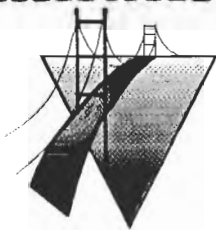

Erie Gay Community Newsletter

Published by BRIDGES



July, 1993

Celebrating the goodness & diversity of Erie area's lesbian, gay & bisexual community

☛ = New or Modified Group/Event this issue

Events & Happenings

Important Note: Events listed here are specifically gay or of interest to a lot of lesbigay people. If you know of an event that should be listed here, please get the info to us by the 20th of the month. For out of town events, call a day or two before to confirm that it is still on; mistakes can occur and circumstances can change at the last moment. Also, please note our email address! From CompuServe, 70431,1622 or from Internet 70431.1622@compuserve.com

Jul 3—Big Picnic in Venango County/Franklin, PA At Venango County Coon & Fox Club, 1pm to 2 am. \$10/person. Price includes food (4-6 pm), beverages (pop, coffee, beer). DJ 8-2am all types music. Also karaoke singalong, 50/50 raffles. Plenty room, bring frisbees, horseshoes, etc. Camping possible. Accomodations: tent space on grounds & motel nearby. At the Fox Club off Rte. 8. Turn at the Ri-Ge Motel & follow the pink balloons. ☎ Call Chick or Kel (814)437-6412. Indoor/outdoor rain or shine.

☛ **Jul 9—Men's Coffeehouse** Come, have fun with us! ☎ (814)455-9049 or (814)456-9833

Jul 9—"Destiny" All Women Band & Vocalists at Lizzie Bordon's Lesbian recording artists will be performing their very out, very lesbian music. Adult contemporary musical style. Showtime 12:00-1:00 am. 3412 West 12th Street, Erie.

Jul 11—Integrity The Episcopal Diocese will be having their church picnic at Waldameer Park in Erie. ☎ for info & tickets, Jacquelyn at (814)455-0549 or Dor at (814)774-0903

☛ **Jul 14—Volunteer Orientation Training at AIDS Council of Erie County** At 11:00 am & 6:30 pm. Part of Red Ribbon staff program. If interested, ☎ Mary Lee Brooks at (814)455-5492

☛ **Jul 16-19—Great Lakes Faeries 7th Annual Ganowungo Gathering** This is a camp-out for gay

men held on 25 acres of private land in the Chautauqua Gorge in Chautauqua County, NY. Bring drinking water, vegetarian food, candles & camping gear to share 4 days of faerie magic in a gentle wilderness. Please note that alcohol, drugs, meat, and compulsive sex orgies will *not* be the central focus of the gathering. Make the faerie circle a place of *perfect love, perfect trust & perfect freedom!* How to get there: Sorry, no public transportation available to these hinterlands! If you need directions call (814)453-2785 or (814)455-9049.

☛ **Jul 16-18—Women's Camp Out in Buffalo** Must register by July 7. ☎ (716)825-6604

Jul 17—"Christmas in July" Drag Show at Silver Slipper in Erie At 11:45 pm. At 1317 State Street. \$2 cover charge. MC for evening is Miss Downtown Erie, Jackee Regina. With Bobbi B & Gene Brandt

Jul 17—Jamestown Social Group Picnic At Ottaway Park on Route 5 in Westfield, 4-10 pm. Bring dish to share & own table setting. Enclosed pavilion in case of rain. Alcohol not permitted in park. Picnic will be laid-back & low-key: quiet games, talking & nature walks. This group (which includes people from their 20's to their mid-50's) would like to connect with & get to know Erie people. This is definitely not a hard partying scene. About a mile east of light on Rt 5 at Barcelona (Westfield) Entrance to park is opposite KOA Campground. \$1/car charge for parking. ☎ (716)484-7285

☛ **Jul 18—Gay & Lesbian Educators of Western NY Picnic in Sardinia NY** 2 pm till whenever, rain or shine. Bring your own food, beverages & paper products will be provided. Might want to bring a lawn chair, blanket, game stuff. Badminton court, picnic shelter, barn in case of rain. Buffalo, Rochester, & Erie area educators welcome. ☎ Peter at (716)883-6641

☛ **Jul 23—"Silkwood" on Lifetime** On cable at 9 pm. Cher plays a lesbian co-worker in this biographical drama about dangers in a nuclear power plant.

Jul 25—Integrity: Newcomers' Night, Evening Prayer and Discussion

If you've been thinking about going to Integrity, or have questions about being Christian & gay, Integrity would like to encourage you to come to this special night. Newcomers are welcome to ask questions, introduce themselves, meet other Integrity people, and feel welcomed. Integrity is hoping to start having more of these Newcomers' Nights. 7 pm at the Cathedral of Saint Paul, 133 West 6th, Erie

Jul 20-25—Starwood XIII In Sherman, NY. Festival of people into Earth-centered spirituality. Mixed, but definitely lesbigay friendly. Lots of stuff: Annual Faerie Circle, Lunacy (a gay male pagan musical duo), Womyn's folk groups, Chaotic Good & KIVA, Jade (feminist & editor of *Of A Like Mind*), children's program for 5-15 & lots, lots more. Association for Consciousness Exploration, 1643 Lee Road #9, Cleveland Heights, OH, 44118 ☎ (800)446-4962 or (216)932-5421

Jul 25—8th Annual Community Picnic & Games: An AIDS Fundraiser

Buffalo at Ellicott Creek Park Island, 2800 Niagara Falls Blvd, Tonawanda NY, noon-7 pm. \$10/adv, \$12 at the gate. Persons under 16 must be accompanied by guardian. Includes lunch, music, games, fun. County Law: No alcohol but can bring in canned beer in limited quantities. Information tables: must register, call Tim or Tony at (716)881-1459

Jul 30-Aug 1—Feminist Girls Camp

On 40 acres near Cambridge Springs, PA. Girls 5-15. Recreational activities (swimming, nature hikes, games, etc.), plus discussion & guidance about ecological, spiritual and —especially—feminist issues. The camp emphasizes the power of self esteem and the power of working together. This year's theme is "Every girl is strong, together girls are even stronger" Call (216)932-8259.

Jul 31—Paula Poundstone "Cats, Cops and Stuff" on Comedy Central (Cable)

At 11pm and 3 am.

Aug 1—Dancin' in the Streets

Downtown Cleveland. Music, dancing, entertainment, food, raffle, info booths & lots of surprises! 2000-3000 people expected. This year's theme is "Rodeo." 1 pm to 10 pm at W9th Street & St. Clair. Donation is \$5, "more if you can, less if you can't." Organized by Health Issues Task Force of Cleveland HIT, 2250 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland OH 44115 ☎ (216)621-0766

Aug 4—"Burroughs"

Documentary film about the gay writer who had a major influence on American literature and art for three decades. The film will be introduced by Deborah Burham, Creative Writing Department, PA Governor's School of Arts, who will also lead the discussion. 7:30 pm at Mercyhurst College, Zurn Auditorium, 501 East 38th Street, Erie. General admission \$3.00, Mercyhurst community free.

Aug 1—Annual GROW Picnic for Women in Buffalo

Not Erie's GROW! In Buffalo at Chestnut Ridge Park, horseshoes, badminton, etc. Bring a dish to pass, rain or shine. ☎ (716)627-9825

Aug 13-15—Gay Positive Men's Group Camp Out Weekend at Jones Pond

For info, ☎ (716)884-8670 In Buffalo.

Aug 14 (Changed from Aug 21!!)—Bridges Potluck/Discussion at Unitarian-Universalist Congregation of Erie

Open to all! Potluck at 6:00 pm, open discussion at 7:00 pm

Aug 21—AIDS Memorial Walk at Presque Isle

AIDS Council of Erie County, Inc. at (814)455-5492. Call now to help out! Pledge sheets will be available at the AIDS Council. Call Mary Lee at (814)455-5492 for further info.

Aug 29—Gay & Lesbian Music Festival in Buffalo, NY

Details next month.

Sep 5—Bridges Festival

All day, dance from 7 to 11 pm. At Glinodo Conference Center in Erie County. Festival runs from noon to 11 pm. Cost: \$8 in advance/ \$10 at the door, kids 15 & under \$3 (all costs, more if

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Entertainment Notes

- ☆ The USA Channel will be airing the soap opera *Eden*, which contains a lesbian story line. You can see *Eden* at 11 pm starting June 28.
- ☆ *The Broadcast Tapes of Dr. Peter* will air on HBO during July. Consult your listings for dates & times. This is the video "diary" of British Columbia's longest AIDS survivor.
- ☆ Two plays with gay themes won the top prizes at Broadway's coveted Tony awards, with *Angels in America* being chosen best play and *Kiss of the Spider Woman* best musical.
- ☆ Singer-songwriter Janis Ian ("Society's Child", "At Seventeen") has come out as a lesbian. She has just released her first album in 11 years, *Breaking Silence*. One song on the album, "Ride Me Like a Wave" is an erotic lesbian love song. Ian said that her other songs with lesbian content include "Maria" and "Queen Merka & Me," though she says lesbianism is "always in my work."
- ☆ The season finale of Nickolodeon's *Ren and Stimpy* cartoon series featured the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles filking "God Save the Queen." (This was the "Royal Canadian Kilted Yaksmen" episode.) Happy, happy, joy, joy! They were listed in the show's closing credits.

you can, less if you can, contact Bridges for advance tickets). Swimming pool, volleyball, softball, games, treasure hunt, merchants and lots of neat people like you! The Lesbian Moms Support Group will be organizing childcare & children's activities. **If you need childcare, you must contact us by August 22!!!** (Those under 16 must be accompanied by guardian). Vendors welcomed. Call Jacquelyn at (814)455-0549 for details or Michael at (814)456-9833.

ART NEEDED FOR FUND-RAISING CALENDAR! CONTACT THE AIDS COUNCIL OF ERIE AT (814)455-5492

We Need Help for the Bridges Festival!

Volunteers needed for clean-up, childcare, running activities, transportation, planning, vendors, errands, etc.

Call Jacquelyn at (814)455-0549 or Deb at (814)453-2785 for more info.

Groups & Organizations

AIDS Council of Erie

Location: 554 East 10th Street; Erie, PA 16503-1314. ☎ (814) 455-5492. ⌚ Hours: 8:30 to 4:30 Mon.-Fri. Activities: Reorganizing activities. See Red Ribbon Staff Volunteer Orientation Meeting on July 14. Also bimonthly newsletter, weekly Food Pantry, Memorial service, Buddies program, Bereavement group. Call for more info.

Bridges

A coalition of organizations which seeks to use networking and communication skills to build a better community. Also publishes *Erie Gay Community Newsletter* and puts on community dances and quarterly potluck dinners/forums. ✉ Bridges, PO Box 3063, Erie, PA 16508-3063. ☎ (814) 455-0549 or (814) 456-9833.

Committee in Support of Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual People

A committee of students, faculty, & administrators who work together to educate, bring speakers, offer films, and address concerns that relate to gay and lesbian issues specific to the Allegheny Community. ✉ CSGLBP,



Box 186, Allegheny College, Meadville, PA 16335. ☎ Paula at (814) 332-4356 or Erny at (814) 332-4375

Edinboro Gay Organization (EGO)

Student group, primarily social. *Meetings:* On vacation till school year resumes. Tuesdays from 8-10 pm in Hendricks Hall, Room G13 (☎). ☎ Jessica at (814) 732-2574 or David at (814) 732-4278.

Erie Sisters

Non-sexual social support group for TV/TS/CD. Good manners, taste & common sense expected. Monthly meetings, newsletter, Meetings in even numbered months are social events held at accepting establishments. Changing room provided. Interview with a club officer required before first meeting. ✍ Erie Sisters, 2115 West 8th Street, Suite 261, Erie, PA 16505

Friends Alike (Oil City, PA)

Number disconnected. Currently checking this out.
Gay and Lesbian Alliance - the Other 10% (GALA 10)

Support group for gay men and lesbians and friends and family. Open to public. *Meetings:* On vacation till September! 3rd Wednesday of month at 8:00 pm, call for site. Next meeting is Sep 15. ✍ Mercy Institute, 501 East 38th Street, Erie, PA 16546. Attn: Sr Marlene Lehmkuhl ☎ Sr Marlene at (814) 824-2572.

Gay and Lesbian Drug & Alcohol Abuse Support Group (Jamestown, NY)

Meetings: Thursdays at 7:00 pm at Jamestown Community College (in Chautauqua room at the Library). ☎ (716) 664-5556 or (716) 483-0749

Girth & Mirth

For big men & their admirers. ✍ PO Box 7048, Erie, PA 16510-7048 ☎ TC at (814) 899-0202.

HUGS East (Mentor, OH)

Activities, events & groups for the gay and lesbian community of Ashtabula, Lake & Geauga counties. Newsletter published ✍ HUGS East, PO Box 253, Mentor, OH 44060 ☎ (216) 974-8909.

Integrity

A Christian-based spiritual and support group, sponsored by the Episcopal Church that welcomes people of all faiths. *Meetings:* 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month (7:00pm) at St. Paul's Cathedral, 133 West 6th Street. ✍ Integrity-NWPA, PO Box 1782, Erie, PA, 16507-1782. ☎ (814) 455-0549.

Jamestown HIV Positive Support Group

☎ Jill Johnson at (716) 664-7855

Jamestown PFLAG

For parents & friends of lesbians & gays. Meets last Tuesday of the month, call for site. Meeting Dates: Jun

29, Jul 26 & Aug 30. ☎ (716) 488-1264 or (716) 763-1529

Jamestown Social Group

For men & women. Smoke & alcohol-free. Meets 3rd Saturday of the month at 7 pm at First Unitarian Society of Jamestown, 1255 Prendergast. Meeting Dates: Jun 19, Jul 17 & Aug 21. ☎ (716) 484-7285 or (716) 664-5556.

League of Gay and Lesbian Voters (LGLV)

Currently reorganizing. Planning Gay town hall meeting in September to show *The Gay Agenda*, an antigay hate video putout by the religious right. Lobbying for PA State SB1218 (also introduced in House), which would outlaw gay-bashing. Non partisan voters group. Publishes Voters' Guide for primary and general election, voter registration/education, lobbying. *Meetings:* See schedule or call. ☎ Michael at (814) 456-9833. ✍ LGLV-Erie, PO Box 3063, Erie, PA 16508-3063. ☎

Lesbian Moms Support Group

Support group for lesbian moms, co-parents and women interested in parenting. Meets 3rd Saturday of each month. ✍ Lucinda Marsh, 214 Walnut Street, Waterford, PA 16441. ☎ (814) 796-3535.

Life's Blood

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings for Gays and Lesbians. *Meetings:* Sundays at 8:00 pm at the AIDS Council, 554 East 10th Street in Erie. ☎

Men's Coffeehouse

The Men's Coffeehouse is an alcohol & smoke-free environment with a particular theme, topic or activity for each month. They get together on the 2nd Friday of each month at 7:00 pm. Meetings: Jun 11, Jul 9 & Aug 14. ☎ (814) 455-9049 for more info. ☎

Out & Proud

Support group for media issues, those dealing with coming out. ✍ OP, PO Box 3063, Erie PA 16508-3063 ☎ (814) 456-9833

Trigon

Support group for Behrend students, faculty, alumni. On vacation til September. ✍ College Mailroom, Box 1054, Behrend College, Station Road, Erie, PA 16563. ☎ (814) 453-6232

Womynspace Coffeehouse

The Womyn's Coffeehouse is an alcohol & smoke-free environment for lesbians, with a particular theme, topic or activity for each month. They get together on the 1st Saturday of each month at 7:30 pm. They also have parties, picnics, softball & other activities. Next Meet: Jul 3, Aug 7 & Sep 4. ☎ Sally at (814) 454-2713.

Area Bars

Ashtabula

Leeward Lounge, 1022 Bridge Street. Open 7 days a week, 7 p.m. - 2:30 a.m. Food is served from 7 p.m. till 1:30 a.m.

Fri & Sat - \$1 cover, half goes into a 50-50 raffle drawn at the end of the night, other half goes to person taking the cover. Cleveland *Gay People's Chronicle* for free here.

Erie

Lizzie Bordon's Part II, 3412 West 12th. Bowling on Tuesday nights from 9 pm till whenever. Requests & Country played on Wednesdays. DJ on Friday & Saturday. Shows on some Fridays. Carries Pittsburgh *Out* newspaper (free).

Silver Slipper, 1317 State Street. Live DJ music 9 p.m. - 2 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. On Friday the DJ plays oldies till 10:30 p.m. (50s, 60s and 70s). The Slipper will be expanding as soon as the PA LCB okays it. It will mainly be a seating area, with tables and booths.

Jamestown

Nite Spot, 201 Winsor. Open Tues-Sun 7pm-2am. Closed Mon. DJ Fri & Sat 10pm-2am. Sun Drag show, DJ after 9:30 pm, no cover. Nightly specials.

Sneakers, 100 Harrison. (716)484-8816. Open 7 days a week, 3:30 to 2. DJ Fridays and Saturdays 10-2. Country/Western every Sunday 5-10. ▼

Editorial Policy

We will consider for publication any material which broadens our understanding of our lifestyles and each other. Views and opinions appearing in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of the staff nor those of the component groups.

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

All materials submitted must be signed so we can contact the authors should we need to consider editorial revisions. However, within the pages of the newsletter, articles may appear anonymously, upon request, and strict confidentiality will be observed. If you wish to have your full name published, you must send a written and signed note that gives us permission to do so. This publication will not "out" anyone.

We welcome and encourage all readers to submit news for publication and to share your comments, criticisms, and positive feelings with us.

Materials should be sent to: EGCN; PO Box 3063; Erie, PA 16508-3063. Call (814) 456-9833 for more information. Email: CompuServe: 70431, 1622.

A Foundation for the Community

Providing Grants and Scholarships to the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Community.

For information on applying for grants, scholarships, making donations or simply getting involved contact:

The Lambda Foundation

PO Box 5169, Pittsburgh, PA 15206 • 412/521-5444

Transitions

DIED: **Kerry Stoner**, founding executive director of the Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force, died June 2 of complications due to AIDS. He was one of a group of dedicated volunteers who in 1985 helped to organize the PATF.

DIED: **Craig Rodwell**, early gay rights activist, of stomach cancer. He was 52.

Rodwell began organizing the gay community in New York's Greenwich Village in late 1950s. He organized the Mattachine Young Adults in 1964 as well as protests against police harassment of the gay community. In 1967, he opened the nation's "first gay liberation bookstore", the Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop (which is still in business). He was one of the leaders of the Stonewall rebellion in New York in 1969 (against police harassment of gays), which is considered the beginning of the modern gay rights movement. A year later he organized the first gay pride march. ▼

Wills, Living Wills, Closings & Criminal Law

John E. Cooper, Esq
227 W. 5th Street
Erie, PA 16507
(814) 455-3436

Gay Rights Progress: No Stopping Us Now!

There are a lot of gains being made for lesbian and gay people. We're living in some pretty exciting times. Here's what progress has been made, just in the past couple of months.

Couples

☺ The Vermont Supreme Court has ruled that a lesbian may adopt her lover's biological children. That ruling in effect establishes that lesbians can be "legally recognized parents," according to Julie A. Frame, who represented the two women in the case.

The two women, Deborah Lashman and Jane Van Buren, have lived together since 1986. During that time, Van Buren was artificially inseminated and gave birth to two sons, in 1988 and 1991.

The Vermont Social and Rehabilitative Services investigated the family after Lashman went to court to adopt the children, and determined that the adoptions were in the best interest of the children.

Justice Denise Johnson, in a unanimous opinion for the five-member court, wrote, "When social mores change, governing statutes must be interpreted to allow for those changes in a manner that does not frustrate the purposes behind their enactment."

"To deny the children of same-sex partners...the security of a legally recognized relationship with their second parent serves no legitimate state interest."

☺ University of Pittsburgh has given partial domestic partner benefits to its faculty who are involved in committed same-sex relationships.

☺ Norway has legalized same-sex marriages, the second country in the world to do so. Denmark legalized same-sex unions in 1989. Similar legislation is pending in Sweden and Finland.

Anti-Discrimination Policy

☺ In April, Secretary of Transportation Federico Pena issued policy statements endorsing the hiring and promotion of lesbians and gay men and ending discrimination against employees on the basis of sexual orientation, age, race, cultural background or disability. In June Pena spoke to a gathering of several hundred federal workers gathered in the DOT courtyard to kick off Washington D.C.'s Pride Week celebration. Pena is

the first Cabinet secretary in any federal administration to have ever participated in a Pride Week event.

☺ Other federal agencies have begun to adopt anti-discrimination policies. Among them are the Department of Agriculture, the General Services Administration, and several regional offices of the National Park Service.

☺ The American Medical Association's House of Delegates voted on June 15 to ban discrimination against gay and lesbian doctors.

Clinton Administration

☺ Roberta Achtenberg has become the first openly gay or lesbian nominee to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, by a vote of 58-31. The lesbian activist is now the assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity in the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Conservatives like Jesse Helms, Pat Robertson, and Jerry Falwell helped organize strong opposition to Achtenberg's appointment.

Some Senate members criticized Helms' homophobic attacks. Senator Claiborne Pell D-RI, in a speech endorsing Achtenberg, for the first time spoke of his openly-lesbian daughter, who is president of the Rhode Island Alliance for Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights; Pell said he would not want to see her barred from a government job because of her sexual orientation. PA Senators Wofford and Spector voted YES on Achtenberg, as did Ohio's and NY's Senators. (Thank them for their support!)

Gregory King, of the Human Rights Campaign Fund, said, "The Senate vote is a significant milestone in our community's history."

"Roberta Achtenberg has broken down a wall and made it possible for future nominees to be judged on the merits and not by prejudice."

☺ Nan D. Hunter has been named deputy general counsel of the Department of Health and Human Services. Hunter worked for the American Civil Liberties Union in New York from 1981-1990 and was director of its Lesbian and Gay Rights Project and its AIDS project. She also co-edited the book, "AIDS

Cont'd on page 10

Opinion: A Fundamentalist Fag's Point of View*

By Mathew

Growing up in a Baptist household required a degree of willpower I never quite achieved. Sunday sermons proclaimed the world was full of temptations that had to be avoided in order to walk closer to God. Most of the temptations were sexual or were activities that led to sex. Dancing, drinking, premarital and extramarital sex were all damned and partakers of such were to be avoided due to their "ability" to seduce the weak in spirit. Homosexuality always seemed to hold a place all its own when it came to sin. The act of homosexuality actually seemed worse than sin, as I grew up hearing words such as "perverse" and "abomination". The idea of attraction to a member of one's own sex seemed foreign to me, even as I eyed the male models in the Sears catalog. Childhood naivete allowed me to hear descriptions and definitions but kept me from applying them to my pre-adolescent desires and curiosity. My "perverse" desires only took on a name when I described to my father an infatuation I had for a boy on my brother's football team. His reprimand forced me into a secrecy that still exists today.

Religious fervor (fundamentalism) can be an incredible force, and I witnessed its power many times in church services. To serve God and follow His Biblical plan can become a fire in an individual's life that shuts out all other endeavors. Many call this fanaticism, and it causes shivers in one's spine when the names of Robertson and Falwell are spoken. This fanaticism is not unique to fundamentalists and could certainly be applied to some who follow gay activist groups. And yet it is accepted and applauded when in our ranks, and abhorred elsewhere. I am not proud of the intolerance and hate that some fundamentalists preach, even though my life is rooted in such beliefs. But neither can I respect the same behavior when coming from many gays. Many say that they want tolerance and yet fail to practice it in their own lives. The Golden Rule is very applicable for both sides but seems to be trivialized as something parents tell their children in order to stop fights at recess. You must practice what you preach; for actions truly speak louder than words.

I firmly believe homosexuality was decided for me biologically, and I yearn for the day the "world" recognizes this. Until that day arrives, I can only hope for acceptance, or at the very least, tolerance. But as I look for this from others, I must search for it in myself as well. Tolerance only requires respect for another's beliefs and the capacity to allow their practice. It does not force acceptance or approval, two things we may strive for but not see in our lifetime. Tolerance is not much to ask from fundamentalists or gays. It alone could end the animosity that echoes from television, pulpits and march platforms. It could also end the secrecy that existed between a boy and his father and now a man and his family.

**The title was the choice of the author. ▼*



INTEGRITY

A Christian-based spiritual and support group sponsored by the Episcopal Church that welcomes people of all faiths. Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month at 7 pm at St. Paul's Cathedral, 133 W 6th St. Erie, PA. Our mailing address is: Integrity-NWPA, PO Box 1782, Erie, PA 16507-1782. For more information, call (814) 455-0549.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of *Erie Gay Community Newsletter* is to serve as a voice for lesbians, bisexuals, gay men and our friends & families in the Erie area. We wish this newsletter to be a source of information, support and affirmation. We also see *EGCN* as a vehicle for celebration of the goodness and diversity of the lesbian, gay and bisexual communities. *EGCN* is a cooperative effort between lesbian, gay and bisexual groups and individuals to help our community develop and thrive.

The LGLV Report: PA's Anti-Gay-Bashing Bill

Hate Crimes Bill Soon Before PA State Senate and House

The Problem: Anti-lesbian and gay violence is on the rise throughout the Commonwealth and is getting more violent as well. A recent report for the US Department of Justice noted that "Homosexuals are probably the most frequent victims" of hate violence. In recent reports, Pennsylvania Attorney General Ernie Preate notes that hate crimes against lesbian and gay people are a problem in Pennsylvania. A recent study found that Pennsylvania had the most gay related murders in the nation, the second most incidents of police abuse, and the ninth highest rate of physical assaults. Locally and throughout the State, juries and judges as well, often give more lenient sentences for gay-bashing than in normal assault cases.

Hate crimes are crimes committed because of the victim's race, color, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. A recent report commissioned by the National Institute of Justice noted "the most frequent victims of hate violence today are blacks, Hispanics, Southeast Asians, Jews, gays and lesbians. Homosexuals are probably the most frequent victims." Hate crimes are not just attacks on individuals; they are an attack on an entire group of people because the attacks are intended to intimidate that group, and the fear they generate can victimize all members of that group.

The Proposed Solution: Pennsylvania has already recognized the problem of hate crimes against other minority groups when the Ethnic Intimidation Act was passed. The law provides for steeper penalties when crimes are determined to be committed because of the victim's race, color, religion or national origin. The Senate Bill number is SB 1218.

The Hate Crimes Bill will amend the Ethnic Intimidation Act by adding sexual orientation to the list of covered categories. Prosecutors will be able secure sensible punishments against criminals who have until now been able to literally get away with murder. And once some cases have been prosecuted and won under this law, crimes, especially assaults, will decrease.

The Debate: Many legislators may look at this Bill as an attempt to legitimize the status of being gay or lesbian. This is not the case and it is important to steer them away from such debates and get them to focus on the real problem or this Bill may not be enacted. The LGLV suggests the following arguments:

1. Violence against lesbian and gay people is a pervasive problem in Pennsylvania and is a more serious crime than a non-bias crime because of its terroristic nature (it is a threat to attack all lesbian and gay people).
2. Bias crimes against lesbian and gay people are typically sentenced less severely than crimes are in general.
3. Pennsylvania has already recognized the need for bias crime legislation when the Ethnic Intimidation Act was passed.
4. The United States Government recognized the problem of hate crimes against lesbian and gay people when sexual orientation was included in the Hate Crimes Statistics Act, which was signed into law by President Bush.
5. Counter the argument that gays and lesbians cannot be equated to other minority groups, or that it is not the same as attacks against members of other minority groups, with the Statement that those other minority groups who have experienced hate crimes are lobbying for this bill today.
6. This is an anti-crime, pro-law enforcement Bill.
7. This is a pro-family bill; lesbian and gay people have families and when bashing occurs, it affects negatively the family of the victim, and the threat implied by the bashing also negatively impacts the entire lesbian and gay community, and their families.

What you can do: Sign a card to be mailed to local State House and Senate members stating your support for passage of the Hate Crimes Bill. LGLV will soon be making cards available at local bars and gay and lesbian events.

Cont'd on next page.

The Ban: The Countdown Begins...

by Greg Valiga

WAR—This simple three-letter word is so much a part of the gay-lesbian-bisexual struggle that we barely take notice when it is used. With the religious right declaring Holy War on the movement, it is assumed that anytime we attempt to take a step forward to achieve equality, we will find ourselves involved in another battle. It is therefore somewhat hard to comprehend that the pressing issue today is our right to be included in fighting wars, especially since our country doesn't go out of its way to protect us from hatred, violence, and discrimination.

Nonetheless, organizations nationwide are stepping up the pressure on Washington as the mid-July deadline for lifting the ban in the military approaches.

The Human Rights Campaign Fund claims their "Operation Lift the Ban," along with the support of gay America, has turned things around inside the Beltway. HRCF has hired an influential lobbying firm to help out, the Speak Out program has sent 150,000 telegrams to key legislators, and HRCF has been instrumental in bringing ex-members of the Armed Forces before the Senate to testify in favor of lifting the ban.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has implemented a simple strategy involving lobbying and grassroots organizing. Their ACTION PLAN stresses calling and writing Congress; this plan is endorsed by military heroes Margrethe Cammermeyer, Tracy Thorne, Heide De Jesus, and Keith Meinhold. Martina Navratilova has been successfully employed to increase fund-raising. NGLTF is working with a coalition of organizations which include the ACLU, People for the American Way, and the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, among others.

The Campaign for Military Service is the upstart organization; CMS has continually criticized HRCF and NGLTF for their slow response to the right-wing campaign. Campaign Manager Tom Stoddard takes a realistic approach to ending the ban: employ our allies and families to help, since we are in the minority. CMS has compiled an impressive list of endorsing organizations and has submitted a very clear proposal for ending discrimination based on status.

Cont'd on next page.



PLAIN IN THE SKY
CAFE

Casual Fine Dining
463 W 8th St, Erie PA
459-8638

Breakfast Mon-Fri 7:30-11:00
Lunch Mon-Fri 11:30-2:00
Dinner Thur-Sat 5:30-9:00

LGLV Report Cont'd

Contact your local State Senator by phone or letter and voice your support for the bill and ask that they co-sponsor the bill. (The name and addresses of the State Senators and House Members are listed in the government listings in the phone book and will appear occasionally in this column). Ask your friends and family to do the same. These calls are counted and make a difference. Remember to use the bill number! (SB 1218 for Senate)

Voice your concerns regarding this bill on local talk radio stations.

Make a contribution to the LGLV and support their fund-raising efforts so that they can continue to lobby for passage of this bill throughout the State.

Become an active member of the LGLV and join their effort to lobby local legislators for passage of this bill.

For more information about the Hate Crimes Bill or LGLV and its local chapter call 456-9833.

Next Month the LGLV Report will focus on the problem of discrimination against gays and lesbians in the community and at work and explains what you can do about it. ▼

Ban, Cont'd from last page.

The American Civil Liberties Union, of course, is also involved in the issue, launching a nationwide postcard campaign. Earlier this year, the ACLU of Pennsylvania conducted petition drives; locally, these petitions were targeted toward influencing Tom Ridge's decision to support the ban. Larry Frankel, Legislative Director of ACLU-PA, states of the successful Erie-area petition drive, "I cannot tell you how impressed I am...I know that my national office is hoping that we can put a lot of pressure on Ridge. [This] is a big part of that campaign."

Locally, the League of Gay and Lesbian Voters has attempted to generate grassroots support by leafletting and distributing the ACLU postcards to be sent to the Senate and the White House. The League is currently negotiating with Erie Cablevision to include the pro-gay video "To Support and Defend" in its local access programming.

A statement in support of lifting the ban, signed by 88 members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation

of Erie, was sent to the White House and area legislators in mid February.

It is now your turn to help end the discrimination in the Armed Forces. Erie County must increase efforts to counter right-wing opposition, which is very strong. Call and write your legislators; they must know that we support the ending of blatant discrimination in the military.

Contacts:

LGLV-Erie (ACLU	US Senate:
postcards, sample letters,	Sen Arlen Specter
and assistance)	118 US Court House
Greg, 833-3258 or Mike,	Erie, PA 16501
456-9833	453-3010
US House:	(202)224-3121
Rep Tom Ridge	Sen Harris Wofford
108 US Court House	107 US Court House
Erie PA 16501	Erie, PA 16501
456-2038	454-7114
(202)225-3121	(202)224-3121 ▼

Take Out a Happy Ad!

For \$10, you can take out an ad to declare your love, wish someone a happy birthday, or happy anniversary, celebrate coming out, send congratulations, announce a group forming...or use your imagination!

Ads must have no more than 25 words and no sleaze, puh-leez! Ads are \$10, pre-paid, and should be in by the 20th of the month.

Because we won't out anyone, we will not publish someone's full name unless they've already been out in our pages at their own request.

Send your ad copy with your check for \$10 made out to "EGC Coalition" to EGCN, PO Box 3063, Erie, PA 16508-3063. For more info, call our Advertising Director, Jacquelyn, at (814)455-0549. ▼

Gay Rights Progress: No Stopping Us Now!, Cont'd from page 6

Agenda: Emerging Issues in Civil Rights," and was a professor at Brooklyn Law School since 1990.

☺ In late April, Donna Shalala, new Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, met with 18 lesbian AIDS activists to discuss AIDS issues specific to the lesbian community. The activists had been trying to arrange such a meeting for the past six years.

Legalizing Our Private Lives

☺ In Nevada, it is no longer a felony for consenting adults of the same sex to have sex in private. A law dating back to 1911 made gay sex—even in private—a felony. In June, that incredible law was made history.

☺ Russia has decriminalized male homosexuality, repealing a law that made consensual male-male sex a crime. Lesbians were not acknowledged in the old law.

☺ The Irish Parliament has decriminalized homosexuality over the objections of the Roman Catholic Church. This struck down a 19th century law making the offense punishable by life in prison. This brings them into line with the European Court of Human Rights standards. ▼

Hey Bungy!! Didn't think strawberry pie would affect you like that. Scott. I'm still here.

Erie Area PFLAG Chapter forming. Call Kathy Harris at (814)838-6020

Community Directory

24 Hour Counseling:

Saint Vincent 452-5151
 Family Crisis 456-2014
 Hamot 877-6136

AIDS Services:

AIDS Council of Erie, Inc. 455-5492
 AIDS Community Svcs of Jamestown(716)664-7855
 AIDS Factline 1-800-324-AIDS
 National AIDS Hotline 1-800-662-6080

Bars:

Ashabula, OH Leeward Lounge, 1022 Bridge St.
Erie, PA Lizzie Bordon's Part II, 3412 West 12th St.
 833-4059
 Silver Slipper Lounge, 1317 State St.
Jamestown, NY Nite Spot, 201 Windsor St.
 Sneakers, 100 Harrison

Community Service Organizations:

Bridges 455-0549
 Out and Proud (Speakers' Bureau) 456-9833

Counseling:

Lisa DiPlacido, MS, 452-4366
 South Shore Counseling Group 725-8504
 For more info, call Greg 833-3258

E-Mail for EGCN. LGLV, Bridges:

From CompuServe 70431,1622
 From Internet 70431.1622@compuserve.com

Medical Services and HIV/AIDS Testing:

Erie Co. Dept. of Health (STD Clinic/AIDS
 Testing; confidential and anonymous); 2nd &
 Cherry St., walk-in (Mon. & Thurs., 9:30-3:30)
 451-6700
 Martin Luther King Center (misc. medical/AIDS
 Testing), 312 Chestnut St. 459-2761 (by appt only)
 Minority Health & Education Delivery Services
 (misc. medical/AIDS Testing), 325 West 26th
 Street, appt only. 453-4728

Political/Advocacy Organizations:

League of Gay & Lesbian Voters 456-9833

Publications:

Erie Gay Community Newsletter 456-9833

Religious Organizations:

Integrity 455-0549
 Unitarian Universalist Congreg. of Erie ... 864-9300

Social Organizations:

Men's Coffeehouse 455-9049
 Jamestown Social Grp (716) 484-7285 or 664-5556
 Womynspace Coffeehouse 454-2713

Student Organizations/Youth:

Committee in Support of Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual
 People (Allegheny College, Meadville) 332-4368
 Edinboro Gay Organization (EGO) 732-2574
 GALA 10 (Mercyhurst College) 824-2572
 Gay & Lesbian Youth of Buffalo (716)855-0221
 National Runaway Switchboard 1-800-621-4000
 Teen Hotline (412) 771-8336
 Trigon (Behrend College) 453-6232

Support Groups:

Erie PFLAG 838-6020
 Erie Sisters 2115 W. 8th St., # 261, Erie, PA 16505
 Friends Alike (Oil City) number disconnected.
 Gay/Lesbian Drug & Alcohol Abuse 716-483-0749
 Jamestown HIV+ Support Group .. (716) 664-7855
 Jamestown PFLAG (716) 488-1264 or 763-1529
 Lesbian Moms Support Group 796-3535
 Lifes Blood (AA) ... Sundays, 8:00 PM, 554 E. 10th

All numbers are area code 814 unless otherwise noted.

**WE NEED HELP FOR THE
 BRIDGES FESTIVAL!**

Call Jacquelyn at (814)455-0549 or Deb at
 (814)453-2785 for more info.

South Shore Counseling Group

55 E Main Street

North East PA 16428

Warm, gay-affirmative counseling for a full range

of individual, couple & family problems

Dale A. Allgeier, MSW, LSW

(814) 725-8504

Fees based on a sliding fee scale



Bridges Festival

Sun, September 5th

Celebrate Labor Day weekend in fine style!

- All day celebration from noon to 11 pm
- Dance from 7-11 pm with DJ Phil Huntley
- At scenic, secluded Glinodo Conference Center along the shores of Lake Erie
- Swimming pool with life guard
- Softball, volleyball, treasure hunt, other games
- Vendors/merchants
- Indoor & outdoor facilities
- Childcare & children's activities courtesy of Lesbian Moms Group. **Must** contact Bridges by August 22!
- BYOB (if you wish)
- Lots of great people just like you!

Tickets are \$8 in advance or \$10 at the door.
Kids 15 & under are \$3. Proceeds benefit Erie Gay Community Newsletter & other Bridges projects.

For general info, call Michael at (814) 456-9833. For vendor info, call Jacquelyn at (814)455-0549

Bridges — Building Community!

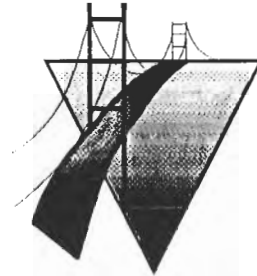
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Thanks!

Thanks to Mike from Youngstown for re-rendering the Bridges logo and redesigning the masthead of our newsletter. So, kids, whattaya think?

Ad Rates

Businesses and Sponsors! Show your support and reach Erie's *lesbigay* community directly! Advertising space is now available in all issues for just \$20 for an eighth page ad, \$35 for a quarter page ad, and \$65 for a half page ad. Write the address above or call our Advertising Director at (814) 455-0549 for further details!