

The Rainbow Times

Your LGBTQ News in MA, RI, North Central CT & Southern VT

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Melissa Etheridge
Fierce & Fearless
Like never before p.12

NOHO PRIDE GUIDE INSIDE!



PHOTO: BILL BERGGREN

p.23

DADT ACTIVIST LT. DAN CHOI
Receives Fenway Health's
Gerry E. Studs Award



PHOTO: ALICIA GRENIER

p.16

THE TUCKER JAMES PROJECT:
Documenting the journey
of a Transman's rebirth



PHOTO: EMMANUEL BOTHELLO

p.b18

DJ HECTOR FONSECA SPINS
Epic Saturday at House of Blues
on April 17

NoHo Pride: Support our supporters!

By: Gricel M. Ocasio/TRT Publisher

It is that time of the year again, when we celebrate NoHo Pride, first, and then the rest of the Pride Marches and celebrations in the nation. This time is particularly important because we are around the people who share our struggles, who are dear friends, who support us—at least most of them.

NoHo Pride this year will be a special Pride. It will be the first time in more than ten years that we have had new leadership, fresh faces and different ideas. We are thankful for the former leaders of the old Northampton Pride, however. They, too, worked hard to make a Pride Day a memorable experience for everyone. Ensuring that this event happens involves the participation of a lot of volunteers and people who are the “behind the scenes” amazing individuals who give to Pride each year relentlessly, then and now. Having been on the Board of the former Northampton Pride at some point, and then having attended most of the committee meetings, I know the organizational aspects that it all entails. It can be very overwhelming. So, perhaps this year we can thank the present volunteers,

committee and Board members of NoHo Pride, along with its Chair. They have done a great job, especially considering how fresh they were to Pride when we first met them. Good job Bear & Cid White!

Our involvement in Pride this year has been the NoHo Pride Guide. It is proudly designed and produced by The Rainbow Times, and it is inserted in this issue. We hope that you like it. Please, as always, visit, support and thank all of the advertisers found in the Guide and throughout the newspaper. They are a vital part of this operation. Without their support and presence none of us could be here today. If there is something important that we should all do, is to ensure that these supporters/advertisers/sponsors know that you also care and support them too. We, at TRT, support our advertisers in that manner. We hope you do too!

Happy Pride!

Gricel M. Ocasio
Publisher

**Gricel M. Ocasio is the co-founder, co-owner and Publisher of The Rainbow Times. She is a graduate of Temple University and has been in the journalism and publishing field for almost 20 years. You can reach her at: publisher@therainbowtimesnews.com.*

I have returned to enjoying being gay too: I'm not defined by labels!

By: Jason Lydon/TRT Opinion Writer

Last month I got incredibly excited to write and preach about the queer Jesus for Easter and, as I did, I began to get some push back. The first push back I received is a little too obvious to even write about, I am sure you can figure that out on your own. The next push back I received was from some people who still do not like the word queer. There are those who still find the word queer to be offensive, demeaning, and degrading. In all honesty, this has not really been the case for me. By the time I came out, 15 years ago, people had moved on to “Fag” and “Faggot.” Queer, for me, was always a political term. I had come out to the world as a pudgy little gay boy, relishing in the happiness of my gay identity. However, an older friend of mine told me that he was not gay as in happy, but queer as in f#@& you. My happy little gay pacifist self was astonished; why was he

so angry? And, the answer was pretty simple. My sexy, older, queer mentor was not saying F#@& you to particular individuals (well, not all of the time). The “you” was to heterosexism, homophobia, and all the institutions keeping queer people down. Queer was a sign of resistance. For him, queer was about tearing down borders and pushing boundaries. Queer went beyond sexuality and gender reaching into all areas. Queer was a verb, to queer something was to challenge its placement or to obliterate the borders of confinement. Queer sexuality was about pushing the boundaries of



Jason Lydon

See Labels on page 4

C'mon Out – Just Ask! Advice Column

By: Tetty Gorfine*/TRT Columnist

Dear Tetty:

Can I ask this question again?

Am I crazy? I'm in a new relationship with a wonderful woman who is warm-hearted, which is one of the things I love about her. Her warm-heartedness extends to her dog, who, until I came along, was the center of her emotional life. Tetty, it's not that I don't like dogs, but this dog is treated like a child, lover, best friend. When we go to sleep at night, the dog lies between us. When we have sex, the dog stays on the bed. When we socialize with friends, we have to go home before I want to do so we can “let the dog out.” I feel like this is going to be a bigger problem down the road as we get closer. What do you think I should do?

—Thank you Tetty, Louise

Dear Louise:

Thank you for your question. It raises an issue we have not yet discussed in this column; how other significant people, or beings in the case, interplay in a love relationship. There are often children, parents, important friends and even pets who are very important to a person in love. Negotiating these boundaries are essential.

Other people (and beings) can be a source of great tension in relationships. When a couple



Tetty Gorfine

See C'mon Out on page 18

The Controversial Couch

Lie back and listen. Then get up and do something!

By: Suzan Ambrose*/TRT Columnist

Sex. It sells. It's hot. It's all the rave.

Unless you're involved with a scandal or two. Sex scandals are all over the place: politics, the Church, Hollywood; everybody's doing it, so what's the problem? We're so immune to it; we barely give it a glance after the first breaking news. Unless you're Tiger Woods. Balls and the people who touch them have a way of grabbing the American populace's attention for more than a day.

And why is it such a big deal, anyways? Well, when it involves youth, abuse or violence, that's when it goes a little outside the box, no?

From the recent Republican National Committee's (simulated) lesbian sex-bar night out to the sex hotline (wrong) phone number being given out for contributions, I'd say these fellows really know how to get membership up (amongst other things). Thumbs up there, big guys.

Then there's singer Ricky Martin's announcement that he's a gay man where it's only big news in Siberia or the Midwest people of the Corn.

But when the Pope, the Roman Catholic closest-thing-to-Jesus steps in a pile of doo-doo, it's time to wake up and focus!

Yes, the Vatican's all atwitter—and I don't mean tweets per hour, although if I did, they'd



probably say “OMG HELP!” It's been building for a few months now: Europe is going through the same revelation/ revolution in the pedophile upset that the U.S. did a few years back. And it's a growing fury, because for the first time ever, there appears to be a direct link to the Pope. Specifically, Joseph Ratzinger, before he became Pope Benedict, had direct knowledge of abuse.

Well, as you can imagine, all of those grown men in hassocks are pulling the wagons around their infallible dude. Infallible, for those who are Catholic Church lingo unaware, meaning “Makes no mistakes,” “His word is law,” “and This is straight from God's mouth to our ears.” True believers are supposed to accept every decision without question as there is a direct link to the holy one. Basically, what Papa Pope says, goes.

And what's he's saying is NOTHING.

That's right. For weeks now, faithful Christians have sat back and waited for a few choice words from Rome, but could the Big Cheese in the Vatican take a few moments on Easter, when the whole world was watching to say “Pedophilia in our ranks is an abomination that we will root out?” Apparently not.

I can't help but draw a parallel between pedophilia and celibacy. Forced celibacy, that is. When the Church makes healthy young men

See Couch on page 8

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I was not happy with Jason Lydon's story saying that Jesus was queer. I think that is disrespectful and offensive. I understand about freedom of expression, but religion should not be a point of focus to queer people.

—Lillian S., Chicopee, MA

Dear Editor,

The story about Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin and the cover were covered in great detail by Ms. Gormley. I was not there, but have met the Congresswoman and she is “family.” It's great to see an open lesbian receiving this Fenway Award. I commend Fenway for having chosen her.

—Luka G., Boston, MA

Dear Editor,

I like that we will be having a Dyke March in Northampton. It sounds exciting, empowering and plain fun! Yeah, let's reclaim what's ours, like our “vagas” were with the Vagina Monologues. There are so many proud dykes in Northampton that this is a better celebration of who we really are here.

—Theresa B., Northampton, MA

Dear Editor,

Mr. Jesep's story “Comfort under a cold complicated world” certainly had many good points. The most important of them was the fallacy that people see God intertwined with religion and can't separate the two. It is a shame because that is exactly why acts of hatred toward others are committed. Thank you Attorney Jesep for bringing this to light via the Times.

—James T., Cambridge, MA

See Letters on page 21

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The Pioneer Valley Gay Men's Chorus—Raising Voices in Pride

Western MA News

By: Tynan Power/TRT Reporter

The Pioneer Valley Gay Men's Chorus (PVGMC) wants to be clear that it's not just a chorus—it's a **gay** chorus.

There's no need to worry, though—no one who sees the group perform could forget.

"The gay atmosphere is here the whole time we're singing," says chorus member Jim Day.

In fact, for Paul Belanger, one of the youngest members of the chorus explains that, "The singing part was secondary. It was the gay part that brought me here."

Even for those who are passionate about singing, being part of a gay chorus is unique.

"A couple of years ago, I sang in another chorus," another member says. "I didn't feel the same camaraderie. I didn't feel like I fit in."

In fact, when asked what they get out of the chorus, the immediate, echoing answer is "friendship."

Some of the men spend hours on the road for the pleasure of each other's company each week.

"This is not an all-Northampton group," says Day. "People travel to be here." Some members come from as far as the Berkshires and the chorus conductor, Lawrence McFarland lives

in New Hampshire.

Henry Gibson says there are numerous other gay men's groups in the area, focused on activities from bowling to potluck dinners, but none are as close-knit as the chorus.

"There's solidarity here," he says.

"We come together for the fun of it. If it's going to be labor, or too intense, I don't want to be here," David Thaxton says.

Gibson gives McFarland credit for knowing how hard to push the chorus.



PHOTO: TYNAN POWER

The Pioneer Valley Gay Men's Chorus (PVGMC)

"Larry [McFarland] is laid back. He realizes that we're an amateur group," Gibson says.

McFarland says there's no experience necessary to join the chorus.

"The primary requirement for joining the chorus is enjoying the collective creation of music," he says. "Naturally, prior choral experience is an asset, but it is not a requirement for membership. Many of our current members do not read music."

Amateur doesn't mean inexperienced, however.

One member with a long résumé of voice training and community theater performance says "I feel that I'm being pushed and challenged, but not too hard."

The chorus itself has years of experience.

"At times, the founding of a community organization can be cloaked in the obscuring clouds of memory. The best we can determine is that the Pioneer Valley Gay Men's Chorus

first began rehearsing together and performing in the mid-1980s," says McFarland. "Today, the Pioneer Valley Gay Men's Chorus continues to present a positive picture of gay men to the community and provides a warm, accepting environment for gay men to express musical creativity."

Transgender and cisgender (non-trans) men are equally welcome in the chorus. Sexual identity isn't even a sticking point, as the chorus welcomes anyone comfortable singing under the "gay men" banner.

"We don't need to see your gay card," McFarland jokes.

With a dozen members now, the chorus hopes to grow to 14 or 16 members in the fall.

"The chorus accepts new members on a rotating basis. We begin rehearsals each fall, and hope that new members can join us then," McFarland says. "At the moment the audition process is simply to join us for rehearsals."

Each year, the chorus has many opportunities to share their voices, in a wide variety of



PHOTOS: TYNAN POWER

PVGMC Conductor, Lawrence McFarland

locales, from churches to Northampton Pride. Earlier this year, the chorus even performed at the Springfield Falcons' Pride Night game—accompanied by zambonis.

Sometimes it's important just to be visible as a gay chorus, McFarland explains. He says that seeing a group of gay men singing in their church can make some people uncomfortable.

"There is a necessity that people who are uncomfortable confront and own that anxiety. We can help them deal with it. Many people appreciate a good chorus," he says. "It's a chance to see gay men in a positive light."

For information about booking—or joining—the Pioneer Valley Gay Men's Chorus, contact director Lawrence McFarland at afarbour@yahoohoo.com. Rehearsals are held every Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. in the basement of St. John's Episcopal Church in Northampton. The chorus will perform at NoHo Pride on May 1, 2010.

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 **Mohegan Sun** a world at play

Faith, Family, and God – Life Eternal: Remove the death that holds you down

In the Name of God

By: Paul P. Jesepe* / TRT Columnist

Easter has a special place in my heart. Putting aside my love for Cabury eggs, Lindt chocolate bunnies, pysanky (Ukrainian Easter eggs), and yellow marshmallow chicks waiting for me to bite their annoying little heads off so they peep no more; Easter is life trampling death. It's especially apparent when the spring flowers push through the cold, dark earth and the birds sing their songs just before sun rise. Regardless of whether you embrace Easter in a secular or religious way or prefer to spiritually celebrate the spring solstice there is a universal message – life eternal.

Consider using April as a time to triumph over the “little deaths” that have eaten at you over the past twelve months. Do you hate your job? Move on or find peace with it. Are there people in your life that make you feel bad? Move on. Don't let someone else's negative opinion become your reality. Is someone's bad habit holding you back emotionally, spiritually, or professionally? Walk away. This isn't to suggest that you love them less. But there is a point in everyone's life when a platonic or romantic relationship isn't

healthy. Don't be afraid to let go. If it's a family member then find some healthy distance.

This is probably stating the obvious. Write down a list of things that you want changed. Identifying them is a necessary step to move forward. Life is not about standing still. It doesn't mean you keep changing jobs or houses or apartments. It means you grow as a person able to live and let live. It means the ability

“Is someone's bad habit holding you back emotionally, spiritually, or professionally? Walk away. This isn't to suggest that you love them less.”

to find joy in each day. It means nurturing and growing your soul. It means finding wholeness and balance.

Approach your soul as if pruning a tree, bush, garden, or houseplant. Remove the death that obstructs the life waiting to sprout forth. It will be challenging. Think of the pruned death you remove as soon-to-be fertilizer. Use it in a healthy way to feed the soul by letting it become invaluable perspective. During your pruning be sure you're not blaming others for things only you can change. Mom's relentless criticism, for example, isn't likely to stop. No one can make you feel bad without your per-

mission. You choose the response.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) adopted a prayer that merits a much wider audience. The prayer, whose author was long thought to be eminent theologian Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) now disputed by scholars, though considered the first promoter of it, has value regardless of one's spirituality, faith tradition or personal struggles. Below is the prayer with editorial modifications.

“Creator, give us courage to change what must be altered, serenity to accept what cannot be helped, and the insight to know the one from the other.”

“Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; Taking this world as it is, not as I would have it; Doing what I can to make it better; Trusting that all will be well in the end; That I may be reasonably happy in this life and having the hope and faith that I will be supremely happy in the next. Amen.”

If this prayer is not right for you then reflect on it and change it. Consider modifying it to personally guide you to help prune the death that may cling to your soul. Better yet consider writing your own daily guide or prayer to help you walk life's path no matter where it may lead. Life eternal.

* Paul is an author, attorney, and a seminary trained, ordained priest in greater Albany, NY. He may be reached at Dilovod@aol.com.

Labels from page 2

acceptable heterosexual normalized relationships and playing with the fluidity of gender roles. Queer not only belonged to my friend, queer was a whole movement, including an overly-academic one. Steven Seidman, a queer theory leader, suggests that the aim of queer theory, “is not to abandon identity as a category of knowledge and politics but to render [identity] permanently open and contestable as to its meaning and political role.”

It did not take long for my gay identity to slip away, as I figured out a far greater meaning for myself in queer and a radical political role that my sexual identity pushed me in to. I decided that if I chose to identify as gay, my identity could uncomfortably force any future sexual partners of mine into an oppressive gender box. As a gay identified boy/man, I was very attracted to masculine men, seemingly mostly straight ones, yet wanted to very intentionally make room for the possibility that their gender could be fluid. I began to identify as queer because I did not want to determine my future partners' gender.

My identity has changed and transformed endlessly over the years, truly rendering the possible meanings of my queerness permanently open. Today, my queer identity reaches far beyond who I want to have sex with or fall romantically in love with. Queer feels like a powerful in your face tool that I share during anti-war kiss-ins with radical anarchist multi-issue focused revolutionary queers. And I have returned to enjoying being gay too. I do feel happily gay at times as I sing the lyrics to *Wicked* or dance to *Lady GaGa*. I encourage others who feel confined by labels to simply try adding more on. Identity exploration and understanding can be an incredible step towards our collective liberation!

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New Boston Pride Deputy Director Focuses on Growth

Boston News

By: Elizabeth Gormley/TRT Reporter

It must have been a great holiday gift for Keri Aulita. Back on December 23, 2009, it was announced the ten-year veteran of the Boston Pride Committee beat out dozens of candidates from all over the country to be crowned the organization's new title of Deputy Director.

"We opened it up," said Linda DeMarco, President of Boston Pride's Board of Directors. "We had a great response from the community, the West Coast, there were a plethora of candidates. It was a three or four month process."

"We had help from non-profits," DeMarco continued, describing the difficult process of narrowing down the contenders for the coveted position. According to DeMarco, the number of candidates kept moving down from "twenty-six candidates, then ten, then three." She explained that Keri stood out because she had a great track record for fundraising in non-profits. Also, DeMarco added, "she knew Boston."

This year, Boston Pride week goes from June 4-16. The 2010 theme is "Riots to Rights: Celebrating 40 Years of Progress," honoring the progress made in the modern Gay Rights movement.



PHOTO: ERIC HESS

Boston Pride Deputy Director, Keri Aulita

New Deputy Director Keri Aulita has had a heavy hand in fund-raising and working for many of the non-profits represented at Pride, such as AIDS Action Committee, Youth Pride, and Fenway Health. Pride Week is huge, and

Boston Pride is expanding. When asked how the role as Deputy Director has been so far, she does not hesitate to immediately answer "great."

"In some ways it's been an easy transition" she said. "I've been on the Pride Committee for ten or eleven years now. But in some ways, we have new things to do, new paths to form, new procedures to come up with. A new position at the organization opens up a new door for a lot of stuff to happen beyond June."

Aulita loves how busy she is kept in her burgeoning role. Keeping up with the voicemail is a challenge.

"We have two months to go," she said with a laugh. "We are at a new place. Obviously right now we're focused on planning Pride Week, but my mind is also in the future, looking at being able to piece together our mission, our strategic plan for the rest of the year, the rest of the years. We want bigger community involvement, community feedback on where the Pride Committee should fit, what our role should be the other eleven months of the year. Where do we fit in as a public organization? That's exciting and

challenging for us."

As the Boston Pride Committee expands and branches out—after the confetti is swept in June—Keri Aulita will utilize her non-profit experience by propagating corporate partnerships for Pride, conceiving fresh educational programming for the GLBT community, generating gifts and revenue, communicating with the media, and working with other human rights organizations.

"We're happy," DeMarco added. "It's a new era. We're one of the top five Pride's in the U.S. We take it seriously. It was time to take the next step. Keri is a steward guiding us forward."

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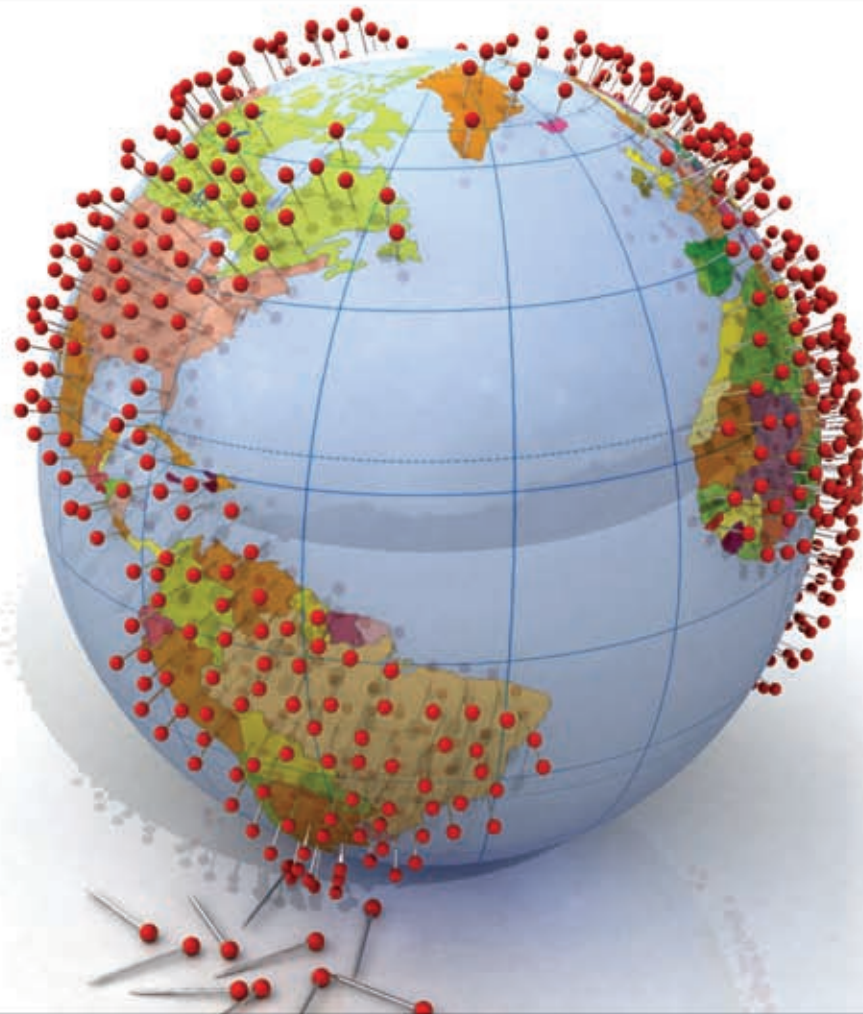
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Trannie: The pejorative word to use or not to use? I reclaim it!

Trans Opinions & More

By: Deja Nicole Greenlaw/ TRT Columnist
“TTrannie.” What does that word mean to you? Most Transwomen find that word offensive. Somewhere along the line that word fell out of favor and Transwomen would wince whenever I would use that word in describing Transgender people. Hey, I didn’t know! I was proud to be a Trannie! I reasoned that Trannie was short for Transgender and was kind of a friendly, cute, affectionate term. Yes, I knew that Transgender porn was advertising itself as Tranny porn but that’s spelled with a “y.” I use “ie” instead. I remember telling a Lesbian friend that it’s Trannie with an “ie!”. She thought it was cute! So did I!!!

But now Transwomen shudder at that word, even my “ie” version. Evidently it means a total putdown of oneself. Tres offensive and never to be used again!!

I remember the first time my use of Trannie got me in trouble. It was in 2007 and I was at a Connecticut Trans Advocacy Coalition (CT’s political force, much like MTPC is for MA) fundraiser event. I got there early and was speaking with a genetic girl who was an ally and we totally hit it off and were talking about and agreeing on anything and everything.



Deja Nicole Greenlaw

It was a very fun conversation and then I said “that” word. All at once my new friend’s face turned sad-eyed and she told me to never, ever degrade myself again. I was shocked! She continued and told me that that word is awful and that I “was much better than that.” My head was

spinning at this point. Until then I thought that everyone thought that Trannie was cute and cool, but then came this big wham! Whaaaat? But, I like to be called Trannie!

My Transgirlfriend who was also there told me that Trannie was now a bad word and that we could only use it while talking about each other much like some other races use their own nouns to refer to one another. If it’s used within our group then it’s not so offensive. Outside the group, usage is a big no-no.

I was growing more confused at this point. Then, it got worse! My first friend spotted her Tranwoman girlfriend who just arrived and they were naturally all excited about seeing each other. One of the first things out of my new friend’s mouth was “s&\$%!” How’re you doing, you w&%*#!” I was totally in shock by this point!!! Wait a minute! I turned to her and told her, “You say that it’s terrible and degrad-

ing to call myself a Trannie yet you call your friend using two more pejorative words??? Whaaaat???

The scene was almost unreal. She even tried to get me into the action by calling me a s&\$%. I immediately told her that I was very offended by that remark and how could she say that! She quietly explained that she always calls her Transgirlfriend by those names and her Trans-

girlfriend loves it! It’s all in fun she said. I was aghast!

Earlier this month I was at a gathering and a Transman asked me if I was offended by “Ticked Off Trannies with Knives,” a new film showcasing at the *Tribeca Film Festival* in NYC. It’s a film made by a Gay man and it tells the story about how Transwomen are brutally murdered (an unfortunately true statement), and no justice is ever served until this one group of “Trannies” fight back. The girls do kick some mean butt and justice does prevail but in a Transploitation type of way. Remember the old “Blacksploitation” movies of the early 70s? How African Americans were exploited? Well same deal happens here except substitute Trannies for Blacks.

Anyway I said that I was not offended by the film and all of the Transmen agreed that they

weren’t offended either. I then asked them what they thought about the word “Trannie.” None of them found it offensive but one did elaborate. He spoke of the possible ways that it could be taken offensively. They are: 1) the Tranny porn connection and, 2) that it’s not the word but rather how it is said to a Transgender person. That’s what makes it offensive. For example, he said say this in a sarcastic tone,

“What are you? A Ta-ranny???” Point taken, Transman! Thank you.

Later at the party I was talking to another Transman and I was complaining about how I loved

the word Trannie and how all the Transwomen seem to hate it. He looked at me and said “If you love the word then take the word back!” Immediately I thought of the *Vagina Monologues* and the reclaiming of another pejorative word. It’s about women reclaiming the “c” word and embracing it! Take the bad word and make it yours! That is such a powerful piece!

So my vision was cast. I am reclaiming the pejorative word “Trannie.” I will take away all of the negative power of that word and joyfully reclaim it as a word to be Proud of! Yes, this Noho Pride you will hear me reclaiming the word “Trannie!” I am a Trannie and I’m Proud! And by the way, that’s Trannie with an “ie!”

**He looked at me and said
 “If you love the word then
 take the word back!” ...**

Ask a Transwoman: The reality of being trans, will I ever truly be regarded as a woman first?

By: Lorelei Erisis*/TRT Columnist

Dear Lorelei,
 When does a transwoman/man stop waving the flag of transition and simply be a woman/man?
 —Nora C.

Full disclosure. This question actually comes from an old and very dear friend of mine and is only the first part of a multi-part question. That said, it kind of goes without saying that the transperson being referred to is myself. I felt it was important to share this particular email with you, dear readers, not simply because I’m a multi-tasking tranny. But, because I want you to know that these are not simply abstracts I’m talking about here.

It sometimes feels like I’m lost in a storm of semantics, when I get to talking about these issues. What is gender? What do all these words mean? Why am I so obsessed with pregnant seahorses? All of these are important questions, but the answers can get a little abstract sometimes. I spend so much time writing about binaries and paradigms and heteronormativity, it’s easy to forget we’re talking about real people with

real lives and real flesh and blood friends and family.

So this is a real question asked by a real friend who knows me sometimes better than I know my own self—a friend I have laughed with and cried with. A friend I have screamed at in anger and held close in pain. In short, a friend just like any good friend of your own my dear faithful reader.

This is the sort of question that transgender people find themselves having to answer all the time. I’ll be honest; the temptation to answer in the abstract intellectual voice is sorely tempting. There are scary aspects of this month’s column for me. Questions of identity that cut right straight to who I think I am and who I have become.

So here goes. Go ahead and peek through the curtains and see me naked here in black and white newsprint. Live Nude Lorelei!

Nora,
 Thanks not only for the question, but for your friendship through all of these changes. More than any automatic acceptance, your loyalty has meant the world to me! We have not always seen eye to eye on my choices, but you have always been there for me when I needed it.

You have asked me before

when I would be, “done with my transition and simply be a woman?” The simple answer is, probably never. On one level, I wish it were possible for me to just be a woman and get on with the rest of my life. I don’t think that’s an option though. There are a million little things that I expect will always remind me that I am Trans.

In order for me to live as a woman, for instance, I will have to keep taking artificial hormones regularly for the rest of my life. It’s not like penicillin. This is a prescription I will never finish.

Also, while there are some pretty amazing surgeons out there who will be more than happy to make me the best looking woman I can be, they are pretty pricey. And we both know that being an actor/writer isn’t exactly a big cash generating profession. Also, not one of them (at least that I would trust...) can make me shorter. I’m always going to be the same height as old Abe Lincoln and that is always going to invite closer scrutiny. Closer scrutiny often leads to being “read” as trans. Worrying about being “read” as trans means not being able to be “over” being trans.

In addition, there are a million other little and big ways in which the society we live in is unlikely to ever let me forget that I started out my life with an “M” on my birth certificate. I can change most of my ID gender markers, but the Social Security Administration is still mighty reluctant to change the marker that’s attached to those little numbers they gave us that we have to use for almost all official documents.

More personally, and more importantly

though, I am proud to be Trans! I have been lucky enough to have an experience that is very unique. I have lived as a man and as a woman. I have in-depth first hand knowledge of both the oppression that women face in this society and the privilege that men are afforded. I have known what it is to be a man who is in love with a woman. I am learning what it is like to be a woman who wants to meet a wonderful man. Heck, I’ve even had “gay” sex as both!! Woowoooo!!!

I’ve said “dumb guy things” and done “dumb girl things”.

Why would I even want to turn my back on all that interesting experience?!?! Especially as an artist!?

Finally though, to answer your first question fully, I already am a woman. I always have been. I am also trans. And I always will be.

And that, dear reader (and dear Nora), is where I must stop for now. There’s more to this question though and next column I’ll be getting to the truly personally terrifying parts of my answer! I’ve got to leave some space for TRT to sell some ads though so they can help me save up for that surgeon!

See you next month with part 2 of “Live Nude Lorelei”!!
 Slainte!

**Lorelei Erisis is Miss Trans New England 2009 and she can be contacted at: loreleierisis@therainbowtimesmass.com.*



Lorelei Erisis

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Holyoke Community College takes stand against bias based on gender identity/expression

By: Lisa A. Eramo/TRT Reporter

Holyoke Community College's (HCC) message is—and has always been—clear: Discrimination based on gender identity/expression will not be tolerated on its campus.

Now, however, the school has a formal gender identity/expression policy to back up this statement. The policy states the following:

Every student and employee of the college shall be responsible individually and collectively for promoting and maintaining a safe environment which is conducive to learning and which embraces the accords of civility and of human dignity. The college regards discrimination on the basis of gender identity/expression to be inconsistent with the establishment of an atmosphere that supports the full engagement of HCC students, faculty, and staff. Gender Identity is an individual's personal sense of being male, female, or elsewhere on the spectrum of gender (including those who identify as transgender, or are non-traditional in their gender identity). Gender Expression includes external characteristics and behaviors of gender identity such as dress, mannerisms, speech patterns, and social interactions. HCC will take reasonable measures to prevent and discourage all acts of intolerance and harassment on the basis of gender identity/expression and will act positively to investigate alleged harassment or discrimination and to affect a remedy or resolution when an allegation is determined to be valid.

The policy—which was drafted by TransCampus (a subcommittee of the Counsel for Community, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)—took effect March 2. It will be printed

in HCC's student handbook under the 'campus conduct policies' section.

In January, *The Rainbow Times* reported that the college had removed gender identity/expression from its formal non-discrimination policy based on legal advice stating the school could not afford these protections to students unless and until Massachusetts state law does.

HCC approved the campus-specific policy because it didn't want to sit back and wait until state law had changed, says Idelia Smith, assistant vice president for diversity at HCC and member of TransCampus.

"It was all part of our intention to be clear with the transgender community that in spite of the fact that the law does not yet address this element legally, we are responding to it," she says.

In addition to the campus-specific policy, HCC will update all print and web-based publications—including financial aid and admissions documents, scholarships and awards, commencement bulletins and public relations reports—to reflect the school's promotion of non-discrimination on the basis of gender identity/expression.

Alexander Pangborn, transgender student and member of TransCampus, says he hopes these changes will enhance already-existing efforts to raise awareness of transgender needs.

"The policy is really affirming things that HCC is already doing, but it also gives us the leverage to move forward," he says.

TransCampus is currently working on several initiatives, including creating gender-neutral bathrooms on campus and designing locker rooms that afford more privacy. The subcommittee also seeks to revise administrative pa-

perwork to include gender options other than male and female and provide students with a way to specify a preferred name when it differs from their birth name.

"If somebody's legal name is John, but they go by Jane, there should be a way to indicate their preferred name is Jane so that when they go into a classroom, they're not outed on the first day," says Pangborn.

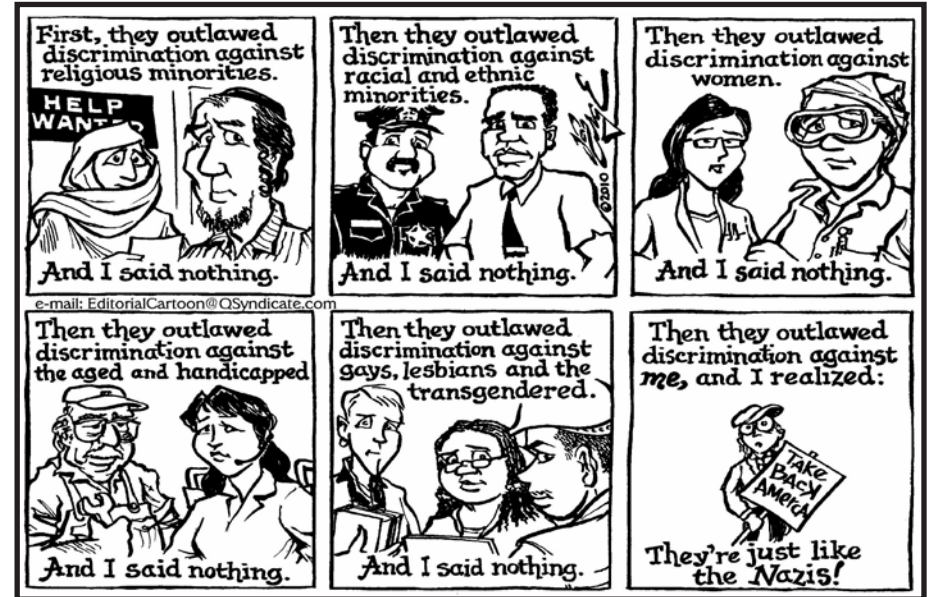
Violations of the new policy won't be taken lightly, says Smith. If a violation does occur, HCC would implement processes it already has in place for responding to conduct viola-

tions and harassment, she says.

"To the extent that we can oppress or negate this type of behavior in any way, we will use every means that we have available to us to do so," she adds.

Pangborn says he hopes the policy and statements will attract more transgender students to the college.

"If I saw this language, I definitely think 'Wow, this school went out of its way to make sure that [gender identity/expression] is in its language.' I would personally feel better about going to that type of school," he adds.



THE FACT IS, 63% OF ALL HIV/AIDS CASES IN THE U.S. ARE IN GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN AND HIV INFECTION RATES ARE RISING AMONG MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN.

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Media Urged to Ignore Bill Donohue's Latest Outrageous Anti-Gay Attacks

GLAAD joined with Call To Action and the Interfaith Alliance today in urging media to ignore desperate attempts by anti-gay activist Bill Donohue to distract attention from the latest revelations in the deepening abuse crisis in the Catholic Church.

Donohue, who has a long history of outrageous and defamatory attacks on gay people in his capacity as head of the New York-based Catholic League, recently renewed those attacks following media coverage of developments in the U.S. and Europe — coverage that turned a spotlight on new revelations about the reassignment of abusive priests.

"As the media attempt to look at the root causes of the abuse crisis, Bill Donohue's attacks against gay people and the media only serve to take away focus from the real victims here: the thousands of children who have been abused by Catholic clergy and nuns," said Jim FitzGerald, Executive Director of Call To Action, a Catholic movement working for equality and justice in the Church and society.

"Even the Pope during his 2008 visit to the United States said that this crisis is not about gays and lesbians," FitzGerald said. "U.S. Catholics are tired of hearing about the false causes of this crisis from people like Bill Donohue and, instead, are ready for the Church to address the real causes of the crisis: lack of

accountability and cover-ups."

Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, President of the Interfaith Alliance, also expressed criticism of Donohue's anti-gay attacks, which were featured in an advertisement Donohue placed in The New York Times earlier this week.



"I do not question Mr. Donohue's desire to speak out on issues concerning his church and the Pope," Dr. Gaddy said in a statement. "But I find his reasoning repugnant. To claim this is a 'homosexual crisis' rather than a 'pedophilia crisis' is a misguided insult to the millions of gay men and women who find this scandal as devastating as their heterosexual counterparts."

The full text of Dr. Gaddy's statement is available online at <http://interfaithalliance.org/news/361>

GLAAD urged any outlets that are considering whether to elevate Donohue's rhetoric to dig below the surface of his latest attack.

"It's telling that when media start taking a closer look at the recent revelations in the abuse crisis, Donohue instantly tries to change the subject by blaming the media and casting gay people as sexual predators," said Rashad Robinson, Senior Director of Media Programs at GLAAD. "But Americans are getting sick of this ugly, vicious scapegoating. Donohue is feeding a hostile climate that gay people continue to face in this country. It's wrong, it's unacceptable, and no credible media outlet should be providing a platform for these kinds of attacks."

Prior examples of Donohue's anti-gay rhetoric can be accessed at <http://www.glaad.org/donohuequotations>.

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) is dedicated to promoting and ensuring fair, accurate and inclusive representation of people and events in the media as a means of eliminating homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. For more information, please visit www.glaad.org.

Couch from page 2

stuff their feelings about sex deep within, it appears to come out in other ... not so healthy ways, actually. For centuries the Church has known about molestation and clergy shacking up with women that has produced children, but has done nothing but turn the other way and ignore the problem.

And truly, why not? IT'S BEEN WORKING quite well for over a millennia or two.

The difference today is the way in which we communicate: television, the internet, getting information fast from continent to continent. Where we can see and now know: "Hey, this isn't just an isolated incident that's happening in my backyard." No, the Catholic Church has been hiding this dirty little secret for way too long, hoping we'd all find something else to mull over, like how much money it takes to pay/pray your way out of Purgatory.

But there's hope that the little people aren't going to take it anymore ... or at least won't be giving their money so easily and trusting blindly. They want accountability and who can blame them?


It's time for the church to air out its closets. Something doesn't smell very good in there.

Even as we go to press, the Church is trying to put the focus on gay marriage and abortion. Because if there is one thing they're good at, it's blaming gays and women for their sins. Distraction could be the next best sacrament.

The New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd said it well when she wrote: "If the church could throw open its stained glass windows and let in some air, invite women to be priests, nuns to be more emancipated and priests to marry, if it could banish criminal priests and end the sordid culture of men protecting men who attack children, it might survive. It could be an encouraging sign of humility and repentance, a surrender of arrogance, both moving and meaningful."

It's interesting times, these, when the Church could be forced to change the way they do business. Perhaps the Pope could take a cue from Tiger on how to proceed forward. At least one of them appears to be man enough to acknowledge his guilt ... and admit he's not infallible.

**Suzan Ambrose is known to have spent time in a convent some years ago and occasionally dabbles in the making of stained glass when she's not writing diligently for The Rainbow Times.*




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Tops and Bottoms up: Fenway Health teams with HVTN, HIV vaccination study

By: Nicole Lashomb/TRT Editor-in-Chief

BOSTON, MA—The HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN) has chosen to partner with Fenway Health, an organization dedicated to HIV Prevention research, as one of its clinical sites in 13 cities nationwide to assist in their latest HIV vaccination study.

"HVTN 505 is an exploratory study looking at a combination of two investigational vaccines. The study is designed to enroll 1,350 HIV-negative men who have sex with men, between 18-45 years old," said Steven Wakefield, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center HVTN Associate Director, Community Relations and Education. "The study is designed to see if this vaccine regimen can lower the viral load in people who become HIV infected after receiving the vaccine or placebo. There is no HIV in the vaccines, and you cannot get HIV from the vaccine products. Everyone who is part of the study receives extensive counseling on how to reduce their risk of HIV infection, and condoms are provided to all participants."

Wakefield said that collaboration with Fenway Health was an obvious clinical choice due to its national reputation as a leader in LGBT health. Additionally, he explained, the Clinic has community-based links to the Boston/Cambridge medical complex.

"We have a reputation for being not only a very well educated and informed community in this college-rich town, but also a caring community that has been willing to roll up its sleeves

and pitch in," said Jim Maynard, Community Outreach, Recruitment, and Education Program Manager, Fenway Institute at Fenway Health. "Along with such cities as New York City, Washington DC, Chicago and LA, the nation and our partners around the world are looking to us to lead the way. I guess having the World Champions Red Sox and New England Patriots was not enough. We need to be world champs in vaccine development as well."

HVTN 505 is better known around the local gay community as Fenway Health's *Tops and Bot-*

ers go to public sex areas and other places that gay and bisexual men congregate. We speak at churches and to community groups and clubs. We also work with community partners such as the *Multicultural AIDS Coalition* and the *Latin American Health Institute* that have been great at education their communities around HIV vaccine development and how individuals can become involved."

As a leader in HIV Prevention research and with a full range of new tools being tested such as vaginal and rectal microbicides, pre-exposure prophylactics (taking a pill once a day to prevent

gay men out of more than 600 who have actually been screened and more than 3,500 who have come for the for the initial interview, Wakefield said.

Fenway Health needs to recruit 164 participants.

"Right now we need to enroll 164 men who have sex with men right here in Boston ... These men need to be HIV-negative, between the ages of 18-45 and to be sexually active," explained Maynard. "So far, we have enrolled 17 so we have a long way to go."

All studies are confidential, volunteers receive state of the art harm reduction counseling from Fenway Health's staff, and all men are compensated for their time said Maynard

"... with that said, the men seem to sign up for the love of their community. They are great guys!" he said.

Wakefield stressed the importance of this study and the annihilation of the HIV epidemic worldwide.

"HIV continues to be a significant health problem in the United States, and around the world. And, for every three people who start ART (antiretroviral therapy), five become newly infected, even now," he said. "The best way to end an epidemic, once and for all, is with a vaccine."

To enroll in Fenway Health's *Tops and Bottoms* (HVTN 505) study or for more information, please call Coco or Danny at 617-927-6450. Jim Maynard can be contacted at 617-927-6016 or at jmaynard@fenwayhealth.org. You may also visit www.fenwayhealth.org.

"We need prevention for HIV, we need care for HIV, we need treatment for HIV, but we also need a vaccine for HIV," said Wakefield.



PHOTO: FENWAY HEALTH

Jim Maynard

"I guess having the World Champions Red Sox and New England Patriots was not enough.

We need to be world champs in vaccine development as well."



HIV VACCINE
TRIALS NETWORK

toms study, which explains in better detail who specifically the clinic is looking for, said Maynard.

"The gay community has shown its commitment to HIV vaccine research over the years, and that seems to be continuing," Wakefield said.

Outreach for this study has been implemented through various outlets such as traditional media, social networking sites and hands on experiences.

"We have a team of hard working recruiters that are everywhere," said Maynard. "We are in LGBT bars and clubs doing outreach. We talk to student groups at local colleges like Boston University and UMASS Boston. Our recruit-

menters go to public sex areas and other places that gay and bisexual men congregate. We speak at churches and to community groups and clubs. We also work with community partners such as the *Multicultural AIDS Coalition* and the *Latin American Health Institute* that have been great at education their communities around HIV vaccine development and how individuals can become involved."

As a leader in HIV Prevention research and with a full range of new tools being tested such as vaginal and rectal microbicides, pre-exposure prophylactics (taking a pill once a day to prevent infection), Maynard said that an effective vaccine will take more studies to develop. However, it will also be vital in the battle to stop new infections, just like past life-claiming diseases such as polio, small pox, Hepatitis A and B, he said.

Of the 1,350 participants needed nationally, HVTN has enrolled approximately 200 HIV-

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Melissa Etheridge: like never before ... Fierce and Fearless

Inside the rock legend's life now – her personal awakening and how it's changed everything

Entertainment News

By: Chris Azzopardi

If Melissa Etheridge's music has seemed mellow lately, she's about to show you. Back to her rock-out roots, the tough-and-gruff musician/mother/activist makes a roaring return with the uplifting *Fearless Love*, her follow-up to 2007's sociopolitical-powered *The Awakening*.

We spoke with Etheridge, who not only discussed surviving cancer during the last decade and the life lessons she learned in the process, but also how she's embracing change – a new sound, touring band and the return of those hot, long locks.

Chris Azzopardi: How does it feel to have the long hair back?

Melissa Etheridge: I watered it every day, and it grew! It was a big part of me. I really wasn't aware how big a part.

CA: I'm not used to seeing you as glammed-up as you've been in some recent photos. What's up with all the make-up?

ME: You know, it's something I think I've grown into. At 48, I need all the help I can get (laughs).

CA: After all you've been through this past decade, what place are you in now?

ME: That was an intense decade! But everything that happened makes me stronger, makes me understand that this is what life is. You are presented with these issues, but you learn and you grow and you move on. Life is rich and full, and nothing's going to kill you. You just keep moving forward – and it gets sweeter.

CA: So this is an extension of *The Awakening*?

ME: This is the next step. I had to do *The Awakening* to present and be upfront about the things that were happening inside of me, the spiritual side of me. The awakening part of me is under-

standing and going through cancer and saying, "Whoa! Life is a lot different. Life is not what it seems." That album was important to put out so people – myself and my fans – would know what path I was on, and then after it seemed so clear that it was time to gather up all that strength. I was knocked down and it was time to pull the parts of me together that I knew were there in this confidence and in this clarity that I have now and shoot it through that rock 'n' roll gift that I've been given.

CA: "Life is not what it seems" – that's a line from the closing track, "Gently We Row." How has that been true in your own life?

ME: I wanted to reference the children's song "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," because that song has all the truth in it that we need. I love

out of things to think about. And it just stopped. When that happens there's this beautiful spirit that's behind that that really is in charge of what's happening.

CA: Also on "Gently We Row," I noticed the parallels between your mother raising you and you raising your daughter. I thought that was so powerful.

ME: That's another part of getting older. You realize your parents did shape a lot of what you think and do and feel, yet it's time to stop blaming them. You can stay there and you can wallow around in that or you can say, "OK, this happened to me and now I make different choices." And that's what the song's about. I'm making different choices for myself and for my children. When you do that, you also heal yourself.

CA: Parenthood actually pops up several times on this album. How has it changed you?

ME: Oh, it's unbelievable. I just had no idea of what being a mother would do. And it's all-encompassing, it's every breath I take, it's every moment I live. I am a mother to four children, and I don't go to sleep at night until I know where all four are and how they are. It makes me

a better person, it makes me more loving, compassionate, patient – patience is ... definitely required (laughs), or you'll just get eaten up alive. They teach me every day about myself. They are these beautiful little mirrors, and I want to be the best person I can be for them.

CA: What was it like reteaming with producer John Shanks, who worked on 1999's *Breakdown*?

ME: He was my guitar player in my first band. We hung out in the '80s, and we've played every hellhole bar. And we've also played Madison Square Garden. We've been through so much, and he knows what I'm capable of. He knows just how to get the best out of it and how to push me to give my best. He's like my brother that makes me crazy (laughs). It was really wonderful working with him.

CA: How did the collaboration with Natasha Bedingfield and Joss Stone on "We Are the Ones" come about?

ME: That's my favorite track on the album just because it's different and crazy and I love it. John called me up and said, "Hey, guess who was across the hall recording – Joss Stone!" She just sang on it. Then, like a week later, he said, "Hey, Natasha Bedingfield's coming in and I'm going to play her this song. I think she's going to

"Music reaches past people's minds and it goes straight into their spirit, their soul, their body. You can take advantage of that in a way. Music and activism is natural."

that we're taught it as a child. "... Life is but a dream" – that's all it is. We create it every day. That's what came to me. That's where I got to going through cancer and coming out. Life doesn't happen to us. We are creating this, and we have more power than it seems. This can happen to you, but your perception of what it is creates what it is. You have a choice in how your life affects you. That's mostly what I want to convey through my music.

CA: Did it take you a long time to realize that?

ME: I got the crash course in it with chemotherapy because I laid there day after day, week after week, and had nothing. No television. No books. I couldn't even read; it hurt to read.

It was just day after day with myself, until my mind – our minds are so busy setting things up in the future and worrying about the past – ran



PHOTO: JAMES MINCHIN III

Melissa Etheridge

sing on it." So he worked with her. That's what he can do, because he's John Shanks.

CA: Have you met Natasha?

ME: No, I haven't! We've become very intimate on tape, though.

CA: When did you know you had "Fearless Love"?

ME: The way that I'm looking at it is that it's about my own fearless love. I need to love fearlessly, and that starts with myself. That's been the journey in the last five years.

CA: You're touring this summer, but without your hot, longtime electric guitarist Philip Sayce – why?

ME: Because Philip's got his own little career going on, so I just cleared the board. I went, "This is a new page for me. It's a new album, it's a new sound, and it's a new feel. I'm just breaking out." It's hard because I get very attached to my band, but they weren't available to make the album, so that was the first step of going, "Ya know, I think this is leading me down another path and

See *Fearless* on page 22

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Deep Inside Hollywood: The *L Word*'s Jennifer Beals as a police woman?

Entertainment News

By: **Romeo San Vicente***

Ron Weasley explodes in *Cherry Bomb*

Turn kids into movie stars and soon enough they'll want to start acting in movies about hookers and drugs to show you how grown up they are. Daniel Radcliffe went the art-theater route by getting naked on stage in *Equus*, but his *Harry Potter* pal Rupert Grint has gone full-tilt depraved in *Cherry Bomb*, a film about a wild teen weekend that goes all wrong. According to early reports, Mr. Grint snorts coke, has sex with night-ladies and is somehow involved in a bisexual love triangle before the closing credits roll. Sounds like Romeo's idea of a fun weekend. Shot back in 2008, the movie has no official release date yet but it's about to hit film festivals, which means multiplex audiences will get their eyes on it later in 2010 or sometime in 2011.

Jennifer Beals: Chief of Police

On *The L Word*, Jennifer Beals as Bette Porter was quite often the one character in the mix who seemed to keep her head screwed on properly when everyone else was coming unglued. So it makes perfect sense that

Fox would want to cast the unflappable one as Chicago's first female police chief in its new series *Ride-Along*. Don't get too excited yet, lesbians. This might signal major progress since the days of *Police Woman*, but it's still a pilot and comes fully equipped with the usual warnings – it might not make the schedule, its



Romeo San Vicente

star could be re-cast, or they might decide to set it in outer space with a choir of singing teenagers. But as of right now you're one step closer to seeing the lady packing heat and using it on wrongdoers.

Ann Coulter, The Sitcom

Wright vs. Wrong, at first glance, sounds like a show made up to justify its cutely clever title. A conservative right-wing TV commentator doing regular comedy battle with a liberal counterpart and a snarky manager, a workplace sitcom designed to appeal to both red and blue states, but one that will probably swing to the left (it's Hollywood, after all). And who knows, that may be what we wind up with, but at least it has a cool cast to flesh out the material. Debra Messing stars as the female Glenn Beck while Cheryl Hines (*Curb Your Enthusiasm*) will pick up duties on the left. And best of all, Carrie Fisher will star as the sarcasm-dispensing boss. And how weird will it be if the *Will & Grace* star's new character has an anti-gay bent? Will she choke on the dialogue or deliver it like a pro, Archie Bunker-style?

Romeo really wants this one to make it on the air.

Superheroes in the Family

Greg Berlanti, the talented gay writer/producer with credits like *Dawson's Creek*,

Everwood and *Brothers & Sisters* under his belt, wants to introduce you to a new pack of brothers and sisters in *No Ordinary Family*. Starring Michael Chiklis, Romany Malco (*Weeds*) and Julie Benz (*Dexter*), the action series centers on a family who discovers that they all have superpowers, sort of like *X-Men* crossed with *The Brady Bunch*. It's due in the fall. Meanwhile, Berlanti is currently directing the feature *Life As We Know It*, about two single adults who become overnight parents to the children of mutual friends who die in an accident. That one stars Katherine Heigl, Josh Duhamel, Josh Lucas and *Mad Men*'s Christina Hendricks and, in spite of its heavy premise, is actually a comedy and is scheduled to surface sometime later this year, which is far enough into the future to help us forget about those other Katherine Heigl-starring comedies we've seen.

**Romeo San Vicente thinks children are great, as long as they belong to someone else and are already good at fixing martinis. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.*

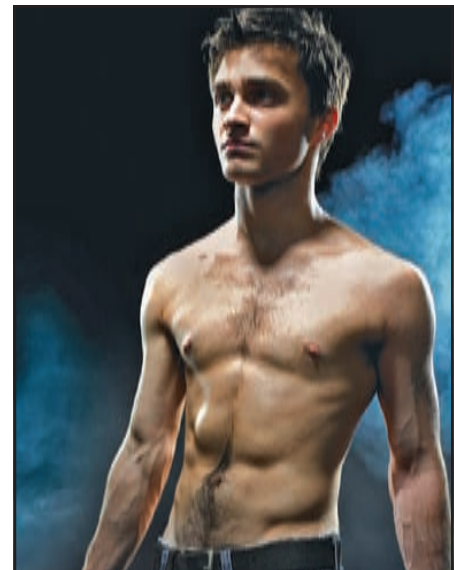


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MassEquality Director Gorticov stepping down

By: Elizabeth Gormley/TRT Reporter

Scott Gorticov, Executive Director of MassEquality, is leaving his post this July; it was announced in a press release at the end of March. Gorticov spent six years as part of the GLBT rights organization. From 2004 to 2009, he was Development Director. In April of 2009, he assumed the Executive Director position. MassEquality is a grassroots group that works to protect the rights we have earned, while continuing the fight for others, such as helping other New England states win marriage equality.

In his time spent at MassEquality, Gorticov helped raise over 15 million dollars for the trailblazing marriage campaign. He has worked to protect the elections of political candidates who support equality, and given guidance to GLBT organizations in other states attempting to attain marriage rights. His leadership skills and track record are nothing short of profound.

Gorticov spoke to *The Rainbow Times* on his decision to move on. Why now?

"Aside from the desire to create a better work-life balance for myself, I decided that now is the best time for me to step down because MassEquality is on very solid footing. First, we are fully staffed: we have a political director, a development director, a full field staff and communications support. Secondly, our board of directors is very engaged in, and supportive of, our work. They are involved in MassEquality's organizational development, fundraising, programming and strategic planning. Finally, I feel as though the organization is on very solid financially: individual donors and grant makers continue to support us be-



PHOTO: MASSEQUALITY.ORG

Scott Gorticov

cause they value the program work and goals that we have set up, including our current efforts to pass anti-bullying legislation and transgender non-discrimination protections here in Massachusetts, and to help enact marriage equality in Rhode Island."

Gorticov has laid witness to and been a part of some historic feats. According to the Director, the anti-gay marriage amendment will be something that will stand out the most to him personally.

"Without a doubt it was June 14, 2007, the day the Legislature defeated the final anti-gay

marriage amendment. I was at the State House that day, in a common area that was packed with our supporters and a smaller contingent of our opponents," Gorticov explained. "When the final vote was tallied, the roar of joy that rang out from our supporters was just deafening. It's a moment I'll remember for the rest of my life; I still get goose bumps just thinking about it. It was so satisfying to finally achieve our historic goal after working toward it for nearly four years."

With regard to this monumental experience and passion for human rights, and what comes next, Gorticov explained that the private sector may be his next choice of work, or perhaps even going back to pursue another educational degree.

"Before I became so actively involved in the LGBT rights movement, I worked in the private sector as a management consultant," Gorticov explained. "I may return to that type of work. Helping organizations with their organizational development, planning, board development, facilitation, and fundraising on a project basis is appealing to me right now. Part of me also has a big yen to take some time to study—so going back to graduate school is a real possibility too."

MassEquality is in a nationwide search to find Gorticov's successor. Gorticov knows the organization will seek out a motivated individual, someone who understands and executes at the highest level. He focuses on the fact that finding support

for the cause is key.

"We still have a lot of work to do to achieve full LGBT equality—in Massachusetts and beyond—so I hope the next executive director will be able to widen the circle of our supporters" he emphasized. "I think there are vast numbers of individuals, organizations and leaders who support LGBT civil rights. They just need to be asked and enlisted in the cause."

According to MassEquality's website, its Board of Directors has initiated a nationwide search for the right candidate for such a relevant position. The board has contracted with McCormack & Associates, a search firm that specializes in diversity recruiting.

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The Tucker James Project: Documenting a Young Trans Experience

By: Elizabeth Gormley/TRT Reporter

When it came time for college student Veronica Vozzolo to choose a senior project, she decided to make a film about a freshman. Really.

"When I heard Tucker James was transitioning I thought it would be a great opportunity to have some fun documenting the transformation. At first I started filming short clips and then people kept asking questions," Vozzolo said. "I officially decided to turn the project into a website when Tucker explained how much this all really meant to him."

Tucker James is an eighteen-year-old Massachusetts student-athlete who is undergoing a female-to-male gender transformation. *The Tucker James Project* is the name of Vozzolo's website that is following Tucker's physical and emotional progress. Video, poetry, pictures, a comment board, and Tucker's own "T-Log," the site combines the educational and the aesthetic with his unbridled energy. He has school, friends, girls, sports, and family on his plate 24/7, and he is going through some enormous physical changes. This experience should sound familiar to just about every American teen.

"As far as my mind, it's puberty," he explained. "I have mood swings like any puberty stricken boy would and I deal with them as they come. Other than that, I'm exactly who I was when the process started, just much happier."

"Like most transgender people, Tucker realized he was different at an early age. He had always considered himself a boy."

Like most transgender people, Tucker realized he was different at an early age. He had always considered himself a boy. When it came time to go to school, he "was forced to fit the gender role that was expected of him."

"I guess I didn't know that I could actually do something about the fact that I knew I was male on the inside until I was 14," he said. "It was at that point in my life that one of my friends asked me if I identified as transgender. Until that point I had never heard of gender variance. This opened up a lot of new doors for me."

At the age of sixteen, Tucker decided he would transition. He waited until the legal age of eighteen, an adult, to start the hormone therapy, as he wanted "the choice to be mine and mine alone." Excessive hair growth, a cracking voice, and explosive energy are just some of the things happening to him—at a rapid

pace. "Things are changing literally every day," he said. "I haven't experienced anything negative. I'm enjoying everything about my transition."

One well-documented struggle in *The Tucker James Project* is Tucker's inability to continue as a collegiate athlete. Because testosterone is a banned substance in the NCAA, he is ineligible to continue as a member of the soccer and lacrosse teams, though he is fighting this rule.

"I'm cautiously optimistic," he said. "Best case scenario, female-to-male trans-athletes

will get to compete for a few more weeks before physical changes really start taking place, instead of being banned upon getting their first shot, as I was. For me, this would have meant I would have been able to finish out the season with my soccer team. There were only a few weeks left when I started my hormone therapy and I had to sit the remaining games out."

Tucker is continuing a rigorous training program as though he is an in-season athlete. Weight lifting, cardio/plyometrics, running, and core workouts are adding the bulk he wants to masculinize his frame.

"It's a lot of work and most days I come out of the gym completely exhausted, but it's worth it to see the changes," he said.

The changes keep coming. Vozzolo keeps filming.

"The first time I filmed Tucker he told me everything and I had no idea what his life was like. I want people to understand and support him because that is what he needs," she said. "Sometimes I get comments or emails from people who I don't know, or TJ doesn't know, and they tell us they transitioned. Some tell us they



PHOTO: ALICIA GRENIER

TJ works out regularly to masculinize his physique to match his psyche.

wish they had this type of support when they transitioned, or that they wish they had documented it. Others say how brave TJ is and how great this project really is. Once I hear things like that I know I did something right."

Tucker himself calls his family "supportive," though they still have difficulty at times calling him by his chosen male name and using male pronouns. Overall, Tucker gathers strength from his family, moving forward.

"My family supports me and loves me and I am very lucky to have them," he said. "There are so many trans people who are abandoned by the ones they love when they come out to them. My mother is especially great. She's the one who got me my first doctor's appointment at the Fenway Health Center, and even came with me to it. They weren't exactly shocked. My dad told me 'you've always been different.' My older brother has been the best."

For more information, or to follow Tucker's journey online visit: www.thetuckerjamesproject.com.

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Ricky Martin fuera del "closet": Lo que implica para el resto de la comunidad GLBT

Visión Latina



Wilfred Labiosa

Por: Wilfred Labiosa*

Mucho/as dicen que la declaración de Ricky Martin, unas semanas atrás, de que es gay no tiene importancia. Yo digo, ¡de lo contrario! ¿Por qué debemos darle importancia? ¿Por qué debemos de aplaudir

y respetar su decisión y la de otras personalidades al tomar este paso públicamente?

Quizás tú ya tomaste este paso, pero ¿recuerdas cuanto te tomó? Recuerden que mucho/as no han tomado y quizás nunca tomen este paso ya que temen el rechazo de sus vecinos, familiares, padres, compañero/as de trabajo y/o amistades. Mucho/as personas GLBT, al tomar o no tomar este paso, se deprimen tanto y se desesperan de tal manera que la única solución para ello/as es el suicidio. Otro/as se sienten tan aislado/as y desesperado/as que sufren de problemas psicológicos a un nivel más alto que las personas heterosexuales, ya que la sociedad asume que todo/as somos heterosexuales. Sabemos, sin embargo, que ser GLBT es mucho más difícil. Hay otras personas GLBT que toman decisiones que los/as ponen en riesgo de homicidio, de enfermarse y/o comienzan a usar drogas.

Cada vez que las celebridades como Ricky Martin, Wilson Cruz, Pedro Almodóvar, Ellen Degeneres, Jade Esteban Estrada, y tanto/as otro/as salen del "closet," ellos educan al público en general sobre la diversidad que existe en nuestra comunidad GLBT y traen un sentido de normalidad al tema. Hay tanto/as personas GLBT fuera del closet en tantas profesiones públicas como en la política, televisión, radio, campos de medicina, profesiones legales, gobierno, y en tantos otros campos profesionales que cada día es más normal hablar sobre el tema. Hay tantas personas en los medios de comunicación y otros ámbitos sociales que nunca salen del "closet" por "x" o "y" razón. Como Ricky Martin dijo en su portal cibernético, que él se lleve por muchas personas que temían de las represalias que tendría al salir del "closet" y que sólo esta haciéndolo

ahora por sus hijos, porque quiere decir su historia sin mentiras y sin ocultar detalles.

Como el presidente de GLAAD, Jarrett Barrios, menciona en su comunicado de prensa, "Cuando alguien como Ricky Martin sale del 'closet', cientos de millones de personas ahora tienen una conexión con cultural con un artista, una celebridad, y quizás lo más importante, un padre que es 'gay'. Su decisión de ser un ejemplo de apertura y de honestidad puede conducir a una mayor aceptación de innumerables personas 'gays' en los Estados Unidos, en América Latina y a través del mundo".

Vamos a aplaudir y a apoyar a los/as amigos/as, familiares, y miembros de nuestra comunidad cuando den este paso. Todo/as damos este paso, pero en períodos diferentes, de diferentes maneras y por diferentes razones. Lo importante es aceptarse a uno mismo ya que quizás nuestros seres queridos nunca lo acepten como uno quisiera. Recuerden que si usted no se ama a sí mismo/a, ¿cómo puede esperar que otro/as le amen? La aceptación personal es lo más importante y si más personas en foros públicos facilitan este paso, esto puede traer más naturalidad al tópico y quizás pueda evitar la alta incidencia de aislamientos, depresión, y suicidios que las personas de la comunidad GLBT sufren.

No te conozco personalmente Ricky Martin, pero te aplaudo y respeto tu decisión. ¡Gracias por ser otro Boricua Gay! Gracias por dar este paso y sé que has ayudado a alguien en aceptarse a sí mismo/a. ¡Gracias! ¡Aplausos y abrazos para ti y los tuyos!

**Escrito en ambos idiomas por Wilfred W. Labiosa; editado por Grisel Martínez Ocasio.*

To read the English version of this story, please visit: www.therainbowtimesmass.com/latinvision_april15.

C'mon Out from page 2

has their first child, for example, often the non-biological parent feels an outsider, that he or she is not as connected to either their new born or spouse as the biological mother is to her infant. Another example may be when couples experience the wishes and demands of parents who have varying abilities to accept their children as they create their own primary families. Children from other relationships must be thoughtfully and sometimes gingerly integrated into a newly forming relationship. There are many examples of this and can even include a pet as in this question. Lots of people consider their pets their family, so this question is quite relevant to these other situations.

It is very important to know and then to remember, that it is healthy for all of us to love and value not only partners but others as well. We can be in love with that one special person and we can deeply love our friends, family and pets. It is very important that we not pit one against the other or think that because our partner chooses to engage in some loving act with another that it means they don't love us. Creating a stance of inclusion and acceptance of others is a very good base.

It is also healthy to have wishes and needs. You may not want the dog on the bed while you have sex or have the dog lie between you. These wishes are neither right nor wrong. And probably hers aren't either. They are each, uniquely yours. If you both view each of your wishes as equally valid, then you have a place to begin discussion.

In families (I am loosely using this term) everyone should get some of what they want. No one should get everything they want while others get little or none of what they want. If all people (pets too perhaps) get some of what they want some of the time, then usually an inherent fairness allows everyone to live comfortably.

Louise, if you and your new girlfriend can begin to talk about how each of you feel and can view each of your feelings and wishes as equally valid, then you can begin to pick out what is most important. When others are involved, be it a pet, child or anyone else, that

person must also be considered. If everyone knows they can get some of what they want, flexibility is possible and the true meaning of compromise can be achieved.

Your new love is deeply attached to her dog. Your presence is now creating a major change to their relationship. Most of us wouldn't expect a person to significantly change their relationship with their child when new love begins. Instead, the parent would slowly integrate the new person into that child's life. There may be negotiated changes, but these changes must come over time. As you develop your own connection with your lover's dog, the dog may be willing to step aside for you too. And perhaps, you might find a way to bring this dog into your heart. They do have much to give. Relationships truly offer lessons in love and negotiation.

You are asking your partner to make some significant changes to her relationship with her dog. Understand her attachment. Talk with your lover and be patient. Only if she refuses or is unwilling to work with you, worry. Otherwise, good luck. Ultimately you are not dealing with anything that any other relationships must negotiate. It may not be about a dog, but all relationships must negotiate differences and the boundaries of those differences.

Best to you, Tetty

C'mon Out! - Submit your questions to Tetty Gorfine, Director of LifeCourse Counseling Center. Simply go to www.lifecourse.net and click on "Ask Us A Question." All questions will be answered on the bulletin board. One or two will be printed next month here in The Rainbow Times.

Tetty has also been a psychotherapist since 1980. She has worked extensively with LGBTQ individuals, couples and groups and has supervised both clinicians and therapists in training. Her vision and leadership spirited nearly all of LifeCourse Counseling Center's programs. Tetty has also been on numerous radio talk shows and television programs. She has presented at professional conferences on topics pertinent to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals.

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Study calls on lawmakers to change Social Security and Medicaid to address growing senior population

CHICAGO, IL—A national report being recently released in Chicago details the myriad social and financial stumbling blocks that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender senior citizens face and calls on lawmakers to change Social Security and Medicaid to help this growing population.

Giving heft to the report — prepared by Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Elders, or SAGE — is the endorsement it has received from major mainstream aging groups including AARP and the American Society on Aging.

"This is the first time that the heavyweights of the aging network are really embracing a comprehensive look at the needs of LGBT older adults," said Michael Adams, executive director for SAGE. "We know there are anywhere from 2 to 3 million LGBT seniors in this country. We're talking about a very significant portion of the older population in this country."

The report highlights three key areas where LGBT seniors face challenges: financial security, health care and social supports. It calls on federal and state lawmakers to consider ways to legally recognize same-sex relationships so aging partners in a committed relationship can access the same supports that benefit heterosexual seniors. That would include the right to Social Security survivor benefits and the rights of same-sex partners to make medical decisions for each other.

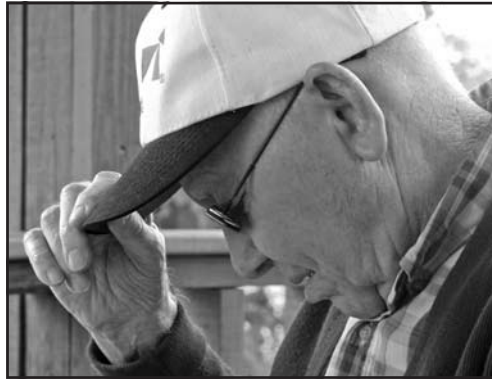
Tom Nelson, chief operating officer of AARP, wrote the report's foreword and said Tuesday that his organization wants to see the needs of

LGBT seniors discussed — and met.

"Whether it's in an institution where someone's receiving care or whether it's some of the fundamental building blocks of retirement security like Social Security, we want to have that discussion about how you make sure people have access to those kinds of benefits," Nelson said. "We don't want to see discrimination in care facilities. This report should help people start thinking about all the dimensions that need to be addressed in the LGBT community."

Serena Worthington, director of the SAGE program in Chicago, estimates that the city is home to more than 40,000 LGBT people older than 55. Conservative estimates point to a national LGBT senior citizen population of 3 million, expected to grow to at least 4 million within the next decade.

Worthington said she routinely sees seniors at SAGE's twice-weekly luncheons who feel socially isolated. Some have never come out of the closet. Others were out of the closet but then moved into a nursing home and felt they had to keep their sexual identity hidden.



LGBT seniors face special challenges

"If you were coming of age when it was illegal or immoral to be gay or lesbian, you could be considered mentally ill," Worthington said. "And now you picture seniors walking into senior centers still holding that fear of rejection. Many LGBT seniors are just not accessing social services, and so they become increasingly isolated."

For same-sex couples, Worthington said, if one person needs to spend down his or her assets to qualify for Medicaid to pay for long-term care, the healthy partner can often be left without money or even a place to live. For straight couples, there are Medicaid exemptions that keep a healthy partner from living in poverty.

Ray Koenig, a Chicago attorney who often helps LGBT clients with estate planning, said the report is a strong acknowledgment of the kinds of dilemmas older people in the LGBT community face.

Koenig is the court-appointed guardian of an elderly man who was in a same-sex relationship for years. The man's partner died, and when Koenig had to place the man in a North

Side nursing home, the attorney had to decide whether he should set up photos of the man's partner in the room.

"I made the decision not to because I wasn't going to be with him all the time and I didn't know if he was going to be treated differently because his partner was same-sex," Koenig said. "I had to make a decision that would protect him, but it was a very hard one to make. That's the sort of decision LGBT seniors are making all the time for themselves when they go into nursing homes."

The report, "Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults," is scheduled to be released Wednesday at the annual Conference of the National Council on Aging and the American Society on Aging.

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See Seniors on page 21

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National Report highlights critical neglect of LGBTQ victims of crime

BOSTON, MA—Report released by The National Center for Victims of Crime and the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs: *Why It Matters: Rethinking Victim Assistance for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Victims of Hate Violence and Intimate Partner Violence* (www.ncvc.org) states: LGBTQ victims of crime do not have consistent access to culturally competent services that can prevent or help victims recover from violence. The report highlights the failings of victim assistance programs in providing much needed outreach to LGBTQ victims, LGBTQ cultural competence training for

staff, LGBTQ-specific victim services policies and practices, and collaboration with LGBTQ providers.

The aforementioned report validates and reflects what GMDVP and other local GLBTQ-inclusive domestic agencies have been doing to manage the insensitive reactions to domestic violence in the GLBTQ community. The (*Shelter/Housing Needs for GLBT Victims of Domestic Violence*) report, which was generated as a result of a public hearing testimony in the State House in 2005 and co-authored by GMDVP, presented that most mainstream domestic violence organizations fail to pro-

vide adequate services to GLBT victims, lack GLBT cultural competence, have poor GLBT-specific victim services policies and practices and collaboration with GLBT providers. Too often, GLBT victims are the ones who suffer as a result. Additionally, the Shelter/Housing

GMDVP commends the national report findings and further reiterate the need for GLBTQ-specific services; the need for GLBT access to mainstream programs and services; and the need for more funding.

"We have a long road ahead to create a safe place for GLBT victims and survivors of intimate partner abuse. We must work together – law enforcement, other domestic violence agencies, friends and allies – to see that regardless of your sexual orientation or gender identity, domestic violence is about power and control and it is not gender-specific," concludes Curt Rogers.

GMDVP provides crisis intervention for victims and survivors of intimate partner abuse. The organization focuses on gay, bisexual and transgender intimate partner abuse, but works with anyone who

is without services, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. GMDVP's offerings include education, advocacy, and direct services including a 24-hour hotline, an emergency safe-home and legal advocacy. GMDVP provides services throughout Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. 24 hour hotline: 800.832.1901.

Why It Matters also mirror the results of GMDVP's comprehensive research among the GLBT population in Massachusetts from 1996 to 2008. This research showed that 1 in 4 GLBT individuals have identified as being a victim of domestic violence, and of them, only 2% named the police or District Attorney as a resource. "This is an alarming statistic because it hasn't changed in over 10 years," states Curt Rogers.



NORTHAMPTON PRIDE WEEKEND

Friday, April 30 KICK-OFF

Northampton Dyke March & Rally
"Reclaim the Name!"
6pm rally 7pm march
Unitarian Society Lawn (next to City Hall)

The Dyke Dance at the Union Station (18+)
A Fundraiser for the LGBT Coalition of Western Massachusetts
7:30pm-Midnight \$10 at the door Music by DJ Jodi

Saturday, May 1

Noho Pride March & Rally
12pm - 5pm in the Armory Street Parking Lot

Afternoon Pride Day Dance Party
4pm - 8pm at the Union Station (18+)

For more information, go to www.lgbtcoalitionwma.org or www.nohopridepromos.com or call 413-588-1018 or 413-588-1512.

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Seniors from page 19

for SAGE. "We know there are anywhere from 2 to 3 million LGBT seniors in this country. We're talking about a very significant portion of the older population in this country."

The report highlights three key areas where LGBT seniors face challenges: financial security, health care and social supports. It calls on federal and state lawmakers to consider ways to legally recognize same-sex relationships so aging partners in a committed relationship can access the same supports that benefit heterosexual seniors. That would include the right to Social Security survivor benefits and the rights of same-sex partners to make medical decisions for each other.

Tom Nelson, chief operating officer of AARP, wrote the report's foreword and said Tuesday that his organization wants to see the needs of LGBT seniors discussed — and met.

"Whether it's in an institution where someone's receiving care or whether it's some of the fundamental building blocks of retirement security like Social Security, we want to have that discussion about how you make sure people have access to those kinds of benefits," Nelson said. "We don't want to see discrimination in care facilities. This report should help people start thinking about all the dimensions that need to be addressed in the LGBT community."

Serena Worthington, director of the SAGE program in Chicago, estimates that the city is home to more than 40,000 LGBT people older than 55. Conservative estimates point to a national LGBT senior citizen population of 3 million, expected to grow to at least 4 million within the next decade.

Worthington said she routinely sees seniors at SAGE's twice-weekly luncheons who feel socially isolated. Some have never come out of the closet. Others were out of the closet but

then moved into a nursing home and felt they had to keep their sexual identity hidden.

"If you were coming of age when it was illegal or immoral to be gay or lesbian, you could be considered mentally ill," Worthington said. "And now you picture seniors walking into senior centers still holding that fear of rejection. Many LGBT seniors are just not accessing social services, and so they become increasingly isolated."

For same-sex couples, Worthington said, if one person needs to spend down his or her assets to qualify for Medicaid to pay for long-term care, the healthy partner can often be left without money or even a place to live. For straight couples, there are Medicaid exemptions that keep a healthy partner from living in poverty.

Ray Koenig, a Chicago attorney who often helps LGBT clients with estate planning, said the report is a strong acknowledgment of the kinds of dilemmas older people in the LGBT community face.

Koenig is the court-appointed guardian of an elderly man who was in a same-sex relationship for years. The man's partner died, and when Koenig had to place the man in a North Side nursing home, the attorney had to decide whether he should set up photos of the man's partner in the room.

"I made the decision not to because I wasn't going to be with him all the time and I didn't know if he was going to be treated differently because his partner was same-sex," Koenig said. "I had to make a decision that would protect him, but it was a very hard one to make. That's the sort of decision LGBT seniors are making all the time for themselves when they go into nursing homes."

The report, "Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults," can be read and downloaded from http://sageusa.org/resources/resource_view.cfm?resource=183

"If you were coming of age when it was illegal or immoral to be gay or lesbian, you could be considered mentally ill," Worthington said. "And now you picture seniors walking into senior centers still holding that fear of rejection. Many LGBT seniors are just not accessing social services, and so they become increasingly isolated."

Letters from page 2

Dear Editor,

The LGBT Foster Care story by Tynan Power was very interesting. I did not know that there was a meeting nor the need for foster parents and that adoption was a step that was available to some foster parents. I think our community should open their homes to these LGBT children and teens. It is the least that we can do.

—Martha H., Northampton, MA

Dear Editor,

The Dyke March? Is that not a little offensive? Maybe I don't get why women like to call themselves "dykes!" Would someone offer an explanation?

—Jeremy T., Providence, RI

Dear Editor,

Betsy Dennigan's story was amazing! She is definitely an asset and a wonderful woman to have for RI. She supports DOMA's repeal and she is a superb human being. I have followed her career. So, Rhode Islanders, let's get her elected, I say!

—Robert L., Providence, RI

Dear Editor,

Wish Out for Reel was in Worcester too. Are these films only shown in Northampton?

—Carrie A., Worcester MA

Dear Editor,

Ricky Martin coming out of the closet was not timely at all. Now he wants to be sincere because of his kids. What about his sincerity before? What about the lives he could have saved as an advocate of LGBTQ people, especially Latinos. I find shame in his actions; to wait so late to divulge something we all knew and needed to hear for a long time. I mean, he's not a kid. The man is a powerful celebrity who is 38 years old. What a pity!

—Jose M., Jamaica Plain

Dear Editor,

I'll give Ms. Deja Nicole Greenlaw the award for courage! What I like about her is that she speaks from conviction and is not divisive, like other members of her community are. We, the gays and lesbians, are not here against the Trans folks. We're trying to understand things, but we want you with us, as a part of the struggle.

—Mark H., Northampton, MA



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Fearless from page 12

I need to be open.” I sent him off with love and I’m sure we’ll get together in the future, but right now I’m putting these guys together and they’re dedicated to working with me now.

CA: The music video for “Nervous” – the second single – stars Edie Falco, which reminds me of all the other hot actresses who’ve appeared in your videos – Jennifer Aniston, Juliette Lewis and Gwyneth Paltrow. Of them all, who made you the most nervous?

ME: Edie Falco, probably. Did you see the way she looked at me? (Laughs)

CA: How did her cameo come about?

ME: I actually know the creator of *Nurse Jackie*. She’s one of my BFFs, and her and I have been trying to do a television show together for a long time and when she landed *Nurse Jackie*, I was so happy for her. I played the album for her months ago, and she goes, “Can I use ‘Nervous’ in the final episode of Season 2?” It was just a really sweet and fun thing to do.

CA: “Miss California,” a song about the state’s ban on gay marriage, is blatantly political. How do you think music and political activism – or activism of any sort – work together?

ME: Music reaches past people’s minds and it goes straight into their spirit, their soul, their body. You can take advantage of that in a way. Music and activism is natural. It’s always been a way through time to bring us closer to the unity we all need to be in.

CA: Is “Indiana” about your wife Tammy Lynn Michaels?

ME: It’s completely about Tammy. She’s from Indiana, and her journey has been so inspiring to me – and I’m around it so much – that this song popped out. To be able to sing with compassion about another person is new for me. For me not to be in the song, I’m working on that.

CA: Why didn’t you before? Was it easier for you not to?

ME: Yeah, I guess so, because everything was so autobiographic. I still do that, but I want to expand as a writer.

CA: Is “Miss California” taking a dig at Carrie Prejean?

ME: It’s not necessarily her. I certainly don’t know her and I don’t really have a comment to the sadness that – I’m not even going to comment. It fit perfectly because when I started to write it, I said I really just have to address this. I have to address my home state, my people and the feeling of, like, being spurned by a lover. I thought, OK, I’m going to write a song about that and I’ll call it “Miss California,” just like Carrie Prejean – even though I’m definitely not singing to her. It just worked into the whole thing.

CA: This album seems to reach back to your roots. You’re rocking out more like you did in the ‘90s and you have a weary woman in an isolated room in the “Fearless Love” video much like the one for “Come to My Window.” Was that intentional?

ME: Yeah, that’s still a part of me. I’m maturing and I create it differently, but that girl is still me, and so when I get on stage and sing “I’m the Only One,” “Come to My Window” and “Bring Me Some Water” – from over 20 years ago – that’s still me. I might not be going through those experiences in that moment, but they happened to me. So I’m able to reflect on it, remember it, understand it in my life now, still see where that’s happening in my life and rock from that place and feel comfortable now.

Melissa’s upcoming tour dates and album will be available on April 27. For information on tour dates, visit: www.melissaetheridge.com.

2010 Pride Marches & Celebrations in our local Gayborhoods & beyond

With Pride just around the corner in Northampton, which starts the country’s 2010 Pride Season, we must not forget to check out all of the Pride Marches, Rally’s and Celebrations around us. Some of the closest to our gayborhoods are:

NoHo Pride 2010 on May 1st. To learn more about the event, please visit NoHo Pride’s website at www.site.nohopride.org/.

CT Pride 2010 takes place on June 5, 2010 at Bushnell Park. TRT will, once again, design the CT Pride Guide this year and will the next too. To learn more about entertainers and CT Pride, please visit www.connecticutpride.org.

Boston Pride 2010 celebrates its 40th Anniversary, will also be one of the biggest celebrations in the commonwealth. TRT will be a media sponsor and will be at Boston Pride this year too. Boston Pride will happen from June 4-13th, 2010 this year. For more information, and to see what will happen throughout the week please visit www.bostonpride.org/multicalendar.php

Worcester Pride 2010 will take place on Sept 11th this year. For more information about this great Pride, visit www.worcesterpride.com.

Rhode Island Pride, or Pride Fest 2010, will tentatively take place on June 19th. PrideFest and the Night Gay Pride Parade through Providence basically functions as Providence Gay Pride and Newport Gay Pride all rolled into one statewide celebration. For more information, visit www.prideri.com.

Pride Vermont 2010 will be celebrated on July 24th, 2010. TRT will be at the celebration. To know more about VT’s celebration, check out their website: www.pridevt.com/

New York City Pride 2010 celebrates Gay Pride for a full week: June 19 to June 27, 2010. As with previous years, this 2010 Pride honors what many consider to be one of the foremost events in the history of lesbian and gay rights, the Stonewall Riots. For more information visit: www.nycpride.org.

Pride Toronto 2010 celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. The week long celebration starts on June 25 and ends on July 4. Pride Week features 10 days of world class arts and cultural programming, community activities, one of the world’s largest street festivals, Pride Parade, Dyke March, Family programming, Blackness Yes and Youth and much more. To learn more about Pride Toronto visit: www.pridetoronto.com.

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The OutField: Brian Burke's personal legacy



Dan Woog

By: Dan Woog*

Last November, the 21-year-old manager of a college hockey team came out as gay. Two months later, he was killed in an automobile accident.

The hockey world may never be the same.

It's not often that a student manager earns headlines by coming out, but Brendan Burke was no ordinary young man. His father was Brian Burke – one of the biggest names in the sport. A former star at Providence College, Brian used his law degree to represent pro hockey players. He then moved up the pro ladder: general manager of the Hartford Whalers; president of the Vancouver Canucks; executive VP and GM of the Stanley Cup-winning Anaheim Ducks; GM of the Toronto Maple Leafs; GM of the U.S. Olympic hockey team. In 2008, he received the Lester Patrick Trophy for outstanding service to hockey in the U.S.

Brendan, meanwhile, quit playing hockey in prep school. He was afraid someone would learn he was gay. But he loved the sport, and at Miami University in Ohio he reveled in serving as student manager. He analyzed scouting tapes, kept goalie statistics and prepared highlight videos. The Miami team was good – reaching the Frozen Four, hockey's version of NCAA basketball's Final Four – and Brendan

was as much a part of the success as anyone.

The RedHawks were tight. When Brian came out – first to teammates, then his coaches – no one cared. More than that, they were over-the-top supportive. Head coach Enrico Blasi called him “a blessing...a great student and an even better person.”

Brendan had already come out to his family: sisters Katie and Molly, brother Patrick, mother Kerry, and finally his dad and stepmother. His father – a big, gruff, macho hockey man through and through – had never suspected. But he hugged his son and said, “We still love you. This won't change a thing.”

Coming out is intensely personal, for everyone. But the Burke name is big, and last fall Brendan decided to share his story in the most public of ways: on ESPN. On the vaunted sports network's Web site, John Buccigross wrote an eloquent, graceful and detailed story about Brendan's continuing journey as a gay man in the often-coarse world of hockey.

“I would prefer Brendan hadn't decided to discuss this issue in this very public manner,” Brian said. “There will be a great deal of reaction, and I fear a large portion will be negative. But this takes guts, and I admire Brendan greatly, and happily march arm in arm with him on this.”

Brian Burke added: “There are gay men in professional hockey. We would be fools to think otherwise. And it's sad that they feel the need to conceal this. I understand why they do so, however.”

“Can a gay man advance in professional hockey? He can if he works for the Toronto Maple Leafs! Or for Miami University hock-

ey. And I am certain these two organizations are not alone here.

“I wish this burden would fall on someone else's shoulders, not Brendan's. Pioneers are often misunderstood and mistrusted. But since he wishes to blaze this trail, I stand beside him with an axe! I simply could not be more proud of Brendan than I am, and I love him as much as I admire him.”

The story ended on an upbeat note. Brendan returned to his all-boys high school, to talk about growing up gay. He earned a standing ovation from “200 kids who spend half their time insulting anyone different than them,” said his brother Patrick.

The ESPN story's final anecdote described an incident last summer. His father called Brendan and said, “Hey, Toronto Pride is this weekend. You should fly up.” Together, they watched the gay pride parade.

Reaction to the posting was swift. Much was positive; some was not. But the Burkes were already moving on. Brian was preparing the U.S. team for the Olympics; Brendan looked ahead to law school. He wanted to work in politics or hockey management, and a law degree was important for both.



PHOTO: Q SYNDICATE
Brian Burke

On Feb. 5, while driving back from Michigan State's law school, Brendan's Jeep Grand Cherokee was broadsided by a truck on a snowy Indiana road. He and a friend were both killed.

Nearly 1,000 people attended Brendan's funeral in suburban Boston. The Maple Leafs were there, in suits and ties. So was the Miami University team, wearing their hockey jerseys. There too were the movers and shakers of the hockey world: general managers, coaches, former stars like Mark Messier, and NHL commissioner Gary Bettman.

Sitting together in grief, they heard Brendan eulogized as “caring, compassionate and courageous.”

For the rest of their hockey lives, one hopes, whenever they hear “courage,” they will think of Brendan: their good friend Brian Burke's talented, smart, beloved gay son.

*Dan Woog is a journalist, educator, soccer coach, gay activist, and author of the “Jocks” series of books on gay male athletes. Visit his Web site at www.danwoog.com. He can be reached care of this publication or at OutField@qsyndicate.com.

Lt. Dan Choi receives Fenway Health's Studds Award

DADT's Activist, Lt. Dan Choi, was the recipient of Fenway Health's Gerry E. Studds Award on April 10 at the Men's Event. Kate Clinton brought her Lady HaHa tour to this year's Men's Event.

Lt. Choi served in the United States Army for a decade under Don't Ask, Don't Tell, a policy that forces LGBT American soldiers to keep their sexual orientation secret. On March 19, 2009, Lt. Choi, a West Point graduate and Iraq veteran fluent in Arabic, announced that he was gay on *The Rachel Maddow Show*. Because of three words – “I am gay” – Lt. Choi's life changed forever. Despite his value as an Arabic speaker able to communicate quickly and clearly with the Iraqi people, Lt. Choi was notified that the Army had begun discharge proceedings against him one month after his announcement. He continues to serve as an infantry officer in his unit while awaiting a final decision on his potential discharge.

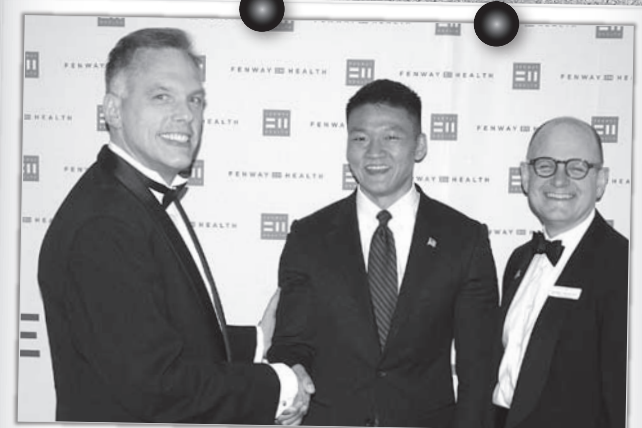
The Congressman Gerry E. Studds Award is given at The Men's Event to honor individuals of integrity and selflessness who embody the spirit of service and provide positive leadership for the LGBT community. Congressman Gerry E. Studds represented southeastern Massachusetts in the U.S. Congress from 1973 to 1997 and became the first openly gay Member of Congress in 1983 when he proudly acknowledged his sexual orientation standing on the congressional floor. The Congressman Gerry E. Studds Award is given at each year's Men's Event in honor and memory of Studds, who passed away in October 2006.



Lt. Dan Choi, the recipient of Fenway Health's Studds Award



Lt. Dan Choi with Providence Mayor David N. Cicilline.



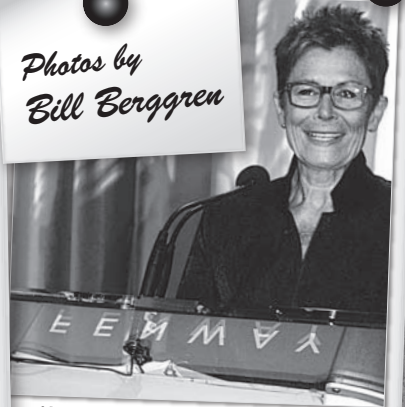
Dean Hara congratulates Lt. Dan Choi along with Fenway President Dr. Stephen Boswell



Boston's Own “Hat Sisters” also attended the event



Co-chair's of the men's event John Prince, Rich Gardner, Ben Perkins and Dr. Stephen Boswell pose with Award winner Lt. Dan Choi (second, from L-to-R).



Kate Clinton brought her Lady HaHa tour to the Fenway Health event

Photos by
Bill Berggren

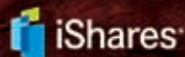
CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

"Death-defying Butterflies,
foot-juggling Ants,
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— *San Francisco Chronicle*



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