

TRIANGLE JOURNAL

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GLBT News for the Midsouth

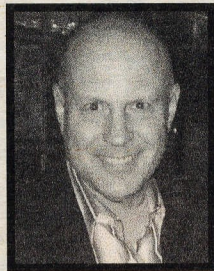


Our Seniors

Like a fine wine, they get better with time

Bursts of energy in our senior years

by Len Piechowski



As I write this, it's the Sunday afternoon before the twentieth anniversary of the founding of Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center. I just got home from the afternoon of storytelling at the center. I listened to how it was in the good, but really tough, old days and couldn't help but think about all the work done by our heroes and sheroes during the last few decades. I listened to stories about how doors were slammed in peoples' faces when they approached landlords in the 1980s about renting a space for the center. I couldn't help but think about how much has changed, and yet how much really hasn't. *The Commercial Appeal* ran a really nice article about the center's twenty years on February 21 and some really great posts by our supporters followed online. That was, of course, after one post had to be removed by the CA staff because it was so obnoxious. That obnoxious post got me to thinking about all the doors that are still being slammed in our faces. Marriage. Adoption. Equality. Constantly pushing against doors that are slamming shut requires amazing energy. It's exhausting!

I hear there is a charming movie out now, something about some guy who ages in reverse. I haven't seen it. I probably won't. I don't get to see too many movies anymore. But wouldn't it be cool if us oldsters could reverse our energy drain, recover some of the energy of our youth and keep pushing against those doors?

It would be really cool. And it is really needed, because there are people out there who never tire of slamming the same doors of yesteryear. Their religion, their ideologies, their misguided intuition supplies them with a seemingly inexhaustible supply of fervor to slam harder and harder.

But it's much harder for us to maintain the same fervor than it is for them. That's because oppression, and the barrage of obnoxious messages that assault our well being that accompanies it, takes a real toll. Over time, it can zap psychic energy needed to push on. Those on the other side of the door don't have that oppression to wear them down. But we do.

So, those of us who have been pushing for awhile might not be able to stay as energized as before. We can, however, keep our eye focused on the door. You remember, just as focused as we were in our youth. And every once in awhile, that focus might stimulate short bursts of adrenaline. In emergencies, people can sometimes do what they can't ordinarily do.

We can too. It's still an emergency.

Let's keep our eye on the door.

TRIANGLE JOURNAL

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EDITORIAL POLICY OF TRIANGLE JOURNAL

The editorial goal of *Triangle Journal*, the newsmagazine of Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center, is to display proudly the contributions of the rainbow community in Memphis and the Midsouth. We are committed to providing information on issues of interest to our community on both the local and national levels.

Triangle Journal is published 12 times a year by a volunteer staff. None of the editors, staff or consultants will profit by revenues from the ads you see in these pages. When our advertisers support us financially, they are supporting the programs of our community center, and playing a part in creating a better future for the rainbow community.

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Letters to the editor and commentaries are welcomed, but the editorial review committee reserves the right to edit or refuse any submitted materials.

Triangle Journal will correct erroneous information. Please email corrections to editors@tjmemphis.com.

MARCH 2009

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Correction:

In the February issue of *Triangle Journal*, we made a mistaken reference to United Way of Greater Memphis in the headline on page 9. The HIV support group for women described in that article is privately funded, as Ann clearly stated, and is not sponsored by the United Way. We sincerely apologize for our error.

LP

Getting older ... getting better

Local lesbian couple shares insights into the needs of older community members

by Ann E. Hackerman

Memphis' LGBT community includes all races, creeds, national origins, financial circumstances, educational levels, work/careers, ages, interests, hobbies and needs. Who better to discuss these issues, especially as they relate to older lesbians, than a couple who has played an active part in the community for a number of years, and who dedicated countless hours of their time, love, talents, and commitment to get us where we are today?

A lovely couple, Ms. Miki Zulewski and Ms. B.J. Massengale will celebrate their 27th anniversary on March 12. They warmly welcomed me into their home to discuss these issues and more. As we visited, their rescue dog Milleigh stayed nearby. Like many lesbians, Milleigh is their daughter, if you will, and their pride, love and joy.

Many issues face older lesbians. For example, the health care system has traditionally not recognized the needs of lesbians, placing many obstacles in the obtainment of adequate medical care. Lesbians' invalidation by the healthcare professionals lends toward a failure to acknowledge their existence and relationships.

Sexism, homophobia, heterosexism and poverty all play key roles. (Frequently, only one lesbian in an older relationship is consistently employed. If the relationship dissolves, one will be left with less financial security).

Growing old and moving into senior housing forces many of our women back into the closet. The U.S. has an estimated 3-4 million aging gay and lesbians while there are less than 30 retirement communities that are geared to LGBTs, and less than 10 that are specifically for lesbians.

We have no true representation of the hidden population of aging lesbians with limited access to support. Those that become medically-compromised, severely ill or frail tend to have only a select few friends (if any) that can assist them. Many frequently see no option but to seek skilled residential care. When this occurs, there may be dire consequences both physically and emotionally especially if it is accompanied by separation from a partner. Many do not get even basic needs met due to isolation.

Many older lesbians, due to their ages and the eras in which they grew up, have not defined themselves as non-heterosexual. Individual self-identification as lesbian has been inhibited by the social mores against homosexuality.

Zulewski and Massengale have lived and seen the LGBT community evolve over the years, both good and bad.

"The movement, if you will, brought us together before the pre-AIDS crisis," says Zulewski, as she clasps her hands together to show a melding of the community. "The old days were good days, everybody was together." She explains that people just "Were." Massengale nods in agreement. Of concern to them, however,

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Looking back over the years, senior gays offer insight into the future

by Len Piechowski

There just aren't too many of us left any more, are there? Ravaged by the gay men's health crisis of the last several decades, most of us older guys have long since gone on to what many hope is a better life, while the rest of us are left to scratch our heads and wonder why we were spared. We look in the mirror, hardly recognizing the faces we see there anymore, while struggling to remember some faces we long ago buried.

But if the good die young, and they certainly did, could it be that the best are still hanging around?

Many of us seniors are convinced we're still here for a reason. Perhaps we have something to say to our younger counterparts. So I spoke with three of our senior gays, Vincent Astor, Herb Zeman and Steve Solomon for a perspective that I hope our younger friends might find interesting.

Len: So guys, as you look over the evolution of the gay community in the recent decades, what is that excites and concerns you?

Herb: Obviously we've made great political strides. In 1992 the majority of Americans were for Don't Ask Don't Tell. Now the majority wants to remove these restrictions to full open participation of LGBT folks in the military. The country has also just elected an unabashedly pro-gay president. I guess I'm still concerned that so many gay people still support the Republican Party. When the Democratic Party so clearly supports our issues more, it's sad to see so many LGBT folks still supporting Republicans. Is this internalized homophobia? Who knows?

Steve: I guess what excites me is the fact that maybe there is less apathy among our gay population. There are more individuals willing to come forward, be out and make a difference in our community to make it a better place to live and enjoy life. What concerns me is the fact that many of our young people are taking more chances by using drugs and risky sex behavior.

Vincent: Though it is still difficult to come out to everyone one knows, it is less of a decision. For a person nowadays, coming out is sort of like going through puberty. It just happens as a part of life. It is also more the ideal to meet, date and find a spouse rather than spend a whole life in one-night stands or affairs. We have not changed in that we are much less organized than our foes. Many of us are too preoccupied with entertaining ourselves to be bothered with trying to alter our general situation for the better. And, after much reflection, I cannot conceive (even in my neeliest drag days) that I was ever as nellie as the average gay teenager is now!!!! I guess this is good and a part of being not only a teen but a gay one.

Len: Each of you has had an amazing impact on the Memphis GLBT community. What impact has your activism over the decades had on you?

Steve: My involvement, especially with the MGLCC and its programs, has made me very proud of my history in the community over the many years. I feel like I can leave a legacy to our community

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February 17 was Advancing Equality Day at the Tennessee state capitol. Members of the Shelby County Committee of the Tennessee Equality Project prepare for lobbying at the Rymer Gallery near Legislative Plaza in Nashville. From left to right they are Stacey Dixon, James Chang, Olivia Blow, Jonathan Cole, Will Batts, Curtis Petty, Felipe Zuvichaux, Herb Zeman, Tommy Simmons, Andrew Dixon and Harper Dixon. The photo is courtesy of Paul Linxwiler.

Injured on the job?

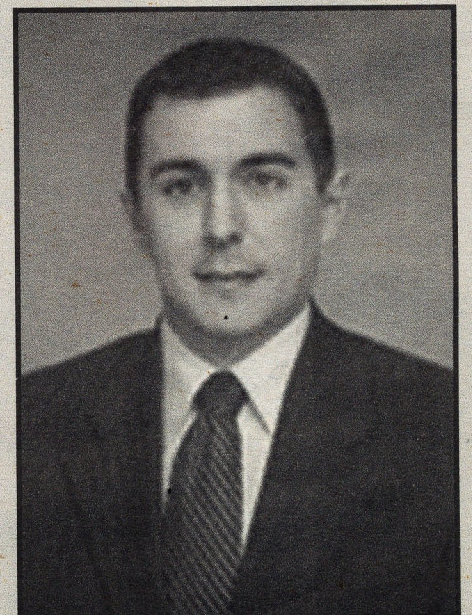
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Equality advanced on the hill by GLBT advocates from Shelby County

by Jonathan Cole

Citizen lobbyists from nearly every corner, hill and valley of Tennessee converged on Legislative Plaza in Nashville on Feb. 17 for the Tennessee Equality Project's fifth annual Advancing Equality Day on the Hill. Twenty advocates from Shelby County ensured that the interests of the GLBT community of Memphis and Shelby County and their friends were well represented. These advocates visited the offices of 5 Senators and 12 House Representatives to discuss at least six bills.

Legislation benefiting the GLBT community includes:

1. Birth Certificate Bill (HB 0334/SB 0252) - Requires amendment of birth certificates upon receipt of a sworn statement from a licensed medical professional that the person's gender has changed. Currently, Tennessee is the only state with a law prohibiting amendment of gender on birth certificates. This legislation would allow transgender citizens born in Tennessee to amend their gender on their birth certificates. Amending birth certificates would help ensure that birth certificates, photo identification and gender presentation match for affected individuals.

2. Gender Identity or Expression Hate Crimes Bill (HB 0335/SB 0253) - Adds as an advisory enhancement factor to sentencing that defendant intentionally chose victim of crime based on gender identity or expression. Currently, there are no enhancement factors for sentencing for hate crimes committed based on gender identity or expression. The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation collects statistics on hate crimes based on race, religion and sexual orientation, but not gender identity or expression. At least three transgender women of color were attacked in Memphis in 2008; two of these victims did not

survive these attacks.

Legislation that adversely affects the GLBT community includes:

1. Adoption Ban Bill (HB 0605/SB 0078) - Prohibits any individual who is cohabitating in a sexual relationship outside of a marriage that is valid under the constitution and laws of this state from adopting a minor. This bill would significantly limit the number of adults - gay or straight - who can adopt children in Tennessee. Hundreds of children will remain in costly state-funded foster care during an economic recession if this bill becomes law. This bill has been introduced several times over the last few years without advancing from a committee for a vote.

2. "Don't Say Gay" Bill (HB 0821 /SB 1250) - Prohibits the teaching of or furnishing of materials on human sexuality other than heterosexuality in public school grades K-8. This bill would disallow any discussion of homosexuality or bisexuality in the above grades. Gay, lesbian, bisexual students or students with GLB parents would be prohibited from discussing their personal lives or families. One year ago, an 8th grade boy shot and killed a fellow student who admitted he was gay to classmates inside a junior high school computer lab in Oxnard, CA. Clearly, local school boards and administrators need the option of addressing the broad spectrum of human sexuality in the classroom to foster harmonious relationships among all students regardless of sexual orientation.

3. Photo Identification before Voting Bill (HB 0639, HB 0641/SB 0150, SB 1681) - These bills require a voter to present qualified photographic identification before voting; voters without proper identification shall be allowed to cast provisional ballots. A number of voting rights organizations will object to this bill in that it will disenfranchise the poor and elderly. Requiring voters to pay for state issued photo identification so that they can vote can be interpreted as a poll tax. Photo identification (e.g., a driver's license) is based on information from birth certificates. Because current Tennessee law does not allow changing of gender on birth certificates, the gender information on photo identification may not match a person's gender identification or expression. This bill could cause transgender voters to be refused a ballot at the

polls.

The Tennessee Equality Project will continue to track the above bills as they advance in the state legislature. If these bills appear on the agenda of assigned committees, it will be critical for all citizens to take action by contacting their legislators. TEP is committed to keeping you informed of these developments to defeat bad bills and advance good legislation. To support the work of TEP, consider making a donation and/or signing up for legislative alerts from TEP at tnep.org. All are invited to participate in TEP's Shelby County Committee meeting on Wednesday, March 11 at Quetzal at 664 Union Avenue from 6:30 - 8:30 PM.

Where is Representative G.A. Hardaway?

by Jonathan Cole

When GLBT constituents and their friends from all corners of Tennessee arrived for Advancing Equality on the Hill last Tuesday, a few had difficulty meeting with their Senators or House Representatives. Political blogs Liberadio and Pith in the Wind documented that Senator Diane Black (R-18-Gallatin) canceled her appointment with her constituents claiming there was really no reason to meet since there was nothing new to hear and there were no common stances with anything her GLBT constituents had to discuss. Despite the cancellation, her constituents did report to Black's office at the appointed time and were able to talk with her for a few minutes.

Rep. Stacey Campfield (R-18-Knoxville) "stood up" his constituents twice after missing scheduled and rescheduled appointments on Tuesday. Campfield is notorious for filing bills that border on the absurd that have never made it to the floor for a vote. His proposed legislation includes bills that would prohibit discussion of homosexuality or bisexuality in public schools, call for issuing death certificates for aborted fetuses, and deny birth certificates to immigrant children.

Shelby County constituents also had difficulty meeting with a few of their lawmakers. I phoned several times to schedule an appointment with Rep. G.A. Hardaway (D-92-Memphis) during the weeks before Advancing Equality Day. I finally reached him last Friday. He apologized that his office had not responded with an appointment for Tuesday and apologized for not calling to cancel a scheduled appearance at TEP's Lobbying

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Hardaway *continued from previous page*

101 training in Memphis on Jan. 24. Hardaway asked that I call his office early Tuesday morning. He was certain he would have time to meet.

I called Rep. Hardaway's office at 8:15 a.m. last Tuesday and was offered a meeting with Hardaway at 12 Noon. When my fellow constituents and I arrived at Hardaway's office at Noon, we were told that he would not be available for the rest of the day. I found this curious since many in our Shelby County group had seen Rep. Hardaway several times in the halls of Legislative Plaza earlier in the day.

Most people who know me will tell you that I am a patient person. I try to accommodate elected officials because I understand they have many demands and responsibilities. Their time is valuable. But a pattern of avoidance seems evident here.

Rep. G.A. Hardaway represents the Cooper Young Neighborhood which includes a high number of GLBT residents and business owners, GLBT-friendly businesses and Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center. Hardaway's constituents deserve to know where he stands on

legislation that affects our community. Hardaway has demonstrated an interest in GLBT voters of his district when he is campaigning for office (He made the rounds at the Midsouth Pride Festival last June). But I have never heard him state a position on legislation that affects his GLBT constituents.

So, where is G.A. Hardaway? Where does he stand on the adoption ban bill, the birth certificate bill and the "Don't Say Gay in Schools" bill? If you are lucky enough to catch him, be sure to ask him and let me know.

Lobbying for Midsouth equality

by Marisa Richmond

First, I have to issue a special thanks to all of you who participated in this year's 5th Annual Advancing Equality Day on the Hill in Nashville. There were more people, and more diversity, than



ever before. I have not heard the specific count from Memphis and West Tennessee, but I did manage to count 17 transgender participants from all three Grand Divisions. Several brought partners and one couple from Chattanooga even brought their children for the second year in a row. The groups who met with legislators throughout the day discussed several bills. The Tennessee Transgender Political Coalition has two bills this year. One is SB252 by Beverly Marrero/HB334 by Jeanne Richardson, which would eliminate Tennessee's one-of-a-kind ban on gender changes on birth certificates. This bill still faces an uphill battle since House Republican Leader Jason Mumpower (R-Bristol) told visitors of his plan to reintroduce an amendment that would create two new genders, male-to-female, and female-to-male, which would make Tennessee the only state in the nation to have four genders on birth certificates. His "compromise" simply cannot be accepted by transgender people, so we have to work to make sure we have the votes to defeat his amendment. The other bill is SB253/HB335, also by Marrero and Richardson, which would add "gender identity or expression" to the Tennessee Hate Crimes Sentencing Enhancement Act of 2000. This language is necessary to send a message that the lives of transgender people has value and must be respected. It will also

add one more tool to local law enforcement and local prosecutors in dealing with hate violence against all who are gender variant and gender non-conformists, regardless of whether or not they self identify as transgender.

Of course, much work was spent fighting against several bills which had been opposed in previous years. One is SB1230 by Dewayne Bunch (R-Cleveland)/HB821 by Stacey Campfield (R-Knoxville), which would ban the teaching of sexual diversity in schools. In his first four years in the General Assembly, Rep. Campfield has not been able to get one single bill passed, while alienating virtually every Democrat, and even many Republicans. His perfect track record appears unlikely to change in 2009. Focus was also on SB78 by Paul Stanley/HB605 by John DeBerry, which would ban adoption by any person who is unmarried, and co-habiting in a sexual relationship. Last year, when the LGBT community united in opposition, along with civil libertarian and children's advocacy groups, the bill had a \$6 million Fiscal Note. This year, with the State facing a \$1 Billion deficit, any bill with any Fiscal Note is likely doomed to failure. Still, Sen. Stanley and Rep. DeBerry reintroduced this offensive piece of legislation, forcing us to action again. TTPC is also opposing several bills which would require new Voter ID's which would have new gender markers, thus, potentially disfranchising transgender voters. The only anti-LGBT legislation that we anticipated in 2009 that has not been filed was a ban on civil unions. We will remain vigilant as the next election nears.

Less than two weeks earlier, I spent a full day on that other Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, visiting several offices of the Tennessee Congressional delegation. I just happened to pick the day that House Democrats had an impromptu retreat in Williamsburg, Virginia, to discuss the Federal Stimulus Bill, so I only met with staff. My focus was on the Employment Non Discrimination Act (ENDA). In 2007, two members of the Tennessee delegation, Steve Cohen and Jim Cooper, both co-sponsored ENDA, but when the LGBT united in opposition to a substitute bill that left out transgender people, they both voted

"yes." It was the first time in history that a civil rights bill passed over the objections of the community it was supposed to support, and we do not want to see a repeat of that vote. I pointed out that the 2008 Democratic Platform clearly endorses fully inclusive non-discrimination legislation, and President Obama made support of a fully inclusive ENDA a key pledge to the LGBT community. During the transition, the change.gov website had a statement supporting fully inclusive policies, and during the Inaugural Ceremony, the official White House website was being updated to say the same thing, while the classical quartet was "performing", and even before Chief Justice Roberts screwed up the Presidential Oath of Office. Of course, some activists and bloggers are frustrated that the new President has not appointed an out LGBT person to a cabinet post, and no openly transgender person to any position, but his voting record in both the Illinois State Senate and United States Senate, suggests he will support a fully inclusive

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Long awaited *SPIT* provides a Memphis splash

by Marc Brown

With an acronym like SPIT, it's just got to be good. The St. Patrick's Invitational Tournament promises to be just that. The ability of this bowling tournament to bring people together has carried it into its sixteenth year.

Hosted by the Brothers and Sisters Bowling League, the tournament running March 13-15 is part of a series of events held nation wide. As a part of the International Gay Bowling Organization, SPIT is one of almost fifty such tournaments held throughout the year. This year SPIT will be held primarily at Bartlett Lanes (6276 Stage Rd.) with the Artisan Hotel (1837 Union Ave.) as the host hotel.

The International Gay Bowling Organization's mission is to provide "educational services, communication avenues, and social opportunities to promote the sport of bowling and to enrich lives of individuals through leagues and tournaments worldwide." As the largest gay sporting organization in the world and with over 200 member leagues around the world, the IGBO seems to be doing that quite well. There is An IGBO tournament is held almost every weekend of the year in this country; each drawing members from around the country.

SPIT is no exception to this. While the majority of the out-of-town participants will be coming from Nashville, Huntsville and St. Louis, players from as far away San Diego are registered.

"Tournaments are a way for bowlers to go out of town and meet people of similar interests. I have friends from around the country that I met through this," said SPIT Co-director Ron Bright who has been part of the tournament for six years. And it's relationships like these that have made SPIT and IGBO such a success.

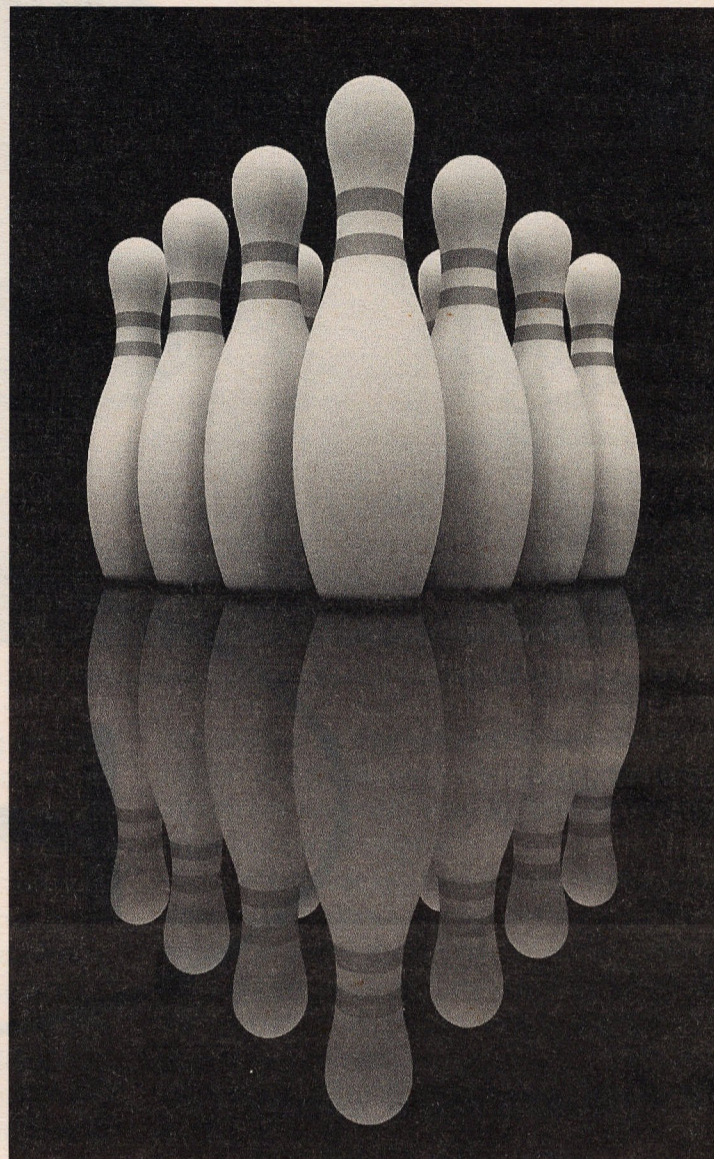
The Brothers and Sisters Bowling League has fundraisers throughout the year to cover much of the cost of the tournament. For the past six years this has given them the opportunity to use SPIT as a way to raise money for other

organizations. Loving Arms, MGLCC and Victory Junction Gang are this year's recipients. Volunteers from MGLCC will be staffing the hospitality suite and all tips received will go to the center. Money raised from sales of tournament related merchandise will also go to these organizations. For those not familiar with Victory Junction Gang, it's a North Carolina camp for children with chronic medical conditions or serious illnesses that provides a safe and medically supported environment while providing an enriching and empowering experience. SPIT organizers expect to raise around \$1,000 for these groups.

While many in the Memphis LGBT community might not be aware of its existence, the Brothers and Sisters Bowling League has been around for nearly twenty years. Organizers hope that SPIT will increase awareness of the league. Registration for the league is the weekend before Labor day with play starting the weekend after. Like the tournament, the league is structured to four person teams. For more information visit brothersandsistersbowlingleague.com.

SPIT is something that has to be experienced, so even those who don't meet qualifications to bowl this year should come as spectators.

Registration can be done online at the tournament's website spitmemphis.com. Qualifying players will be accepted up until the tournament as long as space is available. The entry fee is \$90 and can be payed through the website. For more information email spit2009@yahoo.com or contact Inz and Outz at 901-728-6533.



Vagina goes transgender

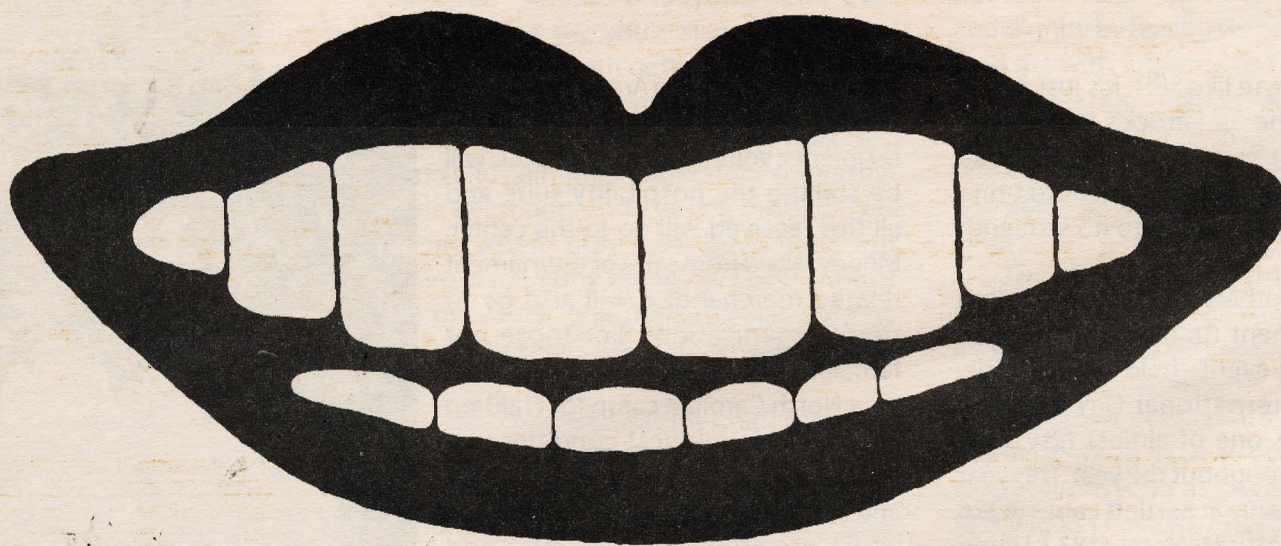
Planned Parenthood Greater Memphis Region (PPGMR) and VDay:Memphis present a landmark performance of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*. What is different about this performance is the inclusion of a monologue written by Eve Ensler in 2004 for transgender women entitled, "They Beat The Girl Out Of My Boy ... Or So They Thought." PPGMR's performance will mark the first time the transgender monologue has been performed in Memphis. Leading the performance will be Darlene Fike, a gender counselor and herself a transgender woman. "In light of recent attacks against transgender women of color in Memphis this is the perfect opportunity to get this conversation started in the mainstream community," said Shoshana Creech of PPGMR. The show will take place Wednesday, March 18, 2009 at 7:30 pm at The Circuit Playhouse. Tickets are \$40 and support PPGMR's programming and services in the community. Call 725-3051 to order tickets or purchase online at www.ppgmr.org.



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Aloysius to have new beginning at Friends For Life

Friends For Life will expand the Aloysius Home Housing Services division through the construction of a new housing facility, Aloysius New Beginnings. The \$1.2 million facility is planned to be built on the empty lot adjacent to the former Aloysius Home building. The 10-unit single room occupancy facility will provide permanent supportive housing to 10 chronically homeless adults living with HIV/AIDS and co-occurring disorders.

The \$1.2 million construction costs will be raised through grants submitted to federal, state and local funding entities. Friends For Life has already received notification of award from the Tennessee Housing Development Agency for a grant in the amount of \$310,300 and a \$200,000 commitment from the City of Memphis for the project. Pending notification of funding is a \$434,000 grant to Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a part of the City of Memphis Continuum of Care application and a \$185,000 application to a local foundation.

Housing for persons living with HIV/AIDS has been a serious problem since the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. A 1992 study by the federal Commission on AIDS reported that at the time, one-third to one-half of all persons infected with HIV were either homeless or at imminent risk of becoming so. Unfortunately, this serious issue among persons living with the disease continues 24 years later from the beginning of the health crisis. Reports compiled by Friends For Life show that from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008, 21% percent of the persons it served were identified as being without permanent housing.

To further document the need for this project, Aloysius New Beginnings was ranked as the number one priority project by the city's HUD Continuum of Care steering committee for the 2009 Continuum of Care application made by the City of Memphis to HUD. Friends For Life projects that construction will begin in the fall of 2009 with the program accepting its first residents in November 2010.

Dining Out For Life benefits Friends For Life

Friends For Life announced last month its participation in Dining Out For Life to be held on Thursday, April 30. This all-day fundraising event will take place at various restaurants throughout the Memphis community. The funds raised locally will support the services of Friends For Life, the Mid-South's oldest and most comprehensive AIDS service organization.

Dining Out For Life was created in 1991 and has become an annual event throughout North America, now produced in over 47 cities. More than 3,500 restaurants donate a portion of their proceeds from this one special night of dining to the AIDS service organization in their city.

Restaurants throughout the community, from family-style casual to first class dining establishments, participate by donating a percent of their revenue for meals sold during this important event. Community members enjoy a meal knowing they are contributing to a great cause, local restaurants benefit from increased business and individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS benefit from much needed programs and services offered by Friends For Life. The funds raised here in Memphis will stay right here in the community! To find out if your favorite restaurant is participating, visit www.diningoutforlife.com and click on the red ribbon on the map at Memphis.

Friends For Life serves over 2,500 persons annually who are affected by the disease here in the Mid South. You can visit our web site at www.friendsforlifecorp.org to learn more about us. To learn more about this fundraiser, please visit www.diningoutforlife.com.

10th annual White Privilege Conference (1st time held in the South)
Thursday April 2nd - Saturday, April 4th (MLK weekend)
Hilton Hotel, 939 Ridge Lake Blvd. (near Poplar & 240), Memphis

Early registration deadline March 15th.

The White Privilege Conference (WPC) serves as an annual opportunity to examine difficult issues related to white privilege and oppression. This conference is not about beating up on white folks. It is about all of us working together to critically examine the society in which we live, and then taking steps to dismantle systems of power and privilege. WPC is recognized as a challenging, empowering and educational experience. The workshops, keynotes and institutes not only inform participants, but also engage and challenge them, while providing practical tips and strategies for combating racial inequality.

For more info: www.uccs.edu/~wpc/index.htm

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Pictures and articles for the April *Triangle Journal* are due:
March 18, 2008

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Un paraíso lésbico pasado de moda?

por Erick Vásquez

En alguna parte de Alabama, detras de un portón, existe un grupo de mujeres llevando una vida tranquila en una comunidad llamada Alapine. Por la mayor parte desapercibidas por sus vecinos del "Cinturón de Castidad", ellas constituyen una tribu perdida de la era de principios de los años 70's de comunas y radicalismo feminista. Habiéndose encontrado una a otra en la fiebre de los movimientos gay y de liberación femenina, ellas construyeron una comunidad matriarcal, donde los hombres no son permitidos, donde incluso un bebe varón llevado por visitantes es causa de debate.

Estos días, sin embargo, sus miembros se preocupan acerca del futuro de su comunidad. Alapine es una de cerca de 100 comunidades indetectables de lesbianas en Norte América, conocidas como las Tierras Womyns (prefiriendo ellas esta descripción), que se guían por filosofías de una era pasada.

Las comunidades, en su mayor parte en áreas rurales desde Oregon a Florida, tienen tan poco como dos miembros; siendo Alapine una de las más grandes, y formada mayoritariamente por mujeres que van de los 50 a los 70. Las mujeres viven en casas simples o casas remolques de doble ancho en caminos que tienen nombres de diosas, como Paseo Diana. Ellas se reúnen para hacer cenas de puchero, películas o noches de juegos y "círculos comunales de luna llena" durante los cuales cantan, leen poemas y comparten sus pensamientos.

Muchas en la red de Tierras Womyn's han evitado la publicidad, viviendo una vida reclusa por décadas, promocionando casas y propiedades disponibles de boca en boca o en pequeños comunicados o revistas lesbianas. Pero las mujeres de Alapine están dispuestas a ser entrevistadas debido a su preocupación que la comunidad centrada en la mujer desaparecería si ellas no reclutan mujeres más jóvenes.

De hecho, muchas comunidades han perdido paulatinamente residentes a lo largo de las décadas conforme sus miembros se mudan o mueren. Conforme el impulso de retraerse de la sociedad heterosexual pierde su atractivo para lesbianas más jóvenes, las Tierras Womyn's encaran algunos de los mismos retos que los conventos Católicos presentan atrayendo mujeres a la vida del claustro.

Un obstáculo que evita el reclutar mujeres jóvenes es el empleo. Muchas comunidades de lesbianas están localizadas lejos de ciudades y otras fuentes de empleo. Otros citan incidentes hostiles de los vecinos conservadores. "Nosotras no anunciamos

nuestro lesbianismo," dijo Morgana MacVicar, 61, una de las fundadoras de Alapine, quien vive con su pareja de 20 años. "La gente sabe quienes somos. Ellos no quieren a nadie que venga a ser activismo político aquí."

Además, hay un debate apasionado dentro y a lo largo de las Tierras Womyn's acerca de quien está permitido admitir. Muchas residentes se adhieren al separatismo lesbico estricto, dando a entender que los hombres tan solo son permitidos como visitantes temporales y que, mujeres heterosexuales, bisexuales y transexuales están excluidas.

Entre las mujeres más jóvenes que son parte de este movimiento, existe una preocupación que las lesbianas de la vieja guardia son muy rígidas en un tiempo en que necesitan ser flexibles, tratándose de la autopreservación.

"Yo veo el cuadro y la idea de las Tierras Womyn's es una utopía, a menos que se tengan finanzas ilimitadas para ustedes mismas, yo veo una tras otra acabarse," dijo Andrea Gibbs-Henson, 42, quien vive en el Campamento Espíritu de Hermana, una Tierra Womyn's en Overt, Miss., donde ella llegó a ser la directora ejecutiva cuando su madre, una de las fundadoras, murió el año pasado. "El punto detrás de esto es que el mundo es muy diverso. La sola idea de una utopía feminista, es tan solo un ideal. Nosotras no sobreviviríamos aquí si todo lo que hacieramos fuese reclutar separatistas lesbianas."

An old-fashioned lesbian paradise?

by Erick Vasquez

Somewhere in Alabama, behind a locked gate, there is a group of women pursuing quiet lives in a community called Alapine. Largely unnoticed by their Bible Belt neighbors, they constitute a lost tribe from the early '70s era of communes and radical feminism. Having found one another in the fever of the gay rights and women's liberation movements, they built a matriarcal community, where no men were allowed, where even a male infant brought by visitors was cause for debate.

These days, however, their members worry about the future of their community. Alapine is one of about 100 below-the-radar lesbian communities in North America, known as Womyn's Lands (their preferred spelling), whose guiding philosophies date from a mostly bygone era.

The communities, most in rural areas from Oregon to Florida, have as few as two members; Alapine is one of the largest, formed mostly by women ranging from 50 to 70. Women live in simple houses or double-wide trailers on roads they have named after goddesses, like Diana Drive. They meet for potluck dinners, movie and game nights and "community full moon circles" during which they sing, read poems and share thoughts.

Many in the network of Womyn's Lands have avoided publicity, living a

sheltered existence for decades, advertising available homes and properties through word of mouth or in small newsletters and lesbian magazines. But the women at Alapine were willing to be interviewed because of their concern that their female-centered community would disappear if they did not reach out to younger women.

In fact, many have steadily lost residents over the decades as members have moved on or died. As the impulse to withdraw from heterosexual society has lost its appeal to younger lesbians, Womyn's Lands face some of the same challenges as Catholic convents that struggle to attract women to cloistered lives.

One obstacle to drawing younger women is employment. Many of the lesbian communities are located far from cities and other job sources. Others cite hostile incidents from conservative neighbors, thus reinforcing their low profile. "We just don't announce our lesbianism," said Morgana MacVicar, 61, one of the Alapine founders, who lives with her partner of 20 years. "People know who we are. They just don't want somebody who's making a political statement here."

In addition, there is strident debate within and across the Womyn's lands about who should be allowed to join. Many residents subscribe to strict lesbian separatism, meaning that men are permitted only as temporary visitors and that straight, bisexual and transsexual women are also excluded.

Among the few younger women who are part of the movement, there is concern that the old-guard lesbians are too rigid at a time when they need to be more flexible, if for nothing else than self-preservation.

"I see the whole picture and the idea of a Womyn's Land utopia, unless you have unlimited amounts of finances for yourself, I've watched one after another go belly up," said Andrea Gibbs-Henson, 42, who lives at Camp Sister Spirit, a Womyn's Land in Overt, Miss., where she became executive director when her mother, one of the founders, died last year. "The bottom line is the world is too diverse. The whole idea of a feminist utopia, it's just an ideal. We would not survive here if all we did was cater to lesbian separatists."

Cuando los gays se llenan de canas...

por Erick Vásquez

En alguna ciudad de la costa este, un hombre abiertamente gay, quien no tenía familia ni amigos, decidió ponerse en una casa de retiro de su escogencia. Los otros en su piso fueron incomodados por su orientación sexual, y como resultado este hombre de 79 años fue trasladado al piso para los pacientes con discapacidades y demencia. El stress resultante hizo que se sintiera muy deprimido como para vivir. Se suicidó colgándose del techo.

Conforme la población de la tercera edad

continued on page 24

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Indiana halts consideration of anti-marriage amendment

According to a widely reported statement from The Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the nation's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights group, Indiana's Senate Republican Caucus voted in mid-February not to consider a resolution that would have proposed amending the state constitution to define marriage as between a man and a woman. HRC reported its belief that this vote means the amendment is unlikely to advance during this legislative session. The resolution would require approval by the Senate and House in two consecutive legislative sessions, and, if approved, would then go before the voters.

"The Human Rights Campaign is glad to see that this divisive, unnecessary amendment appears to have stalled," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "We congratulate Indiana Equality, its coalition partners, HRC members and others throughout the state who urged their legislators to reject this resolution."

Indiana statutory law already prohibits marriage by gay or lesbian couples. The resolution, which sought to place the proposed amendment before voters, would have written this prohibition into the state constitution and also threatened to prohibit other forms of relationship recognition for gay and lesbian couples.

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OMG / Ha Ha Ha

by Carl S. Smith

To say that this film gives us a small glimpse into the lives of several troubled, angst-ridden Memphis youth would be a gross understatement. "OMG/HA HA HA", a documentary style film by hometown director Morgan Fox, exposes some of the very real, adult-sized social maladies at the heart of a number of our young people coping with their families and other personal relationships. OMG showcases the individual stories of turmoil, pain and anxiety of several young people in Memphis and shows that there's more going on in their lives than what we may observe on the surface. Their experiences cover a wide spectrum of issues from transgendered youth and teenage pregnancy to the strained relationships between gay youth and their parents. I felt a great sense of sympathy toward these young people as they struggled through and endured their given situations while seeking love and acceptance. I don't know what it's like to be a teenaged transgendered person trying to decide whether or not to say goodbye to a dying father after suffering through years of molestation by him. I don't know what it's like to have parents forbidding me to bring my boyfriend to their house for my birthday dinner. I don't know what it's like to be a pregnant teenager wondering about my next steps in life. I have to give a great deal of credit to all of them in the how they managed to face such formidable obstacles and seemingly impossible odds. OMG is raw, gritty, unapologetic and perfectly tailored to and for the "generation tech" set. The problems may be different and seem to be a world away, but the feelings and emotions are as old as time itself. I suggest that you and your bff see "OMG/HA HA HA" pdq!

Hear me out

Reg ... not so regular

by Chris Azzopardi

Gentleman Reg, *Jet Black*

This queer Canadian's fourth LP isn't as dark as a title like *Jet Black* lends itself to. The charmer, which is only a tad ho-hummy at the tail end, is Gentleman Reg's sashay into the States. And it's good stuff. After the surfer-dude smoothness of "Coastline," flecked with sweet electric guitar riffs, and "To Some It Comes Easy," a lyrically deft mellow rocker, he gives his brand of indie rock on his latest a glam sheen. "You Can't Get It Back," with a caffeinated chorus, sticks like gum to the ground, while bright and synthy "We're in a Thunderstorm" could cause a power surge: You can practically see all the disco lights sweeping across a sweaty plethora of dancing bods. Reg (real name: Reg Vermue), who had a spot in John Cameron Mitchell's *Shortbus*, sings like a supermodel looks. His voice is Kate Moss thin, breathy to the point of sometimes being swallowed by the arrangements, but it's irrefutably pretty – and best on "Rewind." One for the "Our Relationship Is Screwed (But I Still Sorta Love You)" iPod playlist, it aches with a looped goodbye-relationship refrain – "there's no point in going back when a masterpiece is crumbling" – emphasized with some honey-sweet harmonies. Come the final third, though, "Jet Black," produced by Dave Draves (Kathleen Edwards), loses its ear-wormy oomph, finishing duller than it started with airy arrangements that plod rather than pop. **B-**

Melinda Doolittle, *Coming Back to You*

Melinda Doolittle's major annoyance – her "aw-shucks" face after getting kudos from the "American Idol" judges during season six – overshadowed her big voice. But – rejoice! – no more excruciating, overly modest look. Or any modesty, really. Her first album, a vocal showcase that escapes the drab-"Idol"-debut fate by relying on lesser-known covers, finds the smoky-voiced soul singer channeling Aretha and, at times, stepping in Tina Turner's black spike heels. Shy? Not anymore. "Dust My Broom" is a man-hating kiss-off given the Tina touch with Doolittle's fiery delivery, but elsewhere on "Coming Back to You" she's tackling yesteryear funk-soul with a modern facelift. "Fundamental Things," a Bonnie Raitt recording, sets the stage. And on it, producer Michael Mangini (Joss Stone) meshes an old-school Amy Winehouse sound with contemporary R&B – it's sexier than anyone'll remember the Tennessean being on "Idol." With '70s mainstay "Declaration of Love" (yes, the one Celine Dion covered), the Motown vibe is infectiously fun, and justifies comparisons to Diana Ross. And even if she occasionally dates herself – whimsical, string-lined "I'll Never Stop Loving You" could be the closing song to a black-and-white film – we can't help but do the time warp with her. That voice is a vacuum, and getting sucked up is hard to resist. **B+**

Also out

Rihanna, *The Remixes*

When you've got it, flaunt it, they say. Which is exactly what this Caribbean Grammy no-shower and her really wise (or really poor) record label, are doing. Milking her 2007 album, *Good Girl Gone Bad*, for the third time – a deluxe *Reloaded* edition followed the original release – the 12-track disc is (insert frown here) all radio edits. They're mostly tightly produced, including two mixes of "Umbrella" (The Lindbergh Palace Radio Edit fitted with gay-sound galore) and a sped-up "Push Up on Me."



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Memphis' newest lesbian organizations and hot night life

by Natasha Burnett-Holmes

For years Memphis lesbians have been searching for and asking, "Where are the lesbian bars?" and "What are lesbians doing in Memphis?" Well for those of you who have become disheartened with the lack of lesbian entertainment and organizations, look no further. For the past year or so, Memphis' lesbian community has been literally overflowing with new organizations, sexy girl parties and a new lesbian bar. After reading this article, no lesbian in town should be asking what's going on for us.

The most recently formed organization for lesbians is the Louisiana-based sorority, Kappa Alpha Tau, Inc. (KAT). The sorority's Memphis chapter founders are Justice "Armani" Johnson and her partner. This organization is currently accepting applications from women interested in joining a Greek organization focusing on the empowerment of women. For more information on this organization, contact Justice at justicestrawder@yahoo.com.

Another established lesbian sorority for mature, professional lesbians is AXY (Alpha Chi Upsilon) Gems. This organization's main focus is on Unity, Diversity and Sisterhood. They are a multicultural organization, accepting women from all walks of life. They are involved with various community organizations, including Friends for Life and Hope House. For more information about this organization, contact Shuria or Tonya at axygems@yahoo.com or www.myspace.com/axygems.

The House of Casanova provides lesbians with a family-like unit, with their main focus being to transform the LGBT community through unity, positivity and awareness. These ladies provide a variety of events for the community, including monthly spoken word events at the family head's place of business, Makeda's Cookies, located on Raleigh-Lagrange. Upcoming events for this family/organization include the House of Casanova-Dereon/AXY spoken word event on March 15 at 6:00 pm at Makeda's and a collaborative Spring Break event in St. Louis with the House of Debonair on April 17 -19. For more information about this organization and their events, contact them on MySpace.com. Other Memphis based lesbian organizations are Ladies Exclusively; The Executivez; and Silhouettes. These organizations can also be found on MySpace.

Memphis has a number of lesbian-gearred events and clubs popping up all over town. These events give women something to do virtually every night of the week. Our first feature regular club event is Memphis Nites. This event occurs every Wednesday from 8:00 pm - until and is located in the Kirby Plaza at the corner of Knight Arnold and Kirby Parkway in the Southeast Memphis Area. Shun Sumerall and Tonya Williams are the hosts for this weekly event. The club features plenty of seating for both small and large groups, as well as couples. The bar serves beer and mixed drinks and hot food. There is also a VIP lounge and a dance floor with a Deejay and Jukebox. Another Wednesday event is hosted by Chicago's DJ Tre at Senses night club on Poplar Avenue. This event is an after work set just for the ladies, from 5pm - until. Your Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays are covered with weekly special events hosted by Sexxi Fabulous Productions. First Fridays are hosted monthly at Backstreet nightclub. Saturdays feature themed parties hosted at Metro night club and VIP Sundays at the same location. For more information about SFP, contact them at www.myspace.com/sexyfabproductions or www.myspace.com/femmeskyy.

If you're looking for a neighborhood bar with an intimate feel, visit Dru's Place, located at 1474 Madison, formerly the Jungle. Under new ownership, Dru's Place features mixed clientele, a pool table, a back room for private parties and special events, and a kitchen from which you can order non-fried foods, such as paninis and homemade pizzas. The club features karaoke 3-4 times weekly and live music featuring Carol Plunk and other local bands on Saturday nights. Dru's Place is open seven days a week from 11am-12am Monday - Thursday, 11am-3am Friday and Saturday, and 12pm-12am on Sunday. For more information on Dru's Place, visit their website at www.drusplace.com or contact them via email at drusplacememphis@aol.com. Any one of these organizations and events are a blast to be involved with and patronize, so there is no reason for Memphis lesbians to sit at home and twiddle their thumbs; so get out there, join an organization, become involved with the community, and most of all, ... ENJOY YOURSELF!

Cocktail Chatter

by Camper English

Gay bar bartenders, who are not necessarily gay bartenders, are usually the most efficient and fair intoxicologists in the drinking universe. I say "fair" because at straight establishments, hot women and rich-looking men (usually jerks) get first priority, and the bartenders frequently take drink orders out of order. Infuriating! This is not often the case in gay watering holes, where the bartenders tend to be the hottest people in the room and don't need to impress you by serving you first (**you need impress them with the size of your tips**).


Also, gay bar patrons know how to behave (toward the bartender anyway) and will often line up in an orderly fashion at the drink well rather than shouting and waving like the opening scene of *The Love Boat* all along the bar. I take straight friends to my favorite gay bar and they are amazed at the German-like efficiency in place. They are often jealous and determine to start coming there every night, until they hear the 14th Madonna remix in a row. I can't say I blame them.

In a nightclub or other crowded venue, or anywhere with a mixed crowd, all bets for orderly ordering are off. You need to gain the attention of the bartender as well as make him or her think you're going to be a good customer. **Look available.** You want to make eye contact with the bartender and have her give you the "I see you" nod. To accomplish this, face the bar, not your friends behind you. If you're turned around chatting and using the bar as a leaning post, you're not giving the **right signal**.

Be ready. When you are trying to get the bartender's attention, have visible cash in your hand - but don't wave it around unless there is a row of drag queens in six-inch heels blocking your line of sight. And if you're planning to pay with a credit card, you may want to keep that hidden. It takes longer to process, so the bartender will serve the cash-holding folks first. Also, be ready with your friends' drink orders. Don't wait until the bartender gets there to turn around and say, "What do you guys want?" As the person standing next to you, I'll swoop in and say "Three martinis please" when your back is turned. I'm like that.

Strategize. Don't shout to get the bartender's attention. Nobody likes to be yelled at while doing their job. A friendly "Hi!" sometimes helps though. Make your first tip the most generous one to help ensure prompt service and healthy pours for the rest of the evening. And be respectful of others - if the guy next to you was waiting longer but the bartender comes to you, give him the "he was here first" point. The bartender will remember that you're next, and you never know if that guy next to you will return the favor and pay for your drink.

Camper English is a cocktails and spirits writer and publisher of Alcademics.com.



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BJ Massengale (left) and Miki Zulewski

is that, as the AIDS crisis blew full-force, the focus became the needs of gay men. The needs of women were pushed aside by the news, magazines and community support networks.

A two-time breast cancer survivor, Zulewski has been affected on both sides. Both she and Massengale saw many gay male friends fall ill and ultimately succumb to AIDS and other major medical problems. Yet both have known lesbians that have also suffered and died; health crises in the gay community is not limited to gay men.

Massengale recalls a transsexual male that died from ovarian cancer. Both stress that lesbians must be proactive in health issues. They would love to see MGLCC bring in the Mobile Mammography unit at least once a year. They want all lesbians to know that they need to be vigilant.

These ladies were also very active in the beginnings of what is now MGLCC. Zulewski designed and spent many an hour creating the MGLCC quilt. They worked diligently in the prepping of the Pride flag. They painted the MGLCC walls that provide us safety. They buffed the wood floors of MGLCC on which we gather and stand. They toted the boxes from one location to another, helped develop activities along the way, and contributed extensively to this publication. Their hard work and volunteerism has aided in the bridge between "what was then" and what is present and yet to come for the younger generation. This dedication to the

Memphis needs has had an impact in who they are today.

They also have insight into DADT. Zulewski is a disabled veteran, with all the rights thereof that should be afforded veterans. For those that have served or plan to serve, Zulewski stresses that one need not "Be afraid to speak up for what you need." The VA can be quite intimidating. Women that have served and that are unfamiliar with

the bureaucracy of the VA need to know that there is a Women's Clinic. The VA offers disability benefits for those that qualify and a mental health department. If seeking medical care, be assertive. From Zulewski's experience, the medical providers through the Memphis VA do not care that she is a lesbian. She knows staff at the VA that are gay. She personally came out while actively serving.

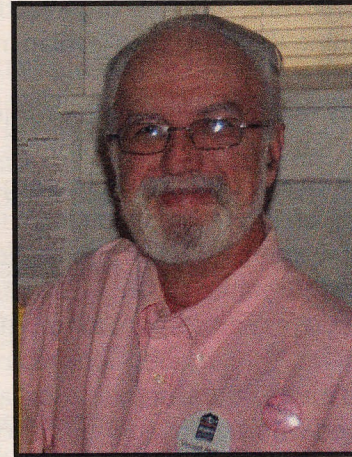
Both see critical issues impacting LGBT youth. Massengale is very worried about teens. Says Massengale, "The homeless kids sleep in cardboard boxes. They sleep in dumpsters. They get clothes from the Salvation Army donation box at night because all they have are the clothes on their back when their parents threw them out. You see them in groups at the park with their backpacks. They turn tricks to get money for food. They turn tricks to support their addictions (to alcohol and drugs)."

Massengale wants the older community to help when they see these kids. Do not give them money. If they need food, buy them a meal. If they need clothes or shoes, go to a thrift store. "I do not give the kids money because I won't enable their addictions," but she will help with food, clothes and anything else in her power. Her heart breaks for them.

Both want to see social activities that do not encompass alcohol and smoking. Both are in recovery. Both are nonsmokers. They know many that also do not go out much anymore because, Zulewski states, "There really isn't any place for older lesbians to go if we don't want to go to the bars. There are no after-hours places. We really need another Meristem (a women's bookstore that has since closed). We need another place for coffee and to just hang out and

in Memphis that will give more incentive to give back and be part of the entire community. Watching us move from partying behind locked doors to coming out and being able to be ourselves whenever and wherever we want to truly has made me a better person & a very out and proud homosexual.

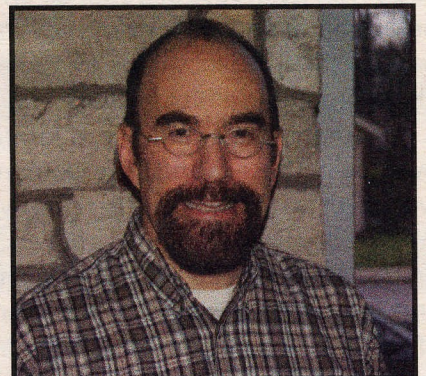
Vincent: I suppose I always had a volunteer streak from my upbringing but in my younger



Vincent Astor

years the fund raisers I organized and participated in did have a large impact on the entities they funded mostly because were few, if any, other sources of funding. To become involved one has to be personally committed to the cause ... applause is rare. When I came out, the thing that impressed me the most as a white male Christian was that now, I had a people, the same as having an ethnic or immigrant or unique religious background. I had a smaller group in which to belong which accepted and embraced some of my more colorful traits.

Herb: Clearly coming out at age 34 and getting involved in the LGBT community made me a more honest and self-confident



Herb Zeman

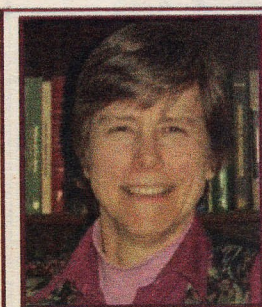
person. Discovering that most people preferred me to be honest about my sexual orientation rather than hiding it, was a great revelation. When I was able to accept myself, I was also better able to accept others and support others in their growth.

Len: What advice do you have for the community today?

Vincent: Look at the whole lifestyle: the bar, the dance club and the Internet adult community are not the only options. Being gay or lesbian or anything in between has a narrow definition, being physically attracted to a person of the same sex, but a huge description which can cover a much larger range these days. The nelly interior decorator or floral designer or the "flannel shirt" truck driver or mechanic still exist but are hardly generally descriptive.

Herb: It seems to me that the AIDS crisis eventually helped the gay community politically.

continued on page 19



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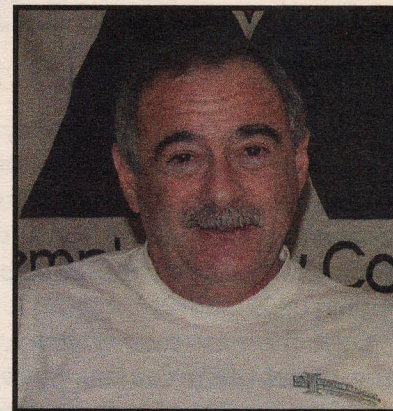
EXPERIENCE: Over 20 years doing psychotherapy. Director of Clinical Training of University Graduate Program in Clinical Psychology. Chairperson, of a State Psychology Licensing Board, supervising all psychology practice in that state.

People could see gays as human beings with real human problems. I lost my first two gay lovers to AIDS. I must have that rare immunity. Otherwise I'd probably be dead too. I was coming out at the worst time and place possible, namely 1979 in the San Francisco Bay Area. So first, practice safe sex. AIDS is still a very serious illness in spite of advances in treatment. Second, join the Tennessee Stonewall Democratic Caucus, the new statewide Gay Democratic Club. And lastly, attend the Outflix Film Festival Sept. 11-17, 2009, at Malco Ridgeway Four .

Steve: The last 8 years has been an uphill battle for equality, but we have still enjoyed

much more freedoms than we had in the 60's and early 70's. The last 3 months, since Barack Obama won the Presidential election, have been a very emotional time for me. I really feel change will come for the better, and it will happen in my lifetime. In my 60 years of life I have experienced much more than many will ever have the opportunity to experience. I hope this political change will encourage our young people to appreciate what is happening in this country. They should participate in this change, help be that change nationally and locally. We now have a young President who I feel is more open minded than any we have had in history, and this

will put The United States of America back in the position of the best country to live in the world. I would tell everyone to take care



Steve Solomon

continued on page 19

Memphis gay life "in the early years"

What was it like for our seniors, back in the day?

by Len Finch

In the late 1960's and 70's, the gay scene in Memphis was very different than today. Coming out of the 60's, the country's mores were changing. Straight people were divorcing more, the opposition to the Vietnam War was making Americans question the status quo and of course Woodstock presented a symptom of change in values and lifestyles which all impacted the way that social mores were evolving in this country. Hippies in San Francisco were wearing flowers in their hair, the Civil Rights unrest of the 1960's, the assassinations of President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King all overshadowed gay rights although I do believe that the equal rights movement as we know it now was born out of the civil unrest of that era.

As for Memphis, most of the gay culture was in the closet in the 1950's and 1960's. Gay couples stayed at home mostly or partied with other couples and occasionally frequented the old Frank's Show Bar which was across from Methodist Hospital on Bellevue and later became George's when it moved to Madison Avenue just west of McLean Ave. The Psyche Out (previously known as the Fruit Jar) which was located on Cleveland at Jefferson was also a popular meeting place on weekends. The Sunday afternoon tea dances at George's on Madison were phenomenal. The shows were so popular that many straight people would come to be entertained. Drag numbers were classics. The drag queens often performed group numbers and portrayed in costume such stars as The Supremes (Baby Love) or Aretha Franklin (RESPECT!!!). One number that brought the house down every Sunday was a group routine of the drag queens dressed in white silk choir robes doing their rendition of Amazing Grace!

In Memphis the 70's were still closeted and gays kept their sexuality private most of the time. It was considered taboo and shameful to be out. Religious dogma overpowered the desire to be openly out at the work place and in public. Gay acceptance in the workplace was non-existent. "For nonconformity the world whips you with its displeasure" according to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in the 1850's and it was so very true 100 years later. I recall in the mid 70's being a

member of Bellevue Baptist Church in midtown and singing in the Sunday choir. My mother would watch the televised version of the Sunday church services and call to tell me that she had seen me singing in the choir. Then one Sunday Dr. Rogers preached on hate and contempt for gays and spewed that "gays are no better than the vicious axe murder in the dark, back alley." I stood up in the choir, walked out and never sat foot in that church again!!

Discrimination of gays in the work place was common in the third quarter of the twentieth century. Even if you could walk on water and had

10 degrees, you could not get promoted and hold top management jobs. Many gays moved away from Memphis while others rebelled by using marijuana and alcohol to escape and just lived for the weekend and party time.

Police intimidation was much more rampant in the gay Memphis scene in the 1970's. We had no computers or Internet in those days and the bars on weekends were packed with people on Friday and Saturday nights. Bars were raided almost monthly by

continued on page 25

Holistic healing at The Psychic Shop

by

Natalie

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Two words that mean so much

by Mark Jones

Two words. Over the past several weeks as Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center has celebrated its 20th anniversary, I've heard two words mentioned over and over again: volunteers and money. While I watched the DVD of the ribbon cutting of the first building in 1989 and while planning for the open house celebration on March 1, those two words keep popping up.

Over the past twenty years, volunteers and money have been the cornerstones of the community center. Everything else builds on those two items. The Center has had many ups and downs in its history; it's had both good and bad years. Thankfully, the future looks very bright. Still, volunteers and money are needed today just as they were twenty years ago.

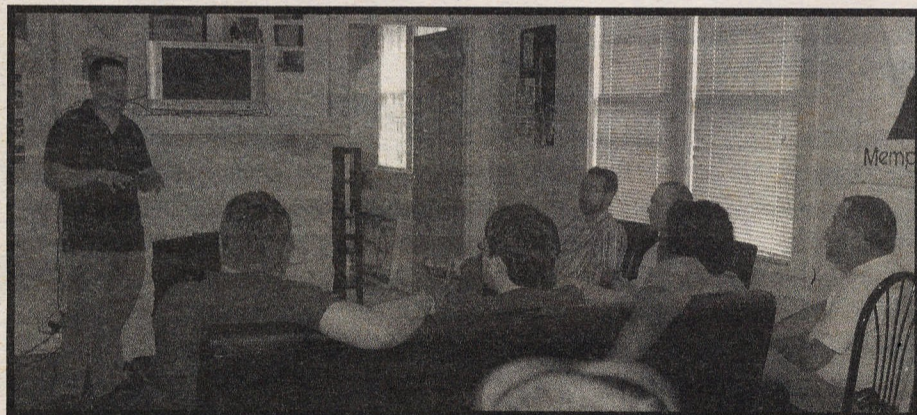
Even though the center has a full time Executive Director, volunteers are needed each night to help out. As someone who volunteers to staff the center on week nights, let me tell you that it takes at least two people to properly run the center. Some nights, between twenty-five and thirty people come through the front door. Even on slow nights when five people come to the center, there is still a need for two people. Like every nonprofit, there are always chores to be done in and around the building.

Money is always needed to pay for items such as lights, heat and mortgage. The community center opens its doors every day of the year. Not only is the Center opened, but it has ongoing programs that need funding. As the past director of the Outflix Film Festival, let me assure you that it takes cold hard cash to run the festival. Screening fees, theater rental and program guides are just a few of the items that must be paid before the festival even starts.

Please visit the MGLCC website and see all the programs that the center is doing. So much has grown and blossomed out of the hopes and dreams from those founding mothers and fathers twenty years ago. While you're on the website, become a Member of the center.

It doesn't cost much and the benefits to the Center and to you as a Member are numerous. www.mglcc.org

Let's make the next twenty years the best the twenty years in the life of Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center.



Mark Jones (left) introduces the video footage of the 1989 MGLCC grand opening and the 2003 MGLCC ribbon cutting at one of the four twentieth anniversary programs during the month of February.

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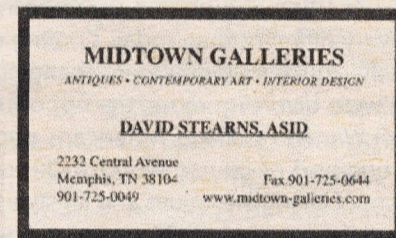
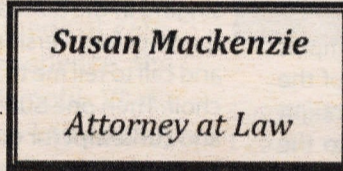
Membership Corner

The Place to Find the Latest MGLCC Membership Information

Thank you for your support in February!

Your generosity made our 20th Anniversary Celebration spectacular. Please help us continue the momentum by spreading the word to your friends about our new Membership program. We are having two Membership Drives in March with great opportunities for new Members to join MGLCC and current Members to show their support for our Business Partners. Please see the announcements in this issue of TJ and we will see you there!

New Business Partners... We have six new Business Partners since last issue and we are continually adding more. Look for the MGLCC Business Partner sticker at your favorite Mid-South businesses. Please visit the following MGLCC Business Partners today to receive your discount and reward these businesses for their support of MGLCC:



Creations by Malone	Free skincare consultation and \$5.00 coupon with \$25.00 purchase of skincare products
Dish	20% off food & beverages (Mon-Thurs)* 20% off food (Fri-Sun)* (*excludes holidays & special events)
Dru's Place	\$1.00 off any food item anytime
Experiential Healing Center	25% off services
Hi Gorgeous	Monthly Specials - See www.mglcc.org for details
Inz & Outz	Monthly Specials - See www.mglcc.org for details
Kendall B. Dowell @ The Salon* (exclusive to Kendall)	Free haircut for the first MGLCC Card Holder each month. \$10.00 off basic color anytime. \$20 off highlights anytime. \$5 off men's haircuts anytime.
LUX Style	10% off entire purchase
Massage Studio	\$10 discount on any massage
Memphis Center for Reproductive Health	10% off all medical services (excluding lab fees)
Midtown Galleries	10% discount on furnishings and artwork. 25% discount on fabrics, wall covering, and furniture made to order
Molly's La Casita	Free dip with purchase of 2 entrees or lunches
Musicians at Work	5% discount on adult piano classes
Opera Memphis	2 for 1 on single tickets and subscriptions
The Pumping Station	Free pizza with purchase of any pitcher of beer
Susan Mackenzie, Attorney at Law	10% discount on up to \$1,000 in civil or personal services such as wills, powers of attorney, co-parenting agreements and mediation

If you are a business owner, business manager or know of a business that would be interested in becoming an MGLCC Business Partner, see our website at www.MGLCC.org or contact Will Batts at (901) 278-6422.



The Mystic Krewe of Pegasus conducted its sixth annual Mardi Gras Ball on January 31. Proceeds benefited the Child Advocacy Center. Becky Rachels and Ed Rachels (above) were crowned the queen and king for 2009. Photo courtesy of John Lloyd.

Members of the Memphis community gathered to reminisce about the early days of MGLCC at an afternoon of storytelling on February 22. The occasion was one of four programs honoring the 20th anniversary of Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center. Sharing the love, and many memories, are two of the early activists of the GLBT community, Hunter Johnston and Audrey May (below).



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February 6, 2009

Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center
892 South Cooper Street
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Dear Friends,

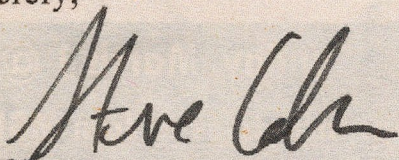
It is with great excitement that I offer my sincere congratulations upon the 20th Anniversary of the Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center. The MGLCC has become an important landmark in our community, offering a welcoming environment for GLBT persons of all ages and a remarkable space for community events.

I am very impressed by the many initiatives and organizations that have emerged from the MGLCC. Holy Trinity Church of Christ, Initiative: Fairness, Outflix film festival, the former Memphis Pride, and the former Lambda Men's Chorus have all made a remarkable impact on our community. I am certain that the current programs, along with the monthly publication, *The Triangle Journal*, will continue with the same community force helping to unify and utilize the talents, energy, and resources of the GLBT community.

Once again, congratulations to the Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center for 20 years of service. Thank you for your consistent and welcoming presence in our community.

As always, I remain

Most sincerely,



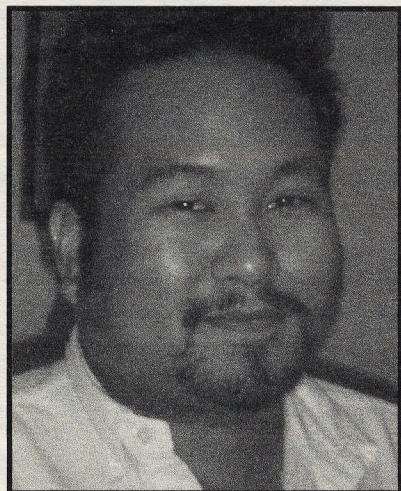
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Aging gayly ... can you believe 30 is the new 50?

by Andrew Cruz

Golden Men: The Power of Gay Midlife, by Dr. Harold Kooden and Charles Flowers is a how-to book to finding balance and a healthy spirituality while growing older in a culture that both celebrates and denigrates youth, while dismissive of the aging.

The central premise of the book is that ageism causes death. Ageism is defined according to Robert N. Butler's 1969 description as "the systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people because they are old;" however, the book also briefly engages how gay youth are also mistreated due to their age. As the author puts it, "I define ageism as using one age period as the standard of comparison for judging or describing another age period."



Andrew Cruz

The author points out that recently, many younger gays have seen the age of 30 as a harbinger for the beginning of middle age. Decades ago, most

gays agreed that the 40's or 50's were the beginning of middle age.

Dr. Kooden reviews four ways to measure a gay man's age: chronological, biological, experiential and sexual. Chronological age, or "Clock Age," refers to a man's age according to his birthdate. Biological age, or "Body Age," refers to a man's body based on the way it functions. Experiential, or emotional, age, which Dr. Kooden terms our "Heart Age," refers to the age a man feels he is. Sexual age, or our "Gay Age," measures how long a man has been practicing and preparing for the adult expression of his sexual orientation.

The author goes into how ageism and internalized homophobia cut young and old alike. The young feel that their lives will be short. The older feel that they can no longer participate in the activities with other gays that they did when they were young.

Also described are how ageist comments can often look like compliments, but are not. For the older, comments like "You don't look your age." For the younger, comments like "You're wise for your years." These comments bring about a dynamic of

self-negation, according to the author, whereby the young and old learn negative stereotypes about themselves.

"Part of the struggle in coming out is getting rid of these negative feelings, these 'voices' inside our heads that tell us to be gay is sick. By and large, we silence most of this internalized homophobia during the process of coming out," Dr. Kooden writes, also that "many gay males do not find a satisfying community of gay peers until their thirties or even forties, which further delays a gay man's adolescence."

I, for one, am glad to know there are others. I did not find a large group of mutually supporting friends until recently, and I love them. I am already thirty-one years old. Before that, I would have one trusted friend at any given time. Those who are still with me have joined in the friendly fray which has since developed.

Following the introduction of the book are three sections: Body, Mind and Soul. These sections match the three factors involved in the aging process: behavioral, mental and emotional. Each chapter describes a "developmental task" which represents a component of successful aging. The assumption, in accordance with current human development theory, is that the individual is active rather than passive. Dr. Kooden writes, "I make the core assumption that a gay man is the central agent in developing his identity, and he continues his self-creation over the course of a lifetime."

I would add, after perusing Dr. Kooden's work, that in going through the exercises in the book, it might be fun to go through them together with a close friend or friends, and grow through the work together.

One of the questions the author poses for the reader is: in what ways has your definition of success changed over time? The author shares his perspective and that of "Ben" and asks the reader to consider where work is, and where fun is, in his or her definition of success.

Dr. Kooden graduated from the University of Chicago with a doctorate in human development and clinical psychology and moved to New York in 1967 to work in community health programs in the South Bronx and in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. He began seeing gay men and lesbians as clients during the early 1970's while involved in the radical mental health movement, and came out of the closet in his professional life in his 30's. He began private practice in 1977.

Local couple *continued from page 14*

visit. We need places to go that we can enjoy that is not filled with smoke." They recall Jamie Anderson coming to town a few years ago, but there was a very small turnout. They point out that the bars and clubs that allow no one under 21 to enter promote a non-inclusive environment as the teens are excluded. Other than Di Anne Price, there are no local musicians that reach out to the community that also entertain in non-smoking venues. Both would invite others with talent to entertain, as there is an audience.

They close with stating that lesbians have come a long way. We have a long way to go. The generations need to bridge.

Yet overall, "There is hope."

MGLCC's Annual Bachelor and Bachelorette Auction

May 1, 2009 ~ 7-11 pm

Senior gays *continued from page 15*

of themselves, be careful, stay healthy and participate in our community. Those of us who had the vision of MGLCC as a place to socialize, meet people in a safe environment and to participate in the many activities it provides, did so in order for the younger people to have more than we had growing up. I would tell them to take advantage of what we started for them so that we will not feel like we took chances, raised money and fought for gay rights as we did over the years in vain.

Be proud of who you are and use it for the advancement of our community.



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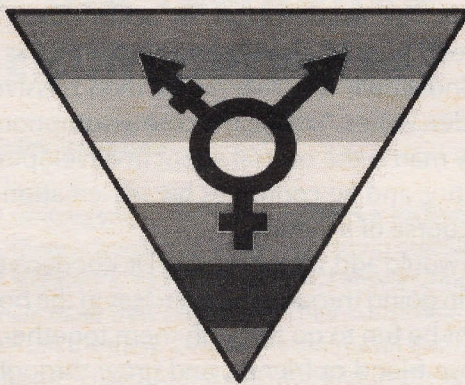
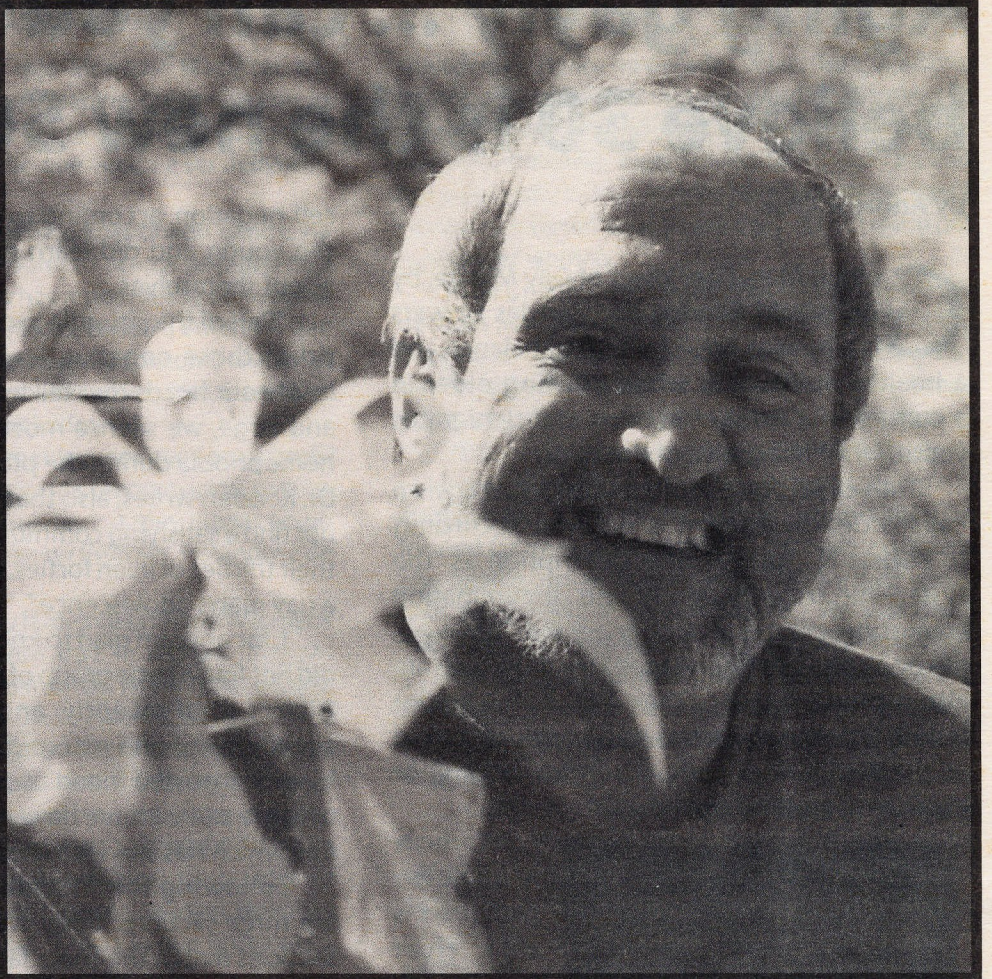
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Active member of the Memphis, Tennessee, and Little Rock, Arkansas, GLBT communities. Last king of the Mystic Krewe of Memphis United Mardi Gras Krewe and avid participant in all of the Memphis krewes. He was employed as a designer for Hobby Lobby in Germantown and previously traveled internationally as a designer and purchaser for Wangs. Renowned for his costumes and holiday decorating. Survived by James Norcross, his spouse of 40 years. A memorial service was held at Holy Trinity Community Church, his cremains will be scattered by his local family. A memorial has been created on findagrave.com; search on his name without location to leave flowers or a message.



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Why Have GRS Surgery?

The journey of Darlene Fike

by Jamie Griffin

"So what are you here for?" That's the question Darlene Fike had to constantly endure during her prologue to GRS. "Genital Reassignment Surgery," she would reply. And it seemed as if everyone on the hospital staff came equipped with the quiz: the surgeon, the nurse, the anesthesiologist and certainly the check-in clerk. "I was a bit frustrated, but I didn't complain," Fike admits of the repetition. Eventually, she would even find it to be a bit humorous.

The question was always followed by the million dollar one. Typically, it would go something like this, "why do you want to have it?" A legitimate question. So what's the legitimate answer? Is there one?

Consider Fike's journey, which started when she was born intersexed (both male and female genitalia). Three days into the world and her parents decide to have her vagina removed and identify their child as a bouncing baby boy. For as long as Fike can remember, she could never identify with the sex her parents chose for her.

So let's fast forward past the self-hatred, the deception, the pain and fast forward to December 2008, which is when Fike traveled to Trinidad, Colorado to have the surgery.

As with all surgeries, Fike had to give up food twenty-four hours before going under the knife and could only have clear liquids up until midnight the prior day. "So why do you want to have it?"

Her doctor sat her down, talked to her for about thirty minutes. She told Fike again what she already knew, that the surgery is not reversible. Fike recalls the pre-surgery examination, going across the road to another medical facility to get her blood work. "I was frightened by the potential blood loss during surgery, so they type-matched my blood to have blood on hand, just in case," says Fike. "Now why is it you want to have this surgery?"

Advancing on to the anesthesiologist, Fike gets a list of things to do prior to surgery. She had an hour and a half before she had to start drinking the "foul clean yourself out liquids." So what's a girl to do with the time? "I went shopping," admits Fike. While out and about in Trinidad, she noticed she was being "clocked" or profiled by residents of Trinidad. Perhaps with so many people coming through the area for GRS, figuring out if people are trans has become some sort of sport. "And you're sure you want to have this surgery?"

Now it's time for surgery, but Fike notices there are no wheelchairs and had to make the walk to the operating room. Thanks to the



Darlene Fike (second from left) mixes it up with Eric Sirignano, Jonathan Cole, Gary Dawson and Paul Linxwiler at *Tribe* in Nashville on the eve of TEP's 2009 Advancing Equality Day. The photo is courtesy of Paul Linxwiler.

anesthesia she remembers only waking up after surgery feeling groggy. She also recalls how uncomfortable the bed she laid in had become, having to keep weight off the seat for a spell, coming back to Memphis and being advised to her disliking by the professors in her PH.D program to take a medical leave of absence, which she eventually agreed was for the best.

So what's the answer? Why have the surgery? Even with the complications (Fike had another surgery on February 5th and will have at least two more to put internal organs back in order). Fike considers the surgery a big success. Why have the surgery? Fike's answer is simple, "Because I'm a woman!" Although that should say it all, Fike has more to say. "All of my life I was taking inventory of my body until I got to the crotch and I knew it wasn't right. But on the way from (surgery) I thought...everything is in harmony. I felt a connection to the whole of existence for the first time. Previously my body wasn't in harmony with my brain."

Even the process had its highlights. Everyone was courteous and professional according to Fike. Plus she met at least 10 other transwomen. She met one who was 17 and had her parents by her side, which fulfilled Fike with a deep sense of hope. The wonderfully decorated rehabilitation facility was also a high point. That's where she and others who had gone through the process would stay for a few days. "We had a meal and talked about everything but surgery...from who was in what relationship, who was gay, politics

and religion. It was wonderful," she claims. But maybe not as wonderful as hearing the doctor inform her when she woke up from surgery, "you have a beautiful vagina."

Just because Fike has answered the questions time and time again, doesn't mean they will ever stop. For example, one of her school advisors sarcastically asked her "are you happy now that you've had surgery?" She replied, "the best part is that I no longer have a _____" Well some answers you'll just have to figure out on your own.

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I'd rather depend on the kindness of (paid) strangers

by Elizabeth Flanders Pitts

I admit that I occasionally worry what will happen to me when I get old. I've always been a bit of a worrier – "Hope for the best, prepare for the worst," that's my motto (well, that and "Six impossible things before



breakfast," because being a pessimist 100% of the time gives me a toothache) – and when I run out of reasonable things with which I might concern myself, I look to my next birthday and obsess about Who Will Take Care of Me When I'm Old. Or, more to the point, Who Will Pay For Me to Be Taken Care Of.

I'm a single parent. Not only that, but I'm a confirmed single with no intention of ever marrying again. Questions invariably follow that statement, such as "Don't you want to spend the rest of your life with someone?" (sure, as long as they don't move in), "Was your first marriage so bad that you've soured on the whole institution?" (our marriage was delightful, but that doesn't mean I need to do that again), and my favorite:

"Don't you want to grow old with someone?"

No, thanks.

I have no intention of anyone I love ever having to change my adult diaper, thank you very much. I'm okay with getting old enough to wear them, mind you. I want to live in my sweet little house on Spruce Street for the next 60 years, gardening and painting things bright colors that annoy the neighbors and chasing outdoor cats back home where they belong, dammit. But taking care of me in my dotage will be the job of a paid professional, and that's my last word on it. I refuse to become a burden to anyone who loves me.

It'd be nice to while away my golden years as love-filled, joyous, rewarding times where some doddering old man holds hands with me as we sit on a porch swing, and that may well happen. But if I start to lose control of my faculties or my bowels, it's time for strangers to step in. Hire someone to come by the house a couple of times a day, or if I really lose it, move me into a facility. Make sure it's a nice facility, please, but don't break the bank or anything. My daughter may visit, but she's not allowed to fret. You are all now my witnesses.

Much of this attitude has to do with the independence that I have worked hard to regain after the divorce. I used to be a bright, spirited, opinionated firecracker of a woman; that woman

hid away for a while and it took me quite some time to find her again. For obvious reasons I'm not ready to give up any of that self-reliance and dignity by having someone I actually know feed me with a spoon. The whole idea smacks of humiliation. I don't want to depend on someone's tender feelings toward me; I don't want anyone's pity. I'd rather have someone perform a service in exchange for a fee of some kind.

The other side of that coin is that my parents, active though they may be, are aging as we speak. I'd be lying if I didn't admit to choosing my sweet little house with one or both of them in mind: it's a good layout and size for them to move in with me and be taken care of for as long as possible. When it comes to my folks I have no qualms about organizing a medication schedule or giving a sponge bath. My responsibilities as their child will only increase as they grow older and need more assistance, and that sense of responsibility stems from the respect I have for their sacrifices and support to these many years.

It's my sincere hope, however, that when I get to be of an age or a circumstance where I can no longer take care of myself, my loved ones will have the same respect for my wishes: please don't change my diaper. And you're not allowed to fret.

GAME ON

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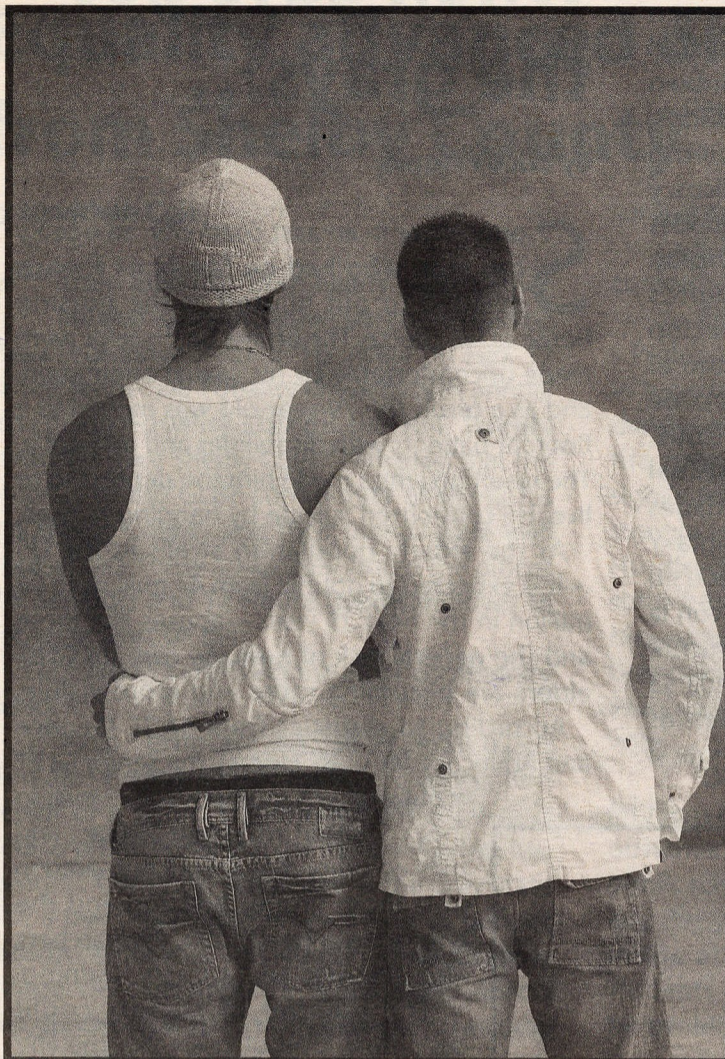
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Miss Gay America 2006



Sasha Nicole
Miss Mid America 2008

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or call

901.603.4838

Triangulo *continued from page 10*

aumenta en los Estados Unidos —se espera que se duplique de 44 millones a 90 millones en los siguientes 25 años— los abusos como estos y la falta general de cuidado humano para los adultos mayores homosexuales están llegando a ser más y más visibles.

De acuerdo a las estadísticas de SAGE (Servicio y Defensa de los Adultos Mayores GLBT, por sus siglas en inglés), la población gay de la tercera edad se multiplicará de 3 a 6 o 7 millones en los siguientes 25 años, y sus comunidades no están preparadas para darles albergue y cuidados médicos apropiados. Investigadores y activistas ven una crisis que se avecina.

“El número de adultos de la tercera edad puede llegar a ser un tipo de crisis como la epidemia del HIV en los siguientes 5 a 10 años, y no hay ninguna estructura para lidiar con ella. No están listos para nosotros,” dijo Amber Hollibaugh, un adulto de la tercera edad que planea la estrategia para la “National Gay and Lesbian Task Force”.

La encuesta “Gay y envejeciendo: Preocupaciones para el futuro”, que acaba de ser publicada por Community Marketing,

Inc., encontró que un 70 por ciento de los gay y lesbianas que tomaron la encuesta y con edad arriba de los 40 tienen preocupaciones acerca de perder la habilidad de cuidarse a sí mismos. La mayoría también teme el llegar a estar enfermos o discapacitados.

Entonces, cómo la sociedad, el gobierno federal, los proveedores de servicios médicos, y las casas de asilo se ajustan a estas necesidades urgentes? El gobierno federal ha comenzado a hacer algunas mejoras para los adultos mayores homosexuales. La administración Bush, por ejemplo, admitió a SAGE como el primer delegado GLBT a la Conferencia de la Casa Blanca en Envejecimiento en 2005.

Proyectos de envejecimiento homosexual también están siendo efectivos en ciudades como Boston, Nueva York, Chicago y Atlanta. Y las Comunidades Stonewall, una organización sin fines de lucro de Boston, se ha asociado con la compañía de bienes raíces Abbott para construir “Stonewall Audubon Circle”, que comprende 53 hogares de una y dos habitaciones con centros de asistencia para personas homosexuales de la tercera edad, la primera de este tipo.

When gays get the grays...

by Erick Vasquez

Somewhere in an east coast city, an openly gay man who had no family or friends decided to put himself in the nursing home of his choice. The others on his floor were made uncomfortable by his sexual orientation, and as a result the 79-year-old was moved to a floor for patients with disabilities and dementia. The resulting stress made him too depressed to live. He committed suicide by hanging himself.

As the elderly population swells in the US—it is expected to double from 44 million to 90 million in the next 25 years—abuses like these and the general lack of humane care for GLBT elders are becoming more and more visible.

According to statistics from SAGE (Service and Advocacy for GLBT Elders), the senior GLBT population will multiply from 3 million to 6 or 7 million in the next 25 years, and their communities are not prepared to give them proper housing and the appropriate healthcare. Researchers and activists see a crisis looming.

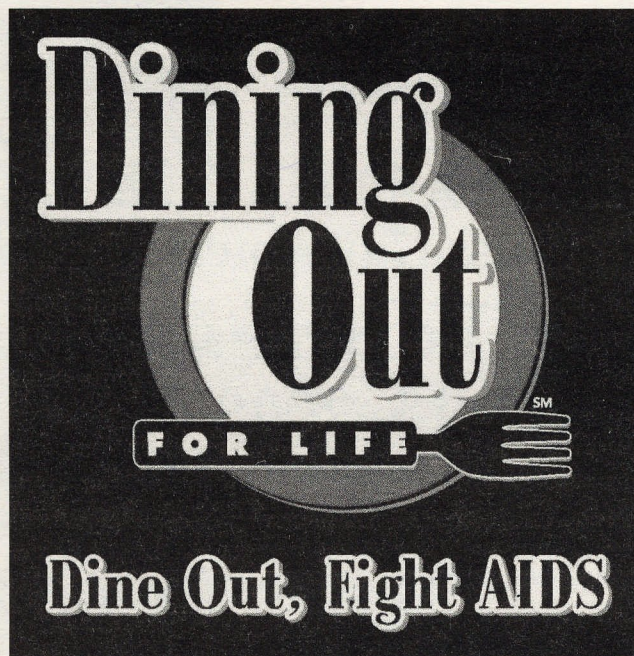
“The number of seniors could become a kind of crisis like the HIV epidemic in the next five to 10 years, and there is no structure to deal with it. They’re not ready for us,” said Amber Hollibaugh, senior strategist for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

The survey “Gay and Graying: Concerns for the Future,” just released by Community Marketing Inc., found 70 percent of its lesbian and gay respondents over age 40 with concerns about losing the ability to care for themselves. And the majority also feared becoming sick or disabled.

So how will society, the federal government, healthcare providers and nursing homes adjust to their urgent needs? The federal government has begun making some improvements for LGBT seniors. The Bush administration, for example, admitted SAGE as the first LGBT delegate to the White House Conference on Aging in 2005.

LGBT aging projects are also branching out in cities such as Boston, New York, Chicago and Atlanta. And Stonewall Communities, a non-profit organization from Boston, has partnered with Abbott Real Estate to build “Stonewall Audubon Circle,” a complex of 53 one- and two-bedroom homes which feature assisted-living centers for older gay people, the first of its kind.

Friends For Life Presents



Thursday, April 30, 2009

For More Information:

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Equality *continued from page 6*

ENDA. It remains to be seen how active he will be as the fight for the bill occurs later this year, but if he makes a positive statement as he did on his Stimulus package, we can get it passed. In the meantime, everyone should contact their House members during the month and, urge them to pass a fully inclusive ENDA as soon as possible.

The Hate Crimes bill is actually expected to move first. As with the fully inclusive ENDA, Congressmen Cohen and Cooper were the only supporters. One message I got from other Congressional offices is that we are being outworked. One office reported that calls and e-mails on Hate Crimes were 99 to 1 against! We have to mobilize our support better. And when I pointed out President Obama's own vote and public support for the Hate Crimes bill, they simply said, "Obama won 35% in this district." Even if the President is willing to engage in any arm twisting, we cannot expect much help on that issue. We will have to carry this forward ourselves.

You can follow up on my visits by participating in the annual Congressional Lobby Day organized by the National Center for Transgender Equality on April 26 to 28.

For more information, visit <http://www.nctequality.org> Let us all stand united for one ENDA for all!

Back in the day *continued from page 15*

the police and fire marshall. Police would raid a bar by pulling up in squad cars with sirens blaring, come in with flashlights and shine the light in your face to intimidate you. Patrons would leave by the dozens and the bar would be essentially empty by midnight. Police harassment and gay beatings were common even into the 1980's and many gay bar patrons were Billy clubbed for supposedly drunkenness. Especially targeted were drag queens and some of them even lost their lives.

Overton Park was a refuge and cruisy area in the 1970's and early 1980's. Paved streets throughout the park offered a superb way to cruise, park and meet other LGBT persons. In the late 80's these paved streets in the wilderness areas of the park were closed to traffic or totally removed entirely, thus cutting off an important meeting place for LGBT people.

By the 90's things were beginning to change. More freedom and more openness were tolerated. Non-conformity was giving way to tolerance with a watchful eye. Gays were socializing more in the city both at work and in the gay scenes. The 70's gave rise to the Gay Switchboard which was very beneficial to teenagers and young people who were often ostracized by parents and peers at school. Gay organizations began to spring up in the community such as dance clubs, and other organizations which supported charitable causes. Universities and colleges began to have gay organizations. The gay newspapers began to appear and gays were getting more organized.

In the spring of 1979, a gay coalition from Memphis and Nashville chartered a bus and attended

the gay march on the United States Capital in Washington, DC. Harvey Milk was there as a speaker as well as about 50,000 LGBT people. I recall marching down Pennsylvania Avenue behind our Memphis banner then gathering on the mall to hear speeches from other activists. On Monday, our Tennessee group lobbied our Tennessee senators. I recall meeting with Senator Sasser and will never forget his reply to a question regarding gay discrimination. "I'm not convinced that gay discrimination exists," he said, "and even if it does, you always have existing courts to turn to." Change was slow over the past 35 years for the gay scene in Memphis. Having lived through the AIDS epidemic and the ups and downs of the Memphis gay movement, I am convinced that gay life in Memphis is definitely on the upswing. Midtown has become more eclectic, especially areas like Cooper Young and the wonderful new mixed bar like The Molly Fontaine House; moreover, businesses are more tolerant and gay pride is taking hold. However, the overall Memphis community is beginning to see that LGBT people want the same out of life as straight citizens...life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, friend and family acceptance, and an overall feeling of value and worthiness in our society. Community acceptance and legally respectable gay marriages would catapult the gay movement to new heights and disenfranchise the taboos of misplaced hate that have been directed toward LGBT persons for the past 50 years. I trust that a new Renaissance in America's culture of openness, self-determination and social acceptance of LGBT persons will continue as globalization and the Internet explosion draws all of mankind closer together both socially and respectfully.

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DAY IN. DAY OUT.

TRIANGLE JOURNAL GUIDE TO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT FOR MARCH 2009

S

March 1

MGLCC Open House celebrating 20 years of service to the community 2- 5 pm

Dish presents MGLCC Membership Drive and Tea Dance with VJ Jason Plunk 5 - 7 pm

March 8

MGLCC board of directors meeting at 2 pm at MGLCC

March 15

SPIT Tournament at Artisan Hotel and Bartlett Lanes

March 29

Dru's Exotic Beer Tasting Event and MGLCC Membership Drive 5 - 7 pm at Dru's Place

Every Sunday

Tea Dance at Metro every Sunday 4 p.m.

Pool Tournament at Pumping Station every Sunday 6pm

Country Sissy Bingo Crossroads at 8 p.m.

M

March 2

MGLCC's Bachelor and Bachelorette Auction Planning team meeting 6:30 pm

March 16

MGLCC's finance committee meeting at 6:30 pm

MGLCC's Bachelor and Bachelorette Auction Planning team meeting 6:30 pm

Every Monday

Women's Rugby Practice at Tobey Park at 6:30 p.m.

Monday Night at the Movies sponsored by Holy Trinity UCC at Bartlett Cinema 10 at 6:45 p.m.

Second & Fourth Mondays

Perpetual Transition - transgender support group meets at 7:30 p.m. at MGLCC

T

Every Tues

Phoenix AA (Open AA group) Grace-St. Luke's Church, 1790 Peabody at 8 p.m.

The Caring Group: Relaxation and destressing by subtle energy practices at Holy Trinity UCC at 7 p.m.

Lesbians with Breast Cancer support group at YWCA, 766 S. Highland at 7 p.m.

Singles Dart Tournament at Crossroads 7:45 p.m.

Please see our online calendar at www.mglcc.org for changes and additions.

Please send your events and activities to editors@tjmemphis.com for monthly publication in *Day In Day Out*

W

March 4

Men's Potluck at 6:30 p.m. at MGLCC

March 18

Women's Potluck 6:30 p.m. at MGLCC

Vagina Monologues at 7:30 pm at Circuit Playhouse

Amy Steinberg performs at Java Cabana at 8 pm

Deadline for submissions for April TJ

Every Wednesday

HIV testing at MGLCC 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Every Second Wednesday

TEP meeting at Quetzal at 6:30 pm.

T

March 5

PFLAG meets at Central Library at 7 p.m.

Cooper Young Business Association sponsors a monthly **Neighborhood Night Out**. Call 276-7222 for info.

March 12

2009 Outflix planning meeting at MGLCC 6:30 pm

Every Thursday

Cotton Pickin' Squares square dancing group at Holy Trinity UCC at 7:30 p.m.

Women's Rugby Practice at U of M at 6:30 p.m.

Karaoke at Dru's Place at 9 pm

F

March 13

MGLCC Arts and Performance Series 7 pm

SPIT Tournament Artisan Hotel and Bartlett Lanes

L & T Productions Mis Mid America Preliminary - *Rocky Top Tennessee* at Crossroads at 10 pm

March 20

MGLCC Arts and Performance Series at 7 pm

Romeo and Juliet opens at Playhouse on the Square - runs through April 19

Every Friday

Karaoke at Dru's Place at 9 pm

First Congo Films at First Congregational Church at 7 & 9 p.m.

Seriously Sober at Holy Trinity UCC at 8:00 p.m.

S

March 7

Alpha Chi Upsilon meeting at MGLCC at 4 pm

Queer as Youth at MGLCC 7 - 9pm

March 14

SPIT Tournament at Artisan Hotel and Bartlett Lanes

MGLCC marches in Beale Street Merchants' Saint Patrick's Day Parade

March 21

Queer As Youth at MGLCC. 7:00-9:00 PM

March 28

MGLCC Family Group Event at 2 pm

An Evening of Stand Up Comedy and Improv with *Queer On Their Feet* featuring Jennie McNulty, Jason Dudey, and Diana Yanez. at Holy Trinity United Church of Christ at 8 pm.

MGLCC'S QUEER AS YOUTH



FOR TEENS AGES 14-19

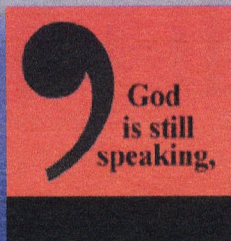
MEETS MARCH 7 AND 21 AT 7 PM
AT MGLCC - 892 SOUTH COOPER
SEE WWW.MGLCC.ORG OR
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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

▼ Indicates Triangle Journal distribution points.

Please let us know if your contact information changes so that we can keep our community updated with accurate information.

Thanks!

editors@tjmemphis.com

BARS

- ▼ **901 Complex:** 136 Webster St., (901) 522-8457
- ▼ **Backstreet Memphis:** 2018 Court St., (901) 276-5522
- ▼ **Crossroads:** 1278 Jefferson Ave., (901) 272-8801
- ▼ **Dru's Place:** 1474 Madison Ave., (901) 275-8082
- ▼ **Lorenz/AfterShock:** 1528 Madison Ave., (901) 274-8272
- ▼ **Metro Memphis:** 1349 Autumn, (901) 274-8010
- ▼ **Pumping Station:** 1382 Poplar Ave., (901) 272-7600
- ▼ **Vault,** 529 S. Highland, 525-6203

BOOKS

- ▼ **Borders:** 6685 Poplar Pike
- ▼ **Burke's:** 936 South Cooper
- ▼ **Davis-Kidd:** 387 Perkins Extended
- ▼ **Memphis Public Library** 3030 Poplar

COMMUNITY GROUPS

- ▼ **Blue Suede Bears of Memphis, Inc.:** 41 S. Morrison - www.bluesuedebears.com
- ▼ **Cotton Pickin' Squares:** Gay/Lesbian square dance club meets Thurs., 7 pm Holy Trinity, 685 S. Highland.
- ▼ **4F:** Leather/Levi group, 698 Pope Dr., Bartlett 38112
- ▼ **FedEx:** LGBT & Friends Network at FedEx: lgbt@fedex.com or - Intranet Keyword: LGBT
- ▼ **Initiative:Fairness** (political committee of MGLCC: IF@mgcc.org; www.mgclcc.org/IF
- ▼ **Memphis Area Gay Youth (MAGY):** PO Box 241852, Memphis, TN 38124 - (901) 335-MAGY - www.magyonline.org
- ▼ **Memphis Center for Independent Living** - 726-6404
- ▼ **Memphis Gay & Lesbian Community Center (MGLCC):** 892 S. Cooper St., (901) 278-6422 Web site: www.mgclcc.org
- ▼ **Memphis Stonewall Democrats:** P.O. Box 42242, Memphis, TN 38104 www.memphisstonewalldemocrats.org mphsstonewalldem@yahoo.com
- ▼ **Mid-South Equality:** www.geocities.com/midsouth_equality
- ▼ **Mid-South Pride, Inc.:** Mail to 111 S. Highland Ave., Suite 322, Memphis, TN

38111 - 685 S. Highland, 3rd Floor - (901) 414-2197 - Fax: (901) 592-6635 - info@midsouthpride.org - www.midsouthpride.org

Nike TN GLBT Network: Daniel. forrest@nike.com office: 901.547.8217

Olive Branch Gay & Lesbian Christians Fellowship: meeting: first Tuesday 7 PM - discussion and fellowship location: Holy Cross - 8230 Highway 178 - Olive Branch MS 38654 - (662) 895-5029 on the web at http://www.meetup.com/The-Olive-Branch-Gay-Lesbian-Christians-Fellowship/ admin@holycrossolivebranch.org

Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG) Memphis, TN - (901) 268-2511- pflagmemphis@pflagmemphis.org

Parents, Families, & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (PFLAG): Jackson, TN 38305 - (901) 664-6614 - burtren@aeneas.com

PFLAG Oxford/North Mississippi: Meets the third Thursday of every month. Johnson Commons room 203 (Isom Center) 7 p.m. - (662) 816-2142 - PO Box 2142 Oxford, MS - www.geocities.com/pflag_oxfordnorthms

Perpetual Transition: A support and social group for transgender people of all varieties and non-trans allies. - clanham@memphis.edu. - www.groups.yahoo.com/group/perpetualtransition

Shelby County Committee of Tennessee Equality Project: shelbycounty@tnequalityproject.com

Stonewall Tigers: University of Memphis, c/o Stonewall Tigers, 2522 Campus Postal Station, Memphis, TN 38152-2521 - stonewalltigers@yahoo.com

Tennessee Equality Project works for the equality of LGBT persons through the establishment of fair and equitable laws. Meets every second Wednesday at 6:30 pm at Quetzal.

Tennessee Leather Tribe: Gay men's/women's leather org. 1568 Rolling Hills Dr., Memphis, TN - (901) 357-1921

Univ. of Miss. Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Association: GLBA, PO Box 3541, Univ., MS 38677 - (662) 915-7049 - glba@olemiss.edu - www.olemiss.edu/orgs/glba

Tennessee Transgender Political Coalition TTPC P.O. Box 92335 Nashville, TN 37209 http://ttgpac.com TTGPAC@aol.com (615)293-6199 (615)353-1834 fax

UT-Martin ALLIES: Campus and community. Alternate Weds. 5 p.m. Info 131F Humanities Bldg., Martin, TN 38238 - neilg@utm.edu

COUNSELING SERVICES

- ▼ **Counseling Referral Service:** MGLCC's Confidential Counseling Referral Service - (901) 347-8701
- ▼ **Kent D. Fisher, LPC, MAC:** Experiential Healing Center, 1713 Lockett Pl. - (901) 372-0710. EMDR, group, individual, couples & family therapy
- ▼ **Bob Loos, MS, LPC-MHSP:** Individual, couples, & family therapy for anxiety, depression, relationships sexual identity issues: (901) 581-9898

FOOD, RESTAURANTS, AND COFFEE

- ▼ **Bluff City Coffee Shop:** 505 S. Main
- ▼ **Bogie's Delicatessen:** 2098 La Salle Pl. - (901) 272-0022
- ▼ **Cafe Eclectic:** 603 N. McLean
- ▼ **Cafe Ole:** 959 South Cooper 274-1504
- ▼ **High Point Coffee:** 9077 Poplar Ave.
- ▼ **High Point Coffee:** 1680 Union Ave.
- ▼ **India Palace:** 1720 Poplar
- ▼ **Java Cabana:** 210 Young
- ▼ **Molly's:** 2006 Madison
- ▼ **Otherlands:** 641 South Cooper
- ▼ **Pie in the Sky:** 2158 Young Avenue
- ▼ **Quetzal:** 668 Union Ave.
- ▼ **Sean's Cafe/Smooth Moves:** 1651 Union
- ▼ **Sweet:** 938 S. Cooper.
- ▼ **Wild Oats:** 522 Poplar

HEALTH SERVICES

- ▼ **Community HIV Network** - 2400 Poplar, Suite 500: 287-4750.
- ▼ **Friends For Life:** HIV/AIDS service organization - 43 N. Cleveland, (901) 272-0855 - www.friendsforlifecorp.org
- ▼ **Memphis Center for Reproductive Health:** 1462 Poplar Ave. - (901) 274-3550
- ▼ **PhoenixAAGroup:** Every Tuesday evening at Grace St. Luke's Church at 8pm.
- ▼ **Seriously Sober:** AA meeting at Holy Trinity United Church of Christ 685 South Highland every Friday evening at 8 pm.

HELP & INFORMATION LINES

- ▼ **Gay & Lesbian Helpline:** 1-888-340-GLBT (Mon.-Fri., 5-10pm, Sat.-Sun., 4-9pm)
- ▼ **Gay & Lesbian Youth Hotline:** 1-800-347-TEEN Mon.-Fri. 5-9 pm (Pacific) Web site: youthtalkline.org
- ▼ **LINC:** (901) 415-2700 ☎ A community informational agency providing information on shelters and senior services
- ▼ **Memphis Sexual Assault Resource Center:** (901) 272-2020
- ▼ **Narcotics Anonymous:** (901) 276-LIVE.
- ▼ **Peer Listening:** Youth-staffed GLBT youth hotline - 1-800-399-PEER - Mon.-Fri. 5-10 pm (Eastern)
- ▼ **Suicide & Crisis Intervention:** (901) 274-7477
- ▼ **Trevor Project** - National 24/7 hotline for suicidal or questioning teens: 886-488-7386.
- ▼ **Lambda Legal:** 404-897-1880

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

- ▼ **Dabbles:** 19 North Cooper
- ▼ **Hi Gorgeous:** 1475 Madison
- ▼ **Inz and Outz:** 553 South Cooper (901) 728-6535
- ▼ **The Studio:** 629 South Cooper
- ▼ **Paggios Hair Salon:** (901) 274-3944
- ▼ **Tear It Up:** 895 S. Cooper
- ▼ **Movies and More:** 3129 Poplar, 323-3251

SPIRITUALITY

- ▼ **American Gay Atheists (AGA) Memphis:** Box 41371, Memphis, TN 38174-1371

▼ **First Congregational Church:** Worship Service: Sun. 10:30 am • 1000 S. Cooper St. ☎ (901) 278-6786

▼ **First Presbyterian Church:** Sun. School, 9:30 am; Coffee & fellowship, 10:30 am; Worship, 11 am • 166 Poplar Ave. - (901) 525-5619

▼ **Holy Cross Episcopal Church:** Worship services: Sunday 10 AM - discussion at 9 AM Small groups - 8230 Highway 178 - Olive Branch MS 38654 - (662) 895-5029 on the web at www.HolyCrossOB.org admin@holycrossolivebranch.org

▼ **Holy Trinity United Church of Christ:** Worship Service: Sun. 11 am; Bible study: Wed. 7 pm - 685 S. Highland - (901) 320-9376 - office@holyltrinitymemphis.org

▼ **Integrity Memphis:** Meets the 3rd Tues., Worship, 6:30 pm; Dinner, 7:00 pm; Meeting 7:30pm - c/o Calvary Episcopal Church, 102 N. 2nd - (901) 525-6602

▼ **Living Word Christian Church:** Worship Service Sun. 9:30 am • 1015 S. Cooper - (901) 485-0949 - www.livingwordchristianchurch.net

▼ **Memphis Friends (Quakers):** Sunday 11:00am - 917 S. Cooper - (901) 274-1500 - memphisfriends.org

▼ **Memphis Gay & Lesbian Atheists & Humanists:** (901) 327-2677 - memphisgalah@yahoo.com

▼ **Neshoba Unitarian Universalist Church:** (901) 266-2626

▼ **Open Heart Spiritual Center:** 2489 Broad

▼ **Prescott Church:** 961 Getwell, 327-8479, www.prescottchurchmemphis.org

▼ **Unity Church of Memphis:** 2570 Kirby Rd. Memphis, TN 38119

SPORTS AND FITNESS

- ▼ **Bluff City Sports Association:** www.bluffcitysports.net
- ▼ **French Riviera Spa:** 3486 Poplar

THEATER

- ▼ **Circuit Playhouse:** 1705 Poplar
- ▼ **Playhouse on the Square:** 51 South Cooper
- ▼ **TheatreWorks** 2085 Monroe

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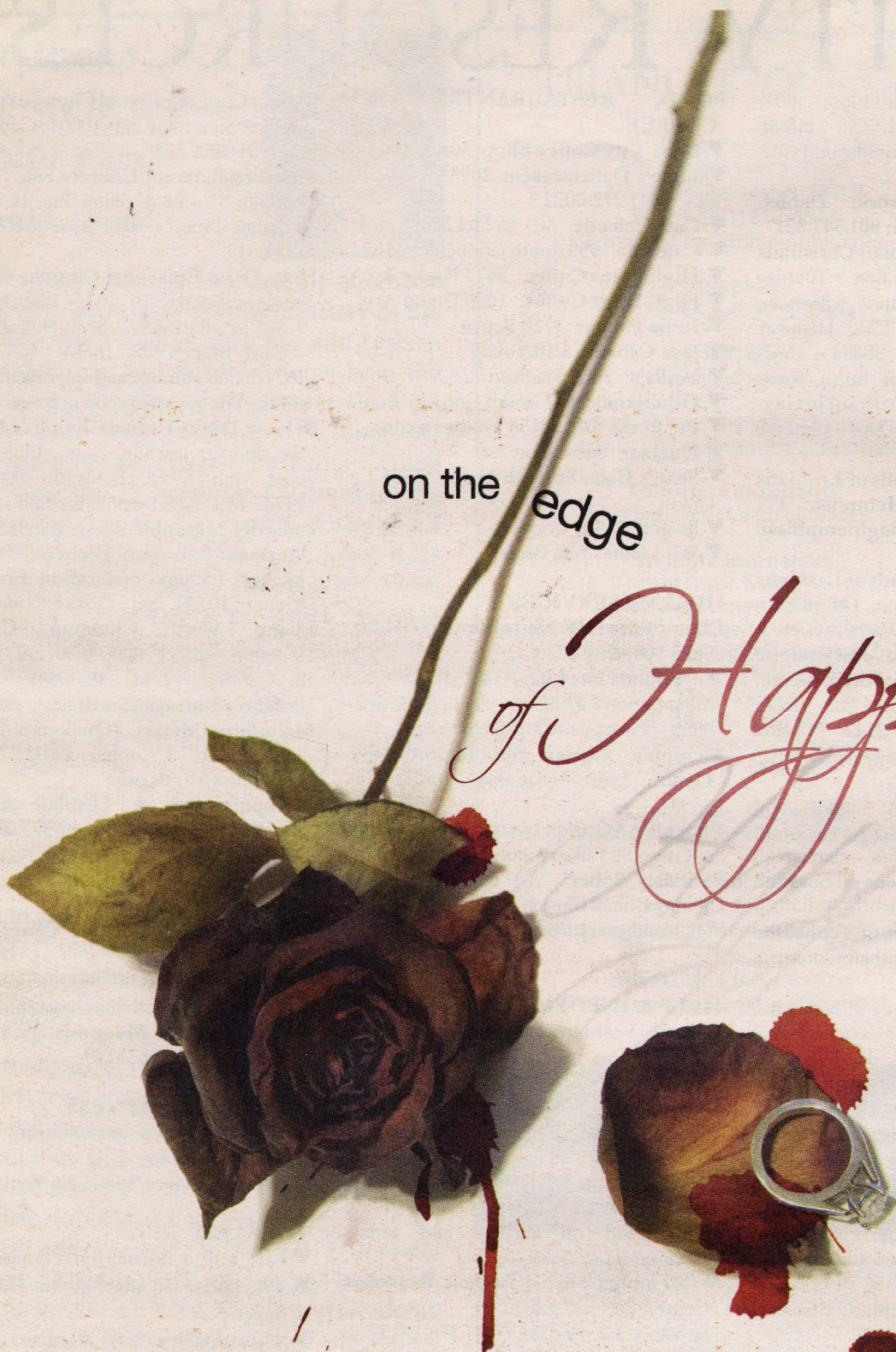
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