



# ERIE GAY NEWS

Serving the Regional LGBTQIA+ Community Since 1992

## Compton's Table Cookies & Queen

On Saturday, December 16th, Compton's Table held its inaugural holiday social and fundraiser, Cookies and Queen. Guests gathered at the Compton's Table studio to enjoy cookies, hot cocoa, make-your-own ornament crafts, and an exceptional performance and reading by local drag artist and reigning Miss Eerie Shea D'Heaux. This family-friendly event was designed to bring together members of the queer community and their loved ones for the festive season. "We realize that for many in the LGBTQ+ community, the holidays can be a challenging time," said Compton's Table board secretary Christina Salvia. "We wanted to host a holiday event that felt safe, inclusive, and fun for all, and to that end, I think we succeeded." Approximately 25 guests attended Cookies and Queen, which Compton's Table hopes will be only the first event of its kind. "Making connections and building community are two of our primary goals," Salvia said. "We hope to incorporate many more fun, family-friendly events like these into our programming in the future."

## Journey to a Trauma-Informed Life Wellness Weekends

This year, Journey to a Trauma-Informed Life, 201 W 11th Street, Erie, PA, is combining their community building events into one weekend - Friday night game night, Saturday crafternoon and open art studio, Sunday early afternoon banned book club and later afternoon yoga classes, plus special events to try each month. Head to their webpage at <https://atraumainformedlife.com/> or Facebook page for details. Early 2024 dates are January 19-21, February 16-18, and March 15-17.

## TransGiving celebrated at the Compton's Table

TransFamily of Northwestern Pennsylvania once again hosted the annual TransGiving on Saturday, November 25, at Compton's Table in the Central Outreach Building on State Street. The meal was



*Compton's Table - Cookies & Queen on December 16, Photo by Michael Mahler.*

a potluck style, with members of the TransFamily board providing the turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, and dressing. Great conversations among new and old friends helped make this event a cherished part of the holiday season.

## World AIDS Day Observance Held Dec 1st

*from Gary Snyder, Erie County Department of Health*

On Friday, December 1, 2023, the Erie County HIV Task Force [ECHTF] presented this year's World AIDS Day Memorial Program at the H.O. Hirt Auditorium inside the Blasco Public Library at 160 East Front Street, Erie, PA 16507. Speakers included Erie County Department of Health Director Erin Mrenak, Erie County staff member Gary Snyder, Adagio Health staff member Andi Fair, and PA Thrive Partnership staff member Sonny Concepcion. 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, presented the event's program covering accomplishments of the ECHTF in 2023, including the history of World AIDS Day and the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Erin Mrenak re-

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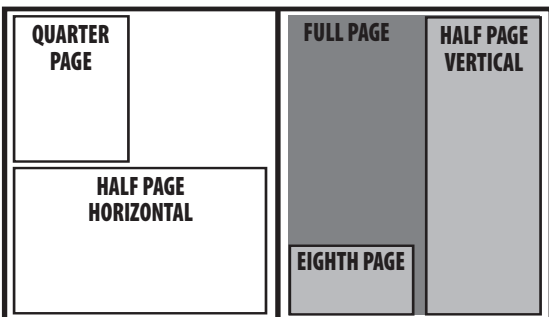
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The *Erie Gay News* is published monthly as a source of news, events, information, and support for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people (GLBTs), their families, friends, and supporters in the Erie PA area.

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



AD SIZE	PRICE/ISSUE	DIMENSIONS
EIGHTH	\$50 - \$45 Prepaid	1 5/8" high X 2 7/8" wide
QUARTER	\$80 - \$72 Prepaid	3 1/2" high X 2 7/8" wide
HALF VERT.	\$150 - \$135 Prepaid	3 1/2" high X 6" wide
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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.

## THANKS

From Your Friends at Erie Gay News

To Lake Erie Counseling Associates for hosting! Jeff Hill, Kim Conti, Maggie Watts, Rex Apps, and Steve Siwiecki for folding; Brett Staskiewicz, Jeff Hill, Kim Conti, Rex Apps, and Steve Siwiecki for distribution; Wheel! Design for logo. If you're interested in helping out, contact Michael Mahler at (814) 456-9833 or [info@eriegaynews.com](mailto:info@eriegaynews.com).

viewed the importance of improving care and testing access for Erie residents. Andi Fair reviewed the current options for HIV Prevention. Sonny Concepcion moderated an interview segment with two guests that discussed their diagnosis journey from the 1980s to today and how today's available medicines give them fulfilling lives while having undetectable HIV.

This year's program also included the I AM A WORK OF ART project involving the public, Community Health Net / PA Thrive Partnership clients, and Journey to a Trauma Informed Life. The word ART this year has a dual meaning. As a medical term, ART is an acronym for Anti-Retroviral Therapy - a combo of meds taken to make HIV undetectable, which creates no risk of transmission to others. ART also represents creativity and imagination through various forms of expression. During art therapy sessions held in October and November 2023, participants created submissions of designs/pieces currently on display for December in the Blasco Memorial Library at 160 E Front St, Erie, PA 16507. Many thanks to this year's participants, volunteers, and sponsors: Journey to a Trauma Informed Life, Northwest Institute of Research, PA Thrive Partnership, and the Erie

County Department of Health.

For more information about HIV testing and treatment options or to become a volunteer, please visit echiv.org, including the county map of testing locations, clinic services, and free condoms available locally or mailed to your home. You may also call 814-315-3375 or send an email to admin@echiv.org.



Erie County HIV Task Force members by AIDS Quilt panels at World AIDS Day Program on December 1, 2023.

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## **Aging With Pride Meeting with GECAC Presentation**

On November 19, 2023, Ray Maholtz, Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC) Deputy Director of Aging, presented services and opportunities for GECAC and the Independent Council on Aging (ICA) of Erie, PA. Caseworkers at GECAC's senior helpline, (814) 459-4581 ext. 400, can skillfully guide callers to access services and resources. Aging With Pride member Dale Allgeier joined GECAC's advisory board as a follow-up to the meeting. In addition, the Independent Council on Aging of Erie, PA, meets on the first Friday of each month. Aging with Pride member Robin Green is now serving as the group's representative to the group, with Kem and Pat as alternates. The Independent Council on Aging of Erie, PA, publishes an annual directory of services and resources. In addition to a listing in the directory, Aging With Pride has also purchased an ad in the 2024 edition. The directory is distributed throughout the year at service providers and senior resource fairs. Thanks to Ray, Erie Gay News will now be distributed at all seven senior centers in Erie County.

At the following Aging With Pride meeting on December 3, Central Outreach Wellness Center of Erie's Outreach Coordinator and Case Manager, Gabe Genua, presented info on the services and resources that Central Outreach provides. Several Aging With Pride members already access services at Central Outreach. Aging With Pride was very grateful for Gabe's informative presentation and appreciated his help being more aware of what the organization offers.

## **NW PA Pride Alliance reflects on a full 2023**

The NW PA Pride Alliance would like to take a moment to reflect and thank all those who have helped make 2023 a success.

Most notably known for planning and hosting the Erie Pride Fest and Parade, many may be surprised to learn the Pride Alliance works throughout the year to enhance visibility, foster unity, and promote acceptance through roughly forty events and programs, creating an inclusive space for all in Northwest Pennsylvania.

The year's highlight for the NW PA Pride Alliance has always been the annual Pride Fest celebration in Perry's Square in Erie. Thousands come from

around the region to participate in the festivities. Continued for 2023 was the Meadville Pride and Street Fair, which also saw growth. NW PA Pride Alliance is one of only a few Pride organizations that put on multiple Prides during the year.

Another high point of the year for the Pride Alliance was the 30th annual Pride Picnic. The Pride Picnic was held once again at the Rotary Pavilion on Presque Isle, allowing the community to gather with their chosen family.

New for this year was a Pride Prom held in May at the Ambassador Banquet and Conference Center. The board wanted to provide a fun atmosphere for those who may not have been able to attend their own prom or who may not have been able to attend with the person they would have preferred to. For those who had a good time, the Pride Alliance is happy to announce that this will return in 2024.

The NW PA Pride Alliance has also been visible throughout the area by participating in local parades. Members have walked in the Millcreek Fourth of July parade and the Penn West Edinboro Homecoming parade for many years. They have also most recently made the Meadville Halloween Parade an annual tradition. In addition, the Pride Alliance hosts monthly Happy Hours on the first Wednesday of the month at Oasis Pub in Erie and on the fourth Wednesday of the month in Meadville, alternating between Julian's Bar and Grill and Cussawago Creek Distillery. The year would not be complete without a trip to support the



*Members of Aging With Pride at Blane & Randy's holiday dinner on December 14, 2023. Photo by Michael Mahler.*

local sports teams in Erie, with Pride Nights being celebrated with the Otters and Seawolves.

Teaming up with other Queer organizations, the NW PA Pride Alliance helped to give back to our larger community by helping to host some give back events throughout the year. The Boots and Coats drive, which benefited Community Shelter Services, was held in January to help provide much-needed items during Erie's cold winters. In May, the Alliance helped with the collection of nonperishable food items, which were donated to the Second Harvest Food Bank of NW PA.

Another new endeavor started by the Pride Alliance in conjunction with eleven other local queer organizations was to host the first-ever Banned Book Drive held in Northwestern Pennsylvania, focusing on queer-themed books. The banned books were collected and then distributed throughout the community by use of the United Ways Small Library System. This was seen as such an asset to the Queer community that it helped inspire other collections throughout the Commonwealth.

The NW PA Pride Alliance is grateful to all of our donors and sponsors who help to improve the

visibility of the Queer Community here in Northwestern Pennsylvania. We stand committed to fostering equality, respect, and diversity throughout events. We especially want to thank the following donors who helped us achieve these goals.

Our Main Stage was sponsored by Erie Insurance. Adagio Health sponsored the Health & Wellness Zone, Central Outreach Wellness Center Erie was the title Sponsor for the 30th annual Pride Picnic. We are also grateful for support from The First Energy Foundation and National Fuel Gas.

Rainbow level: Andora's Bubble, Erie County Department of Health, Giant Eagle Pride Business Resources Group, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, Macy's, PNC Bank, and Wegmans.

Purple level: Erie Gay News, Whee! Studio, Yoga Spot Meadville


Blue level: Crime Victim Center of Erie County, Jones Pond Campground & RV Park, Mooney's Bakery, PennWest Edinboro Psi Chi Chapter, SafeNet Center, State Farm Insurance Agent Natalie Braddock, and Steadman Law Office.

Yellow level: Alicia Castorena and LBT



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## Women

Orange level: Samantha Randall

NW PA Pride Alliance has many exciting announcements planned for 2024, so stay tuned to Facebook, Instagram, and NWPAPride.org to stay connected.

## 2023 Annual Lake Erie Gala

It was another very successful year for the 92 Transgender/Cross-Dressing Ladies, their spouses, significant others, speakers, and vendors attending the 24th Annual Lake Erie Gala hosted by the Erie Sisters and Brothers at the Sheraton Erie Bayfront Property last November.

It was a great time, starting with a Welcome to the Gala with Bang party on Wednesday night. This year, we changed it up from Pizza to a Soup and Sandwich Buffet. It was a great hit and will be a new tradition for Wednesday nights. Thursday during the day, 27 beautiful ladies boarded a Coach bus, and toured around Presque Isle, stopping at the Presque Isle Lighthouse and grounds, followed by a delicious lunch and wine tasting at Arundel Winery located in North East PA. Thursday's dinner theme paid homage to the West Side Story where the ladies strapped on their best pair of dancing shoes and dined on a delicious Spanish themed dinner. After dinner, they danced the night away with our own Erie Sister DJ Brittany. Friday was a big day for outings starting in the morning with 29 ladies hopping on the bus for a tour and a fun interactive group project at The Erie Art Museum followed by a lunch and beer tasting at John Russell Brewing Company. That night a shuttle of 10 ladies and a car of 5 went over to the All an Act Theatre to view the comedic drama play called "Jake's Women". While another bus of 15 ladies took a short trip over to Kellar's Magic and Comedy Club

for a thrilling magic show with Blake Vogt.

Saturday was a very active day for all starting off with Journal Your Dreams Breakfast Experience with Liz Tattersall where she shared tips, tools, inspiration, and more to uncover the power of journaling your vision and dreams so that you can live your best life. Next up was Money and Mimosas with Beth McKinley. Participants joined Beth with mimosas and she shared tips about SMART money habits that can help ensure a stable financial future by aligning money decisions with the participants' values, they could discover opportunity costs, and have a process for making wise money choices. Once again we had the beautiful Michelle Popkov with her session on Enhancing Your MTF Presentation. Her seminar was aimed at novices sharing some basic tips on developing a feminine presentation. Those tips could provide the participant countermeasures to take on life in public as a woman, building confidence, and avoid natural traps that could potentially give them away. For Saturday's lunch 13 Cis-Gender Spouses/Cis-Gender S/O's hopped the hotel shuttle for an amazing lunch at Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen in Erie PA while the rest of the beauties dined on a Slider buffet at the hotel. The same afternoon was also fun filled, starting with Fun Story Time with JoAnn. 13 ladies shared some of their funniest stories of their various outings as a feminine lady. It was so much fun that it was widely requested to be held again next year. Then the afternoon ended with The Vanity Club, the oldest and most dedicated sorority organization of transgender women in the world holding an open to all reception. The day ended with a 50's Sock Hop where 92 ladies squeezed into those leather pants or shimmed on the poodle skirts and saddle shoes. They enjoyed a Buffet Dinner and a 3 layer JukeBox cake with 2-1/2 sheet cakes made by Liz Millspaugh. (<https://www.facebook.com/BizzzyLizzysBakery>) After dinner they "hopped" the rest of the night to the entertainment provided by Matty and Dirty Pickles ([www.facebook.com/thedirtyPickles](http://www.facebook.com/thedirtyPickles)). What a day!!! Sadly, once again all the fun ended on Sunday with a "Farewell Breakfast". Thank you to all that attended this year and best wishes to see all again next year.

This year, we started a new tradition of having a Memorial table at each meal held at the host hotel for those that have crossed over the Rainbow bridge complete with an electronic picture frame with their revolving pictures. If you know of anyone that has

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crossed over the rainbow bridge. Please send a clear jpeg picture and a brief biography and their affiliations with the community to [info@lakeeriegala.com](mailto:info@lakeeriegala.com).

Special thank you to our speakers and vendors:

- \* Liz Tattersall, Certified Health and Life Coach, HCI
- \* Beth McKinley, Roots Financial Group at Thrivent
- \* Scarlett, owner of Scarlett's Makeovers
- \* Amy Lamb, owner of Just You
- \* Michelle Popkov, who gave us a very informative seminar in MTF presentation.
- \* Diane Crow, owner of Portraits by Diane Crow
- \* 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
- \* Brad Gerow, PharmD, Chief of Philanthropy and Development
- \* Rachel McShane, Voice Coach with Vocality Speech Therapy

To obtain contact information about the Erie Sisters 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 2024 year which will include the starting up again of monthly/every other month meetings in Erie, PA, Cabin Fever in February, Princess Dinner Cruise in June and ending the year again in November with a very special 25th annual Lake Erie Gala. So stay tuned!

## Transgender Day of Remembrance 2023

TransFamily of Northwestern Pennsylvania would like to thank everyone who gathered together at Journey to a Trauma-Informed Life or via Facebook Live for this year's Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR). 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 the media often seek to erase their existence.

This year, participants read the names of 47



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transgender individuals and shared reflections from their friends and family. Sadly, we know the number is much larger, and these are just the ones who have been proven and reported. TransFamily chooses to focus on the positive aspects of these lost siblings when remembering these lives taken far too soon.

Sadly, 87% of the victims were people of color. 50% were Black transgender women. 77% were killed with a gun. 43% of the known victims were killed by a romantic/sexual partner, friend, or family member. Finally, 50% were misgendered or deadnamed by authorities or the press. (Source: hrc.org)

For more information, you can check out the Human Rights Campaign's report "The Epidemic of Violence Against the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Community in the United States" at <https://reports.hrc.org/an-epidemic-of-violence-2023>.

## **Applications Open for Executive Director of Governor's Commission on LGBTQ Affairs**

The previous Executive Director of the Governor's Commission on LGBTQ Affairs has recently stepped down due to health issues. The Executive Director serves as an extension of the Governor's office in the LGBTQ community and is responsible for communicating the priorities and accomplishments of the Governor and his Administration. In this role, the Executive Director will seek to spread awareness and increase access to programs and services provided by the Commonwealth that benefit everyday LGBTQ Pennsylvanians. Applicants are encouraged to embark on an innovative and fulfilling career path within the Commonwealth and apply today at <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/pabureau/jobs/4313574/executive-director-governors-commission-on-lgbtq-affairs>! Pennsylvania was the first state in the nation to have a commission for the LGBTQ community as of 2018.

## **Compton's Table Rolls Out New Independent Living Program**

True North: Compton's Table is very excited to announce the rollout of our new ILP (independent living program) beginning in January 2024. The program, True North, is an 8-week program tailored to the specific needs of queer youth and young adults



(16-21 yrs old) in our region. Key components of True North include financial literacy, finding and maintaining housing, self-care and mental health, career development, legal rights & advocacy, cooking & nutrition, networking & social skills, and more! True North is a free program, thanks to the LGBT Funds of the Erie Community Foundation, and you can register at [www.comptonstable.org](http://www.comptonstable.org). For any questions, email [info@comptonstable.org](mailto:info@comptonstable.org).

### Community Spotlight #13: Pennsylvania Equality Project

On June 20, 2011, David Moore was watching live coverage on C-Span of the New York state legislature voting to enact marriage equality for same-sex couples. He was so moved that he formed a group of like-minded people on Facebook and called it Gay Marriage for Pennsylvania. When enough people in the group expressed to him that the name overlooked far too many people in the LGBTQIA2S+ community, he changed the name to Marriage Equality for Pennsylvania (ME4PA). In 2012, Joshua Szczeny joined ME4PA; together, David and Josh built the

organization into a small nonprofit. However, by August 2014, with marriage equality already law in Pennsylvania, he changed the name to Pennsylvania Equality Project (PEP). The organization he founded now focuses on surveys related to housing, discrimination, bullying, and mental health. PEP also offers the Meadville FreeShop, held two or three times per year at the Meadville Public Library.

The organization is applying to the FCC for a low-watt FM radio station license to serve Crawford County and provide live programming about the LG-BTQIA2S+ community across PA. David hopes to open volunteer on-air talent opportunities for students from local schools and colleges. While these initiatives are of a localized nature, PEP also has a listing of resources, petitions, and events and conducts surveys on its website. To learn more about the Pennsylvania Equality Project, email [info@paequality.com](mailto:info@paequality.com) or see their Facebook page at <https://facebook.com/paequalitypro> or Instagram page at <https://instagram.com/paequalitypro>. The organization's website URL is <https://paequality.com>.

# Join Us

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This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA/HHS, or the U.S. Government.



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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.aaeriepa.org](http://www.aaeriepa.org) or contact [cmn0626@gmail.com](mailto:cmn0626@gmail.com). or (814) 504-1507.*

*Zone Monday Night Karaoke with DJ Nitro at The Zone, 133 W 18th St, 9 PM-midnight. No cover. 21+ with valid state-issued ID.*

*Zone Tuesday Game Night, 133 W 18th St, Doors open at 8 PM. Bring your own game or use ours. (Must submit an ID for us to hold while game is in use.) Happy hour 8-10 PM. \$1 off bottled beers. \$2 well drinks. No cover. 21 & over with ID.*

*Zone Flow Together Thursdays, 133 W 18th St, Erie PA. Ever wanted to try your hand at ribbon dancing or poi? Join Ash, Buddy, and Snarebear for a night of flow toys! Doors open at 8pm. No cover. 21+ with valid state-issued ID.*

**Dec 21 (Thu) - Journey: Healing Together presents Raise The Roof - Winter Solstice Celebration** (Journey: Healing Together, 201 W. 11th Street, Erie, PA 16501) 5:30 PM - 8 PM. You're invited to celebrate the beginning of winter with our fellow community members. There will be an art show, food, art projects, intention setting ceremony and a cozy fire! Free to the public - donations are welcomed! <https://journeyht.org/donate/>

**Dec 21 (Thu) - Queer Open Mic** (Compton's Table, 3104 State St, Erie, PA 16508) 6 PM - 10 PM. Come hang out at our monthly open mics hosted by the awesome, talented, and slaying Gwen Elaine! FREE! BYOB (wrist bands provided for anyone with alcohol). if you want to register as a performer, email [info@comptonstable.org](mailto:info@comptonstable.org)

**Dec 21 (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.

**Dec 21 (Thu) - Lotz of Tea with Mona** 7 PM. With co-host Large Marge. Live streaming on Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. Browse to <https://www.facebook.com/LotzofTea>.

**Dec 22 (Fri) - DIVAS: Naughty and Nice** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 10:30

PM. Celebrate the holiday season in glittering style at Erie's top queer destination, the Zone Dance Club, with our monthly drag sensation, 'DIVAS: Naughty & Nice.' Hosted by the incomparable Misty Michael Kall, our talented house queens are ready to enchant you with a special holiday-themed performance that combines the perfect blend of naughty and nice. Join us as we open our doors at 8pm, and the show lights up the stage at 10:30pm. Mark your calendar for this festive edition of DIVAS, with a \$5 cover charge, and get ready for an evening filled with holiday magic, laughter, and sensational entertainment!. 21+ with valid state-issued ID.

**Dec 23 (Sat) - It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like ALASKA ...A Christmas Show** (Erie Playhouse, 13 West 10th Street, Erie, PA 16501) Justin Andrew Honard is an American drag queen and recording artist from Erie, PA, performing under the stage name Alaska 5000. She is best known as the runner-up on the fifth season of RuPaul's Drag Race and the winner of the second season of RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars

**Dec 23 (Sat) - TransFamily of NWPA (Erie) Transgender Support Group meets** (Compton's Table, 3104 State St, Erie, PA 16508) 2 PM - 5 PM. Meetings are hosted at Compton's Table, 3401 State St, Erie PA. All current CDC, state, and local guidelines for meeting indoors will be observed. Meetings are always confidential and completely free.

**Dec 24-25 (Sun -Mon) - Zone Open Christmas Eve & Christmas Night** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 8 PM. Christmas at The Zone Dance Club is 'Our Gift to You'! Join us for the holiday season as we open our doors on Christmas Eve and Christmas night from 8pm to 2am. We're spreading even more cheer with a special Happy Hour from 8pm to 10pm, so come early to enjoy great deals on drinks. It's the perfect opportunity to celebrate with friends, chosen family, and a welcoming community. We can't wait to share the joy of the season with you! No cover. 21+ with valid state-issued ID.

**Dec 25 (Mon) - The Color Purple movie musical premieres in theatres** This musical adaptation of Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel (and the popular 1985 Steven Spielberg film) spotlights Celie, a downtrodden young woman whose personal awakening over the course of 40 years forms the arc of this epic story.

**Dec 27 (Wed) - LGBTQ+ and Allies Happy Hour - All welcome** (Cussewago Creek Distillery, 993 Water St., Meadville, PA 16335) 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM.



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*Jen and Katie - Erie, PA*

**Dec 28 (Thu) - Aging with Pride Social Hour** (Royal Chopstix Asian Cuisine, 3444 West Lake Rd, Erie PA) 6 PM - 8 PM. Aging with Pride, an organization of senior LGBT+ members and allies, is hosting a social. This organization develops and sponsors social/recreational and educational events to promote healthy leisure activities, community and an active, enjoyable lifestyle. They are sponsoring this social hour (OK, social two hours) to interact with members of the community and to get a sense of the types of activities that are of interest to senior LGBT+ individuals. For more information about Aging with Pride, visit their website at [AgingWithPrideErie.org](http://AgingWithPrideErie.org), or email Dale Allgeier at [DaleAllgeier@outlook.com](mailto:DaleAllgeier@outlook.com).

**Dec 28 (Thu) - Teen Trans support group meets** (G.A. Family Services, 210 Gustavus Ave, Jamestown, NY 14701) 5 PM.

**Dec 31 (Sun) - Ashtabula Pride, Inc. - Drag In The New Year** (Conneaut Human Resources Center, 327 Mill St, Conneaut, OH 44020) 6 PM - 1 AM. A fun night of Dinner, Dancing, & Drag! Hosted by Mona Lotz and Gingerella, it's a night you don't want to miss. Raffle baskets, 50/50, and the BIG UNVEILING of our HUGE RAFFLE! Only 130 tickets are available. Join us for the biggest fundraising event of the year!

**Dec 31 (Sun) - M & J's New Year's Eve Party** (M & J's Lounge, 124 Mercer St, Butler, PA 16001) Tickets are \$20.00. Food and all the party supplies and champagne included. Pre-sale tickets are \$20.00 at the door will be \$25.00. Doors open at 8:00 pm for this event. We have a limited numbered amount of tickets. Drag Show to end the year of 2023.

**Dec 31 (Sun) - New Year's Eve** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 8 PM. CGet ready to ring in the New Year with a bang at Erie's premier LGBTQ+ destination, The Zone Dance Club! Doors open at 8pm, and with just a \$10 cover charge, you'll gain access to the most sensational New Year's Eve celebration in town. Enjoy a complimentary buffet and join us for a champagne toast at midnight as we welcome the arrival of the new year with open arms. Bring your friends and chosen family for a night of unforgettable moments, music, and dancing at The Zone! \$10 cover. 21+ with valid state-issued id.

**Jan 2 (Tue) - LGBTQIA+ Recovery Support Group** (UPMC Western Behavioral Health at Safe Harbor, 1330 W 26th St, Erie, PA) 5 PM - 6 PM. Our mission is to provide a supportive and empowering space for LGBTQIA+ individuals who are dealing with substance use disorders. We strive to create an inclusive, strengths-based community where participants can find understanding, acceptance, and inspiration to overcome

any challenges they may be facing. Through support, education, and resources, we aim to foster personal growth, resilience, and long-term recovery. For more information about the LGBTQIA+ Recovery Support Group, please call 814-451-2246.

**Jan 3 (Wed) - Erie's Queer Happy Hour** (Oasis Pub, 3122 W Lake Rd, Erie, PA 16505) 6 PM - 9 PM. This event will be held in the backroom at Oasis. This event is open to everyone. However, those under 18 years of age will need a guardian to attend. In accordance with State law, only those 21+ can have alcoholic beverages.

**Jan 3 (Wed) - Aging with Pride Game Night** (Werner Books & Coffee, 3608 Liberty St, Erie, PA 16508) 5-8 PM. Bring games and/or cards with you or just come to play what others bring.

**Jan 3 (Wed) - LGBTQ+ Drum Circle** (St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 410 North Main Street, Jamestown, NY 14701) 7 PM - 8:30 PM. Come explore creative drumming, enjoy music in a playful atmosphere, and make connections with other LGBTQ+ members of the community! This group will foster joy and connection to yourself and with others in a safe, supportive environment. Facilitator Karen Hewes Suber (she/her) is a Board Certified Music Therapist (MT-BC) with a passion for community music making and the "Aha!" moments it can bring. Sessions run approx. 1.5 hours. Monthly meetings on the first Wednesday @ 7 pm at St. Luke's in the Undercroft on 4th St. Hosted in cooperation with St. Luke's and MHA. Donations are welcome, and instruments are provided. Bringing your own instrument(s) is also welcomed!

**Jan 4 (Thu) - Lotz of Tea with Mona - SEXTORTION; Jordan's Story** 7 PM. A mother tells how her life tragically changed the day her son answered a call from a scam artist. With co-host Large Marge. Live streaming on Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. Browse to <https://www.facebook.com/LotzofTea>.

**Jan 5 (Fri) - G2H2 (Gay Guy/Gal Happy Hour) meets** (Room 33 Speakeasy & Cafe, 1033 State St Erie PA) 6 PM - 8 PM. All Are Welcome!

**Jan 7 (Sun) - Aging With Pride planning meeting** (Lake Erie Counseling Associates, 1932 W 8th St, Erie, PA 16505) 1 PM.

**Jan 7 (Sun) - Full Spectrum LGBTQIA+ Youth Peer Support & Social Group meets** (Full Spectrum Community Outreach Center, 660 W Earle Ave, Youngstown, OH 44511) 4 PM - 5 PM. Ages 14-17, under 14 with signed parental consent form. Phone: (234) 254-8924.

**Jan 8 (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 for Zoom meeting info.

**Jan 9 (Tue) - PFLAG of Chautauqua meeting** (Secret Undisclosed Location, 100 E 2nd St 2nd Floor, Jamestown, NY 14701) 6:30 PM. PFLAG of Chautauqua, a support group for allies, loved ones and the entire Queer community. Please visit our Facebook group, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/594395124695283>, or email PFLAGCHQ@GMAIL.COM or call (814) 313-4495 for details.

**Jan 9 (Tue) - Youngstown PFLAG meets** (St. John's Episcopal Church, 323 Wick Ave, Youngstown, OH 44503) 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM.

**Jan 13 (Sat) - TransFamily of NWPA (Meadville) Transgender Support Group meets** (Empowerment with Grace, 941 Federal Ct Ste 104, Meadville, PA 16335) 2 PM.

**Jan 13 (Sat) - Veronyca's Showgirls Diva's Birthday Drag Bash** (Loyal Order of the Moose Lodge No. 119, 201 West State Street, Olean, NY 14760) 9 PM. A queen's fabulous birthday revue. \$7 at the door/\$5 colors/21+. Special guest Sabrina Williams. Come on out to the Olean Moose Lodge to celebrate a drag icon's birthday! Special appearances from all over, and a special guest from Buffalo NY. Doors open at 8 PM, showtime at 9 PM.

**Jan 15 (Mon) - Deadline for Erie Gay News February 2024 print edition (#339)** (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, January 23.

**Jan 16 (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.

**Jan 16 (Tue) - Bears Do Dinner #111** (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 18 (Thu) - Lotz of Tea with Mona - NEGATIVITY BE GONE!** 7 PM. Instagram sensation and motivational speaker Bruce Brackett, BWB, speaks about addiction and surviving. With co-host Large Marge. Live streaming on Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. Browse to <https://www.facebook.com/LotzofTea>.

**Jan 18 (Thu) - Queer Open Mic** (Compton's Table, 3104 State St, Erie, PA 16508) 6 PM - 10 PM. Come



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January

### National Stalking Awareness Month

Stalking victims from the LGBTQ+ community encounter distinct challenges, setting their experiences apart from those of their heterosexual counterparts. When assisting LGBTQ+ stalking victims, safety planning takes on a specialized approach. This involves considerations such as including hormones, HIV prevention, and necessary medications in a personalized "to go bag."

Adding another layer to the complexity, some LGBTQ+ victims find it challenging to disengage from current or former intimate partners due to limited dating experiences within the LGBTQ+ community. This underscores the need for tailored support and understanding of the unique aspects shaping the experiences of LGBTQ+ stalking victims.



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**Jan 18 (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.

**Jan 19 (Fri) - Journey: Healing Together - LGBTQ+ Affirmative Game Night** (Journey: Healing Together, 201 W. 11th Street, Erie, PA 16501) 5 PM. Gather around 5pm for a couple of hours to geek out with fellow gamers. Ages 18+ choose from a variety of board, card, dice, games. As the group grows, smaller groups can split off and play different games. There are plenty of quiet spaces available to regroup for those of us who can get over stimulated sometimes. Hosted by Eric Reiche, Milo Orr, and Leo Ferko, there are opportunities to meet up with friends new and familiar. We are definitely an LGBTQ+ affirming space! Allies and Accomplices welcome! \$5 suggested donation. Phone: (814) 867-5309. Browse to <https://journeyht.org/>.

**Jan 20 (Sat) - Journey: Healing Together - LGBTQ+ Crafternoon** (Journey: Healing Together, 201 W. 11th Street, Erie, PA 16501) 11 AM - 2 PM. CottageCore and Curious Crafter's alike are welcome! Journey: Healing Together hosts a casual time of crafting and conversation. Crafting is a great anxiety reducer and being around great people while you're creating is even better! We are a Queer-Affirming space so LGBTQ+, Allies and Accomplices are welcome! \$5 suggested donation per person or \$10 max per family (Children welcome, although we do not provide any childcare or facilitation). Phone: (814) 867-5309. Browse to <https://journeyht.org/>.

**Jan 20 (Sat) - Aging with Pride Book Club - Best Years of your Life by Jen Craven** (Werner Books & Coffee 3608 Liberty St, Erie, PA 16508) 1 PM. Werner Books offers a 20% discount on books purchased for the book club.

**Jan 20 (Sat) - Twila Holiday National Entertainer of the Year 2023** (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 7 PM. Prepare for a night of unparalleled glamour and talent as The Zone Dance Club proudly presents Twila Holiday, the reigning National Entertainer of the Year 2023! Join us for a spectacular evening that promises to be nothing short of extraordinary. For this special event, we're opening our doors early at 6 pm (usually 8 pm), so you have plenty of time to get ready for the show. The standard cover charge of \$5 applies. Your host for the evening will be the

fabulous Rebecca Mae, and the lineup includes some of the brightest stars in our drag world. Among them is Shea D'Heaux, the current Miss Erie 2023, known for her dazzling performances. Misty Michael Kall, show director for our DIVAS shows, will also grace the stage with her presence. And let's not forget the sensational Debbie, Miss Erie 2022. Get ready for a night of fun, dance, and unforgettable performances that will leave you in awe. Mark your calendar, and don't miss this sensational showcase at The Zone! \$5 Cover - 21+ with valid state-issued ID

**Jan 20 (Sat) - I Celebrate With Pride Karaoke Night** (Ringside Restaurant, 3202 Sterrettania Rd, Erie, PA 16506) 7 PM. Organized by Yellow Brick Roads LGBTQ+ Ally Organization. Phone: (814) 217-7599. Email: [Support@YellowBrickRoads.Info](mailto:Support@YellowBrickRoads.Info). Browse to <https://www.yellowbrickroads.info/>.

**Jan 21 (Sun) - Journey: Healing Together - Banned Book Club** (Journey: Healing Together, 201 W. 11th Street, Erie, PA 16501) 2 PM - 4 PM. Phone: (814) 867-5309. Browse to <https://journeyht.org/>.

**Jan 21 (Sun) - Full Spectrum LGBTQIA+ Adult Peer Support Group meets** (Full Spectrum Community Outreach Center, 660 W Earle Ave, Youngstown, OH 44511) 4 PM - 6 PM. Ages 18+.

**Jan 21 (Sun) - Aging With Pride planning meeting** (Lake Erie Counseling Associates, 1932 W 8th St, Erie, PA 16505) 1 PM.

**Jan 24 (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 23 (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.

**Jan 25 (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.

**Jan 25 (Thu) - Aging with Pride Social** (Enrique's Southeast Mexican Taqueria & Tortilleria, 1801 Liberty St, Erie PA) 6 PM - 8 PM. Aging with Pride, an organization of senior LGBT+ members and allies, is hosting a social. This organization develops and sponsors social/recreational and educational events to promote healthy leisure activities, community and an active, enjoyable lifestyle.

**Jan 25 (Thu) - Teen Trans support group meets** (G.A. Family Services, 210 Gustavus Ave, Jamestown, NY

14701) 5 PM.

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

**Jan 27 (Sat) - TransFamily of NWPA (Erie) Meets** (Compton's Table, 3104 State St, Erie, PA 16508) 2 PM - 5 PM. Meetings are hosted at Compton's Table, 3401 State St, Erie PA. All current CDC, state, and local guidelines for meeting indoors will be observed. Meetings are always confidential and completely free.

**Jan 27 (Sat) - M & J's Lounge Drag Show** (M & J's Lounge, 124 Mercer St, Butler, PA 16001)



*On Wednesday, December 13, 2023, Greater Erie Alliance for Equality (GEAE) held its annual End Of year Celebration at Room 33 Speakeasy, 1033 State Street, Erie, PA. The evening featured appetizers, a live band, and great fun.*



*TransFamily's TransGiving potluck at Compton's Table on December 16. Photo by Michael Mahler.*



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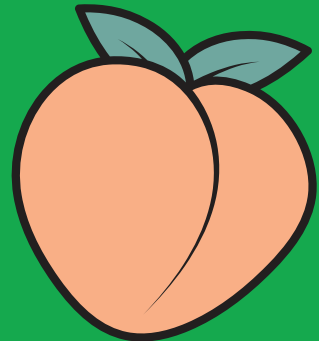
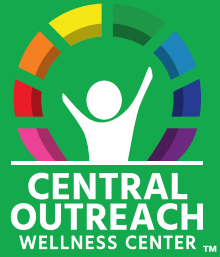
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