

# The Rainbow Times

• Your LGBTQ News in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut & Vermont



PHOTO: DEREK GOODWIN

## **NORTHAMPTON'S TDOR**

**Remembers LGBT suicide victims as well p7**



PHOTO: CHUCK COLBERT

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PHOTO: STEVEN SMITH

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PHOTO: SCREEN GEMS



## Female unification a progressive step forward

**By: Grisel M. Ocasio\*/TRT Publisher**

In a recent interview with *More* Jennifer Beals talks about many interesting topics as part of promoting her new series *The Chicago Code*.

Dissatisfied about *The L Word* finale, she made a comparison that made me think. She said: "Do you know the lobster theory? When you cook a pot of lobsters and they're all male, you need to put the top on, because if one male gets out, he'll try to help the others get out. But if you're cooking a pot of female lobsters, you don't have to put the top back on, because if one female starts trying to get out the others will try to drag her back into the pot. Isn't that awful? My point is, we're not lobsters [bringing each other down]. It would have been nice to end it differently."

She made an excellent, succinct point. I thought back about TV shows that I have watched through the years. One of the shows, *The Apprentice*, portrays such a behavior frequently. When working together, Donald Trump

told former NBC's Today Morning Show host Katie Couric several years ago that women worked rather well together. Once placed in groups with males, he added and I phrase, "they self-destructed as an entity." As I watched *The Biggest Loser* last night, I also noticed the same pattern. Yet, the opposite happens with men, as Beals stated in her quote. They stick together when things get tough, or when they don't. Is this the "bromance" that has triumphed over even the closest of heterosexual relationships? And, why is it that women behave in such a manner toward other women? Does this also happen amongst lesbians?

It does, unfortunately. I tend to think it happens less, but lessons learned have also taught me the difference between working with men and women. It is an unfair world and many women make it more unfair when they do not stand together in sisterhood, and support each other. It is shameful to hear mothers say, "I prefer boys over girls!" What message does that send our young girls?

**See Unification on page 4**

## Queeries: Answers to LGBT etiquette questions

**By: Steven Petrow\*/Special for TRT**

**"We want to help other kids fight bullying"**

**Q:** *It's been so upsetting to the queer kids at my middle school to hear about all the teen suicides lately and the awful bullying going on. One guy I know got punched in the face recently and his Facebook page was smeared with homophobic comments like "faggot." What can we do to help our friends?*

**A:** That's really admirable that you want to reach out to other kids in trouble. This recent series of high-publicity gay teen suicides has lots of people asking that same question: "What can we do?" And while the answers at first feel overwhelming, my advice in this situation is quite clear: It's everyone's responsibility to help fight public and private expressions of

homophobia and transphobia, especially when violence is involved or could be anticipated.

The truth is that you and your friends may already be doing the two most important things: Being yourselves and supporting each other. But there's always more.

In the case of your friend at the other school, you could certainly help him if you suggested that he talk to his parents or school officials about reporting that assault —yes, he was assaulted. I know that can be hard to do, but you can't stop bullying unless he (or she) is called on it.

That Facebook mess is an example of how "direct" confrontation has its place: Without saying anything threatening or targeting individuals by name, go ahead and post some supportive messages on the guy's page. Make sure that lots of your other friends do that too.

**See Queeries on page 17**

## The value of the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

**By: Jenn Tracz\*/CABO's Executive Director**

I'm inspired to write this month about a wonderful experience some of us at CABO just recently had in our nation's capital, Washington D.C. CABO is an affiliate chamber of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC). Each year the NGLCC hold a conference where hundreds of business and community leaders descend to discuss the LGBT movement in terms of business.

The NGLCC recently hit a milestone of 125 corporate partners working with their organization to better serve our businesses and LGBT communities on a local level. You can view their corporate partners here <http://www.nglcc.org/corporate/partners>. You can take action today to help corporations and businesses succeed further because they support LGBT rights. You can choose to do business with Burger King because they support the NGLCC over other fast food chains that do not. You can choose to do business with Pepsi over because they support the mission of doing business with LGBT individuals and companies that support the same mission. You can also choose to do your shipping with UPS because they believe in the power of the community.

As an individual, a business owner, and a chamber leader, I encourage you to do business with those who support your rights as an LGBT person or someone who supports LGBT equality. On a local level CABO is your resource to doing business with those who support you, but



**Jenn Tracz**

on a national level see who supports the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. There are some heavy hitting names out there who proudly support LGBT rights and human rights, so let's reward them for that.

CABO holds regular monthly events in the New Haven and Hartford areas and will be introducing monthly events in Fairfield County starting in January

2011. For more details on CABO events in your area, visit [www.TheCABO.org](http://www.TheCABO.org).

CABO's corporate partnerships include; Aetna, Foxwoods, Murtha Cullina LLP, Comcast Business Class, Bearingstar Insurance, Clear Channel Radio and The Rainbow Times. Each of these businesses has something great to offer and their commitment and support to the LGBT community is what separates them from the rest.

*\* In her role as Executive Director, Jenn is responsible for maintaining and growing membership, developing strategic business partnerships and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the organization. In addition to being CABO's executive director, she also is a small business owner specializing in marketing and design services.*

## Not pro-gun, but stance could change if our community is being threatened

**By: Jason Lydon/TRT Columnist**

On the day after Thanksgiving (aka "National Day of Mourning") my father, brother-in-law, and I go to a shooting range together to shoot handguns, rifles, and shotguns. This is a particular type of heterosexual bonding that makes me think of a couple other times I have gone to shoot guns. There have been two bright occasions where a group of queers and trans folks got together to converge on the gun range and learn what those phallic machines are all about.

Let me first say that I dream of a world where we do not have guns and where bullets are only tacky adornments on punkrocker belts. I live in a city where young people are shooting each other. I have no romanticized notion about guns as some kind of long term solution to community problems.

All that said, I want to know how to use these tools. As long as the police and military have guns, I want to have them. As long as the UN can remove sexual orientation from lists of people who should not be arbitrarily executed, I want to know how to shoot guns. As long as queer kids are getting bullied in school and harassed on the streets, I want to know how to use guns. As long as transgender people are being brutally murdered, I want to know how to use guns. As long as queer and transgender prisoners are being raped in prison, I want to know how to use guns. As long as preachers are condemning queer people to a fiery hell, I want to know how

to use guns.

I am not interested in a group of queers who go around killing people, rather empowered queer and transgender folks who can protect themselves from violence. Guns are scary and intimidating things. When the names of queer folks are printed in newspapers in Uganda, imagine a contingent of armed queer and trans folks who provided protection outside their homes? We have enough martyrs on our side, we do not need another queer or trans person to die in order to make a point that we are the good, suffering, needy oppressed people seeking validation from straight and gender-conforming systems. We need to defend ourselves and protect each other from ongoing violence.

I know many readers will immediately call upon me and others to adopt pacifism or nonviolence as a supreme ideology. Examples will be given about Gandhi, MLK Jr., and anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. My first response to all of these things is that liberation has not been secured for the people of India, black people in the US, or South Africans. Secondly, none of those movements were exclusively nonviolent;

**See Not Pro-Gun on page 4**



**Jason Lydon**

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Great coverage of TDOR and the "I AM: Transpeople Speak." You are definitely the best and most inclusive trans paper that I've ever come across and I used to live in NY and CA. None compares to TRT. You have certainly shocked me in a very positive way. I also think that it is two lesbians running this paper, so more power to you!

—Joseph Sanchez-Roberts, Boston, MA

Dear Editor,

I am enjoying the larger Connecticut coverage. I read Ms. Tracz column religiously and it keeps me informed of many GLBT things in CT. I also enjoyed seeing photo spreads from CT because I attended the Bears, Twinks Studs and Femmes event. Hopefully, you'll be able to continue to incorporate more CT GLBT news in the Times.

—Adrianna Robles, Hartford CT

Dear Editor,

Your two most recent issues addressed a ton of issues related to anti-gay bullying. I particularly like how inclusive the reporter, Joe Siegel and Tynan Power were about these tragic events. The follow up on the topics has also been very informative. One thing that I don't like is to have to stop reading a story because it's continued online. I am more of an old-style reader. I wish you did not jump as many stories to the website.

—Ryan MacGynner, Springfield, MA

Dear Ryan,

Most times we try not to jump stories to the home site. However, due to space constraints, we often do it. It is also healthy to do so and give the community another medium by which they can read *The Rainbow Times*. Our complete edition can be found

**See Letters on page 8**

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# Contagious anti-gay agenda by the Catholic hierarchy on national level, NOM to blame?

**By: Chuck Colbert/TRT Reporter**

The executive director of the National Organization for Marriage wasted no time in soliciting funds for the nation's leading anti gay-marriage group at the same time he trumpeted recent developments at a gathering of Catholic Church hierarchy.

The reason for Brian Brown's delight: Meeting in Baltimore, from Nov. 15 - 18, Catholic bishops elected new leadership, elevated their Ad Hoc Committee on the Defense of Marriage to a permanent subcommittee, and pledged a full-time staff advisor on marriage and the family.

But pro-LGBT Catholic groups and an organization of nuns were just as quick to voice their displeasure.

And there was some drama and a surprise as the US Conference of Catholic Bishops elected New York Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan to lead the official organization of Church hierarchy in America.

Dolan's surprise win over Tucson Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas by a close vote of 123 - 111 represented a departure from a long-standing tradition of selecting a sitting vice president.

The Chicago-based Rainbow Sash Movement (RSM), an LGBT advocacy group, claimed their endorsement of Kicanas was perhaps his undoing.

"We endorsed a shoe in candidate," wrote Joe Murray, executive director of RSM. "As soon as the endorsement was placed on our web page, the hit count reached over 20,000 inside of two hours, and was reported in many far right Catholic online blogs," he explained. "The drama surrounding this issue would put drama queens to shame."

No matter what ultimately influenced the election, leaders from gay Catholic organizations agreed: The election of Dolan as president and Louisville, Ky., Archbishop Joseph Kurtz as the new vice president signals a Church hierarchy ready to continue, if not escalate its secular politicking against same-sex marriage and homosexuality.

Kurtz served as chairman of the defense of marriage ad hoc committee.

During the recent bishops' meeting Kurtz compared the current legal and political advances of marriage equality to the time before the United States Supreme Court's 1973 landmark decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion.

"Today is like 1970 for marriage," Kurtz told his fellow bishops, according to Catholic News Service. "If you had seen *Roe v. Wade* coming three years out, what would you have done differently?"



PHOTO: COURTESY JOE MURRAY  
**Joe Murray, executive director of the Rainbow Sash Movement**

to head the USCCB, signals a particularly virulent anti-gay agenda by the Catholic hierarchy on a national level. Distorting the truth about gay persons, and denying civil rights by their so-called 'Defense of Marriage campaign,' will continue to be at the forefront of their efforts to convince Americans that gays don't deserve equal treatment under our Constitution," said

**"The election of Archbishops Dolan and Kurtz to head the USCCB, signals a particularly virulent anti-gay agenda by the Catholic hierarchy on a national level. Distorting the truth about gay persons, and denying civil rights by their so-called 'Defense of Marriage campaign,' will continue to be at the forefront of their efforts to convince Americans that gays don't deserve equal treatment under our Constitution," said Charles Martel.**

Charles Martel, a board member of Catholics for Equality, a national advocacy group.

"Anticipating civil marriage equality in 2011 in Rhode Island, it will be critical for Catholics who believe in justice and fairness, to contact their legislators and show their support for same-sex couples. The citizens of Rhode Island know very well from their Massachusetts neighbors how civil marriage equality has in fact been a source

of great joy to their families and friends."

Providence Bishop Thomas J. Tobin has been an outspoken opponent of same-sex marriage.

The bishops' meeting comes at time of profound economic uncertainty. In one analysis, Jesuit priest Thomas Reese noted the bishops said nothing about the Great Recession or the ten percent unemployment among some parishioners.

Just as social and economic justice concerns escaped the bishops' concerns, so pastoral sensitivity to the recent spate of youth bullying and teen suicides eluded the hierarchy.

The Detroit-based National Coalition of American Nuns, an organization of 500 Catholic sisters from various congregations of women religious, was "appalled" by the omission.

"More than a month has gone by since the media broke the news about a series of gay suicides. During that time, the US Catholic Bishops failed to make a single statement regarding these tragic, preventable deaths," the sisters wrote in a statement.

"Not one bishop's voice was raised to condemn a culture where youths are bullied for being who God created them to be and are sometimes pushed by society's judgments to attempt suicide. Many people have accused certain segments of organized religion, including the Catholic hierarchy, of fueling these attacks and contributing to suicides," the nuns wrote, adding, "This week offered an opportunity to decry these horrendous events. Instead, the bishops have chosen to discuss 'the defense of marriage,' their well funded attack on same-gender couples."

Kurtz also said that 4,500 copies of a traditional marriage DVD, "Made for Each Other," have been distributed nationwide and that other teaching materials, aimed at teaching children, are in development.

Meanwhile, in Boston one gay Catholic offered his assessment.

"The election of Archbishops Dolan and Kurtz



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# Faith, Family, and God: Rudolph the (wrong message) Reindeer

By: Paul P. Jesep\*/TRT Columnist

**R**udolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer (released in 1964) that generations love and grow up watching sours my eggnog. It curdles my cream. I don't like it. It sends the wrong message about family values. Sam the snowman who narrates is verry annoooooying. Put him in a park, unleash the dogs, and let nature take its course. Melt him into yellow, steamed oblivion. Cats can supervise perched on windowsills from within warm homes.

No, I have not had too much rum twirled with a special candy cane prior to writing this column. Nor have I had sugar cookies made with psychedelic mushrooms. I have, however, been thinking about fruitcake with nuts and cherries, but I digress.

I realize that I'm probably one of the very few who doesn't like *Rudolph*. The movie is cute. On the surface there is an alluring charm. The deeper message, however, is that you must be useful to be loved. A much better story is *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (released in 1966). I'll get to it later.

In *Rudolph* the reindeer can't play in games because his nose is too bright. His father dulls the nose with dirt. Rudy sounds like a kid from the Bronx. Dad is embarrassed despite knowing that Rudolph can fly higher and better than any adolescent. Eventually, the mud on the nose falls off and all hell breaks loose.

Rudolph runs off because even Santa doesn't like him. Meanwhile Hermey the elf is conditioned to think like a robot on an assembly line. He resists. Hermey doesn't want to be a mind-

less drone on a factory line and runs away. The elf wants to be a dentist. Awwwww. Better than a lawyer.

He later meets Rudolph. They spend time on the island of Dr. Moreau for toys. Later, Rudy convinces Santa, the guy who is supposed to bring joy, love, peace, and goodwill to all, that he has to find homes for misfit toys. Santa, who helps define the holiday, has been oblivious to this need for love, acceptance, and compassion for a long time.

The elf and deer are later accepted in Ho-Ho Land because the masses need them. The elf corrects dental problems. The reindeer has a glowing nose who can guide Santa's sleigh without which there will be a public relations disaster because Christmas will be cancelled. The elf and reindeer weren't accepted for what they were, but for the value they offered.

In sharp contrast is *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*. The Grinch is icky green with a very small heart. He smells from head to toe. His breath would melt stainless steel. He is a lonely, unloved, pathetic yet loveable creature. The Grinch tries to deny joy to some small village of peculiar happy-go-lucky creatures. In his effort to deny the beauty and pleasures of the holiday season he learns that no matter how annoying, distasteful, or frightening some find him, there is always someone who will unconditionally love him.

His heart bursts with love. All Christmas trees, meals, and presents he stole from Whoville are returned. Life is not about taking. It is about giving – joy, hope, acceptance, and unconditional love.

Watch *Rudolph* followed by *The Grinch*, both the cartoon and the movie. If you agree with me, you'll throw *Rudolph* into the fire place. It will add to your holiday ambiance. Just don't choke on the toxic fumes. *The Grinch* represents the

true holiday spirit. Peace and blessings to you and your family now and always. The Creator loves you and your family unconditionally.

*\*Paul is an author, attorney, and a seminary trained, ordained priest in greater Albany, NY. His book Crucifying Jesus and Secularizing America – the Republic of Faith without Wisdom, is available on Amazon.com. He may be reached at Dilovod@aol.com.*

## Not Pro-Gun from page 2

there were violent components of each and every one of them. In every struggle for liberation there has been a role for armed self-defense. Why should queer/trans liberation be any different? There are those within oppressed communities who find the need to assimilate into the dominant system, but there will always be those who are not allowed to and/or do not want to. These realities lead to queer and transgender people needing to know how to best defend ourselves and protect our communities.

Nearly a dozen of us across Massachusetts coordinated a queers with guns event earlier this year and plan to coordinate more events in the future. If you want to learn how to defend yourself, you are welcome to join us. If you want to understand your fear of guns, join us. If you don't want the first time you touch a gun to be in a moment when you must use it, join us. If you simply want to practice target shooting, join us. There is a great need for a diversity of tactics to secure our liberation and there are those of us who need to be armed and dangerous while fierce and fabulous!

## Unification from page 2

Not a positive one, for certain. This too, I consider a form of bullying. It reminded me of Dr. Phil's words to a heterosexual couple whose husband had had an affair. The husband blamed the woman he had the affair with, and so did his wife, instead of blaming her husband whom she had married and broke his vows.

I pose this question to you: Is this behavior exhibited by many women the result of self-loathing, gender inequity, society's objectification of women, or merely a result of a glass ceiling theory that keeps women in subervient positions in the workforce resulting in abstaining them from being fulfilled and in powerful positions?

Hopefully, this Season and in the New Year women will treat one another better, with a more fulfilled sense of the societal placement and the realization that such a predicament is not always a result of other fellow women's actions. We can compete and disagree without it escalating to anything more than just a disagreement. It is time to start bonding and moving this community forward, together, in a womanly embrace and even perhaps a "femance" or "girlmance."

To everyone, LGBTQI and allies, please have a safe and Happy Holiday Season!

*Grisel M. Ocasio*

*\*Grisel Martínez Ocasio is the co-founder, co-owner and Publisher of The Rainbow Times. She is a graduate of Marylhurst University (MBA, 2010) and of Temple University (1991). She has been in the journalism and publishing field for almost 20 years. You can reach her at: publisher@therainbowtimesnews.com.*

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# Becoming Myself video series offers up hope to LGBT students struggling with their sexuality

EASTERN MA NEWS

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

LGBT students and faculty at Boston University are featured in a new video series, "Becoming Myself." The participants aim to give hope to students who may be struggling with their sexual orientation. The message they share is that no matter how tough things get, life does get better.

Inspired by columnist Dan Savage's "It Gets Better" video series, BU students Leslie Friday and Robin Berghaus wanted to do something to help create a friendlier climate for LGBT students on their campus.

"We'd been discussing at our morning news meetings how to address in our online publication, BU Today, the tragic news about gay teens who committed suicide in recent weeks," explained Friday. "I was listening to NPR on the way home one night and heard Dan Savage interviewed about his 'It Gets Better' Project. That's when I had the idea we could do something similar, but plugging into the LGBT community here—students, faculty and staff."

Friday and Berghaus contacted Spectrum, BU's LGBT group, which gathered a list of students interested in participating.

"We contacted the Dean of Students Office, Residence Life, and asked students and colleagues to spread the word," said Berghaus.

Zac Brokenrope, a student at BU, shared his story of growing up gay in a small town in Nebraska. Brokenrope was shunned by classmates when he revealed his sexuality. He was also beaten up and harassed. One day he attempted suicide.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF BU PHOTOGRAPHY

**Liz Douglass, Marsh Chapel associate for LGBTQ students, talks about coming out, being accepted by her family, and finding renewed faith in her religion.**

Brokenrope has received a favorable response from the students at BU.

"I've received a huge amount of support from nearly all corners of the BU community, including the Dean of the School of Education," Brokenrope said.

"The morning the video came online, I started getting all these phone calls from friends who just wanted to talk to me about it. One kid, who I don't even know, stopped me on the street and gave me a hug and then just walked away. In a weird way, it's incredibly liberating. It's like I'm coming out all over again, and this time I have the support I never had before."

Liz Douglass, who serves as a Chapel Associate for LGBTQ students at BU, also shared her story.

"People were very grateful for my willingness to share my story and my work to make

Marsh Chapel at BU more known as an open and safe space for LGBTQ students," Douglass noted.

Douglass believes the videos will have a positive effect: "It's important for students to not only hear from peers, but also LGBTQ staff and faculty knowing there are LGBTQ people in authority and positions of power can bring feelings of reassurance and lessen anxiety. It also lets students know there are people to turn to if they need someone to talk to they can trust."

"A lot of my friends came up to me and said that my story was very touching and they were impressed that I am comfortable enough with myself to do the video," said student Ted Anton. "I feel that anyone who does a video for the 'It Gets Better' project will help someone

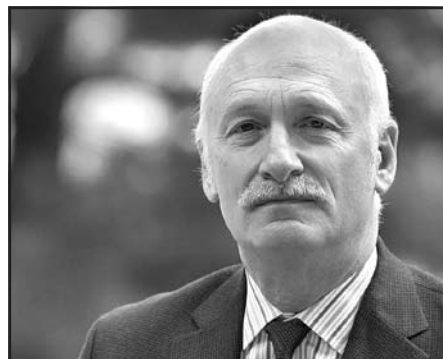


PHOTO: COURTESY OF BU PHOTOGRAPHY

**Robert Volk, a law associate professor, talks about being bullied in high school, coming out, and finding peace in his personal and professional life.**



PHOTO: COURTESY OF BU PHOTOGRAPHY

**Zac Brokenrope (SED'12) discusses how he survived bullying and an attempted suicide in his home state of Nebraska and then found a new life and supportive community at BU.**

struggling with their own issues and influence their decision to do something harmful to themselves. I feel that any effort to help with the LGBT youth suicides is worth it."

"I hope the people who see this video/story package and may be struggling let the message sink in that life does get better," added Friday. "No matter how dire the circumstances may seem at the time, life is worth living beyond the bumpy parts of the road. I think that message resonates with not just the gay community, but with everyone here at BU and beyond."

All of the Becoming Myself videos can be viewed on BU's video network - BUUniverse: [www.bu.edu/buniverse/search/?tag=lgbt+voices](http://www.bu.edu/buniverse/search/?tag=lgbt+voices).

[therainbowtimesnews.com](http://therainbowtimesnews.com)



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.

## TOPS & BOTTOMS WANTED

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## Northampton Transgender Day of Remembrance inclusive of the wider scope of all LGBT suicides

By: Tynan Power\*/TRT Reporter

On Sunday, November 21st, over 60 people created a living luminary as they walked quietly through downtown Northampton. Every year since 1999, Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) has marked the loss of numerous innocent victims to violence sparked by intolerance of anyone who dares step outside of society's gender norms. Held in November to honor the memory of Rita Hester, a trans woman murdered on November 28, 1998 in the Boston area, it has become a local tradition to see people bundled up against the chill during evening candle-lit vigils and listening to a somber reading of the names of those who have died in the past year.

This year, Yohah Ralph and I organized the Northampton Transgender Day of Remembrance event to bring together the transgender community in a spirit of unity, after a tough year in which it experienced some "growing pains."

"I helped to organize the TDOR because I am interested in bringing people together to share our faith, aspirations, and hope for the world, and to foster supportive and meaningful relationships," Ralph said. "My training as a minister helped me with creating programs and community organizing, and it was a good fit for creating an event like TDOR. Musicians, artists, and writers offer us new vantage points to encounter the world, and I really enjoy creating space where we can express ourselves and be enriched by one another."

The evening offered opportunities for many in the community to bring their talents. Speakers included Jasmina Andino, of Connecticut, who was First Alternate at 2010's Miss Trans New England pageant.

"I choose to speak because of all the trans girls murdered in Puerto Rico this year, and for all the teens in the GLBT community who took their lives," said Andino.

Other speakers included Karen Johnston, a local queer-identified lay preacher, poet and social worker, who read her poem "Let the Foul Harpies Starve"; comedian Tammy Twotone, who offered a message entitled "Hope;" and Mary Beth Silva, who read "Children Learn What They Live."

Two area musicians shared their talents, as well.

"I chose to sing 'How Could Anyone Ever Tell You' by Libby Roderick, because just about everyone in the GLBTIQ community has been told (by family, peers, politicians, preachers, media, and people on the street) that we are ugly, broken, immoral, and unlovable," said folk and word performer, Arjuna Greist. "This song brings out the shining truth that we are, every one of us, beautiful, whole, and connected by love. We need to give this message to each other often, to counteract the hate. I followed this with 'Jerry in Heaven,' which I wrote as a spiritual challenge to forgive one of the biggest bullies of modern times, Jerry Falwell. Violence springs from hatred, which springs from fear. If we address the fear with compassion and forgiveness, there is a chance of breaking the cycle."

Rocker Lezleeanne Rios injected her characteristic energy into the evening.

"Sister, sister" is about violence against women and encouraging my 'Sisters' to change their life and step out of all that," Rios said. "Teach me Peace" is about my own and other's successful struggle to find peace in spite of a life of abuse."

When it came time to remember the dead, a

hat was passed containing names and brief information about the circumstances of each death. Attendees rose and read the names, one by one, and then sat for a moment of silence.

Some of the victims of violence each year are transgender men and women, some are gender-queer—people between or beyond the binary identities of man and woman—and some victims simply expressed themselves in a way that made someone else feel uncomfortable. This year, one of the 30 names listed on the TransgenderDOR.org website that compiles data for the Trans Day of Remembrance was a 16-month-old boy—far too young to articulate his gender identity—named Roy Antonio Jones III, of Southampton, NY. He died at the hands of his mother's boyfriend, supposedly because he didn't "act like a boy."



PHOTO: GLENN KOETZNER

**Lezleeanne Rios**

Jones exemplified a theme in this year's Day of Remembrance, at least in Northampton: we can't neglect to recognize victims in the wider community, especially when they lose their lives due to bigotry around gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. As different as the issues of gender identity and sexual orientation may be, discrimination and violence often don't differentiate. Fatal attacks on trans women of color—the most common victims—don't begin with an inquiry about their sexual and gender identities, just as bullying that targets young lesbian and gay students is often directed at those whose gender expression makes it hard for them to "pass" as straight.

Because of this interconnection of bias and oppression, this year, in Northampton, we remembered all the transgender lives lost—and we also honored the memories of the LGBT youth lost to suicide in the past few months.

When we consider the lives lost to violence and the suicides that seemed to often end lives of unspoken despair, we have to ask: where were the loved ones, the friends, the allies, the communities—in these moments of fear and despair?

With that in mind, I took the opportunity of giving closing words to ask those gathered to share in the responsibility for our community—both our trans community and our wider LGBT community. I suggested that we look beyond our chosen family—and, perhaps, our comfort zones—to commit to getting to know and supporting someone else, so that we don't have to ask where help was for any



PHOTO: ILANA PANICH-LINSMAN

**Jasmine Andino**

of our own, next year.

"It is important to remember those lost to transphobic and homophobic violence," said Arjuna Greist. "Both to honor their individual lives and to inspire us all to keep working to make a better, more just world where the list of names dwindles down to none."

May it be so. May it begin with us.

\*Tynan Power is a Northampton-based reporter, activist and interfaith leader. In addition to co-organizing this year's Northampton TDOR, Tynan is co-chair of the USNF Big Ol' Gay committee and founder of Pioneer Valley Progressive Muslims. You can reach him at tynanpower@yahoo.com.

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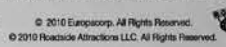
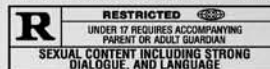


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## Quest for Equality: Woman's climb for LGBT rights

By: **Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter**

Jody Cole is preparing to climb Africa's Mt. Kilimanjaro next January in a bid to promote equal rights for LGBT people.

Cole recalls being "dumbfounded" by a recent string of suicides by LGBT youth.

"I couldn't believe it was coming to this point and I admit, I got angry," Cole said. "I've just had it with the bullying and the violence and the shame that comes with being bullied - for any reason - but especially because you are gay."

Cole has been a long-time activist, having spent time working with Equality California for several years in their efforts to repeal Prop. 8, which banned same-sex marriage in the state.

"It's one thing to be denied equal rights, but to commit suicide and end your life because you simply do not feel you can live with the shame any more, that means we're not getting the message out there that we are valuable, we are good citizens, good neighbors, good friends, and will lead healthy, productive lives and contribute to society, just like everyone else," Cole said.

Cole makes her living taking others on excursions to some of Africa's most picturesque and exotic destinations. She is the founder and guide of Wild Rainbow African Safaris.

Cole previously climbed Kilimanjaro in 1998.

"It was really the hardest, most painful thing I had ever done," Cole explained. "I have always been an avid hiker and wilderness adventurer. I began expanding my knowledge of mountaineering back in 2000. I'm the kind of person that can't do anything half way - I love it if I can have a pack on my back, blisters on my feet and spectacular scenery all around me, so climbing mountains is the logical next step in the adventure."



PHOTO: SEAN TIMBERLAKE

**Jody Cole, set to tackle Mt. Kilimanjaro**

it through whatever I'm faced with."

Cole is hopeful her climb up the mountain can serve as inspiration to others: "If I make it to the top, which will be up to me, my training, the limitations of my body at this age, and the altitude, I hope that for someone out there who is cheering me on, it will mean they, too, can achieve anything they set their minds on. I'm so very lucky to be able to climb for Equality California. But it will take more than luck to summit the mountain. I'm hoping some young person out there will be inspired to live on."

### Letters from page 2

online, via .pdf and also each separate story is showcased separately as well. We hope that you can see the importance of doing this. We do try to work with all of these situations and hope that you continue to enjoy reading *The Rainbow Times*.

Dear Editor,

I enjoy reading the western Mass anti-bullying coverage. I wish I had seen more photos in this past issue, from events and activities.

— Jane Hamiltan, Northampton, MA

Dear Editor,

Nice coverage of the Boston Pride event with Margaret Cho. I wasn't aware that Boston Pride was still having events all through the year. I'm glad your reporter, Chuck Colbert, wrote about it. It's super exciting that Boston won the bid for the international Pride celebration. Boston should have won over Pittsburgh, since Boston is a well-known gay mecca and we have gay rights here. This is the type of stuff that I like to know about so that I can get involved with Boston Pride. Thank you, you rock!

— Josiah Stephenson, Cambridge, MA

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**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE BLACK GLBT COMMUNITY**  
**From Cultural Barriers to Effective Services - Hosted by the Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project (GMDVP)**  
**WEDNESDAY, DEC. 15; 5:30-8.30PM**  
**Fenway Health Centre,  
1340 Boylston Street, Boston**

Join GMDVP, Cllr Denise Simmons (former Cambridge City Mayor & first out Lesbian Mayor of a major U.S. city), David Wilson (Board Chair of Mass Equality and National Board of Directors for Human Rights Campaign) the Hispanic Black Gay Coalition, & Violence and Recovery Program from Fenway Health Centre in a discussion about of domestic violence in the black GLBT community.

The Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project will be facilitating a panel discussion exploring how religion, race, and homo/bi/trans phobia affects the quality of care for black GLBT victims of domestic violence.

This workshop is free and open to anyone in the public that has an interest in racial justice, healthy relationships in the GLBT community that includes Domestic Violence advocates, GLBT community and leaders, clinicians, service providers, the faith community. A food/drink reception immediately following the forum.

**Registration deadline: Dec. 8th, 2010. For more information about the event, please call 617-354-6056, or fax: 617-354-6072.**

# viva!

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## Creep of the Week: ASH's Peter LaBarbera

By: D'Anne Witkowski\*/Special for TRT

Have you ever been at an airport looking around you at all of the harried travelers in flip flops and sweatpants stuffing their faces with dinner plate sized Cinnabons and thought to yourself, "If only there was a job that would pay me to grope these people?"

Well, it's your lucky day. There is such a job. As an agent of the Transportation Security Administration you'll get to participate in the new "enhanced" pat downs that include genital touching. The thing is, if you're female you can only grope ladies. If you're male, you can only grope guys. In other words, it's the perfect job for homos!

Now, no doubt and obviously, gays and lesbians are quitting their jobs and unemployed homos are throwing down their "Will Work for Grope Privileges" signs and flocking to their local TSA hiring offices saying, "Sign me up! Hell, I'll do it for free!"

Unfortunately, Peter LaBarbera of Americans for Truth about Homosexuality wants to ruin everyone's fun by raising the alarm on homosexual America's nationwide TSA grope party.

Pointing out that "pat downs" on passengers are done by a TSA agent of the same sex, LaBarbera asks, "But what about homosexual TSA agents? Isn't it just as inappropriate for a 'gay' male TSA agent to pat down male travelers as it is for a normal, heterosexual male TSA agent to pat down female travelers?"

Good question. Never mind the invasiveness of the TSA's new procedures, the real issue is that God-loving heterosexuals don't want sex-crazed homosexuals rooting around in their ass cracks in the name of security.

"The reality is, most traveling men would

not want Barney Frank to pat them down at the airport security checkpoint," LaBarbera continued. "Neither would it be fair to assign Ellen DeGeneres to pat down female travelers."

He's right. Most travelers probably wouldn't want Barney Frank and Ellen DeGeneres doing their pat downs because passengers would be all, "Hey, aren't you wildly over qualified for this job? Don't you have a legislation to write or a TV show to tape?"

Actually, no offense to Frank, but I think a lot of women actually wouldn't mind DeGeneres doing their pat down if only because she'd probably make the whole experience pretty hilarious rather than humiliating and degrading.

Using TSA officers of the same sex as the passenger getting the pat down is "to assure the public that sexual tension will be taken out of the equation," said LaBarbera. "Hence, we must take seriously the self-identified desires of homosexuals. 'Gay' men define themselves as being sexually attracted to other men. Lesbians are sexually attracted to women. And bisexuals are attracted to both."

Thanks for the human sexuality lesson, LaBarbera. Very informative and helpful. There's something I think LaBarbera doesn't understand, however. When he says, for example, that "Lesbians are sexually attracted to women," he seems to mean, and believe, that lesbians are attracted to all women. Anyone with a vagina will do. Same thing with gay men and penises.

LaBarbera asks, "Is it fair to travelers who may end up getting 'groped' by homosexual TSA agents who are secretly getting turned on through the process?"

See Creep on page 12

## XL Center to host the Big East Women's NCAA Basketball Championship in March

HARTFORD, CT—For people who enjoy watching elite basketball, there is a great opportunity coming to Hartford this March. The BIG EAST Women's Basketball Championship will be held at the XL Center in Hartford, Conn. on March 4-8. All 16 teams in the BIG EAST Conference will advance to the Championship, making it a jam-packed weekend with plenty of college basketball action.

Women's basketball has grown in leaps and bounds over the last few years and continues to expand, gaining recognition and exposure. The BIG EAST is leading the pack, helping to create a name and identity for the sport. Last year, seven BIG EAST teams were selected to the NCAA Women's Basketball Championship, tying for the most of any conference. Over the last four years, BIG EAST teams have made 30 NCAA appearances, proving that the quality of competition is strong. The women's game continues to shatter the preconceived notions of what females can do in athletic settings. The sport is changing the view of many people and as the exposure expands, so does the appreciation of true talent.

"Now that I'm a senior, I've gotten a chance to look to sit back and reflect on my experience being a part of the BIG EAST," said BIG EAST Preseason Player of the Year Maya Moore at the 2010 BIG EAST Women's Basketball Media Day. "It's been more than I could have imagined. The fact that we had seven former and current players on that World Championship team,

coached by UConn's Geno Auriemma along with DePaul's Doug Bruno, speaks to the quality and competitiveness of our conference."

The BIG EAST Women's Basketball Championship is the pinnacle of action, competition, excitement and sportsmanship. Whether cheering for the powerhouses or the underdog, it is an experience like no other and an event that no fan wants to miss.

There are four first-round games on Friday, March 4 and four second-round games on Saturday, March 5. The quarterfinals will be held on Sunday, March 6 and the semifinals will take place Monday, March 7. The final game will be televised on ESPN at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 8. Tickets can be bought at [www.BIGEAST.org](http://www.BIGEAST.org) or [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com).

Between the games, there is plenty to do in Hartford and the Greater Hartford Convention and Visitors Bureau (GHVB) has some ideas on how to do that at [www.enjoyhartford.com](http://www.enjoyhartford.com).

The BIG EAST Women's Basketball Championship FanFest is a fun-filled fan area located in the XL Center Atrium during the tournament. The FanFest provides fans entertainment and opportunity to get to know the local businesses and organizations who display at the event.

The FanFest is a tremendous exposure opportunity for local companies.

For more information, fans can log onto [www.BIGEAST.org](http://www.BIGEAST.org) and click on the women's basketball Championship Central page, a one-stop location for all needs involving the competition.



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 The 38-member troupe of dancers, musicians, and singers performs "Bahian" folkloric dances of African origin that features slave dances, capoeira (a form of martial arts), samba, & Carnival dances.  
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**PILOBOLUS**  
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**★ THE ARTS GIVE BACK: please bring a new or gently used suit or professional item of clothing (all sizes welcome) or accessory to donate to Dress for Success, a local organization dedicated to promoting the economic independence of disadvantaged women. Visit their web site at [www.dressforsuccess.org](http://www.dressforsuccess.org).**

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## TRT Heroes: Coco Alinsug's steadfast compassionate approach to others

By: **Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter**

Coco Alinsug has served as Executive Director of North Shore Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (NAGLY) for 8 years and has been the Recruitment Manager at The Fenway Institute at Fenway Health for the past 5 years.

He recently took some time to speak to The Rainbow Times about his work for the Boston LGBT community.

**TRT:** What needs to be done to increase awareness of the importance of funding for HIV/AIDS (LGBT rights in general)?

**CA:** Many people are now aware of the dangers of HIV, and yet each year millions of people become infected with the virus. It is therefore vital that HIV and AIDS education goes beyond simply providing information and that it is supported by other prevention efforts such as providing condoms and clean injecting equipment, and making testing facilities available and accessible.

HIV and AIDS education needs to motivate people by making them aware that what they are learning is relevant to their lives. Empowerment is also crucial, as people must be in a position where they are able to take control of their sexual behavior or methods of drug use. Education is a crucial factor in preventing the spread of HIV. Given the huge numbers of deaths that might still be prevented, the importance of effective education cannot be overestimated. Everybody has to do his or her share. It might be a small contribution or devoting your life to this cause. Shouting at rallies or going to candlelight vigils is not sufficient enough; we need strong financial support from our government. My dream is to see the end of HIV and AIDS and to see people regardless of their sexual orientation live in peace and harmony.

**TRT:** Which people in the LGBT or allied community have been most influential in your life?

**CA:** There are a lot of influential people both in the LGBT community and personal experience. Let me start with my mom Esther Alinsug who taught me the values of patience, understanding, love and giving. Growing up in the Philippines, my mom has always been there for us, taught me and my sibling about giving back to the community and be understanding about situations and challenges in life. She is a very religious person and a devout Catholic but in spite of her religious background that did not stop her for accepting me and my sexuality.

She even flew from the Philippines to Boston a couple of years ago and marched with me at the 2008 Boston Pride Parade. As far as the LGBT community is concerned, my greatest influence is my friend Kirsten Freni and my partner Peter Cipriano. Kirsten works at the Gay and Bi Men's Health Program (GBMHP) in Beverly. She has been my partner in my mission to serve the queer community. Both of them are always there in every activity I have for the community. You can see Peter carrying my outreach bags every time I have major events and you can al-

ways see Kirsten co-hosting me or assisting me in all speaking engagements or projects for the LGBT community. We support each other.

**TRT:** How can the average member of the LGBT community make a difference in our struggle?

**CA:** Start with full understanding about the challenges of our community. Educate yourself, friends and family. Stick up for each other and

be reminded that the battle for acceptance is not over yet.

**TRT:** What is the best advice you have ever been given to do the proactive things you do today for our community?

**CA:** Patience, Patience, patience.

**TRT:** What have you done for the LGBT community individually or collectively that you are proudest of?

**CA:** I could say, I make every LGBT youth be proud of who they are and stand up for what they believe in. As Executive Director of NAGLY for 8 years now, that has been my role as the guardian, the mother, the father, the big brother to

any youth who steps in to the NAGLY premises, to listen to what they say, understand, and provide a safe space for them to be themselves. I always tell them that I am here to understand and welcome them in regardless. Aside from my NAGLY work, I also work as the Recruitment Manager of The Fenway Institute at Fenway Health for 5 years and work closely with clinical trials with the hope of finding a cure for HIV.

**TRT:** What motivates your work within this community?

**CA:** Growing up in a different culture and without support from organizations like NAGLY, it has been a challenge for me not being accepted within some members of my immediate circle. I have always strived hard to just to be accepted, and it has been very difficult. I soon realized that my approach was wrong; I then learned to really please myself first. I have to accept myself and have to accept the fact that I am special,

and in this way, it was easy for me to deliver my message and to serve my community.

**TRT:** What can be done about teen suicides that happen as a result of bullying or anti-gay sentiment?

**CA:** Everybody must work; everybody must do his share and his part. We must demand from our political leaders that sufficient legislation be addressed. Education is another vital piece which is not only crucial to teachers and school administrators but to each and every household as well. We should promote a stronger support system.

**TRT:** What are the top three issues that affect our community the most? How can we each make a difference?

**CA:** There should be more than 3, or probably a top 20 but since you are only asking for three, then here's my 3:

First, we need fFull Trans Inclusion to Approve a Trans Bill. Most often, some of us forget that we have our brothers and sisters in the trans community that are still fighting for what is right. We sometimes complain about the littlest



PHOTO: GLENN KOETZNER

**Coco Alinsug**



PHOTO: COURTESY COCO ALINSUG

**See TRT Heroes on page 12**



# MIKEY ROX'S ULTIMATE GUIDE TO GAY GIFT GIVING!

By: Mikey Rox\*/Special New England Feature for TRT



## SNAP TO IT

Ramona Singer infamously called Kodak antiquated, much to the chagrin of Jill Zarin, who was hosting an event on the company's behalf during a season three episode of *The Real Housewives of New York*. Points go to Team Jill for that round, because Ramona was way off base. In fact, the iconic brand is as cutting-edge as they come where affordable consumer technology is involved. Case in point: the EasyShare M580, the world's thinnest 14-megapixel, five-times-zoom digital camera. The pocket-sized point-and-shoot also features a Share Button, which allows users to tag and upload pics to Facebook, YouTube, the Kodak Gallery and Flickr within seconds of plugging it into a computer. Mmmmm. Whatcha got now, Ramona? (\$199.95; www.kodak.com)



## RINSE & REPEAT

Shower time is sacred. And simplehuman aims to make it even better with its twin wall mounts with basket. Wide openings on the shampoo and conditioner dispensers prevent messy spills (is there such a thing in the shower?) and makes refills fast and easy. Convenient storage hooks hold a razor, loofah or other accessories and the square tissue holder features an integrated clamp that keeps the box from falling out. Although, if you're blowing your nose in the bath, you've likely got bigger issues than escaping tissues. Mount secures to a dry wall in 24 hours with silicone glue. (\$69.99; www.simplehuman.com)



## DRINK TANK

If you're still buying bottle water on a daily basis, you're behind the times. Not only is it expensive, but it's also bad for the environment. In fact, you probably own a small part of your local landfill by now. For shame! Reduce your carbon footprint by investing in 3M's latest innovation, the Filtrétre Water Station, which features four reusable water bottles that fill with fresh, filtered H<sub>2</sub>O. The liquid station provides the approximate recommended daily water intake – 64 ounces

– with each bottle containing 16.9 ounces. The bottles are BPA-free with leak-proof caps and can be washed conveniently on the top rack. Cut down. Drink up. (\$38; www.filtrete.com)



## PRODIGAL SUN

Go green while gettin' down with Solar Sound 2, the new and improved sun-powered portable speakers from pioneering company Devotec. Building upon the success of the original Solar Sound, this upgrade promises a superior listening experience with the use of specialty woven speaker cones; silver-plated, oxygen-free copper cabling; an efficient power circuit to provide even more juice to the amp; and a larger integrated battery that increases playing time to five to 10 hours, depending on the volume level. That's where the sun comes in. With its embedded solar panel and quick charging system, the unit can play continuously under UV rays – even when the built-in battery is dead. Party on, party boy. (\$99.99; www.devotecindustries.com)



## THE BIGGER PICTURE

There are digital photo frames, and then there's the CEIVA digital photo frame. What's the difference? For starters, CEIVA frames come preloaded with your favorite pics, so when the recipient opens the box your pearly whites are peering right back. But that's not the best part. The frames are connected, allowing anyone, anywhere to send photos directly to the frame by camera phone, e-mail, Facebook and more – a nice surprise for grandma when she walks in to see new pictures from her favorite gay grandson. Unless her favorite gay grandson hits the wrong button, of course. But then, he really shouldn't have such scandalous content stored on his Droid, now should he? (\$127.99 and up; www.ceiva.com)

## GARDEN VARIETY

Paging Peg Bundy! Al's trophy wife loved her some bonbons – but probably not this kind. Moulton's Bon Bons are truffle-shaped mounds of clay and organic compost combined with



seeds. The Garden pack features two each of basil, parsley, chives and thyme, while the herb tea selection includes double quantities of borage, chamomile, lemon balm and Stinging Nettle. Just toss the handcrafted clay balls into the garden or an indoor container, add water, and watch them grow. Perfect for that crazy uncle who "talks" his plants. Misery loves company. (\$14.95; www.moultonology.com)



## BIKES FOR DYKES

Sexy ladies have long had a love affair with motorcycles. Seems unlikely, but examine the evidence; nobody's forcing those busty blonds and brunettes to bend over the handlebars in every bike rag sitting on newsstands. One could argue that the female species likes the feeling of all that power between their legs, no? (Insert your own dirty joke here.) Whatever the case may be, California Scooter Co. has carved a niche in the market for women who have a need for speed with three styles – Classic, Greaser and Babydoll – and a custom-built option. The company claims on its website that you're in for the ride of your life. And if one of these is waiting for your honey in the garage on Christmas morning, you probably will be. (\$4,995 and up; www.californiascooterco.com)



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## HAUTE DOG

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See Holiday Gift Guide on page 16

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## To Cook is To Love: A Foodies Journal

By: John Verlinden/TRT Cuisine Columnist

¡MUCHO GUSTO!



PHOTO: RACHEL POWER  
John Verlinden

### This Year -- Give the Gift of Love

Instead of logging to the mall and battling crowds all seeking that "perfect gift," be a rebel. Don't pull on your goulashes and rush to the car, put on your slippers and stroll to the kitchen.

Give them something you made.

It's gotten harder each year to purchase gifts for the folks on my list that let them know in a really special way how much our relationship means to me. The pressure's heavy-duty; you want to get something unique and personal, something they'll enjoy or can really use, and something they probably wouldn't buy for themselves. You've also got to make sure it's the right style, the right color, the right size, the right price, .... And then, on the coldest, snowiest day in January, long after all that holiday warmth has frozen over; here come the credit card bills.

Don't get me wrong, I love the holidays; love celebrating with family and friends, but all that running and searching and spending and then worrying that I forgotten someone, makes a Grinch out of me. My holiday cheer gets worn pretty thin pretty fast sitting in traffic jams, searching the racks and waiting in line. Who needs something else to stress over these days -- last year it got so bad, I ended up exchanging

gift cards with most ... pathetic, huh?

So this year--do what I'm going to do. Crank up the holiday music, slip on an apron and fire up the range. Who doesn't love a homemade gift? Everybody can use a plate of cookies or a loaf of your home baked bread, no one already has a jar of your jam, homemade fudge is always in-style, and what's better for that man or woman in your life who has everything than receiving something that's uniquely you. For gift ideas and recipes go to [www.muchogusto.com](http://www.muchogusto.com), you'll find something for everyone on your list. And after it's all over, you'll have saved enough money to go out and buy that special gift you wanted but no one gave you, at the half-price after Christmas sale.

Until next time -- ¡Mucho Gusto!, ¡Muchas Gracias! y ¡Buen Provecho!

### Creep from page 9

This, of course, is only happening in LaBarbera's wild imagination. But seeing gays and lesbians as anything other than sex-crazed perverts who get a secret thrill every time they touch the under wire of your grandmother's bra or paw at your dad's nut sack would ruin LaBarbera's narrative where homosexuals are lurking everywhere just waiting to pounce on you and your private parts.

The only solution, of course, is to do away with all homosexual TSA employees. Of course, then you have homosexual travelers "secretly getting turned on" via TSA grope. So you'll have to ban them, too. And with no homos flying or working in airports, well, I suppose they could always go Gayhound.

## BGMC to spread "Joy" this Holiday Season

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

The Boston Gay Men's Chorus will be spreading some holiday cheer next month with a series of concerts titled "Joy!"

Under the direction of Reuben Reynolds, the performances will be held on Sunday, Dec. 12 at 2:00 pm, Friday, Dec. 17 at 8:00 pm, Saturday, Dec. 18 at 8:00 pm, and Monday, Dec. 20 at 8:00 pm. All concerts are held at New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall and these concerts will be recorded for future CD release.

Now in its 29th season, the 150 member Chorus has won acclaim for its outstanding musicianship, creative programming and community outreach. Regularly listed on the Boston Business Journal's Top 25 list of Boston's largest performing arts organizations, the Chorus performs for more than 10,000 people annually. The BGMC has appeared throughout New England and coast to coast and has 10 CDs in its growing discography.

"Our mission is to create a more tolerant society through the power of music," said Steven Smith, Executive Director of the BGMC.

Smith said the holiday concerts will reach 4000 people in Boston and in Provincetown. The audiences for the holiday shows typically attract an equal mix of gays and straights.

"It's a great opportunity for us to provide a gay presence to the holidays and bring GLBT and straight people together," Smith noted.

The shows will feature more than a dozen traditional carols and songs arranged for chorus and brass. The Majestic Brass will be special guests. Gwyneth Walker's *Rejoice* features *What Child is This* and *Good Christian Friends Rejoice*. Jackson Berkey, co-founder of Mannheim Steamroller, has arranged *O Come All Ye Faithful*, *Still, Still Night*, and *Joy to the World*.

The BGMC's accompanist and resident arranger Chad Weirick has provided a new arrangement for *Pictures of a Season*, a resounding panorama of Christmas tunes inspired by



PHOTO: STEVEN SMITH

### The Boston Gay Men's Chorus

Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Audiences will enjoy Weirick's eclectic take on *Deck the Halls*, *Children Go Where I Send Thee*, *Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day*, *Carol of the Bells*, and *Do You Hear What I Hear*.

The BGMC will go all out for a rendition of Eric Lane Barnes's Christmas Cheer, complete with pom poms, pleated skirts and a routine even GLEE's Sue Sylvester wouldn't choreograph. The program also features acclaimed choral composer Eric Whitacre's *Lux Aurumque* and cabaret songwriter John Bucchino's *Grateful*. Rounding out the selections are Craig Carnahan's *Welcome Yule* and music for Hanukkah including *L'Dor Vador* and *Shalom Santa*.

*Tickets for Joy! are \$46, \$36, \$26, and \$16 and are now on sale by phone by calling 617-542-SING. All tickets can also be purchased securely on the web at [www.bgmc.org](http://www.bgmc.org). There are no service charges, but New England Conservatory adds a \$2 restoration fee to all tickets. Tickets are also available in person at the Jordan Hall Box Office, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston. All performances are sign language interpreted and wheelchair accessible. More information is available at [www.bgmc.org](http://www.bgmc.org) or by calling the BGMC at 617-542-SING.*

### TRT Heroes from page 10

things that we tend to forget that others have even more problem/s than we do. As what my mom always told me "Always count your blessings." Let's advocate for them.

Secondly, civil rights is a long overdue problem. Though some legislation has been passed, no total civil right bill has been passed for our community. LGBT people face the same family issues as their heterosexual counterparts, but that is only the beginning of their struggle. The LGBT community also encounters legal barriers to government recognition of their same-sex relationships and relationships to their own children. Policy issues affecting LGBT families addresses partner recognition, parenting, issues affecting children of LGBT parents, health care, discrimination, senior

care and elder rights, and equal access to social services.

Lastly, there needs to be increased financial support to all HIV-AIDS related providers, patients, education, etc.

**TRT:** Do you consider yourself a hero for the LGBT community?

**CA:** This is a question that you should be asking to somebody else that knows me.

**TRT:** Will full LGBT equality be achieved in this country during the next 10 years? 20 years? If yes, how?

**CA:** This is a tough one. Though it is everybody's dreams and wishes to achieve this the soonest possible time but I want to be realistic here, we need to strive hard, we need to work hard and continue addressing our problems and issues one step at a time and hopefully we could see the rainbow sometime soon.



PHOTO: GLENN KOETZNER

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Please send your nominations to: [editor@therainbowtimesnews.com](mailto:editor@therainbowtimesnews.com)



## No Child Abuse in Lesbian Households, according to new Williams Institute study

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

Children being raised by lesbian parents are less likely to be abused than children being raised by heterosexual parents, according to the results of a new study.

The Williams Institute, a research center on sexual orientation law and public policy at UCLA School of Law, revealed the findings from the U.S. National Longitudinal Lesbian Family Study (NLLFS), the longest-running study ever conducted on American lesbian families (now in its 24th year). In an article published recently in the Archives of Sexual Behavior, the 17-year-old daughters and sons of lesbian mothers were surveyed about sexual abuse, sexual orientation, and sexual behavior.

The paper finds that none of the 78 NLLFS adolescents report having ever been physically or sexually abused by a parent or other caregiver. This contrasts with 26% of American adolescents who report parent or caregiver physical abuse and 8.3% who report sexual abuse.

The study was conducted by Nanette Gartrell, MD, Henny Bos, PhD (University of Amsterdam), and Naomi Goldberg, MPP (Williams Institute).

Gartrell is a 2010 Williams Distinguished Scholar, an associate clinical professor of psychiatry at UCSF, and affiliated with the University of Amsterdam.

According to the authors, "the absence of child abuse in lesbian mother families is particularly noteworthy, because victimization of children is pervasive and its consequences can be devastating. To the extent that our findings are replicated by other researchers, these reports from adolescents with lesbian mothers have implications for healthcare professionals, policymakers, social service agencies, and child protection experts who seek family models in which violence does not occur."

On sexual orientation, 2.8% of the NLLFS adolescents identified as predominantly to exclusively homosexual.

The NLLFS report noted that: "The first report on the sexual orientation of adults who had been reared by lesbian mothers was based on data collected in 1991-1992 in the United Kingdom by Golombok and Tasker (1996; see also Tasker & Golombok, 1995). Twenty-five adult offspring (17 women and eight men) of lesbian mothers and 21 adult offspring (nine women and 12 men) of heterosexual mothers were interviewed. This study was a follow-up to a survey of their mothers conducted in 1976-1977. In the lesbian

families, the offspring had been conceived in heterosexual relationships before their mothers divorced and identified as lesbian."

The authors have presented their findings to the American Psychological Association, Annual Meeting Society for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, and the American Public Health Association.

The NLLFS was created in 1986 to provide prospective data on a survey of lesbian families from the time the children were conceived until they reach adulthood. The NLLFS has been supported in part by grants from The Gill Foundation, the Lesbian Health Fund of the Gay Lesbian Medical Association, Horizons Foundation, and The Roy Scrivner Fund of the American Psychological Foundation.

A similar study has been conducted for gay men with similar findings, according to Gartrell. The results of that study were published in the Journal of GLBT Family Studies.

For more information on the NLLFS study, go to <http://www.nllfs.org/publications>.

## Grants to local women and girls offer a leg up in a faltering economy

NORTHAMPTON, MA—The Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts is now accepting grant applications to fund non-profit organizations that support women and girls in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties.

"We look for projects that truly address the root causes, that influence long-term social change for women and girls, particularly in the areas of education, economic security and safety," says Julie Kumble, director of grants and programs. The foundation's funds operating support, program support, policy impact projects, and organizational capacity building. "Our grant categories make it easier for organizations to decide where they might best fit in."

Grants will range from \$1,000-\$15,000. Application materials can be found on the foundation's website [www.womensfund.net](http://www.womensfund.net). Grant applications are due on January 31, 2011.

## Book Marks: The Queer Books we love!

By: Richard Labonte\*/Special for TRT

**Hate: A Romance**, by Tristan Garcia, translated by Marion Duvert and Lorin Stein. Faber & Faber, 288 pages, \$14 paper.

The men who hate in Garcia's provocative debut novel — an award-winner when published in France two years ago — once loved each other. Will is first seen as an awkward country teen, fumbling with his physical self-esteem; passionate about the arts, he makes his way to Paris in 1989, a pontificating club kid before spiraling into drugs. Salvaged by journalist Elizabeth — from whose perspective the novel is narrated — he meets her friend, one-time Communist Dominique, a few years older and soon seduced by the younger man's punk charm and blossoming intellect. Standard boy-meets-boy stuff — except that, after Will contracts HIV (from whom is never clear), their lives diverge dramatically. Dominique (Doom), also HIV-positive, becomes an acclaimed safe sex advocate; Will, by this point something of a public intellectual, becomes a proponent of barebacking. It would be a mistake to pigeonhole this controversial book as solely about the politics of sex and AIDS, however; it's first a heady intellectual narrative, a rich novel of ideas, and then, amidst the tumult of personalities at war with each other, it's the story of a romance.



**Whatever Gods May Be**, by Sophia Kell Hagin. Bold Strokes Books, 288 pages, \$16.95 paper.

Written by a lesbian, published by a lesbian press, about a lesbian Marine rising steadily through the ranks during a vicious counter-insurgency war fought over oil rights in the Asian Pacific, this physically and psychologically intense war novel has balls. It has romance too, beginning in boot camp, as teenager Jamie Gwynmorgan — derided as "twat leader" by male colleagues — is drawn to sultry Martina Rhys, the other woman in her platoon. But their simmering sexual tension is secondary to Hagin's incendiary story about women proving themselves as adept at killing as men — all the while coping with the sexism and homophobia still rampant in a near-future military where "queer became legal and cunts got the right to qualify for combat duty." The blood of battle courses through this novel's pages with an astonishing relentlessness; the harrowing experience of prolonged interrogation becomes horrifically riveting. This isn't a novel for the faint of heart. It is a novel for fans of straight-up war stories, with a dash of the supernatural on the side.

\*Richard Labonte has been reading, editing, selling, and writing about queer literature since the mid-'70s. He can be reached in care of this publication or at [BookMarks@qsyndicate.com](mailto:BookMarks@qsyndicate.com).

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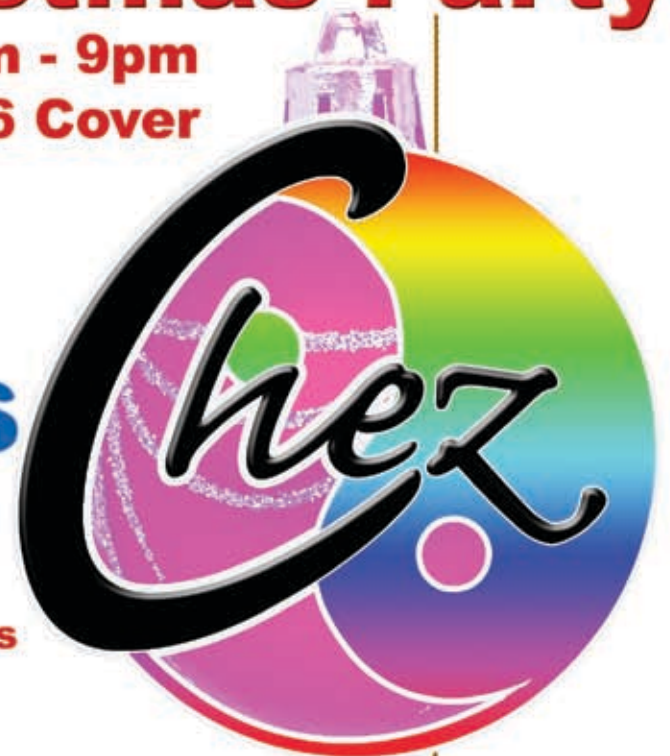
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# Simply Cher: Legend talks film comeback, being a gay icon and son Chaz

By: Chris Azzopardi/Special for TRT

They don't make 'em like Cher anymore. The superdiva, and queen of all gay icons, has been able to successfully pull off singing *and* acting throughout her nearly 50-year career – and she does both in *Burlesque*, her long-awaited return to the big screen out last week, on November 24th. Cher's role as Tess, an L.A. club owner who gives a small-town girl (Christina Aguilera in her acting debut) a shot at fulfilling her dream as a singer, is the Oscar winner's first major part since *Tea with Mussolini* over a decade ago.

"Tess is a character who, in the face of great adversity, manages to pull herself up by her bootstraps and rise like a phoenix – and that is Cher," says writer-director Steven Antin, who nabbed the actress for his big-budget film debut.

Breaking from her Las Vegas show at Caesars Palace, which closes in February after three years, Cher coolly strutted into a suite at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif., with a big smirk and an off-the-shoulder sequined shirt – proof that the legend's not letting her 64 years get in the way of sustaining her sexiness.

Sitting in was Stanley Tucci, who plays her gay assistant and pal (much like the actor did in *The Devil Wears Prada*, alongside Meryl Streep). The two stars laughed a lot over the dirty texts they shared and the scenes they shot together. Cher also talked about her indecisiveness over doing *Burlesque*, why gay men adore her, and shooting an "It Gets Better" video with daughter-turned-son Chaz Bono.

**Chris Azzopardi:** There's no question that this is an incredibly gay movie.

**Cher:** (Laughs) One guy said, "This is gay *Fantasia*!"

**CA:** How does this rank among the gayest things you have done in your career?

**Cher:** Not even anywhere! It doesn't even rank. I don't think of it as a gay film, but of course gay guys love musicals. And it's fun! Gay guys like to have fun, and so I think that's what it is.

**CA:** Do they, Stanley?

**Stanley Tucci:** How would I know? (Sarcasm)

**Cher:** He's just an actor!

**CA:** You've played gay now for Cher and Meryl Streep. Who's the better boss?

**Stanley Tucci:** (Points to Cher) Well, she's much nicer.

**Cher:** That's right – Meryl was horrible! (Both laugh)

**CA:** Gay men have always been a big part of your career. Can you reflect on that?

**Cher:** I've said this many times, but I think gay men either love you or they don't even notice you're alive on the planet. And if they do love you they kind of stick with you through thick

and through thin, even when you're not popular. They recognize kindred spirits that don't really fit into society, either. And, of course, there's sequins.

**CA:** Cher, we haven't seen you onscreen in a long time. What about *Burlesque* drew you back?

**Cher:** You know, I just wanted to sing. I wanted to sing in a film. It was my heart's desire from the time I was about 4, so that's what I wanted to do. I didn't want the film (at first); this was a process. I thought that (Tess) could be a good role. It wasn't exactly what I wanted in the beginning, but she did turn out to be who I thought she should be.

**CA:** What do you love about Tess?

**Cher:** She's my kind of girl. I love that she's working really hard and she's not getting anywhere but she's not giving up. I love the relationship she has with all the (burlesque) girls and with him (Tucci).

**CA:** One of Tess' best moments is the musical number "You Haven't Seen the Last of Me." How do you personally identify with that song?

**Cher:** Stanley and I were talking about this. If you've been in this business, you know what being down is, and if you keep going then you know what struggling through down means.

**CA:** How do you think your performance playing gay in *Silkwood* stands up to gay characters now?

**Cher:** I don't think you "play gay."

**ST:** You don't.

**Cher:** I didn't. If you look at her, she was just a person, and you just play a person. I think for Stanley it was more of a stretch, but the truth is we giggle like (we did in) that first scene all the time. He makes me laugh hysterically, and I just don't think you play that. (Looks at Tucci) I don't think in *The Lovely Bones* you played a murderer; you played a person.

**CA:** How was it for you and Stanley to connect as characters?

**Cher:** We don't get along to this day! (Laughs)

**ST:** It was awful; they're paying me for these interviews. (Laughs) It was great. I was very nervous to meet Cher, there's no doubt about it. But once we started working, we got along very well and we had a great time. In fact, they had to wrangle us in to keep us from laughing all the time.

**CA:** Did you improvise while filming?

**Cher:** There's that part where we're at the rack hanging clothes and at the end he grabs me with his legs – that was so not expected! (Laughs)

**ST:** (Laughs) No one would actually write that in the script.

**Cher:** I remember when I opened the rack and he looked at me, I just started laughing hysterically. That wasn't in (the movie). We would go off on our little tangents. It was fun for us and



CHER PHOTOS: COURTESY OF SCREEN GEMS

Stanley Tucci and Cher in a scene from the newly released *Burlesque*.

I think when you're having fun on the screen, people get it.

**CA:** You wore something to the MTV Video Music Awards this year that was very similar to the outfit in the "If I Could Turn Back Time" video. Was that planned?

**Cher:** I wear that every night (laughs). I just had it and I didn't have time to think of an outfit and thought it would be fun.

**CA:** What's next for you?

**Cher:** There's an album, but I haven't been able to get to it. That's going to be the next thing I really want to do – unless a movie with Stanley comes up.

**CA:** Clint said you tried to pull out of the film. Was that only because of the character?

**Cher:** Yeah. In life I don't know what I want nearly as much as what I want in a character. I complained a lot about the hours – we had many 16-hour days in heels. It was hard.

**CA:** Are there plans to film a video with Chaz for the "It Gets Better" campaign directed toward LGBT youth?

**Cher:** We haven't talked about it. She's been... she, I do this all

the time; the pronouns are just f%\$&#d. He's doing the documentary and this book, so that's been taking up all the time.

**CA:** Looking back at your early career, what advice would you give yourself?

**Cher:** Shut my mouth! (Laughs)

**ST:** You would shut your mouth?

**Cher:** Yeah, I would shut my mouth a lot

more than I have in my life. I wouldn't have done anything different because you just do what you do, sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. You just have to keep going. Mistakes are just mistakes.

**Cher (about her new movie *Burlesque*) "One guy said, This is gay *Fantasia*!"**



PHOTO: STEPHEN VAUGHAN

Christina Aguilera in *Burlesque*



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## Holiday Gift Guide from page 11

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### GO THE EXTRA SMILE

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### NEURAL TUBE

While movie tickets continue to climb, the ultimate in home-viewing entertainment gets more accessible. The Toshiba WX800 Cinema Series 3D LED HDTV delivers an impressive three-dimensional experience within a premium, ultra-thin package. Beyond its luxe look, the WX800 is a wonder worthy of the Cinema Series label,

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### LIGHT 'EM UP

His bulbs will shine bright in these festive trunks from Pact, an eco-friendly and cause-conscious underwear shop. A portion of the proceeds will help charitable organizations EarthSpark and Citizen Effect send handheld solar lanterns to Haitians in need. (\$22; [www.wearpact.com](http://www.wearpact.com))



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To continue this story, visit us online at [www.therainbowtimesmass.com/12022010/holidaygiftguide.html](http://www.therainbowtimesmass.com/12022010/holidaygiftguide.html)

\*Mikey Rox is an award-winning writer/journalist and the founder of Paper Rox Scissors, a copywriting and creative consulting company in New York City. He can be reached at [mikey@paperroxscissors.com](mailto:mikey@paperroxscissors.com).

## Homo for the Holidays: A festive selection of TV favorites & specials!

By: Mikey Rox\*/Special for TRT

### DECEMBER 3

• **The Polar Express** (ABC Family; 8:30PM/7:30c)

### DECEMBER 4

• **A Christmas Carol (1938)** (TCM; 9AM/8c)  
• **Surviving Christmas** (TBS; 1:30PM/12:30c)  
• **Celebrity Holiday Homes** (HGTV; 8PM/7c)

Get a glimpse inside the homes of Brooke Burke, Sherri Shepherd and Trisha Yearwood as HGTV designers Brandon Branch, Mike Russo and Sandra Espinet turn them into seasonal sanctuaries.

• **Merry Madagascar** (NBC; 8PM/7c)

• **Kung Fu Panda Holiday Special** (NBC; 8:30PM/7:30c)

Po faces a daunting dilemma when, as Dragon Warrior, he may have to sacrifice family traditions to fulfill his formal duties at the Jade Palace.

• **Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas** (ABC Family; 11PM/10c)

Jack Skellington of Halloween Town plots to kidnap Santa Claus and become the overlord of Christmas – and the box office. This film has been repackaged and re-released in theaters seven separate times over the past 17 years.

### DECEMBER 5

• **Harry Potter Marathon** (ABC Family; 7AM/6c)

An entire morning, noon and night filled with magic and mayhem from everyone's favorite witches and wizards.

• **Holiday Affair** (TCM; 12:30PM/11:30c)

• **The Christmas Child** (Lifetime; 3PM/2c)

• **A Dad for Christmas** (Lifetime; 5PM/4c)

A young dad steals his own child from the hospital when the boy's mother puts him up for adoption against the father's wishes. This just screams holiday cheer, doesn't it?

### DECEMBER 6

• **Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and the Island of Misfit Toys** (ABC Family; 7PM/6c)

• **Martha Stewart's Holiday Open House** (Hallmark; 8PM/7c)

• **The Best Thing I Ever Made for the Holidays** (Food Network; 9PM/8c)

Celebrity chefs Cat Cora, Aaron Sánchez, Ted Allen and others invite viewers inside their homes as they prepare their signature holiday dishes, including juicy prime rib, sweet butter tarts, and crispy rack of pork.

### DECEMBER 7

• **Mickey's Christmas Special** (ABC Family; 7PM/6c)

• **Cranberry Christmas** (ABC Family; 7:30PM/6:30c)

This adaptation of a children's book series was commissioned by Ocean Spray. Yep, the juice makers. And wouldn't ya know it, a bunch of kids are fighting for the right to ice skate on a local cranberry bog. Pairs nicely with a shot of vodka.

• **A Charlie Brown Christmas** (ABC; 8PM/7c)

• **Frosty's Winter Wonderland** (ABC Family; 8PM/7c)

• **Home Alone 2: Lost in New York** (ABC Family; 8:30PM/7:30c)

• **Miracle on 34th Street** (1994) (ABC Family; 8:30PM/7:30c)

### DECEMBER 8

• **Rudolph's Shiny New Year** (ABC Family; 6PM/5c)

### DECEMBER 9

• **Rudolph's Shiny New Year** (ABC Family; 6PM/5c)

See Homo for the Holidays on page 22

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# Give a Damn Campaign releases new PSA about LGBT youth homelessness

Featuring: Susan Sarandon, Alan Cumming, Rebecca Romijn, Pete Wentz, Eden Riegel and Cyndi Lauper, among other celebs

NEW YORK, NY—The Give a Damn Campaign, a project of Cyndi Lauper's True Colors Fund, has released its latest video during National Runaway Prevention Month to raise awareness about homeless gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth. Susan Sarandon, Alan Cumming, Rebecca Romijn, Pete Wentz, Eden Riegel and Cyndi Lauper speak up about the need to bring an end to this epidemic.

Each year, between 500,000 and 1.6 million youth in the U.S. are homeless or runaways. Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth make up an estimated 3% to 5% of the general U.S. population. Yet they make up more than 20%—and possibly up to 40%—of all homeless youth in the country.

Family conflict is the most common cause of all youth homelessness. For gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth, the conflict tends to be over their sexual orientation or gender identity. Half of all teens get a negative reaction from their parents when they come out to them resulting in many of them running away. More than 1 in 4 are actually thrown out of their homes by their parents.

"As a parent, I can't understand those who would kick out their own kid simply because they are gay or transgender," says Cyndi Lauper. "Your child is a part of you, throwing them out on the street is like ripping out a part of your own soul. No child should ever be homeless, especially when they have a family that can give them the love and acceptance that they need. It's time all of us parents join to-

gether and let our kids know that their home is always a safe place for them no matter what."

Once living on the streets, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth have to learn to survive amidst a higher rate of victimization and suicide that awaits them. They also have to deal with greater difficulties in finding resources that are willing or able to help them due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, sometimes facing further rejection from the very people and institutions that are supposed to assist them.

To learn more about this gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender homeless youth, please visit [www.wegiveadamn.org](http://www.wegiveadamn.org). To watch the video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMDPtejcKSA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMDPtejcKSA)

## ABOUT THE GIVE A DAMN CAMPAIGN

The Give a Damn Campaign, a project of Cyndi Lauper's True Colors Fund, is a bold, web-based initiative with the goal of educating and engaging the straight community in the advancement of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality. The campaign produces call-to-action videos that have featured Elton John, Whoopi Goldberg, Susan Sarandon, Ricky Martin, Jason Mraz, Anna Paquin, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Alan Cumming, Cynthia Nixon, Lily Tomlin, Pete Wentz, Piper Perabo, Sharon & Kelly Osbourne, Judith Light, Rebecca Romijn, Wanda Sykes, Margaret Cho, Mae Whitman, Kim Kardashian, Clay Aiken, Eric Roberts, and Cyndi Lauper.

# Rufus Wainwright brings two-night acoustic performance to Jorgensen

STORRS, CT—This time when you see Rufus Wainwright, it will be personal. First, there's no orchestra, just him, his voice and a piano. Second, Scottish artist Douglas Gordon has created a video close-up of Wainwright's eye as an emotional stage element on the Grammy-nominated singer/songwriter's world tour.

Wainwright's two nights in the popular Jorgensen Cabaret setting, on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 10 and 11, will feature songs from his new album, "All Days Are Nights: Songs For Lulu." And it's pure Rufus.

"With this album, when the curtain is raised, it's me on my own," says Wainwright, who toured with a 70-piece orchestra to perform his celebrated opera, "Prima Donna," that debuted in 2009.

A favorite of critics and vocal purists, Wainwright has been dubbed "genuine" by The New York Times and "the greatest songwriter on the planet" by Elton John. He has released eight albums and three DVDs to date, and has appeared on numerous soundtracks and compilations, making music alongside Elton John, David Byrne, Rosanne Cash, Pet Shop Boys and Keane.

He composed music for choreographer Stephen Petronio's work, BLOOM, and for a musical adaptation of Shakespeare Sonnets that debuted in 2009. He has acted in films, including Martin Scorsese's "The Aviator" and the Merchant Ivory film "Heights."



PHOTO: KEVIN WESTENBERG

## Rufus Wainwright

Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts is located at 2132 Hillside Road on the UConn campus in Storrs. Doors open at 7 p.m. Sandwiches, dessert, alcohol and other beverages are available for purchase, cash only. Regular tickets are \$45, \$38 and \$34, with some discounts available. For tickets and information, call the Box Office at 860.486.4226, Monday through Friday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., or order online at [jorgensen.uconn.edu](http://jorgensen.uconn.edu). Convenient free parking is available across the street in the North Garage.

Co-sponsored by the UConn Rainbow Center, with media sponsorship by The Rainbow Times.

## Queeries from page 2

You can also report the individuals making the hateful comments to Facebook, who will cancel their accounts.

## "Dad just told us he's gay"

**Q:** On National Coming Out Day, my father recently told the family that he's gay. To be honest, I didn't know what to say back to him. What would you have suggested?

**A:** In a dream world, you'd be genuinely happy for your father and shout "Mazel tov" or "Congratulations" and give him a big hug. And it would be but one supportive voice among many, with warm wishes from friends, colleagues and other relatives alike. But if that's not in your heart right now, at the very least I'd suggest you thank your dad for being open and honest with you and tell him that your love for him has not changed. Most LGBT people—yes, even our fathers and mothers—fear rejection more than anything else when they're coming out. By the way, it's not too late to take my advice and speak with your dad.

## "My best friend's lover is cheating"

**Q:** The other day my friend, Stan, invited me over for drinks. When I got to his apartment, Barry, who is partnered with my best friend, had just come out of the bedroom wearing a towel. It was really awkward and Stan was shocked that I know Barry and his partner. Barry and my best friend have been together for years and their relationship is supposed to be monogamous: Do I tell my friend, yell at Barry -- or just keep my mouth shut?

**A:** Yikes! What's up with Stan that he in-

vited you over while he still has a paramour on the premises?

If you step back from the situation a little, however, you'll realize that best thing that could happen would be for Barry to let you know that he's going fess up to his partner—so that 1) you don't have to and 2) you won't have to have a guilty conscience about saying nothing to your friend. With any luck, Barry will reach out to you with this plan. But, if he doesn't, call him and let him know "what a good idea" you'd think it would be for him to "do the right thing." Obviously, the implied threat is that if he doesn't speak up, you will, but I wouldn't actually say that.

Still, Barry may call your bluff by not saying anything. Then, I'd fold and sit it out on the sidelines because you're really in a no-win situation. If you turn Barry in, there's the slight possibility that your understanding of their monogamous status was wrong in the first place -- or that sharing this information wasn't what your friend would have wanted. Perhaps, ignorance may be bliss for him.

Finally, I'd be remiss if I didn't point out that couples often do "kill the messenger" in a charged situation like this. If these two fellows get through this rough patch and back to trusting each other, there's a real possibility they will both view you as interfering or as a troublemaker. If in the end, if your friend does find out that you knew about his philandering partner and didn't say anything, tell him the truth: That was Barry's responsibility.

\*Steven Petrow ([www.gaymanners.com](http://www.gaymanners.com)) is the author of "The Essential Book of Gay Manners & Etiquette" and a regular contributor to Huffington Post and GayWeddings.com. Send him your questions: [ask@gaymanners.com](mailto:ask@gaymanners.com).

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# 'Tis the season: There is always reason to hope - are you feeling jolly?

TRANS OPINION

By: Deja Nicole Greenlaw\*/TRT Columnist

As the song goes "Soon it will be Christmas day" so does the time go! Before you know it, summer is gone, autumn flies by and it is here. Yes, the holiday season is upon us and 'tis the season to be jolly and to be with the family and celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa or the like. For some LGBT folks it is not a very nice time of year. Sometimes we are excluded from family gatherings because of who we are. I know that some LGB people have a very difficult time but in this column I want to explore what may happen during the holidays if you are transgender, especially if you are a transwoman.

Some transgender people are completely shunned from their family's celebration. There is no way that a family invite will come. Lines have been crossed and bridges have been seemingly burned. There is no room for compromise here. It's all or nothing and the transperson gets nothing. No invite, no gift, no card, no call, no love, nothing.

Then there are those who will be invited to family functions but they are invited only as their previous gender, not their real gender. For transwomen that means no skirts, no dresses, no blouses, and no make-up. The "acceptable uniform" is androgynous at best. Transwomen who have children and/or grandchildren are some who may fall into this category. "Dad," "grandpa" or "uncle" are the greetings for these transwomen and their former name is used continually throughout the day. Hear-



Deja Nicole Greenlaw

ing their old name continually may feel like bullets hitting you all day long. By the end of the day you are psychologically beaten down. Yes, it is wonderful to see your family, but what a price to pay!

Still some others may attend family functions as who they are but they may not do so on the actual holiday. They get to see their family usually in the weekend before the holidays or maybe a day or two afterward. It is at that time that they can see their children or their mom, dad, sibling and other family members. On the day of these "off date" functions things may go well and it appears to be normal. Could it be that progress is being made? Maybe, but come the actual holiday there may be no invite. The progress stops at that point.

At the top of the list are those who are accepted into their families as who they are and the family members will invite them to celebrate on the actual date with all the rest of the other relatives. This is total acceptance and I say "Thank you and I love you!!" to all of those family members who will invite you as you for the holidays. These folks are Angels! If you are transgender and you have such people in your family please hug them and love them. You are fortunate to have such wonderful support.

To the family members who aren't quite 100% behind us but they are doing their best to process it, I say "Thank you and please continue trying!" To those who are 50-50 I say "Please choose love." To those who are less than 50% I say please try to understand." Finally, to those who are 100% against us I say "Please listen to our story before you decide." When you hear someone's personal story, you just might understand them better. How can you hate someone when you've heard their story?

For those who have members of their family wrestling with us being transgender the best we can do is to try to enjoy the holidays. Wherever you are with respects to your family please try to enjoy. Smile! Laugh! Love! Hug! These kinds of things will only help. If you do get into a gender conversation, please keep it respectful even if it isn't respectful towards you. We must take the high road on this one. To slink down to the low road may mean shouting matches, saying things that you might regret later on and overall bad feelings afterward.

To those of us who will be alone on the holidays I suggest planning something ahead of time, which will fill those holiday hours. Hook up with a friend who is in the same boat as you and do something together. Go over to your friend's house and watch a movie. Maybe go out to a theater? The movie houses are busy on those days and it might be nice to get out. Afterward you might be lucky and find a Chinese restaurant that is open.

Last year I was fortunate enough to spend the day with my old boyfriend who does not

celebrate the holidays. There are surprisingly many people who do not celebrate the holidays so ask around and see what your friends are doing.

If you cannot connect with someone else you could always plan to stay home alone. Get something that you like to eat and enjoy being at home. Maybe work on a project, create, paint or redecorate a little that day. Find something that is good for your soul and enjoy it! Listen to your favorite songs! Read one of your favorite books! Surround yourself with things that you love and the holiday hours will quickly pass.

Of course you can always go on line and social network. You can see what others are doing, feeling sharing etc. Oh, and don't forget that Trans FM will be broadcasting every day all though the holiday season stating on the evening of December 13 and running straight through to December 25 at midnight. You can catch this broadcast on the internet. Search for Trans FM and hook into Ethan St. Pierre as he airs his annual "Hellidaze" broadcast. Ethiee will get you through the rough spots and he will brighten up your holidays or "hellidaze" as he calls it.

Realizing where you are with respects to your family, successfully dealing with it and planning ahead to fill the holiday hours, may bring you some Peace this holiday season!

*\*Deja Nicole Greenlaw is a local transwoman who has 3 grown children and works at a local Fortune 500 company. She can be contacted at dejavudeja@sbcglobal.net.*

## Estradiol extravaganza! My life on Hormone Replacement Therapy

By: Lorelei Erisis\*/TRT Columnist

It's column time again folks! Normally for these things I use your standard advice columnist format, tried and true since the days of "Ask Ye Olde Village Idiot." But one of the biggest dilemmas associated with being a columnist and a highly accessible trans-lebrity is that folks often just march up to me and ask things directly. I'm like Visa, I'm everywhere you want to be. So it's easy.

As it happens, I've just returned from the Transcending Boundaries Conference in Worcester, at which I was an entertainer, presenter and emcee. I was pretty busy, but it was a great time and also a good chance to meet all kinds of folks, many of whom had questions.

Over the last few days I was asked repeatedly about the nuts and bolts of my transition. What meds do I take? How does it affect me? What can I tell them about the physical and emotional effects of HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy). I get asked this a lot actually, so I thought it would be an appropriate thing for me to address here.

To be absolutely clear, I'm not a doctor, not even kind of, though I could play a Doctor on TV. I'm an actor and a columnist, neither of which professions involves much medical training.

I am also, a transgender woman, a fact you may have gathered from the name of this column.

What I can share is my own story and experience.

I began HRT about 3 1/2 years ago, while liv-

ing in Los Angeles and had made the firm decision that I was done trying to deny who I was. I came out to my family and friends about my decision to transition and signed up for both single and group therapy at the LGBT Center in Hollywood.

I did not really want to be labeled with the "Gender Dysphoria" diagnosis, but I did feel it was prudent to talk to someone about such a big decision who didn't have a vested interest in my life or gender. The experience was enormously helpful, but I still refused the diagnosis.

Fortunately I was acquainted with a Doctor who specialized in Transgender Health and who was a transwoman herself. The fabulous Dr. Maddie Deutsch.

Dr. Deutsch was willing to start me on HRT using what is called an "Informed Consent" model. Basically we had a discussion about the risks and benefits associated with HRT, and then I signed several forms stating I knew what I was doing and was choosing to do so from an educated and healthy position.

I was started on a daily oral tablet regimen of Estradiol, an estrogen; and Spironolactone, a testosterone blocker. Basically what happens is that you go through puberty a second time. The changes that happen are essentially what would have happened if you had gone through puberty as your "chosen" gender the first time. And it takes about the same length of time for all the changes to run their course—anywhere from 5 to 8 years.

Right now, as an adult in my mid-thirties, I'm hormonally a 16 year old girl, which is quite a ride let me tell you! My body has been changing, my skin softening, breasts, a\$\$ and hips growing. I also cry all the time, often for no



Lorelei Erisis

readily discernable reason.

I even went kind of boy crazy!!

Soon though, I ended up having to return to the East Coast for a while to take care of my dying Grandmother.

Basically I went back to the neighborhood I grew up in to begin my transition!

An odd choice to say the least. Unfortunately, due to the difficulties associated with having a Doctor who was 3000 miles away, and the stresses of taking care of a dying family member, I ended up losing my Doctor.

When I returned to LA I had been on HRT for more than 6 months and had no intention of stopping. I soon lost my job though and could not afford a new Doctor, so I did what I had to do to: be who I was.

I would take the Greyhound bus from LA down to Tijuana, then walk across the border to buy my hormones at one of the many "farmacias." "Yo necesito Estradiol en dos miligramos tabletas por favor! Y Spironolactone, tambien."

I would get my hormones, then get carinitas tacos, and Negra Modelo at my favorite "Taqueria" and spend the day wandering around in another country. Then re-cross the border, praying that the border guards would not ask to look in my bag.

Eventually I returned to Massachusetts. Once back in the land of healthcare for all, I was able to find a new Doctor at the Fenway

Health clinic in Boston. I was supremely pleased to be back under proper medical supervision.

HRT is pretty radical thing to do your body and mind.

In addition to being the doctor who oversees my HRT, my new doctor also takes care of my health as a whole woman, which is wonderful. She's new to trans health but is always learning, keeping up with the latest information, which she shares with me. She answers my questions clearly and is not afraid to tell me when she either doesn't know or there is not enough research to tell.

My hormone levels recently reached that of a normal, cisgender woman and so the dosages of my meds were adjusted down, to maintenance levels. I also, switched to injectable Estradiol, which is, arguably, safer and easier on my poor overworked Irish liver than the oral meds are.

So that's where I stand now. Three and a half years down the path and still changing. Isn't life grand?!?!?!?

Slainte!

*\*Lorelei Erisis, former Miss Trans New England, can be contacted at: loreleierisis@therainbowtimesmass.com.*

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# Fenway Health at forefront in global battle against HIV/AIDS pandemic

By: Chuck Colbert/TRT Reporter

*More than 25 years into the HIV/AIDS pandemic, statistics of HIV rates of infection are shocking:*

- "Every ten minutes, someone in the United States gets infected with HIV," cautions HopeTakesAction.org, a website seeking volunteers to participate in a clinical vaccine trial to prevent infection.

- Sixty-three percent of all HIV/AIDS cases nationwide are among gay and bisexual men, with HIV infection rates rising among men who have sex with men, according to Fenway Health, a state-of-the-art facility, providing comprehensive medical care to the LGBT community of Greater Boston.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that close to one in five gay and bisexual men in 21 major US cities are infected with HIV, and half of them do not know it. Apparently, some younger gay and bisexual men either don't remember the early years of AIDS or have a sense it won't happen to them.

Among older men, another attitude has set in: "No-big-deal, it's-a-chronic-treatable disease, like diabetes.

"It's very interesting," said Ronn Bill, research coordinator at The Fenway Institute, who has worked on a number of HIV clinical trials. "Some men are very conscious and practice safe sex. Others have to be convinced the epidemic happened, and they are at risk."

"There seems to be a perception, at least in some parts of the community, that HIV is not a problem and that why do we need to be involved in HIV prevention and research," said Marcy Gelman, associate director of clinical research at Fenway Institute.

Still, "It's well documented that men of color is a particularly concerning community"



PHOTO: CHUCK COLBERT

**L-t-R: Fenway Health's associate director of communications Christopher A. Viveiros, along with Marcy Gelman, Chris Chianese, Vanessa Marquez, and Ronn Bill.**

among MSM (short form for men who have sex with men), she said recently during a wide ranging interview. In fact, men of color MSM "may well be at higher risk and have higher rates of infection that is even know about." The bottom line, Gelman explained, "HIV rates of infection are the same as they were ten years ago."

That's the grim news.

And yet there is plenty of promise in no small measure thanks to biomedical research at Fenway.

Indeed good news broke recently on one HIV/AIDS battleground - a new prevention approach called Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis or PrEP.

On Nov. 23, The New England Journal of Medicine reported the results of a new study showing that individuals at high risk for HIV infection who took a single daily tablet containing two widely used HIV medications, the antiretroviral drugs emtricitabine and tenofovir, experienced an average of 43.8 percent fewer HIV infections than those who were assigned to take a placebo pill.

To continue this story, visit us online at [www.therainbowtimesmass.com/12022010/fenway.html](http://www.therainbowtimesmass.com/12022010/fenway.html).



PHOTO: CHUCK COLBERT

**Kenneth H. Mayer, MD, co-chair of the Fenway Institute.**

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# MA first in nation again: MTPC pioneers with a first-ever Trans public awareness initiative

By: Chuck Colbert/TRT Reporter

The message is as all-American as the Fourteenth Amendment.

"The country was built on equal opportunity," a new multi-media public education campaign begins. "As transgender people we are asking for the opportunity to take care of our families and be free from discrimination."

No big surprise: "I AM: Trans People Speak," the nation's first-ever public awareness initiative, springs from navy blue Massachusetts. But the brief personal stories — in video, audio, written essay, and photo format — hold the same message even for crimson red localities.

"We want to explain to people who we are, the issues we face from our own voices, not from a medical model," said Gunner Scott, executive director of the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition (MTPC).

At a recent launch party, held at a popular eatery in Boston's Jamaica Plain neighborhood, Scott said his "crazy idea" for the project came from National Public Radio when he heard about immigrants telling their stories through the "We Are America" multi-media program.

Scott floated his idea at a staff meeting this past summer. "No one said, 'Gunner, are you absolutely out of your mind,'" he explained.

Voilà: MTPC fast tracked the project. The Coalition received a \$35,000 grant from the State Equality Fund, assembled a team, and within three months were up and running with the project ([www.TransPeopleSpeak.org](http://www.TransPeopleSpeak.org)).

AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts, Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, The Fenway Institute, and The Network/La Red are co-sponsors, along with the State Street Corporation.

Scott said that another \$20,000 would enable MTPC to place ads on MBTA subway trains and busses. "This is not

the end, but the beginning," he said.

Transgender people are widely misunderstood by the general public and the media, Scott and other transgender-rights advocates say.

"Much of the media is negative," explained Jesse Begenyi. A documentary filmmaker, she serves as MTPC clerk, as well as on the trans speak team.

"We feel boxed in," Begenyi said. "Trans people are so much more than their trans experience," she said, referring to the story told by Cohasset resident Michelle Figueiredo, whose video is one of eight posted on the "I AM: Trans People Speak" web site.

"Her whole video is about how she ran a marathon; there's nothing about being transgender," said Begenyi, who is also a videographer for the project.

And yet Figueiredo's experience transiting from male to female while on the job at State Street cuts to the heart of the public education efforts.

During a short interview at the launch party, Figueiredo, a manager, spoke about the support she received from human resources and her boss.

"I went to an HR person who said, 'Let's explore how we do this. We support you,'" she said.

**See Trans People Speak on page 23**



PHOTO: JESSE BEGENYI

**Michelle Figueiredo**

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## Openly Gay David Cicilline elected to Congress

**By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter**

Rhode Island LGBT voters elected openly gay Congressional candidate David Cicilline in the race to succeed outgoing Congressman Patrick Kennedy (D).

Cicilline, the 49 year-old Mayor of Providence, trounced his Republican challenger John Loughlin, a State Rep. from Little Compton,

Cicilline won 51 percent of the vote to about 45 percent for Loughlin, a conservative who vowed to continue Bush's tax cuts, denied the existence of global warming, and opposed a repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

Cicilline is now the fourth openly gay member of the House of Representatives.

Cicilline's political career began in 1994, when he was elected as a state representative, staking out liberal positions on civil rights, abortion, gay rights, and gun control.

In 2002, Cicilline was elected as Mayor with 84 percent of the vote, and was re-elected in 2006.

Cicilline had been mentioned as a possible candidate for Governor, but he announced in 2009 that he would be seeking a third term as Mayor of Providence.

After Kennedy announced last February that he was retiring from Congress after serving for 14 years, Cicilline announced his candidacy.

Cicilline won the endorsement of prominent gay politicians, including House Majority Leader Gordon Fox (D-Providence) and State Rep. Frank Ferri (D-Warwick).

In September, Cicilline triumphed in a four-way Democratic primary, defeating businessman Anthony Gemma, former state Democratic party chairman William Lynch, and State Rep. David Segal.

However, Cicilline had his share of critics, who faulted him for his record as Mayor.

"In my opinion, David Cicilline was an ineffective Mayor. He is leaving behind a enormous debt and a city in disarray," said Greg Wright, who voted for Loughlin.

Incumbent Democratic Congressman James Langevin was re-elected, defeating Republican rival Mark Zaccaria.

In the General Assembly, openly gay incumbents were re-elected, including Fox, Ferri, and State Rep. Deborah Ruggiero (D-Jamestown, Middletown).

Pro-LGBT incumbents who were re-elected include State Reps. Edith Ajello (D), Arthur Handy (D), Scott Slater (D), Grace Diaz (D), and Donald Lally (D), and State Senators Juan Pichardo (D), Rhoda Perry (D), Donna Nesselbush (D), Erin Lynch (D), Nicholas Kettle (R), Joshua Miller (D), Christopher Ottiano (R), and Susan Sosnowski (D).

LGBT activists were delighted with the results.

"Rhode Islanders chose candidates--almost across the board--who actively support full equality for LGBTQ people," said Wendy Becker, who believes there is great chance of passing a same-sex marriage bill in the next legislative session.

However, Becker said LGBTs need to remain vigilant: "We must organize to fight the opposition as elections don't affect the powerful religious lobbies in this state."

"Rhode Islanders across the state have spoken out for equality," noted Patrick Smock, chair of MERI PAC. "They cast their votes and are sending marriage equality supporters to the State House to bring fairness and respect to all the families in our state, their friends and neighbors."

## Rhode Island LGBT Veterans speak out on DADT

**By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter**

With the ongoing effort to repeal the military's anti-gay Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy in the news, The Rainbow Times sat down with two Rhode Island LGBT veterans to discuss their experiences, ordeals when enlisting, and how they feel about the current policy.

### Barbara Humma

Barbara Humma, from Warwick, served in the Navy from 1976 through 1985. Humma was attending nursing school in California when she decided to join. She had uncles who had served in the Navy and "saw it as an opportunity to further my career."

Humma, who was 22 when she enlisted, knew she was attracted to women. However, she had kept her sexual orientation a secret.

The Navy recruiter asked Humma if she was "homosexual."

"I said no but I knew I was lying," Humma recalled. "It bothered me."

During her time in the Navy, she met many gay officers and went to gay clubs. In those days, people did not discuss their sexual orientation.

"The military is a closed environment," Humma said. "It wouldn't have been easier (as a gay man or lesbian) to be out."

Humma did not encounter a lot of homophobia in the hospital where she worked as a corpsman. Humma conducted physicals and other tests for Marines who were about to ship out for overseas tours. She later became an operating room technician.

Humma remembers hearing about military personnel who were discharged from the service for being gay.

Humma opposes Don't Ask, Don't Tell and pointed out that other countries allow gays and lesbians to serve openly.

"They're all equal," Humma noted. Humma enjoyed her time in the Navy and feels proud of her service. "I would do it again," Humma added.



PHOTO: JOE SIEGEL

### Tom Koch

Koch was assigned to a medical clinic in Oklahoma, where he worked with a doctor who he knew was gay.

"He was very well-respected," Koch said. "He didn't go to a lot of effort to appear straight."

There were other men on the base who Koch suspected were gay as well. However, Koch never heard any homophobic comments.

"I think a lot of people really don't care" about sexual orientation," Koch said, explaining military personnel were focused on doing their jobs.

However, Koch did not date women during his four years in the Air Force and had not accepted his own sexuality.

"I was fearful of anyone who was too much like me," Koch noted.

Koch admits to being angry at President Obama for not doing more to repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell. He wants the discharges of highly qualified gay and lesbian soldiers to stop.

"This is a civil rights issue," Koch added.



PHOTO: JOE SIEGEL

### Barbara Humma

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**LESBIAN TOP 10**

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2. My Normal
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5. The Kids Are All Right
6. Women's Coming Out 6-Pack
7. The Real L Word - Complete First Season
8. Hannah Free
9. And Then Came Lola
10. Loving Annabelle + Mädchen In Uniform

**GAY TOP 10**

1. Plan B
2. David's Birthday
3. Arizona Sky
4. Is It Just Me?
5. 8: The Mormon Proposition
6. Howl
7. Men's Coming Out 6-Pack
8. Pornography: A Thriller
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## Rhode Island's LGBTQQ Youth 'Live Out Loud'

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

Nearly 200 people were in attendance at the Providence Biltmore on November 5 for Live Out Loud, Youth Pride, Inc.'s (YPI) annual fundraising gala. The event paid tribute to individuals and groups who have made outstanding contributions to the lives of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning youth.

YPI is Rhode Island's largest statewide organization devoted to meeting the needs of LG-BTQQ youth. Programs include OUTspoken – a leadership training program, one-one counseling, case management, The Way Out – a peer led support group, Gay/Straight Alliance Network Organizing, and an LGBTQQ Task Force for Youth.

Honorary chairs for the event were Providence Mayor David Cicilline, State Representative Frank Ferri (D-Warwick), and Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts.

The Founders Award was presented to Anne Marie Sylvia, who has worked in the public health and education field for nearly 40 years managing several non-profits.

Sylvia also served as Executive Director of AIDS Project Rhode Island and currently serves as HIV/Sexuality Specialist at the RI Department of Education.

Sylvia is a consultant to YPI's Board of Directors.

Beth Vorro, a former YPI Board member, called Sylvia a "passionate and effective" leader.

Sylvia praised the work YPI does on behalf of gay youth, noting it was "rare to find an organization that touches so many people in so many ways."

"I wish Youth Pride was around 30 years ago when I was coming out," said Sylvia. "I might have come out sooner."

CFAR, the Lifespan/Tufts/Brown Center for AIDS Research was the recipient of the Lipsky/Whittaker Award, named for John Lipsky and George Whittaker who were life partners for more than 50 years. Their estate established a Scholarship Fund to benefit LGBTQQ youth.

The CFAR is part of a national program begun



PHOTO: JOE SIEGEL

### YPI participants at the Live Out Loud gala.

by the National Institutes of health in 1988. The Lifespan/Tufts/brown CFAR is a collaboration of senior AIDS investigators at the Tufts and Brown Universities and their affiliated hospitals which have stimulated new AIDS research.

Dr. Ken Mayer, Professor of Medicine at Brown Medical School, accepted the award on behalf of CFAR.

"It's so important to have an organization like YPI to let (LGBTQQ youth) know they're not alone and to help them transition into living fulfilling lives," Mayer said.

The Luis Pagan Award, named for a former YPI participant, was presented to Ruby Lazo, a 2010 graduate of The Met High School in Providence. Lazo became involved with YPI during her sophomore year of high school. Lazo helped organize a Day of Silence in her high school, conducted safe-zone trainings throughout New England, and took on the role of OUTspoken's program assistant.

Lazo pledged that as a straight ally she would "continue Luis' message of activism and equality."

"Please continue to share your stories," Lazo said to the YPI participants in the room. "You have the power to change lives."

For more information about Youth Pride, Inc., go to <http://www.youthprideri.org> or call 421-5626.

## RI Gays welcome Governor-elect Lincoln Chafee

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

LGBTs in the Ocean State cheered earlier last month when the vote totals showed that Independent Gubernatorial candidate Lincoln Chafee had prevailed over his Republican challenger John Robitaille, who had vowed to veto a same-sex marriage bill if elected.

In a four-way race, Chafee garnered 36 percent of the vote, while Robitaille got almost 34 percent. Democratic candidate Frank Caprio came in third, with 23 percent. Moderate Party candidate Ken Block got 6.5 percent.

Chafee, 57, served as Mayor of Warwick and later was appointed to the United States Senate in 1999 following the death of his father, Senator John Chafee. Chafee was elected in 2000 and served until 2006, when he was defeated by former state Attorney General Sheldon Whitehouse (D).

Disgusted by the GOP's increasingly extreme views, Chafee left the party and became an Independent.

Rhode Island currently has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country and a massive budget deficit.

At a press conference last month, Chafee acknowledged that it was a "very challenging time" for the state.

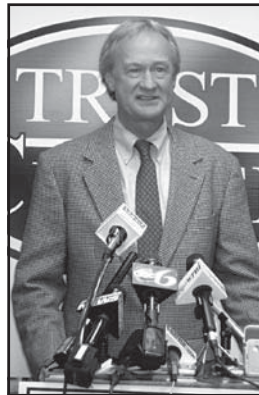


PHOTO: JOE SIEGEL

### Lincoln Chafee

The sales tax was a huge concern of voters, Chafee explained, noting some people were reluctant to vote for him due to that issue. Still, he stands by his position.

"I don't have any regrets," Chafee noted. "I'm open to better ideas."

Chafee succeeds Governor Don Carcieri (R), whose term expires next January. Carcieri has also been a vehement opponent of same-sex marriage and has incurred the wrath of the LGBT community for his stance on that issue. Carcieri also supported the National Organization for Marriage (NOM), which ran radio ads trying to win support for Robitaille.

While a member of the U.S. Senate, Chafee had been an ardent supporter of LGBT rights. Earlier this year he signed a pledge, along with Caprio and Block, to sign a same-sex marriage bill into law if elected Governor.

Marriage Equality Rhode Island (MERI) endorsed Chafee for his support of same-sex marriage rights.

Chafee recently met with supporters of marriage equality and vowed to work with the state's legislative leaders to make same-sex marriage a reality.

To continue this story, visit us online at [www.therainbowtimesmass.com/12022010/chafee.html](http://www.therainbowtimesmass.com/12022010/chafee.html)

## David Abbott speaks about the importance of LGBTQ activism in Mt. Holyoke College visit

By: Clara Lefton/TRT Guest Reporter

SOUTH HADLEY, MA—David Abbott, former member of ACT-UP and present director of the Rhode Island AIDS Project, gave a speech at Mount Holyoke College entitled "The Importance of Activism in the LGBTQ Movement" on November 17th at 7 p.m. From protesting the Supreme Court to shutting down the New York Stock Exchange, Abbott shared what he has learned over the years.

"I didn't bring a bomb-building kit and I don't build bombs but I can tell you how to start a really nasty little riot or I can tell you how to write press releases or I can tell you how to meet the President and have an argument with him. None of that really matters. Those are my stories," said Abbott at the opening of his lecture. The event, organized by Mount Holyoke's chapter of Equality Across America, detailed the 56-year-old man's motivation to standup for what he believed in and his wish to inspire others.

The Rochester, NY native's activism began after a 1984 visit to Massachusetts General Hospital. His boyfriend of the time, Jerry, had been in the hospital for what would turn out to be a case of encephalitis. Abbott arrived to find Jerry alone on his bed; the former college linebacker was only 80lbs. After a brief rekindling of love and emotion a nearby nurse quickly noticed the commotion, but Abbott refused to leave. "He was a twig and-boy the memories don't go away," said Abbott, his blue eyes beginning to tear up in front of his audience. "That's a visit to the hospital during AIDS. I went in there to see my friend who

was dying and I got left on the front curb having been cuffed." Scarred from his encounter, Abbott became determined to create change and joined Rhode Island's chapter of ACT-UP shortly after.

"I came because I so appreciate what Act Up contributed to social justice movements," explained Maxwell Ciardullo, a University of Massachusetts at Amherst graduate student.

Abbott encouraged the audience to get off their computers and participate in any cause one feels passionate about. "What really works is the soles of your feet and your presence as a human being on the street around the problem. It doesn't go away because you typed something, that's just nonsense."

"It was brilliant. I had come hoping to get good ideas about activism and how to organize. I'm interested especially in his agenda... and he had some really fun and creative ways of telling them," said local South Hadley, MA resident Sarah Olmstead who attended the lecture.

His chilling and exemplary tales of riots, protests and demonstrations went on for over an hour.

"What really matters is what I feel about it. What you feel about about it. What you feel right inside your heart because all issues aren't important," said Abbott.

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# Bishop Robinson addresses methods of propriety in promoting LGBT equal rights

By: **Chuck Colbert/TRT Reporter**

There is a right and wrong way for people of faith to advocate in the secular realm, openly gay Bishop V. Gene Robinson said recently at public forum on the future of religion and LGBT equality.

Examples abound of the wrong way to be religious in politics, he explained, for instance, saying "I've got the truth, and it's the truth for everybody. You've got to do it this way."

The "appropriate way," Robinson said, is to advocate your values because of your beliefs. "Then go into the public square and argue them on the basis of the Constitution and mutually agreed upon governmental factors," he explained. "You can't argue in the public square what God wants, but what motivates me. That's the line I draw."

Robinson's remarks about the proper role of religion in public life came on Saturday, Oct. 30, a week before announcing his resignation from heading the 15,000-member New Hampshire diocese. In 2003, his election as the first out bishop in the Episcopal Church infuriated traditionalists. Many considered his consecration an affront to Holy Scripture and Christian tradition. The rub for them is Robinson's same-sex relationship.

In explaining the resignation, Robinson said "death threats, and the now-worldwide controversy surrounding" the "selection of me as bishop, have been a constant strain, not just on me, but on my beloved husband, Mark," according to a transcript of closing remarks to the New Hampshire diocese convention on Nov. 6.

And yet in deciding to step down some years before mandatory retirement, Robinson said he was resigning — not retiring. Still a bishop, "There is no question that I will continue to be active in trying to achieve full and equal rights for gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual people," he told the Los Angeles Times. "I am also very interested in how religion intersects with public policy."

Meanwhile, back in Boston, the Rev. Irene Monroe, an African American writer and theologian, joined Bishop Robinson at the forum, along with Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders legal director Gary Buseck, who moderated the hour-long discussion, held inside the Episcopal cathedral, located in city's Beacon Hill neighborhood.

The night before the panel discussion, Robinson received GLAD's Spirit of Justice award and keynoted the organization's annual fund-raising dinner.

The event drew nearly 1,000 people to the Westin Copley Place Hotel, raising a record-breaking \$575,000.

While, "the Church plays a remarkable role

in secular society, the bishop said, "we can lay most of the resistance to our full equality at the foot of religious people."

Agreeing, Rev. Monroe singled out the black Church for how "it endangers the African American queer community and our movement."

Citing significantly high rates of homelessness among LGBT youth of color, high suicide rates, pervasive bullying, religious conflict over coming out, and the "face of HIV among our black heterosexual sisters," Monroe said, "It's more than an spiritual crisis. It's a public health crisis," adding, "What role does the Church play in perpetuating unsafe sexual behavior?"

During a question and answer follow-up, Robinson and Monroe were asked about encouraging progressive people of faith to become more active in the political realm and to help them get past the idea that politics and faith somehow should not mix.

The power of "corporate worship" and "collective moral outrage" during the 1950's to 1960's Civil Rights Movement points to the effectiveness of "the social Gospel active in the lives of scared black folks, moving them from the pews to picket lines," said Rev. Monroe.

"Anyone who says that a religious person should not be involved in the political sphere has simply not read Scripture," Bishop Robinson said. In the Bible, "There is a constant call to the people of God to critique [secular] culture," he added. "Nothing is mentioned more in Scripture than care for the poor. So I vote to elect candidates and support parties that seem to be most responsive to the needs of the poor."

Even those who are not religious have a stake in the role faith plays in public life, the bishop said. "You may not like the role religion plays, but if you ignore its role, then that naiveté is going to cost us."

A good example, Robinson noted, is California's Proposition 8 campaign. "A case can be made that the outcome might have been different if the effort had not written off progressive religious voices."

And, "I am here to say that more and more each day, religious Christians, Jews, and Muslims — faith allies — can be convinced to stand up for us."

Often "religion often gets it wrong," Robinson said, referring to slavery and women. But "God doesn't" so "there is no reason to get discouraged," despite temporary set backs, "because we know how this [struggle for full LGBT equality] will end. We have a role to play in the ever upwardly spiraling trail on the way to full citizenship."

Or, Robinson said, "As I like to say: God wins."



PHOTO: CHUCK COLBERT

Left to right: Rev. Irene Monroe, Gary Buseck, and Bishop V. Gene Robinson.

## Items of interest in our local gayborhoods and beyond

### NEWSBRIEFS Rhode Island News:

Rhode Island educators, anti-bullying activists, and advocates for gay and lesbian teenagers held a forum on Monday, November 8 in response to incidents of bullying of gay students around the country. The forum, which streamed online and aired in part on WJAR-TV's Channel 10.2, was called by state Education Commissioner Deborah Gist, who said the climate at individual schools should have no tolerance for bullying, as well as honor the diversity of the students who go there.

James Robinson, executive director of Youth Pride, an advocacy group for GLBTQ youth, said despite the state Department of Education's efforts to improve the environment in schools, there is still resistance.

"When you get in the districts, it's hard for the state to police on that level, and when you get into the individual schools, it gets even harder," he said. "There are schools where the problems have been consistent for years, and where it hasn't changed."

James Izzo, a teacher from East Greenwich, said bullying was a constant problem for GLBT students at her school. She said bullied students should be trained to be "smart victims" and to save text messages or other evidence of what

they're being put through.

"Everything should be documented in writing," Izzo said.

### Worcester News:

AIDS Project Worcester will hold their annual Holiday Party on Friday, December 10 at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Recreation Center, 28 Mulberry St., Worcester. Buffet dinner and dessert, children's crafts, music, raffles. Register at the front desk or call 508-755-3773.

### Connecticut News:

The BIG EAST Women's Basketball Championship will be held at the XL Center in Hartford, Conn. on March 4-8. All 16 teams in the BIG EAST Conference will advance to the Championship, making it a jam-packed weekend with plenty of college basketball action.

There are four first-round games on Friday, March 4 and four second-round games on Saturday, March 5. The quarterfinals will be held on Sunday, March 6 and the semifinals will take place Monday, March 7. The final game will be televised on ESPN at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 8. Tickets can be bought at [www.BIGEAST.org](http://www.BIGEAST.org) or [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com).

For more info, check out the ad and story about this great event in this issue of the paper.

### Homo for the Holidays from page 16

#### • **The Gruffalo (ABC Family; 7PM/6c)**

IMDB says, "A cunning mouse goes for a walk in the forest and outwits a succession of predators." Maurice Sendak should sue. Watch it and you'll see why.

#### • **Santa Claus is Comin' to Town (ABC Family; 7PM/7c)**

#### • **Shrek the Halls (ABC; 8PM/7c)**

Mike Myers and Cameron Diaz reprise their roles as America's favorite ogre family in this fun-filled yuletide tale. Also featuring the voices of Eddie Murphy as Donkey and Antonio Banderas as Puss In Boots, this nouveau Christmas classic finds Shrek channeling the holiday spirit as only an ogre can. But as the putrid patriarch plans for a cozy family celebration, his friends make sure that it's one he won't easily forget.

#### • **The Santa Incident (Hallmark; 8PM/7c)**

#### • **The Year Without Santa Claus (ABC Family; 9PM/8c)**

### DECEMBER 10

#### • **Scrooge (1970) (TCM; 9:30PM/8:30c)**

#### • **The Santa Clause 2 (ABC Family; 10PM/9c)**

#### • **The Man Who Came to Dinner (TCM; 11:30PM/10:30c)**

### DECEMBER 11

#### • **Jack Frost (ABC Family; 3PM/2c)**

#### • **Sarah's Holiday Party (HGTV; 4PM/3c)**

During this one-hour special, designer Sarah Richardson will show viewers her time-tested methods for hosting a grand holiday party for family and friends. Sarah and her design assistant, Tommy, will demonstrate every detail — from planning and decorating to cooking and gift giving — as they pull together a memorable holiday soiree.

#### • **National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation (TV Land; 5:30PM)**

The irony of this beloved comedy classic is that 20 years later Randy Quaid is now Cousin Eddie in real life. Poor Dennis.

#### • **An Old-Fashioned Christmas (Hallmark; 8PM/7c)**

#### • **Frosty the Snowman (CBS; 8PM/7c)**

Jimmy Durante narrates this 1969 fave, in which a discarded silk top hat ignites a fight between a washed-up stage magician and a group of schoolchildren after it magically brings a snowman (voiced by Jackie Vernon) to life.

#### • **Frosty Returns (CBS; 8:30PM/7:30c)**

There's still magic in that old silk hat as Frosty (voiced by John Goodman) continues his adventures and skates on the edge of danger in this 1992 animated musical special, narrated by Jonathan Winters.

#### • **Santa Clause 3: The Escape Clause (ABC Family; 9PM/8c)**

### DECEMBER 12

#### • **Santa Baby (ABC Family; 2PM/1c)**

#### • **Santa Baby 2: Christmas Maybe (ABC Family 4PM/3c)**

#### • **Christmas Cupid (ABC Family; 8PM/7c)**

### DECEMBER 13

#### • **Holiday in Handcuffs (ABC Family; 9PM/8c)**

In this romantic comedy, Clarissa snaps and kidnaps A.C. Slater after a series of personal letdowns. At the very least, it'll bring back fond memories of 1991. Melissa Joan Hart and Mario Lopez star.

#### • **Mariah Carey: Merry Christmas to You (ABC; 9PM/8c)**

Hey, lady's got a new album to promote — and, soon, another mouth to feed. Besides, nobody does Christmas carols better than this diva, daaaahling.

### DECEMBER 14

#### • **Dr. Seuss' The Grinch Grinches The Cat in the Hat (ABC Family; 7PM/6c)**

#### • **I Want a Dog for Christmas, Charlie Brown (ABC; 8PM/7c)**

Blockhead takes the backseat in this Peanuts Christmas special, allowing the often-overlooked ReRun — younger brother of Linus and Lucy — to take center stage. When Snoopy can't fit ReRun into his busy holiday schedule, he invites his brother Spike to help his human friend fill up on yuletide cheer.

#### • **Three Wise Women (Hallmark; 8PM/7c)**

### DECEMBER 15

#### • **Disney Prep & Landing (ABC Family; 8PM/7c)**

An animated special about two elves whose number one priority it is to prepare for Santa's arrival at every house. But after they're caught by little Timmy, the jig may be up.

### DECEMBER 16

#### • **Gift of the Magi (Hallmark; 8PM/7c)**

#### • **Yes, Virginia (CBS; 8PM/7c)**

CGI animation steals the spotlight in this re-telling of the famous story that appeared in the Sept. 21, 1897, edition of New York's now out-of-print newspaper The Sun. Neil Patrick Harris and Jennifer Love Hewitt provide voice talent.

### DECEMBER 17

#### • **Food Network Challenge: Holiday Cake-Off (Food Network; 7PM/6c)**

Six of the nation's top pastry chefs compete for the title of best holiday cake maker. But only one will take home a stocking full of cheer and a pocket full of cash.

To continue reading these holiday listings, please visit us online at [www.therainbowtimes-mass.com/11172010/homoholidaytv.html](http://www.therainbowtimes-mass.com/11172010/homoholidaytv.html).

# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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# A disfrutar las festividades, y que tengan un ¡Próspero año Nuevo!

Por: Grisel Martínez Ocasio/Publicadora de TRT

**LATIN VISION** Este tiempo es uno particularmente difícil para muchos latinos de la comunidad LGBT (lésbica, gay, bisexual y transgénero). Durante estos momentos muchos de nosotros no tenemos el amor y apoyo de nuestros seres queridos, dada su ignorancia o dificultad de nuestras vidas. Piensan que hemos escogido vivir "gay" cuando la realidad es que nacimos siendo "gay". Es una pena el que muchos padres latinos todavía no acepten a sus hijos e hijas por quienes son—seres humanos engendrados por ellos mismos y creados por el divino Creador.

Si Jesucristo mismo no juzgó, ni maltrató a nadie, ¿por qué piensan algunos seres queridos que pueden hacerlo? Esto no es el mandato de Dios. El llamado fue que "nos amáramos todos como nos ama Dios." Mucho más importante aún, el mandato de las escrituras del Nuevo testamento explica que para entrar al Reino De Dios hay que seguir dos principios. El primero, "amar a Dios sobre todas las cosas." El segundo, "amar a tu prójimo como a ti mismo/a." Si ese es el mandato, ¿qué tipo de religión, familia, amistad, etc. puede entonces recriminarnos, juzgarnos y maltratarnos por ser "gay"? Nadie debe hacerlo. No debe haber abandono de un hijo de Dios por ninguna razón, punto. Todos somos hijos/as del ser divino al que muchos llaman Dios y todos somos iguales ante sus ojos.

En estos días en el que muchos celebran festividades religiosas, debemos también hacer hincapié y recordarnos de las enseñanzas fundamentales a seguir. No es justo el que un padre, una madre, un/a hijo/a, un/a hermano/a sea aislado por el mero hecho de que esa persona

es "gay, lesbiana, bisexual o transgénero". Es una acción que va en contra de lo enseñado por Cristo, y es algo hiriente que le hacemos al prójimo, y ese no es el "llamado". De antemano las personas de la comunidad LGBT ya vivimos vidas difíciles pues muchas veces nuestros seres queridos no valoran nuestras relaciones, matrimonios y uniones. Es un sentimiento que duele, y que no hace sentir bien al que lo recibe y no debería hacer sentir bien al que lo envía. Quizás en este tiempo de agradecimiento y festividad, pueda recapacitar y meditar en estas palabras, y quizás tratar de entender al informarse mejor sobre la vida de esa persona de su familia que es parte de la comunidad LGBT, pero a quién no le habla, o ha abandonado. La aceptación legítima y única ocurre cuando hay aprecio, amor, y cuando se demuestra al hablar orgullosamente de los miembros de nuestra comunidad, sin importar el "qué dirán". Una persona en mi vida me ha hecho sentir así desde el momento en que salí del "closet" inmediatamente y esa persona fue mi adorada tía y madrina Aida. Y a mi hermana Marilyn, por haberme apoyado, entendido y haber sido también una portavoz de información a las personas que, sin saber, forman una opinión de otros que ni tan siquiera conocen. A ellas dos, esta vez, les dedico este artículo.

To read this article in English, please visit:  
[www.therainbowtimesmass.com/12022010/latinvision.html](http://www.therainbowtimesmass.com/12022010/latinvision.html).

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## Trans People Speak from page 19

Figueiredo went on to praise her boss, a "guy's guy," she said, who told her point blank, "I don't care what you look like as long as you do the great job you do," she said. "Talk about a huge weight off my shoulders."

"He actually went on the Internet to find out more information," Figueiredo added. "He knew staff would ask questions."

Her boss genuinely cared, she said. From time to time, "He asked me, 'How are you feeling? How are the hormones treating you?' I put him up for a diversity award and he won."

Still, Figueiredo's positive experience at one of the Greater Boston's venerable financial institutions is not always the case.

Transgender people face not only employment discrimination, but also encounter discrimination in housing, credit, education, and public accommodations. Transgender persons are also victims of violent hate crimes. Unlike gay men and lesbians, transgender residents of Massachusetts do not enjoy basic civil-rights protections.

Twice, attempts to add "gender identity and "gender expression" to the state's non-discrimination and hate crimes statutes have fallen short.

Last year, the Transgender Civil Rights bill, with more than 100 co-sponsors last year, stalled on Beacon Hill largely because of the Massachusetts Family Institute's hijacking the debate's language, dubbing the proposed legislation a "bathroom bill," an ugly



PHOTO: GLENN KOETZNER

Gunner Scott, MTPC's ED addresses attendees.

smear transgender allies consider fear mongering and scare tactics all about imaginary trans bogeymen in restrooms and locker rooms.

Republican gubernatorial candidate Charlie Baker went so far as to say if he were elected he would veto the "bathroom bill" should it come to his desk. But even some Democratic lawmakers balked during the last term, fearing a vote on the measure would compromise their reelection campaigns.

The Legislature's Joint Committee on the Judiciary never reported the bill out of committee. Neither House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo nor Senate President Therese Murray placed the measure among their top legislative goals.

While Governor Deval Patrick voiced support for the bill and said he would sign it into law, he never pushed Democratic leadership for it to come to a vote.

Sure enough, transgender activists intend to renew efforts to pass civil-rights protection on Beacon Hill next year.

Meanwhile, the power of personal story telling continues.

"It's not just about us," said Ty of Northampton, a transgender man who is the biological mother of two teenage sons, during his video clip. "It's about our families."

For Mick of Boston, a licensed clinical social worker, a feminist and queer transman, it's all about being true to self, he said on video. "I can finally look in the mirror, and I finally know who I am."

# The OutField: A look back at 2010



Dan Woog

By: Dan Woog\*  
/Special for TRT

**A**s another year winds down, The OutField's inbox fills up. Here are a few stories from 2010 we had no space for – but that merit a big ol' LGBT shout-out.

"Gay" and "NASCAR" are rarely used in the same sentence. But if we truly are everywhere, that includes stock-car speedways.

And Michael Myers makes sure we connect with each other, above the roar of race cars.

Queers4Gears.com is a website for gay NASCAR fans – though all are welcome. It features photos, race reports, even discount ticket deals. It's been named one of NASCAR's top 50 blogs.

"NASCAR fans have been more accepting of (Myers) being gay than gay people have been accepting of his being a NASCAR fan," the site says of the 37-year-old founder.

According to a recent article in the *New York Times*, Myers "acknowledges that gay male race fans are attracted to stock car drivers the way straight female race fans are." However, he adds, it's really just about the races.

"I'm not there to ask drivers what they think about gay marriage," he says. "I'm there to ask them about racing."

Another oxymoron could be "gay professional baseball umpire." But when a manager attacked an out ump with anti-gay language, it was the manager who suffered most.

The Golden Baseball League incident began in July, when Billy Van Raaphorst ejected Edmonton Capitals manager Brent Bowers for repeatedly objecting to a call. Bowers raced over, called Van Raaphorst a "fucking faggot," and asked, "Do you take it up the fucking ass?" (Just to make sure there was no mistake, Bowers bent over and grabbed his ankles.)

The tirade continued, with the manager saying, "I ought to kick your ass, you faggot." The league suspended Bowers for two games. Van Raaphorst's fellow umpires thought the punishment was insufficient and threatened to walk out.

The league then suspended Bowers for the rest of the season – and fined him \$5,000. The Capitals' owner – who also owns the National Hockey League Edmonton Oilers – supported Van Raaphorst and the league against its now-former manager.

Then – recognizing a "golden" opportunity when they saw it – the owners announced plans to provide diversity training for all its baseball and hockey staffs.

In more gays-and-baseball news, a group of gay men and lesbians got fed up watching the

St. Louis Cardinals' hetero-only "Kiss Cam." That's the traditional shot shown on an enormous scoreboard of a man and woman passionately smooching. A cute little heart is superimposed on the shot, and cute little music plays.

Big deal, huh?

To David Whitley – a columnist for MLB. Fanhouse.com, a national website – it was.

"I can't help sympathizing with that father who'll be sitting next to his son or daughter at Busch Stadium," the not-very-empathetic dad/fan/writer wrote.

"Daddy, why are those two men kissing?" he imagined a child saying.

"Umm, err, hey isn't that Albert Pujols coming to bat?" he figured would be the only possible reply.

"I'm not ready to discuss same-sex relationships with my 3-year-old," he wrote. "I don't think she's ready, either." Using that logic, he would have to discuss opposite-sex relationships every time the "Kiss Cam" showed two straight people making out.

Scrambling to avoid charges of homophobia, he added: "If my daughter grows up and falls happily in love with another woman, I'll proudly walk her down the aisle." Chances are, though, he'd first have to get over his daughter's fear that he wouldn't, in fact, be proud – based on his reaction, years earlier, when daughter and dad watched two women doing the exact same thing straight people do every day, at every ballpark in America.

Finally, from the Stand-Up-And-Cheer Department: For the fifth consecutive year, the Gene and John Athletic Fund of Stonewall has awarded a scholarship to an outstanding gay athlete. This year's recipient is Jessica Leigh Weather.

At the University of Florida, Jessica studied six languages. A runner, she has completed two marathons, three half-marathons and a half-Ironman triathlon. She's a swimmer too, with a 12.5-mile swim around Key West and 8-mile swim through Boston Harbor and a relay swim of the English Channel to her credit.

She hopes to compete in the 2014 Gay Games in Cleveland.

Jessica is currently enrolled in Duke University's Physician Assistant Program. Her goal is to specialize in pediatrics.

"My knowledge of the mental and physical benefits of athletics, along with my first hand understanding of the spectrum of sexuality, will make me a unique asset to the field for the next generation of youth, both straight and LGBT."

Including those who aspire to be NASCAR drivers, baseball umpires, or kiss their same-sex partner in public.

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