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## Farewell John Deen



Dean Lynch speaks to a packed house at the John Deen Memorial Celebration at Dempsey's Brass Rail in Spokane on Sunday, Feb 11th, 2007. Others gathered also shared stories and memories of Deen, former decade long Stonewall News Northwest publisher, and his impact on their lives. Tributes to Deen can also be found in other publications: Editorial *A Generous Life*, The Spokesman-Review, Page B4, February 14, 2007; *Publisher Deen fought for rights*, The Spokesman-Review, Front Page, February 12, 2007; *Remembering John Deen*, The Pacific Northwest Inlander, Page 14, February 8, 2007. Links to these articles can also be found on Stonewall's website, www.stonewallnews.net/johndeenn.htm.

## EWU's SAFE works toward open and accepting campus

By Joyce Crosby  
Special to Stonewall News Northwest

SPOKANE, Wash - When Adam Gudith, 21, moved into the dorms on Eastern Washington University in the fall of 2004, he was the only person who knew he was gay. After two quarters of silence about his sexual orientation, Gudith came out to his roommate. "I had wanted to talk to him about it for a while before, but I decided to wait," Gudith, a Mechanical Engineering major explained. He came out to his roommate just before Spring Break "so that, if things went sour, I could move. Things went better than I could have ever hoped, especially considering he's Christian, and we've

been close friends ever since," Gudith said happily. "I slowly started to come out to a few select people, first a friend who worked in a theater, and then a teacher in the women's studies department. That teacher pointed me in the direction of Steve, but I didn't want to meet him yet," Gudith said referring to Steve Bertram, Staff Advisor for EWU's Student Alliance For Equality more commonly known as SAFE.

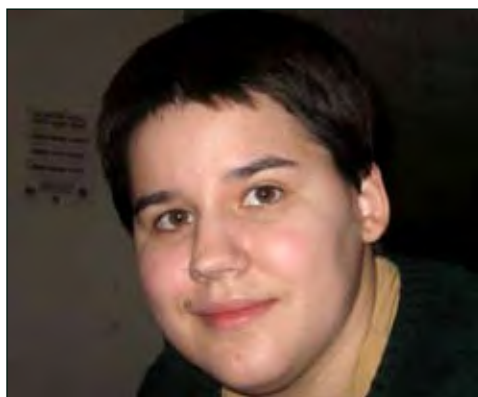
Gudith's experience coming out is one thing that binds the entire queer community together. Whether someone identifies as lesbian, transgender, bisexual, gay, questioning or somewhere

*Please see SAFE page 15*



Adam Gudith shares his experience in coming out and EWU's SAFE

## Spokane Lesbian Mom's Group begins



Danielle Satrom organized the Feb 2, 2007 meeting of Spokane lesbian moms.

By Joyce Crosby  
Special to Stonewall News Northwest

SPOKANE, Wash - The initial meeting of Spokane Lesbian Moms was held on Saturday, February 2, at

the play area inside NorthTown Mall on Spokane's north side. The purpose of the group is to provide "a place for support and friendship," stated group organizer Danielle Satrom, 23. The idea is to bring together like-minded women and their children in a safe and fun environment. Parents can connect and network with each other while the kids have lots of fun playing with other kids from families like their own.

"I had been wanting to join a group like this for some time now," said Satrom, who is raising a three-year-old son with her partner Katherine Cutright, 36. "As a gay mom, I tried joining other moms' groups and just felt like the odd one out, and all the questions got draining. The questions about my supposed husband, and then how in the world did I have a child if I am gay."

The newly formed group currently has nine members, not including partners, and is open to mothers who

are biological, non-biological, adoptive, foster, and step-parents. Though she started the group to meet other lesbian parents, when asked about including gay, bisexual and transgender parents, Satrom added that she "would be open to expanding to include others in the group."

Three families came to the Spokane Lesbian Moms first "outing," which started at 10:30 a.m. and lasted about two hours. The women seemed eager to connect with other parents and engaged in lively discussions about their kids and jobs. Satrom indicated that she and Cutright enjoyed meeting the other parents, and their son Seamus "had a blast" playing with the other children. After the meeting, Satrom said her family ate lunch in the mall's food court with another family they met at the gathering.

*Please see MOM'S GROUP page 4*

# Spokane & Regional

## Deal or No Deal

### Strategic win requires our action



Above: concerned individuals who attended the Spokane HIV Town Hall meeting December 13th, 2006. Left to Right: Kenneth Grunert, Joseph Ready (Co-chair of the Spokane County Ryan White CARE Consortium), Mark Garrett (Client Advocate Spokane AIDS Network), Mark Niclas, James Breedlove (Preseident of the Spokane HIV Speakers Bureau, John Gildroy, Susan Fabrikant (Executive Director Spokane AIDS Network), Walt Biggs, Christopher Zilar (Health Educator Spokane Regional Health District), Senator Majority Leader Lisa Brown, Cat Carrel (Prevention Coordinator Spokane AIDS Network), Charles Fawcett and Susan Sjoberg (Program Manager of HIV/AIDS Spokane Regional Health District).

By Mark Garret  
Spokane AIDS Network

This year the state legislature will decide the biennium budget for the next two years, and like the show Deal or No Deal, it's a game of strategy.

On December 13, HIV advocates from the Spokane area met with State Senate Majority Leader Lisa Brown from Spokane to discuss what that strategy will be this year. Senator Brown was optimistic that after more than six years of flat funding or funding cuts for HIV care and prevention, the legislature and governor appear ready to support increased funding. The Senator also

pointed out that following the state elections in November, our chances of finally passing the "Healthy Youth Act" that would require school sex-ed programs teach accurate information supported by scientific research, is also possible this year, after years of failed attempts in Olympia. Recent polling shows that 85% of Washington parents want schools to help them provide sexual health information to their teens (Global Strategy Group, 2004).

Locally, we are seeing over 30 new individuals diagnosed with HIV in Spokane every year and 600 statewide. The majority of these individuals are men who have sex with men and half of those

*Please see DEAL page 10*

## ERW organizes *Vow to Take a Stand*

### Forum, first of five events, informs pro-equality groups

SPOKANE, Wash - Wednesday evening February 7, close to 50 people attended the Vow to Take a Stand Forum at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Spokane (UUC). This is one of a series of five events occurring across Washington State to inform people and encourage support of legislative initiatives before the Washington State Legislature. The event sponsors include a wide variety of groups including the American Civil Liberties Union of WA, Peace and Justice Action League, Inland Northwest Equality, and the UUC, which housed the event. Field Organizer Nathan Riding of Equal Rights Washington provided coordination as did Carla Brannan.

Kevan Gardner, Pride Foundation Regional Program Director was Master of Ceremonies. Spokane's Senate Majority Leader, Lisa Brown, attended via video and described the real possibility of pro GLBT family legislation passing this year. This was followed by Former Spokane City Councilman Dean Lynch, who presented a brief social/political history. (See the sidebar Social and Political Progress.)

Josh Friedes, ERW Advocacy Director spoke of the early success of ERW in helping to get 13 "equality" freshmen elected to the legislature. He

stated that people need to hear from at least five friends or family members before they understand the issue of marriage equality. He urged everyone to tell legislators, as well as neighbors and co-workers, why they support same-sex marriage. He believes that "When people know the truth about our lives, they support us".

Friedes provided the following legislative updates:

- SB 5336 and HB 1351: A domestic-partnerships proposal would create a state registry of same-sex partnerships, as well as partnerships in which one person is at least 62, which would be maintained by the secretary of state. It also would grant same-sex partners the right to visit a partner in a health-care facility, receive health information about the partner, grant informed consent for care of an incompetent partner, make funeral arrangements, consent to autopsies and inherit property in the absence of a will. This legislation is given a fair chance of passage.

- SB 5335 and HB 1350: A same-sex-marriage proposal would repeal the state's ban on same-sex marriage and amend the state's marriage laws to

*Please see VOW page 15*

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# COME HOME WITH US!

## Dean Lynch shares local progress time line at *Vow to Take a Stand*

### Social and Political Progress 1980s

Some of the dozen plus existing organizations included Emmanuel Metropolitan Community Church, Inland Empire Sovereign Court of Spokane and PFLAG.

Spokane AIDS Network, AIDS LifeLink and other organizations evolved to battle the AIDS crisis.

GLBT persons began conducting fundraisers under the Privacy Fund, a statewide Political Action Committee (PAC).

The SWAN, a monthly newsletter served the community.

### 1990s

1992 Stonewall News Northwest founded.

PFLAG organized the first pride parade – PJALS provided security.

1994 Inland Northwest Business Alliance (INBA) organized and published its first directory in 1995.

Spokane Mens Chorus forms.

1995 Rainbow Regional Community Center was founded and housed at PJALS.

1996 was the largest GLBT PAC fundraiser with attendance of over 300 people, including 17 local and statewide candidates or their representatives and special guest Candace Gingrich.

1996 Hands off Washington and initiative I-677.

GLBT Film Festival takes place.

### Non-Discrimination Ordinance milestones

August 1996 John Deen, Publisher Stonewall News hears Mayor Jack Geraghty speak of equality at the GLBT PAC fundraiser.

March 1997 John Deen presented his "Equal Rights for All" document to Mayor Geraghty.

May 1997 Stonewall Patriots shared their life stories with Spokane City Council.

Spokane Human Rights Commission drafts ordinance language.

Jan 1999 Non-discrimination ordinance passed by Spokane City Council.

Nov 1999 Non-discrimination ordinance was successfully preserved at the ballot.

2006 Senate Majority Leader, Lisa Brown praised Spokane's ordinance and the people of Spokane from the Senate floor.

2006 Passage of Statewide Non Discrimination Bill.

# Voices

## Letters to the Editor

### Thank You

I would like to convey my appreciation to everyone who attended and help make possible John Deen's wake. Special thanks to Larry Brown and the staff at Dempsey's Brass Rail for supplying the location and the great food, to Dean Lynch for speaking and leading the toast to John, and to Stonewall News Northwest for everything they did to help me pull it all together, which I don't believe I could have done without their eagerness and willingness to help host this celebration of John's life.

John would have been honored by the turnout and the heartfelt stories people shared about their experiences with him in his life. In memory of John, I only ask that all who read this to keep the fight alive for gay rights and equality for all.

Thank You Again,  
**John L. Marshall**  
Spokane, WA

### Besen hits nail on the head

Dear Stonewall News:

I am originally from Seattle and have spent a lot of time in Eastern Washington. I was quite intrigued by the existence of such a slick GLBT publication coming from Spokane. During my formative years (during the 70's & early 80's) there wasn't much of a gay or lesbian presence in your area, although I worked closely with the then fledgling Metropolitan Community Churches as they began to spread across the state.

There were several articles in the most recent issue of Stonewall News Northwest that I found fascinating. One of the best was the article "I'm Not Snickering," by Wayne Besen. I didn't watch the entire Super Bowl - I'm really only a "football fan" when the Seahawks are playing - but I do enjoy seeing the commercials they spend so much money on making entertaining. The Snickers commercial was disturbing and Mr. Besen hit the nail on the head with the reasons. As GLBT people we fight a battle for understanding

that often requires subtlety and tact because the vast majority of the heterosexual world just doesn't "get" why things like this ad are a problem. Mr. Besen's words likening this to the recent statements made by Senator Biden regarding Senator Barack Obama was genius. It's this kind of subtle bigotry that so often goes unchallenged which nevertheless undermines the hard work done by Equal Rights proponents. I would love to see an article like this appear in the Spokesman Review or the Seattle Times - perhaps that day will come.

Thank you for being a voice for equality in the Northwest. You face an uphill battle, especially given your location, but I have hope that you will help to bring about positive change.

Peace,  
**Julie Alexander**  
Los Angeles, CA  
artistrelations@rjnmusic.com  
www.jasonanddemarco.com

## LCMP gets new coordinator, makeover

By Cat Carrel, HIV Prevention Educator, Spokane AIDS Network

Ryan Oelrich, former executive director of Quest Youth Group and the Gay Youth Association, has been named as the new coordinator of Lilac City Men's Project, a HIV prevention program of Spokane AIDS Network. Oelrich brings with him a wealth of knowledge about the needs of Spokane's young gay/bi men's community, a broad network, and extensive project coordination and event planning experience. Oelrich has participated in the LCMP as a Wellness Group facilitator and has completed the 7-hour HIV training through the Spokane Regional Health District.

"We are excited to have Ryan join the SAN team," says Susan Fabrikant, executive director. "His experience and knowledge of the Mpowerment Project will be great assets," she adds.

In addition to hiring Oelrich as the coordinator, SAN has revised the program to concentrate on young gay/bi men age 18-29 in 2007. Gay and bisexual men in this age group are at the most risk for HIV exposure in Spokane County. The Lilac City Men's Project satisfies the need for a social network while teaching young gay/bi men the skills necessary to be able to advocate and negotiate safer sex practices for themselves, their friends and their partners.

The LCMP is an Mpowerment Project, a best practice HIV prevention intervention, approved by the CDC to target young gay and bisexual men, age 18-29. The Project was shown to be very effective in reducing the incidence of unprotected sex among young gay/bi men in that particular age group. Its

*Please see LCMP page 12*

## Gay Bunko to raise money for future LGBT Center

SPOKANE, Wash - Dana and DeVerne, co-owners of Studio One Hair and Body Salon, will host a Gay Bunko Night from on March 10 to help raise general operating funds for the future LGBT community center. The night will feature food, beverages, a 50/50 drawing, door prizes and a special appearance by Spokane's new drag king troupe, the Chicks and Dales. Studio One is located at 1311 W. Sprague, near the intersection of Sprague and Riverside. The suggested donation for the Center is \$15, and tickets will be sold for purchasing beverages.

Bunko (also spelled Bunco) is a dice game involving teams of two at tables of four, and players attempt to accumulate points to win each round. At the end of each round, teams rotate to a new table. Rules of the game are "dicey" and can differ from host to host

and town to town. The main goal of the game is to have fun, socialize, and WIN.

So is it a parlor game or is it a party?

"It's both," says Cat Carrel, who has personally never played the game but who has read up on it. "I've heard it's a great time, and a way to let loose and have fun with friends, whether they are old friends or new friends." Carrel is the Chair of the board that has been organizing to reopen a LGBT center since the closing of the old Rainbow Center last July.

So far, almost \$1000 in community raised funds has been added to the fund to open the new center. Through March, the board is matching all community-raised funds, including funds from

*Please see BUNKO page 12*



**Truth Wins OUT (TWO) is a non-profit think tank and educational organization that counters right-wing disinformation campaigns, debunks the ex-gay myth, and provides accurate information about the lives of GLBT people.**

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- Educate America about the GLBT community

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**Politickers**

# Ready to run?

by Catherine D. Willis

Every year Parade magazine offers us a ranked portrait of the world's worst dictators. Every year we see many of the same faces, always male. I studied the latest edition, published Feb. 11, and wondered out loud, "How would this collection change if our planet could claim significantly more female heads of state than we now know?" I'm back to the point I made last month: If we want peace, we'd better start putting war powers into the hands of women.

This is not a plug for Hillary. It's actually a call to local action. The more women we elect to school boards, city councils, county commissions and statehouses across the nation, the larger the pool of potential female presidents we will have before us. Let's get busy!



Consider the upcoming mayoral race in Spokane. Can we lure somebody's sister or mother into the Dennis Hession vs. Al French fray? (No, Barbara Lampert, I am not suggesting you saddle up this horse. Barb Chamberlain could be a contender but she has thus far declined the challenge.) A visionary woman could bring greater depth to the discussion of important issues than we can expect in the present two-man match-up.

An openly gay candidate could add substance to the dialogue as well. Any takers? (Dean Lynch, I'd doorbell for you any day.)

Spokane City Council president Joe Shogun and members Bob Apple, Rob Crow and Brad Stark face the voters this fall. None have announced plans to step down, so it's not too early to begin exploring possible opponents. As far as I'm concerned, Bob Apple's rant over the 2005 domestic partner benefits ordinance justifies - no, requires - his replacement. Who can we cajole into running? Send me names of progressives you favor. I'd be happy to appeal to their sense of civic pride in this space in coming months. Remember, we can influence public policy-making if we step up to the task.

Haven't I said enough about the virtues of service in the unpaid but all-important role of school board member? Believe me, the forthcoming departure of District 81's Superintendent Brian Benzel is relevant to GLBTQA interests. The school board will select his successor. Three seats on the board will be up for grabs this year. Incumbents Christie Querna and Barbara Richardson have indicated they will not seek re-election, though Benzel's retirement may change this. Susan Chapin, who was appointed in January to fill the vacancy created by Don Barlow's election to the Legislature, must run if she wants to remain in office.

I don't doubt that those who would send us back to the closet are recruiting like-minded candidates for the District 81 and other school board races. Can't we field one fresh face from the GLBTQA community?

We'll have a fund-raising entity up and running soon. The potential PAC I mentioned last month now has a name (Citizens Advancing Equality) and it should have legal standing in a month or so. For more information, e-mail PAC2007@comcast.net.

Something to hmmm about - Why do so many members of Congress keep referring to Nancy Pelosi as "Mister Speaker"? Isn't the correct form of address "Madam Speaker"? Folks need to get used to it; there will be a Madam President in the foreseeable future.

While I'm prognosticating, I think the young people of Washington are finally going to win the comprehensive sex education legislation the Odyssey Youth Center's constituency and

Planned Parenthood of the Inland Northwest have been seeking for years. Public hearings for the Healthy Youth Act—House Bill 1855 and its Senate counterpart, SB 5297—were held last week. If passed, the measure will require public schools that offer sexual health education to "assure that [information] is medically and scientifically accurate, age-appropriate, appropriate for students regardless of gender, race, disability status, or sexual orientation and includes information about abstinence and other methods of preventing unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases."

Let's give a cheer to the 3rd District's Alex Wood and the 6th's Chris Marr, co-sponsors of the respective bills. Kudos to Rep. Don Barlow as well; he serves on the House Health and Wellness Committee through which the bill passed.

It certainly wouldn't hurt matters at all if we were to write or telephone legislators to express support for this or other bills. HB 1350 (civil marriage) hasn't moved beyond the Judiciary Committee in the past month, but HB 1351/SB 5336 (domestic partner registry) could still pass. Let's be squeaky wheels.

While we're in the communication mode (writing or phoning elected officials), shouldn't we also have a say about the future of public broadcasting? The budget the president has sent to Congress eviscerates funding for PBS and NPR. If Big Bird was once your best friend, this might be a good time to recognize his valuable place in your (or your child's) life.

*Catherine Willis, a freelance writer/editor and community advocate, has been a political junkie for 30 years. She can be reached at cathnoy@comcast.net*

**MOM'S GROUP**

*continued from Front Page*

Though none of the parents with school-age children were able to attend the outing, group members have children ranging in age from toddlers to teens. Satrom reported that she would like to have parents with children of all ages active in the group, and that she will "try and come up with activities for the children that can be adapted to most ages and developmental stages," such as going to a park. Satrom would like Spokane Lesbian Moms to have regularly scheduled events including "play dates or outings for the kids twice a month and a moms only event every month."

Group members are encouraged to be active in planning fun low-cost or free activities. In the future Satrom would like to develop a discussion group as well as a social/support group. Satrom, who moved to Spokane from North Dakota three years ago, affirmed with youthful enthusiasm, "Spokane Lesbian Moms is a good place to discuss the joys and challenges of being a gay parent."

Danielle Satrom can be reached at 218-0276; e-mail danielle\_e2@hotmail.com

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# 52 Things we can do for Transgender Equality

By The National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE)

Achieving our goal of transgender equality requires activism at the local, state and national levels. While NCTE focuses on federal policies, we strongly support and encourage the vital work of grass roots activists. Each week during 2007, we will feature an idea for action that you can take at a local level. Some will be challenging, some will be simple; all are effective ideas and we will include links, resources and thoughts to help you get started. Some are things you can do on your own, while others are ideas for local groups to work on. We hope that you will take on projects that spark your interest and that meet a need in our community as we work together for equality for all people.

Week #9 February 25 - March 3:  
**Change the Policy of an Organization You Belong To**

Many of us belong to organizations—neighborhood groups, professional associations, labor unions, hobby clubs and more. One way to further transgender equality is to add policies that protect people from discrimination based on gender identity and expression or make clear that transgender people are welcome in your group.

If the organization has an existing non-discrimination policy, propose that gender identity and expression be added to it. If the organization doesn't have a relevant policy, then put forward language that includes other categories as well.

Recently, Nick Gorton, Kevin Maxey, and Arlene Vernon helped make such a change. These three physicians are all members of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and submitted a resolution to change ACEP's Code of Ethics for Emergency Physicians. Their resolution was passed and the new ACEP Code of Ethics reads: "Emergency physicians should act fairly toward all persons who rely on the ED for unscheduled episodic care. They should respect and seek to understand people from many cultures and from diverse socioeconomic groups .... Provision of emergency medical treatment should not be based on gender, age, race, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, real or perceived gender identity, or cultural background. No patient should ever be abused, demeaned, or given substandard care."

This could make a significant difference in the quality of care you receive if you need to visit an emergency department.

Week #10 March 4-10:  
**Donate money to an organization providing direct services for transgender people**

The internet has created so many new ways for people, including transgender

people, to connect. The world of blogs provides an avenue for new voices to be heard and opinions to be shared with others.

You can create a blog easily through many different portals available on the internet. You can set up a blog for just you or create a space for others in the community to share their perspectives. You can also create bulletin boards on a website for people to dialogue about their ideas or set up an e-mail list serve that covers a topic you'd like to talk about. With all of these, you'll need to keep up with them to be sure that content stays current and that folks a topic to talk about in order to keep your presence vibrant.

An excellent example is the website, [www.myhusbandbetty.com](http://www.myhusbandbetty.com), run by Helen Boyd who is the wife of NCTE Board Member Betty Crow. The [myhusbandbetty.com](http://myhusbandbetty.com) site includes blogs, message boards, and regular columns from Helen.

Speaking about her experience, Helen comments, "Although Betty and I first created [www.myhusbandbetty.com](http://www.myhusbandbetty.com) for the sake of publicity, we've been pleased to see both the blog and the message boards on the site thrive. The message boards provide a useful place for interaction, nearly a think tank, and in fact have been part & parcel of an in-person monthly group forming here in NYC. Other people on the boards have met when they travel, on business trips, and at conferences. My blog has shown up everywhere from pro-choice websites to [queerday.com](http://queerday.com) - which means that many feminists and queer folk of all stripes know somewhere they can learn more about trans issues. Online communities end up facilitating not only in-person communities, but make transness more visible to other sympathetic people online. It takes a lot of work to moderate the boards and write the blog, but increasing trans visibility on the 'net is worth the effort."

What do you have to say to the world? Consider creating an online community to lift up your voice as well as the lives of others.

## No Rest for the Wicked

# A Truly Western L Word

By Joan Opyr

I've written about "The L Word" before. I've written about it in this very newspaper. I have complained about the stupid plots, the warped characters, the bad writing and the bad dialogue. It annoys the living daylight out of me that *The L Word* doesn't seem to bear any relation to lesbian life as I know it.

Of course I am willing to admit that I don't know everything about lesbian life. I accept that "The L Word" is just a soap opera. Fair enough. After all, did the TV show Dallas in any way represent the lives of real Texans? I have no idea. The Bushes are a rich oil baron family - perhaps we should ask them. As for the soap opera element, I must admit that I grew up in the South. It didn't strike me as at all odd when J. R. Ewing had a trashy and torrid affair with his wife's sister, Kristin, and she got ticked off and shot him with a pistol. That was a story straight out of our local newspaper.

Back to "The L Word." Producer Ilene Chaiken has blamed some of the show's problems on the now-departed scriptwriter Guinevere Turner. Chaiken has said that the show's subsequent writers have worked hard to fix things. But are they fixed? No! First there's the character of Jenny. She's an artiste waif with sexual identity issues, and she does all the show's voice-overs. Jenny is pretentious and annoying. We're supposed to believe that she's a gifted writer, but everything she writes sounds like weakly-brewed Michelle Tea. It's time to push Jenny in front of a moving Lexus.

And then there are the rest of the characters. Bette, Tina, Alice and Shane. Ilene Chaiken says that these rich, spoiled, irritating women are based on real people that she knows. They're based on her friends. Okay, I'll buy that. Chaiken is a long-time Hollywood producer. Who are the people she might know? Lawyers, professional tennis players, journalists, art curators, and film industry executives. She might also know a few service people, a manicurist or a gardener, and maybe Chaiken has a personal assistant. Maybe she has a chiropractor or a masseuse. Maybe she leaves detailed notes for the woman who cleans her house.

What has that got to do with me in way out Moscow, Idaho? Ilene Chaiken is a member of the Dinah Shore elite. She's tanned, she's buff, and she's richer than God. Is it any wonder that many lesbians can't relate? Hands up, dear reader, if you've been on an Olivia cruise? Hands up if you've been canoeing? Rafting? Okay, have you floated in the bathtub while reading a book? Ah, at last! That's a lesbian universal.

You know television show what I can relate to? Re-runs of "Roseanne." There were three good lesbians on that show - Sandra Bernhardt, Morgan Fairchild, and John Goodman. Should Ilene Chaiken happen to read this, here is how I would write "The L Word" to make it more appealing to regular gals:

Alice works for The Ad-Mart. She spends her days writing dull copy about refrigerators, four-wheel drives, and guns for sale. She attends the Unitarian Church, she plays softball, and she hopes to find true love at a potluck. Good luck, Alice!

Dana plays tennis at the Washington State University Recreation Center. It's a hobby, not a profession. She actually works in the university's crop science department developing disease-resistant peas and lentils. Dana



met Alice (at a Unitarian potluck) and she likes her, but she's not sure she can live with a meat-eater. If only Alice could learn to love lentils.

Jenny is a graduate student in Women's Studies. Her professors love her writing, but when she graduates, she'll be stunned to find that the

only job she can get is delivering The Ad-Mart for Alice. Why, oh why, didn't she get a degree in crop science? The professor was so cute! And she played tennis, too.

Bette is the curator of the Student Art Gallery at the University of Idaho. She fears for her job because the state has imposed draconian budget cuts on higher education, preferring instead to spend money on Ten Commandments lawnornamentsandwolfextermination. Bette and her partner, Tina, are in the deep doo-doo because Idaho has passed a constitutional amendment prohibiting same-sex marriage or "anything approximating the rights and privileges thereof." Bette and Tina want to have a baby, but Bette can't cover Tina on her insurance, and Tina, who works part-time as a hairdresser, wants to be a stay-at-home mom. Concerned about her lack of options, Tina meets Henry at a sleazy bar and decides to play it straight. But that's okay because...

Bette meets a sexy new bartender at the very same place on the very same night. The bartender looks exactly like Tina, right down to her mullet, and Tina looks exactly like Bette's previous six girlfriends. Bette has a thing for blondes. It never seems to work out, but she remains optimistic. Optimism, that's the key ...optimism and making Tina jealous. This has the potential for season after season of serious dyke drama!

I would also like to introduce a couple of new characters:

Wendy, the UPS driver. Get a load of those biceps!

Jane, the veterinarian; Sally, the veterinarian; and Connie, the veterinarian. These three women all work in the same animal clinic, a place called Pussies Galore. Jane used to be with Sally, but now she's with Connie. Not a problem, as Wendy, who's single, delivers the weekly supply of rabies vaccine. Hubba hubba!

And last but not least, allow me to introduce Sandy. Why? Because there's always a lesbian named Sandy. I personally have known at least 346 lesbians named Sandy across the lower 48 states. Sandy has a partner named Amy. They've been together for 20 years and they have two cats, Ellen and Rosie. Everyone likes Sandy and Amy, but they often have a hard time telling them apart. Why? Same haircut, same clothes, same height and weight. If you want to be sure you're talking to Sandy and not Amy, ask her to belch the alphabet. Only Sandy can do this. Amy is disgusted.

Joan Opyr, AKA Auntie Establishment, is a Moscow area fiction writer, the author of the novel *Idaho Code*, and the *Northern Idaho Editor* for *New West Magazine*. She invites your questions, comments, mint julep and rat recipes at [joanopyr@moscow.com](mailto:joanopyr@moscow.com).

## What's on Stonewall's Website?

### Your GLBTQA Community.

Online Interactive GLBTQA Calendar, Current Issue, Current Headlines, Downtown Spokane Map, Back Issues, Blogger, Business Directory, Resources, Links, Press Releases, Advertising Rates, Demographics, Distribution Locations, Subscription Info, Web Statistics



[www.stonewallnews.net](http://www.stonewallnews.net)

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Founder and Publisher: Larry Stone 1992-1995  
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## Publisher/Executive Editor

Michael R. Schultz

Editor

Kathy Ferguson

## Arts &amp; Entertainment Editor

Christopher Lawrence

Layout Consultant

Christopher Lawrence

## Music Reviews &amp; Previews

Graham Ames &amp; Chotley Ferguson

Masthead Design

Christopher Lawrence

## Contributors

Graham Ames	C. Lawrence
Cat Carrel	Dean Lynch
Joyce Crosby	NTCE
Chotley Ferguson	Joan Opyr
Paul Garber	Guy Trebay
Mark Garret	Catherine D. Willis

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Stonewall News Northwest  
 PO Box 2704 • Spokane, WA 99220  
 www.stonewallnews.net  
 phone 509.570.3750 fax 509.267.6309  
 mail@stonewallnews.net

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 1999 | *Rainbow Award* | Inland Northwest Pride  
 1997 | *Vice Versa Award* | Q Syndicate  
 1996 | *Rainbow Award* | Inland Northwest Pride

## National &amp; International

## A Kiss Too Far?

The tectonics of attitude are shifting in subtle ways that are geographic, psychic and also generational

By Guy Trebay  
 New York Times

THE spot was only 30 seconds, almost a blur amid the action at the Super Bowl. Yet the hubbub after a recent commercial showing two auto mechanics accidentally falling into lip-lock while eating the same Snickers bar went a long way toward showing how powerfully charged a public kiss between two men remains.

Football is probably as good a place as any to look for the limits of social tolerance. And the Snickers commercial

— amusing to some, appalling to others and ultimately withdrawn by the company that makes the candy — had the inadvertent effect of revealing how a simple display of affection grows in complexity as soon as one considers who gets to demonstrate it in public, and who, very often, does not.

The demarcation seemed particularly stark during the week of Valentine's Day, when the aura of love cast its rosy Hallmark glow over card-store cash registers and anyone with a pulse. Where, one wondered, were all the same-sex lovers making out on street corners, or in comedy clubs, performance spaces, flower shops or restaurants?

"There's really a kind of Potemkin

village quality to the tolerance and acceptance" of gay people in America, said Clarence Patton, a spokesman for the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project. "The idea of it is O.K., but the reality falls short."

Provided gay people agree to "play a very tightly scripted and choreographed role in society, putting your wedding together or what have you, we're not threatening," Mr. Patton said. "But people are still verbally harassed and physically attacked daily for engaging in simple displays of affection in public. Everything changes the minute we kiss."

The lugs in the Snickers commercial recoiled in shock at their smooch, resorting to "manly" behavior like tearing out their chest hair in clumps. Alternate endings to the commercial on a Snickers Web site showed the two clobbering each other, and related video clips featured players from the Super Bowl teams reacting, not unexpectedly, with

*Please see KISS next page*

## Gay student's troubles unheeded

Parents, student say school refused to stop abuse; superintendent says she didn't know

By PHIL GARBER Managing Editor  
 Recorder Community Newspapers

MOUNT OLIVE TWP. — James Sharratt remembered what it was like when classmates threw rocks at him on the playground at Mount Olive High School because he was gay.

And he remembers the anger and pain he felt when students would mock him and call him "faggot" or when it was suggested he dress for gym class in the nurse's office and not in the locker room with the other male students.

And he remembers how the counselors at the school said they could do nothing to stop the verbal and physical assaults against him.

Sharratt sat down on Saturday, Feb. 3, with his mother, Rebecca Dressel, and father, Donald, to talk about his experiences. Also sitting in on the interview was Walter Schubert, a founder of the Morris County chapter of the support group, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays or PFLAG.

In part as a result of James' experiences, PFLAG and several other gay support groups will host a countywide forum "Creating Safe Schools," from 1 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, March 3, at County College of Morris in Randolph Township.

Students, parents, administrators,

teachers and clergy are invited to the forum which will focus on educating participants on the harm caused by offensive language and behavior that result in shame and humiliation for lesbians, gays, bisexual and transgender students.

It also will identify how schools can address the needs of gay students. For information, on attending, e-mail to [bdressel@optonline.net](mailto:bdressel@optonline.net).

## Dire Situation

Sharratt is now 17 and is attending Morris County Vocational and Technical High School to earn a graduate equivalency degree (GED). He left Mount Olive High School in November at the recommendation of a psychologist because he was getting increasingly depressed at the high school.

James said he was 10 when he realized he was gay but that looking back, he said he always knew he was different than the other boys.

**"I was scared to come out. I thought no one would like me. I thought my mom would kick me out. I thought my friends would stop talking to me and I would be alone for the rest of my life."**

—James Sharratt

He said he told friends of his homosexuality when he was 14 but didn't tell his parents until he was 16 and a junior.

"I was scared to come out," said James, a tall, brown-haired young man. "I thought no one would like me. I thought my mom would kick me out. I thought my friends would stop talking to me and I would be alone for the rest of my life."

Most of the time, James just tried to keep his homosexuality out of his mind.

"I wasn't being honest with anyone," he said. "I had a fake persona."

James first disclosed his homosexuality with a close, female friend while they were at the Rockaway Mall. He told the girl in the course of an otherwise casual conversation.

"She didn't ask any questions," James said. "She knew it was hard enough for me to blurt it out."

As a freshman and sophomore, James had older friends in whom he could confide but that they all graduated by the

time he was a junior.

Mrs. Dressel said she first got an inkling of her son's problems when he was in his junior year at the high school. Her concerns heightened after she saw his bio on Myspace.com on the Internet and saw that he had been communicating with a 23-year-old man, with whom he also was

*Please see SCHOOL page 10*

## Nigeria moves to tighten gay laws

Nigeria's House of Representatives held public hearing on new bill seeking to outlaw gay relations.

NIGERIA — The bill, which could become law before April's elections, proposes a five-year sentence for anyone convicted of being openly gay or practising gay sex.

Critics say the bill is anti-freedom, but religious leaders say it will help "protect society's morals and values".

Homosexuality is taboo across most of Africa, although South Africa recently legalised gay marriages.

The committee conducting the public hearing say they have received over 100 petitions from

rights groups asking that the proposed bill be withdrawn.

"The bill is going to seriously violate the rights of people. This bill is evil and should not be allowed to see that light of the day," says Alimi Ademola who heads Independent Project Nigeria, a gay rights organisation.

But the bill will prove popular in a country where homosexuality is taboo and elections are looming, says the BBC's Senan Murray

in Abuja.

While we are trying to protect morals

and values, we must also remember to protect people's rights even if they are a minority

Parliamentary insiders say the bill is likely to be passed by both chambers of the Nigerian National Assembly by the end of March, he says.

Speaking at the session, Deputy Speaker Austin Opara said he did not want Nigerians to forget their "religious and cultural backgrounds".

The Christian Association of Nigeria (Can), the umbrella body for Nigerian Christians, called for speedy passage of the law, describing same sex unions as "barbaric and shameful".

The National Muslim Centre also condemned gay relations as "immoral,

*Please see NIGERIA page 12*

**KISS**

*continued from Previous Page*

gay issue?" said Robert Morea, a fitness consultant in New York.

Although Mr. Morea is heterosexual, his client list has long included a number of high-profile professionals, the majority of them gay women and men. "The issue is there because for so many years, people got beaten up, followed or yelled at," he said. "Even for me as a straight man, it's obvious how social conditioning makes it hard for people to take back the public space."

After considering herself exclusively lesbian for decades, Sarah Van Arsdale, a novelist, not long ago found, to her surprise, that she had fallen in love with a man. At first, as she wrote last week in an e-mail message from a writer's colony in Oaxaca, Mexico, "Whenever we would hold hands in public, I felt a frisson of fear, waiting for the customary dirty looks or at least for the customary looking-away."

In place of revulsion, Ms. Van Arsdale was startled to discover that, having adjusted her sexual identity, she was now greeted by strangers with approving smiles. "I felt suddenly acceptable and accepted and cute, as opposed to queer," she said.

While few are likely to have shared Ms. Van Arsdale's singular perspective, her experience is far from exceptional. "I'm a very openly gay man," said Dane Clark, who manages rental properties and flies a rainbow flag from his house in Kansas City, Kan. "My partner and I don't go kissing in public. I live in probably the most liberal part of the State of Kansas, but it's not exactly liberal. If I was to go to a nice restaurant nearby and kiss my partner, I don't think that would go over very well."

As many gay men have before him, Mr. Clark chose to live in a city rather than the sort of small town where he was raised in the hope that Kansas City would provide a greater margin of tolerance and also of safety. Even in nearby Independence, Mo., he said, "if you kiss your partner in a restaurant, you could find somebody waiting for you outside when you went to the car."

But haven't things changed radically from the days when lesbians and gay men were considered pariahs, before gay marriage initiatives became ballot issues, before Ellen DeGeneres was picked to host the Oscars, and cable TV staples like "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" made a competitive sport of group hugs?

In some senses and in certain places, apparently, they have. The landscape of acceptance, as the Snickers commercial inadvertently illustrated, is constantly shifting — broadening in one place and contracting somewhere else. The country in which anti-gay advocates like the Rev. Fred Phelps once drew headlines for picketing Matthew Shepard's funeral and preaching what was called "a Day-Glo vision of hatred" can seem very far away at times from the laissez-faire place in which an estimated 70 percent of Americans say they know someone who is gay.

"We don't administrate public displays of affection," said Andrew Shields, World Church Secretary of the Community of Christ, a Christian

*Please see KISS page 14*



**Snickers withdrew a commercial featuring an accidental kiss that many people did not find amusing.**

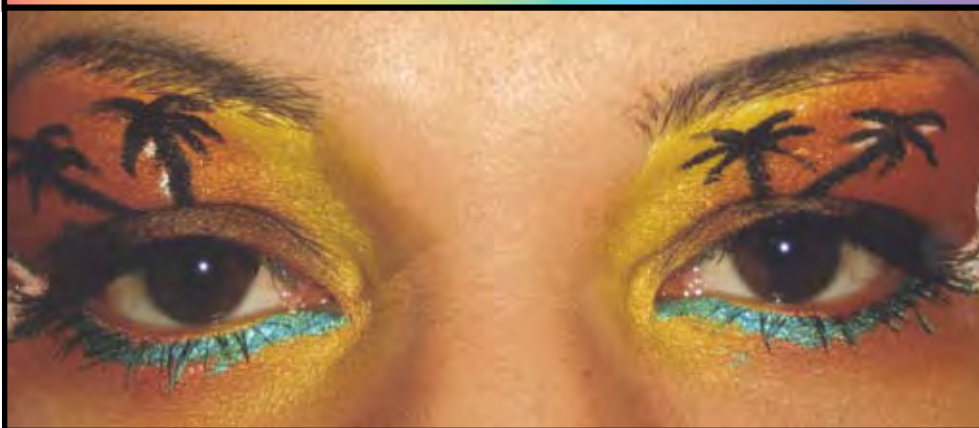
squeamish distaste. The outrage voiced by gay rights groups similarly held little surprise.

"This type of jeering from professional sports figures at the sight of two men kissing fuels the kind of anti-gay bullying that haunts countless gay and lesbian schoolchildren on playgrounds across the country," Joe Solmonese, the president of the Human Rights Campaign, said in a statement. A spokesman for the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation condemned the advertisement as "inexcusable." Masterfoods USA, a division of Mars and the maker of Snickers, withdrew the offending ads.

But for some the commercial left the lingering question of who owns the kiss? How is it that a simple affectionate gesture can be so loaded? Why is it that behavioral latitudes permit couples of one sort to indulge freely in public displays lusty enough to suggest short-term motel stays, while entire populations, albeit minority ones, live real-time versions of the early motion picture Hays Code: a peck on the cheek in public, one foot squarely planted on the floor?

The freedom to kiss in public is hardly the most compelling issue for most gay rights advocates, or perhaps even in the minds of many gay Americans. Yet the symbolic weight of simple gestures remains potent, a point easy to observe wherever on the sexual spectrum one falls. "Whose issue is it? Why is it only a

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**MON**

- Karaoke hosted by "Don't Be Shy Karaoke Company" 9 PM—1 AM



**TUE**

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**Could a gay couple who weren't hired models get away with this in Manhattan?**

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Christopher Lawrence, A & E Editor

## Spokane Symphony put the MAN in Romantic



Left: Johnny Mathis and tour manager Gil Reigers on guitar

orchestra of the past. You are truly a treasure for Spokane and the Inland Northwest.

When Johnny Mathis came onstage, to begin the second half, his advancing age was reflected in a slower gait and more deliberate speech. As he began the first of many songs his voice even seemed a little thin. But as he became more relaxed, that memorable warmth that is his instrument began to take us all back to our romantic teens.

It occurs to me that perhaps the advent of reverb and echo chamber effects might have been designed to help lesser singers achieve the naturally vibrant, caressing tones that Mathis has always delivered.

In fact, some of the women in the audience were distracting; emitting constant "oohs" and "aahs" with each song Johnny introduced. As the evening progressed amidst thunderous applause (three curtain calls), underscored heavily by the swooning female sighs, my lesbian seat mate commented in my ear: "I'll bet there isn't a dry seat in the house!"

Mathis' musicianship remains unsurpassed. Spokane Symphony kept in stride with every nuance and style he performed. Again, thank you all for such a great night of Terpsichorean temptation!

Before I launch into the merits of the second half of the Spokane Symphony performance that included Johnny Mathis, I need to give props to our Symphony Orchestra in its own right.

As a professional dancer for many years, my experience with classical music has always had a physical sensibility. What a chore it was **not** to jump up and begin dancing during the first half of the delightful evening of music. I was ready to throw on my cowboy drag and start hoofing when "Buckaroo Holiday" from **Rodeo** with its bright Western Americana rhythms began to beat.

Memories of romance and Sugar Plum Fairies danced in my head with the orchestra's wonderful presentation of **The Nutcracker's** pas de deux, and I was not the only one in the audience whose heart was racing during the breathtaking selections from **West Side Story** by Leonard Bernstein!

Thank you to Morigo Nakahara, a masterful conductor, Spokane Symphony and Music Director Eckart Preu. I realize I had underestimated your brilliance and abilities until tonight. You gave us first rate music worthy of any great classical

## Fundraiser at interPLAYERS Mar 1-3 Features Gay Issues!

How often does any theatre feature a play about gay issues? **Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks** centers around two characters – one gay male and an older straight woman. **OutSpokane** is co-hosting this important play as a fundraiser for Spokane's **Pride 2007**. This endeavor is worthy of the GLBTQA community's participation!

A large part of the proceeds Mar 1-3 will go to **OutSpokane** for Spokane's Pride Parade and Rainbow Festival 2007. I hope to see real community support.

It is not romantic in any sense, but it does deal with breaking down stereotypes held by both the gay and straight communities about each other.

The two characters find out where they stand and who they are after being confronted by lessons they both thought they had learned long ago. They, like the rest of us, find and form new relationships in and with the most unlikely places and people. Most straight and gay people want to find that "special one ...the one face in a million," but how do we break down the walls we build around ourselves once we have been hurt?

Kathie Doyle-Lipe portrays Lily Harrison and New York's Joel Richards plays Michael Minnetti. Kathie dances the tango, waltz, foxtrot, swing, cha-cha and contemporary dance numbers with her dancing instructor.. It sounds like a fun evening for all. The language is contemporary, intense, funny and honest.

One very lucky couple (gay or straight) will win a raffle for six dance lessons (three 50 minute private dance lessons and three group class lessons) from the Simply Dance Studio.

**Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks** opens Mar. 1 and closes Mar. 17. For tickets, call the box office at 455-7529.



### GLBT Book Group

Spokane's GLBT Book Group meets the first Wednesday monthly in the second floor conference room of Auntie's Bookstore. Facilitator Julie Smith says review sessions begin at 7 P.M.

The upcoming review session is **Price of Salt** by Patricia Highsmith on March 7.

## PRIDE & JOY MOVIE NIGHT

Last month's showing of **Yes Nurse, No Nurse** was a big hit, and on March 7, we are privileged to show **Loving Annabelle** at CenterStage. Dinner is provided for only \$9, including main course, salad and a beverage. Those who would prefer to order from ella's wonderful menu receive a 20% discount and 50% off all well drinks. Doors open at 6:30. The movie starts at 7:30.

### Loving Annabelle

Director: Katherine Brooks

Wofe Video, 77 minutes

One Student, One Teacher, One Secret.

Rising heart-throb Erin Kelly stars as Annabelle, a precocious Senator's daughter who falls in love with her teacher Simone (gorgeous Diane Gaidry) at a stodgy Catholic girls' boarding school. Inspired by the classic 1931 lesbian drama **Maedchen in Uniform**, out writer-director Katherine Brooks unveils this passionate tale of forbidden love with intelligence, wit and sensitivity.

Simone Bradley is Saint Theresa's prized young poetry teacher who finds peace and security within the boarding school walls. Surrounded by a lush atmosphere with little conflict, Simone has settled into a life of comfort and purpose educating her young female students.

Annabelle is a charismatic and enchanting new student who quickly draws attention for her rebellious behavior.

Fearing Annabelle will influence the other students, the rigid Headmistress (Ilene Graff) instructs Simone to keep an eye on Annabelle and get her under control.

Simone, however, quickly learns that the real challenge is not Annabelle's behavior but the attraction budding between the two. As Annabelle pursues her teacher, she unleashes the passion that has been locked deep inside Simone, who must decide whether or not to enter an affair that could cost her everything.

Director Katharine Brooks' **Loving Annabelle** gives a modern telling of this "forbidden love" story that continues to be controversial to this day.



With stunning cinematography by Cynthia Pusheck, **Loving Annabelle** offers excellent performances from its female leads, Diane Gaidry and Erin Kelly, as well as a featured performance by Academy Award nominee/Golden Globe recipient Kevin McCarthy.

**The movie is free!**

**Loving Annabelle** explores the

complexity and controversy of love and struggle between two women who have every reason to deny their feelings. Blind to the world around them, the two journey into a love affair destined to change their lives forever.

Remember you can still catch, **McManus in Love**, a comedy by best selling author Patrick F. McManus at CenterStage on Feb. 22 & 23.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and **McManus** starts at 8 p.m.

For tickets, call (509) 74-STAGE or TicketsWest (800)-325-SEAT.

## Brokeback kiss is voted number one!

**PinkNews.co.uk** writer February 2007

An online poll of people who rent DVDs has revealed that their favorite movie kiss of all time was between two men.

Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal's passionate kiss in **Brokeback Mountain** topped the online survey by DVD rental firm Lovefilm, beating classic movie moments from **Gone with the Wind** and **Breakfast at Tiffany's**.

Lesbians are not left out either: the Selma Blair/Sarah Michelle Gellar encounter in **Cruel Intentions** came in at number five.

Lovefilm marketing manager Fliss White said: "We never expected the results to be so varied. Our top 10 has covered everything from sexy passionate embraces to more sinister, threatening kisses."



There certainly were some puzzling results from the online poll.

Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie make the list for their kiss in **Mr & Mrs Smith**, and **The Godfather** comes in at number seven.

In the case of **The Godfather**, it is not a passionate lip-lock that won over DVD viewers, but the famous scene where Michael Corleone kissed goodbye to his brother Fredo, whom he has decided to have killed.

**Breakfast at Tiffany's** was number two in the poll, followed by the Pitt/Jolie kiss and then **Gone with the Wind**.

Deborah Kerr and Burt Lancaster's beach kiss in **From Here to Eternity** came sixth, followed by **Bridget Jones's Diary**.

The final two places were claimed by Tobey Maguire and Kirsten Dunst in **Spider-Man** and Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Gray in **Dirty Dancing**.



# REVIEWS & PREVIEWS

## GRAPHIC NOVELS - VIDEO - MUSIC

Chotley Ferguson, Christopher Lawrence & Graham Ames

**Editor's note: It seems an appropriate time to include a genre of literature that is highly popular in the social lives of many of our GLBTQA youth.**

It was brought to my attention by Chotley Ferguson, a 17 year-old Allied youth, that many characters in Manga and other Graphic Novels are Gender Fluid (GLBTQ), so I asked her to give me a review of one of her favorites. It so happens that nearly all the characters in this particular series are Gender Fluid. - C.L.

### Eerie Queerie, Vols 1 - 4

by Shuri Shiozu, Jackie Medel, & Heidi Yamaguchi (Translator)  
TOKYOPOP

**Eerie Queerie**, a popular manga (graphic novel), is a great coming of age story with a supernatural twist. The reader follows a young boy, Mitsuo Shiozu, through a host of trials and tribulations as he tries to discover his sexuality and his place in the world.

If you are unfamiliar with this new art form, you may think that it is childish—and some of it is. However, manga, like books, vary wildly. Reading level and subject matter range from juvenile to adult. The art is as important to telling the story as the text. And because many of the available manga are written by Japanese authors, the reader is often immersed in a new cultural experience.

Over the four part **Eerie Queerie** series, the story can wander at times. While the individual tales are amusing, the main plot seems to occasionally get lost in the fun. However, despite the continuity problems, the story finishes strongly with an excellent ending.

The characters themselves are, for the most part, quite endearing, while some are realistically unsavory. Mitsuo and his friends grow, assimilating the lessons they learn throughout the story. Each character has individual traits that shine through clearly, making it easy to differentiate each person.

Last but not least is the high quality art. For those of you who haven't read any manga, this may seem like an odd thing to discuss, but it is in fact very important. Shuri Shiozu, the artist and author, did a superb job. Virtually all the drawings are clear and concise. It's easy to see who's who, and the emotions are expressed perfectly.

Overall **Eerie Queerie** is a fun, exciting, laugh-out-loud read with a lively, optimistic view on life.



### Shut Up and Sing!

Dixie Chicks  
Rockridge Institute

Some documentaries are dry and sterile. Not so in the case of **Shut Up and Sing**, created by Barbara Kopple and Cecilia Peck. This is not just another rehashing of old and disturbing news about the cost of freedom of speech to this very special band, but an actual documenting of the events as they unfolded.

Far more than just the distasteful politics and uneducated hate-driven red-necks on the warpath with an American flag-cum-ax to grind, the juxtaposition of the media frenzy of 2003 with the evolving internal dialogue of the Chicks and their families engendered over the next two years is evocative and moving.

As you watch their bravery under threats of death and plummeting record sales because of boycotts by major country western radio chains, I believe you will gain even more respect for the healing journey they have taken on the way to the creation of their newest album, **Taking the Long Way**.

They talk back and bring it on with pride; their heads held high. The Chicks' noble voices are sweeter than ever, and their uniquely haunting harmonies have grown stronger every year.

The results are clear. Taking their place once again as the largest selling female band in the world, we see that their determination and unaltered convictions have affected many people and garnered more fans than ever.

They prove that censorship is not an American value, no matter how many conservatives in this country might wish it to be so.

I can safely recommend **Shut Up and Sing** to all of our readers, and this is a must see for their fans as well. The Chicks have moved beyond country into a new genre of music that speaks from the heart and makes us think about our lives and the meaning in them.

Production values on this DVD are excellent, and the process of their recovery while rebuilding their careers is inspiring.

In the meantime, I found a great freebie video on the web to share with you readers and fans. An episode of the Bill Maher Show is available to view online.

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B000KX0IN6/bookstore-now78-20>.

If you have not had the chance to appreciate their music before, I recommend you do so at the first opportunity.

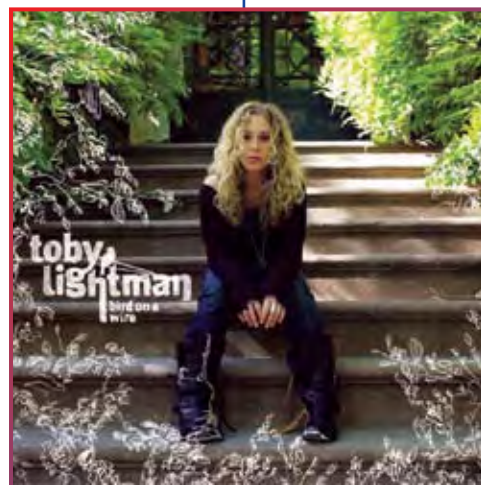
### Bird On A Wire

Toby Lightman  
Atlantic Records

Opening for Carbon Leaf at their recent show in Spokane was a diminutive blonde with a guitar and an amazing voice. She performed a great set of acoustic rock, accompanied only by another guitarist. It was gutsy, and while I was not immediately captivated, I did pick up her CD in the lobby during the act break.

To my surprise, Toby's album is decked out to the nines with vintage industry talent. Patrick Leonard, one of Madonna's chief producers and co-writers, helped out with about half the tracks. The other half have Bill Bottrell at the helm, who created Sheryl Crow's brilliant first two albums. With such talent bringing along their friends and helping out, it is no wonder that **Bird On A Wire** is so engaging across its thirteen tracks.

Toby is a bit Bonnie Raitt, a smidgen of Janis Joplin, and a whole lot of herself. She covers a lot of ground, moving from rock to folk to blues to retro styles, sliding between genres, blending them together and putting her stamp on the final package. Tying everything together is Toby's songwriting, at once plain and complex, melodies carrying straightforward words that grow deeper upon reflection. It is a great album by an emerging artist, and I am really glad I grabbed a copy. You should grab a copy for yourself.



### A Weekend In The City

Bloc Party.  
Vice Music

Bloc Party neatly avoids the sophomore slump with **A Weekend In The City**. This quite excellent CD is not quite a concept album; the overarching theme explores those anonymous stories all around in any unfamiliar urban landscape. Just who are those random people next to you waiting for the bus, at the light, in the checkout line? Some are living lives of quiet desperation: "sitting in silence in bars after work ... now we cling to bottles and memories of the past/just give me moments, not hours or days." ("Waiting For The 7:18") Some, not really so quiet. "I'm sitting on the roof of my house/with a shotgun and a six pack of beer." ("Hunting For Witches") Eleven such stories are shared in this marvelous album, exploring what lead singer Kele Okereke calls "the living noise of a metropolis."

The band is in amazing form, nicely evolving their approach while remaining true to the core of what makes them special. When their 2005 "debut" **Silent Alarm** was released, their dance/rock balancing act was largely hailed as The Next Big Thing. Sounding a bit like U2



fronted by Robert Smith (from The Cure), they took most of the world by storm, just not the US. A little bit punk, a little bit grunge, a whole lot of great stuff, and while I was listening, I do not recall ever meeting anyone else who was.

This new album showcases the depths of Bloc Party's craft. "I Still Remember" is a catchy ditty about two school-boys' unrequited love. But underneath all the fully modern sensibilities lies a core of 80s synthpop; the narrator is trapped in a moment from twenty years ago. "The Prayer" begins with a tribal stomp, which seems to come from a '30s movie musical, quickly passes through a couple of stages and is suddenly deep in dance floor techno, and then pops back again, making its point clearly.

Kele has pulled back from the sharp edges of his voice, or else has matured through them. Either way, he is even better than he was before, perfectly capturing emotion with his own unique phrasing and voicing. Russell Lissack's guitars are fierce and imaginative, while Gordon Moakes (bass) and Matt Tong (drums) create nearly any atmosphere imaginable.

A trio of songs buried in the middle of the album summarize where this band is right now. "Uniform" is a five-minute opera, a commentary on the manufactured "rebellion" culture marketed to today's youth. "On" is a sarcastic paean to cocaine set to a skipping breakbeat. Finally, the sharp drums and machine gun guitars of "Where Is Home" break apart the bourgeois alienation with the story of an immigrant family whose son has just been killed: "In every headline we are reminded/ that this is not home for us." It is a great stretch of music on a great new album, and that is always a wonderful thing.

### Year Zero

Nine Inch Nails

It began with a photograph of a concert shirt purchased during NIN's current European tour. An observant person noticed that some of the letters stood out, and when decoded led to [www.i-am-trying-to-believe.com](http://www.i-am-trying-to-believe.com). Other clues have led to phone numbers, or have been discovered only through PhotoShop or other manipulations. One story goes that a flash drive was found in a bathroom in Lisbon, Portugal that contained a complete song from the unreleased album. Welcome to the world of Alternate Reality Games, although to call this one a game does not seem fair. Trent Reznor recently posted online, "What you are now starting to experience IS 'year zero'. It's not some kind of gimmick to get you to buy a record - it IS the art form... and we're just getting started. Hope you enjoy the ride."

Please see **NINE INCH** Page 10

- Chotley Ferguson

## DEAL

continued from Page 2

new cases are persons under age 25. HIV prevention programs in Spokane at both Spokane AIDS Network and Spokane Regional Health District are critically underfunded, and our capacity to care for the growing number of persons living with HIV, currently over 500, is approaching a breaking point based on current funding available.

The "Deal or No Deal" depends on each of us taking a few minutes to contact our elected representatives and telling them that increasing HIV funding must be one of their top priorities. We all live with HIV/AIDS directly or indirectly, and it remains a community responsibility to keep our local, state and federal governments focused on this issue until there is a cure.

On February 21, hundreds of HIV advocates statewide will gather in Olympia for AIDS Awareness and Action Day 2007 to educate lawmakers about the need for increased funding for HIV and our desire to pass the Healthy Youth Act.

You can help make that message loud and clear by calling the Washington State Legislative Hotline today at 1-800-562-6000 and leave your message for your elected representatives.

To learn more about how you can help, please go to [www.LLAA.org](http://www.LLAA.org), click on the "Communities in Action Network" link and help us insure our local, state and federal governments make the right deal to help us prevent and treat this disease.

## NINE INCH

continued from Page 9

Considering that there are still over two months before the album is released, and then another year before the rumored "second half" of the concept, I sure hope they are "just getting started." It looks like it is going to be intense.

Jump into the action by visiting [www.echoingthesound.org](http://www.echoingthesound.org) and selecting the "Year Zero" forum. I suggest you start with "I Am Trying To Believe" for a summary of What Has Been Discovered. And be sure to drink lots of water. - G.A.

## SCHOOL

continued from Page 6

having a physical relationship.

Mrs. Dressel said she was more worried about her son's safety than whether he was gay. She later spoke with James and he acknowledged he was homosexual.

The problems in school began for real at the end of his sophomore year and into his junior year.

"That's when people started to use words like fag," James said.

He said that during gym class outside, kids would throw rocks at him and that he would hear people call him names while passing in the hallways.

One time, he was with a friend when a classmate confronted him in a hallway.

"A kid came up and got in my face and started calling me a fag," James said. "My friend kicked him and we walked away. There were always people around and I don't know how the teachers didn't hear it."

At home, James tried to act as if he was doing all right. But one day he couldn't hold it in anymore.

"He finally broke down and told us what was happening with the rocks in gym class," Mrs. Dressel said. "I felt horribly angry. You send your child to school and expect he will be protected."

James and his mother soon brought their concerns at a meeting with a school counselor and social worker. They said they could do nothing unless James could identify those who had assaulted him verbally and with rocks. But James said he feared retribution if he named the students.

"We went to the school and they said they were against bullying but could do nothing without names," Mrs. Dressel said.

"If I gave them names, it would only get worse," James said.

That was the only time Mrs. Dressel met with school officials although she had numerous telephone conversations. She said she regrets not having contacted the principal, Kevin Stansberry but had trusted that the counselors would be able to handle the issue.

James continued attending classes and felt particularly uncomfortable when changing in the locker room for gym class. A teacher suggested he change in the nurse's office but he felt too embarrassed. Instead, at his psychologist's suggestion, James was allowed to withdraw from phys ed classes and take a study hall instead.

Another incident involved a sabotage of a six-page psychology report he had written on the genocide in Rwanda. James said he went to make changes to the report on a school computer and found someone had deleted the file and replaced it with homophobic comments.

"I had to rewrite the entire essay and it was due the next day," James said.

James said he asked his counselor if the school could form a gay support group but was told the school focused more on anti-racism education.

James and his mother brought up their concerns at the meeting with the school social worker and a counselor.

"The first excuse they gave me was that they were supposed to discourage students from coming out in high school," James said.

Mrs. Dressel also said she was told that there was no money in the budget for any new clubs.

As his junior year progressed, James became more outspoken about his homosexuality and was even selected as a school "free spirit" and one of seven students who represented life at the school.

"I asked the teachers why I was nominated and they said it was because I was gay and open about it," James said.

A student later wrote an essay for a local newspaper about the seven students. James said he spoke to the student and talked at length about his homosexuality. But he said he was very disappointed when the story was published and any references to his homosexuality was deleted.

The continuing experiences made James very angry but he didn't know what to do.

"I kept it all inside," he said. "There was nothing I could do. I was so lonely. The minute I stepped in school, I could barely talk."

By November, James was becoming more and more withdrawn and one day Mrs. Dressel got a call from the school counselor.

"She said that when James came to school he felt isolated and fearful," Mrs. Dressel said. "She told me I needed to get him out of school immediately."

In December, his psychologist notified the school that James would be enrolling in the GED program. James now regularly sees friends who attend County College of Morris and since leaving Mount Olive, his life has turned around.

"From the time we took him out of Mount Olive, it was a 180 degree change," said James' father. "The burden is lifted off his shoulders."

## School Policy

Schools Superintendent Rosalie Lamonte said the school district has strict anti-bullying policies.

"We don't tolerate bullying and harassment in any way, shape or form," Lamonte said.

But she said the school could not address James' concerns because the matter was not brought to the attention of a school administrator. She also said there was no action against those who taunted James because he would not identify them.

"If a students didn't wish to share information specifically, there is not much we can do to pursue them (other students)," Lamonte said. "If the situation was such that we felt we needed to investigate further, we would have."

Lamonte also said the school counselors were "trying to help (James) deal with his identity crisis."

Lamonte said James had asked the school to create a gay support group. But Lamonte said she understood it would be a PFLAG chapter and that an outside group would not be permitted to recruit members on campus.

"If the students want to start a gay alliance, they certainly could meet on campus," said Lamonte.

Lamonte said the school curriculum does not directly address gay and lesbian issues but generally talks about "being accepting of differences."

Throughout last year, Mrs. Dressel said she sought support and learned about the PFLAG chapter. She attended her first meeting in January 2006 and has been attending regularly since.

Mrs. Dressel discussed her son's situation at PFLAG meetings and this past October, Schubert wrote to Stansberry and asked for information about the school's anti-bullying program.

The letter was copied to board president Anthony Strillacci.

"The purpose of this letter is to request information regarding Mount Olive High School's prevention programs and other initiatives in compliance with the NJ "Anti Bullying" legislation," the letter said. "In particular, I am seeking information regarding those specific programs relating to

the prevention of harassment and or bullying of Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender - "LGBT" students."

Schubert received no response to his inquiry.

Lamonte said she recalled the letter but didn't believe it called for a response.

"It seemed to be an inquiry to all schools about gay and lesbian support groups," Lamonte said. "We didn't feel any response was needed."

Lamonte said the district will be sending a representative to the March 3 PFLAG conference. She also said Stansberry will call Mrs. Dressel about her son's situation.

Schubert said PFLAG was formed to connect people, usually parents, to help them understand their emotions and their children.

"Over the last 10 years, I have noticed parents frightened, angry and worried and PFLAG helps them feel not alone and to start action," Schubert said. "Becky (Dressel) is a classic example of what PFLAG offers moms and dads."

Schubert said PFLAG tries to help parents understand that often much of the problem has to do with their own preconceptions and less about their child's issues on being gay.

"I've seen virulent reactions from parents who have a difficult time letting go of their image of how life should unfold," Schubert said. "PFLAG shows the parents that it's more about their issues than their child's."

Schubert, who is gay and helped found the national PFLAG organization, said James showed great courage in talking publicly about his emotions and his concerns.

"He is speaking for all the kids who don't stand up and don't talk to their parents and are isolated," said Schubert. "Nobody should ever have to go through this. It's an awful experience."

Mrs. Dressel said Mount Olive school officials reacted more out of a lack of education than a lack of concern.

"The biggest problem is that the administration, the teachers, the counselors aren't educated," she said. "When there is a problem, they don't know what to do."

Dressel said she hopes Mount Olive educators and many others will attend and benefit from the PFLAG summit in March.

"If I can get them to attend the summit and get programs in the high school, then what happened to James isn't for nothing," Mrs. Dressel said.

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### 13 - Volunteers

**Odyssey Youth Center has both short-term and on-going volunteer opportunities available.** Are you interested in becoming a Facilitator during open youth hours? Are you information technology savvy enough to be one of our regular IT volunteers? Call Bonnie at 509/325-3637 for more information.

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Contact Cherie at 509/455-8993

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### 22 - Housing For Rent

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### 31 - Help Wanted

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youth and experience working with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth a plus. Successful candidate will be over 24 years of age and without significant friendships or relationships with any current Odyssey youth. 30hr/wk at \$12.00/hr. Applications due Monday, February 26, 2007. Send to [Odyssey@OdysseyYouth.org](mailto:Odyssey@OdysseyYouth.org) or Odyssey Youth Center, Attn: Hiring Committee, 1121 South Perry St, Spokane, WA 99202.

### 44 - Travel



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**SAFE***continued from Front Page*

**Steve Bertram is EWU's Assistant Director of Student Life and Staff Advisor for Student Alliance For Equality, more commonly known as SAFE, for the last eight years.**

else on the minority end of the sexual orientation/gender identity spectrum, nearly every one of them has come out or will come out at some time in her or his life. In addition to selecting a major and studying for exams, becoming comfortable with one's sexuality is an important part of college life for many young adults. At Eastern Washington University, SAFE is there to help.

Parents, staff and students often regard Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) like SAFE as dating services or places where "gay people" get together. The truth is that GSAs in general often have numerous members who identify as questioning or "queer"—a once offensive word that has been embraced by youth as a term that means any form of sexual expression that isn't strictly heterosexual. It is also common for straight allies to make up a significant percentage of GSA membership. The goal of SAFE and other GSAs is to create an open and accepting campus where all students feel safe, as well as to provide opportunities for social interactions where GLBTQQA students feel safe, welcome, and supported. Straight allies are an integral part of that process.

"At the end of that school year, I talked to Steve (Bertram) for the first time. He told me all about SAFE, which I joined the following September," Gudith continues. "That very evening after talking to Steve, I was talking to my mom when, after I asked how she'd feel about me having a gay roommate, she asked me if I was gay. I had promised myself I would never lie about it, so I told her the truth. She started to cry a bit, and the first thing she said was that she wanted grandkids. I thought that was the most selfish thing she could have said."

A week later, he left the EWU campus, tucked between rolling wheat fields and the small conservative town of Cheney, for his parents home in Western Washington. Over the summer Gudith came out to his father, who wasn't at all surprised. Both of his parents rapidly accepted their son as a gay man.

After returning to EWU, Gudith learned firsthand that the Student Alliance For Equality was a place where others understood what he was going through. He was free to express himself without fear of judgment. Gudith, who has become a Women's and Gender Studies major, described a familiar scene.

"That September, 2005, I decided it didn't matter if people knew I was gay. I just started being myself. If people asked me if I was gay, I told them yes. I didn't announce it to the world with bright pink and rainbows; I just let down all my old guards. A little peace of mind goes a long way."

With 150 students on its mailing list, SAFE, located on the second floor of EWU's Pence Union Building, is a popular and respected club. SAFE has regular office hours every weekday, and students are encouraged to stop by for peer support or to use the club's resource library. Gudith confirms, "We open our doors to anyone seeking help,

information, a place to just hang out, or a cause to fight for. The only thing we don't allow is someone intent on putting the group down."

According to SAFE leaders there are generally between ten and twenty people attending club meetings. Elizabeth Welch, 20, club Treasurer asserts, "SAFE is a wonderful group, which always offers a shoulder to cry on, no matter what you are crying about. You don't need to identify as GLBTAQ in order to get help and support from SAFE."

Two SAFE meetings are held each week; the first an hour long business meeting, where events are planned, and fundraising and promotion of the club discussed; the other is a social gathering where support is offered, and students can just hang out in a welcoming and affirming environment. During social meetings Welch states, "We talk about whatever people want to talk about." Bertram reports that, "This year there seems to be a specific need for students to explore what it means to be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender." Gudith, a senior who plans to enter EWU's Physical Therapy PhD program, asserts candidly, "Belonging to SAFE gives people a social network to enjoy time with or to get help from in times of need. It also gives people an outlet for any frustrations they may have about any issue, though there is often a focus on the prevailing anti-gay sentiment from many religious or other conservative groups around both Cheney and Spokane."

The degree of difficulty experienced on campus by GLBTQA students at Eastern Washington University depends on the individual. "You could ask ten different SAFE members how safe they feel on campus, and you would probably get ten different answers," reports Bertram, EWU's Assistant Director of Student Life and SAFE's coordinator for the past eight years, "Some students feel ostracized, and others feel totally comfortable."

There have been several recent incidents of harassment of GLBT students on campus. In an article by Russell Stahlke that appeared in EWU's student newspaper on November 8, 2006 SAFE's President, Miranda Jack, is quoted as saying, "Students have brought harassment issues to our discussion groups, and I would have to say we're not a very GLBT- (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender) safe campus. There are enough outlets to get people involved in GLBT issues and equality, but there are still too many horrible incidents of harassment and hate crimes occurring."

Conversely, Bertram offers the example of a transgender student who is quite gregarious and self-assured. Because she is confident and accepts herself, others respect her. That in turn leads those students who might be tempted to use derogatory language or otherwise harass the transgender student to, as Bertram put it, "take their cue from other people's acceptance of her" and walk away or risk being berated by her supporters. Still, Bertram acknowledges that some GLBT students believe that

living in residence halls or in Cheney is not safe for students who are openly queer.

In reference to controversy and negative aspirations toward GLBTQA students on campus, Gudith reports, "Many of the Christian groups on campus have a dislike of SAFE. Some peers don't have problems with people being in SAFE, but others, especially those in the many Christian groups on campus, will give the "death glare" to everyone working at one of SAFE's events. This is especially true when someone who is also in that particular Christian group is helping SAFE." Gudith acknowledges, "There are a rare few open minded Christians in those groups."

One Christian group, however, gets along great with SAFE. Pastor Paul Rodkey, longtime supporter of the GLBTQA community and pastor of Spokane's Bethany Presbyterian Church, has offered to help SAFE whenever he can. Paul has also requested that SAFE put on an event for the newly formed open-minded Christian group called Holy Grounds, which is designed to open discussion with students and get them thinking about issues commonly thought of as against the bible.

To combat bigotry, hatred and violence, SAFE leaders work tirelessly to raise awareness of, and advocate for, GLBTQA persons on campus. Because of the prevalence of heterosexism and homophobic attitudes, Gudith, who is now SAFE's Vice President declares, "We try to make people realize that gay people are everywhere, and we're all just as human as everyone else. We also provide access to EWU's counseling services and legal services when necessary."

Welch asserts that SAFE is working to create a progressive environment at EWU, where sexual status is no more important than the color of a person's eyes "by putting out the word that GLBTAQ people are not monsters out to get you and/or your family, but they are real people just like any other person. We try to educate people on what exactly being GLBTAQ means and try to override the misconceptions many people have about GLBTAQ's."

Through outreach and educational programs on the EWU's Cheney campus, SAFE works to dispel myths, prejudices and fears about GLBTQA persons. SAFE provides speakers who go into campus classrooms to educate students about issues ranging from what it means to be transgender to preventing STDs. Bertram says that the benefit of doing classroom outreach is students come to realize that the only difference between them and the GLBT student who is sitting next to them is sexual orientation. SAFE also sponsors panel discussions concerning issues of sexual diversity.

To increase awareness of issues important to Eastern's GLBTQA community, Welch reports that SAFE participates in campus events like Tunnel of Oppression and Homecoming. It also hosts an annual Drag Show with proceeds going to Spokane Aids Network, helps sponsor Spokane's GLBT Film Festival, and is looking forward to having an entry in the 2007 Pride Parade.

To promote the club, SAFE has an informational booth staffed by SAFE members each time there is a campus organization and club fair. Gudith reports that, "SAFE hands out information about where and when our meetings are and how to get in touch with people for support should one not wish to come out at all. We have a strict rule that if anyone doesn't want it to be known that he or she is involved with SAFE, nobody may acknowledge that person's involvement outside of the SAFE office."

There has been an active gay-straight alliance at Eastern Washington University for at least fifteen, and possibly as long as twenty years. In an effort to place less emphasis on homosexuality and more emphasis on equality, EWU's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Alliance changed its name a decade ago to Student Alliance For Equality (SAFE). The club felt that the new name would encourage more straight allies as well as queer students who weren't ready to come out to join the club.

However, it is possible that the very students who would benefit most from the club are unaware that there is a GLBTQA club at Eastern Washington

University because of the alternative name that does not contain one word from the acronym associated with sexual minorities. For example, Elizabeth Welch, 20, a Psychology major and Treasurer of SAFE stated, "I had no idea SAFE existed until I contacted the student group office to ask if I could start a GLBTAQ group on campus. They then told me that there was one already on campus."

According to Welch, a junior, the problem that SAFE is not as visible to GLBTQA students as it needs to be could be solved with support from the university's administration. "I think the University could help by making people more aware that support is out there. By advertising both on campus and on the University website that support really does exist on campus," Welch stated.

Bertram reports that there is "currently a real push to develop a GLBT Center at EWU. It would be the equivalent of the campus Women's Center." A center would allow funding for an academic degree offering in gender and sexual orientation studies. All of this translates into more support for GLBTQA students at EWU.

Coming out is a process, and sometimes it takes many years before a person becomes so comfortable with her or his sexual orientation that it is just another facet of who that person is, not any more or less important than any other part of the conglomeration that makes a person uniquely human. SAFE is a wonderful tool for anyone who is struggling with issues related to their sexuality, and Eastern is fortunate to have a club with leaders who are so enthusiastic and dedicated to helping their fellow students. In an effort to reach out to people outside of the university community, Gudith reports "SAFE accepts people who aren't students or staff at EWU, so Cheney and Spokane residents are more than welcome to attend meetings or help with events."

Since beginning his coming out journey two years ago, Adam Gudith says he has never been happier than he is now that he is living an authentic life.

**VOW***continued from Page 2*

change the definition of marriage from "a civil contract between a male and a female" to "a civil contract between two persons." This legislation is not considered likely to pass this legislative session.

- SB 5297 and HB 1297: Regards providing medically and scientifically accurate sexual health education in schools. This is an issue getting much attention locally and statewide. Chance of passage is unknown at this time.

Diane Ballantz, one of the Andersen Case plaintiffs before the Washington State Supreme Court seeking marriage equality, gave us first hand the need for marriage equality. She related a personal story about how her wife's employer had offered Domestic Partner benefits but no longer does and their efforts to get this benefit renewed.

The attendees broke into smaller groups around tables hoping to provide information that will better enable ERW to advocate for the needs of the LGBT community. People seemed very engaged.

Nathan Riding, ERW Field Organizer followed the group sessions with Tactics and Opportunities such as testifying to legislators at Equality Day on February 26, 2007, sending written testimony and signing the marriage equality postcards.

It was apparent throughout the evening that politics is more than elections. The majority of "election work" is done by organizations and individuals. The recent political successes of the LGBT community are not the result alone of the political activists, but rather the accumulative product of every GLBT person talking to a neighbor, family member or coworker about our unique needs and experiences.

# NORTHERN QUEST CASINO

## Brad Garrett

Feb 17



February

## Take it or Leave it!

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\$5,000  
\$4,000  
\$3,000  
\$2,000  
\$1,000  
\$800  
\$600  
\$500  
\$400  
\$300  
\$200  
\$100  
\$50



Player 1

Player 2

See Casinos Club for Complete Details.

## Paul Anka

March 1



## BEST OF THE WEST

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\$50,000

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All events are 18 years and older unless specified.