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# LGBT News

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

**February 2010**

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## For the Love of Art, February 19, 2010

GOT ART? WANT ART? Then drop off pieces for the art auction ~ or come and enjoy the first annual FOR THE LOVE OF ART benefit for the LGBT Resource Center of the 7 Rivers Region. Friday, February 19th, 2010 5:30-10:00PM Silent auction until 8:30PM. Concordia Ballroom 1129 La Crosse St. \$10 or free if you donate any art. Come out and celebrate beauty and artistic expression in its many forms. See you there!

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## Director's Column: Starting Out 2010 Right

It has been a great start to the New Year for the Center. We held our 2009 Annual Meeting which proved to be a wonderful way to spend a Saturday morning with supporters of the Center. I am amazed by the continued dedication from the founding board members/volunteers, community members, and past board members to the success and vitality of the Center. It is in our unity that we become a force to be reckoned with, as Margaret Mead eloquently said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." I believe and can sense from the work, dedication, and immense variety of talents possessed by the Center's supporters that we will overcome all obstacles to ensure that we have a Center to meet the needs of LGBT folk and youth including their families and friends.

We held a Legislative Meet & Greet which was attended by many interested people including some of our stellar GALAXY youth. Representative Jennifer Shilling and John Medinger, La Crosse Area Representative for Senator Kohl attended the meeting. The afternoon was full of great dialogue and served as an active step forward to bridging communities to ensure the best possible

outcomes for those we serve. By being a voice and helping to provide education, factual information, and listening to legislators we are fulfilling our desire to make connections and foster understanding.

If you look at our 2009 Annual Report you will see that we have a frugal budget but still will fall short of what we need to run the Center at full capacity throughout 2010. Prior to having a full time staff person at the Center to help coordinate, direct, and implement the programs we were able to operate on a smaller budget to have a space but it was not as accessible, did not have as many opportunities for support and enrichment, nor were we able to provide a safe space six days a week to the community. We have made great strides in fulfilling the initial dream and will continue to do so but we need your help and support. If you have not completed your 2010 Membership Form and sent in your payment please do so today. Encourage others that are committed to equality, LGBT issues, empowering youth, and social justice advocate minded folk to also do the same. There is strength in our membership and it truly helps propel the Center onward in the direction of our goals. We are focusing on outlying service areas this year and have a plan to implement specific outreach efforts to ensure that people who need the Center located in Monroe, Jackson, Trempealeau, Vernon counties in WI; Fillmore, Houston, Winona counties in MN; and Allamakee and Winneshiek counties in IA, know about the Center and the many resources we have available. This will be a time intensive endeavor and if you are interested in helping get the word out, make connections in outlying counties or can disseminate information please contact the Center and sign up to help reach this goal!

If you have some time or the desire to help be part of the change please consider volunteering at the Center. We are looking for volunteers to help staff the Center; help with the Christa Matter Memorial Library; help facilitate groups/outings; presenters for our groups who could :come in and present on a topic, share a talent, etc; serve on the Grant Writing Committee; serve on the Pride Committee; or the Development Committee; and many more options. If you live in an outlying area perhaps you would like to be trained and then could facilitate a Drop-In Group in your community/area. As you can see there are many ways to get involved it just depends on what you are looking for. Feel free to complete a Volunteer Application which can be found on our website and then we can schedule a face to face meeting to see what works best for you.

I look forward to a wonderful February.

With love and appreciation,  
Rosanne

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## 2009 Annual Meeting Summary

Highlights of 2009 were shared through a listing of the Center's activities and accomplishments for the year, which were many. We are proud of the many increases in programming, visibility, political, educational and social events held, trainings and presentations given, sponsored or attended, and the acquisition of GALAXY for youth, all under the direction of the first full year of our fabulous Executive Director, Roseanne St. Sauver. More volunteers were also trained and several individuals who have found the Center significant in their lives wrote touching tributes that were shared about how important the work of the Center is and how much Roseanne has helped them. Thank you Roseanne, AmriCorps Members Erik, Amanda and Amy, all of our volunteers and participants at Center events, and all of you that have given of time, money, skills and material donations to make it happen! Altogether, it has been a year to remember and to build on.

Our board of directors is pleased with the success and growth of the LGBT Resource Center for the 7 Rivers Region and intends to focus on creative ways to continue to fund the Executive Director's position and maintain money to run the Center and the many programs. We also plan on reaching out to the surrounding communities and counties that we serve to increase collaboration with schools, social service agencies, other organizations and individuals so that we can continue to meet the needs and foster understanding on behalf of the LGBT and allies communities. Your contributions, membership and participation in the Center is vital. Thank you for doing what you can to help the Center and all that it offers continue to flourish.

Thanks to Greg Bonney, Jillayn Hey and Marilyn Huchenpohler (past board president) for their years of service on the Board of Directors! And, an enthusiastic welcome to Emily Cannon, Marti Lybeck, Cory Malles and Joshua Mueller who were approved by the membership to join as new board members.

I look forward to seeing you at a future event, starting with the Progressives Dinner this Friday at the Concordia ballroom or the Center's first annual 'For the Love of Art' fundraiser at Concordia on February 19th. Check out the calendar for details and other happenings!

Kathryn Hietbrink,  
Board President

A copy of our [2009 Annual Report is available on our website.](#)

## New Board Members

### Emily Hynek Cannon

Hi! My name is Emily Hynek Cannon. I'm an attorney at Johns, Flaherty & Collins, S.C. in La Crosse, WI. I've been with the firm officially since June 1, 2009, although I also did a summer and winter break internship with them prior to my graduation from Wisconsin Law School. My primary areas of concentration are criminal defense, family law, and litigation. I was asked to join the board by another attorney of my firm, Greg Bonney, and I'm very grateful to him for giving me the opportunity to meet such fun and dynamic social changers.

I'm originally from Sparta, WI. I got my undergraduate degree in social work from UW-Eau Claire, and I graduated from Wisconsin Law in May 2009. It feels really great to be back in the area. This part of the state is very conducive to several of my interests, including sports (go Loggers!), being outdoors, and enjoying a glass of red wine with my friends. I'm looking forward to getting to know people through the Center, and I hope to raise a glass with many of you in celebration of what I'm sure will be our many successes, great and small!

### Cory Malles

Cory is a local boy, having grown up in Trempealeau, Wisconsin. After graduating from G-E-T High School, Cory attended Winona State University. Originally, he wanted to become a music teacher with a minor in English, or an English teacher with a minor in music. However, after taking a tour of the campus radio station, he became hooked on broadcasting.

After college, Cory worked at WIZM/Z-93 radio in the early 90s, where he proudly sported a mullet and earrings. He made the jump to television weather at WKBT TV in 1993. He went back to school (while working) and earned his broadcast meteorology accreditation in 1996. March 2010 will mark his 17th year at NewsChannel 8.

When not at work, Cory enjoys reading historical fiction, music, theatre, gardening, and oddly enough, fishing! He's been known to croak out a song or two during Thursday night karaoke at the Recovery Room and is trying to teach himself electric guitar, but doesn't practice nearly as often as he should.

Cory lives in La Crosse, with his partner of 11 years... and one very spoiled cat named "Mike."

## **Joshua Mueller**

Joshua Mueller grew up in La Crosse, WI on the south side of town. He attended Central High and graduated in 2003. Josh came out in his first year of high school and is a former GALAXY youth. During his coming out process he wrote in an open forum about his coming out experience which was read by many classmates. After high school he went to work for a local customer service center. Following many trials and tribulations he attended school for a short time but put his education on hold. Joshua now works for a collection agency and looks forward to going back to school. During the last year he has been extra active in the LGBT community protesting for equal rights and helping fund raise for the Resource Center. He's currently posting on Twitter under LGBTweet with over 1,600 daily subscribers and starting a blog called The Word Of The Gay. In his free time Joshua enjoys spending time with his family, attending concerts, and chatting with friends at coffee shops.

## **Marti Lybeck**

Marti Lybeck moved to La Crosse in 2008. She is an Assistant Professor in the History Department at UW La Crosse. She teaches gender history and European history. Her dissertation research analyzed the role of homosexuality in defining female gender in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Germany. Her dissertation has won several prizes including a book contract from SUNY Press awarded for best first book in queer studies in 2009.

Prior to her academic career, she lived in the Twin Cities. There she served as an officer on two non-profit boards—one of them was Quatrefoil, a gay-lesbian library in St. Paul. She has also been a volunteer with the Minnesota AIDS Project. She first made use of community resources in 1975, attending a “rap group” at the Lesbian Resource Center. She is eager to use her experience and knowledge to build a solid long-term future for similar community center services here in La Crosse.

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## **The LGBT Resource Center for the Seven Rivers Region Launches New LBT Breast Health Initiative**

The LGBT Resource Center for the Seven River Region launched the Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Breast Health Initiative (LBT Breast Health Initiative) with the start of the New Year. The initiative is one of the Center’s programs that provide educational and health promotion services to the LGBT community in

the following counties in Wisconsin: La Crosse, Vernon, Trempealeau, Jackson, and Monroe.

The goal of the LBT Breast Health Initiative is to work within the LGBT community to promote breast health awareness to at least 300 people, refer 15 people for breast cancer screening, and have a minimum of 10 people receive screening. The Initiative will be assisted in these goals by recruiting Volunteer Health Promoters from the LBT community to teach and reach people in need of breast cancer screening.

According to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure®, “nearly 100% of women diagnosed with early stage breast cancer are alive five years later.” The long term goal is to increase positive health outcomes in the LBT community through this initiative and other health focused services. For more information on our programs and available services please visit our website [www.7riverslgbt.org](http://www.7riverslgbt.org)

The LGBT Resource Center for the Seven Rivers Region will be collaborating with the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center to implement the LBT Breast Health Initiative. We will be coordinating with other service providers and healthcare professionals to serve LGBT people who are referred to them through the initiative.

For a referral for breast cancer screening or for more information concerning the LBT Breast Health Initiative please contact Rosanne St. Sauver at 608-784-0452 or e-mail [r.st.sauver@7riverslgbt.org](mailto:r.st.sauver@7riverslgbt.org)

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## Looking for Older Lesbians' Stories: Share Your Story

A couple of Lesbians associated with Golden Threads are looking for short submissions to a new book they are working on. They want the material by March 15th, 2010. The book is to be called Old Lesbians and Their Brief Moments of Fame. If you would like to write about one of your favorite life accomplishments.

Book title: Old Lesbians and Their Brief Moments of Fame  
Stories compiled by Karen Gibson and Joy D. Griffith  
Edited by Judith Ross

We need Old Lesbians to volunteer a story from their lives. They should look back in their lives and tell us what was especially important, and/or exciting that they achieved. You can be interviewed by telephone or you can write your chosen, special achievement of fame and send it via email or you can write it down and post it to us in answer to our basic question based on the title: Old Lesbians and Their Brief Moments of Fame.

Why are we compiling your stories? We want to honor our age; we the Old Lesbians!

We ask the woman being interviewed to look back into her life and tell us what was especially important (and/or exciting) to her that she achieved.

1st She would need to introduce herself in the first paragraph. (She can choose her real name or create a name, although we are hoping she is comfortable enough to use her name.)

2nd She would explain...tell the story of what she did that she considered an important achievement for herself or even for the world.

We all have done many things throughout our lifetime. We only ask that the woman choose just one of her brief moments (that she) considered it a brief moment of fame. The word fame must not bother her, because this brief moment is simply something that she felt she achieved.

The examples of human achievement are infinite: 1. Saving an animal's life, or pulling a pine needle from its bleeding paw 2. Publishing a book 3. Helping a sick child get well. 4. Winning a race. 5. Reaching the minds of people for understanding about equality 6. Helping oneself come out from the depths of depression ...ad infinitum (Look back into your life for your special story.)

A. You may write your story of one selected achievement from your life and post it to: Karen Gibson, P. O. Box 334, North Conway , NH 03860, phone Karen at: 603-356-7172 ...or

B. Email your written story to Joy D. Griffith at: joydg2002@yahoo.com Phone Joy at: 781-749-1978 or 617-680-0995 or 781-229-9028 ...or

C. Phone either Karen Gibson or Joy Griffith for a telephone interview if (you) the interviewee is unable to write it. However, please phone us at any time should you have any questions ...at any time!

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## Upcoming Center Activities

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### **GALAXY Flake Fest**

**When:** Saturday, February 6th from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**Where:** Pettibone Gazebo. To have the absolutely best Flake Fest ever, everyone is encouraged to bring a new ally to the Flake Fest. This event is open to LGBTQQIAA youth and their dates, 20 & under. Frolic the day away! We will have contests, music, and more.

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### **Women's Potluck Group: The Annual Ice Fairy Follies**

**When:** February 13th from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. As usual outdoor activities will be encouraged so bring snow shoes or cross country skis. Ice fishing may also be a possibility but no guarantees. Some main dishes will be available at 12:00 but we would like everything there by 1:00 at the latest.

**Where:** For more information on the location, please contact Rosanne at 608-784-0452.

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### **For the Love of Art Benefit**

**When:** Saturday, February 19, 2010, 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Silent auction until 8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Concordia Ballroom, 1129 La Crosse Street, La Crosse, WI  
\$10 or free admission if you donate art.

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### **February Out + About snow tubing**

**When:** Saturday, February 20, 2010 at 1:30 p.m.

**Where:** White Tail Ridge Hwy 21, Sparta

Meet at Center at 1:30 pm. We will leave to the Sparta as a group and then have a fun filled afternoon of snow. The cost to tube is \$10 for 12 and up all day. For those 12 and under the cost is \$8 all day. More information: Rosanne 608-784-0452

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## **Guy's Night Out: Chili and Cards**

**When:** Friday, February 26, 2010 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Where:** At the Center, 303 Pearl Street. Questions, call Mike 608-385-5753 or Josh 608-790-7606

## **Ongoing Center Activities**

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### **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

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### **Bi-weekly Activities**

#### **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

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## 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.

### GNO (Guy's Night Out)

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

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## Need Help With Overwhelming Debt? *Don't go to a for-profit debt relief company (and don't come to me...I can't offer much help)* By Christina Mae Olson, CFP®

A few years back I got a call from a prospective client who was really in over her head. She owed over \$50,000 on her credit cards, was \$7,500 behind on her mortgage and had not renewed her insurance, driver's license or auto registration the last time they came due. She had a disability but had just been

turned down for Social Security disability benefits. She was broke and desperate. I get so many inquiries from people who are in trouble with their mounting debt. It's true that I do personal financial planning for my clients. I work with people who are willing to restructure their lives to make their financial dreams come true. Unfortunately, however, I'm not much of a debt relief planner. My advice to someone with questions about staying out of or getting out of debt is: 1.) *Make more money*, 2.) *Spend less money* and, 3.) *Live beneath your means. If you can do these things then you will have money left over at the end of your paycheck to reduce your debt - eventually the debt will be gone.*"

This particular woman was about to sign a contract with a debt settlement company and wanted to know if she was doing the right thing. They promised they would reduce her debt to a fraction of the total. They promised they could make her whole again in less than a year without harming her credit. Here's the clincher - they wanted a down payment of \$3500! They couldn't help her until they got paid. This was a trap. I persuaded this woman to get help from a non-profit counseling service. I haven't heard how she is doing but I am confident she got better advice than what I would have given her and certainly better than the for-profit rip off people.

My advice is oversimplified for someone with debt totaling more than twice their annual income. She didn't need a financial planner - she needed financial triage. People find themselves in debt for a variety of reasons. Maybe you just can't control your spending and have gotten used to buying things on credit. Perhaps you lost your job and still have to put food on the table. Some of you have had legal trouble. Some have costly medical issues. Some of you have loaned money to friends or family that hasn't been repaid. The best advice I can give someone in these situations is to seek help from a professional Certified Consumer Credit Counselor. It's better to get help from someone that is trained to work on this particular financial problem; someone who is a salaried or hourly employee who doesn't make commissions from their customers.

There are many fraudulent (read: FOR-PROFIT) "credit relief" or "debt settlement" corporations that want your business. Don't be tempted by their alluring pitch. These outfits will rip you off. They often operate illegally. They cannot keep the promises they make about saving you money or protecting your credit rating. They are in business for only one reason - to make a profit off of your bad luck. Do not go to these people for help.

Where should you go for help? You'll find the very best credit counseling advice from a member agency of The National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC). Start by navigating through their website: [www.debtadvice.org](http://www.debtadvice.org) or

www.nfcc.org. You can get on-line help anonymously but also seek live help from local counselors. You will get trustworthy and practical information from this non-profit service. Don't pay any money or sign any contract unless they are licensed by your state and are accredited members of the NFCC. You'll usually pay on a sliding-fee scale from \$0 to \$50 (reverse mortgage counseling up to \$100). Some services are free of charge. You will never be asked to pay a huge lump sum up front before they agree to help you. The two qualifying member agencies that work in the Coulee Region are:

Catholic Charities Credit Counseling - 782-0710  
Consumer Credit Counseling of La Crosse - 784-8380

You can come to me for personal financial planning advice once you climb out of that deep hole of debt that has been overwhelming you. You wouldn't go to an eye doctor for a tooth ache, would you? Take care of that abscess through NFCC and then come to me - I'll correct your vision so you can see your financial path! I'm more than willing to help you save for that house down payment or retirement but won't be able to help you with your debt like a NFCC member consumer credit counselor would. Good luck!

*Chris Olson is a licensed financial planner with a fee-only practice. You may contact her at [CMoney@centurytel.net](mailto: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.

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## 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.

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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.