
LGBT News

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

April 2009

Join us at the GALAXY Ball on April 18, 2009

[Read all about the 2009 GALAXY Ball here](#) and consider being a [sponsor of the ball](#) to help ensure this service for our youth stays vibrant.

Director's Column

First I would like to use the famous words of Harvey Milk, "The Center wants to recruit you!" We are looking for members to join us in 2009 as we strive to fulfill our mission and realize the vision of the Center. As a paid member you receive discounts and benefits from our Community Partners as appreciation for your commitment to equality and the work of the Center. Please visit our webpage at <http://7riverslgbt.org/documents/membership.pdf> and print off the membership form and send it in or drop it off today. Our Stellar Advocates for Equality a.k.a. The Board of Directors and I have a goal of increasing our membership exponentially in April; you can help us do that by joining today! If you are already a member-borrow Harvey's words and "Recruit, recruit, recruit!" Belonging is an amazing feeling and together we can do so much more as a collective force.

We are once again being given an opportunity to participate in the democratic society in which we live by voting on Tuesday, April 7th. On the ballot will be races for La Crosse Mayor, State Superintendent, and State Supreme Court. Vote, vote, vote-it is definitely one way as a collective community for equality that we are afforded an opportunity to create a climate in which we can realize equality and be included in the bigger picture. If you are undecided or not as informed as you would like to be check out the candidate's web pages, organizational endorsements of candidates, and learn all you can. Being an uneducated voter is just as harmful as not voting.

Spring is definitely here, the weather is warming and people are scurrying all about soaking up the sun. It is an exciting time at the Center as we continue progressively in to the new season with activities to increase our sense of community. We continue to have monthly Out & About outings and groups that offer support and strive to alleviate the isolation that often surrounds

our community. Stop in, check our website, or call to learn more ways you can get involved with the Center and the rich diverse LGBT community in the La Crosse area.

GALAXY started meeting on Tuesday, March 10th, at the Center and is off to a great start. We have received calls from outlying communities and visits to the Center checking out our space and offerings for LGBT youth. Since the first meeting we have had 10 different youth participate in GALAXY-definitely we are off to a fantabulous start!

Being true to the rich vibrant history of GALAXY we are holding the GALAXY Ball on Saturday, April 18th, at the Port of Call from 7:30-midnight. We have tickets for sale at the office for \$5 for Adults and \$4 for Students in advance and encourage people to buy their tickets in advance. We will have a wing span raffle with proceeds to benefit the GALAXY program and dancing will start at 8:30 pm and end at midnight. If you are interested in sponsoring the ball please contact me at the Center, 608-784-0452 or r.st.sauver@7riverslgbt.org

Stop down to the Center at 303 Pearl Street, and see our beautiful cozy nook. We have books, music, movies, computers for public use, WIFI, a comfortable lounge space and more. While you are here you can trace your hand so it can be added to our spectacular rainbow on display here at the Center. Lastly, you could pay your 2009 membership dues and help the Center thrive.

Belief,
Rosanne

Estate Planning for “LEGAL STRANGERS” - don’t get caught unprepared! By Christina Mae Olson, CFP®

Estate planning covers many things. You don’t have to have an “estate” to do some crucial planning. It doesn’t matter if you are single or coupled, rich or poor or young or old. It’s important to do a little “contingency planning” to take care of those situations that people never think are going to happen. Lifetime partners break up. Accidents happen. People get sick and die. Who is going to help you take care of your affairs when you aren’t able to do it for yourself (for whatever reason)? LGBT’s and our chosen families are considered “legal strangers” in most jurisdictions. We need to take care of a few things that will allow states to recognize us because the law doesn’t do it for us. Below is a short list of estate planning tools that all LGBT’s should seriously consider. Next month, I’ll add a few more.

PARTNERSHIP/RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT. Also called a “cohabitation agreement.” This is as good as a marriage certificate in a court of law. It’s an enforceable contract. You and your significant other should prepare a document that explains how a few things will work in your relationship. Do this early on - before you start to co-mingle your money and your things. This agreement should clarify who pays what of your joint financial obligations. How will you share household expenses? 50/50? What if one of you earns more money than the other? If one of you supplies the cash for your first house down payment - will that be repaid if you split up? This document not only spells out how to divide the costs of your union but also determines who gets

what if you decide to split up later on. If you can agree on these things now, in writing, then you can defer to this document later if you grow apart. Make the decisions now (and revise as needed). You won't be able to agree on dividing up anything after your girlfriend has an affair and one of you is kicked out!

MEDICAL POWER OF ATTORNEY (POA). You get to appoint someone to make medical decisions for you if you cannot make them for yourself. A hospital won't necessarily let your lover make decisions for you, if you can't. Put it in writing and tell your appointed POA representative what your wishes are. Give a copy to your doctor.

LIVING WILL. This is how you tell your loved ones (and medical folks treating you) what sort of life-sustaining procedures you want performed - without which you may die (CPR, ventilator, tube feeding). This can be part of the medical POA and is also called a health care proxy. You must talk about these things with your loved ones so they know what your wishes are. Don't make them guess at a time like this.

DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY. This is absolutely necessary. The durable POA gives authority to anyone you choose to take care of your financial affairs when you cannot. Without this POA - your bank accounts and credit cards will be frozen. Your POA representative will be able to pay your bills for you and make other financial decisions for you until you can do it for yourself again.

I suggest you hire a lawyer to help you with these documents. You can't afford to make mistakes. Next month, I'll cover the following:

- POD's, TOD's and beneficiary designations
- Insurance
- Titling property
- Wills
- Second Parent Adoption
- Shared Custody and/or Guardianship Agreements
- Authorization for disposition of body

Chris Olson is a licensed financial planner with a fee only practice. Contact her if you want a referral to an LGBT - friendly lawyer who can help you prepare all of these documents correctly! CMoney@centurytel.net or 608-525-9818.



If you have comments on this article, please send them to Chris at the email address above, NOT to the LGBT Newsletter.

Upcoming Center Activities

Check the Center [website calendar](#) for all events.

People Helping People Fish Fry

When: Friday, April 3, 2009 AND April 10, 2009, 5:30 to 8:00

Where: Eagles, 228 5th Avenue South

For the Bible Tells me So: a video about religion, parents and LGBT Children

When: Saturday, April 4, 2009, 11:00 a.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street

GALAXY Ball

When: April 18th, 2009 7:30 p.m. to midnight

Where: UW-L Port` of Call in Cartwright Center

Tickets are \$5 in advance for Adults and \$4 for Students

Neighbor's Day

When: April 18, 2009, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Where: To sign up to help, drop in at the Center (303 Pearl Street), or call 608-784-0452

Women's Potluck Group Meeting at Hunan's Chinese Restaurant

When: April 19, 2009, 6:00 p.m.

Where: Hunan's Chinese restaurant, 322 4th St South, La Crosse
Hunan's needs an exact count, so PLEASE RSVP IF YOU ARE COMING. Just email Rosanne at the Center to let her know that you'll be there: r.st.sauver@7riverslgbt.org or call 608-784-0452. We need a count by Wednesday April 15, so please contact Rosanne by then.

First Brat Barn fundraiser of the season

When: April 24, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Where: Festival Foods, 20 Copeland Avenue

National Youth Service Cleaning Day

When: April 25, 2009

Where: The Center will be taking youth to clean up a stretch of highway near Hixon Forest in recognition of this day. Stop in or call to sign up to help.

Out and About Group Activity

When: April 25, 2009, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Where: Meet at the Myrick Park parking lot near the trails at 3:00 pm. Activities for the day may include walking the trails through the marsh, frisbee, hacky sack, more. We will end with a potluck picnic at 5:00 p.m. Bring a dish to share, your own beverages and eating utensils. All ages welcome!

Ongoing Center Activities

Weekly Activities

GALAXY, a group for youth ages 14-19

When: Every Tuesday 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. AND every Saturday 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

LGBTQ Parents Group

When: Every Wednesday 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

Drop-in Group

When: Every Thursday 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

Bi-weekly Activities

Glenda/AA Group

When: Every other Friday at 7:00 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

When: First Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

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

Gender Queer/Transgender Gathering at the Center:

When: First Wednesday 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 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. The group meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00. For upcoming meeting dates, check the Center [website calendar](#)

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.

Opportunities to Help Your Center

There are new items on our Wish List. Check here for the complete [Wish List](#).
[Volunteer](#) for some fun, fundraising activities for the Center.

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.