
LGBT News

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

February 2008

Reminder: Become a member!

Your membership in the 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center makes it possible for LGBT folks to have a presence in our community and to support the collaborative work we do with other organizations in the 7 Rivers Region. Your membership supports LGBT visibility! Please join us now by filling out [the membership form](#) and mailing it to the Center. Membership also comes with goodies from our Community Partners.

Annual Meeting a Success and Read About New Board Members

The Annual Meeting on January 11, 2008 was well attended and everyone had a good time dancing and socializing. The new board members were introduced and voted into office.

Read About Our new Board Members

KATHRYN HIETBRINK

Kathryn Hietbrink is very excited to be joining the 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center at this time in her life and the life of the Center. She feels ready to contribute to help move the center forward and that there is an excellent plan in place and energy and people to make it happen. Kathryn would like to honor those that gave birth to the center and to the members and volunteers that have kept it going and expanding to meet the community's needs. Kathryn moved to La Crosse 2 and 1/2 years ago to assume the School Social Worker position at Central High School and to enjoy the beauty and diversity of the this area. She had been living in Richland Center and commuting to Tomah for 6 years after spending her younger adult years in Chicago. Part of her goal is to help build a bridge of support for LGBT youth as they transition into young adulthood and to expand networking, socializing and service opportunities to the larger LGBTQ community.

GREGORY S. BONNEY

Greg Bonney is a partner with the firm of Johns, Flaherty & Collins, S.C. in La Crosse, practicing primarily in estate and business planning, as well as probate and real estate law. He also works with many businesses, ranging from sole proprietorships to national and international companies.

Greg grew up in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, and is a 1978 graduate of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, and received his law degree in 1981 cum laude from Hamline University School of Law in St. Paul, Minn. He joined Johns, Flaherty & Collins in 1981. He is admitted to practice in the state of Wisconsin and the United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin.

Actively involved in advancing the practice of law, Greg is a member of the La Crosse County Bar Association and the Crawford County Bar Association. He is a member of the State Bar of Wisconsin and is currently on the Board of Directors of the Real Property, Probate and Trust Section of the State Bar Association. He serves on the Special Investigative Panel of the state Lawyer Regulation System, an appointment by the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

Greg has been involved in several community activities, including the Sugar Creek Camp Foundation, La Crosse Area United Way, the La Crosse City board of zoning appeals, the La Crosse Community Foundation, the Salvation Army Advisory Board, as treasurer of the La Crosse Area Synod - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and as treasurer of the Logan High School Band Parents Organization. He is active in the lives of his two boys and in his church, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

MIKEL HAMPEL

I am a local boy farm boy. I was born in Black River Falls, raised in Cataract and attended Sparta High School. I have an Associate's Degree in Accounting from Western Technical College and a BS in Business Administration from UW-La Crosse. After graduation I lived in Appleton and worked for a hotel and an airline before landing a position with a dairy cooperative. I was hired as an accountant, promoted to General Ledger Supervisor and again to Assistant Regional Controller. In 1996, I was hired by Radisson Hotel in La Crosse as Controller and I moved back to La Crosse.

My partner's name is Dan Lintin, a founding father of the resource center. We have five daughters. Three are attending Logan High School, one is attending Iowa State University and the oldest is a graduate from UW-Riverfalls. I have been a member of the City Tax commission for several years. For the last two years, I have been a member of the Pridefest Committee. I am a member of Our Savior's Lutheran Church in La Crosse, involved in Sunday school, our Tuesday evening community free meal called "Come for Supper", a member of the Membership and Evangelism Committee and organizer of our new men's groups.

TRISH HARVEY

Trish Harvey teaches 8th grade social studies at Holmen Middle School in Holmen, WI. Formerly, she served an administrative role at the University of Wisconsin La Crosse in the Masters of Education - Professional Development Program. She has also facilitated two UW-L Learning Communities and is currently working with a community in Milwaukee. Trish earned a Doctoral degree from the University of Minnesota in Educational Policy and Administration. In addition, she has a Master's of Science degree in Sports Administration from UW-La Crosse. Trish taught grades 7-12 social studies for a number of years in St. Charles, MN. Her interests include biking, skiing, hiking, and reading. Trish and her partner, Teri Staloch, have two sons, Tate, 7, and Teigen, 4.

PATTI MARTIN

I've lived with my husband in the La Crosse area for the past 28 years. My husband and I reside in an old farmhouse and have raised three boys in a rural setting near Coon Valley. In April our marriage will be 30 years old and we are now experiencing the joys of being grandparents to a little girl. My hobbies include many interests such as doing outdoor activities, reading, learning about the universe, and experiencing interactions and relationships with people.

Graduating as a social worker from Utah State University my work and volunteer experience has mainly focused on working with families and children. Currently I am employed by PATH WI, a non-profit agency, contracted by La Crosse County to provide services to families experiencing child abuse and neglect issues. I also serve as a mental health consultant for Head Start Child and Family Center of La Crosse.

Over the years I have been interested in learning more about people: from various cultures, in different ethnic groups, with beliefs differing from mine, and in the LGBT community. As we raised our children we tried to instill an open mindedness and an acceptance about the differences that make people unique. In 2003 we learned our youngest son was gay. While we embraced him for who he was it still wasn't enough to take away the fears he had about being gay in our society.

In the positions I've held professionally and as a volunteer I have worked at educating people about what it is they need to know to be effective parents, healthy individuals, and productive members of society. I believe it is through education that we alleviate the ignorance that causes hatred and prejudice. Skills I could bring to the LGBT Resource Center board are abilities to empathize, provide support, speak to the public, educate, counsel, and a strong sense of compassion.

Though brief and concise I believe the above provides information on my interest in working on the LGBT Center board and also how my own goals would be met in doing so. I look forward to this opportunity and thank you for your consideration.

Report from the Center

The cold weather has meant a lonely time for us here at the Center. We had a great time at the Annual Meeting on January 11th despite the snowy weather. The rearranging of the Center is nearly complete with only a few minor details left to work out to get the space back to its full working form. As part of the mini-makeover, Ann and Leslie spent a blustery Sunday doing a much needed clean sweep of the center. It looks great so come check it out!!

We are continually looking for titles of literature and media to add to our library. If you have suggestions of titles that you feel would be good additions or items on your bookshelf you don't read anymore, please contact the center.

Something else we would like to try is getting your input about activities and events you would like to see happen at or in conjunction with the Center. Below is a link to a survey Center staff

has created to get a better feel for what kind of events we should plan to have! Please take [this survey](#) and let us know!

Oh yes, one more thing; we still have quite a selection available in the Rainbow Boutique so stop in and check it out—it's never too early to buy something rainbow for your valentine!

Lindsay, 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center Coordinator

Old Lesbians Organizing for Change

OLOC (Old Lesbians Organizing for Change) announces plans for the upcoming National Gathering "California Dreaming: Building a Better World for Every Old Lesbian" to be held at the Hacienda Hotel in Los Angeles, CA from July 30 to August 3, 2008.

Keynote speakers will be award winning author Jewelle Gomez, community activist and politician Jackie Goldberg, and jazz/blues artist and Lesbian activist Gaye Adegbalola (who will also perform).

Other entertainment planned for the Gathering includes Alix Dobkin, Mothertongue Feminist Readers Theater, Robin Tyler, the Los Angeles Women's Community Chorus and the OLOC Chorus, both directed by Sue Fink.

Numerous workshops will be provided on topics relevant to Old Lesbians. In addition, there will be a dance and a banquet. Some financial assistance will be available.

Registration information and fee schedules will be available in the near future on our web site, www.oloc.org.

OLOC is a national network of old Lesbians of all races age 60 and over working to confront ageism; support, respect and empower old Lesbians; increase visibility of old Lesbians; and encourage and support local chapters using education and public discourse as primary tools.

For further information about OLOC contact: OLOC
PO Box 5853
Athens, OH 45701
www.oloc.org
info@oloc.org.

For questions specifically regarding the 2008 Gathering email info@oloc.org or phone 888-706-7506 and leave a message if you reach voice mail.

**BUYING INSURANCE - are you OUT and PROUD? By
Christina Mae Olson, CFP®**

Do you trust your insurance agent? Do you know if your insurance agent is going to take your unique LGBT concerns into account when working with you? I suppose that one can always choose the conventional route and just ask if they are “gay friendly.” Gulp. Some of you are probably thinking that is none of their business if you are gay. Are you “out” to your insurance agent? One of my clients said that their stock broker told them to their face that they are going to hell because they have a gay son. Wouldn’t you want to know if you were dealing with a professional like that? You might never know their bias if you aren’t willing to come out to them. I always ask now. How can I not - in lieu of that horrible story? That stock broker obviously didn’t want my client’s business. I wouldn’t want him working with my money, either!

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we could just ask the professionals with whom we do business if they are gay or lesbian without fear of offending them? Why on earth should that be an offensive question? Being LGBT defines us - it’s an important factor in our lives! It can/should be part of the interview process - part of helping you decide if you want to give a professional your business.

If you google LGBT INSURANCE you’ll come up with some interesting links. One link sent me to www.gayfriendlybiz.com where I did a search on LGBT insurance companies and/or agents in Wisconsin. I found only one - and she is in Minneapolis! There is www.gaybusinessworld.com - with one link to an article about health care issues impacting the LGBT population. A further search from this website uncovered a link to a Milwaukee insurance agency. This was the only listing for Wisconsin! There was a Met Life representative at our PRIDE Festival last summer - her name is Roya Moltaji (www.rmoltaji@metlife.com). She is located in Bloomington, MN but comes to the Coulee Region periodically building her business. Do you remember Roya?

Nationally, there is Gay and Lesbian Insurance Services (Seattle, Washington) at www.gayandlesbianinsuranceservices.com. They are a sort of clearing house and referral service for those seeking insurance. The Human Rights Campaign lists 14 large insurance companies as having a 100% rating in their 2008 Corporate Equality Index. Met Life is one of these. The web based insurance company Esurance, www.esurance.com, also got a 100% rating.

The insurance business is a hard nut to crack. You can’t just go to the insurance aisle in the store and pick out the best product off the shelf. Insurance is “sold” not “bought.” You really have to be talked into many insurance purchases. Many facets of the business will never be disclosed to you, the prospective client. Insurance, like cars and coffins, pays a commission to the broker/agent for each. They don’t/won’t tell you what that is. When I sold health insurance - the broker was paid 20% of the first year’s premium and 10% every year after that. Wow, what a mark-up!

If you pay \$1800/year (\$150/month) for health insurance - that means \$360 goes to the broker for selling that policy to you. They’ll continue to get an ongoing income from your policy (increasing as the rates increase) - if that \$1800 annual policy inflates by 16% next year to \$2088 - they will earn \$208! I always ask for full disclosure on commissions. It should be required by law! That way you can decide if your agent actually earned \$360 for the 20 minutes they spent selling you their policy. Or, if they are worthy of a 10% cut every year you keep the policy.

Next month I will write in more detail about the differences between elective and mandatory insurance.

Chris Olson is a licensed Certified Financial Planner™ Practitioner in private practice. You can contact her at CMoney@centurytel.net or 608-525-9818.