offering Shakespeare's gorgeous language with a supernatural sizzle. This inventive, three person production was premiered in L.A. in 2008, and has been performed in L.A., London, and at Scotland's Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Online at www.proarttickets.org By Phone at 412-394-3353 www.unseamd.org/

Jun 6 - Dreams of Hope “That's So Gay” in Youngstown at Pride Youngstown From 1:00 - 2:00PM Corner of Phelps and Federal Streets. www.prideyoungstown.com or www.dreamsofhope.org

Jun 18 - Pansy Division in Cleveland Out and proud “queercore” punk band, at Grog Shop, 2785 Euclid Hts. Blvd, Cleveland Hts; 216-321-5588, www.grogshop.gs www.myspace.com/pansydiv

Jun 19-20 Melissa Etheridge in Niagara Falls Canada in Fallsview Casino and Resort (19+ with I.D.) www.fallsviewcasinoresort.com

Jun 21 - Indigo Girls in Munhall PA at Carnegie Music Hall www.indigogirls.com www.librarymusic-hall.com

Jun 23 - Pansy Division in Pittsburgh at Pegasus Lounge www.pittpegasus.com

Aug 20 - Kathy Griffin in Cleveland State Theater, Playhouse Square, 1519 Euclid Ave, Cleveland; 216-241-6000, www.playhousesquare.org.



Out-and-proud punk rock band Pansy Division is on tour promoting their new CD “That's So Gay” and a documentary about the band. They will be in Cleveland and Buffalo in June.

Obituary



Jeff Eells aka Lexus DeV Vaughn

Condolences to the family and friends of Jeff Eells who passed away on May 11, 2009. He was born on May 3, 1985.

A native of Crawford County, he had moved to Pittsburgh and performed drag shows as Lexus DeV Vaughn. Jeff/Lexus had been a female illusionist since 2003.

Funeral services were held through the White -Cool Funeral Home in Conneautville PA.

Her website is at <http://lexusdevaughn.tripod.co>. There will be a link to the Legacy Guestbook at the Erie Gay News web site.

Friends at The Link in Irwin, PA offered these thoughts:

We are shocked and saddened to get the news today regarding the loss of Lexus/Jeff, a friend, a lively performer, a person who always had their friends first. Her impersonations always gave The Link-stage fierce and frolic good times yet this shock of his loss is never easy when young go before their time.

So as these days follow and grief is a part know of all friends and fellow performers that they are in our thoughts and prayers ...Our strength at this time of sorrow is what we offer.

Deepest Condolences to the Family & Friends of Jeff Eells.

Keith/Ed/Greg/Jezebel and family at The Link

HIV hasn't gone away...

KNOW YOUR STATUS GET TESTED

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

Pride and Resource Update

by Michael Mahler

Gay Pride Picnic Sponsorship

The 17th Annual Gay Pride Picnic at Presque Isle on Saturday, June 13th. Erie Gay News has been very proud to organize this event, which is the largest GLBT event in Erie County.

Erie Gay News www.eriegaynews.com has hosted the annual picnic since 1992. More details about the 2009 Pride Picnic are online at <http://picnic.eriegaynews.com/>, as well as articles and photos from previous years.

Erie Gay News requests your support to help underwrite the costs of the event and/or to provide a door prize for the 2009 Pride Picnic.

If you would like to make a financial donation or to donate a door prize to promote your organization, it would be very much appreciated.

Your participation will be advertised at the picnic, if you like.

To show our appreciation, all donors will receive a web banner ad in rotation at the Erie Gay News web site for 1 month. In addition, the top donor will get a free 1 month half page ad, 2nd top donor will get a quarter page ad, and 3rd top donor will get an eighth page ad.

These will be in the July issue, which comes out after the picnic.

Layout is included free of charge! The deadline for this special offer for donors is Friday, June 5.

At the family-style picnic, information will be made available on local gay-related groups. There will be games and activities for all ages. We will also be collecting nonperishable items to donate to the Erie Food Bank. We will be taking photos, which will be posted to our web site and will be included in an EGN print edition. Each person who attends will bring a dish to share, but the committee will provide table settings, hot dogs, Sloppy Joes, and pop/water. To accomplish this, we are asking for your support to help with the expense.

Please feel free to contact Michael Mahler at home (456-9833) or via email at info@eriegaynews.com if you need any additional information. Any support you can offer will be greatly appreciated. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Annual Resource Update

Please note that Erie Gay News is conducting its annual resource update. You can see the extensive list of resources at the Erie Gay News site under Resources. Most resources should have already received a form by email, along with the request for Pride Picnic sponsorship.

Responses can be sent back via the online form at <http://www.eriegaynews.com/resaddreq.php> or from the mailed form. (Online is preferred, if possible.)

If you are aware of a resource that is not included, or which needs to be updated (or even removed if it is no longer active), then please let us know!

The deadline for getting in updated resource info is Friday, June 5.

Millcreek 4th of July Parade As you may know, this will be the 4th year that Erie Gay News will be marching in the Millcreek 4th of July parade. The parade generally steps off at 10 AM, and everything is done by noon. We have marched with the Erie Peace and Justice Center and other groups. Last year, the United NeoPagan Council of Lake Erie and PFLAG-Erie and Crawford Counties marched as well. The event draws about 2,000 spectators and media coverage, so this is an excellent opportunity for visibility. We have marched without any appreciable incident for the past 3 years.

This year, the 4th of July falls on a Saturday. We are trying to get a coalition of groups, organizations and etc to march along. Some years, the component groups get announced when we march by the reviewing stand at the end, but sometimes not. Tim Reim, who gets the form from the committee, is going to include the names of all of the groups in a separate sheet, and hopes that makes it more likely to get everyone announced.

If you are part of a group or organization and want to march with us, please contact me ASAP with the name of your group, and I will get the list to Tim within the next 2 weeks. You can email me at info@eriegaynews.com or phone me at (814) 456-9833. (The deadline is probably close to the end of June. Not sure of the date.)

We can't have specifically political messages, but other stuff is okay. This is a terrific opportunity to make the community more visible!

PA grants domestic partners benefits

The Philadelphia Gay News reports that on July 1, Pennsylvania will become the 16th state to offer state employees domestic-partner benefits. This includes all current and retired employees (139,000) of the commonwealth.

The full story, with statement from Gov. Ed Rendell, is up now at <http://www.facebook.com/1/www.epgn.com>

Mark Segal, publisher of The Philadelphia Gay News stated, "This is the greatest step toward equal rights for the LGBT community in Pennsylvania since Gov. Shapp outlawed discrimination in state employment in 1975."

US Marriage news

On May 6, Maine became the fifth and New Hampshire moved closer to being the sixth state to permit same-sex marriages.

The sweep of New England states stalled in **Rhode Island**. The influence of the Catholic Church in that state is widely regarded as a major factor.

On May 14, the **Wisconsin** Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal to have a same-sex marriage ban overturned as unconstitutional.

For developments in the state of **New York**, see pages 15 and 16.

Win a T-shirt or hoodie from Whee Designs!


Win a free t-shirt or hoodie from Whee! Design. Up to a \$45 value! Choose from our ever growing collection of LGBT items or from any of our 1000's of other fun, rude or topical designs.

Enter this contest at www.eriegaynews.com between May 29 and June 19.

Whee! Design offers a wide variety of designs on t-shirt, hoodies, stickers, buttons, home decor items and more. Our latest additions include a line of organic t-shirts, the recyclable and reusable SIGG water bottle and Flip Mino and MinoHD video cameras. We also have a range of fan merchandise for Twilight and American Idol.

Stop by the store today at wheedesign.com and get ready for summer and Pride!

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New York equality

New York State Assembly Passes Marriage Equality Bill

from Empire Pride Agenda

May 12, 2009—By a bipartisan vote of 89 to 52, the New York State Assembly today passed a bill that would allow same-sex couples to marry in New York. This is the second time that the Assembly has voted on and passed marriage equality legislation. The Assembly first passed the bill in June 2007 by a vote of 85 – 61. Today’s vote saw an increase in four supporters over 2007, including three additional Democrat votes and one additional Republican vote, for a total of 84 Democrats and five Republicans voting to support marriage equality for same-sex couples. Five Assemblymembers who voted “no” in 2007 voted “yes” today.

“Thanks to the Assembly’s leadership on this issue, we are one step away from winning marriage equality in New York,” said Empire State Pride Agenda Executive Director Alan Van Capelle. “This second vote on the marriage bill in the Assembly won greater support than it did in 2007, with more Democrats and Republicans standing up to protect all New York families. I want to thank Assemblyman Danny O’Donnell for once again leading this bill through his chamber and so eloquently arguing for the need to provide same-sex couples with the 1,324 rights and protections that come with a New York State marriage license. We also thank the thousands of New Yorkers who had conversations with their Assemblymembers—in their districts and in Albany—and conveyed to them the importance of this issue.”

The Pride Agenda attributes the increased margin of victory in the Assembly to two main factors: greater understanding by legislators that only civil marriage and not any other legal mechanism provides equality for same-sex couples and recognition by legislators that support for marriage equality is not politically toxic at the ballot box.

“Several legislators who are now supporters but weren’t earlier have told me their evolution on this issue is due to having a much better understanding that only a civil marriage license provides equality for our families,” said Van Capelle. “Legislators also saw that a vote for marriage equality in 2007 had absolutely no impact on who won or lost last November.”

Legalizing marriage for same-sex couples is supported by Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Senate

Majority Leader Malcolm Smith, as well as every statewide official, including Governor Paterson, Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, U.S. Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand. A recent Siena poll showed that, by a 14-point spread, the majority of New Yorkers support making marriage legal for same-sex couples (53% - 39%).

“The only remaining barrier to ending second-class status for gay and lesbian families in New York is now the State Senate,” said Van Capelle. “To every single member of the State Senate I say this: The landscape has shifted in New York. Do you want to be on the right side or the wrong side of history when the story is written about how marriage equality came to New York? Your grandchildren will want to know how you voted on this important human rights issue. This is a legacy vote.”

LGBT New Yorkers and allies from across the state, including the New York State AFL-CIO and nearly 500 clergy and lay leaders will be working to secure the needed votes in the State Senate to pass the marriage bill by the end of the legislative session.

“Our families cannot wait any longer,” said Van Capelle. “Now is the time for the State Senate to do what the rest of the state wants them to do, which is make marriage legal for all New York families.”

For more info, visit www.prideagenda.org

Find out how your New York assembly member voted

1. Go to <http://eqfed.org/ct/pdAVUA71tE1d/> to find out who your Assemblymember is.
2. Go to <http://eqfed.org/ct/p7A-VUA71tE1c/> to see how your Assemblymember voted on marriage.
3. If your Assemblymember voted “yes,” call the Assembly switchboard at 518-455-4100 and ask to speak to your Assemblymember to thank them for voting for the marriage bill.

*~info from Empire Pride Agenda
Clickable links at EGN Website*

New York equality

Former Sinclairville NY Baptist pastor asks Senator Young to vote yes in Albany on Marriage Equality

[Editors' note: New York State Sen. Catharine Young's district covers Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, and Allegany Counties and portions of Livingston and Wyoming counties].

State Senator Catharine Young:

In the 1980s I pastored the Sinclairville Baptist Church where I lived with my wife and four children.

I graduated from East-Syracuse Minoa high school in 1971. I am gay and living 12 years now with my partner. We were married in August 2008 in California. We are both from the religious right. I grew up a "born again" evangelical. I did my undergrad and grad work in theology. I hold an MDiv. from Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary (in Mich.). Following my pastorate in Western New York, I took a church in Sparta, NJ (Faith Baptist Church). After being in therapy and support groups, I left the ministry and my wife and entered into the wonderful relationship I now have with my spouse.

Please, marriage equality is not a religious issue. It is a civil issue. My parents (from upstate NY) and the church have outright rejected me—completely. My state should not do the same.

I am a Baptist—as a Baptist I've always felt that gays should have the same rights as heterosexuals because civil law and church law are two different things. The religious right has failed in their church polity and government history when it comes to the issue of gay marriage. Be a good Baptist and do not take your (nor your districts) religious beliefs to Albany.

Give me the civil right that is mine. The church will always have her requirements for her members, and rightfully so. The state will always have its laws, too. As a citizen of the state there is one set of laws. As a member of the First Baptist Church of East Syracuse (where I grew up) there is another set of laws.

If you are interested, I can mail you a scholarly book by an evangelical writer (law grad of Harvard or Yale) who argues that the Bible does NOT condemn homosexuality. But, the issue is not my interpretation versus theirs. The issue is, separation of church and state. Albany should not tip its hat to the church. Albany must represent us, the marginalized, or we have no representation. (I overstate it: there are many religious

people and societies - even many, many evangelicals - who support gay marriage.)

Will you represent the minority and vote yes for equality marriage? Isn't that what our society is all about — equality and justice for all. I grew up Republican. Show me the Republican party is not the party of the privileged and the religious right — but of everyone.

Best regards,
Steve Parelli

Contact Information: Rev.* Steve Parelli, MDiv Executive Director, Other Sheep, 2962 Decatur Ave., 5D, Bronx NY 10458. 718-360-0884 (office/home)

Other Sheep is an ecumenical, Christian ministry working worldwide for the full inclusion of LGBT people of faith within their respective faith traditions by connecting people with people and people with resources. www.othersheep.org

**Defrocked by the ordaining Baptist local church for entering into a committed gay relationship*

Marriage Myths Busted

The Empire Pride Agenda has prepared resources to combat misinformation about same-sex marriage issues in New York State.

The online resource "Same-Sex Marriage Myths Busted" dispels eight of the most prevalent misconceptions and falsehoods surrounding the passage of a marriage equality law.

In their new video, New York State's Deputy Secretary for Education Duffy Palmer dispels the deceptive claims that a law allowing same-sex couples to marry would force young children to be taught about these marriages in grade schools. He explains that there is no state or local requirement that information about marriage of any type be taught in New York public schools, nor would there be any such requirement if marriage equality legislation were passed. Visit the Pride Agenda channel on YouTube (www.youtube.com/user/prideagenda) or click on the link at the online version of this article on our website.

Letters

Hello Deb and Michael & to all at Erie Gay News,

Please forgive me for this rather impersonal e-mail, but I felt I needed to reach out to as many people as possible.

I want to thank you for all of your hard work and support of the progressive and pro-LGBT Community in Western Pennsylvania and beyond!

I need your help and the help of all in the progressive and pro-LGBT Community in Western Pennsylvania in order to help get the word

out about a bill in Congress that would change the lives of many people who's families are being torn apart.

The Uniting American Families Act (UAFSA -H.R. 1024/S. 424) was introduced as a Valentine's Day gift this year to same-sex, binational couples by Rep. Jerrold Nadler and Sen. Patrick Leahy.

As you may be aware, the U.S. government discriminates against gay and lesbian binational couples by not allowing us to sponsor our foreign-born life partners for immigration.

Because of this, we face the terrible choice of separating from the person we love or leaving our country. As Americans, we should not have to choose between family and country.

The UAFSA would fulfill the pledge of family unification under current U.S. immigration policy by allowing gay and lesbian Americans to sponsor their life partners for immigration to the United States.

The Washington Post and The San Francisco Chronicle have both recently endorsed passage of the UAFSA, and the American Bar Association has also just recently adopted a resolution endorsing the UAFSA.

This is an issue that The White House also supports:

Asked about Obama's stance on UAFSA [the Uniting American Families Act] and the likelihood of its inclusion in comprehensive immigration legislation, White House spokesman Shin Inouye said in a statement that: "The president thinks Americans with partners from other countries should not be faced with a painful choice between staying with their partner or staying in their country. We will work closely with Congress to craft comprehensive immigration reform legislation."

This is not a problem that is fixed by civil unions or even same-sex marriage arriving in Iowa, Vermont,

Maine or any other state. Tens of thousands of binational same-sex couples continue to be discriminated against despite changing marriage laws. The Uniting American Families Act would allow us to sponsor our foreign partners for immigration, a right that straight married couples in the US enjoy, along with same-sex couples in 19 other nations around the world. Until this legislation passes, the US will continue, in the gleeful words of the Family Research Council, to "export homosexuals from the United States" as we are forced to choose between our loved ones and our country.

I would ask you to PLEASE contact your members of Congress asking for their support on this bill, and then consider mentioning this as an action alert, on your websites and publications, and please send this e-mail to your list serves, members, sponsors, board, family and friends - and anyone who is supportive of the LGBT community in Pennsylvania - to help spread the word about this very important issue. While I am not from Pennsylvania, in order for this bill to move forward, it needs the support of as many members of Congress as possible, including:

Sen. Robert Casey 814-874-5080

Sen. Arlen Specter 814-453-3010

Rep. Kathy Dahlkemper 814-456-2038

The following members of the Pennsylvania delegation are already co-sponsors: Rep. Michael Doyle and Rep. Chaka Fattah

These members of Congress have very good records on LGBT issues and just need to hear from some of their Pennsylvania constituents to sign on - please give them the push that they need! Reaching out to your two Senators and your Representative by calling, emailing or faxing them to ask for their support can help to ensure this bill will pass.

I am one such person who would benefit greatly from the passage of the UAFSA. I am from NY and my partner is from Europe and we both live and work in the suburbs of NY, where we bought an apartment together a few years ago. With the recent economic downturn, my partner's employer has notified him that his work visa will not be renewed when it expires in a few months. If he cannot locate another employer willing to sponsor his work visa (he has been trying for months, but not only is it difficult to find a job at the

LBT Women news

by Laurie Finch

We had a great time at Andy's Pub last night. There were nine of us who met to play pool, snack and have a couple drinks. We found out that there were no pool sharks among us, so if you "can't" play pool, don't let that stop you next time we have a "billiards night". There were 9 of us show up, which was good for a mid week evening, and we had lots of fun and great conversation. It was good to catch up with what everyone has been doing since the last meeting. Two events next week. On Tuesday the 19th is the Erie Gay News Folding Party at 7 PM at the ZONE. It takes less the two hours and is always a good time. Good thing we can fold, talk, insert, talk, lick, talk and sticker and talk all at the same time. We are a remarkable group! Then comes the weekend when on Saturday the 23rd at 11am we will meet at Cappbell's pottery in Cambridge Springs. Besides Thier beautiful glassware and pottery there will be a presebntation by a master glass blower. The demo is under the pavillion, so come rain or shine! I'd like to invite all of you to this event:

Check us out online at <http://womynoferie.wetpaint.com/> Links to our new Myspace and Facebook pages are at the that site on the home page.

Letters

(continued from previous page)

moment, but especially so when you have to convince the employer to hire an immigration attorney), we will be forced to sell our place, leave our family and friends, and move to Europe. This is something neither of us want to do as we have built a life here together.

If this bill does not move forward on its own, it must be included in Comprehensive Immigration Reform - to include the right of gay and lesbian Americans to sponsor our partners for immigration.

Sadly, many members of the progressive and pro-LGBT Community are not aware of this issue. Please help me contact Congress to spread the word!

Sincerely,
Name withheld

(Unfortunately, because of the legal ramifications surrounding immigration and same-sex couples, I feel I need to remain anonymous.)

HIV/AIDS ed.

Dear Readers:

HIV has not gone away. We are just at the precipice of learning more about the virus, its biological components, and its revolutionary changes both in structure and in replication. When I attended the International AIDS Conference in Toronto, and presented my findings with my colleague and abstract co-author, Dr. Reza Nassiri, Michigan State University, we were both impressed with the breadth of knowledge provided to educators and consumers at the conference.

Areas of concern still focus around the LGBT groups, and of course, my friends right here in Erie, through the Erie Gay News, will remember my dedicated efforts for the past ten years of being a voice and a champion for AIDS education. We lost AIDS education three years ago, but it is not too late. Have no fear! Reinforcements have arrived, and his name is Obama. President Obama intends to bring back AIDS education, and I need your support for the cause.

Please send me emails as to why you would want to see educators teaching HIV/AIDS education again in the schools, be detailed with your answers, and send me questions as well as personal anecdotes. Applications for funding are available, and your messages would be vital to the process.

My dear friends, I look forward to once again being a champion in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Erie, PA.

Thanks,
Patty Puline
Erie County Department of Health

Ellen and Portia top list of celeb babysitters

In honor of Mother's Day, AOL's Parent Dish took an opinion poll asking people to way in about celebrity moms.

When asked "Which celebrity would you most feel comfortable leaving your kids with?" Ellen DeGeneres and Portia De Rossi topped the list, with 31%. Jennifer Aniston followed with 22%, followed by Rachel Ray 20%. Angelina and Brad 18%, and Oprah Winfrey 9%

To check out the entire poll visit <http://www.parentdish.com/2009/05/07/the-results-of-our-mothers-day-poll/> (clickable link at our website)

Screen

When available, there are clickable links to trailers and movie websites in the online version of this article.

VIDEO

Boston Legal Season Five (2008-2009) www.bostonlegaldvd.com/ Fox

Designing Women: The First Complete Season (1986) Available 5/26. *Shout Factory*

Doubt (2008) Meryl Streep, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Amy Adams, Viola Davis www.doubt-themovie.com
Miramax

Lesbian Nation: A Short Film Collection (2009)
Collection of lesbian-friendly cinema features five films, four of them making their premiere on DVD.
First Run Features

November Son (2008) Second film in the projected drama trilogy that began with "October Moon" www.novembersonthefilm.com *Culture Q Connection*

My Fair Son (2007) Tale about a father and son trying to reconcile their separate lives. This art house film shows gay life in China in a different light than ever before. Chinese w/English subtitles *Water Bearer Films*

Pansy Division: Life in a Gay Rock Band (2008)
Documentary about the kings of "queercore." www.pansydivisionfilm.com Also check "On Stage" feature for their upcoming appearances in Pittsburgh and Cleveland. *Alternative*

Unspoken Passion (Sikil) (2007) Tale of friendship and a bizarre love triangle, set in the Phillipines. Tagalog w/English subtitles Trailer: *Water Bearer Films*

Were the World Mine (2008) If you could use magic



Armed with a magical love potion and empowered by dazzling musical fantasies, struggling with his identity and acceptance, Timothy (Tanner Coben) turns his bigoted small town gay while capturing the heart of Jonathon (Nathaniel David Becker).

to make someone love you would you do it? There is also a soundtrack CD (P.S. Classics). Available 6/9 *Wolfe* <http://www.speakproductions.com/>

Will and Grace: Best of Friends and Foes (2008)
2-disc set features 16 episodes of the cast going toe-to-toe with unforgettable Hollywood guest stars, including Alec Baldwin, Patrick Dempsey, Matt Damon, Jennifer Lopez, Michael Douglas, Ellen DeGeneres, Kevin Bacon and more. *Lions Gate*

Will & Grace: Best of Love and Marriage (2008)
Lions Gate

The Village Affair (1994) Alice (Sophie Ward) has a perfect life: beautiful children, a handsome husband, and a stately home in a picturesque English village. But when heiress Clodagh (Kerry Fox) returns from New York City, sparks fly and the gossip begins. Based on the novel by Joanna Trollope. www.acornonline.com
Available 5/26 *Acorn Media*

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Tickets at the door @ 8 a.m.
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2½ mi. s. of Erie Zoo on Glenwood Park Ave

Screen

MUSIC VIDEO

Pride 2009 is being released in honor of the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. Performed by Jon Gilbert Leavitt featuring Freddy Freeman and Kevin Hannan www.jglsongs.com/pride.html You could easily consider this a gay rights version of Billy Joel's "We Didn't Start the Fire." The video and single are on You Tube, and coming soon to iTunes, Rhapsody, Amazon mp3, etc...and should be out and searchable by May 25. Homohiphop artist **Mélange Lavonne** powerfully takes on abusive relationships in "Domestic Abuse," with the video presented by Power Up Productions. Earlier works include "Gay Bash," in which she speaks out against Christians who hate, and "I've Got You (aka Gay Parenting)" in which she bubbles over with love for an as-yet-unborn child. To view Mélange's videos, visit her MySpace page at <http://www.myspace.com/melangelavonne>

IN THEATRES

Kirby Dick's new documentary **Outrage** is playing in selected venues, but the controversial film is not likely to play in this area. OUtage exposes closeted gay legislators—like Larry Craig—who work against gay rights. Visit www.outragethemovie.com/

ALSO ...

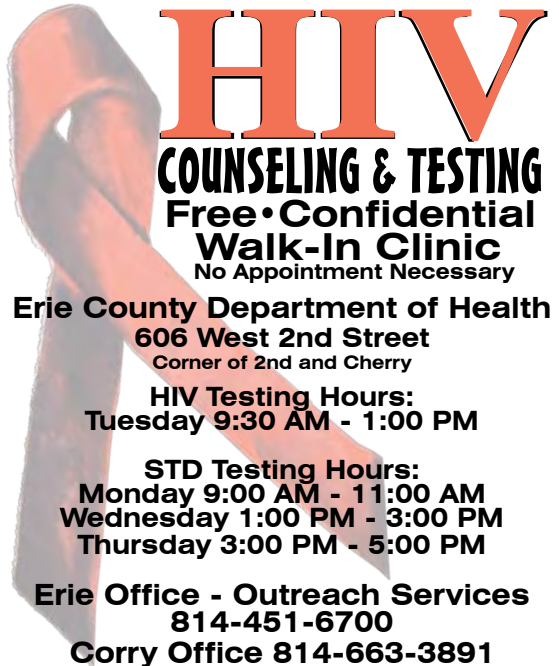
The **m4mHEALTHYsex.org** website has links to a number of videos about healthy sex between men. A particularly imaginative one is "Sugar Baby Love" an animated music video that was actually put out by the French government. There is no speaking, so language is not a problem, but it helps to know that the message at the end says "Live Long enough to find the right one." Other videos include a the Pride 2009 music video, short talk from ChiChi LaRue, black gay men taking amongst themselves, a young man talking about living with HIV, a very sexy and cowboy PSA, and more. The site offers other innovations like chat room sex ed, virtual health educator, Check out all the other resources at www.m4mhealthysex.org

m4mHEALTHYsex is a joint effort between the Pennsylvania Prevention Project and the Pitt Men's Study.

Be sure to check their ad on Page 4!



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Monday 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Wednesday 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Thursday 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Erie Office - Outreach Services
814-451-6700
Corry Office 814-663-3891

How Low Can They Go?

by Wayne Besen

It was unusually satisfying to watch beauty contestant turned Bible-thumper Carrie Prejean crash and burn. In the bat of an eyelash, she went from Christian role model to wannabe underwear model after racy pictures of her surfaced. "They were quite inappropriate and certainly not photos befitting a beauty queen," Alicia Jacobs, a Miss USA judge, told NBC's Today Show.

The verb "strip" is the one most associated with Prejean's name these days. She stripped her clothes, may be stripped of her Miss California crown and was certainly stripped of her moral authority as a spokesperson for marriage. In her brief stint as America's scold, she forgot to memorize one Bible passage: "Judge not lest thou be judged."

What's amazing is that the circus-like antics of Prejean are the rule, not the exception for today's anti-gay activists. There has clearly been a brain drain among our opponents -- with the conservative intelligentsia largely running from GLBT issues. Filling the

vacuum, are the vacuous -- with little to offer, other than comedic relief.

For example, Joe the Plumber plunged into culture wars with his usual thoughtful advice: "I personally still think it's wrong...you know, God is pretty explicit in what we're supposed to do--what man and woman are for...I've had some friends that are actually homosexual. And, I mean, they know where I stand, and they know that I wouldn't have them anywhere near my children."

Joe the Plumber looked like Einstein compared to Maine Rep. Bernard Ayotte (R). During a state House debate on marriage equality (passed 89-58), Ayotte said that he couldn't support the legislation because it would provide legal protections to people whom he said suffered from hormonal imbalances.

"By all indications, homosexuality in human beings seems to be generated by imbalances in the human body," Ayotte said. "As legislators, it is important that we do not base our statutes on genetic aberrations."

Even by the low standards set by anti-gay activists, this level of ignorance was shocking, yet indicative of how far the quality of our opponents has fallen.

Joining the chorus of anti-gay clowns was former Washington, DC mayor Marion Barry, best remembered for smoking crack and allowing the city's rats to grow as large as cats.

A longtime gay rights supporter, he was the lone city councilman to vote against a bill, passed 12-1, to recognize same-sex marriages performed outside the District.

"All hell is going to break lose," Barry predicted. "We may have a civil war. The black community is just adamant against this." Columnist Leonard Pitts summarized Barry's political cowardice when he said the former mayor "punked out."

Sharing the anti-gay spotlight was caustic talk show host Michael Savage and the Kansas preacher noted for picketing military funerals with "God Hates Fags" signs, Fred Phelps and his wife, Shirley. They were banned from visiting England and publicly scorned for their bigoted views. While I do not agree with their banishment (neither do civil liberties groups), it does force social conservatives into the PR nightmare of having to turn Savage and Phelps into "creep celebres."

Even the "mainstream" anti-gay activists seem to have come unhinged. In stating his opposition to



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How Low

federal hate crime legislation, James Dobson appeared in a video where he falsely claimed that the inclusion of "sexual orientation" opened the door to, "bisexuality, exhibitionism, fetishism, incest, necrophilia, pedophilia, prostitution, sexual masochism, voyeurism, bestiality." Dobson added for effect, "I have to ask, 'have we all gone completely mad?'"

Oddly enough, Dobson lives in Colorado, one of twelve states that have a hate crime law offering protection based on sexual orientation and gender identity. There are also 31 states that offer such protection based solely on sexual orientation. In these 43 states, can Dobson point to a problem with hate crime laws being applied to necrophilia or bestiality? If not, his bizarre and paranoid ranting says more about his overactive imagination, than it does about the reality of such laws.

Of course, for the sake of sheer amusement, we can't leave out the absurdity of Bristol Palin hawking abstinence. With baby in-tow and embittered ex-boyfriend on tail, she is the poster girl for the social conservative mantra: "do as I say, not as I do."

Let me reiterate, so you can fully appreciate and savor the situation. The new faces of social conservatism are: Carrie Prejean, Joe the Plumber, Marion Barry, Bernard Ayotte, Michael Savage, Fred Phelps and Bristol Palin. With such luminaries, it should be no surprise that the GLBT community has had a string of incredible victories. Somewhere in the process of passing the torch to the next generation, anti-gay activists have stumbled and are in danger of burning down the homophobic house.

Wayne Besen is an author, activist, columnist and public speaker. He is the author of a book nominated this year for two Lambda Literary Awards, "Anything But Straight: Unmasking the Scandals and Lies Behind the Ex-Gay Myth". He currently serves as the Executive Director of Truth Wins Out, an organization founded to combat the 'ex-gay' myth and right wing propaganda. Visit www.waynebesen.com and www.truthwinsout.org

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U.S. House passes Hate Crimes Act

from the Human Rights Campaign

Washington, April 29 – The Human Rights Campaign – the nation's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender civil rights organization – hailed today's bipartisan vote of 249-175 in the U.S. House passing the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, also known in the U.S. Senate as the Matthew Shepard Act.

"All Americans are one step closer to protection from hate violence thanks to today's vote," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "Hate crimes are a scourge on our communities and it's time we give law enforcement the tools they need to combat this serious problem."

"No one should face violence simply because of who they are," said Judy Shepard, executive director of the Matthew Shepard Foundation. "This bill is a critical step to erasing the hate that has devastated far too many families."

Yesterday the White House released a statement from President Obama calling for passage in the House and urging the Senate to follow with swift action. Along with the President, more than 300 law enforcement, civil rights and religious organizations support the bill.

"The Senate should heed the President's leadership and quickly pass the Matthew Shepard Act," said Solmonese. "After more than ten years and tens of thousands of victims, there should be no delay in passing this bill into law."

This is the eighth successful vote on a federal hate crimes bill which – following a veto threat from former President Bush – died in the last Congress.

"Fair-minded leaders in Congress have for years stood strong against lies about the bill and we are grateful for their efforts," continued Solmonese. "The leadership of Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer and Majority Whip Clyburn as well as Reps. Conyers, Kirk, Baldwin, Frank, and Polis made this incredible victory possible."

Working in coalition with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the Human Rights Campaign mobilized its members to support the bill. The website www.FightHateNow.org gives users opportunities to

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Bear In Mind

By Gary Snyder, aka GarBear73

Sometimes people ask me what this 'bears' thing is all about. Surprisingly, I usually struggle to answer. It's kinda funny really given that I've considered myself a member of the Bear community for nearly 9 years. However, the reason I struggle is that to say you're a 'bear' is a label one chooses for themselves and not so much about how you look. Well while it is true that you can fulfill an appearance by stereotype, I don't know how many women with short 'butch' haircuts appreciate being referred to as lesbians for example. When it comes to explaining the concept of what the Bear community is, personal acceptance is a big part of it. To help explain, a little history lesson is in order I think.

Hate Crimes bill passes House

continued from previous page

contact their member of Congress, watch video testimonials on hate crimes and learn the truth about the legislation. The site will continue as a clearinghouse for information leading up to Senate action.

The LLEHCPA gives the Justice Department the power to investigate and prosecute bias-motivated violence where the perpetrator has selected the victim because of the person's actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. It provides the Justice Department with the ability to aid state and local jurisdictions either by lending assistance or, where local authorities are unwilling or unable, by taking the lead in investigations and prosecutions of violent crime resulting in death or serious bodily injury that were motivated by bias. It also makes grants available to state and local communities to combat violent crimes committed by juveniles, train law enforcement officers, or to assist in state and local investigations and prosecutions of bias motivated crimes.

The Human Rights Campaign is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality. For more information visit www.hrc.org

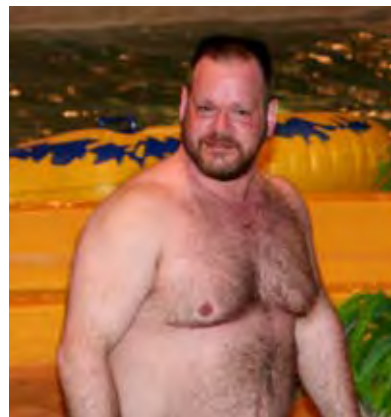
In the early 1980s, some gay men found themselves facing a new 'norm' as the 'look' moved away from the 'all natural male' to the 'twink'. Think of it this way, take actor Mike Farrell (he played B.J. Hunnicutt on M*A*S*H*) and try to turn him into Greg Louganis from the '88 Seoul Olympics; basically, no facial/body hair and a much more trim physique. So in the '70s, expressing masculinity was completely acceptable. However the '80s ushered in a high focus on youthfulness and looking 'healthy' due in part to the AIDS epidemic. During this time, men involved in the leather community and the beginnings of girth 'n mirth (larger bodied men, sometimes referred to as chubs) also found themselves disliking the new 'look'. So these three subgroups began crossing over to each other.

Flash forward to the present and over two decades of men feeling personally comfortable with who they are physically have created a world-wide subculture. The majority of men that consider themselves part of the Bear community agree with inclusiveness for men being men and not necessarily trying to be a 'clone' of what mainstream media says is acceptable. As with any subculture grouping, many things have developed along the way like a fashion stylings, businesses that cater to the desires/needs of its members and differing opinions on what it 'is' and 'is not'. So for men that choose to apply the label of being a 'bear' or a 'cub' (a younger aged 'bear'), the acceptance of who they are naturally is important. Typically it's reflected by having some facial hair, body hair and some extra 'padding' all around. Yes Mary, love handles are not only acceptable, but dare we even say 'preferred'!

There are so many things that make up the Bear community beyond its members; for example the various events that take place, such as bear 'runs' (a carryover from biker runs/rallies). Erie has been the home to its own bear run, titled Drenched Fur. Drenched Fur was created to bring to Erie a bear community for just the weekend and who knows, maybe a club/organization might develop here once day. For more info on the Bear community, feel free to visit these websites: <http://resourcesforbears.com> <http://www.thecompletebear.com> or do a Google search for a little exploring of your own. Look for future articles about events taking place in the Tri-State region and highlights on the local bear clubs from Buffalo, Cleveland and Pittsburgh.

Drenched Fur Photo Gallery

Drenched Fur 5 was held April 3-5, 2009.. For more go to www.drenchedfur.com/gallery.



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