

GAY GRASSROOTS

GAY LESBIAN BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER QUESTIONING ALLIES

Northwest Florida

Our Mission...

To bring together non-partisan activists to advocate for the full **UNDERSTANDING, RESPECT, EQUALITY, and INCLUSION** of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender persons living in Northwest Florida.



RAINBOW BLADES

the GAY GRASSROOTS newsletter

FREE

Volume 3, Issue 3

March 2011

Spring fills this issue with new activities and information

March brings the 1st two themed parties to be held at our new Equality House, a Mardi Gras party to be held on Friday March 4th, and a Saint Patrick's Day Party to be held on Thursday March 17th. These two events will be quickly followed by our 1st Annual Spring Cookout on Saturday March 19th. And in recognition of Nation Women's History Month, we have joined with our local National Organization for Women (NOW) to co-sponsor a special community wide celebration on Saturday March 26th. All of these events are open to the public and free of charge. If you have not had the opportunity to drop in and check out the Equality House, here are four events that you are sure to find enjoyable. More details can be found on page 3.

On my "as I see it" column on page 2, I hope that I have been able to clear up just what Pres. Obama's decision not to defend the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) does and does not mean for our community.

This month's "moving forward" column on page 7 you will learn of our 5 Advocacy Goals for 2011. Also provided are areas of progress we have made toward: re-launching our website; efforts to get all Escambia

County and Pensacola City anti-discrimination policies to become inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity/ expression language; our new simplified membership structure; and the announcement of the PensacolaPRIDE 2011 theme and it's art competition.

On page 8 you will find a "meeting report" from the workshop that myself and members of the UWF Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) attended in Orlando on planning strategies as we prepare for the certain battles that lie ahead to preserve our recently gained adoption equality.

On page 9 this month's "hot topic" combines 2 things our community loves, Lady Gaga and Target. Does Lady Gaga have the power to force Target to make amends and change it's disappointing ways when they support anti-gay candidates?

Our "good news" features on page 12 gives us several reasons to remain hopeful, like the 7 year old boy who decides to donate his money to lgbt causes because he does not think lgbt persons are treated fairly. This unfortunately is greatly contrasted by such items as a Georgia legislator comparing gays

to drug dealers, and other "all out assault" items found on page 13.

When you add this to all the other items that I have hope to shed la little ight on in this issue you can see that the time has arrived for all of us to come together to advance our mission. We are indeed at a crossroads, public opinion is shifting in favor of lgbt equality, however those who would deny our community every basic freedom are more determined than ever to "keep us in our place."

We have set 5 lofty goals to work toward in 2011. With increased community participation we can achieve these goals, without it we will certainly struggle if not out right fail. I ask and urge each of you to get involved, Over the last year and a half, I believe we have proved ourselves as an organization worthy of your support. Please become a member (membership form is on back page) and attend our meetings (refer to calendar on pages 10 & 11.

In Pride,

Doug Landreth, President

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Gay Grassroots of Northwest Florida is proud to be

managing partner

of our lgbt community center

Equality House
Home to Pensacola's LGBT Community

producer of our annual pride festival

PRIDE
Pensacola

publisher of our monthly newsletter

RAINBOW BLADES
the GAY GRASSROOTS newsletter

To receive a full color version of this newsletter e-mailed to you each month please sent us an e-mail asking to be placed on our confidential e-mail list to GayGrassrootsNWFL@gmail.com.

AS I SEE IT

Doug Landreth

President's order not to defend DOMA good news, BUT FAR FROM ENDS OUR FIGHT FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Pres. Obama's Justice Department announced Wednesday, Feb 23, that they would no longer ask courts to uphold the Defense of Marriage Act, a 90s-era bill that prevents the federal government from recognizing gay couples' marriages. While I see this was good news, it is far from great news; as on it's own, this announcement does not change anything other than the conversation surrounding the bill's merit. While the administration has begun to see the DOMA as unconstitutional, the federal government must continue to enforce the act since it remains the law of the land. Basically the announcement's only effect is that it may move the needle of public opinion. For same gender couples to gain marriage equality either the legislative branch would have to change the current law, or the judicial branch (supreme court) would have to declare the law unconstitutional.

Although tens of thousands of gays are legally married in states like California, Iowa, and Connecticut, the federal government considers them "just friends." That translates into hardships like extra tax burdens, the risk of deportation for bi-national couples, the inability to sue for wrongful death, and OVER 1,300 OTHER UNRECOGNIZED RIGHTS.

In response to this announcement, the anti-gay industry has dug in its heels to denounce the country's shift towards equality. Maggie Callagher, the head of the National Organization for Marriage, a very powerful anti-gay group funded by a small number of millionaires, claims that if gay couples are allowed to marry, then straight couples' children will be "produced in circumstances in which their mother and father are not pre-committed to caring for them." Her so-called argument is that marriage gives straight parents a reason to care for their offspring, and that marriage can only exist if it excludes gay people. Another anti-gay leader claimed that "the sky didn't fall" when voters banned same gender marriage. I doubt that the many same gender couples who have faced deportation, lost their homes, or been unable to access their partners' medical coverage feel the same.

Thankfully, Democrats in Congress have renewed their efforts for legislative repeal of the DOMA following the decision by Pres. Obama to stop defending the discriminatory law. The Huffington Post reports on the plan from

Rep. Jerrold Nadler, a senior Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, to introduce the Respect for Marriage Act to repeal DOMA "very soon," according to the congressman from New York, and with "quite a few co-sponsors." Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California plans to offer similar legislation in the senate judiciary committee. "The idea is to take advantage of the headwind created by the Department of Justice's announcement and push for a permanent solution over the legality of laws that prohibit gay marriage," reports HuffPo. "Until Congress acts, or the Supreme Court issues a ruling, DOMA -- which prohibits federal recognition of same-sex marriages performed in states -- continues to be enforced."

Despite the momentum, House judiciary chairman Lamar Smith, who wields authority over the committee's agenda, has called the decision not to defend DOMA "irresponsible." On the other hand, the ultimate say rests with House Speaker John Boehner, whose response to the decision criticized President Obama more for politics than substance. Just as quickly, Former Pennsylvania senator Rick Santorum, and likely 2012 Presidential candidate, began blasting his fellow Republicans for their timidity in defense of traditional marriage. "It's very disappointing," Santorum said in an interview with USA TODAY. "Here you have a president of the United States who's walking away from his constitutional duty to defend the law of the country." He says Pres. Obama is "siding with folks" who say limiting marriage to heterosexual couples is "somehow unconstitutional," a position he calls "pretty radical, in my opinion." Specifically, Santorum called on House Speaker John Boehner to appoint a counsel representing the House of Representatives to "take up the cause and argue the cases" in court. Boehner spokesman Michael Steel said the speaker "is reviewing the situation with other congressional Republicans and all options are under discussion." Former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich said during an interview with Newsmax that he thinks President Obama's decision to stop enforcing the Defense of Marriage Act might be an impeachable act.

The DOMA defines marriage as a union between one man and one woman. Two lawsuits, *Pedersen v. OPM* and *Windsor v. United States*, challenge section 3 of the law passed in 1996. U.S. attorney general Eric Holder said in a statement that the decision to stop defending DOMA in these and other cases hinged on Obama's recent decision that the law is unconstitutional. "After careful consideration, including a review of my recommendation, the President has concluded that given a number of factors, including a documented history of

discrimination, classifications based on sexual orientation should be subject to a more heightened standard of scrutiny," Holder said. "The President has also concluded that Section 3 of DOMA, as applied to legally married same-sex couples, fails to meet that standard and is therefore unconstitutional. Given that conclusion, the President has instructed the Department not to defend the statute in such cases. I fully concur with the President's determination." Holder cited several changes since the law was passed, including the Supreme Court ruling that criminalizing homosexuality was unconstitutional in 2003 (*Lawrence v. Texas*) and Congress's recent repeal of "don't ask, don't tell." He also cited DOMA being considered unconstitutional by several lower courts. Holder added that he had informed members of Congress of the decision, so that those members who wish to individually defend the law may do so. He also said the law, while deemed unconstitutional by himself and the president, will still be considered in effect until Congress repeals it. The following day, Thursday Feb 25, The Department of Justice announced it will "cease to defend" two more cases related to the Defense of Marriage Act in federal court.

According to the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, which represents the plaintiffs, "It is increasingly clear to everyone what has been clear to gay and lesbian families for years - that DOMA's denial of protections available to all other married families is discriminatory, harmful, and unjustifiable," GLAD's Mary L. Bonauto, the lead attorney for the *Gill* case and *Pedersen v. OPM* said in a statement. "DOJ's acknowledgment of this is momentous. At the same time, we know this isn't the end of the road."

Despite this announcement having no weight legally, I do think that this is a watershed moment that can not be squandered. The President's words were very powerful in their message, going beyond marriage equality. The conclusion of the president, the U.S. attorney general, and the Department of Justice was that all laws that discriminate based on sexual orientation should be presumed to be unconstitutional. This being said by a President who admits to being conflicted on the religious issues that he continues to struggle with regarding same gender marriage. Above all, I hope that other officials can follow the example of our President and not allow their official actions governing all persons of many beliefs who deserve to be treated fairly and equally, be influenced by personal religious or moral which they believe are superior.

That's how I see it,
Doug Landreth

Equality House

Home to Pensacola's LGBT Community



**THURSDAY MARCH 4TH
6PM-9PM**

Come "let the good times roll" with old and new friends. This will be our first themed party since our move to our bigger and better home. We will have prizes for best beads and best mask, plus our mardi gras trivia game. Refreshments will be provided.



cleaning day

**TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY
MARCH 15TH & 16TH
10AM-8PM**

Come help us get our home spruced up and ready for spring. We would also like donations of flowers, plants, and containers.



**THURSDAY MARCH 17TH
6-9PM**

Come by for a taste of Ireland, we will be serving up corn beef and cabbage, Irish stew, and Sheppard's pie. Prizes for best green attire and St. Patty's trivia contest.



**FRIDAY MARCH 19TH
11AM-3PM**

Come shake off the winter and welcome spring with old and new friends. We will provide hotdogs and burgers with all the fixins, plus baked beans, potato salad, slaw, chips, and fresh squeezed lemonade.



**SATURDAY MARCH 26TH
7PM-10PM**

Join us to socialize, play games, and watch "Iron Jawed Angels" starring Hilary Swank. Refreshments will be provided. Co-sponsored by NOW. Professional child care will be provide. Refreshments will be provided. For more info contact Jennifer at 850.346.6004 or flow-ingenergy@gmail.com.

MORE EVENTS IN OUR CALENDAR ON PAGES 10 & 11

Be sure to check out our full calendar on pages 10 & 11. And don't forget that we have dates and times set aside for specific age groups.



LGBT TEENS



LOCAL JUICE

Pensacola included in state wide event to protect the recently gained adoption equality (SAT APRIL 16)

As the politicians in Tallahassee continue to publicly object to the court's ruling which overturned the ban on adoptions by gay persons (see next story), our voices of everyone who believes in adoption equality must be raised up. Citizens across the state of Florida need to get educated and get active. host a number of events across the state of Florida to get individuals active, educated, and engaged. The ACLU of Florida is bring a number of public educational events including Education and Speaker Training to communities across the state. One of these events will take place on Saturday April 16th (location and time yet to be finalized.) Gay Grassroots is teaming up to bring GLAAD (The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) in to provide the training and documentary screening of "In Anita's Wake" (<http://www.vickinantzfilms.com>) about Anita Bryant's anti-gay tirade, which resulted in the 33 year ban on adoptions by gay parents.

Florida's speaker of the house goes on record that he wants to return to the ban on same gender adoption

Dean Cannon, the speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, wants to return the ban on adoption by same-sex couples. The 33-year-old ban was overturned by the courts last year, and former governor Charlie Crist ordered the Department of Children and Families to stop enforcing the ban. Former attorney general Bill McCollum decided not to appeal the ruling, and the window for appealing has since closed. Cannon discussed his views in an interview on Jan. 20 with the Florida Baptist Witness, where he said that the Republican-controlled legislature would be prepared to attempt to resurrect the adoption ban depending on how the issue plays out in more court districts or the administration of Gov. Rick Scott. "Until we know how the governor and DCF secretary are going to apply it, it's not a

foregone conclusion that the Legislature should step in," said Cannon. "If we think we should, we're certainly prepared and willing to do so." Last month, Gov. Scott appointed an administrator, David Wilkins, with fundamentalist Christian ties to lead DCF. Newly elected governor Rick Scott opposes adoption by same-sex couples, and when pressed on the issue in a recent visit to Pensacola said that due to the court ruling "yes gay persons are allowed to adopt, for now."

"No Homo Mayor" pastor launches hate filled speaking tour

Terry Jones, the Florida pastor who attempted to mark the anniversary of 9/11 by burning the Koran and led a campaign against the candidacy of out gay Gainesville mayor Craig Lowe, is taking his shtick on the road, Joe.My.God reports. Jones will be serving as the primary speaker on the Stand Up America tour, which will encourage Americans and Christians to "stand up." The tour will denounce the "deathstyles" of homosexuality, abortion, and Islam. Jones was barred from traveling to the U.K. for a speaking tour last month, with authorities citing his "extremism." Jones and his Dove World church protested Lowe's mayoral campaign with "No Homo Mayor" signs and attempted to declare 9/11 Interfaith Solidarity Day with the burning of Korans.

Mother sues school over son's bullying

A mother is suing the Flagler County, Florida school district after bullying of her gay son from students and a specific teacher was ignored, News 13 reports: As a freshman at Flagler Palm Coast High School, Herbert said high school has been tough, especially since he's gay. "People haven't been nice, let's put it that way," Herbert said. Herbert said classmates have bullied him before, but now it's gotten worse. One of his teachers has singled him out. "He stood in front of the class and said 'you can't put Mountain Dew or Pepsi in the same fridge or they'll turn gay'. He [also] came over to me and I was like 'hi.' He said hi, like he was imitating me or mocking me," Herbert said. Herbert and his mother said they went to school officials several times, but weren't taken seriously. "As a parent, it's hard

because you feel like you have to be there every day, begging them to please help. That's how I felt," Dorene Davenport said. Herbert has left the school and is looking at other education options. The school district claims they are investigating his case.

Spanish show carried in 4 Florida markets has FCC complaint filed due to anti-gay content

A Federal Communications Commission complaint is being filed against a Spanish-language talk show for its use of offensive language, nudity, and attacks against LGBT people. The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) and the National Hispanic Media Coalition filed the joint complaint to the FCC in regards to the show *José Luis Sin Censura*, which airs twice a day during the week in 37 markets in the U.S, including Miami, Tampa, Orlando, and West Palm Beach. A six-month analysis of the program in 2010 shows blatant use of antigay slurs, verbal and physical attacks against gay people, and hypersexualized images of women. A GLAAD-led protest against the show in 2005 prompted KFC, Chevrolet, and Nissan to pull advertising. GLAAD issued a call to action against it on June 2010 after multiple guests were attacked with homophobic slurs in Spanish. Nearly 1,000 people sent a petition to Lieberman Broadcasting, Inc., which produces the show. GLAAD President Jarrett Barrios said in a statement released Monday that the show does not meet the standards of other Spanish-language programming that he says has become more inclusive and fair when portraying LGBT characters or situations. "It is extremely disturbing to see a show like *José Luis Sin Censura* air this violent language with impunity and without any regard for the safety of our community," Barrios said. "At a time when LGBT youth and adults face harassment and violence, it is unacceptable for media to fuel such a climate of intolerance about our community." According to GLAAD, the show airs on Estrella TV, which is owned by Liberman, and reaches about 70% of the nation's Latino households and millions of Latinos nationwide. The organizations released a video compiling some of the offenses being called into question.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED NOW for April 21 event!

Local HIV services are struggling under record budget cuts. Medication and services have been drastically cut. OASIS, in sponsorship with the nationally-recognized Dining Out for Life foundation, brings you a unique opportunity to help those affected by HIV/AIDS. Restaurants throughout our four-county area will generously donate a portion of the sales obtained during this event to OASIS. All funds raised will be used locally to help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and provide humanitarian support and services to those affected by HIV in Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties. To learn more about this event, including how to participate as a restaurant, sponsor, or volunteer please call Paul at (850) 314-0959 or e-mail him at oasis9@cox.net. Visit the Dining Out for Life website, www.diningoutforlife.com, to learn more about the event, and to see what local restaurants are participating.

OUR AMERICA



Navy to finish DADT implantation training by June 30th

The Navy announced Tuesday, Feb 8, it will finish training all of its members on the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell" by June 30. Leaders from each of the military branches submitted their training plans to the Pentagon Friday, but the Navy made its plans public, *The Washington Post* reports. Each branch is required to train their personnel in three top-down intervals: first military chaplains, lawyers, and civilian public affairs officers, then commanding officers, and finally rank and file troops. April 30 is the goal date to finish commander training, and then rank-and-file sailors should be done with their training by June 30. Because President Barack Obama, Defense secretary Robert M. Gates, and Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, Adm. Mike Mullen must certify that all members of the members of the military have been sufficiently trained before the ban is officially lifted, the earliest that full implementation could happen would be September, said Aubrey Sarvis, executive director of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network.

Colo police officer resigns after being identified as posting anti-gay web comments from work computer

An officer in the Douglas County, Colo., sheriff's department resigned after 13 years of service after posting several antigay and racist comments on websites using his work computer, provided by the county. Lt. Jeff Engor stepped down Tuesday, Feb 8, after it was confirmed that he left hundreds of postings on sites for KUSA, an NBC affiliate, and the Denver Channel, an ABC affiliate, the latter station reports. Undersheriff Tony Spurlock called the comments Engor left, under the handle Abu Mubutt, "very shocking and inappropriate." In addition to making disparaging remarks about gay people in regard to the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell," Engor also attacked religious figures, immigrants, and Democrats. On December 20, regarding DADT repeal, he wrote, "New military [sic] slogans: The few, the queer, the Marines! Butt Rangers lead the way! Be as gay as you can be! Aim for a high hard one, Air Force! Join the Navy, see naked men!" After several complaints to the station, administrators for the Denver Channel turned his IP address over to government officials, which helped them figure out it was Engor leaving the comments (he made it clear in his comments, that he also worked for the government). He was confronted by sheriff's department superiors Tuesday morning, and resigned Tuesday afternoon.

Head of MCC named to presidents faith advisory council

The White House on Friday, Feb 4, announced that President Obama designated the head of the LGBT-inclusive Metropolitan Community Church as among 12 appointees to his faith advisory council. The president named Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, the MCC's global leader, to his Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. The council is charged with making recommendations to the government on improving relationships with religious institutions. In a statement, Obama expressed pleasure with being able to announce the 12 new appointees. The White House statement says that he'll name more appointees at a later date. "I am pleased to announce that these experienced and committed individuals have agreed to join this administration, and I look forward to working with them in the months and years ahead," he said. According to the biography provided by the White House, Wilson, a lesbian, is "one of the nation's leading LGBT pastors" and held several roles in the MCC before becoming its global leader. "Rev. Wilson has been an active voice on HIV issues, prisoner treatment programs, LGBT issues, and women's rights," the statement reads. Sharon Groves, acting director of the Human Rights Campaign's religion and faith program, said "there could not be a better choice for the president's advisory council" than Wilson. "Rev. Wilson is a lifelong advocate for justice of all marginalized communities, particularly the LGBT persons," Groves said. "She is smart, compassionate, deeply faithful person who has devoted her life to justice."

Cops throw back drinks during raid on Atlanta gay bar

Prior to the raid on the Atlanta Eagle bar, two undercover police officers downed several shots of Jägermeister, according to information provided in a lawsuit against the city. Of the three undercover Atlanta police officers investigating the bar before the September 10, 2009, raid, two of them — Bennie Bridges and Jared Watkins — drank heavily, according to the bartender, and later submitted receipts for their bar tabs to the Atlanta Police Department. *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reports that on the night of the raid, Bridges spent \$50 on drinks while Watkins spent \$60. A third officer, according to the story, spent only \$10. Information taken from the now-settled lawsuit against the city of Atlanta also revealed that on the night of May 31, 2009, five officers visited the bar undercover and claimed to have spent \$5 each. Three other officers reportedly spent \$10, \$20, and \$29, while Bridges, the lead investigator, spent \$60. The *Journal-Constitution* reports that both a witness and a supervisor later signed off on the officers' ex-

penses. Atlanta Police Department spokesman Carlos Campos said that even though officers are not permitted to consume intoxicating agents while on duty, "exceptions are made for employees working undercover on specific law enforcement operations. Those exceptions must be approved ahead of time in writing by an employee's supervisor, and must be limited to prevent the impairment of the employee." Still, said attorney Dan Grossman, who filed the lawsuit in federal court, "that's a lot of booze. That goes beyond fitting in. ... If they could have made some argument that it's essential to an undercover investigation, they should have left the location once the raid started and left it to those who were sober." Officer Bridges was arrested earlier this month on charges of speeding, DUI, and possession of marijuana and has been on paid leave.

MN considers state wide protections of lgbt persons

Montana's House Judiciary Committee is considering whether to include LGBT people in the state's antidiscrimination law, KFBB.com reports. "These are our sons, daughters and neighbors and constitutes and they are entitled to live a free life from discrimination," said Democratic state representative Edie McClafferty, who has introduced legislation that would add sexual orientation and gender identity to the Montana Human Rights Act. But McClafferty's bill was also met with opposition from some antigay groups during a Friday hearing in Helena: "This bill actually discriminates against me and those who believe as I do that homosexuality and transgender and all of these things is an abomination to God," said Harold Himes, a pastor and a member of Montana Eagle Forum.

Transgender candidate challenges anti-gay pastor in bid for Amarillo mayor

Sandra Dunn, a transgender woman, is challenging the mayoral aspirations of a homophobic pastor in Amarillo, Tex. Dunn is running against David Grisham, a fundamentalist preacher who previously called for a boycott of Houston because it has a lesbian mayor. "The more people that run, the better," Grisham told the *Amarillo Globe-News* after hearing Dunn was a candidate. "I'm not sure that's who you want as mayor. If they're indecisive about who they are, are they indecisive about other issues?" Dunn, 53, is currently getting her Master's Degree and previously served in the Army. She previously ran a supply business but closed it after her business partner was murdered inside the shop. Dunn says she supports sex education in Amarillo's schools, but opposes a ban on smoking.

WORLD VIEW

India's high court defers gay rights petition hearing until April

The Supreme Court of India said Monday, Feb 7, that it would defer until April hearing all petitions regarding the landmark gay rights decision that decriminalized gay sex. According to Tehelka, "The Bench, comprising Justice GS Singhvi and Justice AK Ganguly, was hearing several petitions filed by political, social and religious organisations opposing the Delhi High Court order that decriminalised homosexuality. The Bench said, 'We have read through all the 19 petitioners and there is substantial matter in all. Hence, we will hear all the 19 petitions.'" Of the 19 petitions, four support the 2009 Delhi High Court ruling that overturned Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, a remnant of British colonial rule that made homosexuality punishable by a prison term up to a life sentence. Some 15 petitioners oppose the ruling. "Of the 15 petitioners opposing the order in the Supreme Court were BP Singhal, a senior VHP leader, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, the Utkal Christian Council and the Apostolic Churches Alliance among others," reports Tehelka. Other opponents of the gay rights decision include famous yoga expert Baba Ramdev, who claims that homosexuality can be "cured" through breathing exercises.

Israel appoints 1st gay judged

Dori Spivak, a lawyer and the former chairman of Israel's Association for Civil Rights, (ACRI) was named as a judge for Tel Aviv's Labor court on Sunday, Feb 20, becoming the country's first gay judge. Spivak, a Harvard graduate who lectures in Tel Aviv University's law department, has been involved in several high profile gay rights cases, according to *TheJC.com*. In 1997, he was involved in landmark case in which the Supreme Court forced a state channel to broadcast a program about gay teenagers. A lawyer for ACRI, Dan Yakir, told Israeli newspaper Ynet that the appointment would "contribute to developing human rights."

Budapest court okays gay pride parade

A Budapest court has green-lighted the city's upcoming gay pride march, overruling a police decision last week denying permission to event organizers who wanted to extend the route to the parliament building. Pink News reports that Budapest police had banned the June 18 celebration due to "traffic concerns," though pride organizers claimed the decision was politically motivated. But the city's Metropolitan Court reversed that decision, siding with the Rainbow Mission Foundation, an LGBT group. "The court's decision was a victory not only

for the community of lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender people, but for the right of all Hungarians to freedom of assembly," said Boris Dittrich of Human Rights Watch in New York.

Ireland elects 1st gay Member of Parliament

Ireland has elected its first openly gay Teachta Dála, the Irish equivalent of an Member of Parliament. Dominic Hannigan, a Labour politician, was one of three TDs elected to the seat of Meath East this weekend. The former civil engineer was elected as a Seanad Éireann senator on the Industrial and Commercial panel in 2007. In 2006, while a county councilor, he marched with his partner in the Dublin Pride march. Ireland has had openly gay senators in the past and may have its first gay president this year, if polls prove correct. Senator David Norris, 66, is an independent senator known for his campaigning on gay rights. Recent polls have put him at the front of the race to succeed current president Mary McAleese in the fall.

UK court prevents homophobic couple from adopting

The High Court has backed a council's decision to bar a couple from fostering children because they oppose homosexuality. Pentecostal Christians Eunice and Owen Johns, of Derby, were told by the city council in 2007 that a fostering panel had rejected them because of their views. They told a social worker that they could not tell a foster child that homosexuality was acceptable. They applied to the High Court to clarify policies on foster parents who have "traditional" views on sexuality. Today, the court agreed with the council's decision. The Johns, who were supported by the Christian Legal Centre, say they do not recognise sex before marriage, or the validity of civil partnerships. Mrs Johns said in November: "The council said: 'Do you know, you would have to tell [children] that it's OK to be homosexual?' "But I said I couldn't do that because my Christian beliefs won't let me. Morally, I couldn't do that. Spiritually I couldn't do that." Stonewall chief executive Ben Summerskill said: "We're delighted that the High Court's landmark decision has favoured 21st century decency above 19th century prejudice. In any fostering case the interests of the 60,000 children in care should override the bias of any prospective parent. "Thankfully, Mr and Mrs Johns's outdated views aren't just out of step with the majority of people in modern Britain but those of many Christians too. If you wish to be involved in the delivery of a public service, you should be prepared to provide it fairly to anyone."

Spanish cities honor Gay communities

Three Spanish cities are recognizing LGBT people via public works. In March, the Barcelona city government will place a large marble pink triangle in Ciudadel Park, where the Catalan Parliament is located. 'This is a necessary monument to remember the discrimination, repression, humiliation, persecution, attacks and assassinations that the LGTB community suffered for centuries and very especially during the Franco dictatorship,' said Antonio Guirado, secretary general of the Catalan LGBT umbrella group Gay Lesbian Coordinator. 'It is an act of justice and reparation but also will become a permanent symbol of the commitment of the city of Barcelona in the fight against homophobia.' The city of Gijón is creating a park called 'June 28, Gay Pride Day' alongside the Montevil soccer field. And La Coruña is renaming a street after the late Gay activist Tomás Fábregas, who emigrated to the U.S. at age 21 and was active in the fight against the U.S. ban on HIV-positive foreign visitors and immigrants, which was repealed in 2009. At the 1992 International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam, which he attended as a board member of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, Fábregas publicly dared the Bush administration to block his re-entry into the U.S. It did not do so. Fábregas died in 1994.

Belarusian Gays allowed to stage public protest

Gays in Belarus staged the nation's first-ever authorized public Gay event February 14 in Minsk, reported *GayRussia.ru*. The LGBT group IDAHO Belarus held a rally against homophobia in a park near the Justice Ministry, with approval from the city's Executive Committee and police department. The small group carried banners reading, 'Love who you want' and 'Homophobia = fascism.' About two dozen journalists covered the rally, outnumbering the protesters. 'For the first time, the only thing that we feared was neither the police nor the homophobic hooligans but the cold,' organizer Sergey Praded told *GayRussia.ru*. 'This is a very good first step.' Last year, the city's Executive Committee banned the Gay pride march. When activists ignored the ban, several were aggressively arrested for taking part in an unsanctioned public action. Moscow Pride founder Nikolai Alekseev, who joined that march, said police were 'brutal and violent.' 'I've never run so fast in my life,' he said. He and activist Ira Fet evaded arrest by running into a building and hiding in a trash room for 20 minutes.



MOVING FORWARD
GAY GRASSROOTS
 Northwest Florida
 GAY LESBIAN BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER QUESTIONING ALLIES

Here are the advocacy goals we have set for 2011:

- 1] having all Pensacola City & Escambia County; anti-discrimination policies updated to include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression;
- 2] establishing Gay Straight Alliances (GSA) clubs in all Escambia County High Schools;
- 3] creating reliable, safe, & affirming housing options for lgbt youth who find themselves homeless or in an unsafe home;
- 4] retaining adoption equality; and
- 5] advancing marriage equality.

City & County Anti-Discrimination Policies:

We have seen promise of a more cordial and productive relationship with our current Pensacola City Council and Escambia County Commission. We believe that making sure that all city and county anti-discrimination policies include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression should be our first project as it will have the broadest reach and will set a foundation that all future initiatives can be built upon.

County Wide Gay Straight Alliances:

The recent rash of anti-gay bullying has demonstrated more than ever the need for GSA clubs. Until recently the Escambia County School Board has had policies and/or practices that thwarted all attempts to established these clubs. Realizing an important opening in their obstructive measures we are now moving forward with enlisting adults who would like to be a sponsor for an individual school.

Homelessness /safe housing needs among LGBT Youth:

It's estimated that between 20 and 40 percent of all homeless youth identify as LGBT. The shelter and foster care systems often exclude them or perpetuate violence and stigma against them. The housing crisis and increasing stress on families means more LGBT youth are likely to be seeking shelter in our local area. We are currently investigating three avenues: a method of insuring potential lgbt affirming host families and lgbt youth are included in existing place-

ment programs; creating a new independent placement program; and long term planning for establishing a full time safe shelter facility.

Adoption and Marriage Equality:

We will continue to collaborate with all groups in support of adoption and marriage equality, and etc.

Work begins to gain inclusive language in city and county policies

Together with our local ALCU chapter and local lgbt community stakeholders/leaders are moving forward with our efforts to get Pensacola city and Escambia county to update their anti-discrimination polices to include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression language. We have entered discussion with lgbt leaders in other Florida cities who have been successful in this area. In addition we are in the process of identifying and reaching out to business, civic, and religious organizations and leaders who will join us as allies in the important project. Any who is interested in the project is encouraged to contact us.

We are re-launching our website

It won't be long before you will be able to quickly access our monthly events and activity calendar; look over all past issues of our Rainbow Blades newsletter; keep up with our progress on our current advocacy goals; learn more about our beginning, history and organizational structure; view our PensacolaPRIDE 2011 schedule; and more! We will send out an e-mail announcement once our website: www.GGnwfl.com is up and running. We would like to extend a very special thank you to Richie Gibbs for volunteering his expertise is creating and maintaining this great website.

Simplified membership levels introduced

Previously Gay Grassroots has used a six tiered membership level concept. In an effort make become a paid member we are going to a less confusing concept using three easily understood levels; individual; couple; and family. Individual yearly membership is now \$15, couple (any two persons) \$25; and family (all members living in one household) \$40. We are currently looking in to what is needed to accept credit cards once our new website is

active. You can find a membership form on the back page of this newsletter. Please join today.



You could win \$100


PensacolaPRIDE roundtable planning meeting it was decided that we would join pride festivals around the world in adopting the global theme "Pride Around the World" for use as the local theme for PensacolaPRIDE 2011, to be held Monday October 10th through Sunday October 16th, with our signature Festival in the Park to be held on Saturday October 15th in historic Seville Square. It was also decided to once again hold an art contest to select the image that will be used on the cover of the PensacolaPRIDE program (and all other publicity materials), as well as being reproduced on all 2011 PensacolaPRIDE merchandise. The winner of this contest will receive \$100 cash, and be acknowledged in our Rainbow Blades newsletter and the PensacolaPRIDE program. Everyone is invited to enter this contest. Artwork must be e-mailed to GayGrassrootsNWFL@gmail.com by 12 noon, Friday March 25th. Artwork must include the wording, "Pride Around the World", no other text should be included. Winning artwork becomes the property of GayGrassroots and may be altered for reproduction purposes, the artist will have the 1st option of making any need changes. For more information please e-mail your questions to GayGrassrootsNWFL@gmail.com. GOOD LUCK! Watch for details of how everyone in the community will be included in the selection process and be able to win 2 free tickets to all events during PensacolaPRIDE 2011.

Equality House

Home to Pensacola's LGBT Community

We are in need of more persons to serve as Volunteer Ambassadors. In this role you will serve as a host between our organization and the local lgbt community. During this brief training you will learn about our beginnings, our structure, and our plans for the future. Any who attended the training and wishes to be considered for this vital volunteer role should complete and return their application ASAP. Our next opportunity for you to take the class is Wednesday March 23 at 6pm. Call us at 429-7551 for details.

VOLUNTEER



TRAINING

MEETING REPORTS

Statewide strategy meeting on preserving adoption equality

Gay Grassroots President, Doug Landreth, and UWF GSA members, ?????? ?????, ????? ?????, ??? ??????, joined 80 other lgbt community leaders, representing 44 organizations, on Friday Feb 5, to discuss plans for preserving the newly gained adoption equality in the state of Florida. This workshop was conducted by the ACLU of Florida, GLISEN and Equality Florida, all major players in Florida lgbt advocacy. Lessons learned from the failed efforts to defeat our state's Constitutional Amendment 2, which defined marriage as only being between one man and one woman, will be used to plan for the certain battles that lie ahead regarding adoption equality.

Knowing that there are many well funded and powerful anti-gay organizations that have vowed to re-enter the adoption battle in Florida, much of our early strategies and tactics details remain embargoed so as not to give our opponents information that they could use to plan their attacks.

One area that past combatants have always held the upper hand in is their "fidelity of message" whereas our communities' diversity often has lead to inconstant messaging. Tactic's to down play to lgbt angle may have prevented lgbt power players to be motivated to participate. It was also agreed that having had 2 large unrelated statewide agencies both trying to state their own independent campaigns divided the donor pool leaving neither group with adequate funding. Concerns over the accuracy

of data collection and it's interruption, from both groups, remain unresolved. An advisory board was formed at the conclusion of full workshop and within a week they disseminated suggestions that included: assessing the current operating environment, with an emphasis placed on our ability to build a coalition capable of working effectively to engage the community around adoption and a potential threat to the status quo; determine initial steps required to aggregate available data and identify gaps that will be filled through a shared polling/research project; outline the key focus areas to serve as a foundation for a campaign plan (should a formal campaign be required).

The planning group agreed that a coalition of interested parties can successfully engage the community, while aggregating existing data and identifying information gaps that currently exist. Everyone agrees that a threat to the status quo exists, however the threat may not be imminent dependent on current intelligence being accurate (court challenges or efforts to addend the state constitution.) It's important to create a baseline assessment of the public's attitudes around adoption by LGBT families. This is best accomplished in a multi-step process: the immediate completion of an IVR (automated interactive voice response) poll to create an initial baseline of public attitudes around the issue (3 groups have agreed to fund this polling with a goal of completing this work prior to the beginning of the 2011 legislative session); the collection of 3 proposals from reputable research firms for a project to assess public attitudes in-depth, while beginning to test potential messages and viable messengers through a combination of polling and focus group work (the planning group identified 3 potential polling firms and has requested proposals); an agreement among partner groups to share intelligence regarding legislative activities that might be problematic, or indicate

acceleration toward the creation of amendment language (the planning group will be hosting conference calls between organizations and individuals lobbying legislators during the Session).

The planning group then advanced the conversation to include some initial discussions of what elements are critical to building a single, unified campaign (should a formal campaign be necessary). All partners agreed that a large, broad-based coalition would be required to create a competitive campaign capable of defeating a ballot initiative effort to reinstate the adoption ban. Additionally, it was agreed that a campaign plan would require well developed and adequately resourced strategies in the following critical areas: Legislative, Research, Field Work, Legal, and Media.

It's important that we continue to collaborate, communicate, educate and organize! Everyone's involvement in this work is critically important, and the planning group is focused on bringing you the information necessary to make good decisions. While we are in project mode versus campaign mode, everyone has a critical role to play in making our efforts a success.

As the politicians in Tallahassee continue to publicly object to the court's ruling and we need the voices of citizens across the state of Florida to get educated and get active. Gay Grassroots has teamed with the Panhandle Chapter of the ACLU to bring in GLAAD (The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) to provide education and speaker training. This workshop will also include a documentary screening of *In Anita's Wake* (<http://www.vickinantzfilms.com>) about Anita Bryant's anti-gay tirade. This important training will be held Saturday April 16th, time and location to be announced soon.

Please plan to attend these local meetings:



OPEN MEETING
*everyone invited
join in our
progress*

TUE MARCH 8, 6PM
We will discuss our top 5 advocacy goals for 2011 including our plans to have anti-discrimination policies for Pensacola City & Escambia County updated to include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression language. Everyone is welcome to attend this and all Gay Grassroots meetings. Meeting to be held at the Equality House, 317 N. Spring Street, Pensacola, FL 32501. **REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED**



WED MARCH 23, 6PM
Come learn how Gay Grassroots, Pensacola-PRIDE, and the Equality House got started. Lean about our goals and current projects. Become a Volunteer Ambassador for your community. Everyone welcome to attend this training. Training to be held at the Equality House, 317 N. Spring Street, Pensacola, FL 32501. **REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED**



PLANNING ROUNDTABLE
*everyone invited
to help with
this festival*

THUR MARCH 24, 6PM
Come help us plan for a bigger and better festival in 2011. Work will begin on entertainment selection, event planning, as well as identifying advertisers, sponsors, and donors. Everyone welcome to attend this training. Training to be held at the Equality House, 317 N. Spring Street, Pensacola, FL 32501. **REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED**

HOT TOPIC

Can we go back to shopping at Target?

Target Corp., which angered gays last year with a donation to a political group supporting an antigay Minnesota gubernatorial candidate, has amended its policy for political contributions. Among the changes, reports the *Washington Blade*, is the establishment of a committee of senior executives to oversee donations to candidates, parties, and political action committees. "The policy committee and our CEO are responsible for balancing our business interests with any other considerations that may be important to our team members, our guests or other stakeholders," Target spokeswoman Jessica Carlson told the *Blade*. Minneapolis-based Target, a retailer known for trendy but inexpensive merchandise, drew protests and boycott threats last year after it was revealed it had donated \$150,000 to MN Forward, which in turn took out ads supporting Republican gubernatorial nominee Tom Emmer, an opponent of marriage equality and other LGBT causes. He narrowly lost the November election to gay-friendly Democrat Mark Dayton. Carlson told the *Blade* the experience led Target to "evolve" its giving policy. "These changes are really reflective of that perspective that we gained over the 2010 election cycle," she said. She declined to say if Target had consulted with outside groups on the matter, but an anonymous source told the *Blade* some LGBT rights advocates were involved. Carlson also emphasized that the retailer has donated to gay groups and events, such as Minnesota's Project 515 and Twin Cities Pride, and that it plans to offer support to pride events in Chicago and San Francisco. Equality-minded little monsters undoubtedly put their paws up Friday, Feb 18, when Lady Gaga announced that her exclusive album distribution deal with Target requires the company to support LGBT charity groups and reform its past support for antigay causes. Since last summer, the Minnesota-based retailer has been under fire, including a high-profile boycott and tarnished rating in the Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index, for a \$150,000 donation to MN Forward, a group that backed failed Republican gubernatorial candidate and marriage equality opponent Tom Emmer. "That discussion was one of the most intense conversations I've ever had in a business meeting," the pop star told *Billboard* magazine, assuring fans her deal with Target was "hinged upon their reform." The Gaga exhalation followed related news that Target updated its political giving policy upon an internal review after the 2010 election cycle. Responses to the new political giving framework ran the gamut from supportive to

dismissive to wait-and-see among observers who spoke with *The Advocate*. "I think it's a win," said Dot Belstler, executive director of Twin Cities Pride, which had met with Target about the MN Forward contribution. "They admitted they screwed up and as a result of the community outcry, they were able to actually move forward." Twin Cities Pride is a past and potential future recipient of support from Target, which also plans to support Pride events in San Francisco and Chicago. Next year, in the fashionable downtown areas of both cities, Target plans to open "CityTarget," a scaled-down, hipper version of its store, in addition to openings in Los Angeles and Seattle. In San Francisco last summer at the height of the controversy, gay former supervisor turned mayoral candidate Bevan Dufty initially fought the prospect of Target opening at two locations. He relented when he concluded a standoff would only alienate the powerful brand and eliminate opportunities for friendly pressure on issues like marriage equality and anti-bullying initiatives. "Hopefully, it's a good step," said Dufty of the new policy. "But I think it's a step that reflects on how difficult the past several months have been for Target. This is the worst \$150,000 they ever spent." One group unwilling to budge from confrontation is MoveOn.org, which called for a boycott of Target in August and said it had no intention of recanting in light of the new announcement. "Not much has changed," said Robin Beck, campaign director for MoveOn.org. "As far as we can tell, they've expanded the number of people who will be making decisions about the political giving they do. There's no apology for the giving they've done, there's no commitment to equality. There's no commitment to stop funding 527s. There's no commitment to not use corporate funds." Prospective funding for shadowy 527 groups and 501c(4) organizations prompts concern in an era of unfettered corporate political spending after the *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* decision by the Supreme Court. The Target contribution to MN Forward, which came to light because of Minnesota's more stringent state disclosure laws, became the first hot-button example in the new campaign finance landscape. Other questions pertain to the composition of the Target policy committee. Twin Cities Pride's Belstler said she understood the GLBT Business Council led by out director of enterprise Daniel Duty would have a "seat at the table," but a Target spokesperson would not confirm any participation. In an interview published this week, Duty described Target as "a great place to work" and said that several top executives were openly gay. Target spokesperson Jessica Carlson declined to say how many people would be on the committee or to what extent equality would factor into their political giving decisions. She referred all inquiries to the new

guidelines on the website. Although the membership of the policy committee is unclear, people familiar with the changes said the panel would at least include more participants, which most interpreted as a positive sign. "I think it's good that there's broader representation in the decision-making process," said Monica Meyer, executive director of OutFront Minnesota, which had criticized the Target contribution to MN Forward. "It allows for more input in looking at a number of factors that go into using corporate dollars to back a candidate," she said. If recent patterns hold, the political giving by Target will continue to be Republican-leaning but not out of sync with other big-box retailers. According to the Center for Response Politics, the Target PAC gave nearly \$250,000 to candidates for federal office in 2010, with 44% going to Democrats and 54% contributed to Republicans. By comparison, Wal-Mart and Best Buy gave \$1.3 million and \$79,000 respectively to federal candidates last year and tilted Democratic in contributions, though both companies have also favored Republicans in recent years. Recipients of Target PAC money include Congresswoman Michele Bachmann, the marriage equality foe from Minnesota, the company's home base. The House Tea Party caucus founder, she also has received individual support from Target CEO Gregg Steinhafel and his family. Corporations view political contributions through an increasingly complex lens of environments, markets and stakeholders, but giving is always an expression of business priorities. Still, when Target defended the contributions to MN Forward and Bachmann as economic decisions, it only enraged many loyal LGBT employees and store guests who held the brand known for progressive workplace policies and promoting gay designers to a higher standard. "The nature of the political engagement that any company does is by definition subjective," said Bob Witeck, chief executive of Witeck-Combs Communications. "They may have some ground rules that guide it, for example, but if you're going to rule out a candidate or elected official who is really great on certain issues or not on others, you prioritize." Looking ahead, some activists wonder how Target and partners like Lady Gaga will choose to prioritize next year, when Minnesota could face a constitutional amendment against marriage equality advanced by the Republican-controlled legislature. The Democratic governor Mark Dayton, who supports marriage equality, cannot stop such a proposal under the state rules. "I think she's done a great job, I really do," said Charlie Rounds, a Minneapolis-based activist who raised concerns about a bad romance between Gaga and Target in the blogosphere. "I think she went out and went to bat, but I think we're going to have this conversation a year from now."

MARCH 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div data-bbox="142 331 657 436"> <h2>Equality House</h2> <p><i>Home to Pensacola's LGBT Community</i></p> </div> <p>Unless noted events take place at the Equality House, 317 N. Spring Street, Pensacola, FL, 32501</p> <div data-bbox="321 531 435 716"> </div> <p>FREE Rapid HIV Testing is available at the Equality House, call 429-7551 for more information.</p>			<div data-bbox="711 289 912 466"> </div> <p>6PM-8PM Equality House will be reserved for persons 50 and above in order to provide a relaxing atmosphere for this affinity group, all ages welcome 10am til 6pm.</p>	<div data-bbox="917 268 1112 499"> </div> <p>6:30PM Come catch up with old friends or make new friends at this affordable buffet dinner @ Panda China on E Gregory St.</p>	<div data-bbox="1120 268 1315 562"> </div> <p>6PM-9PM PRIZES FOR BEST MASK & BEST BEADS REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED</p>	<div data-bbox="1323 289 1526 487"> </div> <p>10AM-8PM Equality House will be reserved for teens ages 13 to 18 years today, (adult supervision will be provided) in order to provide a day of activities for this affinity group.</p>
<div data-bbox="110 814 284 982"> </div> <p>6PM OPEN MEETING <i>info Louis</i> 850 291-6859 <i>louiscooper@cox.net</i></p>	<div data-bbox="300 814 503 1045"> </div> <p>5:30PM OPEN DISCUSSION <i>info Brian</i> 850 375-2524 <i>bdjeike@mac.com</i></p>	<div data-bbox="511 835 706 934"> </div> <p>OPEN MEETING <i>everyone invited join in our progress</i> 6PM we will discuss our anti-discrimination efforts for city & county policies, and more REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED</p>	<div data-bbox="714 835 909 1354"> <p>This is a special rescheduled meeting as we were unable to meet in January. PLEASE TRY TO ATTEND!</p> </div>	<div data-bbox="925 819 1104 997"> </div> <p>6PM OPEN SUPPORT GROUP <i>info Marge</i> 850 932-0397 www.PFLAG.org</p>	<div data-bbox="1323 819 1526 1060"> </div> <p>11AM-3PM Equality House will be reserved for parents and their young children in order to provide an afternoon of activities for this affinity group, all ages welcome 3pm til 8pm.</p>	
<div data-bbox="105 1365 300 1564"> </div> <p>COMMITTEE MEETING 12:30 PM</p> <div data-bbox="138 1711 251 1858"> </div> <p>6PM</p>		<div data-bbox="560 1417 868 1701"> </div> <p>10AM-8PM BOTH DAYS come help us spruce our home up as we get ready for spring</p>		<div data-bbox="917 1354 1112 1575"> </div> <p>6-9PM come by for a taste of Ireland CORNBEEF & CABBAGE, IRISH STEW, SHEPARD'S PIE ST PATTY'S TRIVIA CONTEST</p>	<div data-bbox="1323 1386 1526 1596"> </div> <p>11AM-3PM come welcome spring with old and new friends HOTDOGS, BURGERS, BAKED BEANS, SLAW, POTATO SALAD, CHIPS, LEMONAIDE</p>	

MARCH 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>20</p>  <p>LGBT AA 6PM OPEN MEETING info Louis 850 291-6859 louiscooper@cox.net</p>	<p>21</p>  <p>ACLU AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION of FLORIDA 6PM OPEN MEETING info Dale 850 429-9128 www.ACLUfl.org</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>  <p>VOLUNTEER TRAINING 6PM become a Volunteer Ambassador REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED</p>	<p>24</p>  <p>PRIDE Pensacola PLANNING ROUNDTABLE <i>everyone invited to help with this festival</i> 6PM we need you to insure our festival continues to get bigger and better REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED</p>	<p>25</p>  <p>GAME NIGHT 6PM come play one of our many games, or bring your favorite FEEL FREE TO BRING FINGER FOODS TO SHARE</p>	<p>26</p>  <p>National Woman's History Month Celebration 7PM-10PM movie, refreshments, and more CO-SPONSORED BY </p>
<p>27</p>  <p>NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN 4PM OPEN MEETING info 850 346-6004 nwflnow@gmail.com</p>  <p>LGBT AA 6 PM</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>  <p>This is a change of date, due to our St. Patrick's Day Party falling on the 3rd Thur of the month, March 17th.</p>	<p>31</p>  <p>GAY GRASSROOTS OPEN MEETING <i>everyone invited join in our progress</i> 6PM we will discuss our plans for gsa clubs and lgbt homelessness REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED</p>	<p>APRIL 1</p>  <p>potluck dinner 7PM come enjoy a laid back meal with old and new friends CHICKEN AND RICE WILL BE PROVIDED</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>LGBT TEENS 10AM-8PM <i>Equality House will be reserved for teens ages 13 to 18 years today, (adult supervision will be provided) in order to provide a day of activities for this affinity group.</i></p>
<p>3</p>  <p>LGBT AA 6PM OPEN MEETING info Louis 850 291-6859 louiscooper@cox.net</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>50 Plus coffee chat 6PM-8PM <i>Equality House will be reserved for persons 50 and above in order to provide a relaxing atmosphere for this affinity group, all ages welcome 10am til 6pm.</i></p>	<p>7</p>  <p>Family Dinner 6:30PM <i>Come catch up with old friends or make new friends at this affordable buffet dinner @ Panda China on E Gregory St.</i></p>	<p>8</p>  <p>Mo'Nite</p>	<p>9</p>  <p>PARENT & CHILD ICE CREAM DAY 11AM-3PM <i>Equality House will be reserved for parents and their young children in order to provide an afternoon of activities for this affinity group, all ages welcome 3pm til 8pm.</i></p>

GOOD NEWS

7 year old donates to gay charities

A seven-year-old has donated \$140 to the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center and the Human Rights Campaign Foundation (HRC) because he doesn't think it's right for gay people not to be treated equally. The child, Malcolm, was given \$140 by his parents to donate to the charity of his choice. He chose to split the money between the gay centre and the HRC. The check was accompanied by a hand written note that read: "I am sending you this money because I don't think it's fair that Gay people are not treated equally." A note from the boy's mother said: "To teach the importance of improving the world around him, Malcolm was given \$140 to give away to the charity of his choice. After hearing a story on the radio about the mistreatment of gays and lesbians, Malcolm became both upset and curious about the issue...to help, he chose to split his money between the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center and the Human Rights Campaign Foundation."

After school forced to allow lesbian couple enter dance together they are greeted by cheering students

It took less than 24 hours for a federal judge to resolve a lawsuit filed by two lesbian teens who wanted to walk together in a processional at their high school pepfest in Minnesota. For Champlin Park High School's Snow Days Pepfest, Sarah Lindstrom and Desiree Shelton had been elected to the royalty court and were planning to walk together when the school district suddenly ushered in a new policy. Rather than allowing students to be paired as couples, the new decree had the teenagers walking with an adult companion. The suit, filed Friday, Jan 25, on behalf of Lindstrom and Shelton by the Southern Poverty Law Center, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and the law firm Faegre & Benson, was resolved the following day after a six-hour mediation before U.S. district judge Susan Nelson in St. Paul. According to the settlement, members of the royalty court are permitted to "select a meaningful person in their life" to escort them in the processional. The suit was dismissed without admissions of fault. Students at Champlin Park High School in Minneapolis cheered as two lesbian students who fought for the right to walk together as part of the school's royalty court entered hand in hand at the Snow Days Pep Fest Mon, Jan 31. "It felt amazing," Desiree Shelton told the Associated Press. "I think we were too focused on getting to the stage" to notice the dozens of students who rose to their feet and applauded as they entered.

GLSEN wins \$250,000 for lgbt student

programs from Pepsi

The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network has taken second place in the Pepsi Refresh contest, winning \$250,000 to help fund the group's Safe Space campaign and fight anti-gay bullying in schools. "When I got the news this morning, I wasn't sure if I was still dreaming," GLSEN Executive Director Eliza Byard said in a statement. "It appears that GLSEN has finished in second place in the Pepsi Refresh voting, winning \$250,000 in support of our Safe Space Campaign. The official announcement of the results won't take place until Feb. 23, but it looks as if we've done it." Byard says the funding will help promote adult support for LGBT students in 10,000 schools across the country. "This funding is going to a truly critical effort to make schools more welcoming places for LGBT students and any student dealing with anti-LGBT bias."

Howard Stern erases "fag" from his vocabulary

Howard Stern admits he sometimes slips and uses the word "fag," but he was taken aback by how much Lisa Lampanelli used it on his radio show because he thinks gay people are too often "bullied" and "abused." "I know Lisa's kidding around and all that, but I've tried to change my thought about that word. I've tried to stop using it ... I'd rather not use it," he said when a caller asked if he was bothered by the comedian's excessive use of the word on his Sirius XM radio show. "I have a tremendous compassion for people that are homosexual. I feel that they are bullied and abused in our society. They take such shit just because they like to be with the same sex, and it's so absurd to me. "It must be a terrible thing to be exposed to that kind of hatred and be hated just because of your sexuality."

Ross Dress For Less chain makes changes after transgender discrimination suit

Following the ejection from a Ross Dress for Less store of a transgender woman who was trying on clothes, the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington says that the store is making positive changes to make the company less discriminatory. In November 2010, "Christy_M" posted on a cross-dressing forum that a manager pounded on the dressing room door of the company's Lynnwood, Wash. store and yelled, "You need to get out of the dressing room now!" as she was trying on a sweater dress. Startled and embarrassed, Christy_M left the store, and vomited in the parking lot. "I felt so embarrassed and disgusted with myself," Christy_M wrote. "I have so much shame wearing on me that I can hardly move." In December the ACLU contacted the stores for the unlawful discrimination under Washington state law, writing,

"Ross was legally required to afford (Christy_M) 'full enjoyment' of its Lynnwood store, which includes the right to enter the store and not be treated as unwelcome, unaccepted, undesired or unsolicited." The ACLU of Washington says that California-based Ross Dress for Less has clarified to employees that company policy prohibits discrimination against persons based on gender identity and expression, and that the Ross Stores was drafting policy including a "special instruction" to employees on accommodating customers' gender identities for use of the bathroom and dressing rooms.

High school creates gender neutral homecoming court

In an attempt to be more inclusive of its entire student body, administrators of a Michigan high school have decided to drop "king" and "queen" from its homecoming royalty titles, opting instead for gender-neutral titles. Transgender student Oak Reed was elected homecoming king in September 2010, but the school denied him his crown because he was officially enrolled as female at Mona Shores High School in Muskegon, Mich. Soon after the decision made headlines across the country, administrators including superintendent Terry Babbitt started discussing, with colleagues and students, how to make a more inclusive homecoming court, according to the [Muskegon Chronicle](#). "I'm so glad that the rules have been changed," Reed said in a statement Tuesday. "All I wanted was a chance for all students to participate and be heard. Now my classmates and I can just focus on having a great time at our school dance." In addition to the homecoming court changes, Reed can wear the tuxedo worn by male students for band performances, and he plans to wear a blue cap and gown for graduation, also worn by male students.

ALL OUT ASSAULT

Dr. Phil advises outdated harmful approach to gender expression in children

Dr. Phil advises a parent whose son likes to play with girls' toys and wear girls' clothing to "take the girl things away, and buy him boy toys" on his website's "Ask Dr. Phil" section. Robbie tells Dr. Phil that her 5-year-old son likes to play with Barbies and likes to wear girls' clothing, which she doesn't think is normal. In the segment, she asks the talk-show host how to deal with his behavior. "There are developmental stages in kids, and it is not unusual, particularly for young boys, to experiment and get stuck on certain stimulus items," he says. "This is not a precursor to your son being gay." Dr. Phil, who recently has increased his support for gay and lesbian teens, particularly when it comes to bullying in schools, then suggests that the solution is to take the girls' toys away from the boy. "Direct your son in an unconfusing way. Don't buy him Barbie dolls or girls' clothes. You don't want to do things that seem to support the confusion at this stage of the game. ... Take the girl things away, and buy him boy toys. "Support him in what he's doing, but not in the girl things." Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation President Jarrett Barrios said in a statement to *The Advocate* that Dr. Phil's advice sends the message to children that they should confirm to the "narrow stereotypes of gender roles. "When a media personality like Dr. Phil sends a message to viewers that their children should conform to narrow stereotypes of gender roles, it can make the process of understanding and appreciating who you are more difficult for young people," Barrios said. "What's important here is that every child has the opportunity to express who they are in a way that is safe and nurturing because at the end of the day, our society thrives on children and adults whose interests are as diverse as the people in it."

Utah bill would exclude gay families from all government programs

A Utah legislator introduced a bill Wednesday, Feb 2, that would require all publicly funded programs, laws, and regulations, to ensure they exclude families headed by gay and lesbian couples. Rep. LaVar Christensen writes in the bill's language that "marriage and family pre-date all governments and are supported by and consistent with the Laws of Nature and God, the Creator and Supreme Judge of the World,

affirmed in the nation's founding Declaration of Independence." It also says, "families anchored by both a father and a mother, fidelity within marriage, and enduring devotion to the covenants and responsibilities of marriage are the desired norm." Brandie Balken, executive director of Equality Utah, told the *Salt Lake City Tribune* that the bill could be used to "create a filter for public agencies and a way to target laws, services and funding that currently help single Utahns or Utahns with families that differ from Representative Christensen's."

GA representative equates gays to drug dealers

A Georgia state representative known for his extreme opinions says letting gay people serve in the military is equivalent to allowing drug dealers and other criminals in the ranks. In a wide-ranging interview with *The Marietta Daily Journal*, Rep. Bobby Franklin said of homosexuality, "The Bible says it's a capital offense. You want someone with unrepentant criminal behavior? And it's not just that, neither should adulterers, neither should thieves, neither should a lot of things. The church is full of sinners, but we're told in 1st Corinthians it rattled off the homosexual, the adulterer, the thief, the liar, and such were some of you, but you've been washed, you've been justified and so forth. It's not what you were. You're not punishing a thought. But do you want an unrepentant drug dealer in the military? Same thing." Franklin has authored a variety of unusual bills, seeking to require the state to conduct financial transactions in gold or silver; prevent local governments from regulating the keeping of chickens, rabbits, or goats; exempt Georgia from the U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion; and eliminate property taxes. So far, none of these has passed. Property taxes, he said, are communist. "The first plank of the Communist Manifesto is the abolition of private property and if you tax it you're claiming ownership over it," he told the *Journal*, adding, "We've really adopted all 10 planks of the Communist Manifesto in one form or another in this country." Franklin, in office since 1996, represents a portion of Cobb County, a largely suburban area just north of Atlanta. Cobb County made national news in the early 1990s when the county board passed a resolution condemning homosexuality.

Anti-gay group launches "second hand effects of gay marriage" workshops calling it a health risk greater than smoking

Bob Vander Plaats, a leader of the effort to roll back marriage equality in Iowa, has denied any connection to seminars that portray homosexuality as a public health hazard, but his website continues to promote them, *The Iowa Independent* reports. Vander Plaats was asked about the seminars during a press conference

in Iowa City with former Minnesota governor and potential 2012 Republican presidential candidate Tim Pawlenty. Vander Plaats, who ran for Iowa governor in the primaries last year, is touring the state to promote Family Leader, his new umbrella organization for several groups working for conservative causes, including the repeal of marriage rights for gay couples. Family Leader's website has promoted the seminars, called "The Second-Hand Effects of Same-Sex 'Marriage'" and provided links to information about them, as indicated by a screen capture published by the *Independent*. The site for the seminars, SecondHandEffects.com, says the sessions will expose "the public health crisis of same-sex activity" and also "how same-sex 'marriage' threatens religious liberty." According to the *Independent*, the sponsors of the seminars have also said gay sex is more of a health hazard than smoking. A reporter at the press conference asked Vander Plaats if he agreed with that conclusion. He responded, "I want to listen again to the premise of this question, because I don't believe we've held any conferences on smoking." He said Family Leader has had no role in the seminar series and pledged to look into the website link. He added that the program perhaps "was something done earlier" by the Iowa Family Policy Center, one of the groups under Family Leader's umbrella.



New study links anti-gay bullying to health problems

A newly released study shows that antigay bullying can cause hormonal disruptions that may lead to increased suicide attempts, memory loss, cardiovascular problems, and bone density depletion. The Gazette of Montreal reports on the study authored by Michael Benibgui, who claims it is the first to prove a biological link between homophobia and health damage. "The results showed that victims of homophobia had disruptions in their output of cortisol, a hormone released in the brain as a response to stress," reports *The Gazette*. "Normally, cortisol levels are highest in the morning and lowest in the evening, but those facing homophobic bullying consistently produced higher levels throughout the day, Benibgui said." In addition to measuring cortisol, which can cause ailments when disrupted, the study looked at whether participants were more depressed or had increased thoughts of suicide or suicide attempts, *The Gazette* reports. The study found that support from family and friends can counteract the cortisol dis-

ruption and improve resiliency. The study involved 63 Montrealers between the ages of 18 and 25 who answered questionnaires and gave saliva samples in 2003 and 2004.

Quit Smoking Classes for the lgbt community to be offered at the Equality House



Smoking is disproportionately high in the lgbt community. Gay Grassroots is please that West Florida Area Health Education Center will be offering smoking cessation classes at the Equality House. The Quit Smoking Now Program is a FREE 6 week evidence-based program developed by Ex-smokers for those who want to become Ex-smokers. Assistance with Nicotine Replacement products such as the patch, gum or lozenge, can be made available for participants of the class. The class

meets for one hour per week for 6 weeks in a row. You will learn about the effects of tobacco on your health and how to correctly use the pharmacological treatments. You will learn about your barriers to quitting and how to cope with withdrawal symptoms. You will also find out about how to make lifestyle adjustments and manage feelings that trigger cravings, and how to manage stress through lifestyle changes. IF you would like to enroll in these FREE quit smoking classes please show your interest by visiting the web survey below so that we may see what day and time will best serve the most people.

Free Rapid HIV Testing continues at the Equality House

Everyone is welcome to come into the Equality House for a 20 minute HIV test. Testing is done by members of the lgbt community so you can feel comfortable talking about your sexuality and behaviors. Testing is available Wed-Sat from 10am-8pm, you may walk in. Please call 429-7551 if you have any questions. The Equality House also stock a large assortment of free water based lube and latex condoms for you to pick up and use.



White House talks budget issues that concern lgbt and AIDS communities

White House officials held a conference call Tuesday, Feb 15, morning to discuss the 2012 budget proposed by President Barack Obama and how it affects the LGBT population and people living with HIV or AIDS. Melody Barnes, director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, and Jeffrey S. Crowley, director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, discussed the \$3.7 trillion budget proposed by President Obama on Monday. The White House has said the budget includes "tough choices" to reduce projected unsustainable deficits and put the country on course for a more productive future. "To make the investments we need to win the future, the government has to function within its means," said Barnes. Despite the constraints, Barnes announced a proposed increase for the Community Relations Service in the Department of Justice to fight hate crimes, and an \$18 million increase, or 5% over the 2010 enacted level, for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which enforces federal antidiscrimina-

tion laws. She said the EEOC would be able to add staff and reduce its backlog of private-sector cases. The budget proposes \$132 million for grants to state and local governments to fight violence and bullying under the Department of Education's Successful, Safe and Healthy students program. Bullying became a high-profile issue last year in the wake of a series of LGBT youth suicides, and Barnes indicated in the question-and-answer session that the White House would have liked to allocate more to the problem. "This budget is a tough budget, that there are places that under normal circumstances, if we weren't facing the challenges that we have right now, we would have done something different," she said.

In the battle against HIV/AIDS, Goldberg said the budget proposed to maintain and in some cases increase support for the national HIV/AIDS strategy in comparison to 2010. Compared to last year, the budget proposes increases in domestic discretionary HIV/AIDS funding at the Department of Health and Human Services by \$219 million, and at the Department of Veterans Affairs by \$173 million. Funding levels are to be maintained at the Justice Department and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. "We're not talking about cuts," he said. "We're holding the

line across all the lead agencies in the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and making increases at HHS and the VA." In addition, for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS program, the budget proposes \$940 million for AIDS drug assistance programs, an increase of \$80 million above 2010 to support access to HIV-related medications. The budget also increases HIV prevention efforts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention by \$58 million over 2010, which includes a \$20.4 million increase for programs specifically targeting gay and bisexual men. Some \$22 million is proposed for HIV prevention in metropolitan areas hardest hit by the epidemic. "It refocuses our efforts, and it proposes targeted new investments," said Goldberg. However, asked about House Republicans' plan to make significant cuts in vital HIV programs, Barnes declined to pledge that President Obama would urge Democrats to fight the proposals. "The budget has articulated the values that he has around this set of issues and the importance that he places on this set of issues consistent with what he said during the campaign," she said. "I think his budget really stands as the backdrop and as the platform from which we will be operating as we move forward. This budget really articulates the framework that he believes should be the guiding set of principles. It certainly is for us."



Harvard Law Review elects its 1st gay president

The prestigious Harvard Law Review elected an openly gay student as president for the first time. Second year Harvard Law School student Mitchell Reich told the Harvard Crimson he is happy to be the 125th president of the valued student-run publication. He also recognizes the importance of being an openly gay leader—previously, he said, he wasn't sure if he could be successful if he were openly gay and he recognizes this milestone's significance. "If I had seen someone who was the president of the Harvard Law Review and [also] openly gay, that would have been helpful to me," Reich told the Crimson. Reich was educated at Yale College and Dalton School. As president, Reich assumes the responsibilities of the editor-in-chief, managing the staff and overseeing the publication of scholarly articles. "My predecessor and the class before is a tough act to follow," Reich told the Crimson, going on to explain that he aims to keep the "tradition of excellence" alive in the eight issues he would publish as president.

Court: student counselor must treat gay students

The American Civil Liberties Union and the ACLU of Michigan have filed a friend-of-the-court brief today in federal appeals court in support Eastern Michigan University in its dispute with a former student. Julea Ward sued the university after it removed her from the graduate counseling program over her refusal to affirm the relationship of a gay client during a practicum. Ward was training to become a school counselor. She believes homosexuality is immoral and a choice and that she could not counsel the client in good conscience, and maintains being removed from the university program is a breach of her religious freedom. "While counselors are certainly entitled to their own religious beliefs, EMU correctly took steps to prevent Ms. Ward from imposing those beliefs on her clients in the university's training program," said Daniel Mach, director of the ACLU Program on Freedom of Religion and Belief, in a press release. "EMU would be remiss if it allowed counseling students to discriminate against clients for any reason, including sexual orientation." "LGBT students in crisis should be able to turn to a school counselor for help without fearing rejection or judgment," said James Esseks, Director of the ACLU Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Project. "Guidance counselors have a duty to treat all students fairly and professionally re-

gardless of who the students are or what issues they are grappling with." Ward previously asked a lower court to force the university to allow her to participate in the course study while refusing to counsel gay clients. The courts denied her request, and has appealed the lower court ruling to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth District to step.

HIV memoir pulled from middle school

A memoir was pulled from the general circulation of a middle school library in Tennessee because of the author's accounts of promiscuity, the AIDS-related death of his lover and his use of profane language. A 12-year-old student checked out Paul Monette's memoir, *Borrowed Time: An AIDS Memoir*, from the Cheatham Middle School library. Her mother, Misty Binkley, told WSMV News that the book was not appropriate to have in a middle school library, but was perhaps more appropriate for older students. After Binkley complained, the school's policy changed to adapt to parents' inquiries. Previously, books that were the subject of complaint would undergo a two week review process, which has been changed to take place over the course of two days.



Mass. governor protects transgender workers

Massachusetts governor Deval Patrick signed an executive order Thursday, Feb 17, banning work-based discrimination against transgender state government employees and contractors. The order adds gender expression and identity to an existing law that bans discrimination for employees based on race, gender, and religion, according to *The Boston Globe*. The measure is similar to one that would extend those protections to all Massachusetts residents in the realms of housing, public accommodations, and private-sector jobs. A recent national survey of transgender people showed that 90% of those employed had been harassed on the job, and 26% had lost a job due to being transgender. Patrick was joined in a private signing ceremony in his office by a handful of transgender state employees.

Catholic college fines gay professor

An openly gay professor has been fired from a private Roman Catholic college after the school learned of his sexuality. Representatives from Philadelphia's Chestnut Hill College say

they didn't know Father James St. George was gay when they hired him to teach. "It was with great disappointment when we learned through St. George's public statements of his involvement in a gay relationship with another man for the past 15 years," the school said in a statement. The priest says his sexuality was never a secret. While the subject never came up in class, Father St. George told Fox 29 that he was fully vetted when he was hired and has never hidden the fact that he was gay. According to MyFoxPhilly.com, "Father St. George is part of the Old Catholic Church Of The Americas, a faction that broke away from the Vatican back in 1870. In his church, priests are allowed to marry and be gay." "I serve as a trauma chaplain," Father St. George said. "I help broken people. I run a parish, a small parish in Blue Bell, take care of people who have no hope. I teach kids how to become better adults... A school that is supposed to teach religious understanding is not even being tolerant."

Pres. Obama appoints gay man as White House Social Secretary

The White House announced the appointment Friday afternoon of Jeremy Bernard to the position of Special Assistant to the President and Social Secretary. He is the first man and the first openly gay person to hold the posi-

tion. According to Jonathan Capehart at the Washington Post, "Bernard and his then-partner Rufus Gifford were early supporters of Obama in California. And they raised a ton of money for him through their company, B&G Associates. Gifford went on to become finance director of the Democratic National Committee. Bernard was the White House liaison at the National Endowment for the Humanities before dashing off to his Paris post in November." According to the news release that announced his appointment, Bernard will join the White House from the U.S. Embassy in Paris, where he serves as senior adviser to the ambassador. He previously worked as the White House Liaison to the National Endowment for the Humanities from 2008 to 2010. President Barack Obama said, "Jeremy shares our vision for the White House as the People's House, one that celebrates our history and culture in dynamic and inclusive ways. We look forward to Jeremy continuing to showcase America's arts and culture to our nation and the world through the many events at the White House." Bernard said, "I am deeply humbled to join the White House staff as Social Secretary and support President Obama and the First Lady in this role. I have long admired the arts and education programs that have become hallmarks of the Obama White House and I am eager to continue these efforts in the years

DIVERSE FAMILIES



California launches radio soap opera to reach Latino community

A three-part radio soap opera is scheduled to broadcast on Spanish radio stations as part of an attempt to better educate California's rural Latino population about LGBT rights and issues. The radionovela, "Bienvenidos a Casa," or "Welcome Home," follows Carlos, a gay Latino teenager who is rejected by friends and family because he is gay. He eventually finds acceptance from his mother and neighbors. The program was put together by the National Center for Lesbian Rights and California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.'s Proyecto Poderoso, which aims to increase acceptance among Spanish-speaking families. Proyecto Poderoso Manager Dan Torres said in a statement last week, "Through this unique storytelling platform, we hope to open up the dialogue in Spanish-speaking Latino households, breaking down the walls of communication, and helping Latino families begin conversations on issues they otherwise would never talk about, and providing them with a greater understanding of the hurt and damage experienced by adults, children, and youth who don't have their fam-

ily's full, loving support and acceptance." The show will premiered Friday, Feb 18, between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Radio Bilingüe's "Rock-in da House," according to California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc. and will air 10 times through March 31 across the state's eight Radio Bilingüe stations.

Pensacola included in state wide event to protect the recently gained adoption equality (SAT APRIL 16)

As the politicians in Tallahassee continue to publicly object to the court's ruling which overturned the ban on adoptions by gay persons (see next story), our voices of everyone who believes in adoption equality must be raised up. Citizens across the state of Florida need to get educated and get active. host a number of events across the state of Florida to get individuals active, educated, and engaged. The ACLU of Florida is bring a number of public educational events including Education and Speaker Training to communities across the state. One of these events will take place on Saturday April 16th (location and time yet to be finalized.) Gay Grassroots is teaming up to bring GLAAD (The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) in to provide the training and documentary screening of "In Anita's Wake" (<http://www.vickinantzfilms.com>) about Anita Bry-

ant's anti-gay tirade, which resulted in the 33 year ban on adoptions by gay parents.

TO SAY "I DO"

Marriage equality bill has votes to pass Md. senate

Maryland state senator James C. Rosapepe announced his support for the marriage equality bill Thursday, Feb 17, giving the measure the required 24 votes to pass the senate. According to The Baltimore Sun, the Prince George's County Democrat announced his support for the bill after an amended version with more protections for religious institutions cleared the senate judicial proceedings committee. Rosapepe is a Catholic, the largest Christian denomination in the state and a historically influential lobby. Rosapepe wrote an e-mail to his constituents, saying, "I intend to vote for the bill as it was reported out of committee with a strengthened conscience clause to respect the views of religious denominations which do not recognize same-sex marriage." A contentious vote is expected in the full senate next week, during which time more amendments could be offered. The bill is widely expected to pass the house of delegates and Gov. Martin O'Malley has promised to sign it. Opponents could attempt to petition for a referendum to overturn the law. In a potential preview of the senate debate, the *Sun* reports on concerns that the religious protection amendment is too broad and gives religious

institutions widespread latitude to discriminate against same-sex couples seeking to hold ceremonies in their facilities, like halls.

Wyo. passes, adds to anti-gay marriage bill

The Wyoming senate passed a bill Friday, Feb 18, that would prevent any recognition of civil unions or marriages among same-sex couples who were wed or entered a union outside of the state. The bill passed with a 16-14 vote after a last-minute amendment to add the civil union provision, according to the *Casper Star-Tribune*. The bill must now be revisited by the house of representatives, which will have to approve the new amendment. Wyoming currently recognizes any valid marriage performed outside of the state, while still restricting marriages in the state to those between one man and one woman. Supporters of the ban on marriage equality argue that this law will close any loopholes allowing gay and lesbian couples to access the same benefits and responsibilities as heterosexual married couples.

Hawaii passes civil unions bill

The Hawaii senate passed the final version of a civil unions bill by an 18-5 vote Wednesday, Feb 16, afternoon. The bill will now go to Gov. Neil Abercrombie, who has expressed his support for it. "Today is a momentous day,"

said Sen. Clayton Hee, according to the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*. "There is no denying that by this action Hawaii takes a significant step towards true equality." Equality Hawaii and the Human Rights Campaign issued a joint statement about the bill's passage Wednesday. We honor and thank the legislature today for their commitment to equality for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community in Hawaii," Alan Spector, cochair of Equality Hawaii, said in the statement. "For the second time in less than a year, legislators have dedicated themselves to providing dignity and respect to all families in the Aloha State." A similar bill was approved by the legislature in 2010 but vetoed by then-Gov. Linda Lingle after a long waiting period.

RESEARCH

Discrimination pervades all aspects of transgender's lives

A report released Friday, Feb 4, by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality lays bare the reality that many transgender and gender-confirming Americans already know all too well: Discrimination runs deep into every corner of their lives, but they possess remarkable powers of perseverance to overcome the obstacles. The first large-scale national study of its kind, "Injustice at Every Turn" documents the staggering levels of discrimination, harassment, and violence faced by transgender and gender-nonconforming people in every facet of life, including employment, housing, health care, and education. The study is based on National Transgender Discrimination Survey conducted from September 2008 to February 2009, which culled paper and online responses from 6,456 participants aged 18 and over in the 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. "I think everybody probably knows that trans people face discrimination and harassment and violence," said Mara Keisling, executive director

of NCTE. "This is the first time we've ever been able to quantify that on a national level. For the first time, we really understand how bad the problem is. We're able to quantify here some tremendous devastation." According to the survey, respondents were nearly four times more likely to live in extreme poverty, with household incomes of less than \$10,000. Respondents were twice as likely to be unemployed, and one in four reported being fired over their gender identity or expression. Half said they had experienced harassment or other mistreatment in the workplace. One in five respondents experienced homelessness because of their gender identity or expression, and 19% said they had been refused a home or apartment. Some 19% also reported being refused health care, and 31% reported harassment or bullying by teachers. In a reflection of the despair caused by relentless discrimination, an astonishing 41% of respondents reported attempting suicide, compared to 1.6% of the general population. "The numbers were shocking even to us, even without all the anecdotal evidence we have. Even we were surprised by this data," said report coauthor Lisa Mottet, the Transgender Civil Rights Project director of the Task Force, in a Friday afternoon conference call during which four transgender speakers shared stories of struggle and survival. In category after category, the study showed that transgender

people of color faced even more pronounced discrimination and higher negative outcomes; for example, African-American respondents reported unemployment levels at double the other respondents', or four times the national average. "The data really shows the compounding effects of racism combined with anti-trans bias that combines to cause devastation and life-threatening discrimination for trans people of color," said Mottet. Despite the extensive hurdles revealed in the study, the information also provides reasons to be optimistic, not the least of which is completing the first comprehensive picture of transgender American lives. The data already has informed policy-making, with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development using the study to propose new housing regulations last month to protect LGBT people. And with the Employment Non-Discrimination Act still not passed, activists could also use the data to educate Congress, while galvanizing other state and local efforts and public education campaigns.



Rangers hockey player says he will stand beside any player who comes out

New York Rangers forward Sean Avery has a message for gay hockey players who are scared to come out: Pick up the phone and call him. Avery, who is known to be one of the sporting world's more liberal athletes, says he'd be more than happy to serve as a support system for a gay player. "If there's a kid in Canada or wherever, who is playing and really loves the game and wants to keep playing but he's worried about coming out, I'd tell him to pick up the phone and call [NHLPA executive director] Donald Fehr and tell him to book me a [plane] ticket," he told the *Toronto Sun*. "I'll stand beside him in the dressing room while he tells his teammates he is gay. Maybe if Sean Avery is there, they would have less of a problem with it." Avery, who lived in West Hollywood when he played for the Los Angeles Kings and now lives in Chelsea, says he doesn't see the big deal about having an openly gay athlete in professional sports. He says there are "probably a few gay players in the NHL, but I don't know if somebody has the courage [to come out]." Last month Avery stripped for

designer Marc Jacobs to promote skin cancer awareness. He also made headlines in 2008 when he became an intern for *Vogue* magazine.

Greg Louganis begins coaching career

Diving legend Greg Louganis has decided to come back to the sport that propelled him into Olympic fame, but this time as a coach. Louganis, who is openly gay and has HIV, became the only man to win back-to-back Olympic gold medals in the platform and springboard diving events. Now 51, Louganis spoke to the *New York Times* on Sunday about being hired in November to coach the members of SoCal Divers. His coaching follows a mechanical style, ensuring that divers master a move before moving on to the next, which is in contrast with other coaches who stress acrobatics. At first, he admitted he was hesitant to return to the sport, but said after he thought about his skill set, and where he felt comfortable, the return was the right thing to do. "I kind of speak their language," he said of the divers he trains. "I know what it is to be afraid of a dive. I know what it's like to put a new dive in a competition. I know what it's like to feel a little insecure about a dive."

Professional cricket player comes out

Fellow teammates and coaches are rallying around Steven Davies, who over the weekend

became the first active professional cricketer to announce he's gay. Davies, a wicketkeeper-batsman with the county Surrey, made the announcement in *The Daily Telegraph*. "I'm comfortable with who I am — and happy to say who I am in public," England's cricketer star told *The Telegraph*. Davies says he first came out to team director Andy Flowers, who was extremely supportive. "He supported me 100%, him and (captain) Andrew Strauss. It was the right thing to do as I felt I couldn't live like this any more." Davies made his England debut in 2009 after first appearing for Worcestershire at the age of 18. He also credited out rugby star Gareth Thomas with helping him to come out.

STAR STUFF

The power of Lady Gaga to improve Target's treatment of LGBT community

Lady Gaga says her deal with Target requires the chain of stores to start working with LGBT charity groups and make amends for past mistakes, reports *Billboard* magazine. Many of the singer's fans were alarmed when it was announced that Target will release an exclusive edition of Gaga's forthcoming album, *Born This Way*, with remixes and three additional studio cuts, in May. In an exclusive interview with the music publication, Gaga reveals she wasn't comfortable with the Target partnership when it first came up as a possibility and that she met with "the entire executive staff" at the company. "That discussion was one of the most intense conversations I've ever had in a business meeting," Gaga says. "Part of my deal with Target is that they have to start affiliating themselves with LGBT charity groups and begin to reform and make amends for the mistakes they've made in the past ... our relationship is hinged upon their reform in the company to support the gay community and to redeem the mistakes they've made supporting those [antigay] groups." Gaga's latest single, "Born This Way," became *Billboard*'s 1,000th number 1 single and the first chart topper to use the word "transgendered" in its 50-year history. Target came under fire by LGBT activists last year for donating corporate funds to support MN Forward, a political action committee that supported antigay candidate Tom Emmer in his failed 2010 run for governor of Minnesota. As expected, Lady Gaga's "Born This Way" became the fastest-selling single in the history of iTunes, hitting the top spot in 21 of 23 countries where the music service is available. It took a mere five hours for the first single from Gaga's forthcoming album of the same title to jump to the number 1 position. With lyrics that address race and sexuality, Gaga, as well as close friends Elton John and Perez Hilton, have called the song the next great "gay anthem." The song also debuted high in the other two countries: number 2 in Denmark and number 3 in Japan.

ABC cut Oscar show kiss between Josh Brolin and Javier Bardem

There's an explanation for that long, awkward shot of Penelope Cruz during the Academy Award broadcast on Sunday evening. When actors Josh Brolin and Javier Bardem came out on the stage to present awards for Best Adapted Screenplay and Best Original Screenplay, they did a short dance and then a kiss. Instead of showing the actors embrace, however, the camera held on an extended shot of Cruz sitting in the audience. When

asked about the flub by *After Elton*, ABC declined to comment.

Barbra to play Mama Rose

Barbra Streisand confirms that she will play Mama Rose, the ultimate stage mother, in a new film adaptation of the beloved Broadway musical *Gypsy*, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. The news leaked "a little early, because the deal wasn't finished," Streisand says. "I am not sure about directing it. It may just be too much. I know I will be playing the part. It's like a bookend starting with *Funny Girl*." With difficult songs such as "Rose's Turn" and "Everything's Coming Up Roses," the role of Mama Rose is one of the most challenging in musical theater. It has previously been played on Broadway by Ethel Merman, Angela Lansbury, Tyne Daly, Linda Lavin, Bernadette Peters, and Patti LuPone. In previous film versions Rose has been portrayed by Rosalind Russell and Bette Midler.

Gay porn company gets serious about illegal downloads

Gay porn studio and distributor Corbin Fisher has taken an unusual approach to going after people for piracy. The company recently offered people who have illegally downloaded their videos a 14-day grace period to pay a onetime fee of \$1,000 and avoid being sued. That grace period ended on February 8, with the company focusing on people who have downloaded videos through the BitTorrent file-sharing program. Corbin Fisher's general counsel, Marc Randazza, tells *The Advocate* just 20 people took the company up on its offer, which included a one-year membership to the websites *AmateurCollegeMen.com* and *AmateurCollegeSex.com*. Now the company is planning to go after some 35,000 people for illegally downloading content through BitTorrent. Those people "will be liable for up to \$150,000 in damages for each infringement," *XBiz* reports. Randazza says the company plans to file suit in the next couple of weeks. The \$1,000 offer "got around pretty good," Randazza says. "Most of the Torrent sites and some mainstream media covered it, so I think" people were aware. Last year Corbin Fisher "won millions of dollars in court judgments ... including a recent \$250,000 judgment against a single Torrent user," the company said in a statement last week. The San Diego-based company is doing some good with the money it rakes in — the company just made a \$60,000 donation to Equality Florida. It donated the same amount in 2010.

The King's Speech was filmed on gay porn movie set

The winner of seven BAFTAs and twelve Academy Award nominations, *The King's Speech* is now racking up publicity for some-

thing completely unrelated to the picture's quality. According to a post at *QueerClick.com*, portions of the film were shot on a gay porn set. The scenes in which King George VI (Colin Firth) visits speech therapist Lionel Logue (Geoffrey Rush) in his office were shot on a set that was also used by the website *UK Naked Men*. For photos from each filming visit: www.queerclick.com/archive/2011/02/was_the_kings_speech_filmed_on_a_uk_nake.php

Kelly Ripa to produce season 2 of Johnny Weirs reality show

Husband and wife team Mark Consuelos and Kelly Ripa will coproduce the second season of the docuseries *Be Good Johnny Weir*. According to *Deadline Hollywood*, Ripa and Consuelos' Milojo Productions, named for the couple's three children, will join Charlie Corwin's Original Media to coproduce the second season of the figure skater's show. The 10-episode series, which will run on Logo this summer, follows Weir as he prepares for *Spectacular*, his ice-skating stage extravaganza. Also, Milojo and Original Media will team with Weir's Fireworks Management to lead the development and production of *Spectacular*. "I am so honored and excited to have Kelly and Mark on board with *Be Good Johnny Weir*," said Weir, according to *Deadline Hollywood*. "I have looked up to them for a long time and they have been two of my biggest cheerleaders so it only seems natural that our creativity comes together."

"Family Ties" mom details domestic violence and her coming out process in new memoir

Meredith Baxter claims her ex-husband actor David Birney hit her, according to revelations in her just-published memoir, *Untied*. The two actors costarred in the 1972 sitcom *Bridget Loves Birney* and were married from 1974 to 1989, during which time she used his surname. During an interview with *Today's Matt Lauer*, Baxter says, "I didn't know I had a choice. I didn't know I could go." Baxter, who came out in 2009 in an interview with *The Advocate*, writes in *Untied* that Birney struck her on more than one occasion: "It was so sudden and unexpected, I couldn't tell you which hand hit me, or even how hard. I do recall thinking, 'I'd better not get up because he's going to hit me again.'"



Italian official says Mona Lisa was da Vinci's male lover

The head of Italy's National Historic Commission says the Mona Lisa is not only a man, but Leonardo da Vinci's assistant and lover. Silvano Vicenti made the announcement at a press conference in Rome Wednesday, Feb. 2. He said the Mona Lisa's real name was Gian Giacomo Caprotti. Researchers have long questioned the actual identity of the Mona Lisa, long thought to be a portrait of a local merchant's wife. But Vicenti says Caprotti is featured in several of da Vinci's works, including paintings of John the Baptist and Angel Incarnate. He said Caprotti became da Vinci's apprentice when he was 10 and worked for him for 20 years.

U.K. zoo acknowledges it has a pair of gay monkeys

A pair of male spider monkeys at Drayton Park Zoo have been named Elton and David by their keepers. The monkeys are "inseparable" and spend their time cuddling and kissing, the Staffordshire zoo said. Colin Bryan, the managing director of Drayton Manor Theme Park, said: "They have been inseparable since they got together last year, and they love to spend their time cuddling and kissing one another. "They make a wonderful couple and to celebrate their first Valentine's Day we plan to give them a special romantic meal."

40% of retired Methodist bishops urge church to allow gay ministers

Thirty-three retired United Methodist bishops this week called on the church to end its ban on gay clergy, the United Methodist News Service reports. In a document titled "A Statement of Counsel to the Church — 2011," the bishops urge the church to remove language from its Book of Discipline stating that "the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching" and that "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" cannot be ordained as ministers. The signatories, led by Donald A. Ott and Sharon Z. Rader, point out that the church has ended discrimination on the basis of race or gender, and say it should do the same regarding sexual orientation. "The historic tests of 'gifts and evidence of God's grace' for ordained ministry override ... race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation," they write. Rader said she was moved by her discussions with the many gay and lesbian students she met when she worked at a Methodist seminary in Evanston, Ill. "Those conversa-

tions were very convincing for me," she said. Neither the church's Council of Bishops nor the council's executive committee has discussed the statement, said the council's executive secretary, Neil L. Irons. He noted that while there have been other calls to end the gay ban, this is the largest number of retired bishops to make a public statement on the matter; they represent about 40% of all retired bishops. Only the church's General Conference, which meets every four years, can change the Book of Discipline. Delegates have voted consistently to keep the ban. The next gathering will be in 2012.

GOProud members says he does not like gay people

A 22-year-old college student attending the CPAC (Conservative Political Action Committee) conference with the gay conservative group GOProud took time out from the event to tell *Metro Weekly* he doesn't much care for gay people and that only "straight acting" gay people are normal. Matt Hinsey told *Metro Weekly's* Ebone Bell: "I don't really like gay people that much. Gay people frustrate me, the stereotypical gay people, it frustrates me...someone who puts on a total act. I understand that some guys are feminine, which is fine. But some guys, at some point, are normal, straight-acting, whatever and the next minute they're jumping up and down. It just frustrates me. The whole conservative thing is just be yourself, be an individual and just don't be someone you're not. If someone does or does not accept you, that's fine but don't change who you are to look different to others."

Facebook adds "civil unions" & "domestic partner"

Setting aside "it's complicated," the choices of "married," "engaged," "divorced," "separated," "widowed," and "single" don't cover all the bases, especially for LGBTs. In response to the hodgepodge of relationship legal statuses that exists in America and around the world, Facebook has added two options to describe users' relationships. Now users can also choose "in a civil union" and "in a domestic partnership" to add to their profiles in the U.S., Canada, France, the U.K., and Australia, starting today. Facebook made the changes with input from LGBT organizations including the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, and the Human Rights Campaign. "As LGBT people face a pathwork of relationship recognition laws, this gives people more tools to adequately describe their relationship," said Michael Cole, spokesman for the Human Rights Campaign. "Facebook has been a company that has tried to be inclusive of the LGBT community, and this is just one sign of it."

Chicago group promotes trans-friendly/gender neutral restrooms

Young activists in Chicago are asking business owners to commit to making public restrooms trans-friendly. Under the T-Friendly Bathroom Initiative, this year 500 businesses and organizations will be asked to sign a pledge that they will allow gender-variant customers to use the restroom of their choice. Those signing the pledge will receive a window decal so that potential customers can easily identify them. Kate Sosin, a project organizer and cofounder of Genderqueer Chicago, noted that while Illinois law prohibits discrimination against transgender people, they are still sometimes harassed and even subjected to violence when using the restroom that fits their identity. "We expect this will dramatically improve the way transgender people experience our city and state," she said in a press release posted by *Windy City Times*. The initiative, led by youth organizers from Genderqueer Chicago, is endorsed by Join the Impact-Chicago, Equality Illinois, Video Action League, and others.

Pastor who opposed Southern Decadence's sexual overtone arrested for masturbating in public park

One of the loudest voices against the annual Southern Decadence festival in New Orleans's French Quarter was arrested Friday, Feb. 25, afternoon for masturbating in a public park. Rev. Grant Storms, 53, was arrested at Lafreniere Park in Metairie, La., a suburb outside of New Orleans, according to the *Times-Picayune*. He told police he was having lunch in a van with his friend, but needed to urinate, so he used a bottle instead of a bathroom. Two women in the park saw Storms reportedly masturbating in his van, while watching children, and notified a parks employee who proceeded to call police. Storms was released from the Jefferson Parish Correctional Center due to jail overcrowding. Storms has orchestrated counter-events for Southern Decadence in the past, and in 2004, filed a lawsuit against gay rights group Action Wisconsin for defamation, but the suit was thrown out of court. He has also been an advocate for cleaning up the French Quarter, and has gone as far as filming sexual acts that took place during Southern Decadence, and screening his videos to lawmakers as a way to coerce them to stop allowing the annual festival from taking place.

SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY:

Equality House

Home to Pensacola's LGBT Community

Opening an lgbt community center in Pensacola was historic, and provide new resources and opportunities never available before. You can ensure that the doors stay open and more and more programs, activities, and events are offered by making a monthly pledge of support.

I will support my lgbt community center each month in the amount of:

- \$10 \$15 \$25
- \$50 \$75 \$100
- \$_____

(please include 1st installment, each month you will be sent a invoice)

JOIN YOUR ORGANIZATION:



To fulfill our mission and attain our 2011 goals Gay Grassroots uses paid memberships to fund our efforts.

I will support the advocacy mission of Gay Grassroots by my paid membership. I desire a membership for:

- \$15 individual \$25 couple
- \$40 family (same household)

(please include full payment, and names for membership cards)

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name(s)

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone (____) _____ - _____

Mail to:
The Equality House
317 N. Spring Street
Pensacola, FL 32501

Coming up in April:

SAT APRIL 2, LGBT TEENS, 10AM-8PM

Equality House will be reserved for teens ages 13 to 18 years today, (adult supervision will be provided) in order to provide a day of activities for this affinity group. *(this event is regularly held the 1st Saturday of each month)*

MON APRIL 4, RAINBOW READERS BOOK CLUB, 5:30PM

Come discuss this month's lgbt book and enjoy a potluck dinner. *(this event is regularly held the 1st Monday of each month)*

WED APRIL 6, 50+ COFFEE CHAT, 6PM-8PM

Equality House will be reserved for persons 50 and above in order to provide a relaxing atmosphere for this affinity group, all ages welcome 10am til 6pm. *(this event is regularly held the 1st Wednesday of each month)*

THUR APRIL 7, 1ST THURSDAY FAMILY DINNER, 6:30PM

Come catch up with old friends or make new friends at this affordable buffet dinner @ Panda China on E Gregory St. *(this event is regularly held the 1st Thursday of each month)*

FRI APRIL 8, MOVIE NIGHT, 7PM

Come watch our movie on the big screen tv, free popcorn and soda.

SAT APRIL 9, CHILD & PARENT ICE CREAM DAY, 11AM-3PM

Equality House will be reserved for parents and their young children in order to provide an afternoon of activities for this affinity group, all ages welcome 3pm til 8pm.

THUR APRIL 14, PFLAG OPEN SUPPORT GROUP, 6PM *(this support groups regularly meets the 2nd Thursday of each month)*

FRI APRIL 15, GAME NIGHT, 6PM

come play one of our many games, or bring your favorite, bring finger foods to share.

WED APRIL 20, FREE PINEAPPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE, 10AM-8PM

Drop in the center and enjoy a free slice of pineapple upside down cake as we celebrate National Pineapple Upside Down Cake Day.

SAT APRIL 16, ADOPTION TRAINING & DOCUMENTARY SCREENING, TBA

As the politicians in Tallahassee continue to publicly object to the court's ruling and we need the voices of citizens across the state of Florida to get educated and get active. Gay Grassroots has teamed with the Panhandle Chapter of the ACLU to bring in GLAAD (The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) to provide education and speaker training. This workshop will also include a documentary screening of In Anita's Wake (<http://www.vickinantzfilms.com>) about Anita Bryant's anti-gay tirade. *(time and location to be announced soon)*

THUR APRIL 21, PensacolaPRIDE ROUNDTABLE PLANNING, 6PM

We need your participation to insure that our festival continues to get bigger and better, refreshments provided. *(this event is regularly held the 3rd Thursday of each month)*

FRI APRIL 22, VOLUNTEER TRAINING, 2PM

Come learn how GayGrassroots, PensacolaPRIDE, & the Equality House began, our current goals, and how you can become a Volunteer Ambassador within our community.

SAT APRIL 23, CHILDRENS EGG HUNT, 2PM

We will have 6 dozen prize filled eggs for the children to hunt, free cookies and punch provided.

SUN APRIL 24, NOW OPEN MEETING, 4PM *(this open meeting is regularly held the last Sunday of each month)*

WED APRIL 27, POT LUCK DINNER, 7PM

Come enjoy a laid back meal with old and new friends, baked chicken will be provided.

THUR APRIL 28, FRI APRIL 29, GAY GRASSROOTS OPEN MEETING, 6PM

We will discuss our plans for gsa clubs and lgbt youth who are homelessness. *(this event is regularly held the 4th Thursday of each month)*

FRI APRIL 29, NATIONAL ARBOR DAY, 10AM-8PM

Come by and donate plants, soil, or containers to make our home more inviting.

SAT APRIL 30, MOBILE PRIDE, EQUALITY HOUSE WILL BE CLOSED

Come join us as we set up a booth at the Mobile Pride Festival.

SUN MAY 1, MOBILE PRIDE PARADE

Come walk with us in the Mobile Pride Parade.

EVERY SUNDAY, AA OPEN MEETING, 6PM

To receive a full color version of this newsletter e-mailed to you each month please sent us an e-mail asking to be placed on our confidential e-mail list to GayGrassrootsNWFL@