



# ERIE GAY NEWS

Serving the Regional LGBTQIA+ Community Since 1992



*PA Thrive Partnership staff/supporters in front of AIDS quilt panels at the Erie County HIV Task Force's World AIDS Day Program on December 1, 2022. Photo by Michael Mahler.*

## World AIDS Day Program Hosted by Erie County HIV Task Force

*From Erie County HIV Task Force*

On Thursday, December 1, 2022, the Erie County HIV Task Force [ECHTF] presented this year's World AIDS Day program at the H.O. Hirt Auditorium inside the Blasco Public Library at 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507. Speakers included City of Erie Mayor Joe Schember, Erie County staff member Gary Snyder, Adagio Health staff member Andi Fair, Community Health Net staff member Kelly Kruize, and PA Thrive Partnership staff member Sonny Concepcion. Local news coverage was by Fox 66 News. In addition to speakers and video segments, one panel of the AIDS Memorial Quilt was on display,

made possible by PA Thrive Partnership.

Erie County Health Department's Gary Snyder, HIV Disease Intervention Specialist, emceed the program and talked about the Erie County HIV Task Force's initiatives for 2022, including the history of World AIDS Day and the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Mayor Schember spoke on the importance of equity of care and testing access for Erie residents. Kelly Kruize expressed the importance of advocating for persons living with HIV as they can face stigma and discrimination from community members due to a lack of knowledge and fear. Andi Fair reviewed the current options for PrEP, known as Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, as medicine options to take and prevent contracting HIV. Sonny Concepcion led an interview segment with two guests that discussed their diagnosis journey in the 1990s and how being in care, taking today's available medicines, and helping others have made for fulfilling lives while having undetectable HIV. For more information, please visit [echiv.org](http://echiv.org) for additional information, including the county map of testing locations, clinic services, and free condoms locally or mailed to your home. You may also call 814-315-3375.

## Erie Gay News Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Erie Gay News (originally known as Erie Gay Community Newsletter) is celebrating our 30th anniversary in December, 2022! Originally known as Erie Gay Community Newsletter, it was a project from Bridges, an LGBTQ coalition early 90's. After a dance/fundraiser held at the Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie earlier in the year, the organization saw the need for a local LGBTQIA+-focused publication to inform the community about local events and resources, as well as the upcoming 1993 March on Washington. There had been an explosion of local groups in the early 90's.

Our primary mission continues to be serving to inform and serve the regional LGBTQIA+ com-

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**Erie Gay News**

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The *Erie Gay News* is published monthly as a source of news, events, information, and support for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender 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. Please include your contact information with any piece you submit.

**If you are restarting events or are moving to hosting events/meetings virtually, or want to change your copies received for distribution, please email [info@eriegaynews.com](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com)**

## EGN Rates & Data

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AD SIZE	PRICE/ISSUE	DIMENSIONS
EIGHTH	\$50 - \$45 Prepaid	15/8" high X 2 7/8" wide
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## THANKS

From Your Friends at Erie Gay News

To Lake Erie Counseling Associates for hosting! Andrea Shaffer, Elisabeth Cadelle, Jeff Hill, Kim Conti, Raven Jane Cammarata, Rex Apps, and Steve Siwiecki for folding; Brett Staskiewicz, Elisabeth Cadelle, Jeff Hill, Kim Conti, Raven Jane Cammarata, Rex Apps, and Steve Siwiecki for distribution; Mike Lipiec for ad layout & etc. If you're interested in helping out, contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or [info@eriegaynews.com](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com).

munity. We are proud to cover not only Erie County PA, but also NE Ohio, Chautauqua County, NY and NW Pennsylvania.

We publish in print monthly, and update our website, <https://www.eriegaynews.com>, regularly. In addition, also have a Facebook page, a Facebook group, an Instagram account, as well as an account on Mastodon.

In addition to providing current news, we also maintain a history of the region's community. Erie Gay News has copies of our print edition at nine different LGBTQ archives, including Amsterdam and Toronto.

The only other LGBTQ-focused print publication in Pennsylvania is Philadelphia Gay News. There is also the online QBurgh in Pittsburgh. Cleveland, Buffalo, and Pittsburgh do not currently have an LGBTQ print publication.

People who want to help us with our mission of informing the community have several different options: we host monthly folding/distribution work parties at Lake Erie Counseling, 1932 W 8th St. This is a great way to meet new people! Additionally, we

deeply appreciate hearing about new distribution points that want to carry the print publication, so if you know of some place that want to support the LGBTQ community and will carry copies, just email us at [info@eriegaynews.com](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com). There is no charge to be a distributor.

We also have an editorial board that meets monthly to plan articles and strategize how best to engage. If this is a way that you would like to be involved, just email us!

We are also excited about our plans for our new monthly Community Spotlight series, which will highlight a group or organization that serves the community.

Thanks to everyone who has made the past three decades so rewarding! We deeply appreciate our advertisers, volunteers, and contributors!

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## NWPA Pride Alliance and Erie Otters Hockey Club to host 3rd Annual Pride Night

Join NWPA Pride Alliance and the Erie Otters for their third annual Pride Night at the Erie Otters on Saturday, January 14th. Tickets are only \$30.00 which includes a ticket to the game plus an exclusive Otters Pride Hat. Link to purchase tickets available at [NWPAPride.org](http://NWPAPride.org).

Any questions please contact RJ Niedzwiecki at [rj.niedzwiecki@ottershockey.com](mailto:rj.niedzwiecki@ottershockey.com) or 814-480-6083

## GEAE and LGBTQ Funds Host Holiday Celebration

On Wednesday, December 7, the Greater Erie Alliance for Equality (GEAE) and the LGBTQ Funds of the Erie Community Foundation hosted an end-of-year reception at Room 33 in downtown Erie. This is the first time the two organizations have hosted a collaborative holiday event.

Guests at the event were treated to a delicious buffet while the Stephen Trohoske Trio played in the background. Cody Empey, President of GEAE, made welcoming remarks, while Blane Dessy, Chair of the LGBTQ Funds Development Committee, welcomed guests. The reception allowed us to celebrate the holidays and thank our supporters. It was also an opportunity to look ahead to 2023 and present some ideas for activities and collaborations in the future with other local LGBTQ+ organizations.



*Friends from GEAE & LGBTQ Funds celebrating on December 7 at Room 33. Photo by Michael Mahler*

The LGBTQ Funds began with a donation from GEAE to the Erie Community Foundation several years ago, so the two groups have always been connected. The LGBTQ Funds provide funding to other organizations for programs and events; the Funds do not directly manage programs in the community. Also, the Funds are not restricted to Erie County; organizations in adjacent Pennsylvania Counties may also be eligible for funding. The LGBTQ Funds plan to continue their current grant and scholarship programs while also looking into other educational events on topics of community importance.

Greater Erie Alliance for Equality was founded with a simple yet vital mission of supporting the region's LGBTQ+ community and its straight allies through education and youth programs, social events, and opportunities for service, which are designed to strengthen our voices and improve the quality of life in northwestern Pennsylvania. Moving into 2023, GEAE will continue its focus on educational and youth programming by bringing back our speaker series and goals to bring competency-based training into the local healthcare arena.

Both GEAE and the LGBTQ Funds are looking forward to expanded collaboration with other local organizations to provide comprehensive outreach in 2023.

## PA Equality Project Announces Two New Board Members

On December 8, at its end of year board meeting, the Pennsylvania Equality Project added Dylan Altemara and Jay Grandis to the Board of Directors. Dylan, from Allegheny County, will not only serve on the Board, but he has also been named as the new Director of Legislative Affairs. Dylan is a former candidate for the Pennsylvania House 49th Legislative District.

Jay Grandis is an Organizing Associate for We The People-PA. He is a long-time advocate and activist, public speaker for LGBTQ+ issues, harm reduction, HIV, and racial justice issues. Jay comes from a background of grassroots community organizing and has co-founded a few non-profit organizations, including West Branch Pride. Jay fights for diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging in any team situation. He will serve not only as a Board member, but as the new Treasurer.

Both Dylan and Jay's terms will expire Decem-



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This program is supported by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Health

ber 31, 2027. For questions or additional information about becoming a Pennsylvania Equality Project Board member, please email [info@paequality.com](mailto:info@paequality.com).

### Transgiving celebrated at the Crime Victim Center

TransFamily of Northwestern Pennsylvania once again hosted the annual Transgiving, Saturday, November 26 at the Crime Victim Center on West 18th Street in Erie. The meal'ss a potluck style with members of the Transfamily board providing the turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy and dressing. Great conversations among new and old friends alike helped to make this event a great part of the holiday season.




*TransFamily of NW PA celebrating Transgiving at Crime Victim Center. Photo by Michael Mahler*

### The Creating Home Roundtable -- Over 60 Pennsylvanians Gathered to Discuss LGBTQ+ Elder Housing

On December 7th, SAGE, partnering with organizations across the state, hosted a virtual roundtable to discuss LGBTQ+ elder housing advocacy efforts in Pennsylvania. The event, Creating Home: A Roundtable to Discuss LGBTQ+ Elder Housing in Pennsylvania, highlighted the need for more affordable and inclusive older adult housing in Pennsylvania.

Ed Miller, Senior Programs Manager of the Elder Initiative at William Way Community Center, kicked off the event. Ed spoke about the national and state-wide needs for LGBTQ+ inclusive elder housing. Ed highlighted the important work of the John C. Anderson Apartments in Philadelphia, an LGBTQ+ inclusive residence for older adults. This event also highlighted an LGBTQ+ inclusive, affordable housing development in the Oakland neighborhood of Pittsburgh. This upcoming development, supported by Presbyterian Senior Care and The Persad Center, will increase the number of affordable, LGBTQ+ affirming rental units available for older adults in Pennsylvania.



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Following these speakers, a panel of industry experts in LGBTQ+ housing, housing discrimination, affordable housing, and property management offered their wisdom and guidance on LGBTQ+ affirming, affordable housing for older adults. The panel highlighted important discussions on community involvement, anti-discrimination policy, and inclusive practices to support LGBTQ+ residents. Participants were able to spend the last hour of the event in smaller breakout sessions that supported more intimate conversation on housing advocacy for LGBTQ+ older adults.

The speakers, panelists, and breakout sessions included challenging and inspiring conversation. This event highlighted the need for continued advocacy alongside LGBTQ+ older adults. The conversation at this roundtable established the momentum and connections needed to continue this important work into the future!

Individuals who are interested in supporting Pennsylvanian LGBTQ+ older adults in need of housing or who would like a recording of the conversation can email [tgodwin@sageusa.org](mailto:tgodwin@sageusa.org).

Additional Notes: Event speakers included representatives from SAGE, The William Way Community Center in Philadelphia, a Pennsylvania Branch of the Walters-Group, the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, and Openhouse in San Francisco.

SAGE's state partners for this event included The William Way Community Center, The LGBT Elder Initiative, The Persad Center, Presbyterian Senior Care, The Western PA Advocacy Team, and The Mayor's Office of LGBT Affairs in Philadelphia.

This event was made possible by the generous support of the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

## EGN Move to Mastodon from Twitter

Because of concerns about the quality and stability of the platform, Erie Gay News is no longer maintaining our Twitter account. We have added an account on Mastodon (@eriegaynews@mastodon.lol), and we continue to keep our Facebook page, the Erie Gay News and Local LGBT Discussion Facebook group, and also our Instagram account.

## LGBTQ Youth Town Hall Sponsored by National and Local Organizations

On November 15, one week after a heated midterm election, over 45 local Pennsylvanians — including young people, parents, and leaders from local and state LGBTQ organizations — gathered at the Erie Center for Arts and Technology as part of a town hall event focused on educating the community about ways that state policies impact LGBTQ young people in The Commonwealth.

Throughout the evening, town hall participants discussed the current landscape of state policies impacting LGBTQ youth, spending a large portion of discussion on the recent executive order signed by former Gov. Wolf, which prohibits state funding from being allocated to the dangerous and discredited practice of so-called conversion “therapy,” which research consistently illustrates is associated with poor mental health and greater suicide risk. This order builds off of the momentum of a broad movement to end the harmful practice across the U.S., with over 26 states that have some form of policy protecting LGBTQ young people, including 20 states that have passed statewide laws banning the practice through their state legislature.

Subject matter experts and leaders working at the state and national level were also in attendance, providing updates from their respective organizations and answering questions about policy implications, advocacy tools, and the path forward in the movement to protect LGBTQ youth.

Attendees at the town hall event were encouraged to contact their legislators to urge them to support statewide legislation that would work to protect LGBTQ youth from conversion therapy, by removing



*Trevor Project presenter at LGBTQ Youth Town Hall.  
Photo by Michael Mahler*

the licensure of providers who engage in these harmful practices. Pennsylvanians interested in sending an email to their respective legislator asking them to support this type of life-saving legislation can do so at <https://p2a.co/nC3VwwC>.

Co-sponsors of the town hall event included: Compton's Table, Crime Victim Center of Erie County, Erie Gay News, National Association of Social Workers Pennsylvania Chapter, Northwest Pennsylvania Pride Alliance, Pennsylvania Psychological Association, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Erie, Greater Erie Alliance for Equality, PFLAG National, and The Trevor Project.



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## 2022 Annual Lake Erie Gala

Despite Mother Nature throwing a temper tantrum, it didn't detour 101 Transgender/Cross Dressing Ladies, their spouses, significant others, speakers, and vendors from attending the 23rd Annual Lake Erie Gala hosted by the Erie Sisters and Brothers at the Sheraton Erie Bayfront Property last November.

It was a great time had by all starting with a Welcome to the Gala with Bang Pizza party on Wednesday night. Thursday during the day, 10 students from Tony and Guy's Beauty Academy performed facial makeovers on the guests. Thursday's after dinner entertainment was magical with Cliff Hopkins and Kelly. Friday was a big day for outings starting in the morning with 1 group going to The Union Station for a haunted tour of the underground tunnels, followed by a lesson on the brewery and beer tastings. That group ending the afternoon with a "visit back" to their childhood at the Play Port Arcade and Family Fun Center. The second group carpooled over the Erie Maritime Museum for a riveting guided tour of the museum followed by delicious lunch at the Smugglers Wharf. That night a bus load of ladies braved the blizzard and went over to the All an Act Theatre to view the hilarious play called "The Play That Goes Wrong". Saturday night was a big 20's speakeasy themed dinner with a working still and all followed by a night of free play with professional gaming tables and chips provided by Mike Lotz, owner of Great Lakes Entertainment. Sadly, the 4 day long event had to end with a Farewell Breakfast buffet Sunday morning. Thank you to all that attended this year and best wishes to see all again next year.



20's themed dinner and gaming at Lake Erie Gala.  
Photo by Michael Mahler

- Special thank you to our speakers and vendors:
- \* Cassandra Storm, owner of My Feminine Heart, Yoga with my Girlfriends and Cassandra Storm Photography
  - \* Lindsey Taub, owner of Lindsey Taub Image Consultant
  - \* Scarlett, owner of Scarlett's Makeovers
  - \* Beth McKinley, Roots Financial Group at Thrivent
  - \* Sarah Moore, who is a respected trainer that presents to a variety of audiences including the public, law enforcement, medical/mental health professionals, victim advocate and other groups.
  - \* Michelle Popkov, who gave us a very informative seminar in MTF presentation.
  - \* Liz Tattersall, Certified Health and Life Coach, HCI
  - \* Anita New Look Wig Salon by Anita Marie DiVecchio Bissonnette
  - \* Bobbie Czerwinski, Independent Beauty Consultant for Mary Kay
  - \* Jodi Turri, Independent Consultant for Touchstone Crystal
  - \* Kimberly Casey, Paparazzi Consultant and owner of Kim's Glorious Design
  - \* Ashley Glennon with her beautiful hand worked wooden bowls, pens, jewelry racks and other items.

To obtain contact information about the Erie Sister's and Brothers group or the above vendors/speakers, you can email [Info@lakeeriegala.com](mailto:Info@lakeeriegala.com) or [www.lakeeriegala.com](http://www.lakeeriegala.com).

Currently the Erie Sisters and Brothers event coordinator is working on the 2023 year which will include the starting up again of monthly/every other month meetings in Erie, PA, Cabin Fever in February, Spring Break in April, Princess Dinner Cruise in June and ending the year again in November with the 24th annual Lake Erie Gala. So stay tuned!

## NWPA Pride Alliance welcomes new Board Members

Erie, PA, December 10, 2022—NWPA Pride Alliance is happy to announce the addition of five new member to its board of directors, Michael "Debbie" Hipwell, Gwen Elaine, Hazel Selitto, Anita Holland, and Matthew Cizek. NWPA Pride would also like to welcome Misha Krastins, Casey Main, Travis Smith,

and Cassie Ellsworth to our advisory board.

NWPA Pride is already planning the traditional Pride Events for 2023 and we look forward to announcing a new spring time Pride tradition soon. Please follow NWPA Pride on social media and at the redesigned NWPApride.org for more information and bios for all new board members.

## Transgender Day of Remembrance 2022

TransFamily of Northwestern Pennsylvania would like to thank everyone who gathered together on November 20, 2022 at Journey to a Trauma-Informed Life or via Facebook Live for this year's Transgender Day of Remembrance. TDOR is when we gather together to remember our Transgender siblings lost to anti-transgender violence. It is up to all of us to remember them, since their killers, law enforcement and media often seek to erase their existence.

This year the names of 32 transgender individuals were read and reflections from their friends and family were shared. They are just a small part of the 390 worldwide. Sadly, we know the number is much larger, these are just the ones who have been proven and reported.

TransFamily choose to focus on the positive aspects of these lost siblings when remembering these lives taken far too soon.

If you would like to know the more graphic aspects such as how they died, the Human Rights campaign goes into further detail. You can find that report here: [https://reports.hrc.org/an-epidemic-of-](https://reports.hrc.org/an-epidemic-of-violence-2022)

[violence-2022](https://reports.hrc.org/an-epidemic-of-violence-2022).

The Human Rights Campaign also tracks suspicious deaths of transgender individuals. Keep in mind that the reports go into detail of how they died. You can find that report here: <https://www.hrc.org/resources/additional-concerning-deaths-of-transgender-and-gender-non-conforming-individuals>.

If you'd like to see the reports, in graphic detail of the transgender individuals lost worldwide you can find that here: <https://tdor.translivesmatter.info/reports>.

## PA Equality Project's Meadville FreeShop 2022 Results

On Monday, November 28, PA Equality Project held the Meadville FreeShop 2022. Generous donors dropped off 7 totes, 15 boxes and 25 bags of clothing, blankets, books, DVDs and CDs, kitchen items, and other household goods. Once on display, the items were free to the public to collect on November 29. PA Equality Project President David Moore said, "With so many needy people in Meadville and Crawford County, our organization wanted to give back to the public as much as we could. We look forward to working with the Meadville Public Library throughout 2023 providing for greater community outreach."

PEP is planning a series of events at the library including Meadville FreeShop 2023 Spring Edition on March 31 (Day of Gathering) and April 1 (Free-Shop Day) from 10 AM – 4 PM both days. PEP will also be starting a chess club at the Meadville Public Library on March 11 from 12 Noon until 3 PM, and hosting other social gatherings. Details on these events will be coming to the PEP website in early January. For questions about or suggestions for events, please email [info@paequality.com](mailto:info@paequality.com).



*Remembering our transgender siblings taken from us by violence at TDOR at Journey to a Trauma Informed Life. Photo by Michael Mahler*

Erie Gay News is now included in  
**The EBSCO *LGBT Life*®**  
with Full Text Index &  
Six LGBT Archives  
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## NWPA Pride says thank you for an amazing 2022!

2022 has been a tremendous year for the NW PA Pride Alliance. Thankfully, with COVID-19 numbers lessening and the development of new vaccines, we were able to bring back some of our annual events, and with the help of some new friends, we expanded what was offered this year.

Coming out of the pandemic, the NW PA Pride Alliance wanted to facilitate some new changes. One thing that became evident was our website was no longer supporting not only our organization but also our community as well. With this in mind, the board worked with Epic Web Studios to develop a new platform for us as we move into the future. To go along with the launch of the new [nwpapride.org](http://nwpapride.org), the board commissioned Whee! Design and board member Patrick Hiller to create a new logo for the Pride Alliance. The former logo of the lighthouse with the rainbow shining forth had been with the Alliance for many years, and this was an excellent time to make a fresh start. The new logo, with the depiction of northwestern Pennsylvania layered in the Progress Pride flag colors in a circular formation, will showcase our commitment to the region and the members of the LGBTQIA+ community for years to come.

The NW PA Pride Alliance has a longstanding tradition of helping others in the community. We partnered again with GEAE (Greater Erie Alliance for Equality), TransFamily of NW PA, and Erie Gay News to host a Winter Coat and Winter Boot Drive to help others stay warm during Erie's cold winter months. Nonperishable food items were collected and given to the Erie Second Harvest Food Bank to help

provide food security to those who may need assistance. The Alliance also worked to help send young LGBTQIA+ youth back to school with supplies in partnership with Compton's Table.

Being able to safely come together for some social time after being isolated from COVID was also very important this year. That was why we were excited to partner with Erie's local sports teams, the Erie Otters, Seawolves, and Roller Derby, to host LGBTQIA+ special events during their seasons. We also partnered with Julian's Bar and Grill in Meadville to host monthly Happy Hours. This has been so well received that NW PA Pride Alliance was approached by Cussewago Creek Distillery, asking if they could also host the Happy Hour. This event now alternates between both locations on the fourth Wednesday of every month.

The NW PA Pride Alliance also continued this year to help sponsor the Erie County HIV/AIDs Awareness Walk held in May, as well as the county's HIV/AIDs Memorial held on World AIDs Day, December 1st. We also help to sponsor the Miss Erie Pageant.

Summer would not be summer without the annual Pride Picnic held at the Rotary Pavilion on Presque Isle or our annual Pride Day at Waldameer. This year we were also proud to have returned the Drive Your Pride, where we invite people to decorate their cars and drive around Presque Isle.

During the early part of the year, Underdog



*Pride Parade arrives in Perry Square at Pride Fest on June 25. Photo by Michael Mahler*



*NW PA Pride and local residents hosted Meadville Pride and Street Fair on July 23. Photo by Michael Mahler*



BBQ approached the board asking if they could host an event at their West Eighth Street location. The Pride Alliance was excited about this and offered an opportunity to get some information from community resources like Journey to a Trauma-Informed Life, Erie Community College, UPMC Smoking Cessation, and free STI testing from Central Outreach Erie.

The NW PA Pride Alliance works hard to increase visibility for all LGBTQIA+ individuals. With this in mind, we march in the annual Fourth of July Parade in Millcreek and the Penn West Edinboro Homecoming Parade. With our growing presence in Crawford County, we were happy to be part of the Meadville Halloween Parade for the first time.

After some conversations during the Happy Hours in Meadville, members of the board were approached and asked if NW PA Pride Alliance would be interested in helping host a local festival in Meadville. This was how the idea for the Meadville Pride and Street Fair came about and later came to fruition this past July.

Of course, our largest and most involved event of the year is the annual Erie Pride Parade and Pride-fest in Perry's Square. This year with the sponsorship of Safe Journey, Central Outreach Erie, and partnership of the Erie Playhouse, Erie celebrated its most immense Pride ever with roughly 5,000 members of the community present.

The NW PA Pride Alliance is grateful to all of our donors and sponsors who help improve the visibility of the LGBTQIA+ community in the greater Erie area. We stand committed to fostering equality, respect, and diversity throughout events and organizations. We would like to additionally thank the following donors who helped to make achieving this mission possible.

Rainbow level: Erie County Health Department (ECDH), Erie Food Co-op, Giant Eagle Pride Business Resource Group, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, NWPA Tobacco Control Program, PNC Bank, UPMC Hamot, and Wegmans,

Violet level: Erie Gay News, Greater Erie Alliance for Equality (GEAE), Lake Erie Counseling Associates, Lion's Den, and Wheel! Design.

Blue level: Andora's Bubble, Jones Pond Campground & RV Park, Julian's Bar & Grill, and Mooney's Bakery.

Yellow level: Signature Concessions

Orange level: Sam's Club and Tammie Kraus

If you would like to help support and donate to help keep NW PA Pride events happening, please consider giving a donation on our website. [nwpa-pride.org](http://nwpa-pride.org).

## Compton's Table Art Exhibit

Compton's Table is looking for young artists to display their work at an upcoming art exhibit titled "As I Am." Acceptable forms are digital, print, and canvas media. The show is open to students and those ages 10-25. Art will be collected beginning in December. The show will run from January- February at Penn State Behrend. There will be a gallery opening night. Specific dates and times are being determined as Erie Gay News goes to press. For any inquiries, please email [info@comptonstable.org](mailto:info@comptonstable.org).



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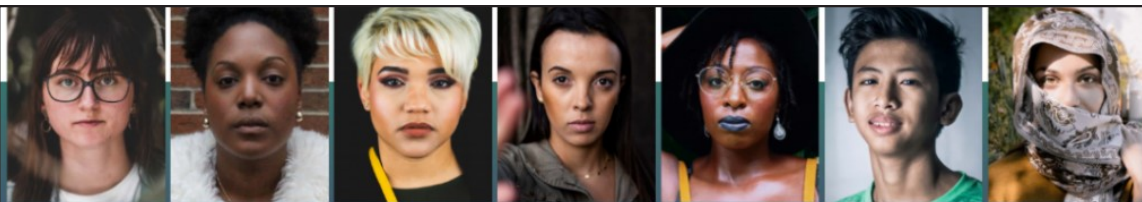
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*Erie Gay News editorial board with Patrick Hiller of Wheel! Design, who created the new Erie Gay News logo.*

*First row (l-r) Kim Conti, Gary Snyder, Andrea Shaffer*

*Second row (l-r) Rex Apps, Patrick Hiller (of Wheel! Design), Michael Mahler, Michael Mongera*



# YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

Crime Victim Center of Erie County offers free and confidential services to all survivors of sexual assault and their families and friends. Trained volunteers and staff are available 24 hours a day to provide crisis intervention and emotional support; advocacy with medical, police, and court systems, should you choose that path. Short-term group and individual counseling; resources and referrals are also available.

[cvcerie.org](http://cvcerie.org)



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## STIs & HIV



STIs like chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis increase the chance of getting HIV. STIs also increase the chance of transmitting HIV to others.



6% of sexually acquired HIV infections are attributed to chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis.

New HIV infections attributed to STIs are costly.

In 2018, the lifetime medical costs for 1,896 new HIV infections attributed to chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis totaled:

**\$800 MILLION**



💰 = \$100 Million

[www.cdc.gov/std](http://www.cdc.gov/std)



\*Note: 2020 data reflect the effect of COVID-19 on STD surveillance trends.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/statistics/2020/syndemic-infographic-may-2022.pdf>

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# Calendar

For latest updates, see [www.eriegaynews.com](http://www.eriegaynews.com)

*Live & Let Live is an LGBTQA-friendly AA meeting that meets every Sunday, at 7PM, at Community United Church, 1011 West 38th Street, Erie, PA 16508. For more information, visit [www.aeriepa.org](http://www.aeriepa.org) or contact [cmn0626@gmail.com](mailto:cmn0626@gmail.com). or (814) 504-1507.*

*Compton's Table Chat and Chill Social Hour for Youth every Monday from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. Register with [info@comptonstable.org](mailto:info@comptonstable.org) for location.*

*Starting January 18, every Wednesday at The Zone, 133 W 18th St, Trivia with Rebecca Mae. Join host Rebecca Mae for our next go at Trivia! Stick around after trivia for a performance by Rebecca Mae! Doors open at 8pm. Trivia begins at 9pm. No cover. 21+ with valid state-issued ID.*

**Dec 21 (Wed) - Coming Out of The Dark** (Journey: Healing Together, 201 W 11th St, Erie, PA 16505) 3 PM - 6:30 PM. Celebrating resilience and post-traumatic growth Phone: (814)636-0821. Browse to <http://www.journeyht.org/>.

**Dec 22 (Thu) – Teen Trans support group meets** (G.A. Family Services, 210 Gustavus Ave, Jamestown, NY 14701) 5 PM. Contact: Kaden Mason. (716) 708-6161. <http://gafamilyservices.org/>.

**Dec 22 (Thu) - Mild to Wild Discussion Group** (Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County, 31 Water Street Suite 7, Jamestown, NY 14701) 6 PM - 7:30 PM. Mild to Wild is a discussion group about sex and substance use designed for gay and bisexual men and folks of trans experience. Meets in person at MHA and also on Zoom. (716) 661-9044.

**Dec 23 (Fri) - Holiday Divas** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 10:30 PM. Join host Misty Michaels Kall, current Miss Erie Debbie, former Miss Eries and special guests for the kickoff of Christmas weekend. Doors open at 8 PM. Showtime 10:30 PM. \$5 cover. 21+ with valid state-issued id. Phone: (814) 452-0125. Email: [info@thezonedanceclub.com](mailto:info@thezonedanceclub.com). Browse to <https://thezonedanceclub.com/>.

**Dec 24 & 25 (Sat & Sun) - Zone Open for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501)

**Dec 28 (Wed) – LGBTQ+ and Allies Happy Hour – All welcome** (Cussewago Creek Distillery, 993 Water St, Meadville, PA 16335) 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM. *Note new location for even-numbered months!* Travis and

Brett came up with the idea of having a monthly happy hour get together for the LGBT and allies community in Crawford County. ALL are WELCOME. This is a time to network and socialize with the LGBTQ community and allies in the Meadville area, make new friends and meet people you may not know. An RSVP would be appreciated by not necessary. All are welcome so please share and spread the word! Don't forget to bring your business cards for exchange.

**Dec 31 (Sat) - Drag in The New Year** (Norman D Banquet Center, 2720 Carpenter Rd, Ashtabula, OH 44004) 7 PM - 1 AM. A formal affair to benefit the outreach and education program. Hosted by Mona Lotz. Music by Jeremy James. Tickets are \$65 per person or \$120 per couple and include dinner, dessert, open bar, dancing, DJ and drag show, door prize entry, 50/50, and 12 AM champagne toast. Tickets can be requested from LGBTQ Coalition of Ashtabula County web site

**Dec 31 (Sat) - New Year's Eve** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 8 PM. Celebrate the end of 2022 and help us ring in 2023! Complementary buffet AND champagne toast at midnight. \$10 cover. 21+ with valid state-issued id. Phone: (814) 452-0125. Email: [info@thezonedanceclub.com](mailto:info@thezonedanceclub.com). Browse to <https://thezonedanceclub.com/>.

**Dec 31 (Sat) - M & J's Lounge New Year's Eve Party** (M & J's Lounge, 124 Mercer St, Butler, PA 16001) Tickets are 20.00 includes food. Limited tickets. Phone: (724) 602-8447. Email: [JoshuaSean2009@AOL.COM](mailto:JoshuaSean2009@AOL.COM). Browse to <http://www.facebook.com/MandJsLounge>.

**Jan 1 (Sun) - Zone Open Regular Hours for New Year's Day** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 8 PM - 2 AM. Phone: (814) 452-0125. Email: [info@thezonedanceclub.com](mailto:info@thezonedanceclub.com). Browse to <https://thezonedanceclub.com/>.

**Jan 6 (Fri) - G2H2 (Gay Guy/Gal Happy Hour) meets** (El Amigo Mexican Grill, 333 State St, Erie, PA 17607) 6 PM - 8 PM. Monthly Happy Hour - All Are Welcome!

**Jan 6 (Fri) - RuPaul's Drag Race Season 15 premieres** (MTV) 8 PM.

**Jan 8 (Sun) – LBT Women of Erie meets (Zoom)** 12 PM – 12:30 PM. Meeting ID: 770 9886 1291. Pass-code: F4fwNr.

**Jan 9 (Mon) - Erie County Democratic Party LGBTQIA+ Caucus meets via Zoom** (Zoom) 7 PM. General meeting on Zoom. Voting members must be a registered Democrat living in Erie County. Straight/cisgender allies welcome! Contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or [mmahler@eriedems.com](mailto:mmahler@eriedems.com) for Zoom



meeting info. Contact: Michael Mahler. Phone: (814) 456-9833. Browse to <https://www.facebook.com/ErieDemsLGBTQIA/>.

**Jan 10 (Tue) - LGBTQ+ Coalition of Ashtabula County Community Meeting** (Ashtabula County District Library, 4335 Park Ave, Ashtabula, OH 44004) 6 PM. Join us for our monthly meetings: a safe place for discussion, understanding, and community. Learn about the current activities of the Coalition and how you can participate. Connect with others in the LGBTQ+ Community in Ashtabula County. All are welcome who come in the spirit of inclusivity, diversity, equality, and nonjudgement.

**Jan 10 (Tue) - Youngstown PFLAG meets** (St. John's Episcopal Church, 323 Wick Ave, Youngstown, OH 44503) 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM. If you're GLBT, a parent of someone who is, or an ally and you're looking for emotional support, we encourage you to attend Youngstown PFLAG's monthly support group. You will be surrounded by understanding peers from the valley who will be able to listen and help. Support groups are open to the public, and it starts at 6:30pm. Light refreshments will be available. Browse to <http://www.youngstownpflag.org/>.

**Jan 13 - 15 (Fri - Sun) - Brokeback Cowboy Weekend** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) Join us for plaids and denim everything! Rootin tootin good times! 21+ with valid state-issued ID. Phone: (814) 452-0125. Email: [info@thezonedanceclub.com](mailto:info@thezonedanceclub.com). Browse to <https://thezonedanceclub.com/>.

**Jan 14 (Sat) - Pride Night with the Erie Otters** (Erie Insurance Arena, 809 French St, Erie, PA 16501) Join us in our third annual Pride Night at the Erie Otters. Tickets are only \$30.00 which includes a ticket to the game plus an exclusive Otters Pride Hat. Any questions please contact RJ Niedzwiecki at [rj.niedzwiecki@otter-shockey.com](mailto:rj.niedzwiecki@otter-shockey.com) or 814-480-6083 Venue Phone: (814) 453-7117. Browse to <http://www.nwpapride.org>. RSVP/ Register/Tickets at <https://fevo.me/pridenight011423>. Browse to venue web site <http://www.erieevents.com/>.

**Jan 15 (Sun) - Deadline for Erie Gay News Feb 2023 print edition (#328)** Please have all articles, ads, and submissions in by this date. This issue will be released on the evening of Tuesday, Jan 24..

**Jan 17 (Tue) - Erie County HIV Task Force meets (Hybrid)** (Erie County Department of Health (ECDH), 606 W 2nd St, Erie, PA 16507) 1 PM. The Erie County HIV Task Force is a collaboration of local organizations and individuals dedicated to educating, supporting, and advocating for people living with HIV/AIDS and preventing the spread of infection. Zoom Meeting ID: 927 9128 9996. Passcode: 940728 Join Zoom Meet-

ing <https://zoom.us/j/92791289996?pwd=UVlySWxGVlNlYmRmdjRKcExXVEQrQT09> Contact: Gary Snyder.

**Jan 18 (Wed) - Bears Do Dinner #99** (Location TBA) 6 PM. Join the Bears for a casual dinner of food and conversation! Dinner is on your own. Contact: Peter. Phone: (814) 384-9785.

**Jan 19 (Thu) - PFLAG Westfield NY meets** (Patterson Library, 40 S Portage St, Westfield, NY 14787) 6:30 PM. Support group for parents, friends and family of LGBTQ+ people. Contact: Patricia. (716)-450-9055. [aode2149@yahoo.com](mailto:aode2149@yahoo.com).

**Jan 22 (Sun) - Full Spectrum LGBTQIA+ Youth Peer Support & Social Group** (Full Spectrum Community Outreach Center, 5060 Youngstown Poland Rd, Youngstown, OH 44514) 3 PM - 5 PM. Ages 14-17, under 14 with signed parental consent form

**Jan 22 (Sun) - Full Spectrum LGBTQIA+ Adult Peer Support Group meets** (Full Spectrum Community Outreach Center, 5060 Youngstown Poland Rd, Youngstown, OH 44514) 6 PM - 8 PM. Ages 18+. (234) 254-8924. [info@fullspectrumcommunityoutreach.org](mailto:info@fullspectrumcommunityoutreach.org). [www.fullspectrumcommunityoutreach.org/](http://www.fullspectrumcommunityoutreach.org/)

**Jan 24 (Tue) - Erie Gay News folding/distribution work party** (Lake Erie Counseling Associates, 1932

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W 8th St, Erie, PA 16505) 7 PM. Help us get out the new issue. Volunteers appreciated!

**Jan 25 (Wed) – LGBTQ+ and Allies Happy Hour – All welcome** (Julian's Bar & Grill, 299 Chestnut St, Meadville, PA 16335) 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM.

**Jan 26 (Thu) – Teen Trans support group meets** (G.A. Family Services, 210 Gustavus Ave, Jamestown, NY 14701) 5 PM. Contact: Kaden Mason. (716) 708-6161. <http://gafamilyservices.org/>.

**Jan 26 (Thu) - Mild to Wild Discussion Group** (Mental Health Association in Chautauqua County, 31 Water Street Suite 7, Jamestown, NY 14701) 6 PM - 7:30 PM. Mild to Wild is a discussion group about sex and substance use designed for gay and bisexual men and folks of trans experience. Meets in person at MHA and also on Zoom. (716) 661-9044.

**Jan 27 (Fri) - Holocaust Remembrance Day** Day to remember all of the victims of the Nazi era. Browse to <https://www.yadvashem.org/27th/index.asp>.

**Jan 28 (Sat) - TransFamily of NWP (Erie) Transgender Support Group meets** (Crime Victim Center of Erie County, 125 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 2 PM - 5 PM. Meetings are hosted at the Crime Victim Center of Erie County (125 W. 18th St., Erie, PA). All current CDC, state, and local guidelines for meeting indoors

will be observed. Meetings are always confidential and completely free.

**Feb 3 - 19 (Fri - Sun) - Cabaret** (Academy Theatre, 275 Chestnut St, Meadville, PA 16335) In a Berlin nightclub, as the 1920's draw to a close, a garish Master of Ceremonies welcomes the audience and assures them they will forget all their troubles at the Cabaret. With the Emcee's bawdy songs as wry commentary, Cabaret explores the dark, heady, and tumultuous life of Berlin's natives and expatriates as Germany slowly yields to the emerging Third Reich. Cliff, a young American writer newly arrived in Berlin, is immediately taken with English singer Sally Bowles. Meanwhile, Fraulein Schneider, proprietor of Cliff and Sally's boarding house, tentatively begins a romance with Herr Schultz, a mild-mannered fruit seller who happens to be Jewish. Musical numbers include "Willkommen," "Cabaret," "Don't Tell Mama" and "Two Ladies." Phone: (814) 337-8211.

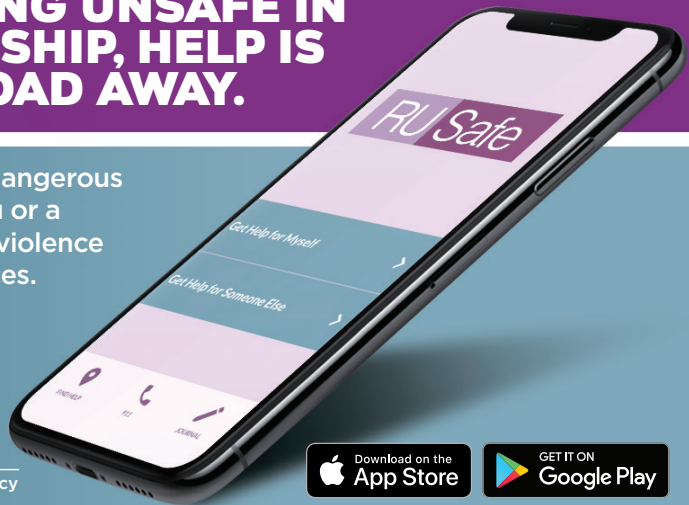
**Feb 7 (Tue) - National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day** February 7 is National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD), a national HIV testing and treatment community mobilization initiative targeted at Blacks in the United States and the Diaspora. NBHAAD was founded in 1999 as a national response

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to the growing HIV and AIDS epidemic in African American communities. #NBHAAD Browse to <https://nationalblackaidsday.org/>.

**Feb 10 - 12 (Fri - Sun) - Hearts Weekend** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) Whether you celebrate Valentine's Day or Singles Awareness Day, join your friends for the annual red and black party! Doors open at 8pm. \$5 cover (Friday & Saturday). No Cover (Sunday only). 21+ with valid state-issued ID.

**Feb 10 (Fri) - Diva Heart Show** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 10 PM. Join host Misty Michaels Kall and her Divas for the first Diva show of 2023! Doors open at 8pm. Showtime 10pm. \$5 cover. 21+ with valid state-issued ID.

**Feb 11 (Sat) - Second Annual Gala Fundraiser - Show Some Love II Warren County Pride** (Crary Art Gallery, 511 Market St, Warren, PA 16365) 7 PM. Live music, silent auction, refreshments. Suggested donation \$25 / person \$40 / couple. Text 714.366.9509 to RSVP

**Feb 12 (Sun) - LBT Women of Erie meets** (Zoom) 12 PM - 12:30 PM. Meeting ID: 770 9886 1291. Passcode: F4fwNr.

**Feb 13 (Mon) - Deadline for Erie Gay News March 2023 print edition (#328)** (Erie Gay News, 1115 W 7th St, Erie, PA 16502-1105) Please have all articles, ads, and submissions in by this date. This issue will be released on the evening of Tuesday, February 21

**Feb 13 (Mon) - Erie County Democratic Party LG-BTQIA+ Caucus meets via Zoom** (Zoom) 7 PM. General meeting on Zoom. Voting members must be a registered Democrat living in Erie County. Straight/cisgender allies welcome! Contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or mmahler@eriedems.com for Zoom meeting info.

**Feb 14 (Tue) - LGBTQ+ Coalition of Ashtabula County Community Meeting** (Ashtabula County District Library, 4335 Park Ave, Ashtabula, OH 44004) 6 PM. Join us for our monthly meetings: a safe place for discussion, understanding, and community. Learn about the current activities of the Coalition and how you can participate. Connect with others in the LGBTQ+ Community in Ashtabula County. All are welcome who come in the spirit of inclusivity, diversity, equality, and nonjudgement.

**Feb 14 (Tue) - Youngstown PFLAG meets** (St. John's Episcopal Church, 323 Wick Ave, Youngstown, OH 44503) 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM.

**Feb 16 (Thu) - PFLAG Westfield NY meets** (Patterson Library, 40 S Portage St, Westfield, NY 14787) 6:30 PM. Support group for parents, friends and family of LGBTQ+ people.



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**Feb 19 - 25 (Sun - Sat) - Aromantic Spectrum Awareness Week** An aromantic is someone who doesn't experience romantic attraction. Arospec is the shorthand name for people who identify anywhere on the aromantic spectrum, including aromantics. Aro Awareness Week is for anyone on the aromantic spectrum, regardless of where they lie there or sexual orientation

**Feb 19 (Sun) - FACE with Misty Michaels Kall** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 10:30 PM. Misty and the house cast assemble with their favorite love/hate songs (because queens can't do anything on time so they get the weekend after the party). Doors open at 8pm. Showtime 10:30pm. No Cover. 21+ with valid state-issued ID.

**Feb 21 (Tue) - Erie County HIV Task Force meets** (Hybrid) (Erie County Department of Health (ECDH), 606 W 2nd St, Erie, PA 16507) 1 PM.

**Feb 21 (Tue) - Erie Gay News folding/distribution work party** (Lake Erie Counseling Associates, 1932 W 8th St, Erie, PA 16505) 7 PM. Help us get out the print edition of Erie Gay News.

**Feb 21 (Tue) - Mardi Gras** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 8 PM. Come out and celebrate Fat Tuesday Zone style! Doors open at 8pm. No cover. 21+ with valid state-issued ID.



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