
LGBT News

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

April 2008

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:

Join us on Sunday, April 6 at 1:30 pm for a special event co-sponsored by the 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center and Our Saviors Lutheran Church, a reconciling in Christ congregation that welcomes LGBT people. We will offer a free showing (donations are accepted to defray the rental cost of the video) of the movie: *For the Bible Told Me So*. The movie is an exploration of families from the religious right and how they deal with LGBT children. It also looks at more mainstream religions approaches to LGBT issues. The movie will be shown at Our Saviors Lutheran Church, 6th and Division. To learn more about the movie [visit this website](#).

Board President's Column by Mary O'Sullivan

Early last fall under the guidance of our former Board President, Cindy Killion, the Center embarked on a significant project. In conjunction with the Centers in Milwaukee, Madison, Eau Claire, and Appleton, we signed onto a grant proposal to UW School of Medicine and Public Health for a three year project that could have a significant impact on the health of LGBT people in our area, and will result in additional networking with other social service organizations in our region.

The granting agency said that our proposal was "innovative" and that the proposal, Reducing Tobacco Use Among LGBT Populations in Wisconsin, "holds great potential to improve the health of the people of Wisconsin in a significant way." The following is from the project summary, written by Gary Hollander of Diverse and Resilient, which is a part of the Milwaukee Center. It says:

"Project Need: Research has found that smoking rates for LGBT are increasing. The tobacco industry is targeting LGBT youth as an emerging audience. 2005 data shows that tobacco rates for general population in WI are 22%. Data collected by D&R over the last 3 years indicates rates in LGBT community as high as 44.6% with more than 5,000 years of potential life lost to smoking and an economic cost to Wisconsin of more than \$205 million dollars. Cultural norms and socialization patterns in the LGBT community place them at risk for tobacco usage and subsequent health problems. A primary social outlet for the LGBT population is gathering at bars

where smoking is pervasive. Culturally specific interventions are needed for the LGBT population to reduce tobacco use. However, there is only one evidence-based model for tobacco specific to gay men. Other projects for LGBT people have conducted social marketing, but there is not sufficient research to determine their effectiveness. The project will adapt tobacco harm reduction strategies with expertise from academic partners."

Watch this newsletter for periodic updates on our progress with the activities of this grant. Here's some of what you can expect to see:

- Non-smoking fun events sponsored by the Center.
- Activities directed to educating people about healthy life styles.
- Activities with our health care partners and educational institutions in the region to provide smoking cessation information and sessions directed to the LGBT population.
- Incentives for those who chose to quit smoking.

This three year grant is not only important to the health of LGBT people in the region, but also to the health of the Center. It will contribute to our special fund to hire an Executive Director for the Center. That, along with your generous contributions, will take the 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center to the next step and help it become an even more vital presence in our community.

New Law Allows Appointment of Person to Carry Out Burial and Funeral Wishes

Although it may sound cold, a new Wisconsin law will actually bring peace of mind to many residents. The law, called Authorization for Final Disposition, allows Wisconsin adults to choose who will make their funeral and burial arrangements.

The old law gave the closest relative the authority to make funeral and burial arrangements, regardless of the wishes of the deceased. That oftentimes created conflict between a deceased's children, parents and life partners. The children or parents of a deceased person may not have known what the person wanted done with his or her body at the time of death. Many times, funeral directors or clergy found themselves in the middle of the disputes.

Under the new law, a person can appoint an agent to carry out her or his wishes upon death. A person who is at least 18 years of age is able to sign a document, termed an "Authorization for Final Disposition" under the law. Through the Authorization, a person may give special directions, instructions concerning religious observances and suggestions concerning the source of funds for funeral and burial, including arrangements for a viewing, a funeral ceremony, memorial service, graveside service, burial or cremation or other disposition or donation of the body. The Authorization must be signed in front of two witnesses or a notary public. The Authorization requires the agent to carry out the directions, instructions and suggestions, unless there are insufficient funds or it is unlawful or there is no realistic possibility of compliance. If an agent is appointed under a valid Authorization, the agent generally controls the disposition of the decedent's remains.

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services is directed to prepare forms to carry out the law. In the meantime, individuals may complete their own forms. Forms meeting the

requirements of the new law are available at the 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center or can be obtained by calling my office at 608.784.5678.

Greg Bonney

LGBTQQA MONTH

April is LGBTQQA Month and UW-L's Pride Center has several events happening.

See the Fag Bug

Meet Erin who is traveling with her [Fag Bug](#) to raise awareness about hate crimes and homophobia in our society. She and her Bug will be on the UW-L campus at the Clock Tower On Monday, April 7, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. (Rain location is Port O' Call from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm)

Queer Cinema Presents:

My Girlfriend Did It

April 10, 7:00 pm in Port O' Call, Cartwright Center

A film and discussion about lesbian and bisexual women in abusive same-sex relationships.

Free Popcorn!

This event is sponsored by the Violence Prevention Office and the Pride Center

Straight Acting: A story about queers and sports

April 24, 7:00 pm in Port O' Call

A documentary film that examines gay men who play contact sports, through one man's journey out of the closet and onto the rugby pitch, the rodeo circuit and the hockey rink.

This event is sponsored by the Pride Center

7th Annual Drag in the City - Maui Style

April 18, 7:00 pm in Valhalla in Cartwright Center

Tickets now on sale at the Information Counter in Cartwright Center

\$5.00 All Students

\$10.00 Faculty, Staff and Community

This year's show will focus on educating the community about the history of Pride Events and Drag. All tips will go to the La Crosse Pride: Live, Love, Be - Be Proud of Your Colors

Report from the Center

Happy Spring! It's April already and I'm sorry to report (no April Fool's) that our Americorp volunteer Lindsay Caldwell has left her position with Americorp. She accepted a Program Director position at Camp Winnebago which started immediately. We are sorry to lose Lindsay but wish her well in her new job. Her last day was March 24, 2008 and volunteer Johnnie Schmeckpepper has been helping us and filling some of the hours. I have already been in contact with the Americorp Director to discuss finding a replacement and will be meeting with a

prospective candidate this week. Unfortunately I'm not sure this candidate can cover 15 hrs. a week, so we are looking for volunteers to help out. If anyone is interested please call the Center at (608) 784-0452 and leave a message and I will call you back.

Speaking of volunteers. We will need help at 2 scheduled fundraisers selling brats and such at Festival in Onalaska on Saturday July 19, 2008 and August 9, 2008. We will sell all day and need about 10 people each day (3 people for 3 or 4 hr. shifts). If you can't volunteer then buy a brat and a pop!

We are also really excited to announce our first annual signature event. Celebrate NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY Saturday October 11, 2008 with us at the Radisson for a sit-down dinner and dance. There will be lots happening at this event, so watch for more details to come about in the months ahead.

Our Center continues to provide space for group meetings. The PRIDE Committee meets at the Center every other Monday evening (see the Center [calendar](#) on the website) and is working hard planning the next scheduled PRIDE celebration on Saturday August 23, 2008.

Other groups using our Center space are the Transgender support group that meets the first Wednesday of each month. A new support group for LGBT people recovering from drug and/or alcohol addiction will have its first meeting Friday April 4, 2008 from 7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. at the Center. If anyone has an interest in this recovery support group please call Michael at (608) 498-3515.

I spent some time recently at the Center doing some organizing and light cleaning. I think we are so lucky to have this space! There is so much work to do at times it gets a bit overwhelming but our Center and all our efforts are so worth it! The Board of Directors is working hard with new fundraising ideas and the details of hiring a full-time Executive Director. It's an exciting time! If you have any desire to get involved, we'd love to talk to you!

Leslie Scheld
Center Manager and Board Member

AA Meeting at the Center

Is there more to YOU than just being a DRUG ADDICT/ALCOHOLIC? Are there other issues YOU deal with that you are uncomfortable discussing in regular AA meetings? Do YOU agree that personal acceptance is a major part of the process of recovery, and a person should feel comfortable in their recovery environment? Do YOU struggle with your sexuality or gender identity, or do you accept your sexuality or gender identity but would like a more LGBT friendly environment?

If you answered yes to any of these questions and are LGBT (struggling or not with personal acceptance), are you interested in starting a LGBT AA meeting?

If you have any questions please contact Michael at (608) 498-3515.

First Meeting: April 4, 2008 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Center, 303 Pearl Street.

GALAXY Ball

You are cordially Invited to the Glitz and Glamour RED CARPET STYLE Annual GALAXY BALL Fundraiser.

WHEN: Saturday, April 19, 2008

WHERE: Valhalla Hall in the Cartwright Center on the UWL Campus

TIME: 7:30 to 11:00 p.m.

COST: Advance tickets are \$5.00 for adults and \$3.00 for students. Tickets at the door are \$7.00 for adults and \$4.00 for students.

There will be a silent auction from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. with awards at 9:00 p.m. The dance will continue until 11:00 p.m.

Call for tickets at 608-781-2783 Ext. 3

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.