

# LGBT News

The LGBT Resource Center for the 7 Rivers Region, Inc.  
**February 2011**

## *Rosanne's Ramblings*

Happy love month! In the spirit of a holiday focused on love, it is officially "Love Month" at the Center. We kicked off the month with the Hughbert family at GALAXY on Saturday, January 29th. It was a great day of family pride and sharing. No matter how each of us define family for ourselves, it truly helps to have love and support from our family of birth, family of choice, or combination of the two. Life is a process with many twists, turns, and bumps along the way--love can help make the journey bearable and manageable. In the spirit of "Love Month" we invite you to stop in the Center, visit, find a book littered with affirming messages, meet new people, and enjoy a leisurely conversation with others who stop in.

We have invited K9 Xpres to join us on February 19th for "I Love My Pet Day". There will be a Pride photo area, time for questions and concerns regarding your furry, scaly, or feather loved one, and Obedience 101 at 2:00 p.m. Please stop down and see some of our beloved family members and learn some helpful techniques. Marcie will be available 11-4:00 p.m. for your questions and concerns regarding your pet. Photos will be available for a donation of \$5.

GALAXY will be focusing on topics related to love of self, others, and more this month. Kedi from Cesa#4 started her 12 week CAST group with GALAXY youth on February 5th and will continue meeting with them through April 23. It has been wonderful to have Kedi provide educational presentations for Drop In and GALAXY. Please save April 30, 2011, for the GALAXY Ball; this year's theme will be a masquerade. For those of you that enjoy dressing up, this will be a great event to share your creativity! We are looking for individuals interested in helping make the ball a success. If you are interested in sponsoring the event, please call the office.

It will be a great semester; we have interns to help with GALAXY, staff the Center, and help with program delivery and support. In addition to our fantabulous interns we also will have seven students from Kansas University joining us for a week in March to volunteer, learn, and help out with many Center needs. We continue to receive donations of office supplies and needed items to help run the Center, thank you to the many generous folk

that share their resources to ensure the Center can do its great work. For those of you who have visited our space you are aware we need more room for groups, resources, and to be more effective in our work-if you know of space that could work to meet our needs and help us fulfill our vision contact us.

Belief,  
Rosanne

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## ***Apply to participate in our first Leadership Academy!***

### **Mission:**

To instill in LGBT youth/adults, their allies, and community members the necessary leadership skills to actively engage them to be stewards for equality, awareness, and help them become change makers through our Leadership Academy.

As evidenced by the mission of this project, we plan to provide a stellar opportunity for activists new and seasoned to become change makers. If you are interested in applying to be one of the first trained through our academy, please complete the application attached here.

If you have the spark to challenge injustice, combat oppression, and speak out against hate, apply to attend the academy and be part of the solution.

Accepting applications through March 4, 2011.

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## ***Check out our new week day group!***

Coffee & Conversation

Starting Wednesday, February 16, 1:00-2:00 p.m

Looking to meet new people, share concerns, and find support? Join us on the 16th to see if this group is what you have been looking for. Coffee provided; feel free to bring your lunch.

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## ***Wanting a weekend get away?***

Looking for a beautiful nature infused escape?

Check out American Eagle Bluff Bed & Breakfast.

They offer nature, rivers, birding, antiques, and solitude all which are accompanied by “a view for all seasons.”

They are located on forty acres in Reeds Landing. The site is perfect for

eagle watching, snowshoeing, hiking, and viewing the Mississippi and Chipewewa Rivers, and there is a view of Lake Pepin. Their slice of heaven gives you an escape on top of the world. For more information please visit their Web page at [www.americaneaglebluffbedandbreakfast.com](http://www.americaneaglebluffbedandbreakfast.com) or call 651-564-0372.



## ***IDENTITY THEFT OR MAIL FRAUD - innocent or intentional - either way, it can hurt you***

***By Christina Mae Olson, CFP®***

Do you have the sort of house where people are always welcome? Is your spare room available for anyone who needs a place to crash for a while? Do family and friends often move in with you for extended periods of time? Do you have multiple roommates that change frequently? This article is about protecting yourself against what might happen when these guests or roommates move out. Beware of what can happen when a roommate, family member or visiting friend moves out of your home and changes their mailing address!

There is one relatively unknown risk that a lot of people have never considered: MAIL FRAUD via a USPS “change of address.” This was brought to my attention by a friend. Her sister was in college and did not have a permanent address. The sister asked my friend if she could use her address until she graduated and moved into a place of her own. My friend said, “Yes.” She got her sisters mail delivered to her house for a few years and forwarded it to the sister every couple of weeks.

Eventually, the student sister did graduate and moved into an apartment in California. She logged onto the USPS website and initiated a “change of address” on-line. It was time to get her own mail delivered to her new place in California. By mistake, she checked the box, “family” (meaning all residents in the household) when she should have selected “individual” (meaning just her). With just a few clicks on her computer, this sister diverted all of the mail going to this house to California. The home owner (my friend) did not authorize the USPS to divert her mail. There is no provision for consulting with the homeowner or proving the identity of the person initiating the change of address.

My friend had no idea this had happened. She stopped getting mail at her house. Her bills were late. Something was wrong. She was having a casual phone conversation with her sister who happened to mention how curious and odd it was that she got mail with her name on it! Uh oh! After some investigating - it was discovered that the sister had authorized the USPS to

deliver someone else's mail to her new address. This is actually illegal but the USPS has no way to prevent it from happening.

My friend did not authorize her brokerage statements to go to a new address but because the USPS had a change of address - instead of returning the statement to the company - the USPS forwarded it to California. This is a huge security breach. Brokerage companies, credit card companies, insurance companies and others do not require their customers to initiate a change of address with them directly. They should. My friend cannot be sure that she ultimately got all of her mail, bills and statements that were diverted to California. She complained to the USPS but can't be sure she was ever "made whole" with this incident.

When someone moves out of your home (an ex-lover, perhaps?) talk with them about this and make sure they initiate their "change of address" properly. Do it with them, to be safest. Do not let them divert all of your mail to their new address by mistake.

This was an innocent mistake but is a mistake that can happen very easily. It is also a wonderful and horrible opportunity for a thief to initiate a perfect fraud against you. The USPS "change of address" link on their website is a perfect way to steal someone's identity. All the thief needs is the name of someone in the household. They enter the current address, the future address and the effective date. They also provide an email address so they can confirm the change of address. A thief can do all of this without you ever knowing about it. A few weeks can go by before you notice something is wrong. A thief can get a lot of your mail in a few weeks and do a lot of harm before you catch it and try to fix it.

I consulted with my District Attorney about this. Laws were actually broken in this case. When you receive mail that is not yours - you are guilty of accepting stolen property. The intent does not matter. This sister was guilty of mail fraud and theft and/or misuse of property not belonging to her.

Your credit report lists all of your mailing addresses and "change of address" actions that you have ever made. Mail fraud is just one more reason why you should check your credit report regularly. You can get a free credit report every year from each of the three credit agencies at this website: [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). Get one every 4 months from a different agency. Look for errors or inconsistencies in your address information.

One more thing: Do you pay your bills by writing a paper check and sending it through the mail? This can be a risky way of doing business. Paying bills with a check - and sending it through the mail - can take up to a week. Dozens of people have to handle your bill if you pay by snail mail. Many

people pay bills electronically now. It is very easy and takes a few seconds. You can confirm within minutes that your request was executed. You can know by the end of the day if your funds make it to the intended destination. Your accounts are password protected and each electronic transaction is encrypted to avoid cyber fraud. You don't have to write a check (wasting paper) or mail in a bill (wasting a stamp and wasting paper). There's no risk of your check getting lost or stolen. EFT (electronic funds transfer) is by far the safest way to pay a bill.

Mail fraud can be intentional or innocent. Be very careful with who gets mail at your house. Perhaps your extended visitor should open a post office box and not even receive mail at your house. Pay attention to the mail that does come to your house. Check into it if something changes or seems different.

Chris Olson is a licensed financial planner with a fee only practice. You can reach her at 608-525-9818 or [CMoney@centurytel.net](mailto:CMoney@centurytel.net).

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## ***Upcoming Events***

Check the Center's [calendar](#) for more information about upcoming and monthly events.

### **I Love My Pet Day**

Join us at the at the Center on February 19th.

Marcie from K9 Xpres will be available for 11-4:00 p.m. for questions and concerns about your pet.

Obedience 101 will at 2:00 p.m.

Photos will be available for a donation of \$5.

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## ***Ongoing Center Activities***

### **Weekly Activities**

*GALAXY, a group for youth ages 13-20*

When: Every Tuesday 4-6 p.m. and every Saturday 2-4 p.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

### *LGBTQ Parents Group*

When: Not currently meeting. Call the Center to restart this group.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

### *Drop-in Group*

When: Every Thursday 6-8 p.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

### *Coffee & Conversation*

When: Every Wednesday from 1-2 p.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

### **Bi-weekly Activities**

#### *GLENDAA/AA Group*

When: First and third Friday at 7 p.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

Just as Glenda was Dorothy's support in OZ this group is the equivalent for LGBT people struggling with drug & alcohol addictions and issues. If you are looking for support and a safe place to be yourself as you deal with your drug & alcohol issues- please join us. For more information please contact Aaron at (608) 788-1508.

### **Monthly Activities**

#### *PGLAG*

For more information call the Seven Rivers LGBT Resource Center at (608) 784-0452, or Lori at (608) 790-5052.

#### *Gender Queer/Transgender Gathering*

When: First Wednesday 7-8 p.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

Do you identify as gender queer? How about Transgender? Do you ever feel like you don't fit in because of your gender identity or expression? Then come to a monthly discussion group at the 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center.

Genderqueer - A gender variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders. This person may want to challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system.

Transgender - A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex.

#### *GNO (Guy's Night Out)*

GNO will meet the fourth Friday of every month at the Center from 6-8 p.m. All male identified persons are welcome.



### ***In Closing***

Thanks for reading! If you have any comments or anything you'd like to add to an upcoming newsletter, please e-mail us at:

[7riverslgbtnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:7riverslgbtnewsletter@gmail.com).

# I My Pet Day!!

February 19, 2011 11:00am-4:00pm

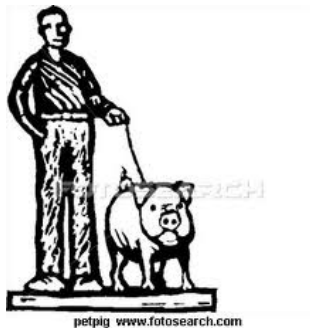


2:00pm – K9 Xpres

Obedience 101

**Pet Photo Shoot All Day!!**

Donation of \$5 please



Marcie, from K9 Xpres will be available all day  
to answer any questions



# Sparkplug: Leadership Academy Application

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ GENDER IDENTITY: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street/City/State /ZIP

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1. Why are you applying to attend the Leadership Academy?

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2. Please share three strengths and three weaknesses then discuss how they will help and/or challenge you and your participation in the Leadership Academy.

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3. If you have volunteered or been in a leadership position before, please share an experience that was life changing: \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Please share what you see as the biggest challenge facing the LGBT community today.

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5. Are you able to commit to one year of volunteer service with the Center? Yes No

6. Please share any experience you have working with the LGBT community. \_\_\_\_\_

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7. List current and past volunteer and/or leadership work (include a brief description of duties and dates of service):

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8. Please list three references who know you well, nonrelated preferred:

	Name	Relationship	Years known	Email	Phone
1.	<hr/>				
2.	<hr/>				
3.	<hr/>				

9. Essay portion. Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

- a. What do you hope to gain from participating in the Leadership Academy and how will what you learn benefit others?
- b. Briefly share what equality for the LGBT community means to you.
- c. Attach a letter of recommendation from someone who has known you for a minimum of two years.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION, ESSAY ANSWERS, AND LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION TO:**

**Leadership Academy**

**Rosanne St. Sauver, Executive Director**

**LGBT Resource Center for the Seven Rivers Region**

**303 Pearl Street, La Crosse, WI 54601**

All applicants will be called to come in for an interview after their application materials have been reviewed. Please indicate any days and/or times that do not work for you, here:

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*"Until the great mass of the people shall be filled with the sense of responsibility for each other's welfare, social justice can never be attained."*-Helen Keller