

The Rainbow Times

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

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Busy queer September with a variety of LGBTQI celebrations and events nearby

By: Grisel M. Ocasio*/TRT Publisher

OPINION This weekend is one to pay attention to in MA and adjacent states. Although we celebrate our queerness every day, I wanted to highlight a line-up of celebration and events that are important to our community. This Saturday, Sept. 18th, will be Worcester Pride, which culminates the 2010 Pride Week in Worcester. Worcester Pride is on Water St. from 12-9 p.m. Night celebrations will follow, for those who want to keep Pride rolling all night long.

On Sunday, Sept. 19th, Six Flags New England turns Queer, with *Out in the Park*. This celebration will feature many well-known entertainers such as Jessica Kirson, "The Gay

Pimp" Jonny McGovern, Boston's own Jubilee, Khri Francis, the self-proclaimed first Lady of Providence Miss Kitty Litter, Sabrina Blaze and Sherry Vine. *Out in the Park* will stay queer from 10:30-7:00 p.m. But, don't dismay, you are always welcome at Six Flags New England.

The next weekend, we go into Queer Carnevale, Mardi Gras in New England, the LGBT Coalition of Western Massachusetts' main fundraiser. Queer Carnevale will be held September 25th at the Northampton Fairgrounds. For a complete schedule of events see the Queer Carnevale Guide inserted in this edition of TRT—designed and produced by us, to

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Howard Dean, ramen noodles, and blueberry vodka



By: Susan Ryan-Vollmar*/TRT Columnist

What do Howard Dean, ramen noodles, and homemade blueberry vodka have in common? They are details in two recent books and one business classic that provide a cultural temperature-taking of sorts on where the gays are in contemporary culture. A little far-fetched? Maybe. But follow along.

Let's start with the business classic. Howard Dean first pops up in Keith Ferrazzi's "Never Eat Alone" at Renaissance Weekend, where Ferrazzi meets the then longshot candidate for the 2004 Democratic nomination for president. One sentence later, Dean and Ferrazzi meet again at "a non-profit event for human rights in D.C." And in the next paragraph, they cross paths at the Gill Foundation's annual meeting in California.

Non-profit human rights event? Could that

be the annual Washington D.C. fundraiser for the Human Rights Campaign? And is this the same Gill Foundation with the tagline "Advocates for LGBT Equality." And is Keith Ferrazzi gay?

Why yes, as it turns out, he is. A quick Google search finds this 2006 feature [www.nytimes.com/2006/04/30/business/yourmoney/30lunch.html] in *The New York Times* about being single on Valentine's Day, in which Ferrazzi confesses that his boyfriend ended their relationship when Ferrazzi started talking about "kids and church."

It's interesting to see how Ferrazzi, whose urges his acolytes to make connections with others by being authentic, handles his sexual orientation in the book. Although he has ample opportunity, he never actually comes out. In one vignette, he describes how, while traveling to an important conference, he received "the final and definitive e-mail that confirmed my worst fears: I was single again." At a conference dinner that night, he wasn't himself: "As the conversation raged on at the dinner table, I realized I was doing all the things I

See Dean on page 5

The effect on career of being out in the workplace

By: Jenn Tracz*/CABO's Executive Director

Each week when I sit down to write for *The Rainbow Times*, I reflect on what is happening around me, around CABO and around the business community. This typically results in commentary regarding specific companies or business initiatives within the CABO organization and the Connecticut LGBT community.

Earlier this month, I was asked a couple of questions for a magazine interview and one I wanted to share and discuss with you is; how has being out affected your career? This is always an interesting question and when you take a step back to think about it, you really see that not everyone is fortunate enough to be out at work.

I am grateful for all of the opportunities I have been afforded as an out lesbian and business woman and I feel that others should be afforded these opportunities as well. Unfortunately, today's society hasn't quite caught up yet, and in 32 states there is still no statewide law providing protection against sexual orientation and in 42 states for gender identity discrimination, in the work place.

With the majority of states not in our favor it can be scary for anyone debating whether or not to come out in the workplace. If you are reading this and you fall into this group, remember you are not alone and there are resources available to you. The one place I highly recommend



Jenn Tracz

you visit is CABO member Lambda Legal; they have been a trusted source for all legal items related to the LGBT community for almost three decades. If you visit their website www.lambdalegal.org you will see a variety of resources available to individuals in every state. You will also see that there is a resource section specifically for employment and rights in the workplace.

CABO holds regular monthly events in North Haven and West Hartford, and hosts open houses throughout the state. For more details on CABO events in your area, visit www.TheCABO.org If you have any particular questions or comments, I am always available via e-mail and would be happy to talk with you. Send me an e-mail today at jtracz@TheCABO.org.

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

My job as a clergy person is to minister

By: Jason Lydon/TRT Columnist

On September 19th, I am making a pretty major life-long commitment; no I am not getting married, not exactly. I am getting ordained as a Unitarian Universalist minister. I have had the great pleasure of serving my church, the Community Church of Boston in Copley Square, for five years. Now, after jumping, crawling, dancing and scraping my way through three years of divinity school I am being blessed with an incredible ritual to symbolize the commitment between my faith, my church, and myself. Yet, as I prepare for my ordination celebration I am also re-reading an important queer anthology, *Smash the Church, Smash the State! The Early Years of Gay Liberation*.

There are many aspects of the 1970s and 1980s queer movement work that means a lot to me, much I wish we

could bring back with great power and pride. I wish we were still talking about the beauty of open relationships and queer families rather than marriage and homonormativity. I wish we were fighting imperialism and still wearing t-shirts that read, "Boys say yes to boys who say no [to Vietnam]" rather than desperately trying to get into the military. I wish our pride parades still marched by the jails and prisons connecting us to our queer and trans family behind bars. I wish all that yet wonder where my place in it would be as a faggoty, sex-positive,

anarchist, anti-racist/anti-imperialist clergy person. When I wrap that white collar around my neck and commit deeply to my faith am I assimilating into a system that does more violence than love? What is my response to my queer ancestors, many who were taken far too early from us, who held signs outside



Jason Lydon

St. Patrick Cathedral screaming out, "Burn the churches, not witches and faggots!" Has religion really made such giant leaps and bounds over the past four decades that queering religion is now acceptable?

As a Unitarian Universalist my faith has long challenged the privileges and power clergy maintain over members of their community or congregations. We have fought hard for religious freedom and the removal of God language from State pledges and currency. The Boy Scouts have even denied some of our community their religion patch because of our support for queers and atheists/humanists. Even with all of the ways my faith community

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I was in the audience on Saturday, Sept. 4th for the *Miss Trans New England Pageant* held in Northampton, MA. I am proud to be part of the LGBT community and would like take this opportunity to thank Lorelei McLaughlin for her work and representation of the "T" (transgender) community throughout her year as Miss Trans New England 2009.

As I watched her exit presentation, which by the way, was the perfect mix of her professional and personal life as crowned queen; I realized how much she truly embodies what I believe it means to be a transwoman. At the same time I realized just how hard it would be for the successor Miss Trans NE to fill Lorelei's "heels!"

Though my personal favorite, LeslieAnne Rios, took second place, I fully respect the judges' choice of Toni Olin-Mignosa and wish her all the best

—El McKimmer, Florence, MA

Dear Editor,

In your 9/2 issue columnist Romeo San Vicente, *Deep Inside Hollywood*, states "no one is officially saying that... THE MIRACULOUS YEAR is ... based on the life of ... Stephen Sondheim." That's because it's about William Finn, legendary gay Broadway composer and Natick native; a fact that would take 10 seconds to research on-line. You are getting ripped off if you are paying for this column. Tell San Vicente to get a clue or a research assistant!

P.S. Love the rest of your paper.

—Thom Yarnal, Dorchester, MA

Dear Editor,

I am saddened by this year's Miss Trans New England.

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More than legal issues at stake in Christine Judd's resignation as Cathedral High's Dean of Students

By: Tynan Power/TRT Reporter

Western New England NEWS
News of the forced resignation of Christine Judd, Dean of Students and Athletic Director at Cathedral High School, came as a jolt to Massachusetts' LGBTQ population. According to an article in *The Republican* (Springfield, MA), Judd was pressured to leave after the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield became aware that she had married her same-sex partner. Almost immediately the story was picked up by *The Advocate* and spread like wildfire in the blogosphere.

In Massachusetts, where same-sex marriage is legal and discrimination based on sexual orientation is not, forcing an employee to resign because of his or her sexual orientation is legal folly. Why would Cathedral risk it?

Attempts to reach a spokesperson for Cathedral High School were unsuccessful and the Diocese has declined to comment further because it is an employment matter. Judd herself could not be reached for comment. It seems, though, the answer may come down to clauses in anti-discrimination laws that exempt religious organizations. As a religious institution, Cathedral may be exempt—and within its rights to ask Judd to leave.

Religious exemptions can be extensive, covering all organizations and businesses run by a religious organization, from places of worship to schools and social services.

"The exception to the Massachusetts state law is not that broad," says Jennifer Levi, a lawyer with Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD). "In Massachusetts, it's limited to situations of carrying out the religious mission of the institution. They really have to be looked at on a case-by-case basis."

Why do these exemptions even exist, if they provide a loop-hole through which discrimina-

tion can wiggle?

"There is a really strong constitutional commitment to equality and, at the same time, religion has played a special role in our history—so there is this central tension."

We have protection of religious liberty and, at the same time, we prohibit establishment of a state religion."

Religious exemptions can offer lawmakers a way to balance that tension, making laws to

protect individuals while also ensuring freedom to practice one's religion, even when it violates other existing laws.

Levi feels that the implications of Judd's forced resignation go deeper than the legal issues.

"The stronger concern is about the message it sends to the students," Levi says. "The message that they get is that it's not ok to be yourself."

Daryl Presgraves of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) shares that concern.

"It is deeply troubling for a school to essentially fire a quality and well-respected educator, simply because she wants to enter into a legally recognized union with the person she loves," says Presgraves. "At a time when

nearly nine out of ten LGBT youth are bullied in school, the decision sends the horrible message to the schools' students that LGBT people are not worthy of the same dignity and respect as their peers."

"It's a real tragedy," Levi says. "Here's a woman who has 12 years of committed service as a dean, a teacher, a role model. Just because of making a more public commitment to her partner, she is let go by the school. That really sends a very damaging message to the students in that school. Many of them will face those same issues in their lives or they may have already."

We know there are really tragic consequences when kids feel they cannot be themselves."

Students of Cathedral High School did not accept that stifling message passively. The day after the news broke, they took to the street with a protest in support of their Dean—a powerful demonstration of respect, affection—and Judd's positive impact as an educator.

"The stronger concern is about the message it sends to the students. The message that they get is that it's not OK to be yourself," said Jennifer Levi, a lawyer with Gay & Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD).



PHOTO: TYNAN POWER
Jennifer Levi, Glad Attorney

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support the Coalition. Also taking place on Sept. 25th is Boston's Harbor to the Bay AIDS benefit Bike Ride. So, if you can't make it out west, be sure to support this important cause too.

Shortly after that, Latino Pride will start in Boston. Commencing on September 30th - October 3rd, Latino Pride will showcase all of the LGBTQ members of Latino heritage and their allies. This edition of TRT showcases a four-page Latino Pride supplement that starts on page 11. You will find more about the entertainment line-up, events, and even the birth of Latino Pride: a one-of-a-kind event in the U.S.

In addition, the North Shore Alliance of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth, NAGLY, is celebrating its third fundraiser event on September 30th at the Hawthorne Hotel Ballroom. NAGLY is here to "create, sustain and advocate for programs, policies, and services for the LGBT youth community" amongst other things. Check out our news story on NAGLY in this edition of TRT, since we are a proud supporter and sponsor of NAGLY too, as well as the other events that I have mentioned above.

We look forward to seeing you at some of these events.

Best,

Grisel M. Ocasio

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

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has worked to challenge clericalism I still find myself struggling with the privileges I gain and implicit cultural respect I become entitled to as I introduce myself as "The Reverend." I am thus confronted with two overlapping yet different questions, what does it mean to be a queer person of faith and what does it mean to hold power as a clergy person within a religious movement, especially as an anti-authoritarian?

Like all things about our queer and transgender communities the question of religion cannot be asked in only one way. Religion is more than just the institutions of Church, Mosque, Synagogue, Temple. Religion is about culture, identity, family, and so on. Religious communities have been the backbone to many social movements within the U.S. and throughout the world, providing havens of support and nourishment during resistance to the status quo. There have also always been queer and transgender people within faith communities, since the beginning of religious thought. I have chosen to be actively involved in my faith community and take on the role of minister because I think of it as a role that can be used to challenge the current system we live in. In my mind and spiritual understanding the role of ministry is to serve in the name of justice for the cause of love towards the purpose of collective liberation. I think it is entirely possible that we would be better off as a people if we smashed the institutions of religion, but I am absolutely sure that smashing the institutions would not diminish the power of people's faith. My job as a clergy person is to minister to that faith and act in a way that truly supports the liberation of all people.

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Celebrando la Jotería: Mi cultura y sexualidad son inseparables

LATIN VISION Por: Lorenzo Herrera y Lozano*/
Especial para TRT

Como un niño creciendo en la parte sur del área de la Bahía de San Francisco, soñaba todo el tiempo en lo que quería ser cuando fuera grande. Soñé en ser doctor, un arquitecto o un piloto. Pero en verdad me desmayo cuando veo sangre, no tengo sentido de dimensión y le tengo miedo a las alturas. Ahora, 25 años más tarde, pueden notar que mi vida no tiene nada relacionado a los campos de la medicina, arquitectura ni aviación.

No, al crecer terminé *Joto*.

Puedo entender el argumento de que la *Jotería* no es una profesión, un campo académico o ni tan siquiera un espacio artístico en donde crear obras, pero yo diría que es lo contrario. Identificarme como *Joto* no es sólo un intento de evocar algunas risas, de asustar a gente o de ganar la atención por ser diferente a los demás, sino que el identificarme como *Joto* es parte de un proceso político de identificación.

Joto es una palabra que mucha/os chicana/os, mexicano/a-estadounidense y mexicana/os (hago la diferencia para aquellos que escogen identificarse a su manera) crecieron escuchando. En mi casa, la palabra se usó frecuentemente cuando se hablaba de uno de mis tíos menores, quien ahora es una de mis tías menores. Antes de lograr identificarse como mujer, mi tía aparentaba ser un hombre joven afeminado y amanerado. Se afeitaba las piernas, su voz era suave y sus caderas no podían evitar moverse a su propia cadencia. Cosas que un 'hombre' jamás debería de hacer. Cosas que sólo un *Joto* haría.

Mi tía, en aquel entonces mi tío, era mi punto de referencia a todo lo referido a *Joto*. Recuerdo claramente como mi familia y la comunidad la repudiaba por ser una vergüenza para la familia. Ella nunca se casaría, nunca tendría hija/os, y nunca sería el tipo de hombre que mi familia esperaba que fuera. Obviamente, puesto que nunca fue un hombre para comenzar. Comparto brevemente parte de su historia, no para definirla como una *Jota* o un *Joto* sino porque éste fue el principio de la trayectoria que me llevaría a reclamar la palabra *Joto* como mi propia identidad.

La primera memoria que tengo de la palabra es a los 5 años. Mi tía había venido a vivir con nosotros en San José y escuché por casualidad a mi papá hablar con mi mamá sobre mi tía, que 'él' estaba actuando como un *Joto*. Entendí desde entonces que la palabra no era algo para enorgullecerse uno. Al crecer y comenzar a sentir emociones por otros chicos, no podía sacar la palabra *Joto* de mi mente. Estaba convencido que no era uno de "esos". Incluso mientras exploraba mi sexualidad con otros hombres jóvenes como yo y más adelante ante adulto rechacé la idea de ser de esa manera.

Mientras exploraba mis deseos también exploraba lo que significó ser el hijo de un padre nacido en México viviendo en Estados Unidos y de una madre nacida en los Estados Unidos viviendo en México. Salí de ese proceso reclamando una identidad de chicano. Aprendí que mi identidad era más profunda que el color de mi piel, aunque ésta me definía. Aprendí que tomar esta identidad era una declaración política. Reconocer la identidad de chicano era reconocer una identidad intencionalmente política. No había nada sutil sobre el llamarme

chicano.

Cuando salí del clóset como hombre "gay" ya estaba profundamente identificado con mi identidad de ser Chicano. Ahora tenía la tarea de descifrar lo que yo pensaba eran dos distintas identidades y experiencias. La mayoría de lo que sabía sobre ser chicano era de una perspectiva heterosexual. Toda la información que estaba a mi alcance de ser gay era de una perspectiva blanca. Yo sabía que no tenía nada en común con estas historias de hombres blancos que crecían en el centro del país y acababan en comunidades como la del distrito Castro en San Francisco. Creo que estas son historias importantes y merecen ser reconocidas, pero no son mis historias.

El proceso de reclamar la palabra *Joto* como identidad vino de mi intento de entender lo que pensaba eran dos realidades. Reclamar la identidad de *Joto* ha sido aprender que mi cultura y mi sexualidad son inseparables. Ambas viven en mi cuerpo. *Joto* es una identidad política como lo es ser Chicano.

La *Jotería* es la comprensión y la afirmación

que mi cultura y sexualidad están entrelazadas influenciando una a la otra. Ambas son mutuamente integrales a mi ser.

Me uno a mis hermana/os del movimiento LGBT y al movimiento Chicana/o como un *Joto*. Celebro con ustedes en Massachusetts en su celebración 7ta de Orgullo Latino GLBT y espero que tomen cada paso, como lo tomo yo, como un *Joto*. En mi trabajo como activista, académico, artista, pareja, amante, hijo, amigo, hermana/o y aliada/o proviene del lugar verdadero, mitológico y místico que es la *Jotería*. Celebren si *Jotería* durante la 7ta Celebración de Orgullo Latino GLBT de Nueva Inglaterra y el resto del año. Feliz *Jotería*!

**Escrito por Lorenzo Herrera y Lozano es un Xicano Joto, escritor, activista, y soñador nacido en California, criado en Chihuahua, viviendo en Austin. Traducción al inglés por Wilfred W. Labiosa.*

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LATINO PRIDE SECTION
on pages 11-14

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People of color LGBT coalition raises the bar for community service work

By: Natalia Muñoz/TRT Assistant Editor

The Hispanic Black Gay Coalition, HBGC, Twitters, has a growing Facebook page and a Myspace spot as well. But, those social network connections are not just for celebrations.

As Quincey Roberts, one its founders said, "We started this because there was a lack of services and we wanted something other than partying."

The HBGC was founded in 2009 by Roberts, 28, and Corey Yarbrough, 24, in Boston to hold meetings and events that dovetail with what many LGBT people of color have clamored for in addition to the advocacy and parades—a place to meet people around community service.

Visit the website at www.hbgc-boston.org and you will find a plethora of ways to get involved. Whether you have a story to share at this month's *Latino Pride* event, or want to join the book club to discuss Byron Jamal's *Unlovable* or see yourself as a mentor to college students, the *Hispanic Black Gay Coalition* has an opening.

Also on its website there is a survey that its founders encourage everyone to fill out to better serve the LGBT people of color community.

Its mission reads in part that it is "dedicated

to the unique and complex needs of the Black, Hispanic and Latino LGBT community. ... We work to inspire and empower Hispanic, Latino and Black LGBT individuals to improve their livelihood in everyday life through activism, education, community outreach, and counseling."

"I never had an LGBT person of color that I could look up to," said Roberts, the organization's co-founder and chief financial officer. "It took me 23 years to come out of the closet. I lived two lives."

Yarbrough, the HBGC's chief executive officer and the other co-founder, also experienced painful duality in his life. Religion played a big role in his family, and being gay was a one-way ticket to hell.

"It was always a struggle with religion. It was a process to love myself," he said.

"Black and Latinos LGBT feel they need to choose a side," said Roberts.

In the organization's first year, they helped a single mother of three by giving her clothes, toys and a gift card during the holiday season as part of its "Adopt a Family for the Holidays" campaign.

See HBGC on page 6



Quincey Roberts, left, and Corey Yarbrough, founded the Hispanic Black Gay Coalition to provide the community with advocacy resources and support.

Jorgensen Center announces The JOY! Chorale auditions

NEW ENGLAND NEWS

Rodney Rock, Jorgensen Director, recently announced an exciting new program for the 2010-2011 academic year. The JOY! Chorale, a concert choir organization for high school and adult voices will provide students in grades 9-12, their parents, and members of the community at large with the opportunity to sing great music together! Rehearsals will be held weekly on Saturday mornings at the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. There is a slight change to the chorale schedule as initially announced. The group will have its first gathering on Saturday, September 28 at 10:00 a.m. Individuals interested in participating in the choir will have a short vocal interview and placement. Weekly rehearsals will take place on Saturday, October 4 through December 11.

In its initial year, the Chorale will be directed by Dr. Linda Page Neely, Associate Professor of Music Education at the University of Connecticut. There is no fee to enroll in the chorale. Please visit the Jorgensen website for further information.

Dean from page 2

tell people never to do. I was hiding behind polite, inconsequential questions about nothing in particular." He finally confessed to his tablemate that he wasn't acting as he normally would because he had literally just ended a relationship. His willingness to be vulnerable to a near stranger, he writes, resulted in a lively discussion among everyone at the table about relationships and divorce.

So what are we to make of Ferrazzi's decision to mask the gender of his ex-partner? And does it even matter? Well, it's hard to imagine a heterosexual author telling the same story and doing it without the use of pronouns, as Ferrazzi does. At the same time, Ferrazzi mentions the Gill Foundation by name in the book. Careful readers will figure it out (with the help of Google, of course). Bottom line? Even if you're the founder of a global marketing firm that bears your name, you aren't necessarily going to come right out in your first how-to business book. Message? Coming out can still have a downside. Even if you're one of the world's most-networked individuals, as Inc. magazine has described Ferrazzi.

In "The Town That Food Saved: How One Community Found Vitality in Local Food," we learn that Steve Obranovich, who works as a chef at the epicenter of the locavore movement in Hardwick, Vermont, is gay. Published

in 2009, the book was an immediate best-seller, fueled by the seeming sudden interest among the Whole Foods crowd in shopping at farmer's markets and raising chickens in their backyards. The local food boom in Hardwick has been covered by the New York Times, Yankee, the late, lamented Gourmet and every outlet in between. At the center of these stories is Claire's Restaurant, which serves the aforementioned blueberry vodka (made by Obranovich) and pledges to feed diners only food that has been locally produced. If you blink while reading, you could easily miss that Obranovich is gay. In writing about Claire's, the straight author lists Obranovich as one of the four founders of the restaurant, along with "his domestic partner Mike Bosia." That's it. Nothing more. For a book that describes the lives of other couples involved in the local food movement in Hardwick (including a husband and wife couple who slaughter animals for a living, another that live off the grid and homeschool their two children, and a third that run a fledging organic dairy farm) why pass up the opportunity to write about the couple that owns the restaurant favorably reviewed in the Times? Who can say? Bottom line: the gays are matter-of-factly noted as such when relevant, but they aren't quite treated the same as everyone else. Message: We're still queer.

Last, in "The Cheapskate Next Door: The

Surprising Secrets of Americans Living Happily Below Their Means," published this year, we meet Bruce Ostyn and Daniel Newman, who are described as "longtime partners." Like "The Town That Food Saved," "The Cheapskate Next Door" hits on another hot lifestyle trend: living below one's means. Ostyn and Newman are frugal. They wash their dishes by hand, carefully conserving water and using what's left when they're done to water their plants. They use their stainless steel dishwasher to store the aforementioned ramen noodles. The couple is presented as one of author Jeff Yeager's "miser advisors," people who live frugally, but who live well. Yeager goes back to Ostyn and Newman frequently to illustrate how it is possible to purchase an Architectural Digest-worthy house in Arizona with cash; travel the world; and, in the only nod to gay stereotypes, dress really, really well. Bottom line: the gays are, in fact, like everyone else. Message? It takes someone who lives outside the mainstream (Yeager is a man who has been known to retrieve scraps from his compost and turn them into vegetable soup) to present us as good, old-fashioned contributing members of society.

**Susan Ryan-Vollmar is a media relations and communications consultant. She lives in Arlington with her family.*

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Creep of the Week: Let's place focus on Montana Tea Party Association President, Tim Ravndal

By: D'Anne Witkowski*/Special for TRT

You know what's totally hilarious? Matthew Shepard jokes. You know, the 21-year-old guy who, in 1998, was brutally beaten and then hung on a fence like a scarecrow to die in rural Wyoming because he was gay. So much potential for comedy there.

Shepard's murder is the exact kind of thing that seems so terrible at the time but you think, "One day we're all gonna look back on this and laugh." If you're a total shit-for-brains asshole, that is.

Enter Tim Ravndal, president of the Big Sky

Tea Party Association in Montana.

On July 23, Ravndal posted a link to a story about marriage and gays on his Facebook page with the following comment, "Marriage is between a man and a woman period! By giving rights to those otherwise would be a violation of the constitution and my own rights."

A friend named Dennis Scranton wrote in reply, "I think fruits are decorative. Hang up where they can be seen and appreciated. Call Wyoming for display instructions."

Ravndal writes back, "Dennis, Where can I get that Wyoming printed instruction manual?"

"Should be able to get info (from) Gazette archives. Maybe even an illustration." Scranton posts. "Go back a bit over 10 years."

Get it? LOL! ROTFLMAO! I mean, sure, they don't mention Shepherd by name, but they don't have to. We all get the joke.

Not everybody is laughing, however. "Mr. Ravndal's comments are outrageous," Kim Abbott of the Montana Human Rights Network told the Great Falls Tribune. "He is a public figure, in the public sphere, condoning and making light of violence against gay people. It's actually pretty frightening."

Kim Abbott, also with MHRN, said, "I would like to know if Mr. Ravndal thinks that gay people are entitled to the same safety, security and protections as everyone else, because his comments seem to suggest he thinks it's OK to hurt or even kill members of the LGBT community."

I'm going to guess that the answer to Abbott's query is, "No, he doesn't think homos deserve the same protections as everybody else." I'm not inside Ravndal's head (thankfully), but that's where I'd put my money.

Ravndal is now claiming that he had no idea what Scranton was talking about and that he does "not condone violence to any human being."

"I wasn't even thinking about the tragedy

that happened in Wyoming," Ravndal said. "I made a mistake and I apologize to anyone I offended."

Really? Ravndal had no idea that "fruit" means "fag?" And that to "hang up" means, well, to hang? As in lynch? As in kill? Hasn't he ever heard Billie Holiday sing "Strange Fruit" before? And even if all of those things really did go right over Ravndal's head, wouldn't the specific mention of Wyoming be, at minimum, confusing?

Because Ravndal doesn't reply with something like, "Dude, WTF? I don't get it." He writes, "Where can I get that Wyoming printed instruction manual?" Kind of hard to believe he didn't know the significance of "Wyoming" in this instance.

It's interesting to note that on his Facebook page in the list of things Ravndal "Likes" right alongside "Tea Party protests" is "Not everything that pops into your head needs to be shared on Facebook."

Irony, yes. But it really makes you wonder what kinds of things he *isn't* posting.

**D'Anne Witkowski has been gay for pay since 2003. She's a freelance writer and poet (believe it!). When she's not taking on the creeps of the world she reviews rock 'n' roll shows in Detroit with her twin sister.*



Great house for SALE in Easthampton; Great neighborhood!

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Perks: walking distance to Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, bike path that connects to Northampton, Hadley and Amherst and 3 miles from downtown Northampton. Easthampton is an up and coming "Noho", but will never be as gentrified - there are a lot of artists with little money and an arts council that does great events. Interested? Call: 413-527-8711.



HBGC from page 4

"We picked a family that could use extra help - that's what we say, extra help, not 'needy,'" said Roberts.

One of HBGC's goal is to do a community service event every month.

To that end, the organization will again this holiday season carry out an "Adopt a Family" campaign, launch another book club series, collect clothes, provide spiritual support, promote community service and build its mentoring program.

That mission is tied to the founders' commitment to social justice as much as their own spirituality.

Another goal is to provide support for LGBT people of color to celebrate their faith in their respective faith-based institutions.

Many religions exclude LGBT people from being full participating members. It is a particularly stinging rejection from churches, temples and other houses of worship built on the premise that God is love.

The mentoring program - they are seeking more mentors for college students - is another key to the organization, said the founders.

"It's one thing to be on campus as a person of color and another thing to be a person of color and LGBT," said Yarbrough.

Their book club is an opportunity not only to meet new people and discuss books and share personal stories, but also a way to discover books by LGBT people of color authors.

As Roberts said: "If we had to pick a social event, it would be our book club. It's more than a book club, it's a support group."

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North Shore LGBTQ Youth Group - NAGLY to hold Gala Fundraiser on September 30th

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

On Thursday, September 30, there will be a Gala Fundraiser at the Hawthorne Hotel in Salem to benefit NAGLY – the North Shore Alliance of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth. The event begins at 7 pm and will run until 10 pm.

NAGLY was formed in 1993 to address the needs of LGBTQ youth, ages 14-21. The organization provides counseling and support services for a population vulnerable to ridicule and harassment in a school setting.

According to a recent national study conducted by GLSEN (Gay Lesbian Straight Educators Network), 75.4% of queer youth have heard derogatory remarks such as “faggot” or “dyke” frequently or often at school, and over a third (37.8%)

of students have experienced physical harassment at school on the basis of sexual orientation and more than a quarter (26.1%) on the basis of their gender expression.

The LGBTQ youth living on the North Shore can rely on NAGLY to provide a welcoming environment. Some of them, through NAGLY’s website, expressed their experience with the organization.

“NAGLY is like a home to me, also a second family. A place where I can be myself and meet other people like me as well,” said Lady, 19.

Notes Ian, 16: “NAGLY gives me the strength and courage to be myself.”

The main speaker at the fundraiser will be openly gay State Rep. Carl Sciortino (D-Medford). Special VIP guests include Logo’s RuPaul Drag Race star Jujubee and MTV’s *The Real World* reality Star Scott Herman.

In the past few years, NAGLY has enjoyed tremendous growth and is now one of the biggest GLBT youth organizations in Massachusetts – with a weekly meeting attendance of over 50 youth and a general active membership of over 400.

“This year we’ve got a lot more response, a lot more professional community members who really want to support the kids,” said Kirsten Freni, President of the NAGLY Board of Directors. “I’m totally pleased (with the growth of NAGLY). We have an amazing eclectic Board of Directors who really put their hearts and souls and time into developing programming and making sure we have all the appropriate leadership offices and mentorship that we can expose the kids to.”

Freni said she would like NAGLY to have a permanent location, in order to provide even greater outreach and services to LGBTQ youth. The organization’s long-term goals involve providing emergency shelter space for at-risk youth, as well as scholarships for adolescents who need the financial assistance to attend college.

NAGLY meets every Tuesday evening, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the First Universalist Church in Salem at 211 Bridge Street – right across from the Salem MBTA Commuter Rail Station. Topics covered each week include: health and safe relationship development, violence prevention, anti-oppression strategies, coming out to friends and families, artistic expression and creativity, and GLBT history, culture and pride.

Please visit www.nagly.org or www.myspace.com/nagly to learn more about the organization.



PHOTO: ALISHA OUELLETTE

NAGLY march Tremont Street during a Youth Pride event.

Northampton Trans Pride 2010 • Northampton, MA

—Photos: Glenn Koetzner/TRT Lead Photographer



Noho Trans Pride 2010 Grand Marshall Monica Roberts addresses the attendees



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Northampton's Trans Pride 2010 ... one that almost wasn't

By: Tynan Power/TRT Reporter

Three days before New England Trans United (NETU) Pride was expected to march through downtown Northampton, emails and Facebook notes started sending the message that all was not well in pride-land.

A parade permit had been obtained, but somehow the rally site had not been secured. No fingers were pointed—at least at first—but desperate pleas went out for help locating a space to accommodate the rally.

"If we don't find a place, it looks like Trans Pride won't be able to happen," read one message sent out to local activists.

Arjuna Greist was one of many community members who stepped forward to help make the event possible. A "folk and word" performer, Greist was originally planning to be involved only as a performer. When she heard that NETU's planned march and rally might not happen, she decided she had to do something more.

"I realized that if Trans Pride was going to happen, the trans community was going to have to come together quickly and strongly. I think the fact that it did showcase our viability," said Greist.

Greist explored other options for a rally site, but finally ended up at the Mayor's office.

"They knew something was going on today because the parade permit had been taken out," Greist said. "They said it was no problem to hold the rally on City Hall steps. They just asked that I contact the Northampton police department to ask them to block off part of the street in front of city hall."

Greist was surprised at how easy it was.

"They wanted to help us. It's important to the city," she said. "I actually like that it wound up

on City Hall steps, both politically and socially. It gave it a feeling of urgency, of protest."

Bet Power, a local transgender activist who has played a key role in previous trans pride events in Northampton, shared similar sentiments when he took to the stage early in the rally. He explained that he had "backed off" involved in this year's Trans Pride while facing serious health problems. Still, when the event nearly got canceled, he stepped in to help.

"You know, this almost didn't happen," Power said. "But, I am here. You are here. I will not abandon you. We will not abandon each other."

Power acknowledged the diversity of listeners at the rally then addressed the transgender people in the audience.

"I am going to talk to my people. Because I think we need a talking to. We need a new rule. From now on the rule is you are not part of this community if you do not treat yourself and others in the community with the utmost in respect and kindness," Power said.

Power's words were met with wild applause.

Bear and Cid White, co-chairs of Noho Pride, were on hand from start to finish lending their support and parade experience to the short-handed NETU Pride organizers.

When asked if they were involved before last week, both offered a solemn shake of the head in response.

"When we heard what was happening, we decided to help. That's what we should be doing. This is our community," Bear White said. "The 'T' [in LGBT] is important to us."

"We have about 700 people on Facebook [as 'friends'] and 2,500 on our email list. We were just trying to get the word out as soon as we got it," Cid White added.

NETU Board members Gary Lapon, Charla Kouadio and Theresa Coley-Kouadio were on hand and working hard to make the event a success, but NETU's director, Christa Hilfers, was conspicuously absent.

While some pointed blame at Hilfers for the original botched rally plan and her absence over the past week, Brianna Harris quietly spread the word that Hilfers was in the hospital. According to Harris, Hilfers had fallen ill just before the Miss Trans New England pageant—at which she appeared feverish—on September 4th. Harris said Hilfers was admitted to Baystate Hospital a few days later.

NETU Board member Gary Lapon also sought to deflect blame from Hilfers.

"Obviously, some things did not happen that should have. I would say we were all responsible—the whole Board. I would chalk it up to inexperience and lack of funds," Lapon added.

At noon, transgender people and their allies marched from Lampron Park to City Hall, chanting "What do we want? Trans rights! When do we want them? NOW!"

The rally commenced with a reading of a proclamation issued by Northampton Mayor Mary Clare Higgins, naming September 11, 2010 Trans Pride Day in Northampton. The proclamation was read by organizer, Trystan Dean. The rally featured speeches by Grand Marshall of NETU Pride 2010, Monica Roberts, local activist Bet Power, executive director of the



PHOTO: GLENN KOETZNER

Top Row (L-R): Rena Shelton (Brianna Harris' son in tee) Brianna Harris, Lorelei Erisis
Middle Row (L-R): Ericka Soto, Bet Power, Arjuna Greist, Trystan Dean, Samson Zarek Hampton, Gary Lapon.
Bottom (L-R): Aydin Brannon, Anne Beon, Cid White, LezleeAnne Rios, Bear White

Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition (MTPC), Gunner Scott, and Advisory Board member of Brattleboro's Queer Community Project, Brianna Harris. Between speeches, City Hall and much of Main Street erupted with the music of LezleeAnne Rios, Carrie Ferguson and Arjuna Greist. The event concluded with a short open mic period before emcee Lorelei Erisis brought the rally to a close at 3 sharp, with some closing words that fit right in with Power's vision of the "new rule" for the trans community.

"We said we'd be done by 3 and we want this city to really love us," said Erisis.

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Sampling *Taste of Provincetown*: A Success for MassEquality

MassEquality's Taste of Provincetown enjoyed all kinds of culinary creations from 11 of Provincetown's most popular restaurants. The bite-sized delicacies were expertly paired with wine. Featured restaurants included Victor's, Patio American Grill and Cocktail Bar, Ross's Grill, Crown & Anchor, Karoo Kafe,

Jimmy's Hideaway, Bayside Betsy's, Relish, Far Land, and Ptown Parties. Funds raised from the event will support MassEquality's grassroots advocacy to advance LGBT equality in school, in marriage and family life, at work and in retirement.

All photos for this story by Lauren Swanson.



Wendy Kaminer, Woody Kaplan, Anne Peretz and Stephen Weiner (L-to-R) attended the inaugural Taste of Provincetown fundraiser for MassEquality Aug. 28 at the Provincetown Art Association and Museum.



MassEquality board members Julie Goodridge and David Wilson, who were both plaintiffs in the Goodridge lawsuit that resulted in the state's highest court finding that same-sex couples have the right to wed, and Paul Asher (Right) of Provincetown's Asher Appraisal Services.



A small sampling of the large assortment delectable offerings from Relish featured at the inaugural Taste of Provincetown fundraiser for MassEquality. Nearly 300 guests sampled bite-sized culinary creations and sipped wine from Truro Vineyards.

NEWSBRIEFS Rhode Island News Briefs

• The 2010-2011 Gay Bingo season kicks off on Thursday, September 16 at the Riviera Bingo Palace in Cranston. This month's theme is *Homecoming Gay Bingo*. Doors open at 6 pm. 1612 Elmwood Avenue.

• AIDS Project Rhode Island will have their 25th Annual AIDS Walk on September 26th. This walk will begin and end at the Rhode Island Statehouse and will take you through Downtown Providence and across Providence's scenic Eastside. It is anticipated that thousands of walkers will join the fight against AIDS/HIV and proceeds will benefit APRI, a Division of Family Service of Rhode Island. This year holds particular significance, not just because it is the Silver Anniversary, but because APRI will be launching a statewide initiative to confidentially test 10,000 Rhode Islanders for HIV/AIDS. They will offer free and confidential HIV testing on site at the event. To register, go to www.aidsprojectri.org.

• Providence Mayor David Cicilline and WPRI news anchor Karen Adams will serve as Celebrity auctioneers at Art Beat 2010, *AIDS Care Ocean State's* annual fundraiser on Friday, October 15. Tickets - \$45 in advance, \$50 at door. The auction begins at 6 p.m. at Providence Biltmore Hotel, 11 Dorrance St., Providence. For more info, go to www.aidscares.org.

Boston News Briefs

• Fenway Health is conducting Helpline Volunteer Training on September 24 and 25. Have you wanted to volunteer, but it always seems as if you don't have the time? If you self identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer or genderqueer, and have 5

hours per month to spare, then this is for you. The Peer Listening Line and GLBT Helpline of Fenway Health provide information, referrals and support to queer, lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, genderqueer and questioning callers through our anonymous toll-free nationwide lines. They accept volunteers 16 years of age and up. Email Joanna Wisch at jwisch@fenwayhealth.org to register.

• Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) is partnering with ArtsEmerson/Tectonic Theater Project's production of *The Laramie Project* and *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later* at Paramount Center, Bright Family Screening Room, 559 Washington Street, Boston.

• On September 21, join GLAD Attorney Karen Loewy and other speakers for a free panel discussion: *The Struggle for GLBT Rights and Protections*. The discussion will include reaction to the Shepard/Byrd Hate Crimes Prevention Act, civil rights in Massachusetts - including the recently passed anti-bullying bill - and across the country, and *The Laramie Project's* impact on awareness.

A second panel discussion, *Be a Part of the Solution: Taking Action Against Hate*, will take place the following night, September 22 at 6:30 p.m.

There is no cost to attend either panel. To register: www.glad.org/event/2010-laramie.

Worcester News Briefs

• AIDS Project Worcester presents its *Annual Latino AIDS Awareness Day* on Friday, October 15 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the YWCA Of Central Mass, 1 Salem Sq. Worcester. There will be great Latino Food, live music, dancing with the APW Stars, Educational Tables, Raffles, and more. For details, call Luis Diaz at 508.755.3773.

Book Marks: Many voices, singular theme in *Gender Outlaws*

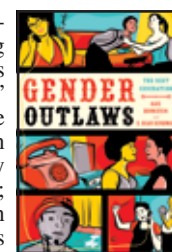
By: Richard Labonte*/Special for TRT

Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation, edited by Kate Bornstein and S. Bear Bergman. Seal Press, 302 pages, \$16.95 paper.

Transpeople. Genderqueers. Trannies. Sex/gender radicals. Transsexuals. They're all represented, in many forms and flavors, in this prose-and-poetry collection of intense, painful memoirs and breezy, joyous mini-biographies addressing the fluidity - sometimes hard-won and often wholly fabulous - of the sexual self. Back in 1994, Bornstein published *Gender Outlaw*, a frank critique of society's attitudes toward the transgendered, based on her own sexual and artistic life. In this eclectic collection of almost 50 essays, older generation meets newer as younger writers address the same landscape - or, more appropriately, genderscape. Every contributor illuminates an aspect of identity: Kyle Lukoff

writes about gender confusion contributing to an eating disorder; Joy Ladin writes about the "Daddy voice" coming from the woman she has become; Mercedes Allen honors the "aesthetic beauty of the transfemale body"; Cory Schmanke Parish wonders, wittily, "what does my wiener do on the days I don't wear it?" This anthology of many voices mulling a singular theme brings today's gender outlaws into the queer literary mainstream.

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



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Faith, Family, and God: Islamaphobia thrives beyond Ground Zero confines

By: Paul P. Jesepe*/TRT Columnist

Opportunities for fellowship, community, and understanding can be found in the most unlikely places. Hence, it's a travesty for all Americans and the larger human family when such an opportunity exists and is not acted upon as in the case of the proposed construction of a mosque and Islamic Center several blocks from Ground Zero.

Regardless of your position on the issue there needs to be less talk, more listening, and an end to persons who try to play people off of one another. Understandably, Muslim-Americans as well as families who lost loved-ones on 9/11 have dug in their heels. This situation has not been managed very well. Emotion dominates the common sense that Thomas Paine said Americans have to govern ourselves. What had been a chance for open, honest dialogue may have been lost.

Ron Paul, libertarian, GOP Congressman, and former Republican presidential candidate, weighed in on the controversy warning that "majorities can become oppressors of minority rights as well as individual dictators." Sound familiar? He further observed that this "is all about hate and Islamaphobia."

Islamaphobia can easily be substituted with homophobia. Are there bad Muslims? Yes, just like there are bad Jews, Wiccans, Christians, and humanists. Are there bad gays and lesbians? Yes, just like there are bad heterosexuals. Are there good and patriotic American Muslims? Yes, just like there are good and patriotic American Jews, Baptists, Pagans, atheists, agnostics, Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, and Episcopalians.

Recently, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg hosted an event for American Muslims at Gracie Mansion, the official mayoral

residence. Poignantly, he acknowledged Talat Hamdani, a Muslim mother who lost her son, Salman, on the fateful day.

The mayor cautioned against making Muslim Americans "equal in the eyes of the law, but separate in the eyes of their countrymen." Doing what's right, he noted, is not necessarily easy.

Recently, there's been talk about "sensitivity." Yes, show sensitivity toward Muslims wanting a mosque and cultural center. Yes, show sensitivity toward families who suffered an irreplaceable loss on 9/11. Yet don't forget that the role fear, pride, and misunderstanding, among other things are playing in this ongoing, painful debate. Emotion is dominating reason and common sense not unlike what occurred in the approval of Proposition 8 in California.

The lessons of Martin Niemöller, the staunch anti-Communist, World War I submarine commander, and initial supporter of Hitler's Nazi Party, comes to mind. After studying theology, he became a pastor of the Church of Jesus Christ at Dahlem, Germany, where he misused his faith to initially further Nazi German principles, which included persecution of gays and lesbians. Eventually, his support for Aryan principles collided with Hitler's attempts to submit all churches to the state. He disagreed and Hitler had him imprisoned. During incarceration his views evolved.

"First they came for the Communists," he wrote, "but I was not a Communist so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Socialists and the Trade Unionists, but I was neither, so I did not speak out. Then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew so I did not speak out. And when they came for me, there was no one left to speak out for me."

In July 2006, former president Bill Clinton praised President George W. Bush's legislative attempt to address the illegal immigrant crisis. Clinton cited Bush's long connection with Texas where he learned to appreciate firsthand the value and contributions of immigrants, including those who came and lived in America undocumented. According to Clinton, "It's hard to demonize people if you know them."

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



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Letters from page 2

Last year's pageant was a fairly well run event that presented a feeling of enthusiasm and style. The venue was beautiful, there were ushers that helped the audience find seats, rest rooms and answered questions. The show had a few glitches but it was lovely and I was so excited to see this year's improvements.

This year was a disgrace, a disgrace to the Trans Community, a disgrace to the audience, a disgrace to the contestants. It was a disgrace that the judges were not introduced but handed a live microphone and told to introduce themselves. It was a disgrace that two of the judges were Drag Queens. It was a disgrace that one of the most important parts of the pageant, the final question was canceled by Miss Hilfer's.

The reigning Miss Trans New England, Lorelei Erisis was the only professional on stage that night. The winner was a lovely Trans Woman, Toni Olin-Mignosa, who wowed us all with her poise and talent but we never heard her speak.

I support Toni Olin-Mignosa as the new Miss Trans New England, but I will no longer support Christa Hilfers, or the Miss Trans New England Pageant. It is very clear after that night, without a new "CEO" the future of the pageant is in jeopardy.

—Shea Adams, Northampton, MA

Dear Editor,

Recently, I read an excellent article by a Jason Whitlock, defending and empathizing with Umpire Billy Van Raaphorst, who was the victim of 'gay' slurs at a particular ballgame.

Whitlock's article would have been perfect, had he not prefaced it by a few personal comments vis-à-vis the comparison of the 'black' fight for freedom and the 'gay' fight for freedom ... not "comparison" so much as why he feels that the 'gays' struggle is not equally legitimate.

• Following is an open letter sent to Jason Whitlock.

Dear Mr. Whitlock,

Thank you for your open-minded and compassionate article about Umpire Billy Van Raaphorst. Clearly, you are an enlightened and thoughtful human being. Sadly, however, the personal opinions that prefaced your piece served to tarnish an otherwise noble endeavour. For that reason, I would like to discuss a few of your comments, starting with: "Let's start with transparency. The analogy comparing black people's fight for equal rights and gay people's makes me uncomfortable." And, "You can't conceal skin color in a closet or anywhere else."

By this do you mean that if all homosexuals were purple, then their plight would be equal to 'blacks'? I think not. The very essence of the homosexuals' ability to hide makes their struggle all the more heinous, the damage to their psyche all the more devastating, and their fight for equality all the more convoluted. We can probably agree, in very general terms, that the predominant racism scenario in the USA is perceived as that of 'whites' discriminating against 'blacks'—yet people of every colour discriminate against 'gays'!

Unlike the 'black' experience, homosexuals do not grow up in purple households with purple parents and purple siblings. They are not part of purple families with purple grandparents and purple aunts, uncles, and cousins. They do not live in communities with purple friends and purple neighbours. They do not worship in churches with purple preachers, purple choirs, and purple congregants. They do not attend schools with purple teachers and purple students. They do not have any

purple role models.

Homosexuals grow up alone and frightened and isolated. From the beginning of their lives, homosexuals are brainwashed by society to believe atrocious things about themselves, and there is no one to repudiate the public's abhorrence. They have no support system or role models, and they live in constant fear that they will be exposed. Although times are changing, albeit nominally and sluggishly, that is the way it was when I was born in 1945, and throughout my childhood, adolescence, and beyond.

Practically from the time I learned to walk and talk I was constantly called a "fairy" (even by a department store Santa Claus when I was four) and a "sissy" and all the rest. For the entire twelve years of my public school education I was relentlessly bullied, harassed, ridiculed, humiliated and physically abused. All of which deprived me of the "equal education" that you seem to think has only been denied to 'blacks'.

In junior high school, at the age of twelve, I met a purple boy, and that was the first time that I ever knew that I was not the only one. For the following six years we were each other's only purple friend, and we are still very close today, 53 years later. Believe me when I tell you, during our public school experience, we would not have cared one iota had we been segregated ... we would have been elated to attend that purple school with its purple teachers and its purple students.

Instead, even today, even though many still try to hide, homosexual students continue to be battered and reviled by students of all colours. Sometimes, they are also abused by teachers and administrators, as well as school bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and janitors. Even with the progress that has been made, the newfound enlightenment, today the suicide rate amongst homosexual teenagers is still three times higher than that of heterosexual teens.

There is a mind-bogglingly long list of 'anti-gay' violence throughout the world, and throughout history, dating back as far as the year 342 AD. Sadly, Matthew Shepard and Gwen Araujo are merely the tip of the iceberg. Occasionally, even 'straight' folk are targeted simply because they are perceived to be 'gay'! Go to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ViolenceagainstLGBTpeople> and read more; I guarantee that you will be utterly dumbfounded. Incontrovertibly, homosexuals have their very own brand of Jim Crow and KKK, and have had for many centuries.

Therefore—except for the fact that persecution of homosexuals has been a worldwide phenomenon for at least sixteen centuries; while the persecution of 'blacks' has been pretty much limited to the colonies/USA for about four centuries (not to mention forty-six years of apartheid in South Africa)—how does the 'gay' fight for equal rights not compare to the "black people's fight for equal rights?" How is the homosexual struggle for equality less legitimate? You say that, "Denying gay people the right to marry doesn't equate to denying black people freedom, the right to vote, equal education, etc." but you are uninformed.

First, it is not "gay marriage" it is marriage equality. Second, it is sophomoric to think that marriage equality is the only issue in the 'gay' fight for equality. Homosexuals have been and still are frequently discriminated against in adoption, education, employment, health care, housing, inheritance, military service, religious practice, and by law enforcement, etc. Sometimes, in some places, they cannot even walk freely down a sidewalk

Letters continued on page 17

LATINO PRIDE 2010

The Birth of Latino Pride of New England: A message to our people and supporters

Latino GLBT Pride is a dream come true for so many organizers of this region, and beyond. Eight years ago, a group of friends and leaders from Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts met to talk about the possibility of bringing together a wide array of events and call it the *Latino Pride Celebration of New England*. It took a year for these individuals to plan a weekend of events that became to be known as Latino Pride. It wasn't until the National Latino GLBT Organization, of the time, called the organizers of *Somos Latin@s LGBT Coalition* to develop an event in favor of the passage of gay marriage in Massachusetts. The financial support of this national organization and the energy from the leadership of *Somos Latin@s* helped in formalizing the first Latino Pride Celebration in May of 2004.

The momentum was there, and the first Latino Pride Celebration of New England took place in Boston. That first weekend included a political rally, a reception to honor those who helped the Latino LGBT movement, the Miss. Massachusetts Gay Latina Pageant, and a comedy show by out-Latina-comedian Marga Gomez. The individuals honored during that first reception were the foundation of the Latino LGBT Movement. Remember La Loba's performance, the food from Cuban Restaurant *Mucho Gusto*, Marga's joke of "La Chancleta," and the Honorable Felix Arroyo supporting us as our first ally? These were the first to be there—part of our community.

It was the birth and the beginning of the oldest and longest running Latino Pride Celebration of its kind in the United States. Can you believe it? Boston is the home for many firsts including Latino GLBT Pride! After this year, we have added movies, lectures, book signings, club nights, and so many different events; some work and others don't, but overall throughout the years we have explored our diverse cultures and our rich heritage as Latinos GLBT individuals. This year, we are Celebrating Our Roots, "Nuestras Raices" from September 30 to October 3. A weekend filled with a wide array of events, including a closing party at Frans Place in Lynn, the Miss. Massachusetts Gay Latina Pageant (turning "Quince"), Our Pride of Latinos Reception, and so much more! For details visit: www.somoslatinoslgbt.org

As one of those first organizers, I have to take a moment to thank the many financial supporters of our group and celebration; gracias to those individuals who helped me bring to reality this dream, Evelyn, Emily, Diego, Lisbeth, Javier, Marty, Carmen, Osvaldo, and Lisa; to all of the drag queens and transgender individuals, that have made our events fun and full of energy especially Boquita, Ambar, Ivanna, Tish, Luis, and to all of our participants and Title Holders, you know who you are! To Lola in Connecticut, and to Luis in Rhode Island, gracias!! To all

See Birth of Latino Pride on page 13

Latino Pride kicks with a bang in Boston! 4 Day celebration features many events

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

The 7th Annual Latino Pride celebration will be held from September 30 through October 3. The 4-day event will provide an opportunity for the Latino community to unite and honor members for their contributions.

The celebration is being organized by *Somos Latin@s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Coalition*, an organization of individuals that represents and serves the LGBT Latino/a population of Massachusetts.

The celebration begins Thursday, September 30th from 6-9 p.m. with a Theater and Community Fair at the UU Urban Ministry at 10 Putnam Street, Roxbury. This will allow members of both the Latino/a and LGBT communities to express their own feelings about their ethnic and sexual identities. The performances will be followed by a discussion on the intersections of race and sexuality, as well as a fair that will highlight local services available to the community.

On Friday, October 1st, there will be a Friday night Club Take Over. *Somos Latin@s LGBT Coalition* chairman Lisa Harrison said this is a new event.

"We're going to a straight Latino night, and talking with the club owner, and having them incorporate an LGBT component to that," Harrison explained.

After taking a year off, *Somos Latin@s* will be staging the Miss Massachusetts Gay Latina Pageant on October 2 from 9 until midnight. This event follows the Our Pride of Latin@s Reception

7-9 p.m.: The awards ceremony will honor this year's *Somos Latinos* community members and allies. Tickets are \$50 per person, and they include entrance to the reception, food and drinks, and entrance to the pageant.

9pm-12am: Latidia Productions, *Somos Latinos LGBT Coalition* and AvOc present an elaborate night of gowns, talent, and dancing. Reigning Miss.Mass Gay Latina Deborah Coss will crown her successor. Tickets are \$12 in advance, and \$15 at the door. This is an 18+ event and proper ID will be required. Tickets may be purchased for both events online through www.latinopride2010.eventbrite.com. Both events will be held at the *Jorge Hernandez Cultural Center*, 85 West Newton Street, in Boston's South End Villa Victoria.

Harrison said another new event this year is a brunch on Sunday, October 3 with Unidos. The brunch is from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

"We're really excited about that," said Harrison. "We think that's going to be great for local folks to meet our national partner."

The Brunch will be held at Café Belô, 120 Washington Street, Somerville. The menu includes a delicious buffet of Brazilian meats, sides, and desserts. Tickets are \$15 and must only be purchased in advanced through www.latinopride2010brunch.eventbrite.com and this is an all age's event.

Harrison appreciates the work of the Boston Pride Committee, but said the need for a separate celebration for LGBT Latinos was necessary.

See 4 Day Event on page 13



Thursday September 30th 6-9 pm
Celebrate our Roots through Theater and Community Fair
At the UU Urban Ministry at 10 Putnam Street, Roxbury, MA 02119

Friday October 1st, Friday night Club Take Over
Continue to celebrate our roots through our LGBT club take over.
Place TBD

Saturday October 2nd 7 pm - 1 am Reception and pageant
7-9 pm: Reception and awards ceremony: join us as we award this year's *Somos Latinos* community members and allies. Tickets \$50/person, includes entrance to the reception, food and drinks, and entrance to the pageant. 21 + event. Proper ID required.
9pm-1am: Miss Massachusetts Gay Latina Pageant: Tickets are \$12 in advanced, and \$15 at the door. 18+ event. Proper ID. Tickets may be purchased for both events online through www.latinopride2010.eventbrite.com Jorge Hernandez Hall at 85 West Newton Street, Boston 02118

Sunday October 3rd 11 am - 1 pm
Closing party brunch with Unidos at Café Belô 120 Washington Street, Somerville, MA 02143
Tickets are \$15 and may only be purchased in advanced through www.latinopride2010brunch.eventbrite.com and this is an all ages event.



For more information to all of these events please visit our website at: www.somoslatinoslgbt.org or email: somoslatinosma@gmail.com.
If you are interested in sponsoring Latino pride or purchasing a table for our community fair please email us.



LATINO PRIDE 2010

Latino Pride: Reflections on what it means to individuals and community

Because Latino Pride will be celebrated in Boston, Mass. from Sept. 30th – October 3rd, TRT has asked some of the Latino community leaders in Boston, Western Massachusetts, and even NYC about what it means to them to celebrate Latino Pride as it relates to other Pride events. The answers showcase responses that convey the duality of the community and its innate diversity.

Why do you celebrate Latino Pride when there is already a mainstream Pride?



Wilfred Labiosa

"I celebrate Latino Pride, even though there is already a Boston Pride, because it celebrates the 'full me' not just my sexual orientation but my heritage of being Latino, Puerto Rican. It celebrates the food, the music, the history, the struggle, and the richness of my Latino and Gay cul-

tures all in one place and time. It is one of the most diverse celebrations of its kind and the oldest in our nation. It was born in Boston and I'm proud of that! Now other cities are replicating this amazing experience of Latino Pride."

—Wilfred W. Labiosa, Co-Founder of *Somos Latin@s LGBT Coalition* and *Latino Pride of New England*; Director of *Unid@s* and *Boston Pride*.

PHOTO: ERIC HESS



Jorge Cestou

"I celebrate Latino Pride because it's the event that connects the two intersections of who I am: Latino and LGBT. These events showcase the importance of who we are as a community in the USA, Puerto Rico and the whole wide world. Sometimes it's a day. Sometimes it's a week. Whichever

it is, it's an opportunity to celebrate who we are as a community."

—Jorge Cestou, *Male Chair, Unid@s - The National Latino LGBT Human Rights Organization*

PHOTO: EMANUEL GARCIA - WINDY CITY TIMES



Gricel Martínez Ocasio

"I celebrate Latino Pride because it deals the real struggles that Hispanic/Latino LG-BTQ community goes through in a manner in which we can relate to what is happening to one another in a more unwavering way. It is a diverse segment of the LGBTQ community with different needs, culture, language and a large cultural richness. Being Hispanic/Latino LGBTQ means that we come from various Spanish-speaking countries around the world with different idiosyncrasies, and that cannot be easily summed up in mainstream LGBTQ issues, although all of us can work together to improve our commonalities and well-being."

—Gricel Martínez Ocasio, *Publisher & Co-Owner, The Rainbow Times, LLC*

PHOTO: THE RAINBOW TIMES



Noris Chavarria

"I celebrate both Prides. However, Latino Pride hits home. It reminds me of my upbringing, my community and me. Mainstream Pride doesn't hit home. Mainstream Pride is fun but doesn't give me the same sense of Pride that Latino Pride does."

—Noris Chavarria, *Manager of Special Projects, student at New School University pursuing an MA in Media Studies*

PHOTO: DAVID CABRERA-VILLAFANA

Join UNID@S- The National Latino/a LGBT Human Rights Organization in...

Celebrating New England's 7th Annual Latino Pride
Celebrando Nuestras Raices, Nuestro Orgullo
September 30th - October 3rd 2010



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Washington DC, 20005
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info@unidoslgbt.com

LATINO PRIDE 2010



Lisa M. Harrison

"We feel it is important to celebrate Latino Pride to provide LGBT Latinos a space where we can feel comfortable presenting both of our identities. We do not have to check our 'gayness' at the door or stop speaking Spanish so that others can understand us. At Latino Pride we can truly rejoice

in our full identities."

—Lisa M. Harrison, *Somos Latin@s* LGBT Coalition's Chair



Pedro Julio Serrano

"Latino LGBT Pride is about celebrating all of our identities, who we are as Latino and Latina, but also who we are as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. We come together to celebrate our heritage, our common struggle and our full humanity."

-- Pedro Julio Serrano, *Communications Manager, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force*

PHOTO: BECK STARR



Keri Aulita

"While it's important that the LGBT Community as a whole stands together in solidarity, it's equally critical that we recognize the complex and particular struggles that exist for communities within our LGBT family. Race, age, class, ethnicity, gender-

all of the isms that still exist have a profound and deep impact on our lives. So, our fight is not just about our LGBT identities, but about fighting for, embracing and celebrating ALL of who we are. This is why Latino Pride and the Dyke March and Trans Pride and Youth Pride and all of the other movements are so key in the struggle for equality."

—Keri A. Aulita, *Deputy Director, Boston Pride Committee*

PHOTO: ERIC HESS



Birth of Latino Pride from page 11

of the attendees across the years, and to the numerous writers, photographers, performers, political figures, and community leaders who have made this movement and celebration one of the most diverse and recognizable Latino Pride's in our Nation!!! Gracias mil a todo/as! Happy Latino Pride 2010 to all!

Wilfred Labiosa

—Wilfred W. Labiosa, *Co-Founder of SomosLatin@s LGBT Coalition and Latino Pride of New England; Director of Unid@s and Boston Pride.*

4 Day Event from page 11

"We also felt in our talks with them and other partners that it was important to have an LGBT Latino Pride that was solely for LGBT Latinos," Harrison said. "There's a lot of uniqueness to our community in terms of language, in terms of how and where people feel comfortable at different spaces that people typically go to."

For more information to all of these events, to sponsor Latino Pride 2010, to participate in the pageant, buy tickets, or to volunteer, email: somoslatinosma@gmail.com.

it could be partner abuse

The Network/La Red:
Ending partner abuse in LGBTQ, polyamorous and SM communities

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Fenway Health is seeking HIV-negative men, ages 18 – 45, to participate in a vaccine trial to determine the safety and effectiveness of an investigational HIV vaccine. Volunteers receive compensation for their time and travel expenses, as well as confidential HIV counseling and testing.

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To volunteer, call 617.927.6450 or visit www.FenwayHealth.org/HIV



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Bigger than last year's!

Sunday, September 19, 2010

Park Hours
10:30 - 7:00

Exclusive event for the Gay and Lesbian Community as well as friends, family and supporters. All are welcome to attend.

DELUXE PACKAGE ONLY \$40! (Over \$70 Value!)

Includes Theme Park Admission, FREE Parking,
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Admission Tickets ONLY \$27 each

IF PURCHASED BY 8-30-2010.

After 8-30-2010, tickets will be \$30 each.

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A portion of each ticket will benefit local GLBT charities.



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Saturday 9/18 Stage Lineup

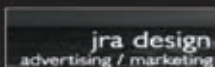
2:00 PM Lady and the Tramps
 2:15 PM Lola Bonita
 2:35 PM Sunta Africa
 2:50 PM Jubilee Gardens
 3:15 PM Shirley McAfee
 3:35 PM Monique and Fingers
 3:55 PM Nakita Le Femme
 4:05 PM Politcal Rally
 4:50 PM Bootz
 5:00 PM Pochado
 5:25 PM Regina Christ
 5:30 PM Mr Flip it
 5:45 PM Joe Posa
 6:15 PM Karen Grenier
 7:00 PM Afro Carribean Pop
 7:30 PM Ebony More
 7:40 PM Thirsty Burlington
 8:05 PM Girlz Blu

NEW DIRECTIONS

Pride Week Lineup

| Sunday 9/12 | Monday 9/13 | Tuesday 9/14 | Wednesday 9/15 | Thursday 9/16 | Friday 9/17 | Saturday 9/18 | Sunday 9/19 |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| Drag Brunch 86 Winter 65 Water St. Worcester (11-2 PM) | Family Night Claytime 124 Boston Turnpike (Rte 9) Shrewsbury (4-8 PM) | Meet-n-Greet Invitation only (6-9 PM) | Cha-Cha and Doc 90 Harding Street Worcester (7-9 PM) | Ms Lesbian + Ms. Gay Worcester Blu Ultralounge 105 Water St. Worcester (7-10 PM) | Bobby Gadoury Trio with Dale Lepage Calabria Ristorante 7 South Main St. Millbury (9 PM) | Worcester Pride on Water St. (12-9 PM) | Gay Days 6 Flags 1623 Main St. Agawam Bus leaves at 9 AM from 86 Winter 65 Water St. Worcester and leaves 6 Flags at 6 PM |
| Flag Raising MB Lounge 40 Grafton St. Worcester (7 PM) | | | | | The Man Behind the Woman, Joe Posa with Resident Dj Whiteboi 86 Winter 65 Water St. Worcester (9 PM) | Karen Grenier 8-10:30/Dj Susan Esthera (10 PM) 90 Harding Harding Street | |
| | | | | | | Thirsty Burlington Reigning Gay Miss MA USofA with Resident Dj Whiteboi 86 Winter 65 Water St. Worcester (9 PM) | |

for more info see www.worcesterpride.com



Letters continued from page 10

without fear of being assaulted.

Although you say that—"Discrimination is discrimination. Debating degrees of intolerance is pointless and counter-productive."—you make that statement after you have clearly stated that you believe there is a difference of "degree" when comparing "black people's fight for equal rights" to that of homosexuals.

Apparently this difference of "degree" is that, "You can't conceal skin color in a closet or anywhere else." In other words, you believe that 'homos' have it easier because they have the option of hiding in the closet to avoid being deprived of equality. Is that it? Somehow I do not see that as an advantage. Somehow I do not think that is what The Constitution means by "created equal."

Sometimes they'd have to think for a moment before they got it. Sometimes they didn't get it. Do you get it? "Acceptance" or "tolerance" is not good enough. I certainly don't need anyone to "accept" me or to "tolerate" me, and I'm insulted by the concept. We don't need to debate who holds the title for being the most deprived of their civil rights; we need to drop all of the derivative and derogatory labels, and focus on respecting everyone's right to equality.

So I ask you, how many 'black' men and women do you know, or have you known, that have had to suffer the emotionally devastating, gut-wrenching, and heartrending process of telling their parents, their siblings, their grandparents, their aunts, uncles, and cousins that they are 'black'? How many 'blacks' do you know that have been rejected and disowned by their families because they are 'black'? How many have been shunned by their church, and condemned by the leaders of their faith to burn in hell for all eternity, because they are 'black'?

As the old adage goes, "Walk a mile in my shoes." Once you have, then perhaps you will not be so "uncomfortable" comparing 'black' people's fight for equal rights and 'gay' people's fight for equal rights in an equal light.

Thank you for your time, and for your otherwise excellent article.

—Lance S. Edwards, Originally from Warwick, Rhode Island; now in Selangor, Malaysia

• Jason Whitlock email: BallState0@aol.com

• Link to Umpire Billy Van Raaphorst article: <http://msn.foxsports.com/mlb/story/gay-umpires-ordeal-shows-sad-state-of-sports-081310>

Dear Editor,

I am rather confused about something and hope you (someone) can provide some clarification. I have been seeing advertisements for a fundraiser event named the Queer Carnevale. This event is listed as being a fundraiser for the LGBT Coalition. Now, I see Diva's nightclub is holding a fundraiser ... for the Carnevale ... huh? How can there be a fundraiser for a fundraiser?

—Donna B., Northampton, MA

Trans Mission: An interview with FTM comedian Ian Harvie

By: Mikey Rox/Special for TRT

Stand-up comedian Ian Harvie looks like any schmo you'd pass on the street: Short, shaggy hair; five o'clock shadow; baggy T-shirt and jeans. But unlike those other average Joes, Harvie's appearance is deceiving.

The truth is, Harvie was born female. Today, however, he lives as a transgendered man who has taken the necessary steps to transform his body into one with which he can feel comfortable.

But being transgendered isn't something that Harvie tries to hide. In fact, he's made it a major part of his career. As a comic, he uses his gender-identity issues as fodder for laughter. Often to great success.

In a revealing interview, Harvie opens up about coming out gay and transgendered, his transition from female to male, his thoughts on how to make trans identity more acceptable, his joke-spiked crusade to expose America to trans issues, Heidi Montag as the trans community's newest inductee, touring with Margaret Cho, and why everyone over age 80 wants him to fix their car — even when they shouldn't be allowed behind the wheel.

MIKEY ROX: Let me say this right off the bat — you're a pretty cute dude. I mean, I would never guess that you were once female. But, as the person who lives in that body, what do you see when you look in the mirror?

IAN HARVIE: When I was growing up, I definitely struggled with how I wanted to display my masculinity and how I felt about my female body. I didn't hate myself or hate how I looked, it was just hard to look at my body and be happy. My hard feelings about my given body definitely led to my drinking at an early age and later becoming an alcoholic; I'm in recovery now. After I began to physically transform my body with testosterone I began to see a bit of what I always had known was inside waiting to come out. Shortly after going on hormones, I had chest surgery to flatten and masculinize my top half.

Post chest surgery, my feelings of relief were near instant. I had an immediate opening of headspace, previously occupied with the constant planning of my outward appearance and gender expression. My heart was lighter and I began to love myself in a way I had not before. I had loved my personality and who I was as a human being, but I could not love the body I had at the time. Those feelings interfered with my intimate relationships, too. I would talk myself out of sex with my partner, thinking, "why would she ever want to fuck me" and "who would ever want this?" A month after my top surgery, I really felt the results of my decisions and began to love what I saw in the mirror. And finally, for the first time in 40 years, I, without the empty compliments of others, began to feel beautiful for the first time in my life. When I look in the mirror today, I see a beautiful man or as you say "a pretty cute dude." I see beautiful.

MR: As a gay person myself, I can understand the pain and confusion that's associated with sexual identity, but how much more difficult is it to come to terms with gender identity on top of that? It seems that people are far less accepting of those issues, so it must be tough.

IH: I think coming out is coming out, no matter where you land in the queer alphabet. What language you use to identify yourself may be different, but the process is the same and equally as difficult, glorious and rewarding. Twenty years ago people were shocked and scared at gays and lesbians; now it's not so shocking. Being gay or lesbian today in

modern culture seems kind of matter of fact to me. In another 20 years, people who identify as other gendered, it will be the same way. It just takes a while for people to not be scared, to shut up, and listen and learn that we're all really the same. It seems like that cycle takes about 20 years. It will get easier. I already see it happening, but yes, it is still tough for many



PHOTO: KEVIN NEALES

Comedian Ian Harvie

trans folks. Safety for trans people is my biggest concern in and outside the queer community — that includes safety from people who want to hurt them and safety from themselves. It always kills me when I hear of a trans person taking their own life. I am really lucky to not have had any horrible experiences. Part of that is that I don't see my being trans as an "issue," so when someone has an "issue" I don't give

"...I don't feel like I was robbed of the correct biological sex. I believe I was born in the right body, I just may want to change it a little bit. Really, who hasn't felt this way about some part of their body?"

it life or room to exist. Plus, what people think of me is none of my business, so I rarely give a shit what people are thinking of me.

MR: Do you wish there was more education on transgender issues? Is that what we need, or do we need something else?

IH: There's always room for more education, in all the usual places — schools, work and family. I love that my girlfriend's mother is an elementary school principal and that the school is writing new guidelines on how to address trans issues in schools — and that's in rural Maine. I love that that is happening. But I don't know if educators will ever be heard by others and have it really sink in, if the attempts to educate folks is done by wagging a finger at someone and telling them what to think. I think the best way to learn is people sharing their lives, their stories, who they are, coming out when it's safe to do so, and sharing their own very personal experience. No one can argue or disagree with your experience. Charts and figures don't change people; people change people, and it takes human beings reaching out and connecting to do that. I think learning from your peers from their personal experiences is the most subversive way to learn — not a book,

not on television, not on your computer, but trans people sharing how they came to learn who they are and how they feel.

MR: Let's talk about this quote: "I was born female, there is no question that I understand this. I believe that 'female' is a biological and legal term; while my gender is something that I get to create and modify myself. I do not consider myself 'male,' however, I do identify as a man; the two are not necessarily connected for me. These are words I like to use when describing my gender: Butch, Trans, Trans Man, Tranny Boi, and Masculine. I don't feel like I was robbed of the correct biological sex. I believe I was born in the right body, I just may want to change it a little bit. Really, who hasn't felt this way about some part of their body?" I guess this is where I get confused — you don't consider yourself a male, but you do consider yourself a man. What's the difference for you?

IH: I don't speak for anyone else but myself of this. Many trans men identify as male and I completely respect that. I would never dream of telling anyone else out there that they cannot ID themselves with certain language. Trans people have been told that enough, that we are not aloud to claim certain language, and I disagree strongly with that. I only am talking about how I identify and how I came to only make sense of my sex and gender. For me, I think biological sex and gender are two different things. Biological sex is a scientific/genetic fact, while gender is something that I get to create — every day — if I'm feeling ambitious. "Male" is a science term used to describe what was between your legs at time of birth. "Man" is an identity that anyone can claim if they want to.

MR: Is it safe to say that you used comedy as a defense mechanism growing up?

IH: I don't think I used it as a defense mechanism for the outside world, per se. I was an odd kid. Who wasn't? I used comedy to get people to like me. I wasn't the odd kid who used humor and a tap dance to prevent

a beatdown from a bully peer, if that's what you mean. It really was to get positive attention back then. It's not that I wasn't getting that; I just wanted more. Humor has always been a creative outlet for me. The reason why I do it today has shifted a little bit from attention seeking to making people laugh while subversively teaching them

something about trans people.

MR: At what point in your life would you say that you became comfortable in your own skin?

IH: I can tell you when I started on the journey, but I can't tell you when I'll arrive. I'm not quite there yet. I'm stopping to see the sights along the way, taking my time, enjoying the process. But isn't everyone always working on feeling comfortable in their own skin? Do you feel 100 percent OK about your body? Does anyone really feel 100 percent OK about their body? No, they don't. And if they do, then they're the freak — not me, not you. People often put the palm of their hand on their chest, nod their heads up and down, thinking they're being compassionate when they say, "I just can't imagine how you must feel and what you've been through."

To read the conclusion of this interview, visit: www.therainbowtimesmass.com/ian

*Mikey Rox is an award-winning journalist and the founder of Paper Rox Scissors, a copywriting and creative consulting company in New York City. He can be reached at mikey@paperroxcissors.com.

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DEEP INSIDE HOLLYWOOD: Cho, Grey, Latifah...all with new juicy projects

ENTERTAINMENT

By: Romeo San Vicente*/TRT Special Queen Latifah's latest Dilemma

No, the dilemma is not the recent "I'm not gay" interview that her personal trainer and frequent companion Jeanette Jenkins just gave to AfterEllen.com. Queen Latifah's new movie is simply called *The Dilemma*. It's the story of two best friends (Kevin James and Vince Vaughn), one of whom comes to believe that his buddy's wife is cheating on him. But to tell or not to tell? That is the question. The comedy is from veteran director Ron Howard and, unlike a lot of his recent fare, it's not going to be aimed at holiday/awards season audiences. It opens next January, usually the month where misfit films go to die or find themselves poorly marketed. But who knows, this might be calculated counter-programming. In any case, Latifah, James and Vaughn are of part an all-star ensemble that includes Channing Tatum, Winona Ryder, Jennifer Connelly and more. Call it this year's *Valentine's Day*, but with more infidelity.

Margaret Cho and Jennifer Grey go Dancing

Dancing With the Stars is such a weird phenomenon. It gives audiences the thrill of seeing celebrities they like (or loathe) in a new light, for better or worse, as ballroom dancers. And yet, it's also hands-down the dorkiest show on television *because* it features ballroom dancing. A new cast of celebs has been announced and it's that loveable mix of old favorites, wannabes, jokes and cult heroes. For gay au-



PHOTO: DAVID C. LEE FOR ASIANCE
Margaret Cho

diences, the two biggest draws will surely be bisexual comedian Margaret Cho and *Dirty Dancing* sweetheart Jennifer Grey. But wait, there's more: Bristol Palin, Audrina Patridge, basketball star Rick Fox, Michael Bolton, The Situation, Brandy, David Hassel-

Stalking Simon Le Bon takes a fall

To be a "Durannie" in the 1980s was more than a hobby for some young girls (and boys). It was an all-consuming lifestyle. Duran Duran did, after all, make the most exotic videos MTV had to offer, and it didn't hurt that the hit-making band appeared to consist solely of male models. So now that that generation of superfans has grown up, it was only a matter of time before their collective coming-of-age crush found its way into a script. Enter the upcoming feature *Stalking Simon Le Bon*, the story of teenagers doing anything it takes to get to a Duran Duran show in the mid 1980s. The band has already given their blessing to the project and it looks as though cool, under-

appreciated gay filmmaker Jim Fall (*Trick, The Lizzie McGuire Movie*) will be taking on directing duties. Now all they need is Robert Pattinson to play one of the bandmates – he won't need to fake an American accent either – and they'll get a whole new generation of fans on board.

Yank! yanked until 2011

Yank!, the off-Broadway musical that was due to move to Broadway soon, has had its premiere delayed a year to give the creative team time to revise the script. Now the show is due to open during the fall 2011 season with current lead Bobby Steggert still committed to star. The story is one that will be familiar to anyone who's seen the documentary *Coming Out Under Fire*, about gay men and lesbians serving in the armed forces during World War II and how the end of the war marked the beginning steps toward modern urban gay com-



Romeo San Vicente

still probably beat the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" to the punch.

**Romeo San Vicente has felt like punching quite a few people over "Don't Ask Don't Tell." He can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.*

All Over Adam Levine: Maroon 5 frontman's new album, bedroom behavior and being so cool with the queers

By: Chris Azzopardi/Special for TRT

Adam Levine knows a little teasing goes a long way. That's why the Maroon 5 superstud – who's fronted the funky pop-rock band since its Grammy-winning debut, *Songs About Jane*, dropped eight years ago – is up for talking gay porn and solving problems in bed. Sex, though, is customary for the group – after all, they named their third album *Hands All Over*. And put a bare-naked babe on the cover.

That's just the line Levine, 31, likes to cross, as he tells us. The gay-friendly guy also discussed his hotness eclipsing the band's music, being domineering, his new fashion venture and freaking out uptight Americans.

Chris Azzopardi: A: Your first gay interview was with The Advocate, right?

Adam Levine: **Yes. Was that a gay interview?** It's so funny – a "gay interview."

CA: Before that, did you know you had a big gay following?

AL: If you have a big following, a certain percentage of your big following must be gay

– which, of course, I embrace with open arms. **CA:** What's the significance of the title, *Hands All Over*?

AL: An album title is almost meaningless – the ring of what you're saying and the combination of words is what really matters. Naming an album is a very weird process; it doesn't exactly have to mean anything. It just has to feel good.

CA: In the "Misery" video, you seem to be enjoying those beatings a little too much. Is aggression a turn-on for you?

AL: Not really, actually. I mean, aggressive, yes. I like to be in control. I don't want to be dominated

or anything like that – definitely not to the extent in the video. Getting the shit beaten out of me is not my thing.

CA: Why are you more comfortable around gay men than most straight guys seem to be?

AL: Because there's a lot of homophobic straight guys. Listen, I think the more secure you are with your sexuality, the more it doesn't matter. I have straight friends and gay friends. I was raised in a place where we were a little

See Levine on page 19



PHOTO: AUTUMN DEWILD

Maroon 5, with frontman Adam Levine

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Amherst, MA

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"LGBT Literature over the Past 25 Years"
In Celebration of the UMass Stonewall Center's 25th Anniversary

Eileen Myles
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Wednesday, October 6, 8 p.m.
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Levine from page 18

ahead of our time with being accepting and tolerant of everybody. L.A.'s a different place to grow up; there's obviously a huge gay community there. It was never weird or taboo. It's actually really astonishing that homosexuality is one of the last remaining acceptable prejudices. Like, it's still acceptable to a certain extent for people to be homophobic. And it's really disgusting, because being homophobic is no different than being racist or sexist. For some reason, people still think it's OK to call people a faggot, and it really pisses me off. I do press with gay and straight magazines; it doesn't make a difference. People need to get real and realize that this needs to stop. But I'm happy about Prop. 8. That's amazing. I hope it sticks.

CA: How will your fashion line, 222, be different from other celebrity lines?

AL: The difference is that I'm designing a lot of the stuff, and it's going to be good. I'm really passionate about this. This is going to be really special. We have the best cuts, best fabrics, best everything. And it's really simple. We're trying to make this as clean and flawless as possible.

CA: On the MTV show *When I Was 17* you said you were gross when you were that age. What would you tell your 17-year-old self now?

AL: I wouldn't change a thing. Part of being a kid is not knowing what the hell you're doing, and the journey of figuring it all out is part of life. And I wouldn't tell myself anything, because I wouldn't want to wind up in any other place.

The band's new album, "Hands All Over," drops on Sept. 21.

GMDVP's 11th Annual Halloween Faces of Hope Masquerade Gala at HOB

EASTERN MA BOSTON, MA—The *Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project*, GMDVP, presents its 11th Annual Halloween Faces of Hope Masquerade Gala, on Oct. 30 in the Foundation Room at the House of Blues.

As a thank you for your continued generosity, we are pre-selling tickets for \$55. This is a limited time offer and tickets will go up to \$75 after Sept. 16.

With more than 250 people expected to attend, this event is GMDVP's largest annual fundraiser, raising approximately one-fifth of the organization's private funds.

Learn more about GMDVP, enjoy great music, delectable treats, and an incredible silent auction.

This event promises to be a night of education, awareness and fun.

For more information, contact the Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project contact: Adrian Budhu, abudhu@gmdvp.org, or call (617) 354-6056.

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Tectonic Theater Project launches "Laramie Project Residency" at universities across the country this fall

NEW YORK, NY—The *Tectonic Theater Project*, the highly successful New York City-based organization that has produced numerous award-winning and innovative plays, will launch an ambitious multi-city tour of the *Laramie Project* and the *Laramie Project Epilogue: 10 Years Later* this Fall as part of a Laramie Project Residency. Performances locations include Boston, MA; Philadelphia, PA; University Park, PA; Cedar Falls, IA; San Francisco, CA; and Whitewater, WI.

"The Laramie Project Residency is an ambitious undertaking," said Greg Reiner, Tectonic Theater Project executive director. "Our goals are to produce the play in partnership with numerous universities, reach a broad audience through touring and educational opportunities and connect the artistic work of Tectonic with people nationwide via our online community, www.laramieproject.org," said Reiner.

"For me, this residency project represents the very essence of Tectonic's spirit and vision," said founder and Artistic Director Moisés Kaufman. "Together with partnering universities, we will explore the ways in which theater can continue to relate to or depict history and map out the process by which change occurs. The horrific murder of Matthew Shepard forever changed the psyche of our nation and these two plays have explored – and will continue to explore through undertakings like this residency – how that change happened and how it relates to all of our lives," said Kaufman.

"After last October's historic simultaneous premiere of *The Laramie Project - 10 Years Later* in New York City and 150 other theaters, we knew we needed to pair these plays and bring them to audience in a unique and excit-

ing manner," Reiner said. "Performed together and as part of the residency project, these two plays will make history and continue the proud legacy created by these groundbreaking works," concluded Reiner.

Working with artist representative David Lieberman, venues will include University-based presenters around the nation. Performances will include an educational component with artists leading workshops in "Moment Work", the company's style of creating plays and post-performance discussions with audiences.

To attend a rehearsal, please contact Greg Reiner at 212-579-6111, or at greg@tectonic-theaterproject.org.

For more information about the *Tectonic Theater Project* go to www.tectonictheaterproject.org.

Tectonic Theater Project Tour Schedule - Boston, MA: Cutler Majestic Theater at Emerson College

September 24: 8pm - The Laramie Project

September 25:

2pm - The Laramie Project

8pm - The Laramie Project, 10 Years Later

September 26:

2pm - The Laramie Project

8pm - The Laramie Project, 10 Years Later

October 1:

Matinee - The Laramie Project

Eve. - The Laramie Project, 10 Years Later

October 2:

Matinee - The Laramie Project

Eve. - The Laramie Project, 10 Years Later

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Local LGBT Activist Amit Dixit Joins GLAD's Board of Directors

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD) is pleased to announce their newest board member, LGBT and South Asian community activist, Amit Dixit.

Amit served on the board of Massachusetts Asian & Pacific Islanders for Health (MAP for Health) from 2000 to 2006 and has served on the steering committee of Massachusetts Area South Asian Lambda Association (MASALA) off and on since 1998.

In 2005, Amit joined the board of The History Project, and in 2009 took over as Chief of Operations for the Boston LGBT Film Festival. A longtime project manager at Microsearch Information Technology and Services, Amit is now pursuing opportunities in

marketing and communications.

"Amit has been involved in local, national, and international campaigns for over 15 years,"

Rick McCarthy, GLAD's board president says. "He will bring disparate groups together under one cause-equal justice for LGBT and HIV communities."

Since 1994, Amit has been fighting the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS in the community at large and in the South Asian community in particular. "The impulse to cover up, to treat the fact that someone has HIV/AIDS as a sin

to be concealed," he says, "can result in a person's avoiding medical treatment and ultimately may put their life in jeopardy."

Amit attributes his diagnosis in 1994 with the beginning of his activist career. "When you're told you only have 12-18 months to live you tend to look at life differently," he says. "You learn that it's not about superficial fears and desires, but about what you leave behind. It's about giving."

Beginning with his own family and friends, and culminating in his 2004 keynote address at the United States Conference on AIDS in Philadelphia, Amit has spoken openly, fearlessly about his own HIV positive status and encouraged others to do the same.

In 2009, GLAD represented Amit in a case against Harvard Pilgrim Health Care (HPHC). The insurance provider refused to cover Amit's treatment for lipodystrophy, a side-effect of AIDS medication resulting in uneven fat distribution of the head, neck, and shoulders, saying that such treatment was purely cosmetic. GLAD's AIDS Law Project Director, Bennett Klein, represented Amit, and in January of 2010, HPHC reversed its decision. Amit's surgery was successfully performed in March 2010.

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders is New England's leading legal organization dedicated to ending discrimination based on sexual orientation, HIV status, and gender identity and expression.



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3. We Have to Stop Now - Season 1
4. Loving Annabelle
5. Mädchen in Uniform
6. Hannah Free
7. The L Word Final Season
8. And Then Came Lola
9. The Cinema Pride Collection
10. 8: The Mormon Proposition

GAY TOP 10

1. 8: The Mormon Proposition
2. Boy
3. David's Birthday
4. Pornography: A Thriller
5. Plan B
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Out at work when you are Trans raises issues and questions

TRANS OPINION

By: Deja Nicole Greenlaw*/TRT Columnist

One of the biggest questions that confront you when you are deciding whether to transition to your real gender or not is the question of coming out at work. This may affect your source of income, your livelihood, your way of life. You hear of so many transpeople who lost their jobs and so many more that are out of work that it makes you stop and think. "Am I ready to possibly risk my source of income? If I lose my job what should I do? Who will hire me then?"

It's true that most transpeople are out of work or have lost their better paying jobs and now work in much lesser paying ones. There are also a number of transpeople who are still working at their jobs and maintaining their income. It depends on a number of things: Is your company trans friendly? Has someone in your company transitioned before? Has a precedent been set? Are there rules that have to be followed? Is your company not transfriendly? Do most people at work like you now before you transition? Will they like you after you transition? Will you be accepted? Or will you be tolerated? Maybe even blackballed? Lots of questions need to be addressed. I have transitioned at work and I know of others that did too. I'll share with you what I have seen.

First of all, you need to be prepared just in case your employer does not accept your transition. Yes, you can contact GLAD and set up legal action but that usually means the end of your job and perhaps a settlement at best. You must be aware that this could happen and you



Deja Nicole Greenlaw

must develop a backup plan, save money, drastically cut your expenses, possibly sell off your assets, etc. You just might go down the road to joblessness. Fortunately, I didn't experience this but I was ready just in case.

Now, say that your company is OK with your transition on the job. Many companies today will accept your transition but let's see what happens when you start your job "anew." I was lucky. There were people in my company (though not at my plant) who had transitioned so a precedent was set. My human resources director did a great job on informing every one of my transition. She did it by holding meetings with all the departments on all the shifts (about half-dozen meetings) and they were told of my "change" and she informed my coworkers to treat me with respect and dignity.

After I transitioned on the job I did get a few stares and people would "happen" to come by my office to check me out. Most people were OK with my change but a few weren't.

It took some of them a while to get used to me but now it's been 3 years and although they may not agree with my transition they do accept me. This is good news, as I want people to see me as a transwoman and see me perform in my job successfully and see me adding value and worth to my company. Then, if they hear someone outside of work talk of a trans person they can say, "Yes, I work with a transperson

and there is no problem. They are just like anybody else." This is very important since some people have this incorrect perception of us. Many times they see and hear of a transperson screaming and acting like a crazy person like

you may find on shows like *Jerry Springer*. This PR is not good for us who want to coexist with the world, not set it afire. That brings to mind another thing. Please be respectful and pleasant to others while on the job. That helps you tremendously.

Fortunately, my job requires me to work with many people every day and this reinforces the fact that a transperson is just like anyone else and can be accepted in the workforce. I've known of other transpeople who have transitioned on the job and because they are not required to deal with others as much they are often shunned socially. If people don't have to deal with you they won't. Yes, a trans can be tolerated in their workplace but they eat lunch alone, do not talk to others about current events or weekend plans, etc. They kept their jobs but lost the camaraderie of the workplace. Yes, this is a win for trans rights to keep your job but as you can see we still have a ways to go for social acceptance.

Still, just being on the job and being visible is a good thing to help our cause. Yes, it may be a lot to ask others for acceptance because we do break gender rules but we need to persevere so that there will be a place for us in

... just being on the job and being visible is a good thing to help our cause. Yes, it may be a lot to ask others for acceptance because we do break gender rules but we need to persevere so that there will be a place for us in the workplace. We can add value to a company and by being visible and performing tasks well is a huge asset in people getting used to us and seeing that we are just like them.

the workplace. We can add value to a company and by being visible and performing tasks well is a huge asset in people getting used to us and seeing that we are just like them. I realize that many "transpeeps" opt to go stealth but in going stealth they don't really help the cause. It's a personal choice whether to go stealth or not. We all have reasons pro and con but if we want to change the attitudes of the workplace we must be out at work. Going stealth does nothing but satisfy your own agenda. To really help we must be out. Believe me, it's not easy but in the long run it will be a tremendous step forward in trans acceptance in the workplace and ultimately, everywhere.

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

Former Miss Trans New England bids adieu: "Thank you for the love"

By: Lorelei Erisis*/TRT Columnist

So, I'm going to do something this week that breaks from my usual format. I know change is scary and I promise not to do this sort of thing often. I absolutely promise that next issue I will dutifully return to the tried and true format of reader questions and snarky-but-hopefully-informative answers.

By the time you read this, I will no longer be your reigning "Miss Trans New England." One of 10 amazing and proud transwomen will be representing our community in an entirely new and hopefully glorious reign.

But as I write this, the 2010 *Miss Trans New England Pageant* is still a week away and I've been reviewing the past year to try and figure out how to say goodbye. So if you will forgive me this indulgence, my friends and dear readers, I wanted to take a few words to simply say thank you.

I honestly never saw "Pageant Queen" in my future even right up until the moment when I heard the words "And the winner is..." I've always loved performing and making people laugh (or cry, or think), but I always thought of myself as more of a "fall down and make 'em laugh" kind of gal.

A little over a year ago though, some folks I had recently met doing trans activism announced that they were going to put on a pageant specifically for transgender women. It was a way for transwomen to stand up and be proud of whom we were. To celebrate ourselves as transgender women!

It seemed like a worthy idea and I also thought it might be fun!! So I signed up to be one of eight beautiful and talented contestants. My excited Mom even helped me pick out a gorgeous gown that my sweet Nana paid for. At a second-hand Store, as befits an old Punk

like myself.

When the night finally came, I gave it my all. I tried to remember to carry myself with grace and respect. For my "Talent" I put my whole heart into an original monologue entitled "My Entire Life And Transition In Under Five Minutes (Hopefully)."

I was awed and humbled by the talent and dignity of my fellow contestants/sisters. Of course, I hoped I might win and I have high enough self-esteem that I thought I could. But, it could have been any of us. I was humbled and happy to have the opportunity to share a stage with such a diverse assortment of courageous transgender women.

Then the most amazing thing happened. I was announced as "Miss Trans Northampton!!" A crown was placed, crookedly, upon my head and a sash slung over my shoulder. At that point, my brain melted.

My Mom, My Nana, My Father and My Stepmother were all there. It was the first time my Dad had seen me perform in over a decade and he even cried.

When I first announced my transition, even some of my biggest supporters had told me, "Well, you have to be who you are. But you know you're going to make an ugly woman right?" Yet, here I was, an actual Pageant Queen!

Shortly after I won, it was decided by the owner of the Pageant and in all fairness to the other contestants, and potential contestants, many of whom were not local to Northampton, to change it to "Miss Trans New England." I was actually born right here at Cooley Dickinson Hospital, a native daughter of Noho, but I was happy to be "upgraded" on the Bill Dwight Show early one morning. Although I felt I was collecting titles like a South American Dicta-



Lorelei Erisis

tor, I decided that I would do everything in my power to be deserving of the title of "Miss Trans New England" and be the best representative of our community that I could.

Every chance to use my crown and sash to promote transgender rights and visibility, I took. I hosted benefits, gave interviews to local and national press, spoke for Transgender Rights at the *Massachusetts Statehouse*, taught workshops, and attended conventions like *Transcending Boundaries* and *TransForm NH*. And over the course of a very busy month and a half, I even managed to attend almost every Pride celebration in the region.

I Co-Emceed *NoHo Pride* and represented *The Rainbow Times* at Hartford and Providence Prides. I got to ride in a beautiful, 1929 Mercedes Benz convertible driven by a fabulous lesbian in Providence's super-fun nighttime parade!

In Boston, I proudly marched with the *Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition* as their ambassador. The skies opened with rain as we marched past the statehouse on Beacon Hill, but we held our heads high and chanted for trans rights.

To top it all off I went down to NYC and carried the rainbow flag for, a group called "Take Back Pride," who simply want-

ed to remind people what this whole "Pride" thing was all about to begin with. Fighting for the rights of LGBTQ people everywhere and holding our heads high.

And that, finally, is what I have been trying to make this title that I have been honored to hold for the past year all about—holding my head high as a proud transgender woman using every tool at my disposal to further our struggle for acceptance and basic human rights for all those who are denied them.

Thank you all for your support, your friendship and most importantly your love. It is my fondest hope that my successor will continue this work and make us all proud in her own unique way.

Slainte!

Post Script: I'd like to offer my congratulations and best wishes to the wonderfully talented Toni Olin-Mignosa, the new "Miss Trans New England 2010"!!!

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

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Frank Caprio runs for Governor of Rhode Island

RHODE ISLAND NEWS

By: Joe Siegel/TRT Reporter

Gubernatorial candidate Frank Caprio is a Rhode Island political veteran, having served as State Treasurer for the past 4 years. The 44 year-old Democrat has also served two terms as a State Representative and 13 years as a State Senator. Caprio chaired the Senate Finance Committee in 2001-2002. In this position, Caprio saved an annual \$5 million affordable housing program from being cut by the governor in 2001.

Caprio earned a degree in Economics from Harvard University and later obtained a law degree at Boston's Suffolk University. As a lawyer, Caprio focused on corporate, tax and finance issues.

Rhode Island currently has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country and a massive budget deficit. Caprio feels he is the right man to turn the state around.

"I want Rhode Island small businesses to grow and succeed," Caprio said, noting the majority of the state's residents work for small businesses.

Caprio is in favor of providing companies with tax incentives to add jobs. He also wants to make it easier for small businesses to access capital. If elected, Caprio vows to reorganize the state's existing Economic Development Corporation and Department of Business Regulation to create the Office of the Small Business Advocate reporting directly to the

Governor.

The state does not have a sales tax on clothing, which Caprio explained has been a well-kept secret.

"We don't publicize it," Caprio said, adding he hopes to "brand" the state as a favorable place to do business.

Voters seem to be responding to Caprio's message: a recent Rasmussen poll had Caprio running six points ahead of his main rival, Independent Lincoln Chafee.

Caprio is proud of the work he has done as Treasurer. He created an online real-time checkbook so residents could see how much his office was spending.

Caprio also divested the pension fund from \$1 billion in subprime investments, which helped the fund outperform during the financial crisis in which many states were losing millions in assets. He has also advocated for a number of progressive social policies, such as divestment of the pension fund from a regime conducting a genocide in Sudan, and signed on to a national effort petitioning the SEC to require publicly traded companies to disclose the risks they face from climate change.

Earlier this year he signed a pledge, along

with Gubernatorial rivals Chafee and Ken Block, to sign a same-sex marriage bill into law if elected Governor.

"It's always been my position," Caprio said.

Caprio has lived in Rhode Island his entire life, and has affection for the people who live here.

"People are family-oriented," Caprio said, noting the close bond he had with his grandfather, who came to America from Italy in hope of a better life. Caprio learned about the value of hard work from his grandfather, who sold fruit from a cart on Federal Hill and later became a milkman.

Caprio recently won the endorsement of former President Bill Clinton, who visited Providence in July to help his campaign. Clinton addressed a crowd of 1000 Caprio supporters at the Rhode Island Convention Center.

"You've got to have the right governor, and he's the man standing right there," Clinton said of Caprio. "He intuitively understands what needs to be done."

Caprio feels he has the necessary experience and knowledge to lead the state in tough times: "My strong suit is working with all kinds of people. I know how the place works."



PHOTO: JOE SEIGEL

Frank Caprio

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The OutField: Out tennis player...at a Catholic college?



Dan Woog

By: Dan Woog*

Troy Smith grew up gay and half-black in a small Pennsylvania town. A highly recruited tennis player, he attended a conservative Catholic college whose president was President George W. Bush's director of Faith-Based Initiatives.

A recipe for disaster, right?

Wrong. A feast of all the good things in life is more like it. After coming out in college, Troy blossomed. He had a successful tennis career. He was elected Homecoming King. And he forged a strong friendship with Saint Vincent College president James Towey.

Welcome to the face of young gay athletes, circa 2010.

Life was not always easy for Smith. As a youth, he could hide his sexuality but not his biracial identity. He heard more racial slurs from hateful classmates than he cares to remember. He heard anti-gay taunts too, but they were not directed at him. He did not come out until college.

Smith chose Saint Vincent not because of its religious background – he's not even Catholic – but because of its academic rigor and proximity to home. Even before enrolling, however, he realized there would be challenges on campus.

"I'm a risk-taker," Smith says. "I knew I'd come out at some point – and I knew it would be hard. I definitely chose a tough path."

At first he played life straight. He did not want to be known as gay before people got to know him as a person – particularly, the tennis players with whom he would share the next four years.

The first friends he told were those with whom he lived. They said they did not agree with the gay "lifestyle" – but that their friendship would not change.

After his first semester – when Smith made the dean's list, with a 3.85 GPA – he felt comfortable coming out to his tennis teammates. He told the captain, who said he already knew. His other teammates were equally blasé. They respected him as a tennis player and a human being; even on a conservative Catholic campus, that's all that mattered.

Coach Enrico Campi also knew Smith was gay. The two never discussed it – but that did not prevent them from having a close, trusting relationship. Campi named Smith a captain during his sophomore year, a rare honor. "He could see that I was a leader," Smith says. Leadership was far more important than sexuality.

Perhaps more intriguing was Smith's friendship with Towey. The college president welcomed the varsity athlete into his office – and the Towey family often played tennis with Smith.

As with his coach, Smith never had an explicit conversation about sexuality with the president. Then again, he never felt the need to. The ease of their relationship let him know that Towey felt being gay was OK.

Smith did discuss his sexuality with the vice president of student affairs. He developed a strong bond with Mary Collins. She reassured him there was nothing wrong with being gay. "Stay true to yourself," she counseled – and he did.

That ease with himself – and his willingness to talk to anyone, anywhere, without judgment or typecasting – no doubt contributed to his election as Homecoming King. Smith was crowned at halftime of the football game – before what he calls the largest crowd in Saint Vincent history.

The applause was thunderous. He received a hug from the president, high-fives from some football players. And the world continued to turn.

Two of Smith's best friends were football captains. He went out with them socially all the time. They tried to hook Smith up with their gay friends – and, when trying to make themselves attractive to women, asked Smith for advice.

Smith graduated with a degree in political science – and a priceless education in the importance of living life with integrity. When he received his diploma from Towey, the president

told him: "You really are a star, Troy." Smith is proud of his academic and athletic achievements, he told the gay sports website OutSports. But he is just as proud of what he calls "the message made by my career at Saint Vincent: No matter where you are, you can fit in no matter who you are."

He entered college – a conservative Catholic college – expecting to be an outcast. He left it filled with hope and courage (and a job as executive producer of the Pittsburgh Mr. Gay competition).

"I don't stereotype or live my life with negativity," Smith says. "I'll go up and talk to people who call me 'that fag.'"

"I don't think people who are racist or prejudiced or homophobic really know what life's about. They don't know we don't choose who we are. They don't understand that diversity is one of the joys of life. It's a key to our great nation – and our world."

*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.



Troy Smith

Eat Gay Love: Ryan Murphy talks about his new Julia Roberts film, pushing the gay on *Glee* and directing *Wicked* movie

By: Chris Azzopardi/Special for TRT

Glee is all Ryan Murphy must be feeling these days. Already on fire from his gay-worshipped TV megahit (including a recent Emmy win for Outstanding Directing for a Comedy Series), the 44-year-old director's second feature, *Eat Pray Love*, adapted from the wildly popular memoir and out Aug. 13, is soul-searching summer movie bait relishing in delicious dishes (not just James Franco), picturesque landscapes and Julia Roberts. The actress plays the book's author, Elizabeth Gilbert, as she leaves her frazzled life behind for a globetrotting jaunt, some solitude and a good plate of pasta.

Go figure, then, that Murphy – who made his film debut in 2006 with *Running with Scissors* while cutting through TV, before he created *Glee*, with *Nip/Tuck* – is nibbling on some strawberries from somewhere just as exotic: the Bardesono hotel tucked away in the quaint Napa Valley, Calif. There, during our one-on-one chat, he dishes on his connection to *Eat Pray Love*, how other queer people might relate to the movie and his plans for gaying up Season 2 of *Glee*, regardless of what the world thinks.



PHOTO: FOX ENTERTAINMENT

Ryan Murphy and *Glee* star Chris Colfer, who plays Kurt, at Comic-Con in July.

Chris Azzopardi: There's a running theme of self-discovery in all your projects, from *Running with Scissors* to *Glee* and now with *Eat Pray Love*. Why do you gravitate toward that subject?

Ryan Murphy: I always figure that out when I'm coming out with something. I don't know why. I think honestly because I'm from Indiana and I grew up with big dreams, and in my work I do reinvent myself all the time and I try to figure out my life with my work.

CA: With *Eat Pray Love*, the book covers a lot more history, spirituality and characters than the film. What did you feel was most important to take from the book and adapt for the movie?

RM: We did focus groups with women who loved the book – many, many women. In a book that's become a classic and a bible to so many women, you have an obligation to them, so I had a list of like 10 parts of the book that had to go in. And then Liz Gilbert (thought) the scene where Julia cries on the bathroom floor was the most important scene for her in the movie, because she felt that in her travels that's the scene that women came up to her the most to discuss.

CA: You've left your gay mark on this movie, too, by including references to Cher and Liza and a nice, gratuitous visual: a man's hot ass.

RM: Look, I love a good Liza joke. The Cher

thing is in the book. The ass shot: What can I say?

CA: Do you always have a personal connection to your projects?

RM: I have to or I can't do them. I really had a personal connection with *Running with Scissors* that I later found out was my mother – the wrong reason to do a movie, by the way. I had a really deep connection with *Nip/Tuck*; I just loved the themes of it – the themes of self-loathing and physicality. And I really have a deep connection to *Glee*. I've sung my whole

life, I acted, all that. That's the optimistic side of my personality. The best part of me is that show. And I really had a connection to this book. I loved it before I even got the job offer.

CA: Have you been offered the film adaptation of *Wicked*, as it's been said?

RM: No, no, no. They're in no rush to make that movie.

CA: You're in the prospective director's pool, though, right?

RM: So I'm told. I find it very flattering. I just read that, but I haven't been contacted yet. I love *Wicked* and I've done songs from the show on *Glee*. I love what it's about. It's about female empowerment, and my work is about empowerment. I'd be thrilled if I

was offered it. I would not expect it.

CA: Speaking of *Glee*, it's been said that Kurt's boyfriend has been pushed back. Is he still getting one in Season 2?

RM: He is – probably toward the end. I can only speak from experience, but he's in that mode of wanting a boyfriend and when people do that, it never happens. Only when you let go does it come. He's so desperate for it that the more he pushes for it the more the universe will deprive him of that – and that's what happens when you're 16 years old. I want him to struggle with it and finally give up. When he gives up is when it's going to happen. That's always been the way it is for me.

CA: And the Brittany/Santana kiss that's been all the talk – will it involve tongue?

RM: Oh yeah. Listen, I know on a show like *Modern Family* that seems to be a big debate, which I think is ridiculous. I don't even understand why that's even, in this day and age, a discussion. I remember we were writing about that 15 years ago when *Roseanne* was on the air. Have we not progressed? It's not a big deal anymore! Why do you need a Facebook campaign about two men kissing? That's hideous. I might just have them kiss in every episode just to show people that the earth didn't stop moving. Maybe because I'm gay it's my job to be the person who does that.

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