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# DOMA: A nick on the tip of the iceberg

By: Nicole Lashomb/ TRT Editor-in-Chief

## OPINIONS

DOMA. It is about time that heinous act of discrimination was overturned. Like many of you, I was in tears, celebrating with friends and family, that my wife and I and thousands like us, are finally recognized and treated as a family in every sense, as protected not just by Massachusetts law, but by federal law. It is a victory I that I wasn't sure I would see in my lifetime. I am proud of the Supreme Court Justices that stood on the right side of equality.

### The repeal of DOMA is just the first step in the treacherous road ahead.

Although this decision was historic, too many of our LGBT brothers and sisters are still left out of the equation and too many families are still not recognized nor protected by the federal and state governments.

According to [www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org), "The federal government [now] has to recognize the legal marriages of same-sex couples. However, the ruling does not require any state to legalize or recognize marriage equality that has not already done so." Simply put, if you don't live in a state that has marriage equality, then you do not have equal marital rights.

For those legally married same-sex couples that reside in states that have affirmed same-sex marriage, more than 1,100 federal legal rights are afforded to them, the same rights that heterosexual married couples have enjoyed for years. But, what about the rest of our LGBT family living in rural America or

the Bible belt? These couples are discriminated against each day for their sexual orientation or gender identity without any laws protecting their families due to their marital status or lack-there-of.

Although, inarguably, DOMA's repeal is a huge victory for the LGBT community, there is still insurmountable work to do to ensure that we all have equal marriage protections, regardless of the state in which you reside.

And, even when this victory has afforded so many of us to finally be treated as a family unit equally under law, this is only the first victory of many battles still to come.

We must forge on fully and combat the stigma of homophobia and transphobia in our churches, schools, and on the streets. We must not become complacent because we may have attained the inalienable rights we deserve in relation to marriage equality. We must strive to end racism through education, even as it exists within our own community. We must work vigilantly to stop the war on women and immigrants. We must rile up to fight against child abuse and objectification, in all forms or simply because one may be gay. We must work to end the ignorance leading to the disproportionate number of LGBT kids living on the street as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity. We must continue to stand united in our front, until all Americans have the rights that they deserve. The repeal of DOMA is just the first step in the treacherous road ahead.

# Despite apology, Exodus continues spiritual abuse

By: Paul P. Jesep\*/TRT Columnist

Physical and emotional harm are two known forms of abuse. However, spiritual abuse is often overlooked. Spiritual and emotional mistreatment carries scars and wounds long after physical harm heals. The unseen abuse can go on for a lifetime. Although some find a level of closure, for many the door remains cracked open, just enough to allow a few demons to loiter.

Recovering from spiritual violence is a lifelong sojourn. Sojourners struggle by acting out in dysfunctional relationships, with unhealthy eating habits, and in the workplace, unable to manage ill-tempered supervisors. Anxiety and depression are constant companions.

In June, Exodus International—long-condemned by the scientific and medical community for attempting to "cure" or "heal" LGBTQ children of God—announced the closing of part of its little shop of horrors. For decades it used devilish prayer and Frankenstein science to cure LGBTQ men and women born as the Creator intended.

"Please know that I am deeply sorry," wrote Alan Chambers of Exodus recently in a statement in their website. "I am sorry for...the pain and hurt many of you have ex-

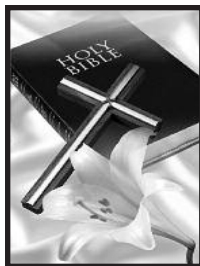
perienced...some of you spent years working through the shame and guilt you felt when your attractions didn't change...I am sorry...there were times I didn't stand up to people publicly 'on my side' who called you names like sodomite...I...failed to share publicly that the gay and lesbian people I know were every bit as capable of being amazing parents as the straight people that I know...

I am sorry that I have communicated that you and your families are less than me and mine."

Other groups misusing religion will fill the vacuum of quack faith and medieval science left by Exodus. It is not just about saving souls. It is an industry making a fortune selling spiritual snake oil to those who suffer. Sadly, there are no laws to prohibit spiritual charlatanry.

"This week's historic apology from Exodus leader, Alan Chambers, for the harm done to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people by Exodus is...

To read the rest of this story visit: <http://tiny.cc/trtgexodus2013>



### "The theology of condemnation must be replaced with a theology of grace in the service of God's good creation—including LGBT people."

# Representation to marginalized groups

By: Jason Lydon\*/TRT Columnist



This month I am writing my column from Detroit, Michigan while attending the 15th Allied Media Conference (AMC). This space has been created for grassroots community

organizers and alternative media creators to come together to share resources, build skills and transform our movements. The conference is facilitated and attended by majority people of color, LGBTQ people and women, with explicit attention to media created by marginalized communities. Far too often the dominant media perpetuates oppression when creating representations of queer people, people of color, poor people, people with disabilities, Indigenous people, youth and so many others of us who are silenced. The Allied Media Conference provides space for people to strategize around efforts to challenge mainstream media while sharing our own created media with each other.

The AMC program book reminds attendees the media is more than the television shows we watch. The organizers wrote, "We've come to understand media as any tool we use to communicate with the world—whether film, fashion, or community wireless networks. We've made media that exposes, investigates and heals, builds confidence and radical hope, incites dialogue and debate. We've demysti-

### As a reader of this newspaper you are engaging in alternative media consumption. When you write Letters to the Editor you are participating in this media and ...

fied technology, not only learning how to use it, but how to design and build our own."

The Rainbow Times functions as a form of queer/LGBT media written by and for queer/LGBT people in New England. As a reader of this newspaper you are engaging in alternative media consumption. When you write Letters to the Editor you are participating in this media and knowledge exchange. Our responsibility is to not allow media to be something done to us, but rather something we are constantly engaged in as active participants.

One of the workshops I attended was facilitated by the Chicago-based Young Women's Empowerment Project. This organization works with young transgender and cisgender women who are engaged in the sex trade and are often

homeless, home-free or street-based. These young women are working with each other in

To read the rest of this story visit: <http://tiny.cc/trtlydonjuly>

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

[I am writing to Deja Nicole to let her know that] I was hoping that there was an uncomplicated answer to the washroom crisis. I am a closet cross dresser but I did dress up in P-town as a girlie (last week) in the daytime. This was a first for me. I didn't get enough of Ptown, so I'm returning in September. Will I have to run to my motel again? What if I am in a gay bar? One Halloween night, I used the men's room; I was treated like a lady. This was Halloween; I'm not so sure about this time of the year. I know! Hide in the corner and use a beer cup!

—Mary Ann Loveheart, Online

Dear Editor,

Wow, what a great an article! [Re: Lifeskills Project celebrates 1st year at anniversary Ball] It's so nice to see the voices of three beautiful women represented! Great performances Bella, Sasha and Nelisa! Way to represent LS and lead the way for other trans girls!!!

—Jackie, Online

Dear Editor,

Thank you so much for your wonderful attention to the work that we are doing.

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## The Rainbow Times

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# Historical Double Victory: DOMA and Prop. 8 struck down

## *The Justices' opinions and vote, how it happened, and reactions from the right and left*

By: Lisa Keen/Keen News Service

In a stunning double victory, the U.S. Supreme Court on June 26, 2013 issued decisions that strike down both the Defense of Marriage Act and Proposition 8.

The DOMA decision, a 5 to 4 split, was written by Justice Anthony Kennedy and joined by the four liberal justices of the court. It strikes DOMA as unconstitutional because it violates the guarantees of equal protection and due process.

The DOMA dissent, based largely on matters of standing, was led by Chief Justice John Roberts and joined by the court's three other conservatives.

The Proposition 8 opinion, a 5 to 4 vote led by the Chief Justice, vacates a Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruling. It says Yes on 8 defenders of the law lacked standing, under federal rules of law, to make the appeal. The decision appears to leave intact the district court decision, a much broader ruling.

The dissent was a surprise: Justice Kennedy led two conservative justices plus liberal Justice Sonia Sotomayor. They said the court should accept the California Supreme Court's determination that Yes on 8 had standing.

Reaction was understandably euphoric from LGBT legal activists and the thousands of supporters of same-sex marriage gathered

### Edith Windsor: Her bravery freed us

Did you know that ...  
• Edith "Edie" Windsor graduated from Temple University & received a master's degree in mathematics from New York University?

• She told The New York Times in a recent interview (<http://tiny.cc/dk0jzw>) "I came to New York to let myself be gay."

• She and Thea waited 40 years to tie-the-knot in NYC, until things got difficult for Thea's health and they went to Toronto and wed in 2007?



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

• Because of DOMA, the 1996 law signed by Pres. Bill Clinton that defined (until 6/26/13) marriage as the legal union of one man & one woman, Edie was mandated to pay \$363,000 in federal estate tax?

• After Spyer's death, Windsor had a heart attack and was very

ill, but it didn't stop her from forging ahead.

• Edie & Thea: A Very Long Engagement Film (<http://tiny.cc/1z1jzw>) gave Edie a "reason to live."

outside the Supreme Court building and town hall in San Francisco.

"It's nearly perfect. I'm thrilled," said Mary Bonauto, civil rights project director for Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, the group which launched the first successful lawsuit challenging DOMA and secured the first right to marry from a state supreme court.

The DOMA decision, said Bonauto, "not only strikes DOMA but makes clear what

we've been saying all along — that DOMA is discriminatory and that it is an effort by the federal government to deprive same-sex couples of their rights and to demean them."

"We have won the freedom to marry in California," said Evan Wolfson, head of the national Freedom to Marriage group, on MSNBC right after the decision was released in the Proposition 8 case. Wolfson noted that, with the addition of California, at least a third of the nation's population

now lives in a state with marriage equality. Prior to today, it was at about 18 percent.

Jon Davidson, legal director for Lambda Legal, called both decisions a "huge victory for married same-sex couples and their families because it will affect almost every facet of life from health care to retirement to taxes."

The two plaintiff couples emerged from the Supreme Court building on the front steps at 10:45 a.m., with Chad Griffin, who organized the Proposition 8 lawsuit, and David Boies, one of the two lead attorneys who pressed the challenge. As they did, a chorus sang the national anthem.

On the plaza in front of the court, Boies spoke about both decisions and noted that June 26 is the tenth anniversary of the Lawrence v. Texas decision, striking down sodomy laws.

In striking DOMA, said Boies, the court ruled "there was no purpose" in denying same-sex couples the right to marry.

In the Proposition 8 case, said Boies, the court ruled that the Yes on 8 defenders of the law did not have standing to press the appeal. But he said the court's opinion makes clear that "when" a case involving a similar ban comes before the court on merits, it is clear the majority will find it unconstitutional.

Plaintiff Kristin Perry emphasized the importance of the Prop 8 decision to the children of same-sex parents, children who can

**See DOMA on Page 6**

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# Op-Ed: Defeating DOMA & Prop. 8 - We've made history, but we're not finished

By: Keegan O'Brien\*/Special to TRT



PHOTO: PAUL WEISKEL

Wednesday June 26th 2013 will be a day that's remembered in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer history, and our community's long and turbulent struggle for full equality. On June 26th the Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 in *U.S. v. Windsor* that the federal Defense of Marriage Act, DOMA, which denies federal marriage benefits to same-sex couples by only recognizing marriages between a man and woman, was unconstitutional due to its violation of the equal protection clause under the 5th amendment. On the same day, the Court overturned Proposition 8 in California, a 2008 voter referendum that revoked same-sex marriage rights and sparked a national uproar, claiming that its defenders had "no legal standing." As a result, same-sex couples in California, the most populace state in the country, will once again be able to marry, and couples in states that have already legalized gay marriage will now have full access to federal marriage benefits. They did not however, go as far to rule that same-sex couples nationwide had a right to full marriage equality.

It was around 11:00 a.m. when I first heard the news of the Supreme Courts rulings, first on DOMA then Prop 8, and I instantly broke

into tears. I was overtaken by an overwhelming feeling of joy as Facebook statuses and news updates celebrating the victory continued to pour across my computer screen. On some level, I was in shock, I almost couldn't believe it. Even in 2013, being gay in this society isn't easy. The daily emotional and psychological trauma we endure for living outside the sexual and gender norms of a deeply homophobic society takes its toll on all of us; from higher rates of family rejection, homelessness, suicide, mental health

sense of confidence and pride required to hold our heads up high and keep fighting for more. For anyone genuinely concerned with justice and equality for LGBTQ people, this week's historic ruling is a victory to celebrate.

While I'm ecstatic about our community's victory, and how it will improve the lives of so many same-sex couples, I am also well aware that our dream of full equality is far from achieved. We cannot consider ourselves free and equal as long as 37 states maintain

continue to live under the bombs and violence of American militarism. While full LGBTQ equality and social justice includes marriage equality, it also extends far beyond on it, and our vision of freedom must encompass the struggles of LGBTQ people everywhere, not just those of us within America's borders.

What makes last week's victory so bitter-sweet is knowing that the Supreme Court simultaneously made other rulings that stripped away civil rights for people of color. The first being their decision to rule against the legitimacy of affirmative action (<http://tiny.cc/6iuezw>), the second being their ruling to role back Native peoples sovereignty and self determination (<http://tiny.cc/esuezw>), and third being their elimination of important sections of the 1965 Voter Rights Act (<http://tiny.cc/3suezw>), an important gain won by the Civil Rights Movement. Meanwhile, the Texas state legislator came incredibly close to passing a bill that would have shut down all but 5 abortion clinics in the state. Thankfully they were stopped by the bravery of Senator Wendy Davis, who gave a 13 hours speech to block the senate from voting, and tens of thousands of Texan women and their allies who took over the capitol building with chants of "Kill The Bill!"

While we should celebrate the defeat of DOMA and Prop 8, we need to be filled with outrage over the Supreme Court's and our political system's other shameful attacks on civil rights. Our community isn't just ...

**See Other Struggles on Page 9**

**While we fight for full LGBTQ equality, we must also build a movement that is based on the politics of solidarity and addresses the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and class.**

problems, and substance abuse to everyday feelings of depression, insecurity, and alienation. So, to have the most powerful court in the country declare—even if it's only partially—that we are human beings deserving of equal treatment under the law, is a pretty profound experience. Victories like this not only provide very real and important material improvements to our lives, especially for working class queer couples, while also taking us a step close toward equality and liberation, they also restore in oppressed people a basic sense of human dignity, self-worth, and confidence that oppression, discrimination, and violence continuously rip away from us. In doing so, they imbue us with the

constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage, 29 states lack any employment protection for sexual orientation and 37 states for gender identity and expression, there persists a shameful and obscene epidemic of queer youth homelessness and suicide, queer youth lack access to safe schools and relevant curriculum, LGBTQ people lack access to safe, accepting, and accessible healthcare and housing, too many queer people of color remain locked inside prisons and detention centers because they've been victimized by our country's racially discriminatory and unfair criminal justice and immigration systems, or while LGBTQ people in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Palestine con-

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## DOMA from page 3

now know that their parents are equal to other parents. Her spouse-to-be, Sandra Stier, said the struggle must now continue to secure the right to marry for same-sex couples in states that deny them marriage licenses.

President Obama, aboard Air Force One on his way to Africa, called the plaintiffs while they were at the impromptu press conference in front of the Supreme Court building. He said he was "proud" and "so glad for California" and thanked them for their leadership.

The White House also posted a Twitter message quoting the president as calling the DOMA ruling an "historic step forward for marriage equality."

The court issued its decision in the two high-profile marriage cases at 10 a.m. EDT on June 26, the last day of its 2012-13 session. The opinions in *Hollingsworth v. Perry* (concerning Proposition 8) and *U.S. v. Windsor* (concerning DOMA) can be read in their entirety at <http://tiny.cc/gk9hzv>.

### DOMA details and reaction

In the majority opinion on the DOMA case, *U.S. v. Windsor*, Justice Kennedy was joined by Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan. The majority affirmed a Second Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals decision that found DOMA to violate the guarantees to equal protection and due process. The majority said DOMA went "far" beyond an attempt at providing uniformity in federal policy affecting married persons and was "directed to a class of persons that the laws of New York, and of 11 other States, have sought to protect." Regulation of marriage licensing, said the majority, "has long been regarded as a virtually exclu-

sive province of the States."

"The Federal Government uses this state-defined class for the opposite purpose—to impose restrictions and disabilities," wrote Kennedy. And by doing so, he said, "DOMA seeks to injure the very class New York seeks to protect" and "violates basic due process and equal protection principles applicable to the Federal Government."

"The Constitution's guarantee of equality 'must at the very least mean that a bare congressional desire to harm a politically unpopular group cannot justify disparate treatment of that group,' wrote Kennedy, quoting a 1973 decision in *USDA v. Moreno*, a decision in which the court said the government couldn't deny food stamps to "hippies" living in communes.

Bonauto, who was reached before she had a chance to finish reading the 26-page majority decision, said it's not clear yet whether or to what extent married same-sex couples living in states that ban recognition of marriage licenses for same-sex couples would be able to obtain federal benefits.

"Clearly, if they live in a marriage equality state, they're protected," said Bonauto. She said many would also be able to obtain benefits related to immigration and the military to the extent those areas recognize marriage licenses regardless of what state they were issued in. She said there may be some additional legal work necessary to secure federal benefits for all married same-sex couples but that the federal government "has the flexibility," such as with tax returns, "to recognize marriage licenses as soon as they are formed."

"I think we'll have a patchwork at first but it will become a tighter quilt as time goes on," said Bonauto.

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder issued a statement calling the DOMA ruling an "enormous triumph for equal protection under the law for all Americans."

"At the President's direction," said Holder, "the Department of Justice will work expeditiously with other Executive Branch agencies to implement the Court's decision. Despite this momentous victory, our nation's journey — towards equality, opportunity, and justice for everyone in this country — is far from over. Important, life-changing work remains before us. And, as we move forward in a manner consistent with the Court's ruling, the Department of Justice is committed to continuing this work, and using every tool and legal authority available to us to combat discrimination and to safeguard the rights of all Americans."

Edith Windsor's attorney Roberta Kaplan told reporters, "It is now clear that discrimination against gay people solely because they are gay violates the United States constitution."

CNN legal analyst Jeff Toobin called the DOMA decision "an immense victory for same-sex marriage supporters" and one that "will change the lives of thousands of marriages in 12 states where it is legal."

### Prop 8 details and reaction

Toobin said that, in the Proposition 8 case, *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, the court could have said same-sex marriages must be allowed in all 50 states "and it did not say that."

"But it did seem to open the door to same-sex marriages in California and it ... certainly does look like court is moving in the direction of everybody has the right to marry," said Toobin.

Chief Justice Roberts wrote the majority decision in the Proposition 8 case, joined by Justices Antonin Scalia, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, and Elena Kagan.

The majority decision vacated the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals decision with instructions to dismiss the appeal pressed by the Yes on 8 coalition that won passage of Proposition 8. It said Yes on 8's "only interest in having the District Court order reversed [at the Ninth Circuit] was to vindicate the constitutional validity of a generally applicable California law." Such a "generalized grievance," said the majority, is "insufficient to confer standing."

"A litigant 'raising only a generally available grievance about government—claiming only harm to his and every citizen's interest in proper application of the Constitution and laws, and seeking relief that no more directly and tangibly benefits him than it does the public at large—does not state an Article III

case or controversy.'"

Once Proposition 8 was approved by the voters, said the majority, "the measure became 'a duly enacted constitutional amendment or statute. Petitioners have no role—special or otherwise—in the enforcement of Proposition 8.... They therefore have no 'personal stake' in defending its enforcement that is distinguishable from the general interest of every citizen of California."

"We have never before upheld the standing of a private party to defend the constitutionality of a state statute when state officials have chosen not to. We decline to do so for the first time here," wrote Roberts.

"Because petitioners have not satisfied their burden to demonstrate standing to appeal the judgment of the District Court, the Ninth Circuit was without jurisdiction to consider the appeal," wrote Roberts. "The judgment of the Ninth Circuit is vacated, and the case is remanded with instructions to dismiss the appeal for lack of jurisdiction."

Once the Ninth Circuit dismisses Yes on 8's appeal, the district court ruling by former Chief Judge Vaughn Walker will remain the law concerning Proposition 8. Walker, who came out as gay after retirement, ruled that Proposition 8 violated the federal equal protection clause because there was no rational basis for limiting the designation of marriage to straight couples. He also said it violated the federal due process clause because there was no compelling reason for the state to deny same-sex couples the fundamental right to marry.

Plaintiff attorney Ted Bontros said they expect it will be about 25 days before the official judgment in the Proposition 8 case takes effect, though it may happen sooner. That is the estimate San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera's website gave earlier this month.

In dissent, Justice Kennedy, joined by Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, and Sonia Sotomayor, said they would have recognized Yes on 8 as having standing because the state supreme court had ruled Yes on 8 did have standing.

CNN interviewed a Baptist minister who said the rulings would "radically transform the institution of marriage" and be "very, very devastating" for the country.

Family Research Council leader Tony Perkins told CNN the Prop 8 decision was a "punt" on the question of same-sex marriage bans. He predicted the two decisions would lead to teachers teaching homosexuality in school and religious groups losing their tax-exempt status.

**See DOMA on Page 8**

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# Southern Maine Pride celebrates gay marriage with wedding-themed Pride, hosts 1st mass marriage ceremony

By: Ashley Mark/TRT Reporter

PORTLAND, Maine—With the historic passage of gay marriage in Maine in December 2012, the 27th annual Southern Maine Pride festivities were designed to highlight the “Marry ME” themed event.

“Now that Maine recognizes gay marriage, Pride organizers felt this was the perfect opportunity to offer a public forum to celebrate that win,” explained spokesperson Sid Tripp, Entertainment and Public Relations Coordinator with Proactive Resources Design. “The theme was also a clever wordplay on the state abbreviation, ME, and the popular proposal phrase.”

Southern Maine Pride began as a small grassroots movement and has grown exponentially in the last 27 years, according to Tripp, who has been working with Pride organizers for four years.

“This year the parade boasted over 1,000 participants and the festival featured more than 100 vendors,” Tripp stated.

The parade started in Monument Square in downtown Portland and proceeded to the festival site in Deering Oaks Park. Master of Ceremonies Khrist Francis, a comedian and, according to the press release, one of Maine’s funniest entertainers, greeted Pride attendees. The festival began with opening remarks from Francis and included appearances by the Grand Marshals. These included Portland Mayor Michael Brennan, Portland Police Chief Mike Sauschuck and Honorary Marshals Michael Snell and Steven Bridges, Maine’s first married gay couple. This year’s Pride Grand Marshal was openly gay inaugural poet Richard Blanco, who read the poem



**Newly married couples enjoy their first dance after the mass wedding ceremony**

he delivered to President Obama at his inauguration on January 21, 2013, entitled “One Today.”

Tripp estimated the number of attendees at Southern Maine Pride was close to 10,000.

“The mass wedding ceremony brought a lot of people out to celebrate and witness the state’s first mass gay marriage,” he explained.

Pride organizers welcomed engaged or committed same-sex couples to participate in the en-masse wedding ceremony, one of the highlights of the day held at the beginning of the festival.

“In keeping with the 2013 ‘Marry ME’ theme, and in light of the newly enfranchised gay population in Maine, organizers believe it would be fitting to use the Southern Maine

Pride Festival as a public forum to acknowledge and celebrate the legalization of same sex marriage in Maine, particularly at the site where the struggle for marriage equality has been fostered and advocated for decades,” the press release stated.

Nine couples were publicly married by non-denominational wedding officiants Diane York and Rev. Karen St. Peter, using pre-determined vows as friends, families and strangers stood witness. The couples even had the opportunity to enjoy their first married dance together on stage as Francis sang “Love Lifts Us Up Where We Belong.”

Courtney Vandermartin and Ivy Gibbs, both from Portland, were married in the wedding ceremony. The couple was engaged in No-

vember and said they felt the public ceremony witnessed by friends and family was the perfect way to celebrate their relationship.

“It feels so great, so new and exciting, to finally be married,” Vandermartin said shortly after the ceremony.

In addition to the wedding ceremony, the festival included performances by Naya’s Trance Belly Dancers, entertainers Cherry Lemonade and Desta Toot, Odyssey Kings, Khrist Francis and musical guests Laura Bateman, Amy Allen and The Other Bones.

The festival also featured a wedding expo tent with vendors highlighting their wedding services, including place settings, floral arrangements, invitation designs, handmade rings, chocolates and catering.

“The wedding expo was great, certainly a highlight of the festival,” Tripp said. “The marriage ceremony was an integral part of the day, but the parade was also fun and the festival was more spread out through the park than in previous years.”

As a final highlight, Pride organizers realized a decades-long dream of having a Deering Oaks Fountain Rainbow Light Show this year. The Rainbow Light Show, funded by Dispatch Magazine, ran at dusk each night from June 9 through June 16. According to the press release, “The colored light show is intended to promote goodwill throughout the city during the week of Pride, and be a reminder of just how far the gay pride movement has progressed in 27 years.”

Organizers hope it will be an annual tradition to kick off future Pride festivals.

For more information on Southern Maine Pride, visit [www.southernmainepride.org](http://www.southernmainepride.org).

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# Fenway's LifeSkills Project celebrates first year at Anniversary Ball

By: Lauren Walleiser/TRT Assistant Editor

BOSTON, Mass.—LifeSkills—an empowerment-focused research study for young transgender women ages 16-29, offered through The Fenway Institute at Fenway Health—held their first Anniversary Ball at Villa Victoria in Boston Friday, June 21 to celebrate the accomplishments of the project thus far and allow participants and community members to perform and compete in the categories throughout the night.

"This year's ball is a celebration of the first year of LifeSkills," said Nelisa Rash, research assistant on the LifeSkills project and part of the Epidemiology Team at The Fenway Institute at Fenway Health. "We want to thank our community allies and partners for supporting us and collaborating to empower young trans women in the greater Boston area."

The evening included an overview of what the project offers and how it has been successful over the past year, performances, and several Ball categories including "OTA (Open to All) Beginner's Runway: The Shades Have It," "OTA Beginner's Performance," "OTA Realness: Fenway Healthcare Realness," "OTA Best Dressed: A Day at the Thrift Store," "OTA Runway: Summer Fashion Look," "Old Way: Paris is Burning," and "OTA Sex Siren: Sexy and Safe." Princess Athena Kahn hosted the Ball. BAGLY (Boston Alliance for Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Youth) was also on site to offer free HIV testing and counseling all night long.

"LifeSkills works with the House and Ball community, and this event supports, gives back, and celebrates this community," said Rash. "The ball is also a celebration of LGBTQ gender diversity and a safe space that respects people's diverse gender expressions and identities. One challenge with outreach is that there aren't as many spaces for young trans women to hang out, so we decided to create a space for our community to not just raise awareness about the study, but also to give back to the community. We want people to have a fun time. This event is a good way for us to connect with people we know, like our participants and friends and other community-based organizations and partners. It is also a good way to meet new people. Through this event, we hope people will have a better understanding of the LGBTQ community, especially trans women. Most importantly, we hope people come together and feel supported in their community and in who they are."



Nelisa Rash

According to Rash, the purpose of LifeSkills is to explore whether a group-based prevention program delivered by trans women will decrease risk for HIV and STI transmission within the trans community.

"Transgender women are disproportionately affected by HIV infection—more than 1 in 4 of our trans sisters have HIV," said Rash. "By teaching sexual safety tips and sharing experiences of our lives throughout our LifeSkills sessions, the curriculum focuses on a lot of great topics like sexual safety, how to be assertive during sexual activities, communication skills, obtaining housing, healthcare and employment, and pride in our communities. We help the girls gain more knowledge about HIV and build the life skills needed to reduce HIV risk behaviors and stop the spread of HIV."

Sasha Sashay Fierce, a LifeSkills participant and performer at the event, explained why she joined the project and what she has learned from facilitators and fellow trans women.

"I recently just came out to myself as trans, so I figured it would be a good way to get into the community, learn from people that have been identifying as trans their whole life and know where I'm coming from so they can give me help, and meet people that are just starting in the process as well,"

Fierce said. "No matter how I look, I can still be comfortable being how I feel comfortable identifying."

Bella (last name withheld for privacy issues), another Life Skills participant and performer, also shared how the project has helped her.

"I've definitely learned and experienced a lot throughout the terms in LifeSkills, so I'm definitely broadening my references to not just LifeSkills but other trans communities and activities," Bella said.

Rash discussed some of the other feedback and success stories she has heard from LifeSkills participants.

"[Some participants] were finally able to change their name after we did our name change workshop," said Rash. "Many have got on hormones and are now connected to healthcare. More employers are hiring trans girls and using their preferred names in the workplace and also families are becoming more accepting of their gender identity. It's truly an amazing feeling to advocate for these young trans girls—they really bring me joy. It's nice to see a big change and help build hope within the trans community!"

Rash explained that trans women have unique prevention needs when it comes to HIV, and that although there are many programs that have been developed to prevent HIV infection among young people, none have been developed or proven to work for young trans women.

"Trans girls are often categorized as being MSM [men who have sex with men], and not even categorized as women," Rash said.



"There are not a lot of options or programs in the Massachusetts area that are specific for trans women. We believe it is important for trans girls to reach out and help other trans girls in HIV prevention programming."

The LifeSkills Project is funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and is recruiting participants in Boston and Chicago. For more information on LifeSkills, visit [www.projectlifeskills.org](http://www.projectlifeskills.org).

## Updated Online Coverage at TRT

National Reactions to DOMA & Prop 8 Decisions: <http://tiny.cc/la3jzw>

All Pride Photos: <http://tiny.cc/2b3jzw>

Exodus Continues Spiritual Abuse: <http://tiny.cc/5e3jzw>

Marriage Equality Returns to California: <http://tiny.cc/rh3jzw>

## DOMA from page 6

But supporters of marriage equality see a much different scenario.

Chad Griffin, the founder of the American Foundation for Equal Rights which organized the Proposition 8 lawsuit and who now heads the Human Rights Campaign, said in a telephone press conference with reporters Wednesday afternoon that he had already been in touch with Attorney General Eric Holder about implementation of the ruling.

Currently, 13 states (counting California)

and the District of Columbia will issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples the same as to male-female couples.

Griffin said the LGBT civil rights movement must now adopt an "urgent new commitment" to bring marriage equality to all 50 states "within five years."

[To read the reactions from local and national activists and organization leaders, visit: <http://tiny.cc/tridomareactions2013>]

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## LGBT SENIOR PRIDE COALITION TEA DANCE

PHOTOS: TRT/LORELEI ERISSIS & MEGAN TROMBINO





## Imperial Court of Western Massachusetts' Inaugural Imperial Crown Prince & Princess Ball

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — Nelson Roman, President of the Imperial Court of Mass – Western Division, ICMA-WD, announced this year's honorees and Recording Artist/Songwriter *Daniel Patrick Ellis & Ru-Paul's Drag Race* Mega Star Jujubee as co headliners of the inaugural Imperial Crown Prince and Princess Ball to be held on Saturday July 13, 2013 at the Springfield Sheraton. Local Drag Celebrity and MAC Cosmetic Make-up Artist *Angelo Commisio* (Bianca Dubois) will receive the Community Service Achievement Award during the event. *Amaad Rivera*, former Springfield City Councilor, the first openly gay City Councilor will also receive honors during the event. *Springfield Mass Pride* and the *Aids Foundation of Western Mass*, AFWM, will be this year's beneficiaries. Additional guests include: Queen Mother of Massachusetts Verna Turbulence, Emperor and Empress of Connecticut Morgan Deluxe and Trevor Reynolds, Diana Prince and Savannah Dev-eaux of RI, and local drag talents Ruby Monroe, Serenity Lockheart, and Erynn Robachich.

"We are thrilled to be able to have such amazing talent appearing at this year's event! It is so important for the Court to make a difference in fighting homophobia, stigma, HIV/AIDS and other social injustices, while empowering youth who are our next leaders," said Roman.

Over the past year in its first year the ICMA-WD has raised over \$10 thousand for LGBT, HIV/AIDS and youth-enrichment organizations. The Imperial Crown Prince and Princess Ball is more than just a dazzling display of regal glamour, it is an opportunity to celebrate the LGBT community, and in par-

ticular, the colorful cross-dressing segment of that community. Last year it hosted a similar event in August which was attended by close to 150 people and raised a substantial amount for the beneficiaries. This year's beneficiaries are *Springfield Mass Gay Pride* and *The Aids Foundation of Western Mass*.

"The AIDS Foundation of Western Massachusetts is honored to be chosen by the Imperial Court of Mass-Western Division as a beneficiary of its their 1st Annual Imperial Crown Prince and Princess Ball. The funds raised through this partnership will allow AFWM to continue providing much needed support, educational programs and services to the western Massachusetts HIV community. Together our efforts improve the quality of life for those with HIV/AIDS, along with those who love and care for them," said Robert Quinn, Board of Trustee AFWM.

Tickets are only \$50 before July 5th, 2013, and \$60 after that & at the door. To purchase tickets to the event visit their site: [icmawmicp.eventbrite.com](http://icmawmicp.eventbrite.com).

### About the Imperial Court of Mass – Western Division

*The Imperial Court of Mass – Western Division, a 501 (c) 3 corporation, is Western Mass's most regal fundraising organization serving the LGBT community. As part of a proud tradition, the Court has raised thousands of dollars for charitable organizations including: Springfield Mass Pride, Northampton Pride and Diversity, Service Members United, The Bing Arts Center, the Holyoke Equal Rights Association, Out Now of Springfield, and the Aids Foundation of Western Mass. For more information, please visit [www.impcourt.org/massachusetts](http://www.impcourt.org/massachusetts) [See the ICMA-WD ad on page 16].*

### Other Struggles from Page 4

lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer; we are also women, people of color, immigrants. While we fight for full LGBTQ equality, we must also build a movement that is based on the politics of solidarity and addresses the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and class. We should think critically before we jump forward with praise for the Supreme Court's ruling, considering these are the same justices who stripped away the civil rights of our sisters and brothers of color. Even when we like the Supreme Court's rulings, can we not also recognize how profoundly undemocratic it is that nine unelected judges, totally disconnected from the lives of ordinary people and the rulings they make, can make such sweeping decisions that have such a profound impact on people's lives? Why should the basic civil rights of oppressed and marginalized groups be put up to a vote, or the opinion of nine judges, anyway? Shouldn't these be recognized as basic human rights guaranteed to all people?

In the aftermath of these important victories, many from the mainstream gay political establishment, such as the Human Rights Campaign and MassEquality, have been quick to praise the efforts of politicians, judges, and lawyers, and credit them with these accomplishments. This isn't surprising, considering that the strategy perused by Gay Inc. for the past twenty years has been to take our movement out of the streets and into the folds of the Democratic Party, the halls of congress, and executive board rooms. While Gay Inc. raises millions of dollars every year, they continue to pour these re-

sources into a political strategy that has given us slow progress at best, and a painfully narrowed agenda, that pushes too much of our community to the sidelines, at worst.

The mainstream gay political establishment has forgotten an important lesson from history; that it's the power of ordinary people and their capacity to build fighting grassroots movements—not politicians, CEO's, and judges—who are the motor force of progressive social change. The historic defeat of DOMA and Prop 8, and all the progress we have made as community since the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969, is the result of tireless, uncompromising activism on behalf of ordinary LGBTQ people and our allies. It's because we stormed the streets after the passage of Prop 8, because 250,000 people mobilized for the National Equality March in Washington D.C in 2009 (<http://tiny.cc/j5zhzw>), because countless activist have spoken out, sat in, signed petitions, and demonstrated in cities and towns across the country, and because millions of us have come out to our friends, family, and community, that we have transformed the national political climate around LGBTQ rights and pressured those in positions of power to act.

We can't let opportunistic politicians steal away the credit for our victories so they can harness more votes and campaign contributions. We need to ask the tough and discomfiting questions; like why can the Obama administration take our votes and money and use it to bail out Wall St., but not deliver an all-inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act in his first four years in office?

**See Other Struggles on page 14**

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# Are transpeople proud? A personal viewpoint on pride and self-acceptance

By: Deja Nicole Greenlaw\*/TRT Columnist

TRANS NEWS



Every year L G B T Prides are held throughout the world and every year they get bigger and bigger. More and more people are attending Pride Festivals and marching in Pride Parades. Why is this, and why do we have Prides anyway?

I think that we love to have Prides and attend them because Prides can mean many things to many people. Some folks think of Prides as big parties. Some folks think of Prides as a platform to voice the inequalities of the world. Some folks think of Prides as being events where they can really be themselves with no repercussions and no holding back, not even one iota. Many of us see Prides as being a combination of all three avenues of thought, but my personal favorite meaning is the last one: being proud of who you are. During Pride, these thoughts pop into my head: "I am me! I am no longer ashamed of who I am! I will no longer fear what society might think of me! I will not

hide anymore! I will live as who I am! I am proud of who I am!"

At Pride festivals and parades, you can see many people expressing that they are truly proud of who they are. They have reached the point of taking pride in who they are because they know what it was like before they ac-

seems to be getting lower. When it comes to transpeople, however, the percentage appears to be higher. Not all, but many transpeople are not proud of being trans. They may be proud of being gay, lesbian or straight, but they are not proud of being trans. Some of them want to shed the transgender label so

want to be transgender. That is fine for them and I wish them the best, but I have seen many of these folks fall to pieces when they are called transgender. I've seen them cry or lash out in anger and their whole mood sours when these instances occur. If they could accept who they are and be proud of who they are, maybe they wouldn't become upset when they are recognized as being trans.

In some extreme cases they may even take their own life. In these cases, I feel that this may be because they cannot continually attain their personal goal of their gender identity. They are "found out" and their identity is challenged. Their world is rocked. I don't know why they take their lives and I can't speak for them, but being trans myself, this is what I suspect.

It is my belief that we should accept ourselves for who we truly are. We then must learn to be okay with ourselves and begin to love ourselves. Then, as we grow, we can truly find peace and pride in being who we are.

*\*Deja Nicole Greenlaw is a local, proud transwoman who has three grown children and works at 3MPI. She can be contacted at dejavudeja@sbcglobal.net.*

## During Pride, these thoughts pop into my head: "I am me! I am no longer ashamed of who I am!"

cepted themselves and came out of their awful closet. They know how it felt to be different and to not fit into society. They know how it felt to be ashamed of who they are. They know how it felt to want to hide, and they know how it felt to want to end their lives. More and more people are getting to this wonderful point of acceptance and pride in their lives. Unfortunately, not everyone has reached that point.

I realize that there are still many gay, lesbian, and bisexual people in the closet still fighting their demons, but as time goes on the percentage of people staying in the closet

badly that they become upset when they are referred to as a transgender person.

None of our paths are exactly the same and each of us looks at things from various perspectives, but I feel that the transpeople who don't accept themselves as trans and don't feel pride in being who they are miss an awful lot in their personal development. Finally, accepting who I am was an important point in my life. From that point, my love of myself grew and pride in who I am grew. It's a very peaceful and powerful feeling.

Many transpeople want to have a male or female gender identity, period. They do not

## Ask a Transwoman: "Don't Ask Don't Tell" and the transgender community - no more waiting

By: Lorelei Erisis\*/TRT Columnist



First of all Kari, I'm sorry that happened to you. It was rude and quite unacceptable. I also think you handled it remarkably well.

As you will know dear readers, this is a monthly publication, which often prevents me from being able to comment on current news cycles. This is not wholly bad, as it leaves me free to effectively "wait and see" on some issues and process events in a more thoughtful fashion than we often are able to in our current climate of "News Right Now!"

However, I have the opportunity this month to comment on a pair of particularly newsworthy developments of great concern to the LGBTQ Community. The most recent is the Supreme Court's ruling of the Defense of Marriage Act as unconstitutional. The other is a flurry of news items alleging that the Board of OutServe-SLDN, the organization which spearheaded the recent repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," had voted to request the resignation of newly appointed Executive Director, Allyson Robinson.

One of these, the SCOTUS ruling on DOMA, is an undoubtedly exciting victory for LGBTQ people. The other, which led to the resignation in protest of several board members and senior staff of OutServe-SLDN, is much less positive. Both of these events impact trans people pretty directly.

First of all, let me make it very clear that I am quite excited about the overturning of DOMA. I have often spoken of the need for same-sex marriage equality. Laws which dictate discrimination against same-sex marriages make no more sense now than the anti-miscegenation laws of a generation ago. I firmly believe that in this we will have the judgment of history on our side. It is a victory very clearly worth celebrating, and I can be

quite sure I'm missing out on some truly epic parties as I sit here in front of my aging Mac.

So how are these related? They both spring from struggles we have been told are of primary concern to LGBTQ people. Marriage equality and open military service for gay and lesbian people have been the issues that have most dominated our community. They have taken the lion's share of resources in terms of financial, political, legal and organizational

sistently been one of those organizations. However, what we as trans people have heard is that if we play along and are diligent supporters of the main agenda, then our turn would come. Well, fair enough, many of us have tried to do just that.

I understand pretty well how politics work. At its most effective, politics (and activism) require compromise. The focus is on core issues, the mobilization of allied blocs and tar-

## Marriage equality and open military service for gay and lesbian people have been the issues that have most dominated our community.

support. Whenever trans people have said tried to interject our own, vital issues into the discussion, we have been counseled to be patient and told to wait. The movement would come back for us. We just had to realize that our needs, as well as the needs of other at risk segments of our LGBTQ community such as immigrants, the poor and sex workers were not a priority. Our concerns would be on the back burner until the gay and lesbian leadership could marry the person they love and participate openly in our nation's military-industrial complex. No matter that these goals in and of themselves seemed to require us to tone down our more radical leanings and downplay our less than heteronormative elements.

If we could just take our flag and stand in the back, that would be great. M'kay?

Clearly, this has not been entirely across the board. There have been organizations that have seen the need to prioritize Trans issues and concerns right alongside those of Gay and Lesbian people. There have been organizations and people who have understood that sometimes the needs of the few go hand in hand with the needs of the many. I am very proud to say that I believe this paper has con-

geted fundraising efforts.

We may not always agree on prioritization, but at some point, priorities need to be set. Often this is done by the most powerful segments of a group. In the case of the LGBTQ community, that power structure is pretty clearly laid forth in the acronym itself. If Trans, Queer or Bisexual people were the ones with the real power and clout, you can bet we'd all be reading that acronym differently.

So, here we are. There's still a lot of work to be done at state levels to achieve full marriage equality, but we've achieved a major milestone. Those marriages that are currently legal will be recognized at the highest levels. Although the culture of our military will require more work, there is no longer any legal impediment to open service. Done and done.

Now, can we focus on improving the much more basic needs of trans people (as well as racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, the poor, sex workers, etc.)? This should be the point where the larger community says, "Okay. You were saying something about Basic Civil Rights? Let's get on that." But I'm not sure it's going to be if we don't absolutely demand it.

Here's where the allegedly requested resignation of Allyson Robinson ties into all this. Her appointment as the Executive Director of OutServe-SLDN about nine months ago, the only openly transgender leader of a major LGBTQ rights organization which does not primarily focus on transgender issues, was read by many as a message to the transgender community. It was taken to mean that priorities in the wake of the DADT victory were being reorganized as long promised, and it made sense too. Although gay and lesbian folks can now serve openly, trans people are still barred from open service. Now, sadly, the rather abrupt request for her resignation is also being read as a message. Whatever the truth of this story turns out to be, whatever the details behind it, the message that has been taken by trans people is already indelible. "You are not our top concern. You will have to wait a bit longer."

Allyson Robinson has been dealing with all this pretty admirably. She has remained remarkably on task, refusing to let her personal feelings about all of this, whatever they may be, distract from her mission to serve America's LGBTQ servicemembers and veterans.

We, however, are under no such obligation. We have been patient. We have fought in the trenches with and for our lesbian and gay brothers and sisters. Now it is our turn. It's time to stand up and say it loud and proud. We will no longer wait quietly for your help in achieving full civil rights for transgender people. We will not stand by as we are beaten and killed because of our gender identity and presentation, waiting for you to have a nice white wedding first.

The time is now for the TBQLG community to stand strong and united for transgender rights. We hope you will stand with us and help lift us up, but we are done waiting. Slainte!

*\*Lorelei Erisis is an activist, adventurer and pageant queen. Send your questions about trans issues, gender and sexuality to her at: loreleierisis@gmail.com.*



# Nuestro orgullo: El amor es amor - ¡Qué viva la decisión!

Por: Wilfred W. Labiosa\*/Columnista de TRT

LATIN VISION



PHOTO: ERIC HESS

**O**rgullo, ¿por qué y para qué?

Estas preguntas no sólo me las hago frecuentemente sino que también hago hincapié durante el mes de

Junio y ahora con las decisiones que tomó la Corte Suprema. ¿Por qué y para qué hay que celebrar nuestro orgullo Latino y LGBT? No hay una respuesta absoluta. Hay algunos/as en la comunidad Latina y LGBT que argumentan que si es obvio y necesario celebrar nuestro Orgullo. Yo pienso que hay respuestas diversas y personales.

Estas celebraciones de Orgullo no sólo son fiestas y paradas, ¡son manifestaciones para demandar igualdad! La Corte Suprema de los Estados Unidos sigue diciendo en sus decisiones que somos iguales en todos los ámbitos. ¿Por qué hay personas y gobiernos que siguen diciendo lo contrario? Si los jueces Kennedy, Ginsburg, Breyer, Sotomayor y Kagan lo entienden ¿por qué no otros/as?

Debemos celebrar nuestro orgullo ya que confrontamos todos los días prejuicios a nuestro alrededor. Todos los días hay personas que sufren de estos prejuicios solas y éstos le llevan a deprimirse y hasta a come-



PHOTO: TRT/GLENN KOETZNER

ter el suicidio. Hay aislamiento, depresión, estrés, y tantos otros sentimientos que afectan a las personas LGBT a través de nuestra nación. Durante Junio hubo celebraciones en todas partes de nuestra nación y el mundo. Los medios de comunicación pasan información al respecto y educan a la comunidad en general sobre la diversidad sexual y la comunidad LGBT. Las personas de la comunidad LGBT pueden aprender de recursos y "herramientas" disponibles en la sociedad. También podemos usar estas "herramientas" aprendidas para confrontar los prejuicios de cada día. Esta es una de las razones primordiales por las que debemos tener las celebraciones, además de celebrar nuestro Orgullo para que otros/as conozcan

de otros/as Latino/as LGBT y no se sientan aislados/as y para que conozcan de estos recursos. Tengo que mencionar que también hay celebraciones en Mayo durante el Día Internacional en Contra de la Homofobia y en Septiembre el Orgullo Latino LGBT, durante el mes de la Herencia Hispana. ¡Estas celebraciones ayudan! Como siempre he dicho a mis compañeros/as activistas y organizadores de dichos eventos, si ayudamos—aunque sea a una persona—entonces todo es válido. Al igual, todos/as nos debemos sentir iguales y si no nos sentimos así entonces hay que seguir estas manifestaciones y celebraciones.

He tenido la oportunidad de asistir a diferentes celebraciones de Orgullo LGBT alrededor de muchos estados en Estados Unidos, Latino América, Europa y el Caribe.

¡Mis favoritas todavía lo son la de Cabo Rojo en Puerto Rico, la de Habana en Cuba y la de Boston (por supuesto)! Hay varias razones pero la primordial es el tamaño y los recursos que hay para la comunidad LGBT en estos lugares. En la de Puerto Rico y Cuba hay un sentir de comunidad donde todos/as se conocen y se crea un espacio de "familia" durante las varias actividades. Hay un sentir de activismo social y comunitario que surge de la comunidad LGBT para la comunidad en general. Se siente el cariño LGBT y la *comunidad LGBT*. La de Boston es una de mis favoritas, ya que fue mi primera actividad de Orgullo LGBT y la que organicé por tantos años – ¡siempre será mi preferida! Eso sí, no debemos de tener celebraciones que cuestan tanto dinero. Debemos de regresar a los tiempos donde celebramos y educamos a otros/as sobre nuestro Orgullo haciendo manifestaciones, demostraciones y paneles educativos.

Nosotros/as como comunidad debemos de formar parte de estas actividades para no solamente aprender de los recursos y de conocer a otros/as personas LGBT pero también para aprender de la retórica de los políticos. Todos/as ellos/as que quieren nuestro voto LGBT participan de alguna de estas actividades. Ellos/as dialogan sobre que pueden hacer para trabajar con nuestra comunidad LGBT. Cabe mencionar que durante la celebración de Orgullo en Boston pude aprender de la plataforma que Markey y Gómez

**Read the rest of this story at:**  
<http://tiny.cc/trtlatinjuly2013>

## Pregúntale a LL: El baño y las personas transgénero

Por: Dru Levasseur/ Abogado Derechos Transgéneros para Lambda Legal



*P: Soy una persona transgénero y recientemente fui cuestionada por un empleado de un restaurante local cuando fui a usar el baño. ¿Qué puedo hacer si esto sucede otra vez?*

**R:** No hay ninguna ley que dice que una persona tiene que tener cierta apariencia específica para usar un baño particular, pero desafortunadamente, esta forma de "vigilar el género" es muy común. La Línea de Ayuda de Lambda Legal recibe con frecuencia lla-

porta el incidente a un gerente, dueño o alguien a cargo. Explica que estás usando el baño correcto. Si te siguen negando el acceso al baño apropiado, puedes presentar una queja con tu agencia local o estatal contra la discriminación. El negar acceso al baño apropiado para personas transgénero puede considerarse discriminación sexual bajo la ley. Es posible que vivas en uno de los 12 estados o más de 125 ciudades y condados donde hay protecciones específicas en contra la discriminación basada en la identidad de género.

Los baños "unisex" son cada vez más comunes en los lugares públicos y lugares de empleo y algunas personas transgénero nos informan que el acceso a estos baños les permite no preocuparse por ser acosados. Si crees que es posible conseguir uno, trata de abogar por un baño "unisex" en tu trabajo.

Sin embargo, las personas transgénero deben ser capaces de utilizar el baño que corresponde con su identidad de género y no deben ser elegidas como las únicas personas que usan algún baño en particular, ya sea "unisex" o no. La comunidad médica (y cada vez más, los empleadores, las escuelas y los tribunales) reconoce que es esencial para la salud y el bienestar de las personas transgénero que vivan de acuerdo con su identidad de género en todos los aspectos de la vida – y el uso del baño es una parte necesaria de esa experiencia.

Si deseas obtener más información sobre tus derechos relacionados con el baño acude a nuestro folleto informativo "Acceso igualitario a baños públicos" en la Internet en: <http://tiny.cc/m65hzw>.

Si tienes alguna pregunta, o crees que has sido objeto de discriminación por tu identidad de género o expresión, por favor comunícale con nuestra Línea de Ayuda al 1-866-542-8336 o visita en la Internet a: [www.lambdalegal.org/ayuda](http://www.lambdalegal.org/ayuda).

## El negar acceso al baño apropiado para personas transgénero puede considerarse discriminación sexual bajo la ley.

muchas de personas que querían utilizar el baño que coincide con su identidad de género, pero por no conformar a los estándares de género de alguien más, le negaron acceso a ese baño. Esto puede ocurrir en las escuelas, en los lugares públicos como los restaurantes y en lugares de empleo.

Si esto sucede de nuevo, mantén la calma para que puedas entender la situación y determinar si estás en peligro o no. Siempre puedes abandonar el sitio si te sientes amenazado/a y regresar después con un amigo a levantar una queja. Si te sientes seguro/a, re-

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# Neil Patrick Harris, Margaret Cho & Lauren Graham

By: Romeo San Vicente\*/Special to TRT

DEEP INSIDE HOLLYWOOD



Neil Patrick Harris will wig-out in *Hedwig*

Why didn't someone think of this earlier? No sooner will *How I Met Your Mother* wrap up its last season

with all questions about mother-meeting finally answered, than its womanizing star Barney (Neil Patrick Harris) will leap over to Broadway, strap on a wig and heels and turn himself into Hedwig, star of John Cameron Mitchell's *Hedwig and The Angry Inch*. Harris is already excited to step into the role of the transgender, German, aspiring rock star for the show's Broadway debut (it was off-Broadway before its 2001 film version) in spring of 2014. And while there's no other casting news yet, does there really need to be? This is a slam-dunk of a casting move, with Broadway's favorite sitcom star/song-and-dance-man/gay role model/Tony host/*Harold & Kumar* villain in the lead. It's like an engraved invitation for 15 different audience demographics to flood the box office for tickets and a readymade, Internet-igniting, post-Tony Awards performance clip before it even happens.

## Margaret Cho is In Transition

Margaret Cho has her own sitcom again, this time on the Internet. Like everyone else with eyes facing forward, the comic is bypassing the TV gatekeepers and taking her work directly to her audience. The show's called *In Transition*; it's about female ex-cons (including Cho) and it co-stars performer Selene Luna, Cho's comrade from the reality series *The Cho Show*. The 13-episode series will be short-form and take place entirely on YouTube, marking another instance of that site's own transition from the number one destination for bored employees searching for kitty and twerking videos to instant TV network with original scripted content. Debating in July, you can bet that its creator will be keeping track of hits and making sure heads roll if numbers don't blow up. That's what all the big TV moguls do.



Neil Patrick Harris

## Lauren Graham's life becomes a book becomes TV

*Gilmore Girls*/*Parenthood* star Lauren Graham is an ambitious sort. You kind of have to be when you're a woman in Hollywood. The men who make decisions are almost never reliably into you, especially after you hit middle-age, so Graham's not taking her winning streak for granted. She wrote her first novel, *Someday, Someday, Maybe* – witty comic fiction loosely based on her own experiences as a struggling actress in 1990s New York City – and watched it hit the best-seller list. Then Graham's friend Ellen DeGeneres – the pair talk a mile a minute every time Graham guests on *Ellen* – taking note of this development, decided to step in and produce the book as a TV series. The energetic Graham will adapt the book into pilot form and, with a little luck, careful shepherding from power-friends in high places and more good luck, this thing will go to series. We think Graham is cool, so fingers crossed.

\*Romeo San Vicente has spent entire three-day weekends penetrating what was often unspoken. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

## The Rainbow Times' Car Topper at the BP Parade

For the first time since being a Boston-based publication, *The Rainbow Times'* Publishers took part in the Boston Pride Parade 2013. Proudly, their vehicle topper depicted on one side the cover of the April, 2013 issue of TRT, showing a photo of Boston Mayor Thomas Menino. On the other side, yet another TRT cover was depicted, this time of Boston Police Department Hero, from the Boston bombings, officer Javier Pagán.



## Six Flags New England's Out in the Park 2013

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — Six Flags New England is proud to host its annual "Out in the Park" event on Saturday, September 14th. Guests will be able to enjoy world class Entertainment as Amy Lynn & the Gun Show takes the stage. Amy will delight audiences with her soulful tone and down-to-earth humor as she performs originals and classic hits. Be sure to also stop by the Rockville Gymnasium as Matthew James hypnotizes volunteers. Matthew James will have you rolling on the floor in laughter as he entertains and involves his volunteers in his hilarious antics.

Throughout the day participating Guests will also be able to enjoy Six Flags New England's top thrilling attractions including Bizarro, Mind Eraser, Batman the Dark Knight, Goliath and many more. With so much to do and so little time, "Out in the Park" Guests will be able to enjoy an exclusive ride time from 8 p.m. – midnight. Tickets can be purchased in advance,

at <http://tiny.cc/sixflagsne>. Guests can purchase the Deluxe package for "Out in the Park" for only \$41 per person which includes admission, catered picnic and parking. The Standard Admission package is \$32 per person and does not include the catered meal or parking.

"We are always delighted to host our annual LGBT event, 'Out in the Park' here at Six Flags New England. It is a day full of fun, music and entertainment that is sure to create memories for a lifetime," said Jen McGrath, Six Flags Communications Manager.



## TOP 10 BEST SELLER VIDEOS

Courtesy: WolfeVideo.com

### LESBIAN TOP 10

1. Cloudburst
2. Mosquita & Mari
3. The Lovers & Friends Show Season 5: The Final Season
4. Face 2 Face
5. Molly's Girl
6. Strange Frame
7. Young and Wild
8. Kiss Me - Best Lesbian Movie of 2012!\*
9. Jack & Diane
10. A Perfect Ending

### GAY TOP 10

1. White Frog
2. A Portrait of James Dean: Joshua Tree, 1951
3. Petunia
4. Men To Kiss
5. I Want Your Love
6. Any Day Now
7. Yossi
8. Broadway Damage
9. Love Free or Die
10. Gayby

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# Rhode Island residents share excitement for upcoming weddings, marriage equality

By: Clara Lefton/TRT Reporter

PROVIDENCE, R.I.—Beginning August 1, 2013, the state of Rhode Island will recognize same-sex marriage, a historical event brought on by the signing of a new law by Governor Lincoln D. Chafee, which will make same-sex marriage legal in all of New England.

Many people throughout the state said they are eager to celebrate this change, including Emily Douglas and Stephanie Storch who both live in Providence, RI. The two met early last summer and said they hit it off immediately. The marriage proposal came after Storch's roller derby team, the Sakonnet River Roller Rats, had just won a competition. Douglas proposed to her in the car leaving the event. Excited to wed but unsure of whether it could happen in RI, the two say they hoped for the best.

"We knew that the vote was going to come up and we knew that there was a possibility of it going through in Rhode Island, but we didn't know what the probability was and were prepared to go through with it in Massachusetts if need be," said Douglas, whose wedding is set to take place at Colt State Park in Bristol, RI. "We were absolutely excited and set our date for August 10, 2013. We're able to get our marriage license on August 1, 2013, so it just worked out perfectly for us."

Although some Rhode Island couples shared their excitement to get married for the



ALL PHOTOS: COREY MARTINEAU

Rick Denoncour, Bill Man, Addie DelValle and Ken G. Swanson attend the wedding of Man and DelValle

first time, others said they are looking forward to renewing their vows, especially Frank Ferri, a member of the Rhode Island House of Representatives. According to Ferri, the date has always been important to him because he first committed to his partner, Tony Caparco, on August 1, 1981. Since then the two were married in 2006 while visiting Vancouver, Canada, but they both grew up in Providence and said they are excited to have their marriage recognized by their home state.

"What got us to this point was the people in our community who were out. Out to their

families, their friends, their co-workers, their employers. That was the most powerful [factor] that helped us get to the point where we could pass the law," said Ferri. "That effort and the fact that we had Gordon Fox [Speaker of the RI House] supporting it was what made the final push."

A longtime supporter of marriage equality in Rhode Island, Ferri has been testifying in favor of it at the Rhode Island State House since 1998. He eventually became the chair of the organization Marriage Equality Rhode Island, and became a Rhode Island Representative in 2007. Due to his longtime advocacy for LGBT rights, Ferri said he is planning to renew his vows under the direction of Representative Fox on August 1, 2013.

"Right now we're planning to have a cere-

mony with some presentations because there are people we want to thank and recognize. Afterwards we want to have champagne and cake," Ferri explained. "It's a celebration for Rhode Island. It'll be an event for the state more than anything."

Another couple that was previously married, Bill Mann and Addie DelValle, said they are also happy to finally have their Rhode Island marriage license, but are undecided on whether it's necessary for them to have a big ceremony.

"Our commitment and bond was sealed three years ago when we married and [we] don't feel the symbolic need to re-marry here," explained Mann, whose MA wedding included 100 friends, family members and co-workers.

The two were married in Attleboro, Massachusetts three years ago and completed living wills and other legal documents so that



Wedding rings at the ceremony of Bill Man and Addie DelValle

they could get as close to marriage benefits in Rhode Island as possible. Therefore, if any ceremony does take place, Mann said it would only include his husband and a few witnesses.

"After August 1 we will do all our paperwork and become legalized in RI. That way we can lead our lives like we normally do, be happy and just take it one step at a time," said DelValle.

For more information on Marriage Equality Rhode Island, visit [www.marriageequalityri.org](http://www.marriageequalityri.org).

## Other Struggles from Page 9

How can we consider politicians who close our schools, shut down our youth homeless shelters, and eliminate these services with the funding they need to address the epidemic of queer youth homelessness, suicide, and bullying, our "allies?" Our job as a movement isn't to make politicians feel comfortable, or get cozy with CEO's and Wall St. Our job is to fight for a world we deserve to live in, to demand what we want, and what our community needs, not what we are told is realistic by people who live in a

world totally disconnected from most of our lived experiences.

Today, we celebrate the power of our community to come together and struggle collectively, and the advancements we have made in our long effort for full equality. But, we need to remember that we have a long way to go until we achieve the dream of full federal equality, and live in a society that is affirming of people all across the sexual and gender spectrum. And, if there's anything to be learned from our recent victories, it is the power of good, old fashioned people's

movement, grassroots activism, and protest. It will be our ability to break the rules, confront those in power, and fight—just like the women of Texas did on the night of June 26th—that we will make our goal of full federal equality a reality.

\*Keegan O'Brien is a long time LGBTQ youth activist in Boston, anti-war organizer, a student at UMass Boston, a former board member of BAGLY, and member of the International Socialist Organization in Boston. He also has written extensively on LGBTQ social justice websites.

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# Valentin runs for Holyoke's Ward 4 City Council seat

By: Grisel M. Ocasio/TRT Publisher

HOLYOKE, Mass. — A local resident of Holyoke and a fierce supporter of Alex Morse's platform during the Holyoke Mayoral Campaign 2011, Jossie Valentin has decided to take on Holyoke, Massachusetts' Ward 4. As a Hispanic from 25 Linden St., Valentin took out nomination papers in May 2013 to run for Ward 4 City Councilor.

"I was involved with Alex Morse's mayoral campaign two years ago, and was quite inspired by what I saw and heard from Holyokers," Valentin said proudly. "I want to be a part of the positive changes that this city is experiencing and be a voice for our community."

Valentin, who is originally from Puerto Rico, came to Massachusetts in 1998 to attend graduate school and never left. She has been a Holyoke resident since 2005. "Massachusetts is a great state" said Valentin, "and I am proud to be a resident of Holyoke."

Public safety and trash issues are Valentin's main priorities for Ward 4.

"We truly appreciate the efforts of the Holyoke Police Department, especially the Community Policing initiatives. However, there is still a lot of work to do when it comes to keeping our streets safe. We need more resident involvement to make positive changes in our city. I want to be a strong voice for Ward 4 residents," said Valentin, who also works at Holyoke Community College, HCC.

Valentin, 36, has worked as a Bilingual Senior Academic Counselor at HCC since 2006. She completed her BA in Psychology at the University of Puerto Rico and her MS in Forensic Psychology at the American International College. She is a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor, LADC, in the state of Massachusetts. Before HCC, she was the Director of the Evaluation and Stabilization Unit at the Hampden County Correctional Center; she was also the Director of Arbor House, a 25-bed substance abuse treatment residential program on Pine St. in Holyoke.

As an out Hispanic lesbian, Valentin knows about struggles and faces them head on.

"My sexuality is a part of who I am. I have been out for the past 20 years," said Valentin. "I am happily married and have lived in Massachusetts since 1998 as an out Latina."

Valentin plans to knock on doors throughout Ward 4 to start a dialogue with her constituents, to ascertain their needs and expectations. In doing so, Valentin has received feedback and other concerns that



Jossie Valentin

the residents have.

"There are many areas of Ward 4 that are struggling with drivers constantly not following the speed limits," Valentin explained. "Some residents have expressed an interest in looking at options such as speed bumps, changing specific one-way streets signs, etc."

Fully bilingual, Valentin knows her language skills will help her better communicate with the people she may be representing.

"Being bilingual allows me to not only communicate with our English speaking residents, but also our Spanish speaking residents," she said. "Knowing that residents can express their concerns to me in English or Spanish broadens the opportunities for many."

The candidacy's platform is about transparency and honesty, according to Valentin.

"I am running for City Councilor because I want to be a strong voice for our community. I am open, transparent, and accessible," Valentin said.

Valentin faces Jason P. Ferreira for the seat. Ferreira is the incumbent Ward 4 councilor. He filled the seat vacated by Timothy W. Purington when he didn't seek reelection in 2011.

"I have seen how our city has been moving forward and would be honored to be a part of our City Council," said Valentin. "Ward 4 is such a vibrant, evolving community. I want to ensure that all Ward 4 voices can be heard in the City Council."

The primary will be on September, 17 and the elections for City Council will take place on November 5, 2013. For more information about Holyoke's upcoming election dates and candidates, visit: [www.holyoke.org/elected-officials/](http://www.holyoke.org/elected-officials/).

## Letters to the Editor from Page 2

I just want to make sure that I clarify that we don't help refugees. Refugees get support, housing (all the things that we provide our asylum seekers) .....from the federal government. ... We are just grateful to your attention to these amazing human beings situation. So much gratitude even as we learn on the way!

—Pastor Judy Hanlon, Online

Dear Editor,  
What a lovely example of a group of researchers who take the time to really know, join with, and empower the community they are studying. This is so very unusual, and is what research in our communities should be (i.e. research that actually helps). Good for the LifeSkills Boston team, and good for Fenway Health.

—KC86, Online

## To cook is to love: A foodie's journal and a book review

By: John Verlinden\*/Special to TRT

¡MUCHO GUSTO!



PHOTO: RACHEL POWER

My nominee for this year's list of great summertime reading is Michael Moss's new book, *Salt Sugar Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us*. While it may not exactly qualify as a "beach read," it is a gripping, true story page-turner full of diabolical intrigue, and it certainly give us lots of information we can use to help us fit into our swimsuits.

Moss takes us on a journey inside the processed foods industry, and what an enlightening and scary trip it is. Sugar, fat and salt are the stars of this expose. It explores the biology and chemistry involved in our bodies' natural attraction to these ingredients, how they each enhance the appearance, flavor, mouth-feel and shelf-life of products, and how food manufacturers use them to keep production costs low and profits high. It delves into how these products are marketed to us and our children, how government policies have supported rather than controlled our ever-expanding appetites for them, and how our consumption of them is affecting our nation's health.

Impeccably well researched, Moss reviewed thousands of documents and interviewed dozens of industry insiders including current

and former company executives, product developers, marketing specialists, and food scientists. From his sources, we learn how these three cheap and abundant "foods" became the lifeblood of the industry, and why it is so hard for them to change course.

Food manufacturers have gotten the message that consumers want healthier choices, but progress remains slow. There are encouraging signs; a well-known soda company launched a new series of ads on obesity awareness and other manufacturers are making incremental changes to their food formulas, but all are cautious. Competition within the industry is cut-throat: if competitors don't do it, why should we take the risk? Stockholders will still expect higher earnings through increased sales every year, and making changes to formulas for best sellers aren't easy. People won't buy it if it doesn't have the same great taste. Are consumers willing to pay more for products with leaner cuts of meat seasoned with more herbs and spices and less sugar and salt?

Do you think food manufacturers have culpability for their products that we voluntarily consume? I'd love to hear your thoughts. Until next time — ¡Mucho Gusto!, ¡Muchas Gracias! y ¡Buen Provecho!

\*Share your family's experience, ask a question or suggest a topic for a future article — contact me: [john@muchogusto.com](mailto:john@muchogusto.com) or visit [www.muchogusto.com](http://www.muchogusto.com) and join our Latin food forum.

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