



ERIE GAY NEWS

Serving the Regional LGBTQIA+ Community Since 1992



Odd Atrocity performs at Rainbow Fest 2025 on April 5 at Basement Transmissions. Photo by Michael Mahler.

Erie Queer Community Unites for Second Harvest Food Drive

By Bobbie Fenno

On Saturday, May 10, from 11 AM to 1 PM, the Erie Queer Community will come together once again to support local families through their Second Harvest Food Drive. Hosted at Central Outreach Wellness Center, located at 3104 State St, Erie, PA, this meaningful event invites all members of the community to donate non-perishable food items. All donations will remain local and be distributed by the Second Harvest Food Bank of NW Pennsylvania, ensuring that the support stays within our region.

This food drive is more than just a donation event, it's a reflection of the community's ongoing commitment to mutual aid and compassion. Participating groups include: Aging With Pride, Ascend Climbing / Queer Scouts, Bears Do Dinner, Central Outreach Wellness Center, Compton's Table, Erie Gay News, Family Services of NW PA, Free Mom Hugs, Journey: Healing Together, LBT Women of Erie, NW PA Pride Alliance, Pennsylvania Equal-

ity Project, TransFamily of NW PA, Wabtec's Pride ERG, Werner Books & Coffee, Whee! Studios, Yellow Brick Roads, and Zone Dance Club.

This initiative follows other recent donation drives held by the Erie Queer Community, such as the Coat & Boot Drive held earlier this year to benefit Community Shelter Services of Erie. These regular drives are an important part of how local LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies show care for one another and the broader community.

Stay tuned for future donation drives, and in the meantime, gather your canned goods and pantry items and join this powerful effort to uplift our neighbors. Every item helps. Every voice matters.

For more updates and to get involved, follow participating organizations on social media. Together, we will thrive.

Rainbow Fest: A Celebration of Pride and Community

From OddCity Entertainment

Rainbow Fest was more than just an event—it became a vibrant celebration of love, equality, and individuality. Held on April 5, 2025, in the heart of downtown Erie at Basement Transmissions, this year's OddCity Entertainment Pride festival brought people together for a day filled with connection, creativity, and unforgettable moments. Attendees came to embrace the spirit of the LGBTQ+ community, support local artists and performers, and enjoy the lively atmosphere that Rainbow Fest had to offer.

Rainbow Fest featured an exciting lineup of activities. From live performances by incredible underground bands and charismatic drag queens, kings and creatures, to interactive elements like the unique "Spin Swap" flow-toy exchange, a Micro Silent Disco hosted by Stim City Collective, and an elementary style parachute for the crowd. The event highlighted innovation and inclusivity at its core, and featured a wide variety of genres utilizing both stages at BT for non-stop entertainment. Guests also engaged

In This Issue...

Erie Queer Community Unites for Second Harvest Food Drive	1
Rainbow Fest: A Celebration of Pride and Community	1
HIV/AIDS Awareness Walk May 18	3
Community Spotlight: Aging With Pride .	4
Congratulations to Debbie Does Drag!....	4
Mayor Joe Schember on the LGBTQIA+ Community	4
Admiral Rachel Levine and Adrian Shanker at 2025 PA LGBTQIA+ Health Summit	6
May 16th is National Honor Our LGBTQ+ Elders Day	7
Warren County Pride Fundraiser – Out Like A... ..	8
Celebrating Trans Joy!	9
Voters Guide	10
Calendar	24



ERIE GAY NEWS

Serving the Regional LGBTQIA+ Community Since 1992

Erie Gay News

1115 West 7th St.

Erie PA 16502-1105

(814) 456-9833

Fax: (440) 551-5985

info@eriegaynews.com

www.eriegaynews.com

Editor/Layout: Mike Mahler

Deadline for next issue: Mon, May 12

Folding and distribution is Tue, May 20 at Lake Erie Counseling, 1932 W 8th.

ISSN 2159-1792

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

Rates & Data

QUARTER PAGE	FULL PAGE	HALF PAGE VERTICAL
HALF PAGE HORIZONTAL	EIGHTH PAGE	

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
HALF HORZ.	\$150 - \$135 Prepaid	7" high X 2 7/8" wide
FULL PAGE	\$250 - \$225 Prepaid	7 1/2" high X 6" wide

Camera ready art or manuscript and/or photos, illustrations and logos must be received by the 15th of the month.
Photos and Illustrations should be PDF or TIFF and HIRES.
All hardcopy ads submitted will be reproduced as close as possible.

THANKS

From Your Friends at Erie Gay News

To Lake Erie Counseling Associates for hosting! AJ, Andrea Shaffer, Bobbie Fenno, Chris McComas, Dae, Deb, Harry Kelly, James Adams, Jeff Hill, Jenn Adams, Jenna Wassel, Johauna, Kim Conti, Laurie Finch, Maggie Watts, Oli Tilton, Rex Apps, Ronald Wilson, Salem, Serenity Patterson, and Steve Siwiecki for folding; Andrea Shaffer, Brett Staskiewicz, Chris McComas, Dae, Jeff Hill, Jenna Wassel, Johauna, Kim Conti, Oli Tilton, 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.

with photo and video booths, found inspiration from community leaders like Angelica Spraggins and Tyler Titus, and connected with inspiring non-profits and charities that aligned with the event's values like Compton's Table and Central Outreach.

Rainbow Fest wasn't just about celebration—it fostered change and community. The festival's DIY punk ethos reflected a commitment to authenticity and grassroots engagement, creating a space where everyone was welcomed and valued. Together, we made Rainbow Fest a memorable and meaningful experience for all, and helped gather financial support for Erie's Compton's Table. To learn more about the mission and importance of Compton's Table, please visit comptonstable.org.

HIV/AIDS Awareness Walk May 18

Erie County HIV Task Force

The Erie County HIV Task Force invites everyone to participate in the 8th Annual HIV / AIDS Awareness Walk on Monday, May 19th. We will meet behind the stage in East Perry Square, 575 State Street, Erie, PA, at 5 PM. We will walk around North and South Park Row, circling Perry Square,

and everyone is encouraged to wear red to help raise HIV awareness. PA Thrive Partnership is providing on-site HIV testing. All ages are welcome, and the event is child and pet-friendly. (Please be prepared to clean up after your own pets.) People participating as organizations are welcome to represent their group/organization. If you don't wish to walk the entire route, you are welcome to join us at any point along the sidewalk around Perry Square.

The Erie County Department of Health's ECHTF is a collaboration of local organizations and individuals dedicated to educating, supporting, and advocating for people living with HIV/AIDS, along with preventing the spread of HIV. For more information, please visit echiv.org for additional information, including the county map of testing locations and clinic services. Free condoms can be mailed to you, place an order online at condoms.echiv.org, or visit our Erie County HIV & STI testing map for locations to test/treat, plus free condoms at echiv.org/map, or call 814-451-6786 for information. To learn more about the HIV/AIDS Awareness Walk activities or submit questions/comments, contact us at 814-315-3375 or admin@echiv.org.



A • TO • Z
LAW ERIE

Allies • Attorneys • Mediators
Collaborative Professionals

A SAFE SPACE
FOR ALL PEOPLE

402 W 6TH STREET
ERIE, PA 16507

CONTACT US:

814-452-4451
assistance@atozlawerie.com

Community Spotlight: Aging With Pride

By: Dale Allgeier

On the first and third Sunday of the month, you can find a group of fun, active, senior members of the LGBTQ+ community gathering as Aging With Pride – planning social activities, outings and events, savoring delicious refreshments, and laughing and enjoying each other's company. Aging With Pride is an organization that was first formed in 2017 but had its rebirth after COVID in 2022. The group was founded by Dale Allgeier after he had become aware of the need for older LGBTQ+ community members to have a forum to connect, and plan and host social, recreational and educational activities and events.

Aging With Pride sponsors a monthly social dinner event during the last week of the month at a local restaurant. You can check the specific day and restaurant on our website agingwithprideerie.org or on their Facebook page.

On the second Thursday of the month, from 5:00pm to 8:00pm, AWP hosts a game night at Werner Books. Also meeting at Werner Books is the Aging With Pride Book Club, which gathers on the third Saturday of the month at 1:00pm to discuss the selected book of the month.

Other events of Aging With Pride include day trips to regional pride events; museums and other attractions in nearby cities, movie nights, educational opportunities, and fund-raising events. These activities are discussed and organized during the Aging With Pride planning meetings held on the first and

third Sunday of the month at 1:00pm at Lake Erie Counseling Inc, 1932 West 8th Street in Erie.

All events and meetings of Aging with Pride are open to LGBTQ+ folks and allies age 55+, although any age is welcome. For more information, please contact Dale Allgeier at 814-455-4009 or visit their website agingwithprideerie.org or check out their Facebook page.

Congratulations to Debbie Does Drag!

From Zone Dance Club

Erie is shining bright! Our very own Debbie Does Drag has claimed the crown, winning the prestigious title of National Miss Comedy Queen 2025. She was crowned by her drag mother and last year's title holder, Vivian Vendetta-Sinclair. This is a momentous occasion, and we're sending a tidal wave of congratulations to this incredibly talented performer.

Debbie's journey to this victory has been marked by show-stopping performances, jaw-dropping presentations, and a unique comedic flair that has captivated audiences. Her charisma and artistry have truly set her apart, earning her this well-deserved national recognition.

This win not only celebrates Debbie's individual talent but also elevates Erie's vibrant drag scene. It's a testament to the creativity and passion within our local community. We're incredibly proud to have Debbie representing Erie on the national stage.

Mayor Joe Sember on the LGBTQIA+ Community

Since I took office in 2018, my team and I have been on a Mission to Build Opportunity, Restore Hope, and Transform Erie. We have also been working hard to achieve our Vision. One element of that Vision is that we celebrate our rich cultural diversity. An important piece of that is ensuring that everyone feels welcomed and valued. Imagine what an incredible community we would have if everyone felt celebrated for the unique skills, talents, and perspectives that each one of us possesses regardless of who we love or how we identify or express ourselves.

My team and I have made it a priority to enact policies that are inclusive of all of our residents, including all who identify as members of the LGBTQIA+ community. One measure of the city's progress and success in this area is the Human Rights



Aging With Pride meeting on April 6 at Lake Erie Counseling, 1932 W 8th St. Photo by Michael Mahler



Featuring
ADMIRAL RACHEL
LEVINE, M.D.
 17TH U.S. ASSISTANT
 SECRETARY FOR HEALTH



Register today!

Scan the QR code for
 information about
 registration, hotel
 reservations, & more:



 **JUNE 3, 2025**
 **MACK EXPERIENCE CENTER**
ALLENTOWN, PA

BradburySullivanCenter.org/HealthSummit

If HIV is on your mind, hope is in your hands.

Find testing, treatment & hope at PA-Thrive.com.






Offices in Clarion, Erie and Mill Hall

Call: 1 (800) 359-2437

Website: <https://pa-thrive.com>

Email: info@pathrive.com



Mobile HIV Testing
Available

Campaign's annual Municipal Equality Index (MEI). When I first took office, the city's score was only 34. I am happy to report that the city has received a perfect score (100 points) for the last three years, 2022-2024.

Through much deliberation and analysis of city laws and policies, my team and I, including the members of the City's first LGBTQ+ Advisory Council, were able to increase these scores in the following years, first to 50 in 2018, then to 75 in 2019, 80 in 2020, 86 in 2021, and finally achieving perfect scores in each of the last three years.

The first area we tackled was the "Municipality as Employer" section, on which Erie scored 0 out of 24 possible points in 2017. We were able to turn this score completely around by adopting a non-discrimination policy in City government, providing transgender-inclusive healthcare benefits, adopting a city contractor non-discrimination ordinance, and creating an inclusive workplace.

The second great area of improvement was achieved under "Law Enforcement" by creating an LGBTQ+ Liaison in the Erie Police Department and reporting Hate Crimes Statistics on an annual basis to the F.B.I. Fulfilling these requirements allowed the City to gain an additional 22 points on the way to an overall perfect score.

The City of Erie also received bonus points for its Conversion Therapy Ban, our youth bullying prevention policy, and testing the limits of restrictive state laws.

The City of Erie has made great progress over the last seven years on our municipal policies, laws, and ordinances as reflected in our improved MEI Score. In fact, with all of our bonus points, our total score was 111 in 2024, but 100 is the maximum number of points awarded.

My team and I will continue to work on policies and initiatives to advance equity, equality, and inclusion of our LGBTQIA+ community members.

Admiral Rachel Levine and Adrian Shanker at 2025 PA LGBTQIA+ Health Summit

Allentown, PA Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center is proud to announce that Admiral (ret) Rachel Levine, MD and Adrian Shanker will be joining us as featured speakers at our 2025 PA LGBTQIA+ Health Summit on June 3rd at the Mack Experience Center.

Dr. Levine served as the 17th U.S. Assistant Secretary for Health from 2021-2025 and upon her confirmation, became the first transgender person to receive U.S. Senate confirmation. She also served as Admiral of the United States Public Health Service. Previously, she served as Pennsylvania's Physician General and Secretary of Health.

Adrian Shanker founded Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center in 2014 and served as executive director until 2022. During that time, he co-created with the Pennsylvania Department of Health the biannual Pennsylvania LGBTQ Health Needs Assessment. He most recently served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health Policy and Senior Advisor on LGBTQIA+ Health Equity at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and previously served as Commissioner on the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission, where he was unanimously confirmed by the Pennsylvania State Senate.

This will be the first time the summit has been in person since the COVID-19 pandemic. We are excited to bring this statewide conference to Allentown for the first time to present the data collected from the 2024 PA LGBTQ+ Health Needs Assessment. This survey, taken by thousands of LGBTQIA+ Pennsylvanian's biennially, covers many aspects of health and well-being from mental health to tobacco use to basic needs.

The summit provides vital information to healthcare providers, public health professionals, and legislators. "Our Health Matters" is the sub-theme of the summit, presenters will cover a variety of topics that impact the health and wellness of the LGBTQIA+ community in Pennsylvania.

"The PA LGBTQ Health Needs Assessment and the PA LGBTQIA+ Health Summit are the legacy of our Center and would not be possible without the dedication of the Center's founding executive Director, Adrian Shanker. We are thrilled to have Adrian return to present at this year's Summit on the state of LGBTQIA+ health policy and how it is impacting the health of our community.

We are honored to have Dr. Levine join us to speak at the Summit as she has not only been a leader for health in the state of Pennsylvania as Secretary of Health and Physician General, but also for the nation at large having served as the 17th Assistant Secretary for Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services," said Krista Brown-Ly, Interim Executive Director at Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Com-

munity Center.

Adrian Shanker commented, "I am excited to return to Allentown for the 2025 PA LGBTQIA+ Health Summit, an event that has historically brought together critical voices in medicine, public health, and human services to improve the quality of health for LGBTQIA+ Pennsylvanians. The difficult reality is that LGBTQIA+ people experience health disparities in almost all aspects of our lives, and its conferences like this one that give me hope for a future where LGBTQIA+ people achieve health equity in our lifetime."

"We invite professionals who wish to provide affirming care to the LGBTQIA+ community to register for our LGBTQIA+ Health Summit," added Chrystina Obleschuk, Director of Programs at Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center, "Registration is free however spots are limited!" Those who wish to register or learn more can do so on our webpage.

Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center is a radically inclusive Queer space based in the Lehigh Valley. Our Center fosters Queer joy & liberation. Prioritizing the most marginalized populations throughout Pennsylvania, we provide innovative programs, services, and experiences for our LGBTQ+ siblings through connection, education, culture and healing.

May 16th is National Honor Our LGBTQ+ Elders Day

National Honor Our LGBTQ+ Elders Day is Friday, May 16, 2025. Established in 2015 by Baltimore's Chase Brexton Health Services, National Honor Our LGBTQ+ Elders Day gained national recognition through social media and the numerous contributions made by LGBTQ+ seniors. There are approximately 2.7 million LGBTQ+ adults aged 50 and older in the United States.

National Honor Our LGBTQ+ Elders Day is an opportunity to recognize the contributions made by LGBTQ+ Elders in Erie and Northwestern Pennsylvania.

In 2023, a group of Erie LGBTQ+ elders identified a need and formed Aging with Pride (AWP) to support the aging LGBTQ+ population in Erie. Initially a social organization, AWP grew to incorporate a commitment to the greater Erie community through contributions to existing organizations.

This small, but vibrant association includes former teachers, registered nurses, managers, therapists, federal employees, manufacturing employees, and carpenters.

Our members volunteer, supporting the arts and working to improve the quality of life in Erie. AWP members volunteer in community events to support Erie's homeless population such as Blizzard of Blankets and clothes/food pantry drives. Several members assisted at Voices for Independence's No Limits Adaptive Challenge. Members participated in intergenerational game night with youth at a local counseling center. AWP has active representation on the Independent Council for Aging and on the Greater Erie Community Action Committee which allows us to support broad initiatives.

LGBTQ+ older adults are at high risk for elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation due to factors such as social isolation, solo aging, past experiences with violence, harassment, and discrimination. AWP organizes social activities: dining at local restaurants and game nights to mitigate social isolation. There have been visits to art galleries in Cleveland and Pittsburgh. The group also schedules speakers on topics such as Medicare, which are of interest to all seniors.

Efforts have resulted in establishing relationships with other LGBTQ+ senior organizations in surrounding cities to share information and plan gatherings.

Since January 2025 a strong interest in establishing an formal archive to reflect the history of LGBTQ+ life in Northwestern Pennsylvania has evolved resulting in the collection of information and sources relevant to this goal.

We are Aging with Pride and Purpose in Erie and Northwestern Pennsylvania.

Please take a moment this May 16th to consider the LGBTQ+ elders contributing to the quality of life in Erie and Northwestern Pennsylvania.

Submitted by Aging with Pride: Aging with Pride, an organization of senior LGBT+ members and allies, develops and sponsors social/recreational and educational events to promote healthy leisure activities, community, and an active, enjoyable lifestyle.

**PLEASE
RECYCLE US!**



Warren County Pride Fundraiser – Out Like A...

On Saturday, March 29, 2025, Warren County Pride's fifth annual Spring fundraiser took on new form in 2025. Playing on the later-than-usual date, "Out Like a..." invited participants to show their wild sides. The newly warm weather gave a playful feeling to the evening. Lions, lambs, and other animal prints were popular themes in both decor and attire. Welcomed by local favorite Jessica Rabbit, performers Willa DeWhisp and Kristy Kreme traveled from Buffalo and Pittsburgh, respectively, to share their sass and skills.

The event had previously been hosted at Warren's historic Crary Art Gallery. This year, "Out Like A..." took the stage at Sally's Encore, an upscale bar adjacent to and operated by the historic Struthers Library Theater. Featuring a ten-foot bar dating back to the 1880s, this new site allowed for a record number of attendees who showed record generosity in support of Warren County's Pride Festival.

Silent auction items, donated by business and individual Friends of Pride, ranged from hand crafted items to merch and gift certificates. Food by Corry's Your Daily Serving and Betsy Grinder kept people coming back for more, and a successful bake sale provided a sweet treat for attendees. Warren County Pride Festival will take place at Betts Park on Saturday, June 14, 2025. All are welcome to attend this free family-friendly event. Donations are graciously accepted on a year-round basis via warrencountypride.org Your continued support helps us keep our June celebration free to all.



Willa DeWhisp performs at Warren County Pride's fundraiser "Out Like A...". Photo by Michael Mahler



Bears Do Dinner held its 126th meet-up for dinner on April 3 at Tandoori Hut Indian Cuisine. The next Bears Do Dinner will be on May 6.



NW PA Pride Alliance held its Meadville Happy Hour on March 26, 2025, at Julian's Bar & Grill, 299 Chestnut Street. Meadville Happy Hours will continue to be held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at Julian's. Erie Queer Happy Hour has returned and will now be rotating through four different establishments.

Celebrating Trans Joy!

On Monday, March 31, TransFamily of NW PA invited community members to a gathering in Erie's Perry Square to commemorate International Transgender Day of Visibility. This year's celebration included local speakers and a walk around Perrys Square, followed by a social time with light refreshments.

If you would like support or receive more information about resources in the area, reach out to them at their website, transfamilynwpa.org.



TransFamily of NW PA's March 31 Trans Day of Visibility in Perry Square. Photo by Michael Mahler



On March 27, Aging With Pride had their monthly dinner at Oasis Pub & Tiki Bar, 3122 West Lake Road, Erie PA. Aging With Pride dinners are usually the last week of the month. The next dinner will be on April 29 at Colony Pub & Grill, 2670 W 8th St, Erie PA. In addition to monthly dinners, Aging With Pride meets twice a month for planning and discussion, as well as a book club on the third Saturday of the month and a game night the second week of the month.



THE BOYS IN THE BAND

by Mart Crowley
directed by Michael Weiss



Pat Vahey Jr - Michael Jeffrey - Jim Nash - Zachery Hoffman
Matt Fuchs - Howard Lang - Brandon Vogt - AJ Holman - Zach Mota

May 01 - 17, 2025

PACA Theatre 1505 State St. Erie, PA

Purchase tickets online at PACA1505.org

Voters Guide

Candidates for Erie County Executive, Erie County Council, Erie City Mayor, and Erie City Council were asked about their positions on LGBTQIA+ issues. Their responses appear below

These were the questions asked for all races:

How would you assure that Erie implements and enforces contractor nondiscrimination policies?

To what extent have you participated in LGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency Training? What types of training would you recommend for 1.) staff & 2.) council members?

What strategies would you use to include and engage LGBTQIA+ organizations and community members in developing policy and legislation?

Share a time/moment when you influenced or were positively influenced by LGBTQIA+ community?

County Executive

Not Responding: Brenton Davis (R-Inc)

Nondiscrimination Policies **Christina Vogel (D)**

Ensuring Erie County implements and enforces nondiscrimination policies is fundamentally about opportunity and strengthening our local economy. As County Executive, I'll make sure every contractor working with the county follows strict nondiscrimination policies and that we're holding them accountable.

I'll push for stronger oversight, including regular audits and clear reporting requirements. Contractors need to show they're hiring and promoting fairly. If they're not, they shouldn't be doing business with the county. I'll also work hand in hand with the Human Relations Commission to make sure there's an easy, accessible way for workers to report discrimination -- without fear of retaliation.

Perry Wood (D)

As county executive, I believe every county

contract should reflect the basic principle that everyone deserves to be treated fairly and with respect.

Nondiscrimination isn't just the law, it's a reflection of our values.

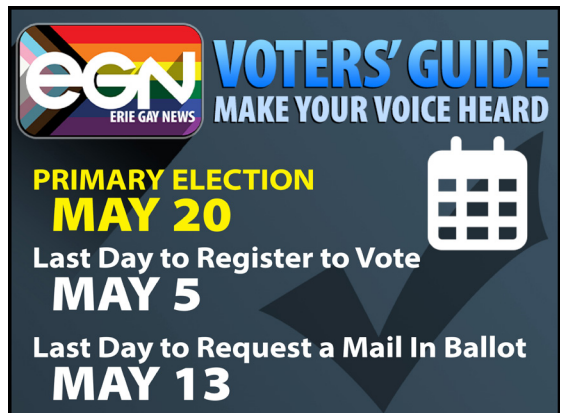
Contractors doing business with the county should reflect the respect we expect in our public institutions which includes ensuring safe workplaces for LGBTQ+ people and holding vendors accountable if they fall short of those expectations.

Public dollars shouldn't support discrimination in any form, and I believe everyone regardless of who they are and who they love deserves to be respected and treated fairly. As County Executive, I will work to make sure that's not just a promise but a practice.

Cultural Competency Training **Christina Vogel (D)**

I do not specifically recall having ever participated in a focused LGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency Training, but I'm not at all opposed to such training.

As County Executive, I will focus on practical, job-specific training for staff to ensure respectful communication and fair treatment for all residents. For council members, we should emphasize how policies tackle bias and impact all Erie residents, including and especially the LGBTQIA+ community. I will seek to partner with local LGBTQIA+ organizations to make sure sessions are meaningful and relevant. Everyone deserves respect, and as County Executive, I'll make sure Erie leads with fairness and understanding.



egN ERIE GAY NEWS **VOTERS' GUIDE**
MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

PRIMARY ELECTION
MAY 20

Last Day to Register to Vote
MAY 5

Last Day to Request a Mail In Ballot
MAY 13

WARREN COUNTY PRIDE PRESENTS

SATURDAY JUNE 14TH
11AM-4PM



BETTS PARK WARREN PA
Shows | Contests | Games |
Vendors | Food



Vote in the Primary,
Erie
The future of the city
and county
are at stake

(Make sure you're registered.
Research the candidates too')
Not sure? Confirm your voter
registration at 814 451-6275

Lake Erie Counseling, Inc.

Providing quality LGBTQ plus
affirmative and empowering
services since 1994.

Offering caring, confidential
counseling to Individuals,
Couples and Families

- Depression • Anxiety • Relationship issues
- Family issues • Sexual identity issues
- Gender identity and transition issues

Most insurances accepted Medicare accepted
Sliding fee scale

1932 W 8th St
Erie, PA 16505
814-455-4009

www.lakeeriecounseling.com



RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL

PA92-0518662

MASTER# M355

JKS Finishes Inc The Professionals

Your local interior exterior Painting Contractor

35 Year in Business with 95% Customer Referral

\$3 Million Liability & Workers Comp Insurance

All employees pass background checks. We value your home
as it was our own. References available upon request

Call or email today for free no obligation estimates

814-796-6365 admin@jksfinishesinc.com www.jksfinishesinc.com

Perry Wood (D)

Cultural competency is an ongoing effort to ensure our government reflects the diversity of the people it serves. I support practical and thoughtful training for staff and council members alike.

For staff, training should cover respectful workplace practices and understanding of inclusive language. It should be accessible, engaging, and tailored as much as possible to ensure efficacy.

All elected officials can benefit from cultural competency training, myself included should I be elected, as it's imperative that elected officials understand the

real-world impact of their decisions on people of different identities which includes hearing directly from community members.

Partnering with local LGBTQ+ groups is key to this effort as they bring lived experience and credibility to make training meaningful.

Engagement Strategies **Christina Vogel (D)**

The best policies come from listening to the people they impact. That's why I'd make sure LGBTQIA+ organizations and community members are part of the process every step of the way. I'd reinvigorate and work with the Human Relations Commission to create advisory panels and hold listening sessions. I'd also strengthen partnerships with local LGBTQIA+ groups to inform our work on important issues like healthcare and employment. My goal is to build a community where everyone feels respected and heard.

Perry Wood (D)

I believe all good policy starts with listening. In this case, it means creating consistent opportunities for dialogue about perspectives and priorities not just occasionally, but as a regular incorporation into county business. I would support regular engagement through listening sessions, advisory roundtables, and open forums.

Inclusion leads to better outcomes by helping us to avoid unintended consequences, building public trust, and creating policies that are more responsive than they are reactive. My goal is to lead a county that is thoughtful, transparent, and welcoming to all.

Positively Influenced **Christina Vogel (D)**

For me, the influence of the LGBTQIA+ community is woven into the fabric of my everyday life. It's in the conversations I have with friends, employees, and customers who identify as LGBTQIA+, and the way we all support and uplift each other. It's in the policies and practices I ensure are inclusive and supportive at Donatos, creating a space where everyone feels valued. The LGBTQIA+ community is just one of many that shapes the culture of openness and acceptance that I strive to nurture, making it a seamless part of my everyday interactions. Donatos has sponsored events at Pride. Donatos has collaborated on many events with the Zone. Donatos has hired members of the LGBTQIA+ arts community for events year after year. Finally, Donatos has employed and currently employs members of the LGBTQIA+ community. The LGBTQIA+ community is simply a part of the larger Erie community, and it should always be included and respected, not othered.

Perry Wood (D)

I moved from Franklin, PA to Erie to go to Mercyhurst in 1997 and got my first job out of college in the early 2000s. A supervisor at that job was a gay woman who wasn't publicly out, and the conversation that we had about her sexuality and what that meant was life-changing for me as a small-town kid at a time when the topic was much more sensitive than it is now. It still sticks with me today as a reminder of how important it is to humanize the people and issues we are talking about.

County Council District 2

Not Responding: James DePalma (D), Renee Vendetti (R)

Nondiscrimination Policies **Jim Wertz (D)**

The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of employment, housing, and public accommodations based on an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, education status, handicap, or disability, but it does not cover sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. That's why it's essential that Erie County Council take an active role in enforcing and strengthening anti-discrimination policies to protect people from bullying and harassment, among other forms of discrimination. This means providing



RE-ELECT MAYOR JOE SCHEMBER

"As your Mayor, I am proud to report that the City of Erie is strong. Thanks to City employees, crime is down, jobs are up, and we've had no tax increases for 6 years."

JOBS ARE UP

- Achieved record low jobless rate in 2024
- Passed LERTA with \$378M reinvested in city
- Business Revolving Loan Funds increased to \$25M
- Achieved CRIZ designation
- Helped create 2,000 new jobs, 400 new employers

CRIME IS DOWN

- Decreased homicides by 57% & shootings by 67%
- Solved 100% of homicides in last 3 years
- Greatly expanded Police Athletic League (PAL) & COP youth initiatives

CITY FINANCES ARE STABLE

- NO city tax increases for 6 years
- Secured more than \$120M grant funding
- Paid down \$86.3M in city's debt
- Solved city's pension problem
- Turned projected 2024 General Fund deficit of \$23M into a SURPLUS of \$2M

LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- Achieved perfect score of 100 on Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index for 3 years
- Established a LGBTQ+ Advisory Council
- Passed a city-wide conversion therapy ban
- Adopted non-discrimination policies for city employment, including LGBTQ+ protections
- Attended every pride celebration as Mayor

PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT JOE SCHEMBER



proper training and education to the directors, supervisors, and support staff that engage in contracting procedures to properly identify and address forms of discrimination in hiring and employment as well as fostering a more inclusive environment

Cultural Competency Training

Jim Wertz (D)

In my nearly 20 years of teaching at Edinboro University (PennWest - Edinboro), I have participated in numerous cultural competency trainings. Those have included a LGBTQIA+ Safe Space certification, coordinating cultural competency trainings for students in the Honors Program, and annual gender and identity discrimination awareness training. I would be interested in similar trainings for county staff and council members – particularly safe space training for new staff and council members given the diverse interactions facilitated at the County Courthouse.

Engagement Strategies

Jim Wertz (D)

Building inclusive policy begins with centering those most impacted, and proactive engagement must be the beginning of the process. Forums for expression – like the Erie Democratic Party’s Queer Caucus, the Erie Gay News, and a multitude of churches and organizations throughout our community – provide an invaluable service to our community, at large. As a member of Erie County Council, I would rely heavily on the members of those organizations and institutions to inform the policymaking process in county government., I look forward to working with and for you, as a friend and ally, in all county issues and especially those rooted in resolving and advancing fairness, equality, and acceptance for all.

Positively Influenced

Jim Wertz (D)

For my entire life, fairness has served as an abiding principle. For as long as I can remember I have been an ally of the LGBTQ+ community. I’ve tried to promote fairness, equality, and acceptance, when I’ve been lucky enough to have a platform that allowed me to do so. I’ve also been inspired to meet those obligations by a number of personal friends and family, as well as historical figures from within and among the LGBTQIA+ community, such as Bayard Rustin, whose work on behalf of working men and

women, the civil rights movement for black and gay people, and a commitment to nonviolent resistance continue to inform our political tactics and our legislative obligations.

County Council District 4

Not Responding: Carl Anderson (D), Michael Keys (D), Jim Winarski (D-Inc)

Nondiscrimination Policies

Marcus Jacobs (D)

The Erie Human Relations Commission is a vital tool for ensuring the fair application of human rights and nondiscrimination provisions for Erie County, as sexual orientation is protected under the Human Relations Ordinance. On Council I will be a staunch defender of the commission and exercise my due diligence in overseeing County-awarded contracts to ensure fairness to the LGBTQ+ community.

Kevin Pastewka (D)

If elected to County Council I will screen contracts with businesses and companies and keep a keen eye open for non-discriminatory policies. I will need to see proof of non-discrimination benefits before I vote to approve contracts. I feel this is especially important now with bigotry sadly on the rise in the U.S.

Cultural Competency Training

Marcus Jacobs (D)

At Penn State Behrend’s diverse campus, I participated in nondiscrimination training to ensure fairness and address bias in working with people of all backgrounds. I would encourage the staff and council members to both attend trainings developed in coordination with local advocates. Attending the same trainings will ensure consistency in County governance.

Kevin Pastewka (D)

As a former history and sociology professor at Mercyhurst University with an M.A. in American Studies, I am a strong advocate for enhanced cultural literacy and improved interaction with the LGBTQIA+ community. I think its in the best interests of all elected officials and staff members to increase sensitivity awareness and knowledge and help decrease potential disparities by having on-going cultural competency training. I would be open to suggestions



DARIA

DEVLIN FOR MAYOR



**NEW
LEADERSHIP
TO STAND UP TO
ATTACKS ON OUR
LGBTQ+
COMMUNITY**

**DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY:
TUESDAY, MAY 20**



DariaForErie.com



[/DariaForErie](https://www.facebook.com/DariaForErie)



[@DariaForErie](https://www.instagram.com/DariaForErie)

Paid for by Friends of Daria Devlin

from the LGBTQIA+ community offering effective programs in this direction.

Engagement Strategies

Marcus Jacobs (D)

Openness of government and transparency are priorities for my campaign. As a younger leader, I have successfully gotten more people of different backgrounds to County Council meetings. I want to work directly with local LGBTQ+ organizations to let them know that the County is with them, and would support funding of the social services to benefit the local community.

Kevin Pastewka (D)

Communication is a two-way street. I will certainly keep an open door policy with the LGBTQIA+ community. If there is a need arising from the community, I will be there to assist. If a crisis develops, I know I can reach out to Erie Gay News to begin to find solutions.

Positively Influenced

Marcus Jacobs (D)

I have community members and many friends, including some working on my campaign, who are proud to be part of the LGBTQ+ community. Beyond any one anecdote, there are proud working queer people who positively influence me every day, at municipal events and working at our local businesses. This isn't just about any one issue or one person, queer people are helping build Erie in every neighborhood, every zip code, every day. They have always, and will always be with us, and I hope be there with the community as an ally and a voice on the Erie County Council

Kevin Pastewka (D)

In the summer of 2019 I was glad to be part of the Erie Pride Parade, marching with the Erie County Democratic Party, then as the treasurer. The day was a joyous celebration of cultural pride and support. But I also have great respect for the fighting spirit of the LGBTQIA+ community. In the Fall of 1989 attended a march in Washington D.C. protesting the burgeoning problem of Homelessness in the U.S. That was a time when the failures of the Reagan administration were being realized in a collective way. And while his social service-cutting policies grew the homeless population 10x that decade, many other groups were

negatively affected. One group most negatively impacted was the gay community and while the focus that day was on homelessness, the group "Act-Up," was there in support, but also very vocal on the neglect of the government to take greater action on the breaking AIDS crisis. Their activism that day was inspiring and came from the dire need to fight against a very real threat. Our democracy today also faces very real threats and as a County Councilman I hope to work with the LGBTQIA+ community to make Erie County a better place for all of us and a good place in this world.

County Council District 6

Not Responding: Samuel Charles Bayle IV (R-Inc)

Nondiscrimination Policies

Scott Rastetter (R)

This is part of the job of a Council person.

I would be sworn to vote within the law on all ordinances and resolutions put before me.

With the best interests of the taxpayers in mind.

Cultural Competency Training

Scott Rastetter (R)

I would welcome you to come before council and present the options for the training programs you have in mind. That are available for council members and staff.

Engagement Strategies

Scott Rastetter (R)

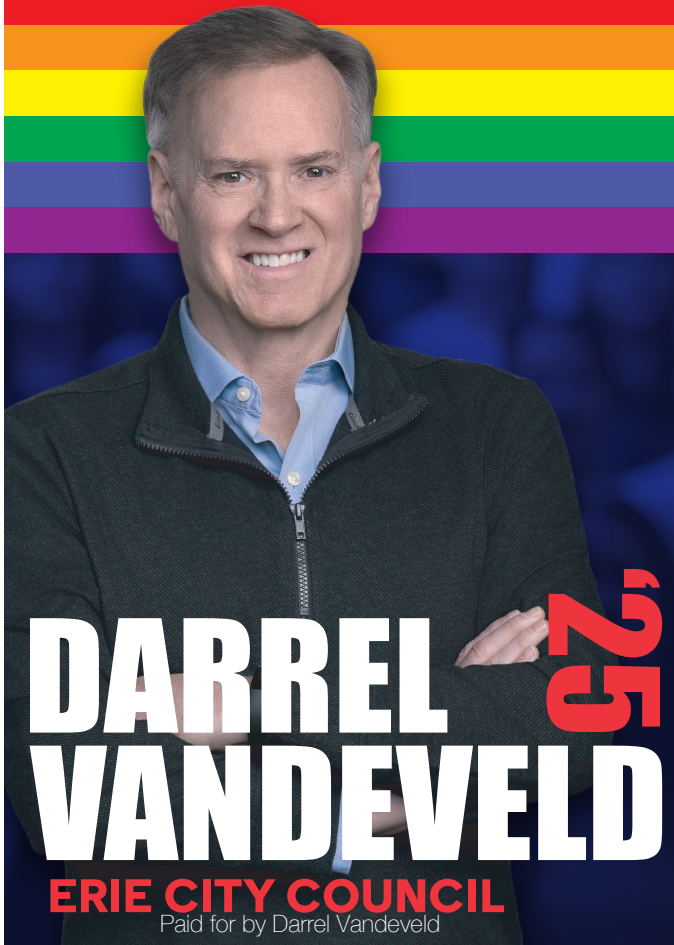
All citizens of our county are welcome to attend Council meetings. To present to the members what input you have in mind that would pertain to items we have in our agenda present and future.

Positively Influenced

Scott Rastetter (R)

Personally I have known and been influenced by many including yourself, though we have never met, Sir. I have had neighbors, relatives, some close and some not. Men and women, I have worked for and with, some living and some deceased.

- **STRONGLY SUPPORTS LGBTQIA+ RIGHTS**
- **STRONGLY COMMITTED TO CONTRACTOR NONDISCRIMINATION FOR LGBTQIA+**
- **STRONGLY EMBRACES FULL PARTICIPATION OF LGBTQIA+ IN ALL ASPECTS OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE**
- **STRONG SUPPORTER OF LGBTQIA+ VETERANS**



- **COMMITTED TO DRIVING INVESTMENT IN ERIE**
- **GOING TO HOLD THE LINE ON TAX INCREASES IN WHATEVER FORM – NO NEW TAXES**
- **WILL MAKE CITY SERVICES EFFICIENT AND AVAILABLE TO EVERY RESIDENT**
- **THE STRENGTH OF CHARACTER TO SERVE HONORABLY AND WITH INTEGRITY**

Erie City Mayor

Not Responding: Matthew Thomas (R)

Nondiscrimination Policies

Daria Devlin (D)

As Mayor, I believe taxpayer dollars should never fund discrimination — period.

I would ensure that every city contract includes clear, enforceable nondiscrimination language that protects against bias based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, in line with Pennsylvania's Human Relations Commission policies. But words on paper aren't enough — enforcement matters.

I would require contractors doing business with the City of Erie to provide proof of their own nondiscrimination policies and create clear processes for accountability if those policies are violated. That includes training, regular reporting, and a willingness to end contracts with companies that refuse to uphold our values.

If we say we're a city for everyone, that has to show up everywhere — including in who we choose to do business with.

Joe Schember (D-Inc)

Thanks to the work of my team and our LG-BTQ+ Advisory Council, the City implemented a contractor nondiscrimination policy. This policy is now in all of our contracts. To assist with enforcing the policy, we have created the position of Community Development Specialist, which will reside within our Department of Economic and Community Development. Some of the responsibilities of this role include: coordinating contract monitoring and compliance reviews of construction projects; monitoring compliance with ADA regulations; coordinating and monitoring of the City's EEO plan for community development; providing timely reports to management and government agencies; conducting on-site monitoring at scheduled intervals; and maintaining a written record outlining the state and performance of projects as assigned. The position is being re-posted, and we will be working to hire someone within the next few weeks.

Sheila Ellyn Woeger (D)

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a federal law that Prohibits discrimination in employ-

ment based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, and pregnancy), or national origin. It also covers all aspects of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, and benefits.

Discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated under my administration.

Cultural Competency Training

Daria Devlin (D)

Throughout my career in public service I've participated in ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion training, including training specific to gender identity, gender expression, and orientation. Cultural competency isn't a one time training — it's a commitment to listening, learning, and evolving every single day.

As Mayor, I will ensure that every City staff member — from department heads to frontline workers — receives LGBTQIA+ cultural competency training developed in partnership with local organizations who know this work best. But training alone isn't enough.

I'm committed to ensuring that our city's policies and practices reflect those same values — that inclusion isn't just something we talk about in a training, but something we live out in how we serve the public, how we treat one another at work, and how we respond when harm happens.

For City Council members, I would recommend training that goes deeper — not just into LGBTQIA+ terminology or history, but into how municipal policies directly impact LGBTQIA+ residents, and how council decisions can either break down barriers or reinforce them.

This work isn't optional. If we want to build a city where everyone feels safe to live openly and authentically, that commitment has to start with city leadership — in both action and accountability.

Joe Schember (D-Inc)

Under my leadership, the City of Erie has participated in cultural competency training for all employees through the Alchemy program. However, we are currently looking for a new provider, because we would like more in-depth training. In addition, Our police officers go through implicit bias training every year, we held cultural competency training with Dr. Rich McCarty, and we also did training with the FBI related to hate crimes and how to recognize

them. We have always prided ourselves on ensuring that we are inclusive, and we intend to continue that training to ensure that we are being sensitive to the needs of our LGBTQIA+ communities. In terms of Council Members, the trainings that we offer are open to all staff, and I encourage them to take advantage of these opportunities.

Sheila Ellyn Woeger (D)

I have neither participated in nor would I recommend any training for staff or council. There is no amount of training that can change the heart of a person. I would however remind both staff and council of the golden rule as quoted in Matthew 7:12 of the Holy Bible. Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Engagement Strategies

Daria Devlin (D)

Policy and budgets shouldn't happen to people — they should be built with people. That's how I lead.

In Erie, we're fortunate to have incredible LGBTQIA+ organizations and leaders doing the hard work every day — NWPA, GEAE, Compton's Table, TransFamily, Erie Gay News, the LGBT Fund board, workplace affinity groups, and countless LGBTQIA+ community leaders. They know the challenges — and the solutions — because they live them.

If elected, I'll make sure these voices are not just heard but centered early and often — especially when it comes to decisions about housing, health, safety, and civil rights. That means real partnership, advisory groups, and showing up in community spaces year-round — not just during Pride Month.

A high score on the HRC Equality Index doesn't matter if people in our city are still facing discrimination in their daily lives. What matters is action — and I'm committed to doing this work with our LGBTQIA+ community every step of the way.

Joe Schember (D-Inc)

Since taking office, I have prioritized the City of Erie's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion which are key drivers of economic growth, serving to attract residents, visitors, and businesses who place a high value on inclusivity. We are focused on what matters: building community, growing the economy, and taking care of each other. When everyone feels supported, welcomed, and valued for their unique skills, perspectives, and talents, people thrive and

contribute to our community. Our policies and practices enable us to strive to make Erie an inclusive place to live, work, play, and raise a family. I am grateful to our LGBTQ+ Advisory Council for their guidance and dedication in helping us to reach this milestone. In my third term, I would re-engage the Council to focus on continuing to expand our policies and practices to ensure that those who identify as LGBTQIA+ feel welcome, safe, and supported.

Sheila Ellyn Woeger (D)

All meetings are open to the public, where you are given the opportunity for your voice to be heard. It would take the participation of the community to engage themselves with the mayor and council as to what your needs are. Developing policy without empathy is fruitless.

Positively Influenced

Daria Devlin (D)

During my work in the public and nonprofit sector, as an elected school board member, and now as a candidate for mayor, I've been deeply moved by the resilience and courage of Erie's LGBTQIA+ community. The moments that have shaped me the most haven't happened on a stage or in front of a microphone — they've happened in the quiet, personal conversations where people have trusted me with their stories.

I've listened to young people navigating systems that weren't built with them in mind. I've heard from parents advocating for their kids with a love and fierceness that leaves me in awe. I've met community leaders who have fought for decades just to create spaces where people can show up fully as themselves — and still, despite facing political hostility and a long history of discrimination, they keep showing up.

Especially in this moment — when the federal administration is targeting the transgender community and stoking fear for political gain — I find myself inspired every single day by the courage, joy, and authenticity. It's a reminder that leadership isn't just about policy — it's about standing alongside people in their fight to be seen, valued, and safe

Joe Schember (D-Inc)

I have been positively influenced by the LGBTQIA+ community many times. This is personal to me because my son Joe is gay. I'll never forget

the day he sat down with my wife and me to tell us. My immediate reaction was “Joe, I love you. You are my son. I could not be prouder of you.” And, we’ve grown closer since that day several years ago. Every person deserves to live an authentic life and be treated with dignity and respect. I want to live in an Erie where diversity is valued by all - no matter the color of your skin, your religion, your ethnic background, your gender identity, or sexual orientation. Our differences should not define us or divide us. Our diversity is what makes us stronger as a community. That is clearly evident during Pride.

I can vividly recall how excited I was to be the first Mayor to participate in Pride when I took office in 2018. I was so honored to be asked to speak, and I was inspired by the excitement and engagement of the crowd. Each year, I am energized by the warm welcome I receive. My participation in Pride is a memory that I hold dear. I have been happy to witness the growth of the event over the last seven years, and I look forward to continuing to support, embrace, and celebrate our LGBTQIA+ community.

Sheila Elyn Woeger (D)

What influences me the most about the LG-BTQIA + community is their tenacity in promoting their cause. It has stirred up my desire to spread the gospel of Jesus the Christ. John 3:16 tells us, For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The key word here is love; and since GOD first loved us, we too ought to love one another.

Erie City Council

Not Responding: Andre Horton (D), Anita Fay (R), Tina Hiotis (R), Kimberly Hunter (R)

Nondiscrimination Policies

Deonte Cooley (D)

I would first review the policies that are currently set into place to make sure that these areas are identified and being addressed before proceeding with creating any new policies. I would then schedule meetings with local unions and independent contractors to discuss these issues to see if there are particular or specific things that need to be addressed to be able to advocate for those who have been or feel

they have been discriminated against. I believe it is important to conduct research on certain issues prior to implementing changes or enforcing policies based on my own opinions or opinions of just “one side” of those issues. It will be important to have open and effective communication in order to identify the need to implement change as well as the changes that need to be implemented to assure that all parties’ needs are being met without conflict that would compromise the goals at hand.

Jasmine Flores (D-Inc)

I would ensure that all city contracts include clear, enforceable nondiscrimination language, specifically protecting sexual orientation, gender identity, race, disability, and more. I support requiring contractors to sign compliance statements and undergo basic equity training. I’d also advocate for periodic audits, anonymous reporting systems, and public accountability for violations. Enforcement should not be reactive it must be proactive, consistent, and transparent.

Marilyn Pol (D)

I will try to ensure all contractors have an equal chance at working within the City of Erie. I would keep an open conversation with the administration and the purchasing office.

Maurice “Mo” Troop (D-Inc)

It would start with making sure that there is a definition of discrimination that is public. Once this is established, I would stress the importance of developing ordinances that require contractors to comply with non-discrimination rules. With this, there would need to be mechanisms established to hold contractors accountable for failing to comply with the ordinances that are established. This would be one of the first steps I work to develop.

Darrel Vandeveld (D)

I would first update the City’s code to explicitly include trans people, making sure that they are included in every aspect of the City’s nondiscrimination policies. This is a basic first step. Next, I would make it mandatory that every city contract be audited, starting from the very first day of the contract, for compliance with the revised City ordinances, and require the results of these ongoing audits to be reported to Council periodically. Finally, I would require every entity seeking City contracts to be certified as having undergone LGBTQIA+Cultural Competency Train-

ing. These are some basic first steps in ensuring that the City awards contracts only to those entities that share our common goal of nondiscrimination toward members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Yevet Anderson (R)

Since DEI is no longer in effect I believe that all contractors should not be discriminated upon but should receive equal and fair consideration through their merit, experience, and pricing. Contract should be given to Erie contractors first. Then if there is nothing available to meet the needs of the project the consideration should go to the county and if need be the state before it is outsourced away from our community.

However if it is outsourced then local labor must be prioritized.

Cultural Competency Training

Deonte Cooley (D)

I have no experience in any formal or organized LGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency Training and only have had lived experiences with those who identify as being a part of the community. I am not sure of what trainings I would be able to recommend due to my lack of experience myself, but do believe that it is something that would be important in order to develop stronger relationships with all living in the city of Erie and learn ways to include underrepresented and misrepresented communities in local happenings within the city. I am not sure what that training would look like or entail, but I would be interested to learn more so that the appropriate advocacy and resources could be provided to those in need who may not be receiving those resources due to the lack of education and information to support their needs.

Jasmine Flores (D-Inc)

I've participated in community-based cultural competency training and informal learning through advocacy spaces. For staff, I'd recommend hands-on training focused on inclusive service delivery, pronoun usage, and bias awareness. For Council, we need deeper training around policy impacts, systemic barriers, and the unique needs of LGBTQIA+ residents. Training should be ongoing and led by LGBTQIA+ professionals, ideally from our local community.

Marilyn Pol (D)

I have not participated myself. As a council member I would be interested in inviting someone

from the LGBTQIA+ community come in and hold training with council members then employees.

Maurice "Mo" Troop (D-Inc)

In my career, I am fortunate to work with a variety of people from different cultures. A wide variety of training has been a regular part of my job. For staff and council, I would research what are the most current and up-to-date trainings to educate all staff and council in these areas. Some of these trainings may be completed online or through guest presenters. I would also make contact with local groups that represent LGBTQIA+, and ask them to partner in giving presentations or providing information for staff.

Darrel Vandeveld (D)

I recently completed three modules of LGBTQIA+ training offered by the Human Rights Campaign LEARN program (LGBTQ+101, Trans+Non-Binary 101, and Gender-Inclusive Language & Pronouns in the Workplace),

which were excellent. I pledge to complete the training by the date I am sworn in as a member of City Council. Further, I will insist that this training by undertaken by members of the Council and staff members. It's that important.

Yevet Anderson (R)

I've not received any training or attended any such training but I can tell you over my life I have not only worked with my family members who have alternative lifestyles, colleagues and individuals that I have coached in various levels of the sport of hockey. I believe that we should treat everyone equally according to God's plan. We are all created equal in my eyes.

Engagement Strategies

Deonte Cooley (D)

I believe utilizing the information from the previous question would be the best approach to include and engage with LGBTQIA+ organizations and community members in developing policy and legislation. I believe that you can not speak for people you may not be fully educated about or on, so it is important to identify "champions" of those communities and allow them a seat at the table to have a voice for "their" people. In order to "speak for the people" you have to "hear from the people" and also "listen to the people." It will be important for me to create

and establish relationships with those amongst the LGBTQIA+ community in order to develop any policies to address, support, or advocate for their needs.

Jasmine Flores (D-Inc)

I believe in co-governance. I'd invite LG-BTQIA+ leaders into the policy process early through working groups, listening sessions, and advisory boards. I'd ensure meetings are safe and affirming spaces, accessible to all. I'd also use city communication platforms to uplift LGBTQIA+ voices and support equitable outreach. Representation matters inclusion means real input, not just visibility.

Marilyn Pol (D)

I would like to have open discussions with possibly forming a committee meeting with the LGBTQIA+ and myself. This would be to try and make it easier to live, work and raise a family in the City of Erie.

Maurice "Mo" Troop (D-Inc)

I would work to establish a positive working relationship with members of the LGBTQIA+ community. I would do this by attending events organized by members of the LGBTQIA+ community. This would increase my visibility and accessibility. I would also set up meetings with members of the LGBTQIA+ community to get their feedback and input on policy and legislation. I would also look at how other cities are working in this area. They may already have positive strategies in practice that could be utilized in our city.

Darrel Vandeveld (D)

I support the work of the Erie LGBTQ Mayor's Advisory Council and will continue:

- * Appointing LGBTQ liaisons to the mayor's office and Erie Bureau of Police,

- * Supporting the continued ban within the city on conversion therapy, approved by Erie City Council in June 2019;

- * Enforcing non-discrimination policies for city employment, including protections for LGBTQ applicants;

- * Continuing health care benefits for transgender employees, INCLUDING their domestic partners;

- * Continuing policies prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in awarding city contracts;

- * Continuing the bullying prevention project

for young people implemented through the Police Athletic League;

- * Continuing the practice of appropriate hate crime reporting to the FBI.

Yevet Anderson (R)

I believe that if you are a citizen of the City Of Erie that your personal life choices should have no effect on you participating in discussions at city Council meetings and question answering and also should have no effect on your right to know on legislation or policies being made.

Positively Influenced

Deonte Cooley (D)

I have been able to develop strong personal relationships with individuals who take pride in their connection with the LGBTQIA+ community and we have all been positively influenced by those relationships. I am not sure if it would be appropriate to name specific individuals or situations but I will share a podcast episode that I did with Angelica Spraggins where she interviewed me for my run for city council and spoke to some of her concerns. She is someone that I reach out to when I am in need of advice, and outside perspective, or someone to just hang with a smoke a cigar down at "The Brig".

Jasmine Flores (D-Inc)

During a housing equity meeting, a trans resident shared their experience with discrimination and safety concerns. That conversation deeply impacted me and shifted how I approached housing policy. It reminded me that real change starts with listening. The courage and leadership I see in Erie's LGBTQIA+ community continues to inspire how I serve with compassion, equity, and accountability.

Marilyn Pol (D)

While attending high school in the 1970's it was not common to know anyone who was openly out. I have been positively influenced by my children by their personal experiences growing up in a time where the LGBTQIA+ community was more acceptable. It has been so nice seeing some of their friends get married and start families of their own. Hopefully with each generation it gets easier for those in the LGBTQIA+ community live with the support of their community.

Maurice "Mo" Troop (D-Inc)

I was influenced by a lifelong friend. This friend has shown me throughout life, what it means to be a loyal friend. Whenever I was going through a difficult situation, I could always call on him. He would listen without judgment. This both inspired and taught me important life lessons about friendship.

Darrel Vandeveld (D)

My sister and my daughter (and her wife) are lesbian, so the issues surrounding LGBTQIA+ and their full participation in government, industry and business and in society in all its strata are of central importance to me. I was particularly gratified when my sister and daughter came out to me that they did so with no anxiety that I would be anything other than totally welcoming of the news. My only concern for them has been that LGBTQIA+ persons are nowhere near the total acceptance that they should be. My fears for my sibling and my daughter and daughter-in-law, which are only rational given how unenlightened American society presently is, are with me constantly. The battle continues!

Yevet Anderson (R)

I have been blessed over the years to work with a variety of people. I have coached at the national and international level with my great gay colleagues and I have been blessed to coach many hockey players of a preference lifestyle. I was able to start the first women's all gay hockey team when there was prejudice to let them play in the senior league and because they could not find a goaltender I stepped up in goaltended for them. To just stay I am still greeted with high respect from all genres of lifestyle players and colleagues.

Do not agree though that transgender men should be allowed to play in women's sports only because of the physical differences that could be dangerous in many sports. I unfortunately had a young lady whose parents insisted she play with the boys in high school school and she was checked on and broke her spine she was one of my Olympic perspectives. If I was still running the senior league if there was a trans team of men I would give them the opportunities to play with the men's league.

Emily Mosco
MERSKI
JUDGE

Battle Tested.
Courtroom Tough.
Big Heart.

VOTE May 20

PAID FOR BY
FRIENDS OF EMILY MERSKI





“ My diverse practice experience makes me ready to serve on day one, but my work with criminal defendants and our most vulnerable populations has truly deepened my understanding of the needs of our community. ”

Emily

Friends of Emily Merski
PO Box 667
Erie, PA 16512

KEEP UP WITH THE CAMPAIGN!
EMILYMERSKIFORJUDGE.COM

Calendar

For latest updates, see www.eriegaynews.com

Live & Let Live is an LGBTQA-friendly AA meeting that meets every Sunday, at 7PM, at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, 1603 W 32 St. Erie PA 16508. For more information, visit www.aaeriepa.org or contact jmwilliams3603@aol.com or (814) (814) 844-2600.

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. Please drink responsibly.

Zone Tuesday Game Night, 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 Wednesday Trivia Night, Think you're a trivia whiz? Prove it! Play night on your phone! New hosts! New challenges! Doors open at 8 PM. Happy hour 8-10 PM. \$1 off bottled beers. \$2 well drinks. No cover. 21 & over with ID..

Zone Friday Night Dance Party, 133 W 18th St, 7 PM. With DJ Joe & MC Buffy. Kick off the weekend! Doors open at 7 PM. \$5 cover after 8 PM. Cash only. 21 and over with ID.

Zone Saturday Night Dance Party, 8 PM. Dance, drink, fun, food. With DJ Joe & MC Buffy. Doors open at 8 PM. \$5 cover. Cash only. 21 and over with ID.

Zone Sunday Funday, 8 PM. Reset, unwind, recharge, relax. Doors open at 8 PM. No cover. Cash only. Happy hour 8 PM - 10 PM. \$1 off bottled beer, \$2 well drinks. 21 and over with ID.

Apr 24 (Thu) - Queer Youth support group meets (James Prendergast Library Association, 509 Cherry St, Jamestown, NY 14701) 5 PM. For ages 12-21. Please contact Kaden Mason at (716) 720-8712 or kmason@lutheran-jamestown.org or Lisa Schmid-Miller at (716) 338-8702 or lschmidmiller@lutheran.jamestown.org with any questions.

Apr 25 (Fri) - Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus - Pride and Pork Loins - Annual Spring Meat Raffle (American Legion Post 1041, 533 Amherst Street, Buffalo, NY 14207) 6 PM. Join us for our annual spring meat raffle! Tickets on sale NOW for Friday, April 25. Doors will open at 6 p.m. and the first spin is at 7 p.m. Single tickets for \$10; a table of eight is \$60 so bring your friends!

Apr 25 (Fri) - April Spring Fling (M & J's Lounge, 124 Mercer St, Butler, PA 16001) Cover charge \$6.00.

Apr 25 (Fri) - DIVAS: Resurrection - Rising From the Glowpocalypse! (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) After the neon-drenched chaos of Glowpocalypse, The Zone's DIVAS are rising from the ashes, bringing you a night of pure, unadulterated glamour! Join your hostess, the incomparable Misty Michaels Kall, as she leads a cast of stunning queens in a show that's sure to resurrect your spirits. Doors at 8 PM, show at 10:30 PM. \$5 cover. Prepare for fierce looks, jaw-dropping performances, and a night of pure DIVA magic as we celebrate the rebirth of glam after the end of the world.

Apr 25 (Fri) - Welcome to the Pissi-sance (Boro Bar, 117 Meadville St, Erie, PA 16412) 9:30 PM. Hosted by Lady Pissith Gabune. Featuring Baroness Aiyasha Storm et Court Jester Snarebear. 21+ with valid identification

Apr 25 (Fri) - Slay & Skate (Gem City Skate, 3162 W Lake Rd, Erie, PA 16505) 11:30 PM - 2 AM. Slay & Skate is Back! Join us after hours for our Slay & Skate, presented in partnership with Central Outreach Erie! BYOB, 21+ only. Themed Vibes Good Energy Late Night Fun. FREE Entry + Free Drink if you volunteer for on-site testing, no insurance needed, provided by Central Outreach! Otherwise: \$20 Admission (includes skate rental) Let's roll into spring with style, support, and community. Expect flower power, fierce looks, and a night to remember. Gem City Skate, where the floors are fresh and the vibes are always right.

Apr 26 (Sat) - Lesbian Visibility Day Created in 2008, this day showcases women-loving-women, providing a platform for lesbian role models to speak out on the issues facing female-identified sexual minorities. This day, alongside other queer celebration days, is still an integral part of moving forwards to create an intersectional society where all are treated equally and fairly.

Apr 26 (Sat) - (Erie) Transgender Support Group meets (Compton's Table, 3104 State St, Erie, PA 16508) 2 PM - 5 PM. Come join us for our monthly support meeting at Compton's Table in the Central Outreach Building. Enter through the rear entrance. Light snacks and refreshments provided. Join us for a community in a comfy, no pressure environment! All are welcome!

Apr 26 (Sat) - M & J's Lounge Drag Show (M & J's Lounge, 124 Mercer St, Butler, PA 16001) BYOB Cover Charge \$6.00 We sell all mixers and pop. PLEASE no outside ppp or mixers.

Apr 29 (Tue) - Aging with Pride Dinner (Colony Pub & Grill, 2670 W 8th St, Erie PA 16505) 6 PM. Aging with Pride, an organization of senior LGBT+ members and allies, is meeting for dinner. Everyone is on their own for the meal. Please RSVP to Peter at

8th Annual Erie County HIV / AIDS Awareness Walk



Monday May 19th, 5pm in Perry Square

Made possible by the



and



Erie County
Department
of Health



PA Thrive Partnership providing on-site testing

Sponsored by Members of the Erie County HIV Task Force:



CENTRAL OUTREACH
WELLNESS CENTER



*Meet behind the
stage on the
West Side of
Perry Square*

COMMUNITY
Health Net
Everyday People. Extraordinary Care.

**DON'T WAIT TO
FEEL GREAT**

MEDICAL • DENTAL • VISION • PHARMACY
TELEMEDICINE • BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Regardless of your ability to pay.



Call **(814) 455-7222** to schedule
your appointment today.
communityhealthnet.org

We are committed to improving the
health and well-being of our community.

We provide a full range of healthcare services
with compassion, dignity and respect.

(814) 384-9785.

May 1 (Thu) - Compton's Table Chat & Chill Group (18+) (Compton's Table, 3104 State St, Erie, PA 16508) 6 PM - 8 PM. Looking to boost your social skills, make new connections or just hang out in a chill, judgment-free zone? Chat N Chill is the place to be! We're all about creating a relaxed, sober space where you can be yourself, whether you're introverted or outgoing. It's a safe haven for the Queer community, where everyone's welcome and respect is the vibe. Join us to build confidence, learn new social cues, or some enjoy good conversation with great people. Chill vibes, real connections, all in a space that celebrates you. 18+ groups are every first Thursday of each month from 6-8 pm. Each month will have a different theme to keep the conversation going. Registration required to be sure that enough supplies are available. Register at <https://comptonstable.org/chatnchill>

May 1 (Thu) - 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 814-451-2247.

May 1 (Thu) - Lotz of Tea with Mona 7 PM. With co-host Large Marge. Live streaming on Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. <https://www.facebook.com/LotzofTea>.

May 1 - May 17 (Fri - Sun) - Boys in the Band (PACA, 1505 State St, Erie, PA 16501) In his Upper East Side apartment, Michael is throwing a birthday party for Harold, a self-avowed "thirty-two-year-old, pockmarked, Jew fairy," complete with surprise gift: "Cowboy," a street hustler. As the evening wears on fueled by drugs and alcohol bitter, unresolved resentments among the guests come to light when a game of "Truth" goes terribly wrong. This groundbreaking play premiered Off-Broadway in 1968 and ran for 1,001 performances. It was subsequently made into a feature film with the original cast, directed by Academy Award-winner William Friedkin. In 2018, The Boys in the Band made its Broadway debut at the Booth Theatre in an unprecedented production featuring a cast of entirely out-and-proud gay actors. This new edition contains both the original two-act script and the

one-act Broadway version, as well as an introduction by celebrated playwright Tony Kushner.

May 2 (Fri) - G2H2 (Gay Guy/Gal Happy Hour) meets (El Amigo Mexican Grill, 333 State St, Erie PA) 6 PM - 8 PM. All Are welcome.

May 3 (Sat) - LGBT Venango Support Group meets (Franklin Public Library, 421 12th St, Franklin, PA 16323) 10:30 AM. Peer-led support group for LGBTQ+ adults. We meet once a month upstairs at the Franklin Library.

May 3 (Sat) - Journey: Healing Together presents Cupcake Wars (Journey To A Trauma Informed Life, 201 W 11th St, Erie, PA 16505) 12:30 PM - 3 PM. A Mental health Awareness Month kick-off event!

May 3 (Sat) - Who Wants To Be a Drag Star Season 1 Finale (Meadville Council on the Arts, 910 Market St, Meadville, PA 16335,) Hosted by Cherry Falwell. Head Judge is Travis Smith. Guest Judges are Shea D'Heaux & Snarebear. Tickets \$15, doors at 7 PM, showtime at 8 PM. Featuring your five finalists: Veronica Ville, Tiny Richard, Hydroxyzine, Emerald Rose, and Aiysha Storm! Pop up bar by Cussewago Creek Distillery.

May 4 (Sun) - International Family Equality Day (IFED) Celebrates the Diversity of Families globally. The Council of Europe recognises the IFED as an important tool to combat homophobia and transphobia and to promote a tolerant and cohesive society. Browse to <http://internationalfamilyequalityday.org/>.

May 4 (Sun) - Full Spectrum LGBTQIA+ Youth Peer Support & Social Group meets (Full Spectrum Community Outreach Center, 660 W Earle Ave, Youngstown, OH 44511) 4 PM - 6 PM. Ages 14-17, under 14 with signed parental consent form.

May 4 (Sun) - Aging with Pride planning meeting (Lake Erie Counseling Associates, 1932 W 8th St, Erie, PA 16505) 1 PM. Planning meetings are open to anyone interested in helping to plan activities for



NW PA Pride Alliance held its Erie Queer Happy Hour on April 2 at Ugly Tuna Tavern. Next is May 6 at Lavery Brewing Co, 128 W 12th St.

Aging with Pride.

May 5 (Mon) - Last Day to Register to Vote for Primary Election Primary Election is Tuesday, May 20. You must already be registered to vote to apply for an absentee or mail-in ballot. Browse to <https://www.vote.pa.gov/Register-to-Vote/Pages/How-to-Register-to-Vote.aspx>.

May 6 (Tue) - Bears Do Dinner #127 ((Luminary Distilling, Eatery, Fuhrman's Cider, 8270 Peach St, Erie, PA 16509) 6 PM. Join the Bears for a casual dinner of food and conversation! Dinner is on your own. Please RSVP to Peter at (814) 384-9785.

May 6 (Tues) - Erie Queer Happy Hour (Lavery Brewing Company, 128 W 12th St, Erie PA, 16501) 6 PM. Join NWPA Pride for a hoppy good time at our monthly Queer Happy Hour! This month, we're tapping into the vibrant atmosphere of Lavery Brewing Company on West 12th Street. Come sample their craft brews, enjoy delicious food, and mingle with friends and new faces in a relaxed and welcoming setting. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with the Erie LGBTQIA+ community and allies over great beer and good company!

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

May 8 (Thu) - ASCEND Erie Queer Scouts Climbing Club (ASCEND Erie, 426 State St, Erie, PA 16501) 6 PM - 8 PM. Queer Scouts is a LGBTQ+ climbing club, with the goal of creating connection and a safer and more inclusive outdoors community. Just look for the Queer Scout mascot, the tiny rainbow unicorn! Please check in at the front desk upon arrival. Not an ASCEND member? Enjoy a discounted \$15 Club Day Pass while attending these meetups.

May 9 - 10 (Fri - Sat) - Pennsylvania Equality Project FreeShop 2025, Spring Edition (Meadville Public Library, 848 N Main St, Meadville, PA 16335) 10 AM - 4 PM. We will be holding FreeShop at the Meadville Public Library on May 9 and 10 in the upper floor community room from 10 AM - 4 PM both days. You may donate both days, and folks from the community in need of items may take from the tables both days of the event. We are looking forward to our biggest event yet

May 10 (Sat) - Erie Queer Community Second Harvest Food Drive (Central Outreach Wellness Center (Erie), 3104 State Street, Erie, PA 16508) 11 AM - 1 PM. The Erie Queer Community is coming together once again to support local families through their Second Harvest Food Drive. Hosted at Central Outreach Wellness Center, located at 3104 State St, Erie, PA, this meaningful event invites all members of the community to donate



Nolan's

Pine Avenue Auto Service, LLC

General Repairs
State Inspections

Specializing in
Heating and Air Conditioning

3626 Pine Ave
Erie PA 16504
814-454-4133



Not Fancy, Just Good!



ABC's

of Building Better Lives

Mary Lynn Rote, LPC, CADC

Rob Giannamore, LPC • Jillian Rhoades, LCSW
Alen Melik-Adamyan, LCSW • Samantha Marcinko, LPC
Sara Allegretto, LPC • Hannah Proper, LCSW
Jessica Dahlgren, LPC • Henry Krol, LPC, CAADC

COUNSELING SERVICES

Individuals | Couples | Families | Depression
Anxiety | Trauma | EMDR Therapy | Addictions
Fitness Training | Nutrition & Weight Management

CALL US TODAY (814) 825-2930

4320 Dexter Ave. Erie, PA 16504
For more info, visit www.marylynnrote.com

non-perishable food items. All donations will remain local and be distributed by the Second Harvest Food Bank of NW Pennsylvania, ensuring that the support stays within our region.

May 11 (Sun) - Full Spectrum Gender Nonconforming Social & Peer Support meets (Full Spectrum Community Outreach Center, 660 W Earle Ave, Youngstown, OH 44511) 4 PM - 6 PM. Free to all LGTQIA+ ages 18 & older

May 12 (Mon) - Deadline for Erie Gay News June 2025 print edition (#355) (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, May 20.

May 13 (Tue) - Last Day to Request a Mail-In Ballot for Primary Election Primary Election is Tuesday, May 20. You must already be registered to vote to apply for an absentee or mail-in ballot. Browse to <https://www.vote.pa.gov/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>.

May 13 (Tue) - PFLAG of Chautauqua meeting (Secret Undisclosed Location, 100 E 2nd St 2nd Floor, Jamestown, NY 14701) 6:00 PM. This is a safe, inclusive space where allies and queer community members can come together for support, discussion, and connection. Whether you've attended before or are joining us for the first time, we'd love to have you with us. Let's continue building our community, sharing our stories, and supporting one another. Please visit our Facebook group, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/594395124695283>.

May 13 (Tue) - TransFamily of NWPA (Meadville) Transgender Support Group meets (Empowerment with Grace, 941 Federal Ct Ste 104, Meadville, PA 16335) 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM. Join us for our monthly Crawford Support Group meeting! Please use the side entrance of the building on 296 Chestnut. It will have signage as Empowerment with Grace but this may not show up on your GPS.

May 13 (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.

May 15 (Thu) - Full Spectrum Youth/Teen Social & Peer Support meets (Full Spectrum Community Outreach Center, 660 W Earle Ave, Youngstown, OH

44511) 5 PM - 7 PM. Free to all LGBTQIA+ youth 16-17, under 16 with signed parental consent form.

May 15 (Thu) - LGBTQIA+ Recovery Support Group (UPMC Western Behavioral Health at Safe Harbor, 1330 W 26th St, Erie, PA) 5 PM - 6 PM. For more information about the LGBTQIA+ Recovery Support Group, please call 814-451-2247.

May 15 (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

May 15 (Thu) - Lotz of Tea with Mona 7 PM. With co-host Large Marge. Live streaming on Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok. <https://www.facebook.com/LotzofTea>.

May 16 (Fri) - National Honor Our LGBT Elders Day National Honor Our LGBT Elders Day was established to draw awareness to and appreciation of the lifetime of contributions made by LGBT older adults. The gains made in recent years toward LGBT equality sit squarely on the backs of those whose struggles and victories, extraordinary courage and everyday authenticity pioneered the path toward freedom. National Honor Our LGBT Elders Day works to unite the LGBTQ community and its allies to celebrate and thank those individuals who fought on behalf of us all. #LGBTeldersDay Browse to <https://www.lgbteldersday.org/>.

May 16 (Fri) - Erie VA LGBTQ+ Veterans Coffee Social (Erie VA Medical Center, 135 E 38th St, Erie, PA 16504) 10 AM. The Erie VA Medical Center will have a coffee social for LGBTQ+ veterans at the Erie VA Veteran Canteen, located in the Erie VA basement at 135 E 38th St., Erie, PA 16504. Times are subject to change based on availability. The Coffee Social is meant to bring Erie's local LGBTQ+ Veterans together to connect and foster ongoing relationships of support and friendship. Veterans will learn about VA services available including: Hormone treatment, Substance use/alcohol treatment & tobacco cessation treatment, Treatment and information on prevention of sexually transmitted infections/PrEP, Mental Health, and Fitness (Diet and Exercise). For more information, contact Brittany Miklos at 814-844-5944. This event is open to all LGBTQ+ Veterans in all counties served by the Erie VA. LGBTQ+ Veterans interested in enrolling in VA Healthcare are encouraged to attend.

May 16 (Fri) - Aging with Pride Movie Night - Milk (Erie Movie House, 3424 W Lake Rd, Erie, PA 16505) 7 PM. Doors open at 7 PM, and show time is 7:15

PacelineFinancialLLC.com
Helping set the PACE for...



Zachary Honess

Zhoness@Sassetmgmt.com
814-734-0377
148 Meadville Street Edinboro,
PA 16412



Securities are offered through Aurora Securities, Inc. (ASI) Member: FINRA/SIPC. Advisory services offered through Secure Asset Management, LLC (SAM), a Registered Investment Advisor. Insurance products offered through Secure Investors Group (SIG). ASI, SAM and SIG are all affiliated companies and maintain common ownership. ASI, SAM, SIG and Paceline Financial, LLC are separate and unaffiliated entities



The Red Zone

The "Red Zone" is a critical and often overlooked period on college campuses, referring to the first six to eight weeks of the academic year when students, particularly freshmen, are at the highest risk for sexual assault. This period is marked by a convergence of factors that make new students especially vulnerable, including their unfamiliarity with campus resources, a desire to fit in, and increased social activity, often involving alcohol.

During the Red Zone, incoming students are navigating new social environments and building relationships, which can sometimes lead to situations where boundaries are crossed. The pressures of adapting to college life can also make students less likely to recognize or avoid risky situations.

*Crime Victim Center of Erie County is available 24/7.
Services are completely free and confidential.*

125 West 18th Street 814-455-9414 cvcerie.org

littledoglodgell@gmail.com
413-522-2213
Lake City, PA
PA Kennel License #18676

Insured / Bonded

Become a Foster Parent!

FosterNWPAKids.org



Family Services of NWPA



Jen and Katie - Erie, PA

PM. Free admission. We will be watching the 2008 gay classic, Milk, based on the life of San Francisco Board of Supervisors member Harvey Milk. The seating capacity is 35

May 16 (Fri) - Zone DIVAS (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) Misty Michaels Kall and her legendary DIVAS pay homage to the queens of music! Iconic diva hits from the likes Cher, Whitney, Britney, Gaga & more! . Doors 8 PM, Show 10:30 PM. \$5 Cover. 21+

May 17 (Sat) - International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia First celebrated in 2005, the main purpose of the May 17 mobilizations is to raise awareness of violence, discrimination, and repression of LGBT communities worldwide. Browse to <https://dayagainsthomophobia.org/>.

May 17 (Sat) - Gays Eating Garlic Bread In The Park (Nate Levy Jaycee Park, E 2nd and Holland St, Erie, PA) 12 PM. Hang out for the sake of hanging out, and of course garlic bread

May 17 (Sat) - Aging with Pride Book Club - Patchwork by Tess Carletta (Werner Books & Coffee 3608 Liberty St, Erie, PA 16508) 1 PM . Werner Books offers a 20% discount on books purchased for the book club.

May 18 (Sun) - HIV Vaccine Awareness Day This day is a chance to thank the volunteers, community members, health professionals, and scientists working together to find a safe and effective preventive HIV vaccine. It is also a time to educate communities about the importance of preventive HIV vaccine research. National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) leads this observance. #HVAD Browse to <https://www.niaid.nih.gov/>.

May 18 (Sun) - Pittsburgh OWLS visit Erie Aging With Pride (Erie, PA) 11:30 AM - 5 PM. Contact Pete at (814) 384-9785.

May 18 (Sun) - Full Spectrum Transgender Roundtable Discussion (Full Spectrum Community Outreach Center, 660 W Earle Ave, Youngstown, OH 44511) 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM. Open to all transgender and gender nonconforming ages 18 and older.

May 18 (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. Free to all LGBTQIA+ ages 18 and older. Entrance to the center is the red ramp on the side of the building off of the parking lot. Please do not use the front door!

May 19 (Mon) - Agender Pride Day To be agender means to not identify as any particular gender. Agender is also called genderblank , genderfree, genderless,

gendervoid, non-gendered, ungendered, or null gender. The agender identity falls under the nonbinary umbrella and (sometimes) the transgender umbrella.

May 19 (Mon) - National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day A national campaign to end silence and shame about HIV/AIDS in Asian and Pacific Islander communities. #APIMay19 Browse to <http://www.banyantreeproject.org/>.

May 19 (Mon) - 8th Annual Erie County HIV/AIDS Awareness Walk (Perry Square, 6th and State Streets, Erie, PA 16507) 5 PM. See article in this issue.

May 20 (Tue) - Primary Election 7 AM - 8 PM. Polls are open from 7 AM to 8 PM.

May 20 (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. Join via Zoom at <https://bit.ly/Zoom-ECHTF>

May 20 (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. Volunteers are very much welcome and needed!

May 23 (Fri) - Spring Fling (M & J's Lounge, 124 Mercer St, Butler, PA 16001) Wear your sexy tops and shorts. Drag Show. We will be having a beauty pageant in June for the title of 2025 Miss or Mr. M&J's Lounge

May 23 - 24 (Fri - Sat) - Leather & Lace: A Weekend of Sinful Indulgence (Zone Dance Club, 133 W 18th St, Erie, PA 16501) 8 PM. Unleash your inner vixen at The Zone's Leather & Lace party! Get ready for a weekend of pure, unadulterated heat where leather meets lace and inhibitions melt away. Slip into your sexiest leather gear or delicate lace creations and join us for a night of forbidden pleasures. With pulsing beats and an atmosphere charged with desire, this is the party where fantasies become reality. May 23rd & 24th. Doors open at 8 PM. \$5 cover. Dress Code: Leather and lace encouraged! While we're embracing the sexy vibes, please remember to keep it respectful and appropriate for a public space.

May 24 (Sat) - Pansexual and Panromantic Awareness and Visibility Day This is a day to celebrate the pansexual and panromantic community and educate others on the community. Browse to <https://thepancommunity.tumblr.com/faq>.

May 24 (Sat) - 9th Annual Full Spectrum Pasta Dinner Fundraiser (Full Spectrum Community Outreach Center, 660 W Earle Ave, Youngstown, OH 44511)

3 PM - 7 PM. Raise a fork to support the Mahoning Valley's LGBTQIA+ Center. ADULTS: \$15.00 | CHILDREN 3 - 10: \$10.00 | CHILDREN UNDER 2: \$1.00. Meal includes: Pasta, Meatballs, Bread and Salad. Vegetarian, Gluten Free Options available.

May 25 (Sun) - 2025 Bigger Gayer PicniQ (Allegheny Commons Park West, 810 Arch St, Pittsburgh, PA 15212) MUST BE 18+ TO ATTEND / 21+ TO DRINK. MUST HAVE PROPER ID TO ATTEND. NO OUTSIDE LIQUOR OR BEER IS PERMITTED AT THIS EVENT. Join us for an exceptional Memorial Day weekend at our Inaugural Event, the BIGGER GAYER PICNIQ. We guarantee an unforgettable experience as your admission provides access to a delightful picnic buffet showcasing an array of options, including vegan options. As well as a phenomenal drag extravaganza at 4pm. Quench your thirst at our bars, offering a selection of your favorite cocktails, beers, and seltzers. Complimentary soft drinks and water will also be readily available. Please bear in mind to consume responsibly and ensure a safe journey home—never drink and drive. Let's come together to make this Memorial Day weekend truly special!

May 28 (Wed) - Meadville Queer Happy Hour (Julian's Bar & Grill, 299 Chestnut St, Meadville, PA 16335) 5:30 PM - 9 PM.

May 29 (Thu) - Queer Youth support group meets (James Prendergast Library Association, 509 Cherry St, Jamestown, NY 14701) 5 PM. For ages 12-21. Please contact Kaden Mason at (716) 720-8712 or kmason@lutheran-jamestown.org or Lisa Schmid-Miller at (716) 338-8702 or lschmidmiller@lutheran.jamestown.org with any questions.

May 29 (Thu) - Aging with Pride Dinner (Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro, 1402 W 10th St, Erie, PA 16502) 6 PM - 8 PM. Aging with Pride, an organization of senior LGBT+ members and allies, is meeting for dinner. Everyone is on their own for the meal. Contact: Pete. Phone: (814) 384-9785.



COLDWELL BANKER
SELECT, REALTORS®



Tom NeCastro

Associate Broker, REALTOR®
Office: (814) 452-2100 x 125
Cell: (814) 881-1186
TomN@eriemoves.com
www.TomNeCastro.com



4664 W. 12th Street
Erie, PA 16505

Each office is independently owned and operated.



Natalie Braddock Ins Agcy Inc
Natalie Braddock, Agent
1338 E 38th St
www.nataliebraddock.com
Bus: 814-825-3186

**It's our
differences
that make
us great.**

No matter what you value, I'm here to help protect it with respect and professionalism.
Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.®
CALL ME TODAY.



WARREN COUNTY PRIDE PRESENTS

SATURDAY JUNE 14TH
11AM-4PM



BETTS PARK WARREN PA
Shows | Contests | Games |
Vendors | Food



This is your sign to get tested.

Whether you prefer in-person care or the convenience of home delivery, we've got you covered. Visit our Erie location to get tested, or skip the trip and get PrEP delivered right to your door with PrEP2ME. Your health, your way.



Central Outreach - Erie
3104 State St. Erie, PA 16508
(814) 619-4009

