

The Rainbow Times

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

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Boston JCRC event to organize support for Iran's Gay community shut down

Opinion By: Jason Lydon/TRT Opinion Writer

On May 10, 2010 the Jewish Community Relations Council, JCRC, was planning to have an event entitled "Being Gay in Iran: Human Rights and the Revolution." Many Boston-area queer and transgender folks as well as our allies were angered by the event and successfully shut the event down forcing both the venue to cancel and the sponsoring organizations to pull out. People have asked "why were you so angry." Why is it not appropriate for JCRC to host this event? Are queer people not experiencing oppression in Iran? The following is a beginning to answer some of those questions.

The JCRC states in their mission that they are working to "build a network of support for Israel." The question must be asked why an organization that is focused on the strength of Israel would organize an event about the experience of gay people in Iran, a country Israel is in direct opposition to. It is not uncommon, however, for so-called liberal organizations to critique an enemy's behavior towards a marginalized group to gain liberal support for war. We saw this happen as so-called feminist groups supported the bombing of Afghanistan to help "liberate" women, unfortunately thousands were mutilated or killed by U.S. bombs in the process of their liberation.

One Jamaica Plain organizer, Erin Ryan, stated that, "I needed to take a stand against the

exploitation of queer identity for an anti-Arab agenda. This tactic of using oppressed people's struggles to further right wing agendas has a long history. Imperialist governments have used worker's rights, women's rights, and genocide to garner support for invading countries they wanted to invade anyway. And here in the U.S., working poor women's struggles were used to justify welfare reform that was really harmful for women. It's important to be aware of this tactic and fight against it, because when it's successful, the results are devastating."

It was suggested to me that JCRC hosting this event would not be much different than the governor of Arizona hosting a forum on immigrant communities' treatment of gay people. The governor clearly does not have the best interest of immigrant people, gay or straight, in mind and thus would only be using this as a tactic of dividing the community and weakening their capacity to resist the policies being enacted by the Arizona government. This is why people were so angry.

See JCRC on page 8



Jason Lydon

C'mon Out – Just Ask! Advice Column

By: Tetty Gorfine*/TRT Columnist

Dear Tetty:

I am loyal and devoted to my partner. But he doesn't want me to hang out with my friends especially if he's not there. I've tried telling him that he has nothing to worry about but he gets anxious and angry. He sometimes accuses me of being unfaithful and now I'm beginning to get angry back. I'm afraid that if I get angry, it will be the end of the relationship. How can I get him to accept my friends and how can I resist becoming angry.

—Thank you, Don

Hi Don:

It seems there are two issues here. One is concerning having the freedom to enjoy your own friends and the other is about anger. Let me start with the second.

We live in a society that is both anger phobic and anger indulgent. By anger phobic I mean that many people fear it. It can be seen as something bad or toxic. For those who fear anger, often there is a false belief that it can only be destructive. Children can be rejected or shamed for expressing it. Some people have witnessed their parents fight and not benefited from seeing that people can listen, let go and resolve situations. When children see others stay angry for long periods with no resolution in sight, fear will develop. Children can also see people become emotionally, or worse, physically violent. Often, the way children experience anger will set the stage for how they as adults relate to it.

Inherently, however anger is just like any other emotion. Its nature is to come and to go.

Equally true, we live in a time that people can easily become angry. Anger can be used to cover up more tender vulnerabilities. Animals show us that aggression is one form of coping with fear. We humans are capable of the same. In my experience I see that anger is one of the major ways people defend against feeling

vulnerable, wrong or shame.

Don, you are in a partnership. I am assuming this is where you want to be. I also understand you want to see your friends. When someone steps on your foot, your reaction might be, "hey, get off my foot!" You might react with some anger since that person is in your space and hurting you. It seems to me that your partner is stepping on your foot Don. The fact that you're feeling anger does not surprise me. If that person on your foot gets off, I'm sure you'll stop being angry. Are you getting my message?

I also recognize that you are fearful of becoming angry. It would likely be helpful if you spent some time understanding why anger is frightening. It is not a forgone conclusion that your anger will destroy your relationship, so challenging yourself with this one will be most helpful. After all, your boyfriend gets angry now and it has not ended the relationship.

This exploration can become a discussion between you and your partner as your sort this through. You can talk about your fears of getting angry as well as your desire for your own friends. Perhaps you can ask your partner about his anger. Maybe you can gently suggest that his anger sits on top of his fears. Ask him if having your own friends threatens him. Hopefully you can help him see that your desire for your own friendships does not mean that you love him or desire him any less. You can tell him what you're afraid of and ask that he "get off your foot" so you can enjoy your friends.

In essence Don, a little introspection and a

See C'mon Out on page 6



Tetty Gorfine

The Controversial Couch

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

By: Suzan Ambrose*/TRT Columnist

I was swept up at a recently sports game like a trailer during a tornado.

It was my first professional ball game in years. So much had changed ... and can I say it was as pleasurable as an electric shock treatment might be.

All I could see, feel or hear were people chanting like Roman Gladiators out for blood.

The deafening roar of the crowds, demanding justice, victory at any cost. The pounding of feet, rage and anger fueling disappointment. Did I step into a time machine to the Coliseum?

This interactive experience I was having didn't feel like a game. Sports have become anything BUT. It was an eye-opening experience of what young people are being exposed to and now consider normal.

This in contrast to a Brazilian archbishop who according to the Associated Press, said (normal?) adolescents are "spontaneously homosexual" and it was important to help children avoid homosexuality.

"Boys play with boys, girls play with girls," Archbishop Dadeus Grings said. "If there is no proper guidance, this sticks."



Wow. So homosexuality sticks like ... gum on your shoe? So, if you don't have your "GaybeGone" and apply immediately, you can pretty much consider yourself a member of the dyke squad or a flamer for life? This could explain my own entrapment in the lgbt community.

My parents pushed me and my siblings to attend many overnight Catholic retreats that were girl-only events. I guess I didn't get the 'proper guidance.' What I got, instead, was the message to stay far away from boys because

pregnancy was unacceptable. I acquiesced ... but it looks as if that wasn't exactly what they had

in mind.

Archbishop Grings also said the acceptance of homosexuality in society could pave the way for the acceptance of pedophilia. "Before, the homosexual wasn't spoken of. He was discriminated against. When we begin to say they have rights, rights to demonstrate publicly, pretty soon, we'll find the rights of pedophiles," he said. Whaaat?

I'm getting sick of the reference to pedophilia and homosexuality in the same breath. It is the

See Couch on page 16

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

What great coverage of Noho Pride! It was awesome to see all of the photos and it looked amazing. I had to miss Noho Pride this year, but your coverage made me feel as if I'd been there. Thank you Rainbow Times.

—Beth H., Northampton, MA

Dear Editor,

The cover page with the Boston Pride people was really amazing. Now I can see the faces of the people who run The Rainbow Times, plus the Noho Pride Guide had a story that I didn't know much about the Publisher and Editor and how you have overcome obstacles in our GLBT community too. I admire your courage and your honest answers. I really like your paper.

—Gabrielle G., Cambridge, MA

Dear Editor,

I liked Jason Lydon's story about immigrants. I like that he gets it. As a Latino man, I have many friends in different states that are really angered by this Arizona law. I like that he spoke openly about this subject and that he is an ally of the Latino cause.

Joe H., Jamaica Plain, MA

Dear Editor,

"How I killed Mac" was really eye-opening to me. I liked how the author, Ms. Erisis, openly talked about who she was. I never thought about it in the way that she presented it. It's sad too that the question was from someone she knew.

—Jay H., Providence, RI

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed reading that having children in the gay community is similar to parenting

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Domestic abuse in same-sex relationships “invisible issue”

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

The prevalence of domestic abuse in same-sex relationships continues to be a major problem. Two Boston-based organizations, The Network/La Red and the Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project (GMDVP) work to provide services for victims of domestic violence.

The Network/La Red was formed in 1989 when a group of formerly battered lesbians came together to address domestic violence in lesbian and bisexual women's communities in Boston. The agency now works to end partner abuse in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, BDSM, polyamorous, and queer communities.

“Our numbers have gone up,” explained Kaitlin Nichols, Director of Organizing and Education for The Network/La Red.

The agency saw 300 new clients in 2009, while the number of calls logged to its hotline was over 2500.

Nichols explained that partner abuse is an “invisible issue” in the LGBT community and hopes The Network/La Red can create greater awareness of the frequency of abuse in same-sex relationships.

“I think a lot of people still don't know that domestic violence and partner abuse happens

in the LGBT community. We're hearing from more people who are experiencing it. We often talk more easily about the violence that happens to our community (from straight individuals who engage in anti-gay harassment). We're less willing to talk about the violence that happens within our community,” Nichols said.

“...We often talk more easily about the violence that happens to our community (from straight individuals who engage in anti-gay harassment). We're less willing to talk about the violence that happens within our community...”

The statistics are startling. 1 in 4 LGBTs will experience abuse during their lifetimes.

“(Partner abuse) crosses all racial, economic, and gender lines,” Nichols explained. “We see people from all walks of life at The Network/La Red.”

Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project (GMDVP), founded in 1994 by a gay man who was a survivor of domestic violence, offers counseling and legal assistance to male victims, along with education and outreach.

GMDVP also features a Speaker's Bureau, for survivors of domestic violence who want to share their stories with others.

Ian Gill, who works for the Education De-

partment at GMDVP, explained that some stay in abusive relationships because they deny there is abuse going on.

“They see it as isolated incidents,” Gill said, adding the victim may hold out the hope that their abuser will change for the better.

The person who commits violence against their partner is seeking power and control

in the relationship, Gill noted. Last year alone, the GMDVP logged 2515 calls to their hotline and saw 439 clients.

Some abused partners may be reluctant to leave a relationship due to financial concerns, or because they might not have a place to go to.

“In 2005 we had a hearing at the State House about homelessness and LGBTQ survivors. We found that 53 percent of the survivors who testified at that public hearing became homeless due to domestic violence,” Nichols said, adding transgender individuals may be refused entry to a shelter, or subjected to harassment there.

Others may not be able to live with their families, due to rejection of them being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

“Sometimes you're making the choice between staying in a relationship that may be safer (to stay in that relationship) than to actually try to access services

that may be hostile to you,” Nichols noted.

GMDVP has been working in collaboration with LGBT political groups, hospitals, and medical professionals to address the issue of domestic violence within the community.

The agency also has been doing outreach work at various bars and clubs as a way to spread awareness about the issue. The staff members attend Pride festivals and marches to engage with the community about the problem.

GMDVP extended its hotline services to include Rhode Island and Connecticut, for victims of abuse in

those states.

For more information about The Network/La Red, call 617-695-0877 or go to their website at www.tnlr.org. GMDVP can be contacted by calling 1-800-832-1901. Their website is www.gmdvp.org.



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Faith, Family, and God: Self respect - everyday lessons to learn and live by

In the Name of God

By: Paul P. Jesep*/TRT Columnist

The homeless have a great deal to teach or remind everyone if the time is taken to look, listen, and observe them. They can be identified everyday whether huddled in the corner of buildings, sleeping on sidewalk grids for warmth, or pushing shopping carts filled with modest possessions.

Recently, another homeless person made an impression on me. After arriving at New York's Penn Station aboard Amtrak I needed another bathroom visit. Although the habit of drinking multiple bottles of water to flush toxins and cleanse the body is very healthy, there is one very annoying consequence. Yes, I know I should have gone on the train. I did several times, but that's beside the point.

As I washed my hands in the bathroom I noticed a middle-aged man wearing soiled, ripped clothes with beat-up shopping bags near his feet. He was at a nearby sink - shaving.

The man used liquid soap from the dispenser as a substitute for shaving cream. He was homeless. (Or perhaps he was one of Kurt Vonnegut's eccentric characters come to life with several hundred thousand dollars in his bags.)

What did this chance encounter with one

of God's Creations have to teach me? First, it didn't matter that he was homeless. We shared many things. The most obvious that morning was I had shaved several hours earlier. We were both individuals with similar routines and had the same basic needs.

One difference is that I had the benefit of doing certain things from the safety and comfort

Homelessness made this man's humanity much more apparent. Sometimes the reaction to an injustice will define the quality of our character.

of my home. The bigger difference, however, is that he chose to do it because of self-respect. He didn't need to worry about his appearance. I had to shave because of my attendance at a meeting. Like many guys I hate shaving. Thank God for the cordless electric razor.

This man, no matter how difficult life had become, no matter how unfairly it treated him, maintained a sense of self. He did what he could under extraordinarily difficult circumstances to be true to his Creation as the Creator intended.

Homelessness made this man's humanity much more apparent. It's probably accurate to say that because of social status he is not treated well in daily life by those better off. Yet despite life's injustices and the daily challenges

of just getting-by he managed not to lose his identity or sense of purpose.

He was resilient and thick-skinned. He had relevance. This man knew deep down inside that he had the same value like everyone else. The bigotry and indifference of others did not define him.

You can look at this experience and not think twice about it. Or you can be jaded, roll your eyes, and move on with your ever so important life. But to do so is a missed opportunity. It is an experience that provides perspective about the world, one's place in it, and the injustices that we all face at one time or another. Sometimes the reaction to an injustice will define the quality of our character.

There are usually life lessons found in each day. They don't have to be obvious or earth-shaking. In fact, most aren't and tend to be subtle. I think of them as examples of God's quiet presence to guide, teach, and mentor.

It doesn't matter if you're in a busy place like a mall, walking on a noisy city street, or in a theater waiting for the movie to start while watching folks select seats. Find silence within yourself and observe. You'll be surprised at the things you can learn about life, yourself, and the surroundings.

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

Transgender Civil Rights Bill deadline extension praised

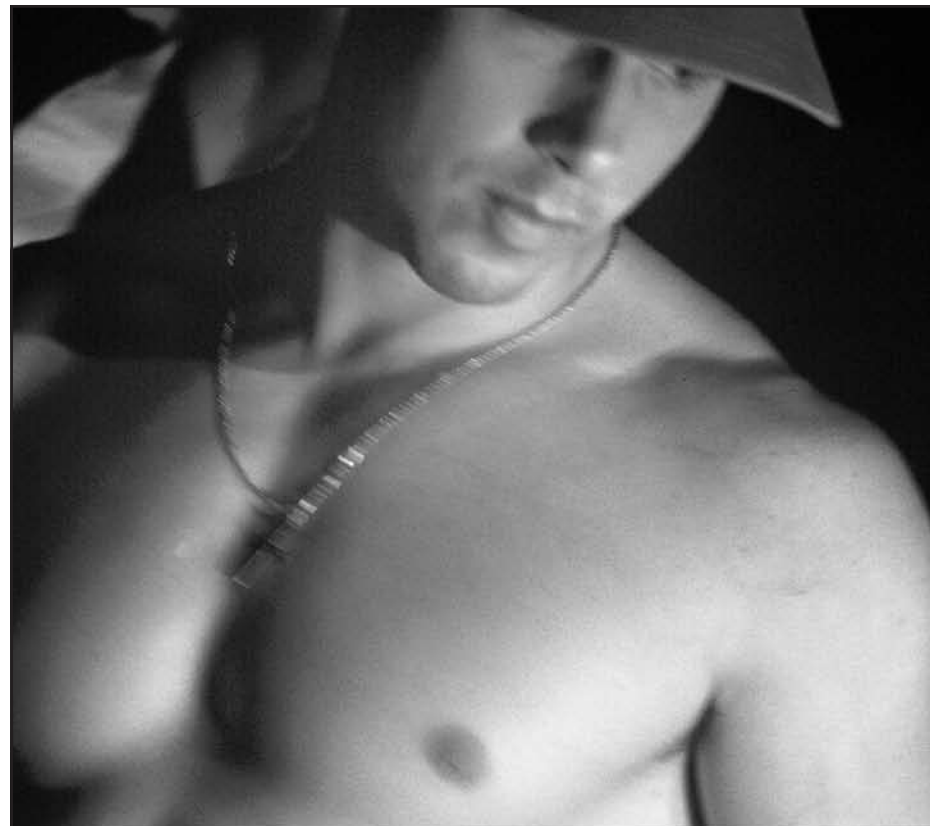
In early May, the legislature's Joint Committee on the Judiciary extended the deadline for H. 1728 / S. 1687, An Act Relative to Gender-Based Discrimination and Hate Crimes (the Transgender Civil Rights Bill) to be reported out of committee. The original deadline to report the bill out was May 7; the bill will now remain under consideration by the Judiciary Committee for at least another month.

"As they say on Monty Python, we're not dead yet. The Judiciary Committee and our coalition now can get down to the business of producing a piece of legislation that can put transgender people back to work and bring stability and dignity to families throughout the Commonwealth," said Political Director DeeDee Edmondson. "We would like to thank the members of the Judiciary Committee for dedicating extra time to this important civil rights bill."

The Joint Committee on the Judiciary's extension comes a day after the Boston City Council unanimously passed a resolution in support of the Transgender Civil Rights Bill. The City of Boston passed an ordinance protecting transgender people from discrimination in 2002.

"We appreciate the Boston City Council for recognizing the importance of protecting transgender people from discrimination and violence at the state level as well as at the local level - which they have already done," said Executive Director Scott Gortikov. "We hope that the legislature will soon follow their lead and pass the Transgender Civil Rights Bill to ensure that all people in the Commonwealth receive equal treatment."

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FENWAY  HEALTH

Boston Pride to launch 40th Annual celebration: 9 days of entertaining and informative events

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

Boston Pride's 40th Annual celebration will feature a star-studded array of entertainment, local celebrities, and a tribute to the progress of the LGBT community over the past four decades.

Dance divas Kristine W. and CeCe Peniston will be the Entertainment Headliners for this year's Pride Festival, to be held at noon on Saturday, June 12.

Other entertainers include God-Des and She, MEandJOAN COLINS, Mrs. Danvers, Odaiko New England, All the Kings Men, Booty Vortex, and Sariah.

Alexis Arquette will serve as the Celebrity Grand Marshal for the festivities. Arquette has appeared in several films, including "Last Exit to Brooklyn" and "The Wedding Singer", and a stint on the VH1 reality series The Surreal Life.

The Boston Alliance of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Youth (BAGLY), Grace Sterling Stowell, who is the organization's Executive Director, and Don Gorton, Esq. III, a veteran LGBT activist in Boston, will serve as the Parade Grand Marshals.

The late Senator Edward Kennedy has been named as an Honorary Marshal.

Kennedy was an unwavering supporter of the LGBT community, leading the charge on important legislation like the Employment Non-Discrimination Act and the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act and forcefully opposing discriminatory proposals, including the Defense of Marriage Act and the Federal Marriage Amendment.

This year's Pride theme, Riots to Rights – Celebrating 40 Years of Progress encompasses the scope of the battle to secure equal rights for the LGBT community, from the Stonewall riots in 1969 to the ongoing

battles to overturn the military's discriminatory "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, explained Keri Aulita of the Boston Pride Committee.

"In 1970 Boston held its first (LGBT) gathering on Boston Common," Aulita said. "We definitely want to look at the progress we've made, where we were, where we've come, and where we still need to go. We are not 100 percent equal. The struggle continues worldwide

See Pride on page 16

"We definitely want to look at the progress we've made, where we were, where we've come, and where we still need to go. We are not 100 percent equal. The struggle continues worldwide for equality."

Obituary: Joyce Crowder



Rev. Crowder

Reverend JOYCE CROWDER: A resident of the Farnsworth House of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, died suddenly April 4, 2010, at the age of 74. The cause of death has yet to be determined.

Born in Alabama City, Alabama, September 4, 1935, Joyce grew to love the wonderful bushes, trees and flowers that grew from the earth that itself changed colors. She loved bird watching, and tending her garden.

She attended a small school, loved to read books and work on puzzles. She used to make up crossword puzzles, and sell them to magazines. In high school, Joyce persistently took college prep in order to go on to college.

In 1959-1964, Joyce was Supervisor of the Medical Transcription Department for the Holy Name of Jesus Hospital in Gadsden, Alabama. From 1964-1968, Joyce earned her Bachelor's degree from Columbus College, Columbus, GA, earned her Registered Nurse Certification from St. Francis Hospital School of Nursing, Columbus, GA, and studied at the St. Nicholas Training Centre, London, England. In 1967, worked in Medical Transcription at Massachusetts General Hospital, also, in 1968, she earned her Montessori Teaching Certification, and taught until 1972. From 1972-1974, at the Cardinal Cushing General Hospital, Brockton, MA.

In 1980, Massachusetts Nurses feared revocation of their license to practice nursing should their sexual-orientation be discovered even though The Nurses Board stated: "sexual preference shall not be considered grounds for action

against a license." Joyce was a member of the Gay Nurses' Alliance, and a secretary for the Massachusetts Gay Political Caucus. She was deeply involved in her work within the nursing profession to represent gay and lesbian nurses, and society at large to ensure the human rights of all people.

It was during the early 1980s that her volunteer work, in a newly formed small (desperately needed) group (only two nurses) later to be named the AAC (AIDS Action Committee), became the most important, and time consuming thing in her life. It became a compulsion, an obsession, a passion, literally a calling.

Peter Lombardi, Head of Support Services Team for the AAC wrote, "Joyce was a wonderfully caring, competent, and compassionate woman who became a substantial piece of my conscience."

Sarah de Ris knew Joyce as, "...a remarkable woman whose passion for social justice was evident to everyone who knew her. The trajectory of her life, from modest beginnings in the deep-south to Harvard Divinity School was certainly amazing, but it was her compassionate heart that touched so many people. Fierce in defense of her principles, she was unafraid to take on the high and mighty!"

Joyce was a member on the board of the Bay Windows Board newspaper for Boston, and the greater Boston area. She was on the Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Caucus for ten years, a co-founder of the South Shore Sisterhood for eight years, a co-director of the Gay Nurses International Alliance for four years, a co-founder of the Dorchester GALA for two years, a member of the Daughters of Bilitis, a member of OLE

See Crowder on page 8

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Memories of "the closet;" It's not easy being different!

Trans Opinions & More

By: Deja Nicole Greenlaw/ TRT Columnist

The closet! Everyone that I know in the LGBT world has spent time "in the closet." We all have had this secret place where we went to and expressed ourselves and dreamed our dreams but we kept it hidden from others. Why? Because of what others might think of us. Maybe we were scared to death of anyone actually finding out who we really are. Maybe we were afraid what they might say or what they might do. Maybe they would be disgusted with us or maybe we feared that we would lose our bond with them. Perhaps we feared being ridiculed, ostracized, beaten, or even killed. These are awful thoughts, but very real thoughts for all of us in the LGBT community.

Those are the thoughts that ran through my head when I was young and growing up in the 1950s and 1960s. Back then those were not very good times to be gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender; it wasn't even part of the equation yet! The trans back then were considered a form of gay and the gays who dressed like women were definitely the "lowest of the low."

It was pretty awful back then and here I was, a poor little boy who wanted to be a girl, but I kept my mouth shut and my feelings stuffed way down deep in my soul. I was scared to death to admit and accept who I really was. I didn't even want to think about it, but it kept creeping back into my mind every single day. I thought: "I can't possibly be one of 'those' people! Those



Deja Nicole Greenlaw

people are bad and evil and unnatural! I can't possibly be like them! I am not bad, nor evil nor unnatural! Or am I?" I didn't know. It was the mid to late 1950s and I was enrolled in a Catholic School taught by nuns. After 8 years of it, I had a pretty good idea on what I was supposed to be and do act and live etc. I knew that I was different, but I also knew that I had to "play the game" and be what I was taught or else!

Some of the "rules" that I learned ... Society back then had these views of how you should act and what you should do and who you should be. If you followed these rules then you were considered a success, a good person, you know, one of the good crowd. Some of the messages I received were: "Men are macho and they don't cry. Women are passive and feminine and they must not be bold. Men should love only women. Women should love only men. One should never even think of loving someone of the same gender. Gays and lesbians are evil people who deserve nothing but the wretched lives they live. Bisexuals? They are the worst of the worst! All they think about is sex and they will "do it" with anyone! They are truly wretched and depraved!"

"A man should never even think of being a woman! That is sick and disgusting and very wrong! Sissies are not normal men and any boy who is a sissy should be 'toughened up' and learn to live correctly like a man! Wearing dresses and playing with dolls is not some-

thing that a boy should do. As a matter of fact, if a boy ever gets caught wearing a dress he should be forced to wear that dress in public to be taught a lesson and then later beaten like never before. That will fix this nonsense! If a girl wants to be a boy, well, that's really not too bad, but only to an extent. Yes, she can be a tomboy but when it comes time for social events she should get dressed up and made up to be pretty! After all, she really is a young lady and young ladies should be prim and proper and pretty and act like young ladies! Period!"

Needless to say I was heavily conflicted. So, what did I do? I did what most of us did back then. I went "into the closet." I went deep into the closet, way, way, deep into it.

As time went on I tried my best to live a "normal" life. I did marry and raised 3 children with my ex. I was married for 26 years when my world was rocked by Osama bin Laden and his radical terrorists with their brazen acts of September 11, 2001. You remember that feeling when you knew it was a very real possibility that radical terrorist acts just may claim your life at any time? All of a sudden every place now could be bombed at any time! The United States was no longer a safe place to live! It was then that I knew that I couldn't stay in the closet any longer. I was afraid that I might go to my grave never having explored my true being. I knew that it was then that I had to make my move. That's what jolted me out of my closet!

I'm sure that we all have similar stories about being in our own closets and then getting to the point where we finally came out. For those of you who came out, what got you out of your closet? For those of you who are still in, I feel your pain. :(

Letters from page 2

in the heterosexual community. Maybe if people were to read more stories about our similarities, they would not be so against our lives. It's not a darn lifestyle. I didn't choose to be gay, but I chose to stand and love who I naturally feel is right.

—Troy P., Hartford, CT

therainbowtimesnews.com

C'mon Out from page 2

lot of communication are ingredients that will help with this one. If you and your partner have trouble with either one, don't be afraid to reach out.

Good luck with this.
Tetty

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

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

Ask a Transwoman: I did not kill the person I was; I am transformed, re-born

By: Lorelei Erisis*/TRT Columnist

Dear Lorelei,
(cont. from TRT's May 6th issue)

How should a friend handle it when their transperson friend starts nurturing their new personality and it's not the same as the pre-trans person?

—Nora C.

Ah Nora, you have such a way of cutting through to it. And this is it. Kind of the make or break question for a lot of us, and our friends/family/co-workers/followers/fellow elite, para-military, tactical assault unit, squad members/etc. How do we preserve, maintain and even nurture the relationships that were important to us prior to transition?

Something I often discuss with other trans-folks is the importance of remembering that while we have lived with this our whole lives. Thinking about who we really are, trying to understand our true selves and get it all figured out. Our friends and family do not have that luxury. This is often all new to them. We need to allow them a period of grieving, under-

standing and hopefully acceptance. We must remember to be patient and give them the time that they need to re-tool their perceptions.

It's a rough time for them. They have to go through a transition of their own. They will probably have to get through all the classic stages of grief to hopefully find their way to the other side—to acceptance and understanding.

We ourselves must remember to be thoughtful and kind, even sometimes in the face of anger or sorrow, so that we may preserve the bonds which are most important to us. We have to give them time. We may have to be educators or even enemies for a bit. We have to be strong when we feel our weakest.

So finally, to the last part of your question Nora (and all my fine readers!), let me assure you that who I am now is not so much a new personality as it is simply a more honest expression of who I always was. Having used up the analogy of "killing Mac" let me present a different more accurate analogy. Kind of a clichéd one admittedly, but hey clichés happen for a reason!

It's not so much that I killed the person I was, as that person was the fuzzy caterpillar that I entombed in a silk cocoon for

a time (mwuahhh-ha-ha!!) and who has now emerged as the colorful and free-flying butterfly I am today (I know, I know, I'm sorry already, but it really does work...!!! I am transformed and re-born.

I'm still the same person I always was, but I'm more confident of myself now. I'm not holding this lie in my gut, eating me from the inside. I'm less distracted, and consequently more focused. Less Hamlet, more Henry The Fifth!! Well, okay, a really fabulous Henry The Fifth with a penchant for unseasonably bright colours.

It may help to consider also, that much of the change you see in me is not just because of my gender transition. It is in large part a result of the many miles I have traveled previous to this. The many stories I have gathered and lives I have touched and been touched by. The loves I have had and the heartbreaks I have endured.

I was much more an innocent when last we knew each other's company with anything like geographic proximity. I have traversed the length and the breadth of this country and made forays into others. I have pretended to be a boy in Mexico so I could buy hormones to be a girl in the U.S.. I've wandered late night city streets alone. Fended off fadingrockstarson my balcony. And pretended to like awful art films with excitable porn actresses. I've lived a number of lives more than most people ever

get to even taste.

How should you handle it? I recommend riding the ride. How often do you get the chance to get to know an old friend all over again for the first time?

And the person that I was in the dark? The person you laughed with and talked through the night with? Who shared half of a curtained bedroom with you? The person you hitchhiked to The Cape with and went exploring in forbidden places with? That person who was planted face-down in the ferns a couple feet over from you, hiding from the po-po? That person is still me, was always me, will always be me. I am Mac who is Lorelei who will always be your friend and who loves you no matter what.

I'm not sure how directly that answers your question Nora. Or if it clears anything much up for you my dear readers, if it illuminates the fog of understanding. But it is the truth and isn't that what all this is about anyway? Being true?

'Til next month, be good to each other and keep those questions coming, because we've got a lot more to talk about. After all, as Mr Rogers sang, "It's such a good feeling to know you're alive..."

Slainte!

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



Lorelei Erisis

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DEEP INSIDE HOLLYWOOD: Brett Easton Ellis's *Imperial Bedrooms*

Entertainment News

Breaking Dawn finds a director

Academy Award-winning filmmaker Bill Condon (*Dreamgirls*) is now the chosen one to shepherd *Twilight* teens Edward and Bella and Jacob as they enter their final on-screen chapter, *Breaking Dawn*. And, not missing a single lesson learned by the people who directed the three earlier films, he's courting fans in a way that most franchise helmers don't really have to. Of course, those other franchises tend not to have the sort of maniacal, demanding followings that the *Twilight* series "enjoys." The director posted an open letter to those fans online, acknowledging his newcomer status and asking for comments and questions; and they responded in droves (Two movies please? No 3D please?). The verdict? The majority of the *Twilight* fans seem supportive. The rest are angry about Jar Jar Binks. Look for the movie sometime in 2011.

Imperial Bedrooms: 25 years after *Less Than Zero*

A quarter of a century ago, the novel *Less Than Zero* established Bret Easton Ellis as the young hipster prince of contemporary literature. Soon afterward, the disturbing, disaffected tale of amoral, drugged-up youth was turned into a strangely undisturbing movie with a strong Nancy Reagan-like anti-drug message. And any day now Ellis's follow-up novel *Imperial Bedrooms* will revisit both its cast of characters – all grown up but no less spiritually emp-



Romeo San Vicente

ty – and the practice of sampling Elvis Costello for a title. Speaking recently at the *Los Angeles Times* Festival of Books, Ellis alluded to Fox Searchlight as possible producers for the film version, a project he'd like to see feature the reunited actors of the 1987 film: Robert Downey Jr., Jami Gertz, Andrew McCarthy and James Spader. Great idea, but only if LL Cool J promises to re-record "Goin' Back to Cali;" the Bangles score the rest of the film and Brad Pitt shows up as an uncredited extra like he did in the original.

Dragon returns for more training

The little dragon that could has given birth to another chapter, thanks to every filmmaker's dream come true: great reviews and crazy box office. Dreamworks' *How To Train Your Dragon*, from gay director Dean DeBlois and un-gay director Chris Sanders (the guys behind the sweet-natured *Lilo & Stitch*), has grossed nearly \$400 million worldwide so far and earned the kind of nearly unanimous glowing reviews that classics (and 2011 Oscar noms) are made of. So it's a bit of a no-brainer and not at all surprising that a sequel has just been announced. Obviously without caring hands to guide it (a plea to the powers that be: bring back DeBlois and Sanders, they know how to do this kind of thing just right) it could all

turn to dull, cashing-in-focused merchandising, but until that goes down this remains great news. There's now at least one sequel probably worth seeing on your 2013 calendar. That is, if you plan your movie-going that far in advance. Romeo does.

The N.W.A. Movie: Film tha police

It was 22 years ago that seminal hip-hop group N.W.A. burst onto the music scene with their album *Straight Outta Compton*, introducing gangsta rap to the world and shocking conservative critics with their song "F*** Tha Police." That means a new generation doesn't know who they are (their members included Dr. Dre, Ice Cube and Eazy-E) or what they did (they were frequently accused of inciting violence, misogyny and homophobia) and that it's time for a biopic. Enter *Straight Outta Compton*, from screenwriter Andrea Berloff (*World Trade Center*), that will chronicle the rise and dissolution of the band thanks to money squabbles and egos, as well as the recon-

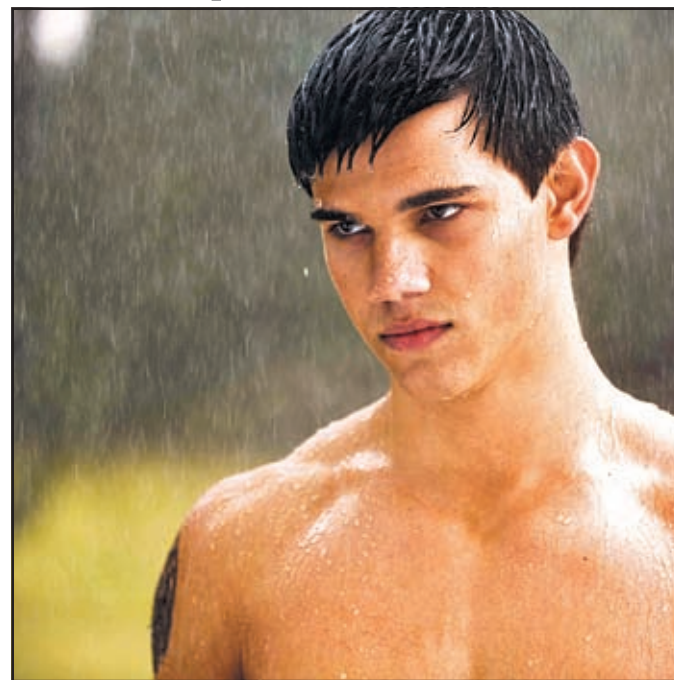


PHOTO: SUMMIT ENTERTAINMENT.

Taylor Lautner of the *Twilight* series.

ciliation that occurred following the death of Eazy-E to AIDS. No stars are attached yet, but Romeo will keep it real with updates.

*Romeo San Vicente has always preferred Lil' Kim. He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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2010 Pride Marches & Rallies in our local Gayborhoods & beyond

The change of seasons welcomes in many Pride Marches, Rallies and Celebrations to the immediate region and beyond. Some of the closest to our gayborhoods are:

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

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

Worcester Pride 2010 will take place on Sept. 18th this year. For more information about this great Pride, visit www.worcesterpride.com.

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

24th Annual Southern Maine Pride Parade & Festival will take place on June 19th. The Parade will start at Monument Square in Downtown Portland, ME. For more information, please visit: <http://www.southernmainepride.org>.

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

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

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

For a more comprehensive list of all of the Pride Events in the U.S. and abroad, visit Interpride at: <http://www.interpride.org>

Crowder from page 5

(Older Lesbian Energy) for 14 years, with the Bay State Democrats for one year to include the state democratic convention, on the board of the Boston Gay and Lesbian Alliance, belonged to the Dignity Boston Gay Catholic group, and was the founder of the Evergreen Social group. Joyce belonged to the GOLDEN THREADS social group for ten years, and the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Advocates, and especially the AIDS Action Committee as a buddy

for 7 years. She was a member of the Steering Committee at Farnsworth House, and a member on the board of directors at ETHOS, outreach to elderly. Also, Joyce was the organizer for the Crime Watch Committee.

Our active and passionately caring Joyce fought not only for our equal rights, our health and justice, but her Spirituality reached our souls. Reverend Joyce will forever be with us as we walk, and find our special path.

JCRC from page 2

I am sure that the treatment of gay people in Iran is terrible. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad clearly does not have much love for queer people and Iran has laws against "homosexuality." However, rather than a Zionist group critiquing Iran, if we are to have authentic conversations about the experiences of queer and transgender people in Iran they should be organized by Iranians who have the best interest of queer Iranians at heart. While the policies of Iran may be harmful for queer people the reality of the Israeli government as a nuclear nation and the sanctions on Iran by the United States are doubtlessly more harmful.

The hypocrisy of JCRC causes its own frustrations. Puerto Rican independence organizer, Marta Rodriguez wrote of the JCRC event, "I understand that the purpose of the event is to mobilize support for the gay community in Iran. But it strikes me as contradictory at best and hypocritical at worse that they should suddenly be so concerned about the plight of gays in Iran, when they have supported Israel's ethnic cleansing policies in Palestine. They have pronounced themselves against any condemnation of the Israeli regime, for their continued removal of Palestinians from their homes, in

order to build more settlements. These are the same people who rallied in support of Israel as the world was condemning the massacres it carried out in Gaza in December of 2009 and January of 2010. These are the same people who supported that regime's acts of whole-sale murder against the people of Lebanon. These are the same folks who oppose the employment of sanctions to force the Israeli regime to cease its crimes of racism and genocide against the Palestinian people." This is why people organized to stop the JCRC event.

Let us all continue to organize to resist the cooptation of our oppression to garner support for imperialist action. Our suffering, locally and globally, cannot be used to justify the violence of other nations. If you want to learn about what is going on with queer people throughout the Middle East, build relationships with groups like Aswat (www.aswatgroup.org) and Al Qaws (www.alqaws.org) and reading Bekhsoos (www.bekhsoos.com). Do not rely on groups who have another agenda that does not include the liberation of queer people. Take action and learn more. The 62nd anniversary of the nakba (Arabic for catastrophe) is May 20th. This is a good time to learn and organize!

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Connecticut Pride kicks off on June 5

Connecticut PRIDE, a Pride organization run entirely by volunteers, celebrates and remembers "who we are, where we've come from, and how far we need to go," according to the organizations website.

This year, the 2010 theme is One Heart - One World - One Pride. Organization officials say that Connecticut Pride produces the event to promote awareness, tolerance, acceptance, and equality for GLBTI individuals, their friends, and families, in a safe space, adopting

a healthy sense of family and identity and to save lives.

The 2010 Connecticut Pride Rally and Festival is being held Saturday, June 5, 2010, in Hartford's Bushnell Park. There will be performances by legendary artists such as Sister Funk, Todd Alsup, and Inaya Day.

Currently, the organization is seeking volunteers. Please visit www.connecticutpride.org for more information about Conn. Pride, to volunteer, and become a vendor or sponsor.

CT Pride 2010 Performer • TODD ALSUP



PHOTO: PROVIDED BY CT PRIDE

Sirius OutQ's Larry Flick, a major tastemaker and champion of new music, has spoken: "Todd Alsup has a lot going for him. He's a fine singer, a strong musician, and an empathetic songwriter. But he has something else. He has that sparkly, intangible x-factor that separates the superstars from the average. He's a true contender. Bet on him to go the distance and touch whole world with his music."

Todd's much-anticipated debut album has just wrapped! The self-titled record will officially drop on June 22nd. Look for the record to be available here at www.toddalsup.com, on iTunes, Amazon, and other digital outlets. Look for lead single "Let's Have a Party" to be available on iTunes this month. And stay tuned for info about opportunities to hear the new tracks in advance.

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CABO is the 2009 Rising Star Chamber and an affiliate of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

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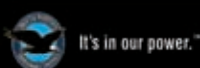
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CT Pride 2010 Performer • INAYA DAY

PHOTO: PROVIDED BY CT PRIDE

Inaya began singing in church as a youngster in Brooklyn New York, where she got her first experience performing.

She attended the High School Of Music and Art in Manhattan and went on to major in musical theater at The University of Bridgeport.

Inaya was then off to the stage. She's done theater work in Germany as well as regional. She understudied Stephanie Mills in the Wiz in 1992, receiving rave reviews when she stepped into the lead as Dorothy in New York, St. Louis, and Washington D.C.

Inaya is no stranger to recording, either. She has recorded vocals for Michael Jackson, Sean "P-Diddy" Combs, MC Lyte, Queen Latifah, Moni Love, Randy Crawford, Bootsie Collins, and Missy Elliot—to name a few.

In addition, Inaya is an incredibly versatile songwriter. You can seek her out in the writers' credit sections on Bootsie Collins album Fresh Outta "P" University and on Randy Crawford's LP, Every Kind of Mood. The songs for Ms. Crawford were chosen to be the first two singles and made the charts in the U.S. and U.K. respectively.

Inaya has spent time on the Billboard charts with projects of her own like Can't Stop Dancin', #1, Movin' Up (take my problems to the dance floor), #2, Keep Pushin', #2, and Hold Your Head Up High, #6—all of which she sang and wrote.

Inaya is also spending time on the ARIA charts, Australia's equivalent to Billboard. There, she's been on the pop, Australasian, Dance, and Club charts.

Her song I am tha 1, nominated for an Aria Award, has been on the club chart for more than 33 weeks and counting, while sharing light with Nasty Girls and Stand By Me—two other Inaya Day singles. Other Credits include (but are not limited to) the charted hits, Just Can't Get Enough, I Will, Feel It, I'm

Touched, Shout It Out, Save Me, Mine, What I Like About You, He's My Music, & Gave Me Love.

Inaya is the vocalist on Mousse T's famous dance floor hook, Horny, which also placed number 1 on the billboard charts, and Missy Elliot's singles Gossip Folk and Cop Dat Disk, which she not only sang but wrote the hooks for with Mousse T on the remixes.

There'll never be another Day ... Inaya Day, that is. For more information, please visit www.inayaday.com.

CT Pride 2010 Performer • SISTER FUNK

PHOTO: WWW.SISTERFUNK.COM

Sister Funk, the nation's hottest all-female band brings a high energy, entertaining stage show to a growing national following. For the past 6 years, Sister Funk has been headlining concert arenas, clubs and music festivals playing tracks off of their 3 independent CD releases: Pursuit of the Groove (c) 2001, Girl (c) 2003 & Gossip (c) 2006. Sister Funk's music is best described as commercial pop/rock, similar in sound & style to artists like Pink & Maroon Five.

Gone a track off their latest CD release Gossip, has been featured on Sirius Out Qs Hot Top 20 Charts for 15 consecutive weeks, reaching #2. Gossip was also voted the #4 CD on Out Voices Top 40 CDs of 2006. Sister Funk's music is also featured in

many independent films and on television: A Word From Our Sponsor, Becoming Donna, Montville Fair commercial and Brining Golfing Back To Dinah Shore which features a cameo appearance of Sister Funk, along side Michelle Balan of Last Comic Standing and Poppy Chaplin, an incredible female comedian.

Sister Funk's live show is what makes them more than just another female band. According to Conch Key West, "Sister Funk gave the most animated rock performance in memory; these ladies impressed even seasoned rockaholics at the 2006 Key West Womyn's Music Festival".

Sister Funk's long list of credits and accolades include: 1st Place Winners in the 2007 Emergenza Music Festival, in 2006 became a featured artist on the Olivia Cruise roster, winners of the 2005 Hartford Advocates Best Pop Band, Best Bassist, Best Guitarist, Best Horn Player & Best Drummer, in 2004 voted Favorite Out Band by National Stonewall Society, in 2003 Crucify was nomination for Best OUT Song by Out Music NYC and in 2003 listed as One of the Top 12 Artists on the Rise by GONYC Magazine.

Sister Funk is also proud to be nationally endorsed and sponsored by: Sam Ash, Mac Cosmetics & Lipstick & Wildflowers.

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FOXCT

Kristine W flexes power at Boston Pride 2010

By: Lenny Frazier

When Kristine W scored her 15th #1 last month with "The Power of Music," she tied Mariah Carey for third-most toppers. Only Madonna (with 40) and Janet Jackson (with 19) have had more No. 1s. She'll perform "The Power of Music" and some of her other chart toppers at this year's Boston Pride.

The Power of Music is Kristine's first studio album in five years. It has proven its power on the dance floor yielding six consecutive Billboard #1s. In addition to "Power...," "Walk Away," "The Boss," "Never," "Love is the Look," and "Be Alright" from the album have all landed at the top spot.

"Mariah Carey is my all time biggest idol," said Miss W when she learned she tied Carey's record. "To be on par with her is a dream-come-true for me as an artist."

If anyone understands the power of music, it is Kristine W. "I was three years old when my mother was preparing to split up the kids and give us to a family because she could not find work that would pay to keep a roof over our heads," she revealed earlier this year at the announcement of the single release. "Luckily, she was an amazing singer and guitar player. She started performing as a strolling singer in a restaurant. Her career took off and she was

able to raise four children as a full time musician. I watched the power of music save my family from desperate times."

Music also saw Kristine through the biggest challenge of her life; cancer. "That's when I learned that music is strong medicine." This year, Kristine celebrates eight years of remission.

It was Kristine's idea to add a rap by Big Daddy Kane to "The Power of Music" single. "I met Kane in Washington DC two years ago. We were lobbying for artists' performance rights. 'The Power of Music' was the perfect opportunity for us to work together because we both share the passion to fight for music."

Even the music video for the single, directed by Mike Ruiz, is showing its power. HBO is heavily rotating the "The Power of Music" video on HBO ZONE, their urban/college channel.

In addition to tying Ms. Carey's record, Kristine W holds the world's record for Most Consecutive #1 Billboard Club Hits. In 2004, she surpassed Madonna and Janet Jackson's record of seven #1 songs in a row. In 2005, Kristine W broke her own record with the release of "Wonder of It All", her ninth consecutive #1.

Kristine W is a fourth generation entertainer hailing from Pasco, Washington. After winning the title of Miss Washington and plac-

ing first in the talent competition at the Miss America pageant, Kristine headlined her own show at the Las Vegas Hilton. She won several 'Las Vegas Entertainer of the Year' awards and was officially sanctioned as the entertainer who performed more live shows at the Las Vegas Hilton than any other performer in its history—including Elvis. The award led to June 28th being declared Kristine W day in the state of Nevada.

Kristine W performs the main stage at Boston Pride (City Hall Plaza) on Saturday, June 12 at 5:30 p.m. For more information on Kristine W, visit <http://kristinew.com>.



Kristine W

PHOTO: MIKE RUIZ

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday, June 4

Pride Flag Raising over City Hall
12 noon
City Hall Plaza, Boston

Saturday, June 5

Pride Day @ Faneuil Hall
10:00 am
Faneuil Hall Marketplace, Boston

Sunday, June 6

The LGBT Aging Project's
Tea-Dance for LGBT Seniors
3:30 pm
Holiday Inn, Brookline

Monday, June 7

King & Queen of Pride Pageant
8:00 pm
Machine Nightclub

Wednesday, June 9

Pride Idol Finale
7:00 pm
Club Cafe

Pride Kick Off @ Latino Night
10:00 pm
Rumor Nightclub

Thursday, June 10

Riots to Rights Rally:
A Community Event
Commemorating 40 Years of
the LGBT Rights Movement
7:00 pm
Boston Common Bandstand

Optionz Party w/ QWOC+ Friends
10:00 pm
Underbar

Friday, June 11

Boston Dyke March
6:00 pm
Boston Common Bandstand

Saturday, June 12

Pride Parade
Kicks off at 12 noon
South End, Boston

Pride Festival

12 noon
City Hall Plaza, Boston

Esme Women's Block Party
2:00 pm
Boylston Place

Saturday, June 12 (cont'd)

Club SIZZLE!
for the 21 & under crowd
7:00 pm
Back Bay Events Center, Boston

Pride @ Night Main Event

10:00 pm
House of Blues, Boston

Sunday, June 13

JP Block Party
12 noon
Perkins Street, Jamaica Plain

Stuart Street Block Party

12 noon
Stuart Street, Boston

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Out! For Reel wraps up second season with twin grand finales

NORTHAMPTON, MA—Out! For Reel, based in Northampton and the largest LGBT film series in the U.S., will wrap up its second season with two grand finales: a double film screening on May 21 and a live concert on June 12. Two films, both audience favorites, will be presented for a second chance screening on Friday, May 21 at the Academy of Music Theatre in Northampton. The films are *Edie & Thea: A Very Long Engagement* at 7:00 pm and *The Topp Twins: Untouchable Girls* at 8:15 pm. On Saturday, June 12, Out! For Reel will present *The Topp Twins*, live in concert, at 8 p.m., at the Academy of Music Theatre. "The Topp Twins performing in Northampton is the biggest buzz in the LGBT community," says Jaime Michaels, Executive Producer/Director of Out! For Reel. "Tickets have never sold this fast—people are really excited. They know it's going to be an incredible concert."

The Topp Twins are talented singer songwriters and comedic performers who happen to also be lesbian twin sisters. Their off the chart popularity in their native New Zealand has won them best Country Western Music Album, their own prime time television variety show, and induction into NZ's Music Hall of Fame.

Famous for their laugh out loud character sketches, beautiful harmonies, and amazing yodeling, the Topp Twins re-invent themselves on stage, changing character and gender with ease, and deliver visually funny humor often through song. Spontaneity is a vital ingredient of the Topp Twins magic on stage and audience participation a trademark. As the Topp Twins maxim is "we send up rather than put down", their "guests" always feel safe on stage while unpredictable fun breaks loose.

"In New Zealand, the whole family will go to a Topp Twins concert. Children and adults, LGBT and straight, women and men, liberal and conservative all love the Topp Twins. Their humor and music appeal to everyone," Michaels states.

"We are thrilled and honored that Out! For Reel will be the first to present The Topp Twins in their U.S. tour for their film. The Topp Twins are really excited to perform in Northampton. It's going to be a fantastic night," says Michaels.

For the May 21 film event, at 7 pm, "*Edie & Thea: A Very Long Engagement*", winner of ten festival audience awards, tells the passionate love story of two women who never stop falling in love with each other even after 42 years of being together. "One of the most beautiful love stories I have ever seen," writes an AfterEllen film critic. The love story of *Edie & Thea* begins in the early 1960's and travels through the decades with fascinating stories and photographs of their involvement in the early gay rights movement. After four decades of being together, they finally are legally married in Canada when they are in their late seventies. Their dance at their wedding is a heartwarming highlight of the film. Funny, brave, and still love-struck, these two women are models of courage and strength that speak to everyone of any age. This documentary is wonderfully uplifting and inspiring. At 8:15 pm, the award-winning documentary, *The Topp Twins: Untouchable Girls*, takes audiences on a delight-



PHOTO: THE TOPP TWINS

The Topp Twins as characters Prue & Dilly in their spoof on high society ladies.

ful and inspiring journey of the twins' lives and rise from humble agrarian beginnings to international fame. Highlights include interviews with the twins' parents, Lynda and Jools' top-rated television show, archival footage of their significant political work on behalf of gay rights, native peoples' rights, and the anti-apartheid movement in New Zealand, Jool's touching triumph over breast cancer, and the Topp Twins' concerts and hilarious interactions with their audiences. Variety magazine says that *The Topp Twins: Untouchable Girls* is a film that "has you falling in love with two of the crazier people you never met...pure fun, very musical, and a can of mixed nuts. What we see are transformations worthy of world-class actresses."

Due to sound difficulties at the Lesbian Film Fest, Out! For Reel and the Academy of Music Theatre are offering Festival attendees free admission to see the film *Edie & Thea* again (the honor system will be used) and a special ticket price of \$8.50 for everyone else who missed the film the first time. The Topp Twins: *Untouchable Girls* tickets are also a special price of \$8.50. Combo tickets for both films are a discount price of \$12.50. Advance tickets are available at www.OutForReel.org. Tickets may also be purchased the night of the films. The Topp Twins concert tickets are \$25 Advance / \$30 Door. Advance tickets can be purchased online at www.OutForReel.org or at the Academy of Music Box Office. For more information, to watch the trailer, and to buy tickets, visit www.OutForReel.org. "It's a really fun and upbeat way to wrap up our second season by screening two of the most popular films this year and then having the Topp Twins live in concert," Michaels states. "People are going to have a great time."



PHOTO: EDDIE & THEA

Edie and Thea in love in the early 1960's

Out! For Reel screens the best in award-winning lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender films from around the world on a monthly basis during a ten month season, beginning each year in September. The dates for 2010-2011 Season Three can be found on the OFR website. Out! For Reel welcomes community support in many forms including advertising sponsors and volunteers. For more information, visit the website or email info@outforreel.org.

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Pride from page 5

for equality."

The Grand Marshals will help kick off the festivities at the Pride Flag Raising ceremony at Boston City Hall on Friday, June 4 at 12 noon. There will also be a Pride Day at Faneuil Hall on Saturday, June 5 from 10 am to 5 pm which will feature speakers and entertainment.

"It's just a really great community day where we can be out and proud," said Aulita, adding many of the stores display rainbow flags to commemorate the occasion.

On June 6, The LGBT Aging Project's Annual Pride Tea-Dance for LGBT Seniors & Friends will be held in Brookline.

The 2nd Annual King and Queen of Boston Pride Pageant will be held Monday, June 7 at Machine Nightclub.

"We want people to participate in either category," Aulita said. "They can be a drag king, they can be a drag queen, they can be a biological male, you can be a transgendered female, so it's open to everybody."

The popular Pride Idol competition winds down on June 9 at Club Café.

There will be a Riots to Rights rally on June 10 on the Boston Common, and will feature a

screening of the documentary, Beyond Gay: the Politics of Pride. The film was produced in conjunction with the Vancouver Pride Society.

"It's a very powerful film on Pride—the Pride movement in hostile environments and more accepting environments," Aulita said.

The Queer Women of Color and friends will be hosting an Optionz party later that evening at Underbar. The Dyke March is at 6 pm on June 11.

Following the Parade and Festival on June 12, there will Club Sizzle—a party for members of the community who are under 21 and aren't allowed in to the other clubs and bars.

Two block parties will also be held on June 13—the Stuart Street Block Party is scheduled from 12 noon to 8 pm. The event features the music of DJ Joe Gauthreaux. The 6th Annual Jamaica Plain Block Party will be held from 12 noon to 7 pm. The featured DJ is Kristin Korpos.

The Boston Pride Committee is seeking volunteers to help out at the Festival and Parade.

"We're looking for dedicated people," Aulita added.

For more information, go to www.boston-pride.org.

Couch from page 2

most repulsive comparison to make, but seeing as it continues to come from the good ol' Boys Club of Rome where it keeps happening, I'd say it's a fairly incestuous perspective.

Grabbing an altar boy's head and pulling it in the vicinity of your crotch doesn't exactly qualify as "guidance," I'm thinking.

"Society today is pedophile(ic) that is the problem. So, people easily fall into it," continued Grings. I'm not sure society as a whole is, unless by that he meant his world, his only society—the Roman Catholic Church. I've never had the urge to "easily fall into" pedophilia, and resent any inference to such a thing.

And, just where is the Church today on more dire matters, like violence? As young people see violent images splashed/slashed across the screens of their television sets, video games, movie theaters and the sports world, where are our leaders? Where have they been on wars happening now or past? It seems to take a decades or millennia for anyone in the Vatican to speak out against this kind of atrocity, but they are very vocal on gays and the pedophilia connection.

As sports and other celebrity figures are brought into the spotlight for rape, domestic

violence and even murder, I'm concerned about the way young people view the "normalcy" of the world around them. These people and their actions are anything but, and we must always speak out against it as a society.

What is normal? It's a hard question to answer, especially when we have so many cultures and diverse ways of expression in America.

But, I think it's fair to say that violence is not something a civilized society should condone or accept into their living rooms as normal. Nor should we accept the notion that homosexuality can be beaten from you, prayed away, or if one is left unattended without guidance, can attach itself to you like a leech.

One thing for sure, normal for me is being gay. Even if I had had even more guidance or if mom and dad had tried to spray the gay away at an earlier age. And it's important that LGBT youth hear this message to know that they are, indeed, normal and worthy of a decent life.

And I'm even willing to go up against a Roman gladiator to defend that.

**Suzan Ambrose has been seen fencing in her backyard when she's not writing diligently for The Rainbow Times. Comments? suzanambrose@gmail.com.*

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What Can Brown Do For You? New media director Michael Cole speaks about HRC's DADT efforts to win pro-repeal vote from Sen. Scott Brown

By: Mikey Rox*

In an effort to persuade newly elected Senator Scott Brown – a key member on the Armed Services Committee who will play an important role in the repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (DADT) policy – The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and MassEquality have joined forces. Brown is one of six senators on the committee being targeted by the groups to support repeal of the policy, which will be included in the Department of Defense Authorization Bill, to be voted on in the coming months.

During his campaign to serve the remainder of the term left vacant by the death of Ted Kennedy, Sen. Brown promised to be an independent voice in the U.S. Senate – and he needs to stake out moderate positions if he is to be reelected in 2012. The Senator has already cast an anti-gay vote on marriage equality when he joined Republican colleagues in an attempt to stop the performance of legalized same-sex marriages in the District of Columbia until the issue could face a referendum vote. The question now is, can the senator afford another anti-gay vote? Given the support among the national electorate for repealing DADT, pro-repeal could be a safe vote for Sen. Brown to split the difference on LGBT issues.

HRC new media director Michael Cole weighs in.

THE RAINBOW TIMES: What initiatives has your office taken to persuade Sen. Brown to support the repeal of the military’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy?

MICHAEL COLE: [The Human Rights Campaign] has been partnering with MassEquality to generate constituent contacts to Senator Brown. Together, we’ve been out collecting “Repeal DADT” postcards at busy street corners and public events like Northampton

Pride. We’ve also been identifying Massachusetts veterans who favor repeal and working to connect them with the senator and his staff directly so they can share their stories of service and life in the military under DADT. Finally, as part of our March lobby day, HRC members met with the senator and his staffers in his D.C. office to press for repeal this year. And we’re lining up veterans to come to D.C. and meet with Senator Brown as part of our May 11th Veterans Lobby Day.

TRT: In your opinion, how important a role will Sen. Brown play on the issue?

MC: Senator Brown will be a key vote on the Senate Armed Services Committee, where repeal of DADT is likely to be taken up in the coming months.

TRT: What do you suspect his motives are for not going on record yet in supporting or opposing the repeal?

MC: We respect the senator’s desire to make his decision on repeal after hearing from as many of his constituents as possible. While we don’t know his exact motivations, as a freshmen senator who is newly confronted with this issue, we hope he is studying how the discriminatory law affects discharged Massachusetts service

members and the armed forces.

TRT: The senator told Barbara Walters in a recent interview that repealing DADT is a big social change and that he would listen to the “generals on the ground” on the issue. Do you think he’ll stick to that statement, since it seems that a good amount of generals on the ground seem to be supporting the repeal efforts?

MC: Senator Brown has served honorably in the National Guard for nearly 30 years, and we know he wants to hear not only from flag officers but also from rank-and-file service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. We are confident that the majority of troops returning from these war zones to Massachusetts will tell him that DADT is an outdated and harmful

policy.

TRT: The Mass. Family Institute put out a voter guide during the Senate campaign that said Sen. Brown was opposed to repealing. If he hasn’t gone on record supporting or opposing the repeal, where did they get that information? Is there truth to it?

MC: We don’t know where the Massachusetts Family Institute got their information, but we take the senator at his word that he has not made a decision on the issue of repeal.

TRT: Do you think he’ll vote in support of the repeal to play both sides of the fence?

MC: We’re working hard to secure the senator’s vote, but we’ll have to wait and see.

TRT: In what capacity is HRC working with MassEquality to win Brown’s support for the repeal?

MC: HRC is proud of the support we’ve provided to MassEquality over the years to build political power to protect marriage equality, to advance a transgender civil rights bill, and now to secure Sen. Brown’s vote on repeal of DADT. We have joined our organizations’ grassroots infrastructures to generate constituent contacts to the senator – through phone calls, postcards and handwritten letters. In addition, we are working together closely to generate pro-repeal letters to the editor and to identify and activate veterans in favor of repeal.

TRT: What’s at stake for the LGBT community with this vote?

MC: The DADT policy is a stain on our country and on our military. It undermines our military readiness by forcing out well-trained and

highly qualified service members, and it’s the only policy in our country that requires people to lie in order to keep their jobs.

TRT: What’s at stake for Brown politically? Can he afford another anti-gay vote if he’s to be reelected in 2012?

MC: Sen. Brown will have to make his own political calculations, but following in the footsteps of socially moderate Republican former governor Bill Weld would likely help in a 2012 Massachusetts general election campaign.

**Mikey Rox is an award-winning journalist and principal of Paper Rox Scissors, a media and marketing company in New York City. He can be reached at mikey@paperroxxscissors.com.*



PHOTO: COURTESY HRC

Michael Cole, HRC Media Director

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Willacoochee Burning: No better time to extinguish hatred than the present!

By: Grisel M. Ocasio/TRT Publisher

"And there stood a burnt wooden cross in our front lawn, right at the end of our driveway," said Doug Sebastian, filmmaker/director, while containing the tears. "To look out and see a symbol like that, a symbol that I knew what that meant ... That's not something I would want anyone to have to experience."

"I thought the cross burning incident was sickening," said Roy Kirkland, writer/actor, in one of the scenes of his and Sebastian's film, *A Cross Burning in Willacoochee* referring to anonymous phone calls the couple had received. "This was worse. It was worse because you have a voice, there is someone there now telling you that they've done something to you and then threatening your life."

Some of the threats heard in the film showed the anti-gay sentiment that certain Willacoochee residents purportedly felt towards the gay couple. The voices and verbiage used against them tell the story.

"... your mailbox has been tore all to be damned! And it weren't the (expletive for African Americans) down the road that did it! (Laugh). It was the f@%\$&# law! (expletive for gay men) ... you're a dead mother f&#\$@%!" were the recorded words of the men who openly threatened Kirkland and Sebastian in 1993.

Other indirect warning sign also came from Kirkland brother's statements to tone down the "gay gatherings" at their Willacoochee home. The main incident following these acts was something completely unexpected—especially for Kirkland and Sebastian.

On July 21, 1993, their Willacoochee home inexplicably burned to the ground. The arson, gone unpunished for 17 years, is still a mystery and Willacoochee officials are, according to the interview below, apparently not investigating it further.

Seventeen years without answers have gone by. Time is not the relevant aspect of this story, but the story itself. The Rainbow Times decided to conduct a one-on-one interview with Kirkland to inquire about his and Sebastian's personal journey through these events. This article's significance as it relates to current LGBT news events such as youth suicides, homicides, bashing and abuse, are ample reasons to further investigate this story.

Kirkland, who originally moved with Doug to Willacoochee from Atlanta, explained that although they separated in 1998, they are forever bonded by what happened to them in Willacoochee. According to Kirkland, they remain "the best of friends and are business partners."

The Rainbow Times: How do you feel now, after what took place in Willacoochee?

Roy Kirkland: I feel much better. I love my work. I love the fact that Doug and I finally came together with this documentary and told

our side of the story in full detail. Many people, including close friends, had no idea what happened to us and were shocked.

TRT: Do you feel safe in Georgia?

RK: Very much so. Valdosta has been extremely friendly to us. There are about 100,000 people here and we have filmed a gay comedy and this documentary here and the local press has done extensive coverage. Our documentary made the front page.

TRT: How long did the ordeal with the insurance company last? (See film for details)

RK: Six months. It was as painful and scary dealing with the Insurance Adjuster, who admitted he recently completed military service and "wasn't for Gays in the military." He was this blunt and bigoted toward us.

TRT: For how long were Doug and you without a house after your house was burned down?

RK: For almost nine months. We stayed in hotel rooms. We had no one to come to our aid to help us out, no Gay organizations in particular.

TRT: How do you feel emotionally after everything that took place?

RK: Curious, pissed off and relieved. I'm curious to know who did these things to us. The death threat remains a huge part of my curiosity. I am pissed off because we didn't fight back. We didn't have help to fight against the wrongdoing. If it weren't for former Georgia Insurance Commissioner Tim Ryles, we wouldn't have had a chance against State Farm. Finally, I feel relieved because although it took many years to

get my nerve up, I went along with Doug and made this documentary.

TRT: As of now, were there any charges or suspects brought in for interrogation for what happened?

RK: No. To this day, no one has come forward to name anyone nor was anyone ever charged with these crimes. The GBI report contained fifteen pages of what one could have read in the newspapers at the time. In November of 2009, we placed a full-page ad in the *Atkinson County Citizen* pleading with the citizens of Willacoochee, Georgia to go to our website and identify the voices of the individuals who left a death threat message. No one responded although our website received over 3,000 hits that week!

TRT: Did you sell the Willacoochee property, or do you still own it?

RK: I sold it to my brother. He bought it and finished clearing up the burned house.

TRT: Why do you think it is important to share the film with LGBT audiences?

RK: For these huge reasons. To encourage people, particularly younger folks, to stand up for themselves. To show the lack of support from Gay organizations during our ordeal and today. I constantly receive emails from many people who thank me for making this documentary. They usually have a story of their own to share with me. ... And, I would like to know who did these things to us and why no one was

ever arrested.

TRT: Do you usually give partial proceeds from the film to certain organizations? Which organizations are they? And, why do you do so?

RK: In the early stages of filming this documentary, we wanted this documentary to be about something more than just our story. We wanted

so much to reach people who continue to suffer from discrimination and bigotry and to encourage them to stand up and bring to light the wrong being imposed on them. I contacted the *Human Rights Campaign*, *HRC*, *GLADD*, and *The Matthew Shepard Foundation*. They all responded as though I was asking for money. I wanted to share our story and include their info in our documentary and website. We also offered a portion of the sales to them. None were interested.

TRT: Is the fact that people seem to be disinterested in your real-life story something that baffles you?

RK: Its not that people are disinterested, it's the fact that some in the Gay media pick and choose whom they want to cover. I strongly believe, and many others do as well, that our story is a powerful, encouraging and is important as the documentaries "Outrage" and "A



Roy Kirkland and Doug Sebastian

Gay Bar."

TRT: Why should people watch the documentary?

RK: Because the documentary shows two individuals who had an uphill battle against a group of people, City Officials, City Police, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, GBI, and State Farm Insurance. Because it shows two unknown

broke gay men in a very small town who stood their ground, even though the odds were heavily against them, and prevailed.

TRT: Do you feel that the same type of situation could occur/is occurring in 2010?

RK: Yes! Not just against Gay people either. It is amazingly scary what is going on in our country today. It seems as though liberty and freedom for all is a taking a few steps back. Gay crimes are still going on.

TRT: What do you expect to accomplish through the film and its audiences?

RK: To remind people that these types of crimes are still happening today and that we have to be there for each other. Also to bring awareness to the fact that many in the Gay community need assistance from the heavily-funded organizations. Many need legal

See Cross on page 19



ALL PHOTOS: DOUG SEBASTIAN PRODUCTIONS, LLC

Burnt cross, precursor to house inferno that remains unsolved

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Rhode Island Attorney General among Gubernatorial candidates

Rhode Island News

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

Attorney General Patrick Lynch is one of several contenders vying to become the next Governor of Rhode Island. Lynch faces General Treasurer Frank Caprio in September's Democratic primary.

"These are desperate times in Rhode Island and they call for strong leadership," Lynch said, noting that fixing the state's battered economy and reducing the high unemployment rate should be top priorities not only for him but for every elected official.

Lynch, 45, graduated from Brown University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics and Political Science. He later earned a law

degree from Suffolk University Law School in Boston. Lynch joined the Rhode Island attorney general's office in 1994. He was eventually named the lead prosecutor of the state's Organized Crime Unit. In 2002, Lynch was elected as Attorney General and was reelected in 2006.

The Lynch family has played an integral role in state politics for several years. Lynch's father was a former Mayor of Pawtucket and brother Bill was the chairman of the state's Democratic party and is now challenging Providence Mayor David Cicilline for the chance to represent the state's First Congressional District.

Lynch believes serving as the state's top law enforcement official has allowed him to display the fortitude required of the state's chief executive.

"I live with a sense of urgency, taking on difficult cases and difficult issues, and doing what's right for Rhode Island and its people," Lynch noted. "What's important for me is that people are heard, particularly those who don't feel their voice has been heard. That's always been the motivation for me."

Lynch, a longtime advocate for LGBT civil rights, stood alongside his fellow Gubernatorial candidates, including Caprio and former United States Senator Lincoln Chafee, at the State House in March. The men all pledged to sign a gay marriage bill into law should they serve as Governor.

Lynch was the first Attorney General in the country to recognize same-sex marriages performed in Massachusetts. He felt so strongly about the issue that he decided to be very active in attempting to secure marriage rights for same-sex couples.

"I took it one step further," Lynch explained. "I wouldn't just sit back and wait for (a marriage bill) to pass. I'd be an advocate for it because

to me it's a basic human rights issue. It's about social justice, it's about human rights, it's about dignity, and it's about love and respect."

Lynch warns same-sex marriage activists to stay alert, considering the continued opposition by the Catholic Church, organizations such as the National Organization for Marriage (NOM), which has a chapter in the state, and anti-gay legislators.

"We have to make sure DOMA (Defense of Marriage Act) doesn't pass," Lynch noted.

Lynch is proud of his many accomplishments as Attorney General, which include establishing the position of Civil Rights Advocate and prosecuting hate crimes committed against members of the LGBT community.

Lynch is not worried about public disenchantment with the Democratic party, noting a Republican has served as Governor for much of the last quarter-century. Governor Don Carcieri, whose term is ending early next year, is a Republican.

Lynch remains critical of Carcieri for maintaining what he refers to as a "CEO mentality" and for failing to effectively work with Democrats, who have controlled the General Assembly for his entire term in office.

Serving as an Attorney General can be demanding, Lynch explained, noting the job can be marked by difficult fights and sometimes unpopular decisions, which he feels have strengthened him as a person and as a leader.

"I know I've run the race, I've worked with incredibly talented individuals," Lynch said, adding: "I'll miss this job every day."



PHOTO: PATRICK LYNCH FOR GOVERNOR
RI Atty. General Patrick Lynch

Cross from page 18

assistance and representation but cannot afford it. These organizations need to concentrate on helping those who are not necessarily famous or influential.

TRT: What is next for you?

RK: We feel a need to have a "March to Willacoochee" on the anniversary of the Cross Burning on July 21, 2010. I would like to bring awareness to what happened to us and to show what happens when a town remains silent while bigotry is upheld. [I want] to remind city officials that you should never condone or approve hate crimes. Doug and I would also like to add our voices (and this documentary) to the cause of the LGBT community to push for an LGBT Equal Rights Amendment added to the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

A *Cross Burning in Willacoochee* was the Winner for Best Documentary at the New York International Film Festival. A Prestigious New Directors Documentary Award also went to Doug Sebastian. The film won recognition as Official Selection at the Atlanta Out on Film Festival.

For more information or to place an order to buy the documentary, *A Cross Burning in Willacoochee*, visit www.dspmovies.com. To contact Kirkland, email him at: dspmovies@yahoo.com or via FaceBook at Roy Kirkland/Valdosta, GA.

Openly gay Republican seeks powerful gay Democrat's seat

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

Erich Sturn is taking on the most powerful gay man in the state: House Speaker Gordon Fox (D).

The 24 year-old openly gay Republican is a candidate for State Representative and hopes to defeat Fox in Providence's District 4.

Lawmakers elected Fox, 48, on February 11 to succeed William Murphy (D-West Warwick,) who had held the position since 2003.

Sturn has never run for office before, but felt the time was right due to the state's dire economic conditions. Rhode Island currently has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country. Sturn was also inspired by the speakers at a recent Tea Party rally he attended and decided to throw his hat into the political arena.

"I feel like I could do a good job," Sturn said. "I feel like we need people (in state government) who actually believe in trying to fix things. It seems what they've been doing lately isn't exactly changing anything for the better."

The Republican party's views on the issues have always appealed to Sturn.

"I've always been a Republican since I was eligible to vote," Sturn said. "Both parties have their good points and their bad points. It seems like the (Republicans') stance on a lot of the economic issues make more sense to me."

The fight to pass a same-sex marriage bill in the General Assembly is ongoing. Fox has disappointed some LGBT activists by stating it was not a top priority for him.

Sturn's position on the issue is more nuanced

than the average politician. He is aware of the religious arguments against it, yet believes in equal treatment for all citizens.

"I don't see why, in today's society, people couldn't have the same rights," Sturn said.

Sturn's campaign has generated plenty of encouragement from his fellow Republicans, including Gubernatorial candidate John Robitaille and Congressional candidate Mark Zaccaria.

"So far it's been pretty positive," Sturn said. "People have been offering help. They've been saying 'if you need advice give me a call.'"

The New Jersey native spent time in California and Seattle, but calls Rhode Island home. Sturn appreciates the close-knit community he has become a part of, and enjoys the state's beaches.

Sturn believes the Republican party is accommodating to gay conservatives and dismisses charges from some members of the LGBT community that gay Republicans hate themselves.

"I don't see it as self-loathing at all," Sturn noted. "To me if they were so for gay rights, we would have more of them by now. It boils down to economic issues and that's the most fundamentally important thing to me."

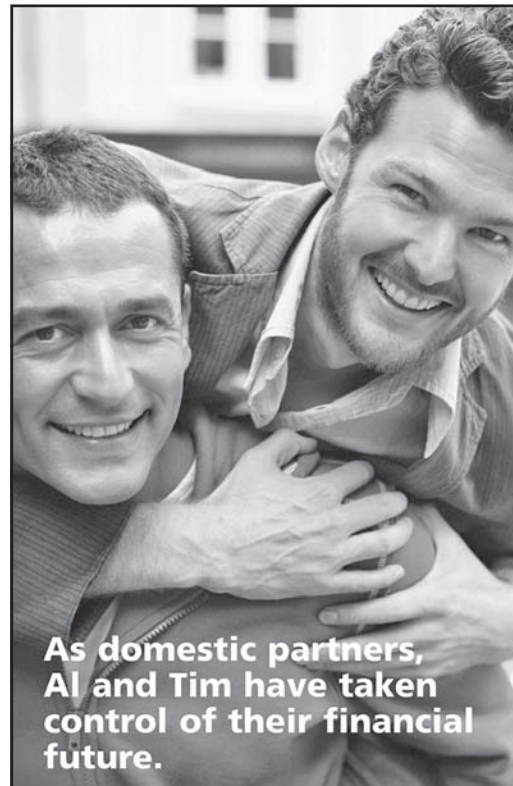
More importantly, Sturn feels the time has come for voters to elect leaders who are not career politicians. He applauds anyone who is willing to step up and attempt to change things for the better.

"You need to be honest. You need to have your heart and your head in the right place," Sturn added.



PHOTO: JOE SIEGEL

Erich Sturn



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Alsup's What's Up: Rhode Island here he comes!

By: **Jorge Treviano**

Todd Alsup debuts his self-titled studio album with the joint release of two singles: the upbeat, summer jam "Let's Have a Party" and the lush pop ballad "You Are." New Englanders will be among the first to have the opportunity to hear Alsup live when he performs Rhode Island's Main stage on June 19 followed by Provincetown's Crown & Anchor for a two week engagement from July 12-21.

For his album, Alsup enlisted New York producers Steve Greenwell (Joss Stone, Diane Birch) and James Walsh and Jeremy Sklarkey of Major Who Media to

create a timeless album that would pay homage to the artists and styles of music he grew up listening to. A native of Pontiac, Michigan (a suburb of Detroit), Alsup took inspiration from artists like Stevie Wonder, Billy Joel, The Supremes, Elton John, and Marvin

Gaye when writing the material for the record. "Some records are completed in a few weeks. Mine took much longer. We made a conscious choice to take things slowly and spent 9 months allowing things to take shape organically." The result is a collection of lovingly-crafted hook-driven songs that seamlessly blend pop, soul, Motown, and rock.

Lead single "Let's Have a Party" promises to be the song of the summer. It's a celebratory shout-out, a deliciously funky track with an old-school Stevie Wonder vibe. The song

features a soaring lead vocal, reggae-infused piano, Wonder-esque synths, doo-wop harmonies and horn-lines for days.

"You Are" is a classic piano love ballad in the style of Elton John's "Your Song" and features an intimate and heartfelt lyric, intricate piano lines, and soaring strings.

"The song is something I wrote for my partner," says Alsup, "to let him know that I couldn't do anything I do without him. He's my strongest support system. God knows, as a musician, it's a bumpy road, but he has always been the one to say 'Do what you love, that's all that matters.'"

Todd Alsup and his partner Matt have been together for seven years. They hope to one day marry, however, New York is among the 45 states in the country that does not legally recognize same-sex unions. "The passing of Proposition

8 in California was a real eye-opener for me. It went beyond denying the gay community our rights. Proposition 8 was all about actively taking them away." Todd cites his frustration with the lack of unification within the gay community.

"There are far too many of us who are willing to accept that change will come when it comes. Where's the sense of urgency? Where's the outrage?" he wonders.

On the surface, "You Are" is not politically charged. It is a love song, plain and simple. "But I wrote it for my partner and our relation-

ship isn't recognized legally. That's pretty political," he adds.

Alsup made a name for himself with the release of his 2007 debut EP "Facts and Figures." Just after the release of his first single "The Good Fight," he was featured in Billboard Magazine as an up-and-coming artist to watch. He later filmed a video performance of the song that aired on Billboard's website. "To be highlighted in the music industry's bible meant everything to me. It was incredible exposure that opened a lot of doors."

It also yielded the attention of major labels. Todd Alsup was approached by several, but he ultimately made a conscious choice to remain an independent artist and to release the album on his own.

"A label would have to present a seriously amazing offer to make me consider signing with them now," he explains. "The beauty of today's music world is that if you're intelligent, driven, and surround yourself with a strong team, it is possible to make an impact without major label support. Indie artists like Ingrid Michaelson who've made it on their



PHOTO: MAJOR WHO RECORDS

Todd Alsup

own terms inspire me and remind me that it can be done."

He conceded it is a lot of work with an endless checklist of things to be responsible for.

"Sometimes I feel like I'm living five people's lives," he continues. "But when the product you are selling is you, who else is going to represent you as authentically?"

For more information on Todd Alsup, please visit www.toddalsup.com or follow him on Twitter @ToddAlsup.

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¡Protesta la ley en Arizona!

Visión Latina



Wilfred Labiosa

Por: Wilfred Labiosa*

En las pasadas semanas se ha escuchado mucho sobre el perfil de la comunidad inmigrante dada la ley que surgió en el estado de Arizona. Esta ley en Arizona (Ley SB1070) escrita para lidiar con la alta incidencia de "criminalidad" sin embargo lo que hace es darle el derecho a las autoridades y en especial a la policía a detener a cualquier persona que se presume esté cometiendo un crimen. Al detener a la persona, si esa persona no tiene identificación que compruebe residencia legal, la persona puede ser detenida, multada por \$500 dólares y si la persona no es residente legal hasta puede ser deportado/a. Esta ley le proporciona el poder a la policía a detener a cualquier persona y pedirle su identificación o "papeles". Aunque los días antes de firmar esta iniciativa como ley le "quitaron" el lenguaje racista y discriminatorio, todavía la ley discrimina en contra de las personas "diferentes". La policía podrá detener a las personas que demuestren el "perfil racial" de aquellos quienes no demuestren características fisiológicas de las personas que son miembros de grupos que no son marginados.

Entre los programas matutinos, vi uno en el que le preguntaron a muchos que viven en Arizona, ¿cuál es el perfil de la persona que debe ser detenida? Las personas entrevistadas, quien incluían doctores, políticos, gente en comercios, y en la calle, no sabían que responder ya que cualquier persona puede ser detenida, cualquier persona puede ser un inmigrante, cualquier persona puede ser detenido/a.

Esta ley lo que está haciendo es dándole la oportunidad a la policía y a agentes a detener a cualquier persona que ello/as crean que caen bajo dicho "perfil"; pero sabemos que esta ley le da la oportunidad a ello/as a detener a cualquier persona que ello/as quieran, que les de el gusto y que las crean que sean personas de interés, o sea, un "criminal" = inmigrante.

Esto les provee la oportunidad a los oficiales a detener a cualquier persona que no les caiga bien, que tenga un perfil racial diferente, sea un anti-inmigrante, anti-gay, anti-transgenero, y anti-latino. Esto le da la oportunidad a detener a cualquier persona que ello/as quieran. Debemos entender que esto no va a bajar la criminalidad ni la inmigración ilegal de millones de personas. Sabemos que ello/as van a detener a personas de color, a personas que se "vean" diferentes. En este estado y a través de toda esta nación la comunidad que se encuentra en las cárceles es diversa y lo/as que cometen crímenes severos son de la comunidad blanca. La policía debe estar enfocando sus energías en parar y buscar a las personas que cometen los crímenes más severos como lo es el robo, homicidios y demás.

Este es el momento donde todo/as debemos de educarnos sobre esta ley, tenemos que tomar riendas sobre nuestra posición política, y tenemos que movilizar a nuestra comunidad Latina y GLBT. Mucho/as creen que lo que hicieron los consejales de la Ciudad de Boston es una pérdida de tiempo; yo no pienso así. Es importante que las ciudades, los individuos y las compañías dejen de hacer negocios en este estado (Arizona) y hagan lo mismo que hicieron los consejales de Boston. Debemos de educarnos y no patrocinar compañías fundadas en este estado ya que muchas de éstas están apoyando esta ley (visite la Internet para una lista de estas compañías). Quizás una ley de esta índole nunca ocurra en nuestros estados, pero nadie sabe el futuro. Hoy es sólo en un estado y el mes que viene, ¿en cuantos más será?

Hasta hoy nada a sucedido y la ley no a afectado a nadie pero mañana ¿cuánto/as serán parado/as y maltratado/as con el pretexto de seguir la ley? Hoy es la comunidad de inmigrante sin documentos la que se va a afectar más, pero mañana podría ser la comunidad LGBT la que sea amenazada. Tenemos que estar al tanto de lo que pasa en otros estados ya que nos afecta a todo/as. ¿Arizona hoy y mañana quién sabe?

Las marchas de Mayo 1 fueron increíbles pero fueron sólo el comienzo; queda de todo/as nosotros/as el motivarnos en tomar una posición al respecto y tomar acción. Ahora que la temporada de Festivales de Orgullo está a la vuelta de la esquina, vamos a incluir mensajes a favor de leyes migratorias positivas para todo/as, vamos a alzar nuestras voces en contra de esta ley de Arizona y a apoyar leyes que estén a favor de leyes de inclusión. El Presidente ya se comprometió a poner este tema de migración en la mesa y poder resolverlo pronto. En vez de separación, vamos a unir nuestras voces. Abogamos por leyes que no dejen que las personas que las cumplan las interpreten de maneras diferentes y usen sus interpretaciones del "perfil" una imagen subjetiva de lo que ello/as tengan en sus mentes. Al celebrar 40 años de Orgullo de Boston y el tema seleccionado, "De Protesta a Derechos", sigamos protestando ya que no tenemos todo/as los derechos que nos merecemos. No sólo los de los inmigrantes pero también los de la comunidad transgénero y la comunidad LGB en general nos merecemos los mismos derechos. El movimiento al derecho a casarnos como parejas "gay" fue transformado con la lucha para casarnos, pero esta no es la lucha final en nuestro movimiento, sino el principio de los próximos 40 años de lucha y de nuestro movimiento como comunidad Latina y GLBT. ¡Unámonos!

Para mas información visita la pagina web de La Sociedad Latina u Oíste.

*Escrito en ambos idiomas por Wilfred W. Labiosa y editado por Gricel Martínez Ocasio.

To read this article in English visit: www.rainbowtimesnews.com/latinvisionmay20

Parents of gay son start RI PFLAG chapter, offer unconditional support

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

The South Central Rhode Island chapter of PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) is still going strong, thanks to the efforts of Ed and Ann Bonetti.

The Warwick couple started the chapter more than 5 years ago, after their son Greg told them he was gay.

The Bonettis turned to PFLAG so they could meet with other parents raising gay and lesbian children.

Greg Bonetti had just completed his freshman year at New York University when he came out to his parents. The news was a surprise to the Bonettis, who had no inkling their son might be gay.

"We weren't expecting it," said Ed Bonetti, explaining Greg always had girlfriends.

"He was very open," Ann noted. "He said: 'There's something I want to tell you, I'm gay'."

The Bonettis wanted to help other families who were raising gay and lesbian children so they formed their own chapter of PFLAG. There are 100 members of the chapter, with about 30-40 attending the meetings. However, the attendance had declined significantly in recent months so the Bonettis suspended the meetings.

The Bonettis still receive plenty of inquiries from parents with gay and lesbian children, so they refer them to various organizations, such as Youth Pride Inc. (YPI), which provides services for LGBTQQ youth.

The national organization of PFLAG is now redirecting its efforts to providing support, education, and advocacy, Ed said, adding PFLAG served as a lifeline to allies in the straight community.

The Bonettis believe the work of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) to win equal rights for GLBTs, as well as the presence of more openly gay politicians has brought greater awareness, along with a greater level of acceptance of homosexuality, said Ed Bonetti.

Adds Ann: "The subject is not as taboo."

On June 2 at Rhode Island Hospital, there will be a screening of the documentary "Any-



PHOTO: ED AND ANN BONETTI

Ed and Ann Bonetti started the PFLAG chapter after son, Greg, came out to them

one and Everyone", featuring the Bonettis and other families sharing their feelings about raising LGBT children. The screening is part of Lifespan's "Celebrating Families" program. Ed works for Lifespan and praised the company's efforts to expand support for LGBT issues.

The Bonettis vow to continue to be active in the LGBT community, whether its marching in the Pride parade with the PFLAG banner, testifying for marriage equality at the State House, or participating in an LGBT student group at the University of Rhode Island.

The Bonettis are very vocal about gaining equal rights for the LGBT community. They each sport HRC tattoos: Ed has one on his arm and Ann has one on her leg.

Ann has received several comments from people about her tattoo.

"It's a good opportunity for me to say my son is gay," she explained.

Ed proudly displays an award from Rhode Island Pride in his office. He relishes the chance to engage in conversations with others about gay rights.

"It's very important to have the straight community fighting for LGBT equality too," Ed added.

For more information about PFLAG, call 401-219-0265 or e-mail info@pflagscri.org.

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CIRQUE DU SOLEIL returns to Hartford with Ovo, a teeming world of insects

[Premieres June 17th on Market Street for a limited engagement. Advance discounted tickets available exclusively to Cirque Club members.]

HARTFORD, CONN.—Cirque du Soleil will return to Hartford with its latest big top touring production OVO. Proudly presented by iShares®, OVO will premiere on Thursday June 17, for a limited engagement under the trademark blue-and-yellow Grand Chapiteau (Big Top) on Market Street in Hartford, at the intersection of I-84 and I-91 (Northwest corner).

Cirque Club members can purchase advance tickets starting Thursday, February 18 at 9:00 a.m. at www.cirquedusoleil.com. Membership is free and registration is quick and simple.

Cirque Club members receive advance access to the best seats under the Grand Chapiteau, ticket upgrades, partner promotions and insider information on the world of Cirque du Soleil.

The name OVO means “egg” in Portuguese. Directed by Deborah Colker, the first female director at Cirque du Soleil, OVO is a headlong rush into a colorful ecosystem teeming with life, where insects work, eat, crawl, flutter, play, fight and look for love in a non-stop riot of energy and movement. The cast of OVO comprises 54 performing artists from 13 countries.

The performances are Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:00 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. No performances on Mondays.

The 2010 U.S. tour of OVO is presented by iShares. Official sponsors include Sun Life Financial, CGI, Wyndham Hotels and Resorts and American Express.

Ticket information can be found online at www.cirquedusoleil.com/ovo. For preferred seating and other special advantages for American Express® Card members, please visit www.cirquedusoleil.com/amex.



PHOTO: CIRQUE DU SOLEIL
Cirque du Soleil opens June 17th in Hartford

“Paradise” in Northampton: Paradise City Arts Festival’s Memorial Day weekend

By: J.M. Sorrell/TRT Reporter

The twice-annual Northampton Paradise City Arts Festival is upon us. This year, it was ranked #3 in the country among hundreds of festivals held coast to coast in the United States. Over the course of the Memorial Day weekend, May 29-31, over 250 artists from 30 states will show and sell their functional and fine art to a multitude of attendees.

A reminder to TRT readers: You do not have to spend big money to enjoy a beautiful and exciting event. Admission is \$12 per day or \$15 for all three days. Children under 12 get in at no charge, and parking is free.

A reminder to me: Resist the need to buy unique sculpture, kinetic art or anything else I suddenly “need” in my home.

If you spend an entire day merely browsing, munching, and listening to great live music and theatre, you will have a memorable time.

Local restaurants dish up fabulous food in an outdoor tent. New Century and PaintBox Theatre companies will perform.

In addition, there is a WGBY silent auction that includes many one-of-a-kind pieces. It is always a big hit.

The festival is at the Three County Fairgrounds in Northampton. Go to www.paradisecityarts.com for more information and directions.

I spoke with three artists about their works. Stop by their booths!

Alexandra Geller is a ceramic artist with a studio in Easthampton, MA. Her pieces are affordable and beautiful. In a phone interview conducted by TRT, we discussed her art.

Q. I see that your dishes and bowls are functional art. Do you create pottery that is less functional or just for the joy of it?

A. I have in the past. The past couple of years have been intense for dinner ware and functional things. I’m not really a sculptural person.

Q. Explain the 2,200 degrees temperature. How do you stay safe and how is the pottery non-toxic?

A. All glazes are non-toxic to begin with, and, once fired, they are completely non-toxic. The process takes 8-9 hours, with the heat building to the point of 2,200 degrees. It is closed for safety, and I have a venting system now.

Q. Describe how you arrived at the combination of ancient cultures and natural surroundings for your inspiration.

A. I studied art history in undergraduate and graduate work. I learned about many different cultures. My thesis was on the evolution of black figures in the period of 4-6th century BC. I have a love of study. And nature—the colors you see outside—are just beautiful. My glaze combinations reflect this. This is my fourth May doing the Northampton show. It is a great setting. The outside areas are wonderful. Many customers from CT, NY, NH, and VT come for this show!

Ted and Cyndi DeMers are from Willington, CT. Visit them at the booth for Everlasting



PHOTO: PARADISE CITY ARTS FESTIVAL

Linda & Geoff Post, Paradise City Arts Festival founding directors

Woods. This is their first showing at Paradise City Arts Festival.

Q. Describe your spiritual practice as it relates to your art.

A. The process of gathering materials is just as important as the final piece. Most of the work is done in the woods. Materials may take 3-5 years to get to where they need to be. Most pieces have a story—how I got it; etc. Often pieces are chosen when they start to decay. I always check out the woods. A tree lying on ground for 15 years may become a maple table. I really grasp the concept of getting my own trees rather than buying lumber when I meet furniture makers who are blown away by the wood in my pieces. A tree lying on ground for 15 years may become a maple table.

I have a table right now that you will see at the Northampton show. One thousand people go to a show. Only 500 look at furniture. Only a few touch it. Yet everyone had to touch this table at the Milford show.

Q. Who is your ideal customer?

A. I had been in the furniture business for 25 years. Seven years ago, I decided to stop taking commissions, and to only build one-of-a-kind pieces. Everyone told me I would starve, but I am not worried about starving.

Jay and Annie Hollis, from Wayland, MA, make wooden jigsaw puzzles. Each is unique and each person who purchases a puzzle gets a signature “Bogart” piece. Bogart is their Portuguese Water Dog who plays a very special role in the business.

Q. How did the puzzle thing get started?

A. I was out walking Bogart in the woods, I met up with woman with a Portuguese water dog, and she suggested going to a Concord arts festival. There I met an old woman with the scroll saw making little wooden jigsaw puzzles. Her name was Pagey Eliot. She taught herself at the age 70 and made them until age 92. A walk in the woods turned my life around!

Q. How are the designs decided?

A. Other artists give me permission or I find designs at antique paper show. I get copyright permission from any image younger than 75 years. I use lots of color and I like images that are both striking and challenging.

Q. What was your most difficult creation?

A. The kaleidoscopes, as they are completely symmetrical. People are nervous about purchasing them. I am excited about doing this show for the first time. We did the Marlborough show and I just did the Smithsonian show in DC. I have been making puzzles for 12 years. By nature I am shy, but I like talking about puzzles and I thought it was time to take this on the road.

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The OutField: Gearing up for the Gay Games



Dan Woog

By: Dan Woog*

In 2001, as Chicago was bidding to host the Gay Games, Kurt Dahl decided to lend a hand. He didn't know much about the Games – he vaguely recalled something about Greg Louganis diving a few years earlier – but he figured his background in banking and finance could help.

Chicago won the bid. By the time Gay Games VII kicked off in 2006, Dahl was the treasurer.

His story is not unique. "A lot of people – even in the gay community – don't know about the Gay Games," he says.

Which means that Gay Games VIII – set for Cologne, Germany from July 31 to Aug. 7 – faces the quadrennial challenge: Telling the world what the Gay Games are, and why they're important.

Over 12,000 participants from more than 70 countries know. They understand the Gay Games are about "participation, inclusion and striving for personal bests." They know the Games are open to everyone – gay and straight; male, female, transgender and transsexual – regardless of "religion, nationality, ethnic heritage, political convictions, athletic skills, physical capabilities, age or physical condition."

They also know that the Gay Games includes not only sports – ranging from soccer and volleyball to bodybuilding, figure skating, golf and chess – but "culture." Two-thousand participants will be singers, musicians, visual artists, dancers and cheerleaders.

Like the Olympics (though legal issues prevent the Gay Games from using the "O" word), the Gay Games Village is part of the draw. There are plenty of opportunities for participants to mix and mingle.

As at every Gay Games, an International Rainbow Memorial Run will commemorate the victims of HIV-AIDS and breast cancer. Yet nearly three decades after the first Gay Games – held in 1982 in San Francisco – getting people to understand the reason behind the Games is still hard.

The difficulty starts with the complex relationship many gay men and lesbians still have with athletics. "A lot of us grew up feeling uncomfortable with sports," Dahl explains. "The Gay Games allow us to be who we are. We can participate openly, and meet other LGBT people. You don't have to be an elite athlete to take part. Just trying to do your personal best in front of the world is a great opportunity. It's an enriching life experience. It's powerful to watch it happen, too."

When the Gay Games were in Chicago – an open, diverse, welcoming city – some people

still did not understand. There was what Dahl calls "an undercurrent" of anti-Gay Games feeling, and some picketing.

Cologne seems ready to embrace the Games. "I've been there several times already," Dahl says. "The people there are very proud to be hosts. Europeans in general have always embraced the Gay Games movement."

The Gay Games have alternated between Caucasian-dominated sites – other host cities have included Vancouver, Amsterdam and Sydney – and the 2014 Games are set for Cleveland. But multi-sport gay clubs have sprung up in places like Chile and Argentina, and Dahl calls South America "an untapped market."

Johannesburg was one of three cities vying for the 2010 Games. Dahl says there is "no reason" the South African metropolis can't host the 2018 Games.

Dahl – whose official titles are co-president of the Federation of Gay Games, and vice president of host relations – wants to make sure the LGBT community knows about this summer's event. Among the attendees will be Australian Olympic gold medal diver Matthew Mitcham. He'll be involved in several activities – though not as an active diver.



Kurt Dahl

PHOTO: QSYNDICATE

"I'm excited to be part of something so important for our communities around the globe," Mitcham says. "This event brings lesbian and gay life out on the court, onto the track and into the pool."

"Participating at the Gay Games is a great chance for all gays and lesbians to show that we as a community are not like the stereotypes the straight media loves to portray. I will take time off from training and travel to Cologne, since I strongly feel we have to celebrate our own values and help others accept that it is OK to be different."

Dahl is excited that the 20-year-old Mitcham will be in Cologne. "He

is a fantastic role model, especially for younger people. He is focused and successful in his sport and doesn't have to hide being gay. Dr. Tom Waddell, the Gay Games founder, would have been so proud of that."

But the Gay Games are as much about non-elite athletes as they are about Olympic gold medalists.

"Come to Cologne!" Dahl urges the world. "See what the Gay Games are all about. If you don't already participate in gay sports or cultural events, get involved."

"It's great fun. You'll make excellent friendships, and enrich your life. My partner and I have met some of our closest friends through gay softball. It could be a life-changing event."

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



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Grammy Winner Charles Neville + 4

Memorial Day:

Jazz Diva Barbara Ween & Café Society



Cinderella



Charles Neville + 4



Save room for dessert!

Chic Cuffs and Cool Jewels!



Gerhard • Fozzy Bracelet

Comedy! Drama! and More!

New Century Theatre

“The Artifice of Love”, short works that celebrate and lampoon matters of the heart.

PaintBox Theatre

“Cinderella”, a most romantic tale with a unique spin!

Silent Art Auction

to benefit WGBY

Public Television for Western New England

“The Art of Love”

Paradise City artists celebrate the power of love in a very special exhibition

Fabulous Food!

Paradise City Tavern ■ Mama Iguana ■ Amber Waves
Eastside Grill ■ Spoleto ■ Great Wall Chinese ■ India House
Bart's Homemade Ice Cream ■ Wine Bar

Northampton, Massachusetts

800-511-9725 • Indoors and Under Tents at the 3 County Fairgrounds • I-91 at Exit 19 or 20

Saturday & Sunday 10am-6pm; Monday 10am-5pm

\$12 Adults, \$10 seniors, \$8 students, 12 and under free, three-day pass \$15. FREE PARKING!

www.paradisecityarts.com

show information and discount admission coupons

WGBY 57

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