

July 2004

EGN

Erie Gay News

12th Annual PRIDE Erie Picnic

Thanks!

**FOR
COMING
OUT WITH**

2004 PRIDE PICNIC A SUCCESS

by Michael Mahler

Huge thanks to everyone who made the 2004 Erie Pride Picnic such a wonderful success! We had well over 300 people attend, a new record over last year's record of 270. There was a wide diversity of members and friends of the community represented. Volunteer Dave Amy remarked that Mother Nature had to be a lesbian as in the 12 years we have been having picnics, we have always had clear and beautiful weather.

We should hopefully have a gallery of photos up within the next 2 weeks at <http://www.eriegaynews.com/photoblog>. We also welcome additional photos that other folks took.

There were so many people who made important contributions to the picnic's success. Thanks go out to our donors: Coca Cola of Erie, Wegman's (Peach Street); Papermoon restaurant, Wanda Phillips of Boat Master Detailing, the

Continued on page 3



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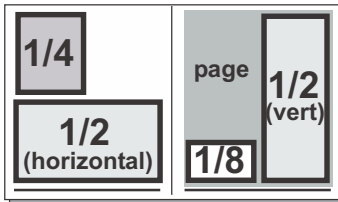
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On the Cover...

2004 Pride Picnic photo montage

Photos by Deb Spilko, layout by MAL

EGN Ad Rates



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Deadline for ads is the 15th



Erie Gay News

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www.eriegaynews.com

Editors: Deb Spilko and Mike Mahler

Deadline: the 15th of each month.

The *Erie Gay News* is published monthly as a source of news, events, information and support for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered people (GLBT's), their families, friends & supporters in the Erie and Northwest Pennsylvania Area.

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

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

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

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Thank You:

To James von Loewe, Tom, Dave Amy, Tim, Jerry McCumber, Marshall Snyder, Brian Lonyo for folding. Dave S, Marshall Snyder, Paula King, Kate Hentz & Jerry McCumber for distributing, Bob for proofreading, and MAL for additional ad layout & etc. Thanks!

If you're interested in helping out, contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or info@eriegaynews.com for date/time.



2004 PRIDE PICNIC A SUCCESS

by Michael Mahler Continued.

Zone Dance Club and the Village Supper Club. Please support these businesses who support us!

Also huge thanks go to staff/volunteers Keith and Deidre for working the registration table; Brian and Larry for cooking food; Dave Amy for cooking and kitchen organizing; Jeff Hill for the nifty Erie PA GLBT banner; James von Loewe for the equally nifty Erie Gay News banner; EGN graphics designer MAL for designing the banners; Dok and Jamie for security and set up; my mother, Anne Bretz, for embroidering the ultra nifty staff T-Shirts, the door prize shirt, and that whole giving birth/raising me thing; Deb Spilko for taking photos and working on documenting accessibility info; SPARC, PFLAG, Americans Coming Together, Hispanic American Council, Erie County Department of Health, and Bob for the John Kerry campaign for putting together the info tables; Jack Kressley for running to the store to get plastic ware when we ran out; and a bonus thanks to Brian, Larry, Dave Amy, Keith and etc. for helping to organize. I am almost certainly forgetting to thank someone, but with so many terrific folks and organizations, that is almost as certain to happen as it is that we would have such a wonderful day.

For those who you who like to mark your calendars very far in advance, the 2005 Pride Picnic should be Saturday, June 11 from 1 PM to 6 PM (notice that we will start an hour earlier next year) at the Rotary Pavilion. For more info about the Pride Erie Picnic, call Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or email info@eriegaynews.com.

There was a collection of nonperishable items for the Second Harvest Food Bank of NW PA. We collected 142 pounds for the food bank. Go team!

We are also happy to report that almost 50 people showed up for the first ever Family Pride Picnic at Conneaut Lake Park, Pavilion 5A the next day, Sunday, June 13. PFLAG and the Northwest Rural AIDS Alliance each had a table there. The organizers were very happy with the response. A committee has been set up to plan next year's picnic. For more info, contact Allan at snowplace2@alltel.net.

Calendar

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

Jun 25- Miss Erie Pageant at the Zone (Erie, PA)
Zone Dance Club, 1711 State St, (814) 459-1711.

Jun 27 - National HIV Testing Day (see article May 2004 issue). www.hivtest.org

Jul 1-4 - Country-Western Dance Convention (Columbus, OH) National convention of the International Association of Gay and Lesbian Country-Western Dance Clubs. www.stompers.org, (614)784-9210.

Jul 3- Independence Daze at The Zone (Erie) 1711 State St, (814) 459-1711.

Jul 3 -Jungle Party featuring Tiger Tyson (Cleveland), blatinio film star, music and dancing, benefits BlackOut Unlimited, 10 PM, Cleveland Public Theater, 6415 Detroit Ave. Tickets available through BlackOut, (216) 937-2268, www.blackoutunlimited.org.

Jul 5 - PFLAG Meeting 7 - 9 PM. Regular monthly meeting Contact: Maureen Koseff. Phone: (814) 898-8341. Email: pflagerie@adelphia.net.

Jul 7 - Always Our Children meets (Erie, PA) For Catholic parents of GLBT children. Catholic Charities, 329 W 10th St, Phone: (814) 456-2091.

Jul 9 - At Chautauqua: Village People w/the Contours (Chautauqua, NY) (800) 836-ARTS www.clweb.org

Jul 10 - Menspace meets: Bonfire/camp out (Venango, PA) Jim & Greg's, 20996 Kightlinger Rd. Combined event with 10% Network Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

Jul 12 - PFLAG-Erie Meeting (Erie) At Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie PA. 7 - 9 PM. Regular monthly meeting Contact: Maureen. Phone: (814) 898-8341. Email: pflagerie@adelphia.net.

Jul 15 - Deadline for August 2004 edition of Erie Gay News (Erie Gay News, 1115 W 7th St, Erie PA) Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: 814-456-9833. Email: info@eriegaynews.com. Browse to <http://www.eriegaynews.com>.

Jul 17 - 10% Network meets: Cookout at Mike Doud's Contact: Don. Phone: (716) 484-1661. Email: donjaye@hotmail.com. Browse to <http://jamestowntenpercent.tripod.com/>.

Jul 17 -Female Impersonation Show at Rascals (Jamestown, NY) Starring Miss Jamestown. 701 N. Main, (716)484-3220.

Jul 25 - Dancin' in the Streets (Cleveland) Dance party to benefit the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland, 1 PM, \$20 adv/ \$25 gate, Scene Pavilion on Flats west bank, 2014 Sycamore, www.erieparty.com, (216) 621-0766, www.aidstaskforce.org



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Calendar

Jul 30 - At Chautauqua: B-52s in concert (Chautauqua, NY) (800) 836-ARTS www.clweb.org

Jul 30 - The Chautauqua/Cattaraugus/Allegany Co. Gay Men's Social Group meets (Olean NY) 6 - 8 PM at Directions in Independent Living, 512 West State Street, Olean. For more information or activity ideas please contact Tom Place at (716) 664-7855 or tomplace@aidscommunityservices.com.

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

Aug 5-8 - Black Unity Pride Celebration (Cleveland) Phone: (216) 472-3474. Browse to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/blackunitycelebration>.

Aug 6 - 8 - Pittsburgh Unity Black Pride (Pittsburgh) (412) 657-0142. peerpastors@hotmail.com.

Aug 6 - 8 - Women's International Music Festival Pine Valley Lake Park & Camping, 4936 S. Arlington Rd, North Canton OH. Phone # is for camping reservations and info only. Email info@wimfest.com. Host Hotel: Comfort Inn. (330) 896-1381. wimfest@hotmail.com. www.wimfest.com.

Aug 7 - Menspace meets at Bruce's (Evans City, PA) At Bruce Walker's home 1408 Evans City Road, Evans City, PA 4 PM. Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Email: gblueye@zoominternet.net. Browse to <http://menspace.eriegaynews.com>.

Aug 9 - PFLAG-Erie Meeting At Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Highway, Erie PA. 7 - 9 PM. Regular monthly meeting

Contact: Maureen. Phone: (814) 898-8341. Email: pflagerie@adelphia.net.

Aug 10 - 15 - Michigan Womyn's Music Festival (Hart, MI) Browse to <http://www.michfest.com>.

Aug 10 - Mr. Village Pageant at Village Supper Club (Erie, PA) Drag king contest. 133 W 18th St. (814) 452-0125. Email: village@velocity.net. web: www.thevillageerie.com.

Aug 14 -Sabrina & Co at Rascals (Jamestown ,NY) 701 N. Main, (716)484-3220.

Aug 15 - Deadline for September 2004 edition of Erie Gay News

Aug 16 - Leather Ball (Toronto) Weekend of parties and events Browse to www.mrlt.com.

Aug 28 - Gayfest at Paramount Canada's Wonderland (Toronto)

Sep 3 - Pride Night at Six Flags World of Adventure (Aurora, OH) 6 PM to midnight. Sponsored by Lesbian and Gay Community Center of Greater Cleveland (330) 995-7822.

Calendar listings are free!

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Watch for Details: SEPTEMBER DANCE ESCAPE!

Erie Co. HRC update

Please note that the votes by Erie County Council for changes to the Erie County Human Relations ordinance to bring it into line with HUD guidelines, and allow them to hire their own staff have not been scheduled. Please keep in touch by phone or email as when these are scheduled, we will need to have everyone possible show up! You can contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or email info@eriegaynews.com.

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On stage

Selected area events that may be of interest to GLBT audiences

Gay Plays: PrideFest 2004 Presented by Buffalo United Artists, June 11-26. www.buffalobua.org (716) 886-9239

Pittsburgh Pride Theatre Festival June 17-27. At Penn Theatre, 4809 Penn Ave., in Bloomfield, PA. \$10 adv./\$12 at door. (412) 441-2213. Presented by the Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company.

Funny Girl at Ashtabula's Straw Hat Theater June 25-July 10 (440) 964-3396.

Lady Day at the Emerson Bar and Grill Roadhouse Theatre for Contemporary Art, 145 West 11th Street, Erie, PA. Opens July 9 and runs thru August 29. Fridays & Saturdays at 8 PM. Starring Mary Alice Brown as "Billie Holiday" Box Office (814) 456-5656. Details page 13

Vampire Lesbians of Sodom Buffalo United Artists/Main Street Cabaret, 672 Main St, Buffalo NY. Jul 23 - Aug 23. (716) 886-9239. www.buffalobua.org.

Jason Stuart September 9-12 - Improv Comedy Club Cleveland (216) 696-7723. www.jasonstuart.com

The Best Man at Erie Playhouse, September 16-26, Premiere weekend Sept. 10 & 11. 13 W. 10th Street, (814) 454-2852

Websites and email lists for appearances by area performers:

Greg Ropp www.gregropp.com

Jocelyn Porter Project www.playerie.com/artists/jocelyn_porter/

Leah Zicari www.leahzicari.com

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

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Michael Dithers

by Michael Mahler

Hope that everyone had a good time at the Pride Picnic! It is always very rewarding for all of us who work on this project. It was nice seeing such a huge diversity of folks represented. When one has elderly folks in wheel chairs, young Goth/alternative kids with piercings, and boring middle aged average sorts like myself, one knows one is doing something right. It meant a lot to me that everyone made an effort to smile and be friendly with folks who were probably outside their usual circle of acquaintances.

If you particularly enjoyed the Picnic, please consider getting a subscription to the newsletter. The money the newsletter makes helps pay to reserve the cabin, etc. Of course, there were several other donors who made very significant contributions (listed on the front page) as well as our fabulous staff of volunteers.

This seemed to be the year for regalia. Or should that be re-gay-lia? Jeff Hill made the nifty Erie PA GLBT banner and James von Loewe made the Erie Gay News banner. (And thanks to our wonderfully talented graphics designer, MAL.)

My mom also machine embroidered the T-shirts. Funny story, when I went over to pick them up, she had assumed that "Jamie" referred to a guy, so I ended up outing Dok and Jamie as a heterosexual couple. Mom seemed to take that in stride.

If there is sufficient interest, we are considering having embroidered Erie Gay News t-shirts, such as were at the Picnic, available for sale. Let us know, okay?

These are extraordinarily volatile times. On the one hand, once can look at Bush and some within his political camp assailing our community for votes. It is disheartening to see the Pope and other religious figures also pursuing a path of hate. However, I have faith. This feels like a replay in some ways of the 1950's, when African Americans were oppressed and some religious and political forbears of today's haters, were spewing the exact same kind of fear and hate campaign. You just know that eventually they will end up apologizing and regretting it, just as many churches apologized in the mid 1990's for supporting segregation. But this does feel like the last gasp of major acceptable hostility. We **shall** be free and equal!



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Monday 9:00 am - 11:00 am

Wednesday 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Thursday 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Appointments can be made at the following locations:

Erie County Health Department
Erie Office, Outreach Services
(814) 451-6732

Erie County Health Department
Corry Office - (814) 663-3891

Hispanic American Council
(814) 455-0212

Multi-Cultural Health Evaluation
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(814) 453-6229 or (814) 453-4728

All services are free and confidential.
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Legislative Updates

Federal Legislation

At the Federal level, it is possible that Republicans may bring the antigay Federal Marriage amendment up for a vote around July 15. This is being timed to the Democratic National Convention.

On Tuesday, June 15, the Senate passed The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act by 65 to 33 on a bipartisan vote. It was moved as an amendment to the Department of Defense authorization bill.

The measure adds “real or perceived sexual orientation, gender and disability” to federal hate crime laws, thus allowing the federal government the ability to provide assistance for the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes based on these categories.

Gay civil rights groups hailed the vote. The Human Rights Campaign called it an important step toward giving law enforcement the tools they need to investigate and prosecute hate crimes.

As expected, Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter voted for the bill (he was a lead co-sponsor of the bill) and Rick Santorum voted against the bill.

PA antigay amendment tabled

PA State Representatives Jerry Birmelin (R-Wayne) and Mark MacNaughton (R-Dauphin) again attempted to introduce antigay amendments to a bill, in this case SB 296. The House voted 96-94 to table this legislation. . Browse to www.pa-gala.org for updates on this. Votes cast by representatives from northwestern Pennsylvania are below. A “Yes” means a vote to table, “E” denotes excused absence.

Bebko-Jones (D-Erie), Y
Biancucci (D-Beaver), Y
Causer (R-McKean), N
Evans, J. (R-Erie), E
Fabrizio (D-Erie), Y
Forcier (R-Crawford), N
George (D-Clearfield), Y
Good (R-Erie), Y
Gruitza (D-Mercer), Y
Hutchinson (R-Venango), N

LaGrotta (D-Lawrence), E
Lynch (R-Warren), N
McIlhattan (R-Clarion), N
Metcalf (R-Butler), N
Scrimenti (D-Erie), Y
Stevenson, R (R-Mercer), N
Surra (D-Elk), Y
Travaglio (D-Butler), Y
Veon (D-Beaver), Y
Wilt (R-Mercer), N

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National News Briefs

by Bob

Kerry Campaign Launches GLBT Effort

Democratic Sen. John Kerry's presidential campaign has launched a voter education program and a grassroots fundraising project that targets the GLBT community.

Pride Across America, organized by the Kerry campaign in conjunction with the Democratic National Committee (DNC), plans to have a presence at pride events in 22 states over the next few months. Staffed by local campaign volunteers, booths are being set up at Pride events to help educate voters about Kerry's record. One such booth was set up at the Erie Pride Picnic June 12.

"It's exciting for us because it's an investment the campaign and the DNC are making in the GLBT community," said Mark Seifert, director of Kerry's GLBT outreach effort. "We're buying tables at Pride, we're sending materials, we're buying ads in some [GLBT] newspapers. We think it's just another sign of John Kerry's commitment to the GLBT community, a commitment which began more than two decades ago."

Another program, "Ripple of Hope," is an on-line fundraising drive targeting \$500,000 in small donations from the GLBT community by the end of June. Veteran GLBT political operative David Mixner and Elizabeth Birch, former executive director of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), helped develop "Ripple of Hope."

Sen. Kerry's record of supporting the GLBT community has been long-standing. In 1996 he spoke on the Senate floor in opposition to the Defense of Marriage Act, the only Democrat up for reelection that year to do so. He has also been a longtime critic of the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy and has received perfect voting scores from HRC for years.

Kerry's current opposition to same-sex marriage has been a disappointment to some GLBT voters. Recently, he said he supported a change to the Massachusetts state Constitution to ban same-sex marriage, but only if that amendment provided equal civil unions for gay and lesbian couples.

"In his mind he has made that distinction and that's his position," Seifert said about Kerry's marriage

opinion. "I don't have a problem supporting him at all, and in fact I'm proud to be supporting his campaign. People understand there are many issues in this campaign, and when they step back and they understand that, they see there is only one choice, and that choice is John Kerry."

MTV to Launch New Gay Cable Channel

In an effort to attract more GLBT television viewers, executives from MTV Networks have announced the creation of Logo, a basic cable channel to be launched next February.

The channel, which has been in planning stages for at least two years within MTV's parent company, Viacom, will feature a mixture of 75 percent acquired/licensed programming and 25 percent original series and specials.

"What has been missing is a home on TV that this audience can call their own," MTV Networks CEO


(continued next page)

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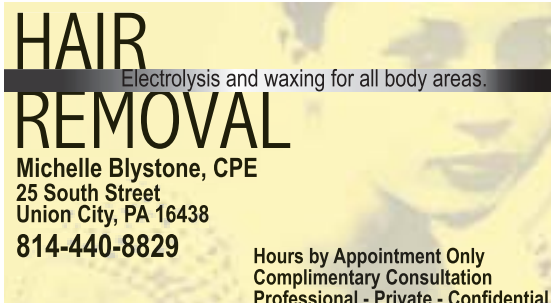


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National News Briefs

(continued from previous page)

Tom Freston said. "With this new network, we're going to start making that home."

The name of the channel, Logo, encompasses many different ideas about identity, according to the channel's Web site.

According to Judy McGrath, president of the MTV Networks group, the vision of Logo is to reflect the diversity of the GLBT community, with the slogan "different together."

McGrath said the channel already has 40 original series and specials in development, with 20 in the pilot phase. Many of the offerings will result from partnerships with "sister networks" in Viacom — MTV, VH1, TV Land and CBS news division.

The new channel will not be a premium offering. As a basic cable channel, it will be more widely available to cable subscribers but will also be subject to stricter broadcast standards. For example, unedited versions of "Queer As Folk" and "The L-Word" from Viacom's Showtime premium network will not air on Logo.

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Downtown Erie

Some Religious Groups Oppose Marriage Amendment

Representatives from 26 religious organizations have sent an open letter to Congress opposing the Federal Marriage Amendment (FMA), which is endorsed by President George Bush and would ban same-sex marriage.

The letter featured signatures from representatives from the Presbyterian, Lutheran and Episcopal churches. They contend that altering the Constitution will impinge on the religious freedoms of all Americans.

"It is not the task of our government and elected representatives to enshrine in our laws the religious point of view of any one faith," the letter stated. "Rather, our government should dedicate itself to protecting the rights of all citizens and all faiths."

"Our nation's founders adopted the First Amendment precisely because they foresaw the dangers posed by allowing government to have control over religious decisions," the letter continued. "The religious freedom protected by the First Amendment has allowed religious practice and pluralism to flourish."

According to the New York Times, Rev. Barry W. Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, helped put the letter together. He told the paper, "I am disturbed that even though I can perform a religious ritual to unite a same-gender couple, the state won't recognize it because some different religious group thinks I am theologically wrong."



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National News Briefs

Coors Distances Itself from Former Chairman

The Coors Brewing Co. has publicly dissociated itself from former company chairman Pete Coors, a Republican U.S. Senate candidate whose stance against same-sex marriage runs counter to the company's gay-friendly policies.

"We do not support discrimination against the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, via legislation or otherwise," the company's chief executive Leo Kiely said.

During a Senatorial debate in Colorado recently, Coors said he favors a federal constitutional amendment that would ban same-sex marriage. Many feel Coors' stance against same-sex marriage is an attempt to gain support from conservative voters in the state's upcoming GOP Senate primary election. Coors' opponent for the Republican nomination is Bob Schaffer, an outspoken opponent of gay marriage.

Coors once took credit for gay-friendly changes at the company that bears his name, a fact the Schaffer campaign has widely publicized.

"If Mr. Coors feels strongly about the importance of the marriage amendment, why hasn't he expressed outrage about his company's publicly opposing it?" Schaffer campaign manager Pat Fiske said in the Rocky Mountain News.

The Coors Brewing Co. was once the target of a GLBT boycott because of its past antigay policies. However, in recent years the company has made a drastic turnaround, adopting many gay-inclusive policies.

Advocates Call for Virginia Boycott

For members of the GLBT community, "Virginia is NOT for lovers."

Gay activists are calling for a boycott of the State of Virginia in response to antigay legislation recently passed in the state prohibiting any recognition of gay marriage, civil unions and domestic partner policies.

The new law, called the "Marriage Affirmation Act," is so broad legal experts fear it may even affect individual couples' wills, powers of attorney and other legal documents.

"We're here to prove that when a U.S. state attacks the fundamental legal rights of gays and lesbi-

ans, gays and lesbians know how to fight back," says VirginiaIsForHaters.org., a Web site promoting the boycott. Jay Porter and David Smith, a Seattle gay couple who created the site, are calling upon gay rights supporters to avoid traveling to Virginia and to boycott companies who's headquarters are in the state, including clothing retailer J. Crew.

"This is a national issue," Porter told the Associated Press. "Someone came up with this really punitive legislation and got it through the state legislature, and in my mind, that could happen just about anywhere in the U.S."

The new law, which was passed in April, is being soundly criticized not only by gay activists and legal scholars, who say it will be found unconstitutional, but also by the mainstream media. An editorial in the Washington Post called the law "jaw dropping."

"It so flagrantly violates norms of basic fairness and decency that federal courts are likely to balk," the Post said, concluding that the legislators' intent was to send this message: "Gays and lesbians aren't welcome in Virginia."

Mayor Cleared of Charges for Marrying Gay Couples

The Mayor of New Paltz, NY, who along with the Mayor of San Francisco made history in February by marrying same-sex couples, has had criminal charges against him dismissed in court.

Mayor Jason West faced 19 misdemeanor counts for marrying same-sex couples without a license on Feb. 27, a charge that could have landed him in jail for up to a year. The dismissal of these charges came just days after a judge permanently barred him from marrying same-sex couples.

The dismissal of the charges against West could have major implications. In his ruling, New Paltz Town Court Justice Jonathan Katz not only cleared West of criminal wrongdoing, but made a strong argument for same-sex marriage.

"Even if the financial issues could be addressed in some comprehensive way short of allowing same-sex partners to marry, there would still be no emotional substitute for marriage," Katz said. "We must be ever on our guard, lest we erect our prejudices into legal principles," the judge ruled.

Letters

Letter to President Bush

President Bush,

I write to you today on the subject of same-sex marriages. I only do so to ask you one question. That question being how can you call yourself The President of a Democratic country, based on a Constitution that guarantees freedom to all who abide it and yet seek to deny a select group of citizens, those very freedoms.

There was a reason our founding fathers separated church and state, and this very debate could serve as an example of that wisdom. There is no codicil to the constitution that says we are all granted freedom only so long as it does not offend the religious beliefs of the President. It says we are all granted "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It does not say we are only granted the "Life, Liberty and Happiness, as dictated by the Moral Majority."

There are no feasible arguments against same-sex marriages, only religious or "moral" ones. There

are however many good arguments for it, such as: More revenue for local governments in marriage license fees and civil ceremonies, more taxes for local and state government, fewer lawsuits for spousal rights to property and child custody in the case of a spouses death, and most importantly, you could spend more time making decisions that really are in your job description like; better health care for everyone, more jobs kept in our country instead of farmed out, lower gas prices and alternate fuel sources to end our dependence on oil, preserving our natural resources, instead of letting big business rob our children of their beauty, and finally bringing home our men and women from this fruitless war. Don't you think it is ironic that we are fighting on the other side of the world to free people from religious and political tyranny, while here at home you are practicing your own version of it? Let The Constitution stand for what it was written to do, give Freedom to All.

Sincerely,
Jamie L. Hibbs

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PFLAG News

by PFLAG-Erie and Crawford Counties
Chapter

PFLAG Activities

PFLAG Erie County was at the recent Pride Picnic and thanks everyone for attending. No date has been set for our next BINGO event. Please watch the Erie Gay News for our future information.

PFLAG continues efforts in lobbying for passage of the County Council's proposals for changes to the Human Relations Ordinance. We had asked for your support by attending council meetings in June when the ordinance was to be voted on. The dates originally provided for these votes have been postponed, and we don't know for sure when the ordinance vote will be on the agenda. We need you to be on the lookout for notices about when the HRC issue will be on the County Council meeting agenda. We and the EGN will try to keep you informed about developments.

We continue to have new people attending PFLAG meetings, and are pleased that the number of attendees is increasing. Our monthly meetings provide a family feeling and support in regards to coming out, as well as learning and understanding.

Thank you all for your support and dedication over the past years. We continue to meet throughout the summer months, the 2nd Monday each month: July 12th, August 9th, etc. Have a great 4th of July/Independence Day.

Meeting Notes

Our next PFLAG support group meeting is, as usual, the second Monday of the month: July 12th. The meeting will be at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, 7180 New Perry Hwy (Rte 97), Erie, from 7 to 9 PM. (Take exit 27 off of Rte 90, and go north about a half mile). In addition to this regularly-scheduled meeting, PFLAG will hold ad hoc meetings, as needed. (For example, for parents who have just recently been informed that their child is gay, or for spouses of GLBT people). To contact PFLAG, call Maureen (814-898-8341), email us at pflagerie@adelphia.net, or write to P.O. Box 133, Harborcreek, PA 16421.

Theater

Lady Day at the Emerson Bar and Grill
Starring Mary Alice Brown as "Billie Holiday"

by Lanie Robertson

Roadhouse Theatre

July 9 - August 28, Fridays and Saturdays 8 PM

It's 1959 in a South Philadelphia nightclub, where legendary jazz singer Billie Holiday is giving one of her final performances. Through a skillful blend of biography and cabaret, this extraordinary play draws us into Holiday's triumphs and setbacks — from scrubbing steps in Baltimore through her rise to fame. The production features more than a dozen of the songs that made *Lady Day* an American icon, including "God Bless the Child," "Strange Fruit," "That Man of Mine" and "Ain't Nobody's Business if I Do."

Is it possible to imagine a more exciting evening at the theatre than one where the great Mary Alice Brown makes a star-turn as the legendary jazz singer Billie Holiday?

The play, *Lady Day at the Emerson Bar and Grill*, was a big hit on Broadway in the late 1980's. However, the notion of doing such a piece comes with a built in problem; who can you get to play Billie Holiday? Well, when you have Mary Alice Brown there is no problem, and she already knows all the songs! The next step is to find a piano player that Mary Alice is comfortable with. After all, she's been accompanying herself for as far back as she can remember. She said; "we might as well start at the top and ask Howard Hamme" owner of Froess Piano and Organ. With the promise that he wouldn't have to do "too much" acting, Howard was in.

Tickets must be reserved in advance through The Roadhouse Theatre Box Office 814-456-5656, 145 West 11th Street. Admission is \$12 for riser seating, \$10 for regular seating. A limited number of VIP seats are available for each performance for \$15. Please have Visa, Mastercard, or Discover ready when reserving.

Sponsored by Baldwin-Hawthorne Real Estate, PNC Bank, WICU12, The Erie Times, Time Warner Cable, Q91.3 & The Arts Endowment-Arts Council of Erie.

For more information go to www.goerie.com/roadhouse.

HIV/AIDS: Conference in Buffalo

by *Patty Puline, Health Educator*
Erie County Dept. of Health

The Erie County Dept of Health is proud to collaborate with the Erie County Medical Center of Buffalo, New York for their New York & Pennsylvania HIV Conference. The title of the conference is **"Season of Change, the Cycle of Life"** to be held at Chautauqua Institute on October 24-26, 2004. The attached link includes a flyer for you to post in your building; I have extra if you need them.

"How has HIV impacted the cycle of life through the past 20 years? Men, women and children that are living and struggling with HIV are grown up and growing older. How is this epidemic affecting their lives and the lives of those that are caring for them? What can we expect in the future?"

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

Suggested topics include: Disclosure skills for HIV positive adolescents and adults; Aging of AIDS (Seniors & HIV Infection); Prevention Education for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities; Heterosexual HIV Prevention; The A.R.T. of Complacency for Men Having Sex with Men; Clinical Track: Reinfection – A Case Study Identifying Behavioral Risks in the PMD Office; Family Physicians and the HIV Specialist.

Professor Reza Nassiri, D.Sc., (Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine) and I recently received international acceptance for Bangkok, Thailand with our abstract pertaining to collaborative HIV prevention methodologies. We intend to present this at the October Conference, and share highlights from Bangkok. Dr. Nassiri is the keynote speaker this year for the Conference.

Michael Chase, executive director for the conference is inviting all of us to participate in this conference. (Michael (716) 898-4714. Please check out their website @ www.aidscenter.ecmc.org for more information.

Patty Puline, Health Educator
Erie County Dept of Health
(814) 451-6543
ppuline@ecdh.org

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This & That

by Deb Spilko
Co-Editor

Picnic

Wow! Once again the Pride Picnic committee pulled together a wonderful event! A lot of people help to make the picnic a success, but I had the chance to see these guys in action this year, and they are really one hard working, well-organized team. Hats off to Brian, Larry, Keith, Dave Amy, and Mike Mahler.

I was delighted that among the many out-of-town visitors to the picnic were Jack and Karen Kressley of DuBois, who organized a PFLAG chapter in that area. Karen and Jack have really done so much to make that area a better, more tolerant place. They're also really wonderful people! At the picnic, Jack noticed that a lot of young people were getting their pictures taken under the PFLAG banner. Pretty cool...

Picnic photos should be up on the EGN website by the end of the month.

Awards

Recipients of the 16th annual **Lambda Literary Awards** were announced and awards presented at a gala ceremony in Chicago on June 3, 2004 (on the eve of the BookExpo America Convention). The awards recognize and honor the best in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender literature. From thousands of nominations received from across the country, five nominees have been selected in each of 20 categories. A panel of 74 judges, chosen to represent the diversity of the GLBT literary community, will determine the final winner from the finalists in each category. To view the list of winners and find out more about the Lambda Literary Foundation, visit www.lambdalit.org

The **Out Music Awards** were announced in New York City on June 13. To see who won, visit www.outmusic.com

Travel

Toronto is a favorite travel destination for a lot of GLBT people in our area. Some helpful websites:
Toronto Tourism www.torontotourism.com
Gay Guide Toronto www.gayguidetoronto.com
LSBN Toronto (of particular interest to women; see "Dorothy's Guide") www.lsbntoronto.com
Xtra www.xtra.ca

Live

Rufus Wainwright will be at Cleveland's Tower City Amphitheater June 27, Buffalo's Niagara Square July 3, and Pittsburgh's Chevrolet Amphitheater July 15 ... **Harry Connick, Jr.** comes to the Warner Theatre in Erie August 11 (814)452-4857 ... As part of comedian **David Sedaris'** fall tour, he will perform October 16, at University of Buffalo Center for Performing Arts. Box office (716) 645-ARTS www.ubcfa.org ... **Paula Poundstone** returns to Jr's Last Laugh November 4-6. Jr's Last Laugh is at 1402 State Street in Erie. Call (814) 461-0911.

The Erie Playhouse has just announced its 2004-2005 season. Some offerings of particular interest to the GLBT community are *The Best Man* (September), *The Lion in Winter* (April and May), Elton John & Tim Rice's *Aida* (June and July), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (July), and musical offerings throughout the season from the *Composer/Lyricist Series*. Info at www.erieplayhouse.org Box office (814) 454-2852.



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