



Lansing's LGBT Connection!

# The LGBT News

Lansing Association for Human Rights

August 2008 • Volume 29 • Issue 11

## AIDS WALK Michigan Sunday, September 28, 2008 WALK THE WALK: AIDS WALK

On Sunday, September 28, 2008, AIDS Walk Michigan – Lansing/East Lansing will be held at Valley Court Park in East Lansing (behind People's Church). Registration begins at 10:00 AM and the AIDS Walk will kickoff at 1:00 PM. Officially hosted by Evans Scholars of Michigan State University for the past 13 years, the local service oriented fraternity provides extensive assistance in all phases of the fundraising event. Their support and enthusiasm for this event and their commitment to LAAN and the AIDS Walk has become an annual tradition and has forged a unique partnership in the local effort to raise awareness and funding to stop the further spread of HIV.

AIDS Walk Michigan is a non-profit organization that began in 1998 to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS, and to raise money for AIDS services in participating Michigan communities. Funds for AIDS Walk Michigan come from a variety of sources. Individuals and teams

(continued on page 4)



## Another Michigan Pride Success

by Bill Beachler,  
Publisher

The 20th Anniversary Michigan Pride celebration was another success. The festival in Riverfront Park this year drew one of the largest crowds in the history of Michigan Pride. Thousands of people enjoyed the music and food as well as stopped by the record number of vendor and organizational booths.

Although attendance at the Pride March and at the Capitol, while about the same as last year, was a little smaller than some of the record crowds in the past. Michigan Equality did another excellent job organizing a brief, but educational and fun,

rally at the Capitol. The rally also included a commitment ceremony for a record 63 couples.

The rally included the following speakers: Rev. Kent Lederer from Lansing, Santiago Lopez from Kalamazoo, Julie Nemecek from Spring Arbor, Michelle Brown from Detroit, and Jay Kaplan from the ACLU of Michigan. The day was ended with fireworks; however, unfortunately that did not happen. We hope you will enjoy a few enclosed pictures from this successful & fun-filled day.



Gone Wired Cafe invites you to join LAHR for a fundraiser breakfast to help support the organization and our local LGBT community!

When: Saturday, August 23, 2008  
LAHR's 29th Anniversary!!

Where: Gone Wired Cafe  
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Time: 9 a.m. until Noon

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# Letter from the Prez

by Penny Gardner, LAHR President



June was a busy month for LAHR. On the tiny bit positive side, we are closing down our Hotline. Michael Carlson and his dedicated volunteers have noticed a sharp decrease in the number of calls, and most of the inquiries are very well responded to via the internet. We appreciate all who have invested of themselves over the past years of its existence and everyone who has seen LAHR Hotline as a resource for coming out issues, contacts to various organizations, and to LAHR's own social and activist groups. A special posthumous appreciation to long time Hotline volunteer Michael Foland. And of course, deep deep gratitude to Michael Carlson.

June also brought us the disquieting news of discrimination against LGTB people by the Lansing area YMCAs. See Board Member Nancy English's story in the July issue of the LAHR newsletter. A lesbian wished to sign her partner up as a family member of the local Y, and was denied the privilege of that discounted rate. She went to another Y and received the discounted family rate for her partner. When asking why at one place it was not policy and why in another it was, the Y created a policy of all Ys that no family discounts be granted to same sex couples. English's story has created much response. We are very proud that LAHR has taken the lead in this issue. In a town that has a non-discrimination policy in place. Stay tuned. Thank you Sarah and Nancy.

Also, June is Pride month for all of us. As always, LAHR is a strong participant. This year we donated money to Michigan Pride, in its new iteration, although, Michigan Pride overlooked listing us as a donor, they did give us booth space. Bill Beachler and Joe Marutiak, LAHR Board members organized the whole thing and the booth was very active all day. LAHR PAC shared the table. Check out the ratings of local candidates inserted in the July Newsletter and hopefully you VOTED in the Primary on August 5!! Primaries are super important. Always request an absentee ballot if you are going to be out of town on any election day...and thanks for your support of both LAHR PAC and LAHR.

And finally, by the time you receive this newsletter, LAHR will have decided on sponsoring Seven Straight Nights, a national effort to inform and engage our straight allies in our fight for social justice. The dates are Sept 14th through the 20th. Please contact Nancy English at english2003@yahoo.com or call 482-2668, if you wish to help.

And with this much going on, don't you wish you served on this Board? There is a space waiting for you and your energy, experience and knowledge...contact me at marydrpenny@yahoo.com or any other board member.

And for further information about our doings, check out our beautifully user-friendly, re-designed and updated web site. Thank you Focus Media! [www.lahronline.org](http://www.lahronline.org).

As always,

**Penny**



The following people will be celebrating their Long Term Relationships (LTR):

## Congratulations!

**Tim Knight & John Griffith**  
31 years on August 19, 2008

**Nancy English & Elaine Pogoncheff**  
July 14, 2008

However, they were just legally married in California on July 2, 2008, and are proud to note that they "are legal in 3 states and 5 countries."

The LAHR Long Term Relationship (LTR) group wants to promote the importance of a strong, committed relationship in the LGBT community. If you have an anniversary for your relationship that you would like mentioned by the group, please email Greg at [MLatino@aol.com](mailto:MLatino@aol.com).

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## LGBT News

Lansing Association for  
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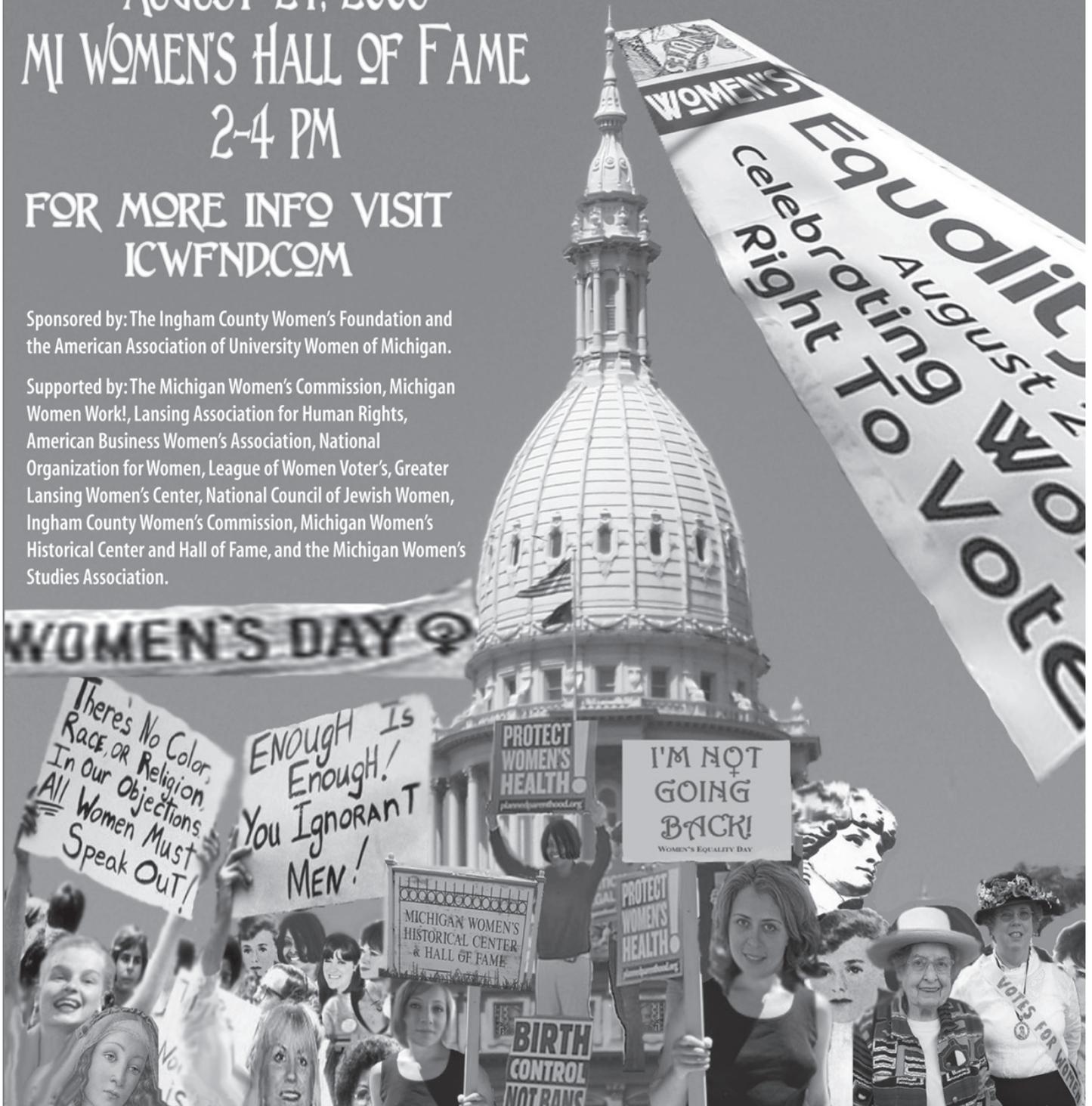
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## **AIDS Walk continued**

participating in the 5k Walk ask for pledges from friends, family members and their communities. Corporate contributions and sponsorships (cash or in-kind donations) from area businesses are also donated. In addition, hundreds of companies, churches and organizations from across Michigan raise funds to lend a hand.

The funds generated by each AIDS Walk are dedicated to HIV/AIDS education, prevention and services. It is important to know that all of the money collected by a community remains in that community to support its local AIDS services. Some local agencies direct all the monies donated to a single service agency, while others divide their proceeds among more than one agency. The local agencies that benefit from AIDS Walk Michigan serve nearly 60% of the 16,500 Michigan residents living with HIV and AIDS. For some HIV/AIDS service organizations, the Walk is their primary fundraising event.

For LAAN, AIDS Walk Michigan – Lansing helps to not only raise donated funds to help underwrite the costs associated with programs and services,

but also helps to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS here in the greater Lansing community. Be sure to mark your calendars now and plan to attend the 2008 AIDS Walk in Valley Court Park, East Lansing.

If you would like to register as an individual or organize a Walk Team to represent your organization, you may create your own Walk Web Page and recruit or raise money for your team

online. Friends, families, coworkers and supporters can pledge money using their credit card to donate to your efforts. It is fun, it is easy and it's all for a great cause! So don't just talk the talk, walk the walk: AIDS Walk Michigan. You may contact Patrick Lombardi at the LAAN office for more information or check out our website: [www.aidswalkmichigan.org](http://www.aidswalkmichigan.org).



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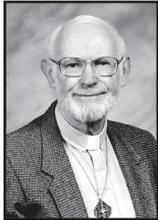
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# Pastor Paul

by Paul S. Downie



## Reason: Series Summary and Conclusion and A Gift of God: Reason Chapter 6

Sexual orientation. Like those who denied scientific truth and condemned Galileo, the Christian Right tells us evolution is false, women should submit to men, and sexual orientation is a choice. But not a shred of credible scientific evidence supports this fantasy of choice. Forcing a change in behavior does not, and cannot, change orientation. A mix of genetics and very early nurture determines our sexual orientation. As a priest, college teacher, and one-time district court chief probation officer, my years of knowing many lesbians and gays confirm this. Reparative (or reorientation) therapy to change homosexuality is discredited as grave psychological risk (American Psychological Assn., Aug. 1997). Virtually all scientific human health organizations concur in this. Young gay men are 7 times more apt to attempt suicide than straight men

(Univ. of Minn., Aug. 1997). And how the Christian Right has nurtured gay suicidal self-hatred! Homosexuality is not the evil, but religious homophobia and hatred. Does God impose a life sentence of guilt and lonely celibacy, bereft of joys of a loving union -- because of a sexual orientation one did not, and could not, choose? Where is REASON in this?

Left-handedness. Once the Church believed left-handedness to be of demons. My 3rd grade teacher hounded a child to write with his right hand -- but from birth his brain was hard-wired for left. Left-handed is not normal in that most people are not; but for those who are, it is normal. Sexual orientation is analogous: neither is chosen, both are determined for us, most are this rather than that, and actions normal for those who are that are condemned as evil. So a child wrote with left hand because of demons; while those living their homosexual orientation -- their own nature -- are condemned, based upon selective biblical literalism and a fairy tale of choice. Where is REASON in this?

Gay godliness. History testifies to homosexual lay persons and clergy through the ages who've lacked the evil fruits Paul lists in Romans 1:28-32, but who instead were highly creative and loving persons. I've been blessed in knowing gays and lesbians, including clergy, whose lives exemplify the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22 - 23). Godliness is not just a straight virtue, but is found -- or is absent -- in celibacy, in marriage, and in same-gender union. Here is REASON.

Anglican Communion. The Episcopal Church is one of 38 autonomous, self-governing national Churches in the Anglican Communion. Every 10 years the bishops worldwide meet as Lambeth Conference to consult. Lambeth has no authority to legislate; resolutions are advisory. At Lambeth 1998 some bishops threatened political blackmail to get an anti-homosexual resolution passed, but their contaminated resolution carries neither moral nor spiritual authority for us.

Episcopal Church. A 1996 Bishops Trial Court dismissed heresy charges against Bishop Walter Righter for ordaining a gay man living in a same-sex union, saying the bishop violated no core doctrine. General Convention 2000 recognized

(continued on page 6)

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## ***Pator Paul Continued***

committed monogamous unions other than marriage: same-sex unions, and widowed persons deterred from marriage by pension or insurance obstacles. The Resolution called for fidelity, monogamy, and holy love in such unions, and affirmed that those on various sides of this issue have a place in the Church. Of 800+ elected lay and clergy Deputies, fewer than 50 opposed; Bishops concurred 119 to 19. Convention 2003 re-affirmed this, and approved election of Gene Robinson, gay priest with partner, to be consecrated Bishop of New Hampshire -- a first. Next Convention (2006) elected Katharine Jefferts Schori as Presiding Bishop -- first, ever, female Anglican Primate, and a liberal! What a trouble maker, the Episcopal Church -- tearing down comfortable barriers, and imitating Jesus and the book of Acts. Praise God!

Other Faiths. Some Protestant Churches also accept and affirm homosexual persons, while some other Churches struggle creatively, moving in this direction. Reform Judaism fully accepts and affirms homosexual persons.

And... Apostles were arrested

and brought to the Jewish Council in Jerusalem, which was addressed by member rabbi Gamaliel: "...leave them alone; because if... this undertaking is of human origin, it will fail; but if it is of God, ... you may even be found fighting against God" (Acts 5). Lesbians and gays are among our clergy and laity. Many Christians support blessing their unions, and ordaining them. If this inclusiveness is not of God, God will cleanse the Church. This must inform REASON. SERIES SUMMARY and CONCLUSION.

The traditional Anglican tripod -- SCRIPTURE, TRADITION, and REASON -- guided me. SCRIPTURE (chapters 1,2,4,5) has some ambiguity, but no mention of monogamous same-sex union; while Creation stories, Jesus, and Acts give indirect but powerful affirmation. TRADITION (chapter 3) cited gay unions blessed until 14th century, when the Bible was being misused as a weapon against Muslims, Jews, Christian heretics, women, gays, and others. Finally, REASON (chapter 6) is a Gift from GOD, and absolutely supports loving monogamous same-gender unions.

Conclusion: A Rainbow from God. A rainbow is the many colors of the

one light. Gays and lesbians are different hues in a diversity of colors, in a beautiful rainbow of one human family, created and loved by God. The Mystery of God, Creation, and humanity elicits differing views, but I believe the gifts of creativity and community for Adam and Eve are also for Adam and Steve, and Adele and Eve. Praise God!

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The Rev. Paul S. Downie is active as an Episcopal Church priest of 48 years, taught 30 years at Lansing Community College until his retirement May 2005, and received the LAHR Prism Award as Ally of the Year for 2000. E-mail: <pastorpaul@voyager.net>. Phone: (517) 332-2326 (until 9:30 pm)

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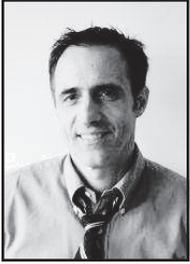
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# Our Washington and HRC Connection



## HRC Making Progress

by *Bill Castellani*

The death of former U.S. Senator Jesse Helms was announced, ironically on the day we celebrate our nation's

noble ideals of freedom, opportunity, and equality.

Jesse Helms represented, for so many, exactly what the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality movement is up against: antiquated notions about what constitutes morality; stubborn refusal to let go of prejudices based on nothing but mean-spirited, unfounded fears; a false

sense that those who are different are somehow inferior.

Since 1980, the Human Rights Campaign has been at the forefront of activism, education and outreach that have slowly but surely coaxed those who believe in basic fairness to speak out about their feelings and encourage others to do the same.

As part of this work, the HRC Foundation's Religion and Faith Program this week released a study guide to accompany the celebrated documentary *For the Bible Tells Me So*. The film, a 2008 GLAAD Media Award recipient and 2007 Sundance Film Festival nominee for the Grand Jury Prize, spotlights the stories of GLBT people of faith and their families,

including New Hampshire Episcopal Bishop Reverend Gene Robinson and his parents.

HRC's user-friendly guide, available at no charge at [www.hrc.org/religion](http://www.hrc.org/religion), is divided into three parts: a discussion of the feelings the film evokes about families and faith; a conversation about the Bible—both how it is misused to discriminate against GLBT people and how it is a source of empowerment and liberation; and a step-by-step training to move people of faith and congregations from acceptance to public advocacy. What a signal of the progress we've made: we're not only reaching out to communities of faith, but giving them an active role to play in the pursuit of equality.

## Our Families



by *Mary Boudreau*

### A Special Message

There's been so much to be proud of in our community lately, with a fabulous Michigan Pride

celebration, and a great LAHR newsletter last month.

I've had a lot of opportunities lately to contemplate the meaning and evolution of a "GLBT community". The closure of the Hotline caused many of us to think about what it was like when hotlines were the

only way for us to connect with others in our community. The online community, while wonderful and accessible, certainly lacks some of the commitment. Remember when it was scary to call these numbers, much less volunteer for a GLBT Hotline? As we develop a community in the future, there are many questions. What brings us together - shared interests, shared ideals, protection from those who try to hurt us, political numbers? Lansing is a very accepting city in many ways, but there are still fears and divisions within our city. We face many problems as a general community (economic, employment, housing, etc.) and these difficult times can cause people to become more divided/prejudiced or can encourage us to more

compassionate, harder working, and smarter. Truly, the power to change the world is in our hands.

One of the things that continues to worry me about the GLBT community in Lansing is that we don't always take good care of ourselves and one another. We need the courage to confront ourselves and one another to stay healthy physically, emotionally, spiritually and even financially in order to grow as a community. What if all the time we spent hurting one another by criticism, rejection, and other negative experiences were spent making our community a better place? We would all reap the benefits of this type of urban renewal!

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Great Lakes Pride Band,  
Paul Levandowski,  
meets Hollywood,  
Sigourney Weaver

## Great Lakes Pride Band Meets Hollywood!!

by Lisa Haston, LAHR Board & Band

Early on June 17, fifteen adults started the drive from their homes in Lansing, Grand Rapids and Ann Arbor to Royal Oak for an 8:00 a.m. call time. The travelers were members of the Great Lakes Pride Band—the only one of its kind in the state—and they were traveling to Royal Oak to appear in the Lifetime TV movie, *Prayers for Bobby*. In the movie, directed by Russell Mulcahy (“*Queer as Folk*”), Sigourney Weaver plays Mary Griffith, a devout Presbyterian, who reared her children with the conservative teachings of the Church. When she learned her son, Bobby, was gay, Griffith pestered the boy for four years to cure himself through prayer.

“His mother was an extreme fundamentalist Christian who felt God was going to cure her son of homosexuality,” says LeRoy Aarons, the author of the book, *Prayers for Bobby*, and the former executive editor of the *Oakland Tribune*, and both the founder and current president of the National Lesbian Gay Journalists Association. Hoping to ease the pain he was causing his mother, Bobby moved away, but continued to harbor hope that some day his mother would accept him. His self-hate and depression deepened to the point where he committed suicide at age 20.

“She had made a terrible, terrible

mistake,” Aarons says. “The wonderful thing is, tragically, after his death she began to discover the error of her ways and she’s now a crusader for gay kids.”

The Great Lakes Pride Band came into this opportunity when one of the film’s casting directors heard them at the Motor City Pride Fest in June. He contacted the Band’s artistic director, Paul Levandowsky, and expressed his interest in having the Band participate in one of the movie’s closing scenes—San Francisco’s 1984 Gay Pride Parade. Levandowsky queried his band members who, unsurprisingly, unanimously agreed to accept the invitation.

Upon arriving in Royal Oak, the band joined 1000 other extras in the Royal Oak Farmers Market for the first of what would be many very long waits. Similarly costumed extras were assembled in groups around the pavilion: flamboyantly bedecked drag queens sashayed up and down the center aisle; parade-goers wore 1980s style cut-offs and super short gym shorts; funeral attendees were dressed in black; band members wore jeans and red shirts; PFLAG parents wore parent clothes. In one corner of the pavilion, several barbershop chairs and large mirrors created a makeshift make-up center. Cases of individually wrapped packages of danish and cinnamon buns were stacked on tables in the center of the market. There was an overwhelming sense of patience and cooperation among folks in the pavilion: people were talking, laughing, eating sweet

rolls, waiting.

Two hours later the call came to start loading the buses for the short transport to the shooting location. After waiting in the appointed spots for another hour, the cameras started rolling. The same scene was shot from different angles for the next nine hours. Each clip lasted no more than 20 seconds before the foghorn blew, signaling the end of the shoot. “Everyone back to your places,” meant another 20 minutes of standing and waiting before the next 20 second shoot occurred. Six hours into the wait, groups of parade extras were excused for a lunch break. The buses transported folks back to the Market, where hot dogs, chips and sodas were provided for everyone.

For a mid-June day, the weather was blustery and cold. At one point, Sigourney Weaver donned a quilted hoodie and several of the actors were spotted doing warming exercises. The fierce wind caused tents to collapse and a balloon banner broke loose and flew away. The response of the crowd: cheering and clapping. This was the tenor of the people that day: happy, pleasant, excited, tired.

Twelve hours after arriving at the Farmers Market, the foghorn blew for the final time. “Alright folks, that’s it. Thanks everyone!” was the last comment from the director. Band dismissed!! We had a blast!

The movie will be aired on Lifetime TV in February 2009.

# Smart Money Tag Team Credit



by *Brian Winters,*  
*AAMS, Financial*  
*Planner*

Let's say one person in a relationship has a credit score that

sparkles like a beacon of responsible borrowing, while their partner has a score they'd rather not be seen with in public.

It happens quite often. And interestingly enough, it's usually the higher earning person in the relationship who has the embarrassing credit score. But it's not just the poor-scoring partner who suffers. Everyone loses. Here's why.

Often lenders use both partners' credit to determine interest rates for large purchases like automobiles and houses. This "score blending" is especially common with mortgages.

If a lower, blended score adds an extra

1% to the interest rate the high-scoring partner would have received on their own, it can cost the couple big. The difference between a 6.5% and 7.5% interest rate over the life of a 30-year, \$250,000 mortgage is a whopping \$60,431. Ouch!

Here's what to do. The couple should open a credit account jointly. Contrary to popular misconception, opening the account shouldn't hurt the higher-scoring partner's credit. Once open, however, activity on the account will affect both partners' credit scores. Applying jointly allows the lower-scoring partner to be approved where they likely wouldn't have been if applying alone.

The card should be used minimally and the balance paid in full every month. After a year, the low-scoring partner should apply for a card in their name only (but don't close the joint account) and continue the pattern. Assuming all other accounts are in good standing and large amounts of debt aren't outstanding, the low-scoring partner will have earned a substantially higher score within about two years, which

can save the couple thousands of dollars on large purchases.

It is important to remember both partners are responsible for debt on a joint account regardless of who made the purchases. One day (very soon, I hope) there will be court protections for same-sex couples who split so partnership debt is shared equally and distributed fairly. In today's imperfect society where marriage equality has yet to be achieved, there are no such protections. To that end, it is important to have a partnership agreement that defines who is responsible for shared debt, and in what proportions, should the relationship end.

As always, please send your financial questions to [brian@7advice.com](mailto:brian@7advice.com).

Brian Winters is President and Financial Planner at Guardian Financial Planning, LLC, an independent Registered Investment Advisory firm serving the planning and investment needs of the LGBT community throughout Lansing, Jackson and Ann Arbor. He can be reached at [brian@7advice.com](mailto:brian@7advice.com).

## International Gay Screenplay Contest

from *Mike Dean, Contest Coordinator*  
303.629.3072

The ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY CONTEST, a screenplay contest dedicated to the positive portrayal of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender and queer individuals in film, celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2008. Entries are now being accepted online and are limited to the first 300 for 2008. Executive Director, David Jensen, "We are excited to celebrate our 10th anniversary and are looking at a record number of entries this year. We are continually amazed with the quality of talent that comes through the door year after year." Jensen continues, "We receive entries from around the globe and Hollywood is taking notice in a very big way. Many of our past winners are now hard working screenwriters"

The ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY CONTEST has gained respect and notoriety from Hollywood studios, agents and producers. Entries for 2008 are being accepted online at: [www.OneInTenScreenplayContest.com](http://www.OneInTenScreenplayContest.com)

Prizes for 2008 include cash, industry exposure and merchandise. The 2008 One In Ten Screenplay Contest is sponsored by: Cherub Productions, Final Draft Inc., scr(i)pt magazine, [www.inktip.com](http://www.inktip.com), [www.TopFilmFestivals.com](http://www.TopFilmFestivals.com), [www.ScreenplayContests.com](http://www.ScreenplayContests.com) and Jungle Software.

The submission deadline for 2008 ONE IN TEN SCREENPLAY CONTEST is September

1, 2008 and winners will be announced on November 15, 2008. Entry forms are available online through the contest website: [www.OneInTenScreenplayContest.com](http://www.OneInTenScreenplayContest.com). Entry forms may also be obtained through the mail by sending a self addressed stamped envelope to:

CHERUB PRODUCTIONS  
One In Ten Screenplay Contest  
Post Office Box 540  
Boulder, Colorado 80306  
(303) 629-3072  
[www.OneInTenScreenplayContest.com](http://www.OneInTenScreenplayContest.com)  
E-mail: [Cherubfilm@aol.com](mailto:Cherubfilm@aol.com)

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## Hello, I am Mike Carlson



Where to start and how to write this so it doesn't sound like a profile on some singles website? No way actually, so I might as well just jump into it without too much thought (not too much like me normally, I over think everything).

I grew up a couple hours away in Richmond, Michigan (always have to get that Michigan in there as people automatically think Virginia when they

hear Richmond). Small town with small town values which of course meant I had no real idea of my sexuality let alone a plan of coming out.

Typical early life. Bit of a nerd. Excelled at school but lacked all social graces. Couldn't wait for college. Picked Michigan State University because my grandfather had played football here a couple generations prior. If only I had figured it all out sooner, I'd have been on ALL the sport teams and been a complete jock just to shower with all the other athletes.

Figured things out as I developed SOME social graces during my five years at State pursuing a Biochemistry/Anthropology double major. Graduated, but as I didn't have anything better to do, I stayed around East Lansing (it beat going back to Richmond) and found work at Community Newscenter, then at my full time job of an environmental chemist at Fire and Environmental Labs in East Lansing (we have since changed our name to Merit Labs, no more fecal jokes, yeah!). I've been there eighteen years and though I never thought I'd stay this long, I like the people I work

with and they were surprisingly open to my lifestyle. They offered insurance coverage to my then partner when he needed it, saying we were 'as good as married'.

Have been involved in the community since attending one of my first prides where I saw Kate Clinton, Urvasi Vaid, and Pedro Zamora all speak with great conviction and passion. Joined the LAHR LGBT Hotline in '94 and have worn many hats (listener, referrals coordinator, volunteer wrangler, and director) on and off since. As you can read in another article in this newsletter, the Hotline has closed down and I have no idea of what I'll be doing with my evenings and weekends from now on (I'm sure I'll figure something out).

I've also written articles for this newsletter (movie reviews and a fitness column) and hope to do more of that in the future (any suggestions what I should try writing about?). Even though the Hotline is done, I intend to continue it's work by expanding

the resources and referrals on the LAHR website and use my position on the LAHR board to reinvigorate some old social groups and introduce new ones.

I'm a hard core nerd boy when it comes to what I like to do in my (now copious) free time. Gaming (old school, around a table more than at a computer), Sci Fi, Fantasy, TV, movies and books, books, books. Another change in my life is the purchase of a new Macbook, so I expect to be seen around cafes typing like I'm actually a writer or something (like I'm doing at the moment).

This year has been a time of great change in my life and I intend to embrace that change and ride it to whatever the future holds with a smile on my face and a song in my heart (yes, this definitely sounds like a singles ad).



# Lansing Area AIDS Network



*Serving the HIV affected community since 1985.*

## Care Coordination

Since 1986, LAAN's care coordinators have worked with over 450 HIV+ men, woman and children assisting in planning for needed services and acting as a central point of access for care and support services in the community. LAAN offers emergency assistance with mortgage and rent payments; utility bills; medical/dental costs; child care expenses; food and nutritional supplements; transportation; and coordinates with other community service providers.

## Volunteer Programs

Many volunteer opportunities are available at LAAN including the Buddy Program, which links trained volunteers who provide practical and emotional support, social integration and friendship to persons living with HIV/AIDS. Volunteers are also needed for general office support, special events, staffing for LAAN's food pantry program and help with transportation for clients.

## Support Groups

Current LAAN support groups include:

HIV+ Men's Group

Positively Aware Series

HIV+ Womens Group

Client Education Workshops

## Anonymous Counseling & Testing Schedule

**Listening Ear** (East Lansing)

313 West Grand River

Thursday from 6-9 PM

*Appointment Only*

**Young's Landing** (Old Town)

Greater Lansing African American Health

511 East Grand River

Wednesday from 6-9 PM

*Walk-In*

**LAAN Main Office**

913 West Holmes, Suite 115

First and Third Thursday of Every Month from 3-9 PM

*Appointment Only*

## HIV Prevention Programs

Prevention outreach and risk reduction is provided through presentations to community groups, schools, treatment centers, shelters, churches, and universities. LAAN utilizes trained volunteers to assist with promoting LAAN services and community resources throughout the region.

**For more information about the LAAN, visit them online at: [www.laanonline.org](http://www.laanonline.org)**

913 West Holmes, Suite 115, Lansing, MI 48910 - (517)394-3560 - (517)394-1298 FAX - [laancontact@lansingareaaidsnetwork.org](mailto:laancontact@lansingareaaidsnetwork.org)

## Michigan Equality Targets Hate Crimes

Michigan Equality declared, July 2008, as “Independence From Hate Crimes and Speech” Month and provided the following educational information:

### Hate Crimes & Speech Education Campaign

Michigan Equality is proud to announce a new educational campaign designed to address the growing issue of hate motivated crimes and violence. Hate crimes against Michigan’s LGBT community increased 133%, according to a new report from the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Prevention.

Every week, Michigan Equality featured articles, blog posts and new programs designed to help people talk about hate crimes and hate speech. In the fall, Michigan Equality will host a series of community workshops thanks to a generous grant from the Arcus Foundation’s Gay & Lesbian Fund.

### Hate Groups in Michigan

Michigan is home to 26 active hate groups according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, a nationally recognized civil rights organization which monitors and reports on the activities of hate groups throughout the United States. Michigan’s hate groups include neo-Nazi groups, Christian Identity churches, and the only university supported student hate group in the U.S., Young Americans for Freedom, Michigan State University chapter. In addition, in December of 2007, the National Socialist Party, (NSM) a leading neo-Nazi group announced it had moved its national headquarters from Minnesota to Detroit.

### Hate Crimes & Hate Speech in Michigan

Since September 2007, there have been reports of nooses at Central Michigan University and a most disturbing videotaped beating of a “gay rights advocate” at Wayland High School just last month. Even Michigan Equality’s neighborhood, Old Town Lansing, isn’t immune from anti-gay graffiti spray painted on a dozen buildings just a block away from our office.

Some will try to argue with you against the need for legislation, because “all crimes are hate crimes.” However, at some level, yes all crime is antisocial. But not all crime is an act of hate. For instance, is the homeless mother who steals a loaf of bread to feed her children acting out of malice or survival? Regardless, she is committing a crime. But crimes against certain classes of persons are held to be particularly destructive to society, and as a result, society has created laws to address those crimes. We have crimes to protect victims of domestic violence, to protect the elderly from abuse in nursing homes and to protect children from sexual predators and we punish them accordingly. A hate crimes law would do exactly the same thing. This law does nothing more than state that Michigan believes crimes motivated by hate against a person or group of persons because of their minority status are particularly heinous and should be punished accordingly.

### What Can You Do?

- Check Michigan Equality’s website often for updates on hate crimes and hate speech
- Contact your legislator and demand that he or she support Matt’s Safe Schools Law
- Check out YAF Watch, a blog that tracks the Young Americans for Freedom, MSU Chapter
- Write a letter to your newspaper editor about “Independence from Hate Crimes & Speech”



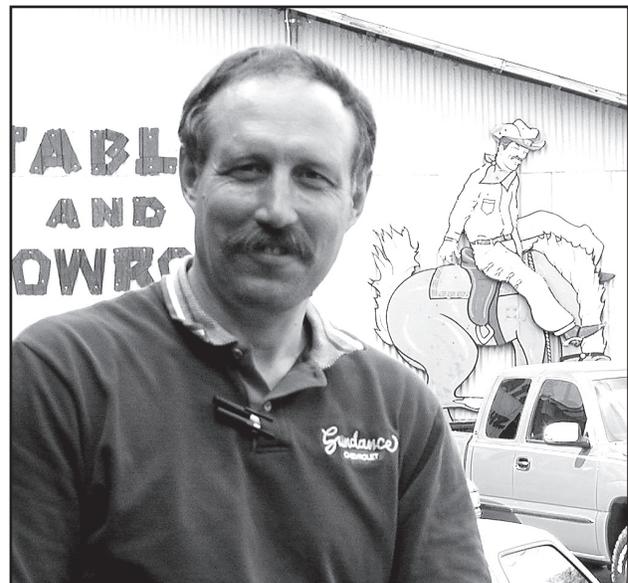
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## New GLBTIQ Group

What: Transgender Peer Support Group  
Who: Individuals who identify as genderqueer, transsexual, transgender, gender variant or who are questioning their gender orientation or who believe that gender is not dichotomous.  
Why: To share resources, experiences and support.  
Where: Lansing MI  
When: Starting summer 2008  
Contact: Jesse @ 517-993-7662 or [ftmjesse@gmail.com](mailto:ftmjesse@gmail.com)  
GLBTIQ PWDs

GLBTIQ = Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Intersex Questioning and/or Queer  
PWD = people with disabilities  
Are you GLBTIQ and dealing with a disability? Or are you a PWD who identifies as gay, lesbian, bi, trans, intersex, queer or who is questioning your sexual orientation or gender identity? Do you find that the disability community isn't open to your GLBTIQ issues or that the GLBTIQ community doesn't take in to consideration accessibility issues?

Would you like to see the disability and GLBTIQ communities become more open and accepting of the other? Or would you just like others to talk to who are facing the same hurdles?

I'd like to start a group of GLBTIQ PWDs to talk about our issues. This could be come an advocacy group or discussion group or a peer support group or a social networking group. I don't know where it will lead but if you have ideas about such a group or want to be a part of one, lets talk.

Contact Jesse @ Capital Area Center for Independent Living (CACIL) 335-1524 or [jlathers@cacil.org](mailto:jlathers@cacil.org)

## August PFLAG / Jackson Meeting

The August meeting will be held August 14 at 7:00 at Immanuel Lutheran.

Usually there is ice cream! This meeting will be a regular support meeting.

Meetings are confidential, barrier-free, and open to anyone. For more information, call 750-3045 or email [pflag\\_jackson@yahoo.com](mailto:pflag_jackson@yahoo.com)

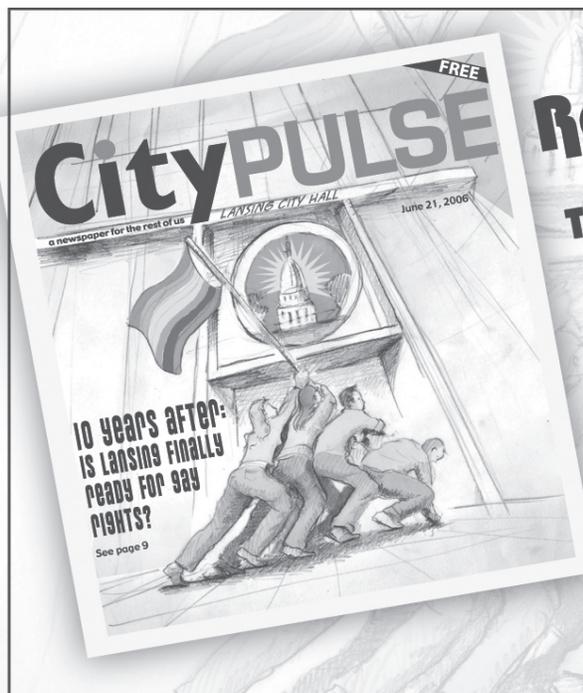
## Transgender Warning

by Bill Beachler, Publisher

I recently received information from PFLAG / Detroit asking us to support the removal of negative people from a committee of the American Psychological Association (APA) working on their Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. The work of this committee as currently staffed may continue to cause major problems for transgender people. A couple of these committee members have a long history of anti-LGBT activities. The committee needs a much broader representation of professional people.

In 1973, Homosexuality was removed as a disorder from the American Psychological Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Second Edition (DSM-II). It was the step that recognized that individuals whose sexual interests are directed primarily toward people of the same sex weren't afflicted with a psychiatric disorder.

When we flash forward to 2008, we find Gender Identity Disorder -- the diagnosis for transsexuals and gender-variant children -- is found in DSM-IV TR. When the DSM is revised in a couple of years for DSM-V, Gender Identity Disorder will likely still be there. If this Manual is not changed similar to the change in 1973, children in the future will continue to be diagnosed with Gender Identity Disorder. This diagnosis for children will further the APA's approval of conversion therapy.



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## Seven Straight Nights 2008



by Nancy English, LAHR board

In 2007 the national organizations Soulforce and Atticus Circle began a week-long nation-wide program, Seven Straight Nights for Equal Rights (7SN). I produced last year's 7SN and I'm going to do so again this year with LAHR.

7SN focuses on the LGBT straight ally and what we can do to educate and activate them on our issues; the focus of 7SN is therefore the straight ally and not the LGBT person in particular. Michigan, as we all know, is a state where we need a lot of

straight ally support due to the horrible political climate toward LGBT people. This year's 7SN week is, Sunday, September 14th through Saturday, September 20th.

I am pleased to announce that Scott Harris, owner of Everybody Reads bookstore, and his family are the hosts of this year's 7SN. There will be an event at Everybody Reads on Saturday, September 20th plus other events throughout that week. Details regarding these events will be posted in the September LAHR newsletter and also on the LAHR website: [www.lahronline.org](http://www.lahronline.org).

## MSU GLBT Homecoming Party

by Bill Beachler, Publisher

The Michigan State University GLBT Alumni Association has been busy working on the Homecoming reception / party and everyone is invited, whether you are an alumni, faculty, student, or just a friend,

Please save this date: Friday, Oct. 3, 2008. The location will be announced soon. We hope to have appetizers, entertainment by a DJ and comedian, mingling and prizes from GLBT vendors and community.

Ticket information will be posted of the association's excellent web site at <http://www.msu.edu/user/glbталum/>

When you go to the web site, it has the following introduction:

Welcome! We invite all Michigan State Alumni who are Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender to join us in helping MSU to provide a supportive environment for the GLBT community.

We hope the MSU GLBT Alumni Association will provide alumni with opportunities to connect, re-connect and network with others who share similar personal and professional interests.

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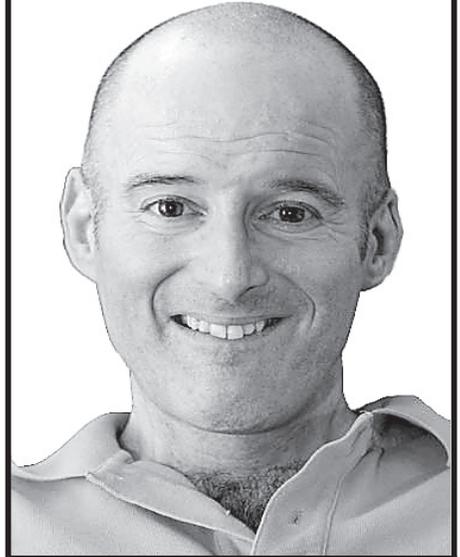
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## LAHR-PAC News



by Bill Beachler,  
LAHR-PAC

LAHR-PAC has been working to prepare for the important upcoming local, state and national elections in August and November. The August primary will have taken place by the time you read this article.

The organization held a fun and successful fundraiser brunch. Also, the local school board races were held, where LAHR-PAC contributed to Damian Fisher for the Okemos school board. Bob McDonough rated Positive and Jeffrey Theuer rated Somewhat Positive won the election. Although Fisher lost, the LGBT community let it be known that we care

about our local schools and Okemos will have an LGBT supportive board.

Also, the organization has been looking at the open 4th District Court of Appeals seat. We had the best and the worst running for that seat – from the positive Paula Manderfield all the way to Eric Doster, who represented U.S. Rep. Tim Walberg in his recall fight and who was appointed to the Judges' Retirement Board by Gov. John Engler in 1996. In 2004, he represented Citizens for the Protection of Marriage, and was widely quoted as promising that the ballot measure would not impact domestic partner benefits. He is a member of the ultra right wing Federalist Society and sits on the board of the Great Lakes Education Project political action committee (GLEP PAC). We had hoped to get this information to you before the primary, but unfortunately the article

wasn't included in the last issue.

The Lansing Association for Human Rights Political Action Committee (LAHR-PAC) will rate candidates, make donations and educate voters in the important upcoming 2008 November election. If you wish to help, please send your membership fees (\$20 minimum for individuals, \$40 for couples) to:

LAHR PAC  
PO Box 16014  
Lansing MI 48901-6014

Additional donations are always welcome. You may donate without becoming a member. We began meeting in March. Members will be notified of the meetings.

\*LAHR PAC is an independent political committee, not affiliated with any other organization. LAHR PAC seeks to elect candidates supportive of LGBT rights.

## LAHR Takes Actions

by Bill Beachler, Publisher

The LAHR June Board meeting resulted in several actions to be taken by LAHR. These decisions will have several positive impacts that will benefit the local LGBT community.

LAHR is sponsoring a needed local project known as Seven Straight Nights that will take place in September and we encourage you to participate. Please read the article by Nancy English for more information. The Board voted to provide up to \$500 to support the several activities that will comprise this project, which will focus on our straight allies to gain further support on LGBT issues.

LAHR voted to support the Great Lakes Pride Band. Paul Levandowski, Artistic Director, for the Great Lakes Pride Band, provided a video presentation to the Board and asked LAHR for assistance. LAHR voted to provide the Band \$400 to cover the cost of registration fees for 6 band members to attend the national Gay Band

Association's annual meeting in New Jersey in order to request Association approval and recognition of the Great Lakes Pride Band in the Association. The Great Lakes Pride Band now meets all the criteria to be recognized as an official national LGBT band. Also while there, the band members will join other band members from across the country and march with the New York City band in the world's largest Halloween parade. Check out the band's web site at [www.greatlakesprideband.org](http://www.greatlakesprideband.org).

As we have reported, LAHR has been active in the local YMCA problem. The Board discussed actions

that will take place during July at the local headquarters of the YMCA. LAHR has been and will continue to collect petition signatures recommending that the YMCA support LGBT families in its family membership policy as we have learned other local Michigan Ys have been doing



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# Calendar of Events!

## SUNDAY

- **Dignity** - 11:30 a.m. mass 2nd Sunday of each month. Saint John Student Parish, E. Lansing.
- **P-FLAG Lansing** - 3-5 p.m. 3rd Sunday of each month Presbyterian church in Okemos.
- **Light House Chapel** - LGBT friendly church -11:00 a.m. service - 1501 Windsor St., Lansing, 48906. Contact (517) 394-2080 for info.
- **All Saints Episcopal Church**, Open and Affirming, Sunday Service 10am, 800 Abbott, East Lansing.
- **Edgewood United Church of Christ**, Open and Affirming, Sunday Service 10am, 469 N. Hagadorn, East Lansing
- **Unitarian Universalist Church**, Open and Affirming, Sunday Services 9:15am & 11:15am, 855 Grove, East Lansing
- **Volleyball** - Sharp Park behind the Lansing Mall - 1:30 p.m. - Please call Bill for information at 337-1419.
- **Fellowship for Today** - Rev. Karen Arndorfer - at 5:30 p.m. - Open & Affirming = 855 Grove St., East Lansing – contact (517) 337-4070 or info@fellowshipfortoday.org .
- **Unity of Greater Lansing** - Rev. Kent Lederer - at 10 a.m. (starting Sept. at 11 a.m.) - Open & Affirming - 240 Marshall St. - contact (517) 371-3010 or revkent@unityofgreaterlansing.org .

## MONDAY

- **Sistrum, Lansing Women's Chorus** - 7-9pm @ University Lutheran church, 1020 S. Harrison, E. Lansing. <http://www.sistrum.org>. Contact: Lisa Haston, haston@lcc.edu.
- **LGBT AA meeting** - 7:30 p.m., University Lutheran Church, South Harrison, in East Lansing.
- **Social Knit Night** - 2nd Monday of each month. 6:30 - 9:00 p.m., 319 S. Waverly Rd.

## TUESDAY

- **Grand River Connection** - 4th Tuesday casual group for the "creative class." Sign-up and get more info at: [www.grandriverconnection.com](http://www.grandriverconnection.com).
- **BINGO** - 7pm at Club 505.
- **Greater Lansing Gay Men's Chorus**- Weekley rehearsals are at the Molly Grove Chapel of the First Presbyterian Church at 510 W. Ottawa St. in downtown Lansing from 6:30-8:30pm. To email: [info@glgmc.org](mailto:info@glgmc.org) or visit the website at [www.glgmc.org](http://www.glgmc.org).

## WEDNESDAY

- **Great Lakes Pride Band Rehearsals** - Every other Wednesday in Lansing. For information call Paul or Phil at 517-664-1275.
- **GLSEN Mid-Michigan** - 4:30 p.m. 3rd Wednesday of each month in Melinda Goff's room at Eastern.
- **Suits And The City** - 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the Month - the location changes each month - please visit [www.suitsandthecity.com](http://www.suitsandthecity.com) for the location or to contact the organization.
- **LAHR's Coffee Night** - Join your friends - every Wednesday from 8-10 p.m. at The Gone Wired Cafe, 2021 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing

## THURSDAY

- **LAHR Bowling** - 8 p.m. for the summer, at Holiday Lanes on Grand River near Frandor. Look for us near lane 35. Contact Greg at [MLatino@aol.com](mailto:MLatino@aol.com)
- **Euchre at Esquire Club** - registration at 6:30 p.m.
- **Lansing Community College Gay Straight Alliance** - Meets every Thursday, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. at the Gannon Vocational Building 262. Contact advisor, Jennifer Spenny email: [spennyj@lcc.edu](mailto:spennyj@lcc.edu)

## FRIDAY

- **LAHR Downtown Lunch** - 11:30 a.m. second Friday at Soup to Nutz Bistro on Kalamazoo & Grand Avenue, credit cards accepted! Contact Greg at [MLatino@aol.com](mailto:MLatino@aol.com)
- **LGBT AA meeting**, 6:30 p.m., at University United Methodist Church, South Harrison, in East Lansing

## SATURDAY

- **LAHR Breakfast Club** - 11 a.m. 3rd Sat. each month – met at Denny's Restaurant at 2701 East Grand River in East Lansing – close to Park Lake. Contact Bill 337-1419 or [beachlerb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:beachlerb@sbcglobal.net) .

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- \$50.00 Matron/Patron membership** at this organizational sustaining level includes the *LGBT News* mailed to your address, Association voting rights for up to two individuals in the household and a tax deduction.
- \$100.00+ Benefactor membership** at this organizational sustaining level includes the *LGBT News* mailed to your address, Association voting rights for up to two individuals in the household, and a tax deduction.

First time members will receive a LAHR T-shirt. Renewing members who donate at the Matron/Patron or Benefactor level will also receive a LAHR T-Shirt.

Please make checks payable and return to:

LAHR, Inc., P.O. Box 6565, East Lansing, MI 48826

Contributions to LAHR are deductible on your federal income tax return.

"The purpose of the Lansing Association for Human Rights is to improve the quality of life for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people throughout the greater Lansing area through civil rights activities, communications, education, social events and supportive services."

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