Pride Doesn't Need A Proclamation!

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Publication Information

The NorthView is a monthly publication of Identity, Inc., a non-profit 501 c (3) Alaska corporation concerned with issues of sexual identity. The NorthView is published as a community service and the views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the directors, officers or members of Identity, Inc.

We welcome articles and letters from individuals and organizations. Whenever possible submit electronic files (via e-mail) in PC (recent versions of Word, please) or text format. All contributions must be signed, but names will be withheld or pseudonyms used upon request. The NorthView reserves the right to edit as necessary and to decline any article submitted. The NorthView does not accept editorial copy or advertising that is sexist, racist, discriminatory or sexually explicit.

All articles must be received by the 10th of the month for inclusion in the NorthView dated the following month (i.e. by March 10, we'll need April information).

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The Imperial Court of the Empire of All Alaska
The Imperial Court of All Alaska (ICOAA) generously donated funds to cover mailing expenses for this issue of NORTHVIEW. If you or your organization would like to sponsor a future edition of the NORTHVIEW, drop us a line at northview@identityinc.org.
Eagles, seals and bathtub rings

Summer has arrived. I know this because I just returned from one of my favorite summer rituals: three semi-rainy days in beautiful Prince William Sound aboard a friend’s 25-foot cabin cruiser.

Each year I pack a smaller version of essentials to bring on the trip. I’ve learned that long underwear and good boots are more important than a clean shirt every day. I’ve learned to go three days without washing my hair (although I don’t like it). And I know that nothing beats good food and good wine after a day of boating.

This year the weather left a little to be desired, but fortunately the critters of the Sound don’t mind. We saw several eagles, lots of shorebirds, and a couple seals even spent the night with us in Goose Bay.

There is one sobering facet of my annual summer trip to the Sound. It’s been more than fourteen years since the supertanker Exxon Valdez slid quietly onto the rocks of Bligh Reef, yet the after effects are still visible today.

As we explored the quiet beaches of Deepwater Bay, we could see the telltale ‘bathtub ring,’ as my favorite skipper put it. This is a dark line on the rocks visible at low tide where crude oil is forever etched into the landscape—a reminder that a moment of human carelessness can have long-term impacts on the natural environment.

I have a small rock I keep as a reminder. The rock is white on the top and inky black on the underside. I rub my fingers across the black, half expecting the ink to leave a smudge, but nature’s forces have polished the stone. The dark stain is embedded, a reminder of the dark bathtub rings that look oddly out of place along the otherwise pristine shores of Prince William Sound.

I keep the rock to remind myself that actions have consequences, that an ounce of prevention can sometimes make a big difference. It also reminds me that beautiful places like Deepwater Bay will outlast me and the petty things I often worry about. And that there’s no substitute in this life for good friends and good memories.

I hope your summer is filled with plenty of both.

Warmly,
Teresa McPherson
Editor

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This ad provided by Jan Carolyn Hardy of New Realities Counseling 248-5933
Murkowski Refuses to sign Gay Pride Proclamation

Governor Frank Murkowski, the newly elected Republican governor of Alaska, refused to issue a proclamation “at this time” declaring June as Gay Pride Month. His assistant could give no explanation for his refusal other than to state that “the Governor doesn’t support...uh, er, no...the Governor is in favor of Gay Pride but he does not want to promote Gay Pride.”

The Proclamation forwarded to Governor Murkowski is shown on the next page to allow each of us the opportunity to see what Governor Murkowski could not promote. For the last two years, Governor Tony Knowles issued proclamations as we requested.

Mr. Dan Carter
Identity, Inc.
P.O. Box 200070
Anchorage, AK 99520-0070

Dear Mr. Carter:

Thank you for requesting a proclamation designating June 2003 as “Gay Pride Month.”

Unfortunately, your request cannot be granted at this time. If you have any questions please contact the Governor’s Office at (907) 465-3500.

Again, thank you for writing and best wishes to you.

Sincerely yours,

Michelle Fabrello
Coordinator, Constituent Relations
State of Alaska

EXECUTIVE PROCLAMATION

by

Frank Murkowski, Governor

Alaska is one of the most diverse states in the nation and as Alaskans, we cherish our freedoms and civil rights. The first act of the Territorial Legislature in 1913 gave women the right to vote—seven years before the rest of the nation. Civil rights legislation championed by Elizabeth Peratrovich and the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Alaska Native Sisterhood passed in 1945, two decades before the United States Civil Rights Act.

Alaskans have long recognized that our diversity is our strength. Our state's culture, society and economy is knit together by all Alaskans working together. Alaskans have made great strides in overcoming discrimination and injustice but the struggle for equality for all is a continuing process.

Throughout our history, countless gay and lesbian people have played important roles as part of this diverse and vibrant nation. Through hard work and dedication, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered Americans have made significant contributions to our local communities, our states and our nation.

Each June, around the world people from all walks of life observe Gay Pride Month in many different ways. The goal of all of these celebrations is the same—to celebrate the strength, humanity, and contributions of gays and lesbians to our society.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Frank Murkowski, Governor of the State of Alaska, do hereby proclaim the month of June, 2003, as

GAY PRIDE MONTH

In Alaska, and urge all citizens of Alaska to join me in "celebrating diversity" by attending the PrideFest 2003 activities in Anchorage and other communities throughout Alaska.

GOVERNOR
I'D RATHER BE...
by Frank Tano

Growing up, we were allowed the luxury of playing a game called, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” It is a game most people think they leave behind when they reach adulthood. That simply isn’t true. We still play that game, only the name has changed. It is now called, “I’d Rather Be.”

“I’d Rather Be” can be played a number of different ways. It doesn’t have to be just about jobs. For example, “I’d rather be straight.”

Yes, I played this version of the game for years, not realizing it was such a waste of time. Why would anyone want to be straight? How uninspiring could that goal be? Nobody hates you before they’ve met you, there is no restriction to displaying affection in public, and best of all, nobody assumes that just because they are the same sex as you, you want to jump their bones. I ask you, why would anyone want to be straight? There is so much fun on this side of the fence. When I stopped playing “I’d Rather Be” in this manner, it took on the fun of what I remembered from childhood.

I’d rather be a Flaming Faggot. Partly because I like the way that sounds, but mostly because it means people don’t expect me to be good at anything physical and, consequently, don’t ask me to partake in sports. I hate sweating with my clothes on.

I’d rather be in a job where I don’t have to think. One that I can do and just let my mind wander. What would that be? How about underwear inspector? Yes, I could put those little numbers in them: “Inspected by #14.” My fantasy of being in as many men’s underwear as possible could come true.

I’d rather be in a state of mind that would allow me to fathom what that fantasy would be like...stupid monogamy.

I’d rather be playing video games than writing this column.

I’d rather be getting paid for this.

I’d rather be with all my friends watching reruns of “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” and picking out the thirty-year-old actors playing teenagers and wishing that I look that good at thirty. Especially since I refuse to exercise and like playing video games all day.

I’d rather be eating pizza.

I’d rather be meeting Ben Affleck.

I’d rather have some combination of “Eating Pizza” and “meeting Ben Affleck” that won’t get me in trouble, but yet be hopefully shameless. Perhaps I could use my professional skills and inspect his underwear, and then give him points on the proper way to wear boxers and what care should be taken when removing them. Then I could slip him my #14. Shameless, I tell you.

I’d rather be myself...because I am just too damn lazy to do anything else. Now, would you pass the Doritos, please, I have to make it through this last game level.

Frank likes to write and perform improv with the Scared Scriptless improv troupe. If you’d like to learn more about Frank’s other fantasy jobs and how they would get him in trouble, drop him a line at tobfrankfeedback@yahoo.com.

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PrideFest 2003!

Thanks to the many individuals and organizations that made Anchorage PrideFest 2003 such a great success. A great BIG thanks to the Imperial Court of All Alaska for underwriting PrideFest and to our other major sponsors: Anchorage Press, KFAT 92.9, Mad Myrna’s, The Raven, Bernie’s Bungalow Lounge, The Beauty Room, and ID Lubricants.

Sincerely,
Pete Gregson & Diana Wolfe
Co-Chairs, Anchorage PrideFest Steering Committee

On behalf of Identity, we’d like to thank the following:

Anchorage PrideFest 2003 Steering Committee
Adam and Steve

Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association
Allie and Myrna LaChoy

Anchorage Museum of Art

Anchorage Police Department

BearTooth Theater Pub
Bovey Trophies
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Vicki Lewis
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(photo by Tim Pearson)

(photo by Tim Pearson)
Friends Roger, Jim, Paul, Chris and Shirley make the short hike to scenic Knik River (photo by Ron Swartz)

Chris Napoleon and Ron Swartz on the peaceful Knik River flats.
Thank you to the Imperial Court of All Alaska and the College of Monarchs for another great picnic on May 26th to open the Alaska summer season!
My Family’s Cabin on Kasitsna Bay
by Chuck Hart

A friend is driving my two youngest kids and me to Homer where my Dad will meet us at the small boat harbor to take us across Kachemak Bay to McDonald Spit, a place of fishing, fun, beauty, mountains, sea life, birds, and friendship.

We have all moved over the years, but we always have the cabin. The most nurturing, relaxing place I know is my family’s cabin. It is our anchor, our tranquility base. This beautiful place full of wonder, adventure and fun is full of my family’s memories. My Dad, his Dad, my brother and I built the first part of the family cabin in 1968; ours was the fifth cabin on the Spit. Mom and Dad have made function attractive. Our cabin has weathered many winter storms that have ‘radically redesigned’ some elegant summer homes that dot the Spit now.

The Spit is a mile-long L-shaped narrow, mostly 20- to 40-foot-wide arm of trees, cabins, rocks and sand. The rocky knoll at the corner covered with alder, spruce and beach grass on the bay sides is 150 feet in height. One tree has an eagle’s nest, occupied for as long as I can remember. We play tag on large red and green boulders piled against the Kachemak Bay side. When the weather is bad, waves crashing, a gray sky, and light rain, a beach walk renews the soul.

The usually glassy Kasitsna Bay is on the ‘back’ beach where we dig clams and fish in the crystal clear water. Kasitsna bay goes dry on the lower low tides. It is usually calm enough to reflect the sun rising over the mountains of Tutka and Jackalof bays.

Kachemak Bay is on the ‘front beach’ where we catch Salmon, Dolly Varden, and that most royal of fish, the Irish Lord. At extremely low tide, we dig clams here, too. We’ll fly kites, comb the beach, and roast marshmallows over a campfire where we will talk and laugh over the day’s events. We’ll look up Cook Inlet to breathtaking sunsets behind Illiamna, Redoubt and Saint Augustine.

At the cabin, sexuality is a non-issue. My Dad has hosted my gay and lesbian cousins as well as his lesbian cousins with their partners for years. It is my most comfortable place.

Chuck is father of three and proudly Alaskan for 40 years.
Follies FUNdraiser a success!

On June 4, 125 GLBTA folk descended on Mr. Whitekeys’ Fly by Night Club in Spenard. The result? A whopping $1,479 in net proceeds was raised to support the GLCCA and other Identity programs.

Dan Carter was the brain behind this simple yet effective fundraising effort. Dan negotiated a date with the Fly by Night Club, publicized the event, and shamelessly pushed split-the-pot raffle tickets before the show and during intermission.

Proceeds from this event will help fund events and programs in our community, such as the Living Out Loud youth retreat, the Gay and Lesbian Helpline, the Pride Conference, and our favorite gathering place, the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Anchorage.

Identity wishes to thank all whom attended, and in particular the following groups and organizations who purchased blocks of tickets to ensure the success of this event.

- The Last Frontier Men’s Club (20 tickets!)
- Metropolitan Community Church of Anchorage (20 tickets!)
- Our awesome GLCCA Volunteers (14 tickets!)
- PFLAG & GLSEN (8 tickets!)
- Urantia Readers Group (8 tickets!)

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Of Anchorage

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- GLCCA -
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929 - 4528 (GLBT)

Hours of Operation
- Monday - Friday 3pm - 9pm
- Saturday - Sunday Noon - 6pm

glcca@identityinc.org

11
L-r: Al Incontro, Jim Mohr, Shirley Rivas, and event organizer Dan Carter.

L-r: Kirt Beck, Larry Shooltz, Bill Skitt and Roger Crandy of TLFMC.
My formative years were spent in Marysville, Washington, then a small town about an hour north of Seattle. Being a deeply closeted gay teen-ager, I was starved to find any sort of literature that had content remotely relating to what I was feeling.

In about 1963 or 1964 (I was around seventeen years old), I walked into the stationery store in Marysville and perused the paperback books on its selves. Reading the jackets of various books, I finally happened on one that truly intrigued me. Could it be ‘the one’? It was. I’d found John Rechy’s City of Night.

Even though the story concerned the life of a male hustler—something I had neither the courage nor looks to even think about—it, at least, touched on some themes and characters with which I could identify. It was the first ‘gay book’ I’d ever read. I subsequently read two more of Rechy’s works: Numbers and The Sexual Outlaw. And even though the scenes Rechy described were not really ‘my’ scenes, the author was always special to me.

Several months ago, I ran across a biography of Rechy entitled: Outlaw: The Lives and Careers of John Rechy, by Charles Casillo (Advocate Books, 2002). I snatched it up, of course, and read it in a couple of days.

I learned that Rechy was a complex fellow whose family had fled Mexico and relocated in El Paso, Texas, Rechy’s hometown. I was surprised to find out that English was Rechy’s second language (after Spanish). I also learned from the photographs in the book that Rechy was a truly physically beautiful child and is still a remarkably handsome adult now in his early 70’s. He was also an intellectual, going to college and pursuing his writing.

In 1952, at the age of twenty-one, he took off for New York and worked the streets as a male hustler there, and also in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and New Orleans. So, a lot of City of Night is autobiographical. In addition, the male hustler in City of Night never admitted he was gay, preferring to think of himself as straight and tough. This was the case for Rechy. It took him years to admit he was gay.

City of Night, along with his other novels, made such a splash that he ended up teaching at Occidental College and UCLA. Thus, Rechy had another career as a college professor and he is, apparently, a superb teacher.

But he continued to engage in male hustling until the early 1980s. You do the math. He was around fifty when he finally gave it up. How is that possible? Let me tell you, there is a picture of John Rechy in the book taken in 1998 (he was 67 years old) in a muscle shirt and jeans and, in my opinion, he was still one sexy stud. And I’m most happy to say that he did find love—and a partner—in the early 1980s in a man thirty years his junior. And they are still together.

I was delighted to discover this biography and it inspired me to go back and reread City of Night. It was nearly forty years between readings, a seventeen-year-old versus a fifty-six year old. And I was pleased that I did. This time, rather than being titillated by the scenes and characters he described, I was dazzled by the beauty of his use of language.

I highly recommend both the biography and any of Rechy’s novels to you.

Gale Smoke teaches Sociology 387: Gay & Lesbian Lifestyles at UAA. You can reach Gale at glsma@alaska.net.

Identity, Inc.

Founded to improve self and community awareness, understanding, and acceptance of the expression of individual sexual identities, in order to promote positive attitudes and healthy ways of living for all people within the State of Alaska.

Identity, Inc. sponsors a statewide Helpline, the NorthView, PrideFest, Living Out Loud, as well as the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Anchorage, 2110 E. Northern Lights Blvd., Suite 103 (929-GLBT).

www.identityinc.org

VOLUNTEER!

If you would like to volunteer with Identity, Inc. please call the Helpline @ 258-4777 or the Gay and Lesbian Community Center @ 929-4582 for more information.
THE THOUSAND RAINS
OF SOUTHEAST
ALASKA

When I touch the face of the mountain and
breathe its breath,
Then I know why the wind pushes up the
moist air for a thousand rains.
From the white mist of the cloud a million
droplets fall like tears of joy.
Each one carries a message from the ocean
saying,
"Here I am again,
As I have been many times before."

Tina Altstatt

("As nightfall does not come at once, neither
does oppression. In both instances, there is a
twilight when everything remains seemingly
unchanged. And it is in such twilight that we all
must be most aware of change in the air,
however slight, lest we become unwitting victims
of the darkness."

—William O. Douglas, Justice of the U.S.
Supreme Court

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Straight & Christian?

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Read All About It! Here's where you can find the northVIEW.
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Out and about with the Women of Olivia!

by Dee Gould

Several years of dreaming about taking an all-lesbian cruise came true this spring.

Olivia Cruises & Resorts charters a Holland America ship to come to Alaska every two years. For the past six years I've buzzed around those marvelous women as they flooded Anchorage for a few days or a few hours.

One year I attended a reception at Mayn's. Another year I walked my dog (proudly sporting a rainbow collar) around the reception/dance at the Egan Center, but was afraid to go in. One year I did go in, and what a journey it has been since then!

The dream of taking an Olivia Cruise, and visiting Alaska towns I'd not seen, became an incredible reality when I boarded the Veendam in Vancouver, B.C. on a damp day in May of 2003.

The party began immediately. I found myself retreating to the very top deck to get good photos of the hundreds of women gathered on the deck for the farewell. I got great shots, met a couple from Maryland who may well prove to be lifelong friends, and I had my first (but certainly not last) overwhelming feeling of belonging, empowerment and sheer joy.

They came from everywhere: the east coast, Florida, Minnesota, Arizona, California, Hawaii, and from as far away as Australia. Nurses, therapists, stock clerks, police officers, forklift drivers, sex therapists. Twelve hundred women, mostly lesbian, and virtually all of us smiling! There were women in their early twenties, middle-aged women at the height of their careers, and retired women relaxing and enjoying the fruits of their labor. As the week rapidly went by, I had the great good fortune to meet and get to know many of these beautiful people.

I was blessed with the perfect cabin mate. We hit it off immediately and got along perfectly sharing our small (but adequate) space. We hope to bunk together again on another cruise.

I heard stories of romantic meetings, long-term relationships, commitment ceremonies, and of course of heartbreaking breakups, deaths and the rest of the events that make life real. Food and conversation, smiles, dances, walks, activities and flirting abounded while the incredible scenery (and luckily good weather) of the famed Inside Passage of Alaska rolled by.

An 86 year-old retired officer from the NYPD told me she had been in a closeted relationship with the same woman for 53 years. Her partner died in 1985, and she lives alone now in a retirement community where she’s not ‘out.’ She adored the cruise and I saw her everywhere having fun and insisting the whole time that she “won’t date anyone under 70.” She was amazing and a big piece in the incredible tapestry that was woven for me that week. When she called me to report that she had arrived home safe and sound, and to keep in email touch with her, her only comment was: “Yikes, can you believe ALL THOSE WOMEN?”

The ship was wonderful, of course. The crew must have had diversity sensitivity training as they were so accommodating and friendly (most were from the Philippines and Indonesia). I was so comfortable that on one early morning walk I took off my shoes, socks, Levis and shirt and happily went swimming in my underwear. It for sure would never have occurred to me on any other type of cruise. We even began referring to ‘straight’ cruises as ‘abnormal cruises.’

Vancouver, B.C, Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway, Sitka and Seward were our stops, with a morning mooring at Hubbard Glacier. The real trip, it turns out for me, was meeting so many women. I have increased my friendship base, gathered a little group to communicate with by email and even plan a trip to visit a terrific new friend!

I’m happy to report that the women of Olivia were welcomed warmly everywhere we went, and many of us hope to meet one another again on another ‘normal’ cruise!

Check out the website: www.olivia.com.
The Olivia Cruise departs Vancouver, B.C. for a bi-annual voyage to Alaska.

(photograph by Dee Gould)

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THREE LOVERS, TWO DEATHS, ONE MOURNER

It was early 1981. AIDS was known as GRID and I was known to be naive. I was exploring my sexuality one week at a time. I was approached by an attractive newspaper reporter interviewing new lawyers who just passed the State Bar Exam. I did not think rejection was an embarrassment. I was not afraid to ask. It made all the difference in my world.

The three-day Bar Exam felt like gladiator work with six months of preparation. It ruined my long-time heterosexual engagement due to financial stress and lack of attention to my fiancée. She decided it was not worth living with an attorney no matter how Successful I may become. She fled to the arms of her high school sweetheart, a handsome guy she never outgrew.

Karl, the newspaper reporter, was gay. I wasn’t surprised. There was something seductive and sensual about his manner that lured us together. And so I took the risk to ask him to see a movie that evening.

Yes, it was that easy to get a date in 1981. Today, the boiler plate response would be, “Let me think about it.” Then it is conveniently forgotten. There were no obligations and no expectations. It was mutual admiration and romance at first sight. Karl and I became best friends and lovers for the entire summer of 1981.

Time does take its toll. We fell out of love, but remained loyal friends and mentors for each other. I had no regrets. In 1983, AIDS spread quietly under cloak of political censorship when silence equaled death.

There was no education to get the accurate information out to the ignorant public at risk. How lucky we would be if AIDS was given the same media exposure that SARS enjoys today. Instead of going home alone when the bars closed, I went straight to the nearest bathhouse or private sex club. That was the protocol when I was coming out. The fun began when the bars closed.

Then came Jerry into my life. He was hired by an insurance company that shared the building with my office. I could sense when he walked into the room without having to turn around. I had a sixth sense. I told my coworker my secret attraction for the male gender. The startling response was my coworker’s disclosure of his addiction to cocaine and Quaaludes while litigating files extraordinarily well.

Time waits for nobody. I made my move by sending an anonymous letter to Jerry’s attention at work. It contained an elaborated scheme and invitation if he was of the same sexual orientation as I. My biggest fear was a sexual harassment allegation, and not a viral infection. It was the best decision I ever made.

Jerry and I met, then fell instantly and deeply in love. He called me “precious” and I called him my “jewel in the crown.” We were inseparable, but gave each other room to breathe, to grow individually and expand our horizons. He always said this relationship was going to last forever. But trained with an analytical mind, distilled with logic and practicality, I was dumbfounded by the word “forever.” I told Jerry coolly and scientifically, “nothing lasts forever.” He stared at me in disbelief.

It was soon 1986. The space shuttle Challenger exploded and so did my world. Jerry came down with a hacking, dry cough. It quickly progressed to tuberculosis. Quickly, I learned the meaning of love: to be supportive in sickness and in the face of death. I did not run away from adversity and challenges.

Within four months, Jerry was stricken with encephalitis, fell into episodes of delirium and finally into a coma. I sat at his hospital bedside the entire summer of 1986 in a self-imposed prison. I bathed him, I fed him and I kept watch. Then I was told to leave the hospital because Jerry would not die while I was present. I raised my right fist skyward invoking epithets.

A week later, Jerry returned safely to the arms of his maker. He was now free without misery or pain.

There was no time for grief. The family of vultures swooped down to snatch our belongings. It felt like barbarians at the gate, forcing their way into our home to pillage and plunder material things that were mementos of our union. I had no strength to resist. The most valuable prize was safely hidden inside my cerebrum: the memory of our happy and enduring partnership.
No sooner than these peasants departed, in late 1986, my friend Karl came down with symptoms of dementia. He had a loss of memory and an irritable disposition. I could see his handsome face change and his body waste away before my eyes. He did not seem to be the same person that I knew and loved as my mentor. One evening I was told that to his world Karl no longer belonged.

Now I know what “forever” means. The memory of Jerry and Karl shall never depart from me.

Frequently, the echoes of their words, their deeds and mannerisms bring smiles and comfort to me. For the ones who were with us, my heart carries on even though to this world they do not belong.

In my mind I shall treasure the memories they gave. They were gifts that can never be taken away; the things they said, the love they shared in their own special way. I miss them on this mortal plane, but for me it is selfish to wish they remain. My own human hurting will eventually wane.

For the friends and lovers who were with us now eternally gains. I would do it all over again. I have no regrets.

Plato dedicates this to Jerry and Karl, and to all our friends and lovers who have suffered and passed before us.
The bitch
(from the Web)

When I stand up for myself and my beliefs, they call me a bitch.
When I stand up for those I love, they call me a bitch.
When I speak my mind, think my own thoughts, or do things my own way, they call me a bitch.

Being a bitch means raising my children to be strong people who have a solid sense of personal and social responsibility, who are not afraid to stand up for what they believe in, and who love and respect themselves for the beautiful beings they are.

Being a bitch means that I am free to be the wonderful creature that I am, with all my own intricacies, contradictions, quirks and beauty. Being a bitch means I won’t compromise what’s in my heart. It means I live my life MY way. It means I won’t allow anyone to step on me.

When I refuse to tolerate injustice and speak up against it, I am defined as a bitch.

The same thing happens when I take time for myself instead of being everyone’s maid, or when I act a little selfish.

I am proud to be a bitch! It means I have the courage and strength to allow myself to be who I truly am and won’t become anyone else’s idea of what they think I “should” be. I am outspoken, opinionated, and determined. By God, I want what I want, and there is nothing wrong with that!

So try to stomp on me, try to douse my inner flame, try to squash every ounce of beauty I hold within me. You won’t succeed.

And if that makes me a bitch, so be it. I embrace the title and am proud to bear it.

The braid

I’ll never forget the first time I saw her hair unbound. It was still wet from her shower. I couldn’t resist reaching out to touch the long dark ringlets that bounced off her back as she walked by. She looked away and I realized I had trespassed.

Moments later, after she’d put her things down and dug out a hair band, she asked if I would braid her hair. I’d seen her hair in the single long braid she wore down her back most days, and I was strangely happy that she asked me to braid it.

She sat down and I stood behind her. We laughed awkwardly as I worked at untangling the long damp strands of jet-black hair, a gift from her Puerto Rican parents. I’d never touched hair so wild, so full of life, so obstinate—and so much like her, as I would later learn.

I finally separated her hair into three large sections. Then I began to weave the sections into a flat, tight braid. I worked my way down the length of the sections, one over the other, slowly, methodically. I savored the feel of her damp hair on my hands, the wiry curls with a mind of their own. I took my time, oblivious to others in the room. I felt curiously happy to stand close to her and perform this small task. I loved the smell of her freshly shampooed hair and the way small tendrils curled against the smooth brown skin of her neck.

We would eventually become lovers and I would braid her hair many times over the course of our mercurial three-year relationship. Yet, this was the time I remember most, the first time I buried my hands in her hair and felt its strength, tenacity, and waywardness.

I made the most of those precious moments. I slowly and gently pulled, twisted, smoothed and coaxed her long dark curls, inch by inch, into the perfect braid. Eventually, I reached the tip of the braid. I secured it safely in the band.

And then I let go.
Help us keep this section current!

Please send new and updated listings to:
northview@identityinc.org

Adam and Steve
Social group for young gay, bi, and questioning men. Weekly activities and fun community events, many taking place at the GLCCA. Also offers the monthly M-group, a fun workshop on sex and dating. Run by a Core Group (meets every first and third Tuesday at the GLCCA at 7 PM) who plan all activities. Come meet new young queer men in a safe and supportive environment. Call the infoline at 907-263-2081 or visit the website at: www.adamanndsteve.org.

Alaska AIDS Assistance Association (Four A’s)
Provides supportive services to persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families and in the elimination of HIV infection and its stigma. They have many services that cater specifically to women. 1057 W. Fireweed Ln, Ste 102, 907-263-2050. Statewide: 1-800-478-AIDS.

Alaska Gay/Lesbian Association
(UAF student organization)
c/o Student Activities Box 4/Wood Center/University of Alaska, Fairbanks 99775. 907-474-1136 fbagla@uaf.edu, Web site http://www.uaf.edu/agla.

Alaskans for Civil Rights (ACR)
A locally organized and operated statewide political organization dedicated to obtaining full civil rights for lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender, polyamorous, and intersexual people in all aspects of personal and public life. 907-566-ACR1 AlaskansforCivilRights@yahoo.com.

Alcoholics Anonymous: Gay, Joyous, & Free
AA group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, & transgendered individuals and their allies. Open non-smoking meeting Mondays 7 PM to 8 PM at the Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Anchorage (GLCCA).

Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
3201 Turnagain St. GLBT-friendly liberal religious church, where people of all beliefs are welcome. Information line: 907-248-0715.

Anchorage Women’s Political Caucus
Open to all women, meets 7pm at Elmer’s Restaurant, New Seward and Fireweed, on the first Wednesday of each month.

Arctic Bears
First Friday of every month. Fairbanks 907-479-8680.

Aquarian Foundation
Services Wednesday 8pm and Sunday 11am, 8500 LaViento Drive, Anchorage. 907-349-9955

Breakeven Productions
Has been bringing up lesbian performers from around the country since 1987. For more information about upcoming events or Breakeven productions, call 277-5630 or akpups@alaska.net.

Breast and Cervical Health Check
A cancer screening service offered by the Alaska Department of Health & Social Services, Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. Funding for this program is provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Free breast and cervical cancer screening is available to women ages 18 - 64, who have no insurance or whose insurance does not cover these services. Anchorage 269-8069, statewide toll-free number is 1-800-410-6266.

Celebration of Change
A performance of women artists for women. If you would like to perform or volunteer, please call 566-3783 or celebrationofchange@email.com for more information.

Committee for Equality
Box 34202, Juneau, AK 99803 or e-mail bsara@gci.net.

Fairbanks Gay Youth Group
Leave message on voice mail for more info: 457-3524.
The Family (UAA Student Club)
The Family hosts discussion groups, potlucks, and various other social, political, and awareness activities. You DO NOT have to be a UAA student to attend and many that do attend UAA are non-traditional students. 907-360-0340 or 907-830-4497.

Frontrunners/Walkers
Meets May thru Oct. at Westchester Lagoon. All levels of runners/walkers/bladers and dogs welcome! Tues. at 6:30 PM and Sat. at 10 AM. Call Peter: 907-337-3682.
Email: anchorage@fronrunners@hotmail.com
Web: www.fronrunners.org/clubs/anchorage

Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Anchorage (GLCCA)
The Home of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgendered Individuals and Our Allies. The GLCCA is a safe space for GLBTAs to meet, hang out, hold or attend a meeting or group, or use the resource library or computers. Located at 2110 East Northern Lights Blvd., Suite 103 (between the Burger Cache & Don Jose's). The GLCCA is staffed by trained volunteers 7 days a week. Current hours of operation are Mon thru Fri - 3 PM to 9 PM, Sat - 12 PM to 9 PM, Sun - 12 PM to 6 PM.
You can reach the GLCCA at 907-929-GLBT.
E-mail: glcca@identityinc.org

Gay and Lesbian Helpline
Sponsored by Identity, Inc., this information and referral line is answered daily from 6:00pm to 11:00pm. The HelpLine is staffed by volunteers and provides information and referrals to businesses, professionals and services providers that are supportive of the goals and objectives of Identity, Inc. If you would like to be a part of this service or if you need information, please call 907-258-4777 or toll free (in Alaska) 1-888-901-9876.

GLSEN
(Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network)
Anchorage: Membership is confidential. We welcome educators and non-educator allies who are interested in the problems of GLBT youth in our public schools. We meet For more information call Fred, 907-562-7161 or fhillman@alaska.net.
Fairbanks: for more information contact Lisa Slayton or Jeff Walters c/o GLSEN Fairbanks P.O. Box 85315 Fairbanks, AK 99708 907-457-2787.

Identity, Inc.
Founded to improve self and community awareness, understanding, and acceptance of the expression of individual sexual identities, in order to promote positive attitudes and healthy ways of living for all people within the State of Alaska. Identity sponsors a statewide Helpline, the NorthView, Pridefest, Living Out Loud and more. For more information about these events contact the GLCCA, 2110 E. Northern Lights Blvd, Suite 103, 929-GLBT. You can also call the Helpline at 258-4777, or visit the Identity web page at www.identityinc.org.

Imperial Court of All Alaska (ICOAA)
The ICOAA sponsors the Eklutna picnic Memorial Day weekend, the Fur Rondy parade float for the GLBT community, Pride on the Parkstrip, Coronation Labor Day weekend and numerous other events.
Contact Information: PO Box 104032 Anchorage, AK 99510-4032.  http://www.icoaa.org

IMRU2
The social group for GLBT youth meets Wednesdays from 5:30 to 7:00 PM at the GLCCA. The group is for GLBT youth, ages 13 to 18. We eat, chat, watch videos, plan events and do lots of laughing. There aren't many ways for people this age to meet each other, so join us and tell your friends. Call 566-IMRU (4678) if you have questions, and one of us will call you back.

Interior AIDS Association (IAA) Fairbanks
Offers medical and dental program assistance, "buddies" (volunteers who help HIV & People Living With AIDS), meal delivery food supplement program, a lending library and counseling support. If you are interested in volunteering or need assistance, please call the IAA at 907-452-2422.

The Last Frontier Men's Club
Social club for the Levi/leather/bear community. Meets the 2nd Sunday of each month for a brief business meeting & potluck social. 6:00 PM, at Mad Myrna's, 530 E. 5th Avenue. In addition, we hold monthly "Dinner Night Out" and several campouts throughout the summer which are open to all. Check our website for complete information and list of community events. TLFMC, P.O. Box 202054, Anchorage, AK. 99502-2054. 907-338-3862.
E-mail: info@tlfmc.com.
clubs, groups, organizations

Metropolitan Community Church of Anchorage (MCC)
MCC is a predominately gay/lesbian/bi/transgendered Christian church where ALL people are welcome to worship a loving and compassionate God. MCC meets every Sunday at 2:00 PM at Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembroke (East of 24th Ave. and Boniface Parkway). For a map showing the location and a calendar of current events, check out our website at www.geocities.com/mccanchorage or contact us by phone at 258-5266 or email us at mccanchorage@yahoo.com.

Northern Exposure Bowling League
Bowlers of all genders meet Sunday afternoon at 4:00 PM, Park Lanes, Anchorage. Please call to confirm time and venue. 907-561-8744 or milt@alaska.net.

OLOC (Old Lesbians Organizing for Change)
Travel 50
Two groups for women over 50.
rosebethlevno@hotmail.com or 907-868-2662.

OPAL
A social organization open to all Lesbians. OPAL sponsors different events throughout the year and occasional potlucks.
Anne at 345-3818 or opal@glci.net.

Out North Contemporary Art House
Cutting edge art, theatre, film, educational programs and more. 1325 Primrose Anchorage AK 99508. Call voice mail: 279-8099, Box office: 279-8200, fax: 279-8100. or email@outnorth.org. Online calendar: www.outnorth.org.

PFLAG of Anchorage (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays)
Holds its monthly meeting at 7:00pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship AUUF, 3201 Turnagain Street.
Call 907-566-1813 for a recorded message.

PFLAG of Fairbanks
PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons and their families and friends through support, education and advocacy. For more information, call 45-PFLAG for meetings and events in Fairbanks.

PFLAG of Sitka
(Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays)
Meets the second and fourth Sunday evenings at 7 PM in the UU Fellowship Hall, 408 Marine, Sitka.
Mail: P.O. Box 6515, Sitka, Alaska.
Phone: 907-747-3674
E-mail: sitkapflag@yahoo.com

PrideFest Planning Committee
This committee plans the annual Gay Pride festivities. Meetings start in November. Members are hoping for representation from as many local groups as possible. We are planning on attracting more corporate funding, having a parade, a larger vendor display, bringing up more entertainment, and planning more Pride Week activities. For more information call GLCCA at 929-GLBT or email prideonthepark@yahoo.com.

RAW (Radical Arts for Women)
A non-profit group which supports and promotes women in the arts. Grant funding available for artistic endeavors.
907-566-3783. RAW@admmail.net.

Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA)
12-Step program meets Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.
Call 907-566-1133 for meeting times and places.

Shanti of Juneau
Offers support services to persons with HIV/AIDS and their loved ones, as well as offering comprehensive AIDS prevention and educational information. Offices: 222 Seward, Suite 200; Mail P.O. Box 22655, Juneau, Alaska 99802-2655. 907-465-5665. 1-800-478-AIDS (2437).

Southeast Alaska Gay & Lesbian Alliance (SEAGLA)
A non-profit volunteer organization that provides a support network for lesbian and gay people in Southeast Alaska.
Publishes monthly newsletter, Perspective. P.O. Box 21542, Juneau, AK 99802-1452. Phone: 907-586-GAYS.

S.T.O.P. AIDS PROJECT
Center for Drug Problems Provides education and outreach specific to injection drug users and their sexual partners regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. Free anonymous HIV testing is provided on a walk-in basis, Mondays and Wednesdays from 1-4 PM. Anchorage: 907-278-5019.
Support Group (Soldotna)
A group of people with HIV or AIDS or families or friends. Call Jan at 262-2589.

Transgender Social / Support Group
This group meets weekly at the GLCCA. Please call the GLCCA at 929-4528 for more information.

Women's Music Fest
Happens the weekend of July 4th. Contact Gay Wolfenberger: 907-258-0312.

Women's Ultimate Frisbee
Gathers Sunday mornings 10:30 AM on the west end of the parkstrip. Interested frisbee-headers should contact Jen or Karen at 907-278-5179 for more info.
E-mail: Jenkout@aol.com.

Publications

Alaska Women Speak
A publication by Alaskan women on topics for Alaskan women. They can be reached at 907-689-7922.

The Anchorage Press
This is an alternative weekly paper that is not focused on the GLBT community but is friendly. They have a large personals section and can be contacted at 907-561-7737.

The Perspective
A newsletter published for the Southeast Alaskan. News and events can be found in this publication. For more information contact SEAGLA at P.O. Box 21542, Juneau, Alaska, AK, 99802-1452 or phone 907-586-GAYS.

The Pink Ink
A newsletter published in Fairbanks for the Fairbanks GLBT community. For more information contact Interior Newsletter c/o IAA, P.O. Box 71248, Fairbanks, AK., 99707. Phone 907-452-4222 or e-mail pinkink@alaska.com

E-mail lists

FairbanksPride
http://www.egroups.com/subscribe/fairbankspride
A mailing list for information concerning Fairbanks & Interior Alaska’s GLBT community.

AnchoragePride
http://www.egroups.com/subscribe/anchoragepride
A mailing list for information concerning Anchorage & Southcentral Alaska’s GLBT community.

Alaska Gay Discussion
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/alaskagaydiscussion
This is an opportunity to discuss gay issues relevant to Alaska, and provides a calendar of events. Participation available via website and/or e-mail. For more info contact Michael Haase at michaelh2001@aol.com.

Alaska GLBT News
A state-wide e-mail notification service distributing news and information about upcoming events of interest to the Alaska GLBT community.
To receive these notices or to submit an item for distribution: alaskaglbtnews@yahoo.com.

Grrlz List
A mailing list for the Women’s Community. Event announcements, inquiries, issue discussion, and relevant topics of concern for women. Delivered every Thursday. GrrlzList@hotmail.com

National and Political GLBT News
Landmark case decisions and other newsworthy announcements from national organizations.
To be placed on this list send an e-mail to: bsara@geci.net
ongoing events

MONDAYS

(A) Gay, Joyous & Free, 7pm, The GLCCA

TUESDAYS

(A) SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous) 8pm, 566-1133
(A) PFLAG 3rd Tuesday, 7-9 pm, AUUF
(A) Frontrunners/Walkers: Meets at Westchester Lagoon May - October, 6:30 pm 337-3683 or anchoragefronrunners@hotmail.com
(F) GLSEN, 5 pm, FEA on S. Cushman, every 3rd Tuesday

WEDNESDAYS

(J) Social at Summit Lounge, after work.
(J) “Women’s Prerogative,” KTOO-FM, Wednesdays, 9-10 pm.
(F) Dames on the Dial, KSUA-FM 91.5, 10 pm – Midnight.
(A) GLSEN, second Wednesday, 7pm, at the GLCCA
(A) IMRU2: every Wednesday, 5:30 - 7 PM, at the GLCCA, for more info leave message: 907-566-IMRU

THURSDAYS

(A) SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous), 5:30 pm, Unitarian Church, 566-1133.
(A) Friends and Family Support Group, 6:30 pm, call 4As, 263-2050.

FRIDAYS

(A) Lunch, 4As, noon-1 pm, 1057 W. Fireweed Ln, Ste. 102, Lori 263-2050. Everyone invited: HIV+, volunteers and friends.
(A) Friday Night Divas Show at Mad Myrna's, 9pm
(F) Free anonymous HIV testing, 3:30-5:30 pm, IAA offices. 710 3rd Avenue.

FRIDAYS, cont’d.

(F) Outlooks, KSUA-FM 91.5, 5:30 pm – 7 pm.
(F) Socializing and Dancing at Club G, mixed crowd, 9 pm- 3:30 am, 150 Farmer’s Loop.
(F) Arctic Bears meet first Friday, call 479-8680
(J) Juneau Pride Chorus, 5:30-7:30 pm, Resurrection Lutheran Church, Marsha at 789-6167 for info.

SATURDAYS

(A) SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous), 12 noon. Unitarian Church, 566-1133.
(A) Frontrunners/Walkers: Meets at Westchester Lagoon May through October, 10 am, 337-3683 or anchoragefronrunners@hotmail.com
(J) PFLAG First Saturday of each month, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm in the Mendenhall Library conference room.
(F) Socializing and Dancing at Club G, mixed crowd, 9 pm – 3:30 am, 150 Farmer’s Loop.

SUNDAYS

(A) Metropolitan Community Church Services, 2pm Sunday at Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembroke
(A) White Lotus Center for Shin Buddhism, 11 am Sunday 123 E 11th Ave., 258-1851
(F) PFLAG, third Sunday, 4-5:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Hall, 4448 Pike’s Landing Road
(A) Northern Exposure bowling league, Park Lanes, 4:00 pm 561-8744 for more information