The Imperial Court of All Alaska generously donated funds to cover mailing expenses for this issue of NorthVIEW.
Identity Seeks Design God/Goddess

Identity is looking for a bodacious designer to lay out NORTHVIEW.

Desktop publishing experience a must (we have PageMaker 7 at the GLCCA).
Monthly volunteer commitment: 10-15 hours, depending on your skill level. Great resume builder!

Contact northview@identityinc.org.

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 note at northview@identityinc.org.
A Community on the Go

One of the first trips my partner, Danny, and I made together as a couple was to Portland, Oregon, for the first chapter of his gender reassignment surgery. We liked Portland so much that we went back a year later just for fun.

While the Pacific Northwest may not seem like the average Alaskan’s ideal vacation spot, we like its lush green landscapes, great restaurants and shopping, and progressive attitudes. Most of our friends, however, choose sunnier destinations for their getaways.

This month several NORTHVIEW writers share travel tips about their favorite vacation destinations as we spotlight gay travel from the Alaskan GLBTA point of view. One writer also shares an experience she calls “Not-so-Gay Travel,” reminding us that sometimes the friendly skies are not so friendly after all.

One thing is for certain: we’re a community on the go, and the travel industry would do well to sit up and take notice.

GLBT travelers are choosy about how we spend our travel dollars, and for good reason. I once read that same-sex couples sometimes pull down the bedcovers of the undisturbed second bed in their hotel room. I imagine this practice is largely a thing of the past.

Today, the message to hotels, B&B’s and resorts is: if you want our business, then roll out the rainbow carpet. And, indeed, the proliferation of ads in national gay and lesbian magazines is proof that the travel industry actively courts the GLBT dollar in a number of innovative ways.

So whether your destination is a surgeon’s office in Portland or a sunny beach in the Caribbean, have a great trip and a safe return to the Great Land.

Warmly,
Teresa McPherson
Editor
Home is where the heart is
For real estate services with heart, call Rona.

Rona Florio
Homes Unlimited • 279-8877 • rona@ak.net
Specializing in your happiness...

Staff Members and Volunteers

NORTHVIEW continues to seek volunteers to contribute articles, poetry, reviews, photographs, and artwork.

Editor
Teresa McPherson
northview@identityinc.org

Layout/design
Vacant

Administrative assistant
Dan Carter
dcarter@identityinc.org

Advertising

Identity Board
Victor Carlson
Rev. Guy Johnson
Teresa McPherson
Susannah Morgan
Mary Parker
Chris Pearson
Phyllis Rhodes
Jeff Ridder
Trevor Storrs
Scott Turner
Diana Wolfe

Contributors
Roger Crandall
Chuck Hart
MaryLee Hayes
R.D. Levno
Raj C. Patro
Gene Rachinsky
Gale Smoke
Sylvia Short
Ron Swartz
Tim Weiss
Diana Wolfe

PFLAG/Anchorage proudly presents

A national travelling exhibit featuring 60 photographs with text of openly gay and lesbian Americans who are serving or have served at nearly every level of elected office in the United States.

This exhibit was created by East High graduate Ronald Lee Schlitter and will be shown at the following locations:

3/28: Unitarian Universalist
4/1-14: 6 area high schools
4/16: 7pm reception at Loussac Library
4/15-30: Loussac Library
(3rd floor, east elevator wall)

"Out & Elected in the USA"

Exhibit sponsors:
Imperial Court of Alaska, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, The Last Frontier Men's Club, Mad Myrna's, Full Circle & individual donors
Not-so-Gay Travel

Travel, like some drugs, illicit or not, can be habit-forming, and the travel habit formed in me a long time ago. My late husband shared this addiction, and we had many wonderful trips to various spots in this world of ours. Now I travel alone, and the pleasure is waning...

New Year's Eve of 2004, as has become a family custom, was spent by my immediate clan in our time-shares in Kauai, Hawaii. After a perfectly idyllic vacation, I was set to return to Anchorage on Jan. 4. That was fine, and I got as far as Oahu when things started to go amiss.

The 200+ passengers of our Northwest flight, scheduled to leave Oahu at 1:40 p.m., learned that our flight would be delayed due to a faulty aeroplane part that was being supplanted by a new one from "mainland." The new departure time of 9:30 p.m. was later changed to 11:30 p.m. When we were thus assembled, ready to board for takeoff, we were advised that the part had arrived, but it would take a full three hours before testing was finished.

Before the groaning ceased, we were reassured that chartered buses would pick us up in 30 minutes and that we had reservations at the Sheraton Waikiki and two meals, all on Northwest. We were also given free round-trip tickets! Considerably reassured, we flocked to the buses and enjoyed a delightful additional stay.

However, my relief was short-lived. I had carefully spent all my money except $17—enough to get me by taxi from the Anchorage airport to home. I had also used up all my checks. And my carefully checked luggage had gone its merry, mysterious way and, in the end, arrived home four days before I did! So I was left with my trusty credit card and lots of hope.

We were picked up at the Sheraton the next day and our plane, with replaced, tested and working part, safely transported us on to Seattle. When we landed, however, it was apparent at once that something was wrong. The plane taxied at 5 miles per hour over a miserably slushy, icy, snowy route, and the airport was a teeming mass of humanity and luggage.

Seattle, noted for its rain, is apparently helpless in snow. Nearly every SeaTac flight had been cancelled. At 4:30 a.m. on Jan. 5, I was directed to a several-blocks-long line to the Alaska Airlines counter. There I was informed that the only flight available to me would leave on Jan. 9.

"Misery loves company, and company I had. Stories other would-be travelers told me made mine pale in comparison."

Fellow travelers, but inevitably, they were paired or with other parties.

It was a tiring, discouraging, frustrating experience, and I'd much, much rather be Gay!

Sylvia Short came to Alaska in 1967. A practicing attorney, she helped found PFLAG and the Alaska chapter of GLSEN. She remains an active supporter of all things GLBT.
Montreal: Expect the Unexpected

The largest francophone city after Paris, Montreal combines Old World charm and eclectic architecture with North American modernity and comfort. The essence of the city lies within the downtown core at the southern foothill of Mount Royal.

Montreal has one of the largest GBLTQ villages on this continent nestled along East St. Catherine Street from St. Denis to Rue Papineau. Surprises await you in the historic Old Town district and the Latin Quarter that pulsates along Rue St. Denis between Sherbrooke and St. Catherine. To keep your orientation intact, just remember that Boul. St. Laurent divides Montreal’s streets east from west.

Excellent restaurants are open past midnight and last call at most bars is 3 a.m. There is also a dynamic after-hours scene for insomniacs. Nearly 100 queer establishments exist downtown, including the city’s oldest straight and gay bathhouse (Colonial Baths), which opened in 1914.

Beware, the GBLTQ pride events are traditionally held during the first week of August. You can also sample the plethora of saunas and spas that serve food and alcohol. If gambling is your vice, then visit the 24-hour Casino Montreal on the island of Notre-Dame. It was the Quebec Pavilion during the 1967 World’s Fair. Your best way to navigate through Montreal’s heart is by foot, or use the convenient subway (Metro) and bus system to reduce road rage and parking issues.

Montreal is astonishingly tolerant of alternative lifestyles and ethnicity. It is socially progressive with the legalization of lesbian and gay civil unions in June 2002, a year before the Court of Appeals in British Columbia and Ontario extended equal protection of marriage to same-sex couples.

If food were a religion, then Montreal would be its temple. The cuisine is innovative par excellence. The best food is found at any entry along the two main streets, St. Laurent and St. Denis. Leave your nutmeg grater and assorted cooking utensils at home and venture out to feast. Montreal’s bohemian neighborhoods and gastronomic jewels are sprinkled along these two streets.

The best museums are the Fine Arts Museum, the McChord Museum, which houses the history of Montreal in photography, the Contemporary Arts Museum at Metro Place des Arts, and the historic Chateau Ramezey Museum (1705), which served as New France’s Governor’s residence. The cuisine, the arts and Old Montreal make it a marvelous place for a getaway after exchanging vows of commitment.

A word to the wise: Montreal has a reputation of always facing its capricious and ever-present enemy, the weather. The joie de vivre of Montreal transcends its cold winters with fierce winds and the uncomfortable summer humidity or rain borne of the city’s island position in the St. Lawrence River. You learn not to fight it, but play with it and seek refuge within the 18 miles of pedestrian catacombs that crisscross beneath the downtown area and connect various stores or subway stations.

Where else would one find a shopping promenade beneath a 19th Century Anglican church connecting the 20th Century Paris style Metro with a skyscraper? So, be prepared with the appropriate clothing for the season’s fickle winds.

Information:
- Infotouriste Centre: 1255 Peel St. on the southwest corner of St. Catherine, 877-bonjour; [www.tourism-montreal.org]
- Village Tourist Information Center, operated by Quebec’s gay chamber of commerce, is at 1260 Rue St. Catherine East [www.infogayvillage.com].
- Best Gay Store: Priape, Montreal’s emporium for gay and lesbian merchandise, is located at 1311 St. Catherine East near the Beaudry Metro station.

Naughty Nightlife:
Select your poison from the vivacious bars and clubs along St. Catherine East. From Metro Beaudry, walk eastward towards the Jacques Cartier Bridge. The women-only bar is Pub Magnolia.

Notable saunas are The Oasis at 1390 St. Catherine East and Sauna Millenium at 1166 St. Catherine East.

Plato was a bona fide inhabitant of Montreal during his impressionable years. Subsequently, Plato’s parents dragged him across the border into the USofA after he stated, “I love it here, I’m queer, get used to it.”
Business Travel with a Twist

Most of my travel around the U.S. has been for business. But that doesn’t mean you can’t have some fun along the way.

I sit down in a gay bar on Bourbon Street in New Orleans and begin to drink a beer. An attractive guy sits down and puts his hand on my leg. “Where are you from?” he asks, as he rubs my leg.

“The frozen wastelands of Alaska,” I respond. “Where are you from and what do you do?”

“I live near here and am a pool boy.”

Scanning his wonderful body, I can tell that is probably true.

“What do you do in Alaska?” he asks.

“I shoot moose and dip them in chocolate.”

“So that’s how they make chocolate mousse!” he says, as his eyes get wide. Ignorance is so cute sometimes. On second thought, maybe he’s not that ignorant after all. He seems to be doing a lot more smuggling than before. Gee, New Orleans is friendly.

“Stay right were you are while I go to the restroom,” he says.

I wait five minutes. Ten minutes. I suddenly reach down to my wallet. Damn! I’ve been pickpocketed. Oh, well. The joke’s on him. I’d read that New Orleans is the pickpocket capital of the U.S. so I had emptied everything out of my wallet, left only a few dollars in it and put my ID, credit cards, and rest of my cash in my shirt pocket instead. If it is Mardi Gras, especially make sure to do this.

On to Washington, D.C. Lots of sleazy bars there, but a few that are geared for government workers and higher-class clientele.

I walk out of my hotel room during a terrific thunderstorm. Lighting strikes the street in front of me and rain pours down, rushing down the street six inches high. The cute doorman is dodging lightning strikes that threaten to hit his umbrella.

“Alaska!” he says. “I’ve only been at the hotel two days and seem to have acquired a reputation for myself. They all either call me “Alaska” or have actually found out my name, even though I never told them. Some are very, very friendly (smile).

“ Aren’t you going to go out with an umbrella?”

“ Why?” I respond. “I’ll look better when I show up at the Green Lantern completely soaked.” He gives me a wink and says “Have fun!” as he jumps away from another bolt of lightning.

Let me see. Utah is boring, at least as far as the social scene. I didn’t have the nerve to let anyone know I was gay there.

Las Vegas was…er… I think I’d better skip what I did in Las Vegas, or they might change the rating of this newsletter.

Portland has a lot of very friendly businessmen with way too much time of their hands. Hmm… better skip that city, too!

Not all my social activities while traveling involve sex. I’ve made a hobby of going to the poorer sections of cities, finding beggars and vagabonds and paying them to tell me their stories. I’ve written down a number of wonderful stories. Like the man in New Orleans who was sneaking on the boxcars and riding the trains between California and Florida to work in the fruit picking industry. He said what scared him the most were skinheads who raided the boxcars and beat to death any Blacks they found. He said the hobos with him always had at least one who would stay awake and listen for them.

Another man in D.C. told me about getting trapped in a drugstore when robbers sprayed the front of the store with gasoline and lit it, trapping everyone inside. Despite being turned into a beggar due to the disabilities he sustained, he offered me helpful advice and comforting words.

Someday I may publish the stories I’ve collected. Sometimes the fun you have while traveling comes in many unusual forms.
Alive...and Well

Since I can remember, I wanted to do a lot of things. I wanted to be a dentist, I wanted to be an actor, I wanted to be a pilot, a teacher, and an architect and do many other jobs I never did. I never wanted to be gay and I never wanted to be sick. Those choices were made for me. Well, I’ll admit I helped.

I tested HIV positive in December of 1996. Life has turned upside down since then. First, shock, tears, parents freaking out... But after awhile, everything settled and life went on as usual, only better in a way. I started looking at life from a different angle, appreciating it so much that I couldn’t let a day, an hour or a minute go by unnoticed or unfulfilled. Suddenly it was like a second breath, when you want to do and accomplish so much that no one, no one can stop you from doing it.

Days became longer and more productive than ever. Working, studying, writing, drawing, reading—reading everything. I got a dog for a companion. That was one of the best things I’ve ever done. No one will understand you and love you more than he will.

I can’t stand clutter. I like to breathe freely, and only have things I need and use. The rest gets thrown out or given away. It is important to live simply, without clutter and stuff you don’t need. Get rid of it and don’t regret it. After awhile, you’ll notice how easy and simple your life can be without it.

Look back at your life and think what your personal Seven Wonders are. It’s quite interesting what you can come up with. My family was the first thing that came to mind when I asked myself that question. My dear family, I love and cherish.

The second would be friends. It takes years to make good friends who stay with you for life. They are always there if you need to talk, they are there in your moments of joy and sorrow, if you need help, support, or want to share ideas and thoughts. It is very sad when you don’t have real friends; life is empty without them.

The third one would be life itself. It is indeed one of the most beautiful things in the world. Life and everything living: people, plants, animals, everything around us. Everything has something special in it, some meaning, some purpose, some message for another, some delight.

It may surprise one, but I would say that my job (I am a tailor) would be one of my personal Seven Wonders. My work gives me an opportunity to be creative and helpful at the same time.

An education is also an important tool and one of the Wonders. Knowledge is very powerful. Studying or reading gives me great satisfaction, a feeling of accomplishment, achievement and purpose in life.

The ability to express yourself is one of the amazing and fascinating qualities of people and one of my personal Seven Wonders as well. You can express your feelings by writing, drawing, singing, and photography. You are capturing the moment you want to remember for many years to come, and taking an opportunity to combine your knowledge and feelings together to reveal yourself to others.

Love. That would be the last personal Wonder. A feeling you can’t live without. We must love people around us, things we do, places we go. Love is a masterpiece of life. It keeps us alive. However, it is very fragile and we have to be careful with it.

Gene Rachinsky (right) and partner, Kurt, at The Last Frontier Men’s Club Annual Black & Blue Ball.
Thinking about your Wonders makes you appreciate and value people and things in your life, and brings back good memories and good inspiration. Love your life; remember every moment of it, good or bad, because life is beautiful.

You have to make the best out of your life, for people to remember you by, for you to be proud of. Once I came across a phrase that really struck me: “There is no better time than right now to be happy. Happiness is a journey, not a destination. So... Work like you don’t need money, love like you’ve never been hurt, and dance like no one’s watching.”

Why don’t we? Let’s stop being bored and boring. Put a few dollars away in your 401k or IRA. Yes, for retirement, be optimistic and you might surprise yourself. Have fun, enjoy life. Sometimes you might choose to forget about being sick, about your problems and sorrows. Don’t lose your cool, be nice, don’t leave home without a sense of humor.

And don’t make that portrait of yourself because your relatives asked you to. They are going to see you alive and well. Have them count on that. Because you are going to live.

Gene Rachinsky was born in Ukraine and came to the U.S. in 1993. He migrated north to Alaska in 2003, where he lives with partner, Kurt, and English setter, Malcolm. He speaks five languages, and plans to study Arabic.

Life Spirit Counseling
Individuals, Couples, and Small Groups
Grief counseling
Spiritual health and healing for all people
... with special focus for Lesbians, Gay Men, Bi-oriented, Trans- and Inter-gender people, and HIV/AIDS
770-7731
Jan R. Richardson, MDiv., M.A.
650 W. International Airport Road, Suite 204
Anchorage AK 99518-1121

Is your IRA an underachiever?
We offer a free service that can closely estimate what your IRA could be worth at retirement. If it’s not achieving the results you want, I’ll show you all of our available IRA choices.

Call or stop by today.
Wallace Thomas, CLU, ChFC, CFP
2110 E. Northern Lights, Suite 4
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone: (907) 278-2787
www.edwardjones.com
Member SIPC
EdwardJones
Serving Individual Investors Since 1871

Read all about it! Here’s where you can find the NorthVIEW.

The Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association
1057 W. Fireweed Lane, Suite 102, 263-2050
Borders Books & Music
1100 E. Dimond Blvd., 344-4099
The Gay & Lesbian Community Center
2110 E. Northern Lights Blvd., Suite 103, 929-GLBT

Mad Myrna’s
530 E. 5th Ave., 276-9762
Metro Music & Book Store
530 E. Benson Blvd., 288-8774
The Raven
708 E. 4th Ave., 276-9672
We Have a Vision

Identity has a vision that I would like to share with you: “Identity, Inc. envisions a world where all people are free to express and be proud of their sexual and gender identities.”

In the last year or so, we’ve seen an amazing number of changes in our national view of sexual and gender identities. People are getting married in San Francisco and in Portland, Oregon. I just learned that Mariah and Joann, who owned the Women’s Bookstore here in Anchorage for many years, were married in Portland. My partner, Wendy, and I are beginning to think about it ourselves. We had said we would wait until it became legal in Alaska, but now we might go to Portland and just do it.

Laws are being repealed. The U.S. Supreme Court struck down all the sodomy laws still on the books. It seems we have come a long way on the road to freedom, but we still have a long way to go before we, as GLBT individuals, can experience the same equality and freedom that heterosexual people do.

But that doesn’t mean we can’t have a vision of where we want to be. Without dreams and visions, nothing would happen. So, granted, it seems to be a long shot to say we have a vision where people are free to express their sexual and gender identities, but we need to aim high.

The word “identities” is important. This is not a choice for us, but part of our identity. Our sexual and gender identities are at the core of who we are and how we relate to the world around us. The choice of calling our organization “Identity” says exactly that—we are who we are because that is the way we are made. I know there are those who disagree, but I feel for myself, even though I was a late bloomer, that my sexuality as a Lesbian woman is part of my identity, just as I am a woman, Caucasian, aged 54, and so on.

Being proud of something means we can be openly proud of who we are. Pride in our culture has a bum rap. “Pride comes before a fall” is not the kind of pride I mean. Pride is a positive thing, a way of being in the world. I can be proud of my accomplishments and I can be proud of who I am.

Identity’s vision fuels our mission: “Identity, Inc. builds the infrastructure for a strong GLBT community in Alaska.” We struggled over the word “infrastructure.” But I think it’s a good word. We at Identity build a structure that is inclusive through our six core programs: the Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Anchorage, NorthVIEW newsmagazine, the Pride Conference, PrideFest in June, the Helpline, and the Living Out Loud Youth Program. It is in these programs that we provide opportunities for individuals to grow in their sexual and gender identities.

Identity is an all-volunteer organization, except for our part-time administrative assistant. We need volunteers. The GLCCA and NorthVIEW is produced by volunteers, the Pride Conference is presented by volunteers, the Helpline runs through the faithfulness of volunteers, NorthVIEW is produced by volunteers, and the Living Out Loud Youth Program uses volunteer presenters.

PrideFest is gearing up and needs volunteers to step forward to help put on our biggest event of the year. NorthVIEW needs a designer to commit to helping us out with our newsmagazine (our editor is currently doing both). The Helpline is unanswered some evenings because we don’t have enough volunteers. And the GLCCA can always use more volunteers.

Can you find it within yourself to pick a program and volunteer? If so, call the GLCCA and ask that a message be given to Diana that you are interested, and I will contact you.

Let’s all pull together to make a strong GLBTA community happen in Anchorage, Alaska.

Diana Wolfe is co-chair of Identity, and has served on the board for three years. She is a writer and student. She and her partner of eleven years, Wendy, share a house with two dogs and four cats.
Anything But Straight

Although I have dismissed the idea of changing one's sexual orientation for years, and regard “ex-gay” ministries and “reparative therapy” as both laughable and cruel, it is helpful to have these charlatan enterprises exposed in a well-researched and well-documented book.

The title of this learned monograph is *Anything But Straight* (Harrington Park Press, 2003) and the author is Wayne R. Besen. The Director of Communications for the Human Rights Campaign since 1998, Mr. Besen not only digs into historical documents, but does undercover investigations of ex-gay ministries, reparative therapy and the Christian Right. The most surprising thing I learned was that these three elements are not necessarily in harmony when it comes to gays and how they should be “helped.”

Besen is highly critical of all three, but does have some sympathy for many of the folks who want to change – become ex-gays – and the leaders of various ex-gay ministries. Many of the former grew up in conservative religious traditions and are extremely troubled about being gay. Seeking a way out, various ex-gay organizations seem to offer them and their parents hope.

Besen says most of the leaders of these ministries are sincere – and also sincerely wrong. Despite their claims of certain success rates (the percentages widely differ between ministries), they do not have scientific evidence that would hold up in professional journals, but instead rely on testimonials from ex-gays. But if one carefully examines these testimonials, one finds few “cures.” Most simply say they have less temptation and are not having same-sex sex or, at least, not as often. In other words, these are not conversions, but degrees of celibacy.

Few of the cured are happy. In fact, most of the testimonials indicate bleak and tortured lives. It is also interesting that the vast majority of these “successes” do not hold ordinary jobs and families, but are employed as paid, ex-gay leaders of the ministries.

Reparative therapy is psychological and psychiatric treatment that aims to change gays to straights. It is ironic that it was given its life when the American Psychiatric Association finally removed homosexuality as a mental illness. To placate the conservatives, the association left a loophole: a new category called sexual orientation disturbance. This allowed conservative psychiatrists to take on patients with this disturbance, and there was big money to be made in it.

I was also surprised to learn about the different re-inventions reparative therapy has gone through, from traditional psychoanalytic technique to New Age approaches.

Besen reserves most of his wrath for the Christian Right, as do some of the leaders of ex-gay ministries and practitioners of reparative therapy. Evangelical Christian leaders have, at times, aligned themselves with both, but many of the ex-gay ministers and therapists have felt used. What it comes down to is that the Christian Right, despite what it claims, is far more hateful toward gays and seeks to make political changes, but not really help gays.

Unfortunately, even though Besen does an excellent job exposing the games that all three of the above have played with gay peoples’ lives, the author does not believe that we’ve seen the end of any of them. Consequently, we must continue to be vigilant in tracking the activities of all of them.
Goodbye, Skip

I met a vivid young anthropologist in 1953. She was building dioramas for the Denver Museum of Natural History where I was visiting. We had wonderful times talking while she worked. But I was a short-timer in Colorado and we parted casually when my husband was transferred to the East Coast.

Forty years later we met again. We were Golden Threads pen pals. I was still working as a rural school administrator in Alaska, and she had retired (as an eminent curator at that museum, as I learned later). It had gradually dawned on me that this was that blonde young woman, my friend of long ago.

So I flew to Denver. She took me on a tour of her prestigious old work place, and I was amazed at how they rolled out the red carpet for this modest woman.

"I have a surprise for you," she said before we entered the Alaska installation. A blast of icy air came out of the wall at our feet! She told of how she had to ship crates of stones in from the Arctic coast when they could find no suitable ones along the Colorado riverbeds.

She was finally happily "out" in Denver and her pickup camper sported lesbian stickers. We had some delightful trips and visits during which she introduced me to many great people and places. I ate delicious dandelions from her backyard. She couldn't be too long away from home because of Denver Women's Chorus rehearsals.

I had hoped to see Skip on my next visit to Colorado. But, sadly, she died last fall. She was an exemplary person, and we loved her.

Dee Dee Jonrowe: An Iditarod Favorite

On March 6 in downtown Anchorage, the streets were packed for the ceremonial start of the Iditarod. This year 87 mushers began the 1,000+ mile sled dog race to Nome.

Several women mushers were among those who brave this challenge through Alaska's wilderness. A favorite, Dee Dee Jonrowe, was among them. She raced her 20th Iditarod last year, just three weeks after completing chemotherapy for breast cancer. She was inducted into the Iditarod Hall of Fame in 2003, and has won several awards. Her best finish was 2nd place, in 1993 and 1998.

Dee Dee is admired and loved by many. Her kindness toward her dogs, family, friends, fans and strangers is evident.

My friend Teresa and I watched Dee Dee get ready for the Iditarod this year, #39 to depart under the starting gate. She had just come down with a sore throat, and admitted to not feeling well. She apologized for not being able to mingle as usual with the crowd that surrounded her and her team. Nevertheless, again and again she posed for pictures and gave autographs.

As she stepped onto the runners of her sled, all ready to depart, a woman from the crowd suddenly called out, asking Dee Dee if she'd pose for a picture with her sons. It surprised me to see Dee Dee patiently step off the sled runners and walk back one time more to the crowd to pose for a photo with the young boys. Her consideration brought a smile to the boys' faces in light of such an ill-timed request, and showed me again why she is loved by so many.

I'm grateful to be a witness to this woman who exhibits kindness during challenge or adversity. She inspires me to be more than I am.

MaryLee Hayes is a writer, outdoor enthusiast, part-time nurse and long-time Alaskan.

Iditarod musher Dee Dee Jonrowe with young fans just before the start of the 2004 Iditarod Sled Dog Race. (Photo by MaryLee Hayes)
Mental Health for the Gay Bipolar Dad

I submitted my last “Dad’s Corner” as I was literally on my way to Providence Hospital’s Mental Health Unit. I wrote about why I was checking in. Here is what has happened since.

One week did a world of good. Okay, it got the ball rolling. You know how thoughts just come to you sometimes? Not intentional thoughts, such as “How do I work this remote?” I’m talking about the thoughts that come to you when you’re finished unclogging a toilet, such as, “A walk on the bike trail sounds good.”

Some of the thoughts that come to me when I’m in a major depression deal with suicide. It starts gradually, but over time, if I can’t pull out of the depression, the thoughts increase in frequency, complexity, and urgency. It’s like brainwashing, but the thoughts just get murkier. I was to the point of having these murky suicidal thoughts for several minutes at a time, and several times per hour.

In the hospital, I was safe. The rooms were free of objects I could use to harm myself. I could rest; the staff did the cooking, dishes, and laundry. I didn’t have to plan my day. In the hospital, I had a routine. I didn’t worry about my daughter, Becca. She was with a friend and then with Mom and Dad, who drove up from Homer.

A medical doctor gave me a quick check-up the first day. I saw a psychiatrist every day I was there. There was one-on-one therapy available 24/7 on demand or by appointment. There were 5-7 group therapy sessions everyday.

There were no televisions. I could think at my own pace and concentrate on what I was telling myself. The prescriptions helped enormously, but figuring out what triggers negative thoughts and learning non-pharmaceutical ways to combat bipolar disorder were just as important.

I think talking about bipolar disorder treatment de-mystifies and hopefully de-stigmatizes mental health facilities. I am not proud of my bipolar disorder, but I am proud of the way I work at keeping it in check.

My employer graciously, and I mean that sincerely, gave me the time I needed off with only two days notice. Though shorthanded, they let me take an extra week off to take care of appointments and other errands.

I have been meeting weekly with my psychiatrist for nearly two months since my release to get my medications working well. It is a slow process of adding or subtracting one medication at a time. Making more changes at one time makes it difficult to see where a benefit or negative side effect might be coming from. The frustratingly slow progress is still progress and I am proud of it.

My kids are happy that I am “more here” for them.

I recently visited a friend who was in treatment at the Providence Mental Health Unit and was able to see the setup there from the other side. The staff welcomed others and me while still being protective of the patients. My bag was checked to make sure I was not carrying anything a patient could use for self-harm. Funny thing: I ran into X there. Oops! Did I just “out” her? Turned out X was my lesbian friend’s roommate. A helpful, friendly staff ended that quickly and quietly.

On another note, recently the Borders’ GLBT reading group decided to meet in a private home. I will advertise in this column if we resume meeting at Borders. It’s a fun group, and I look forward to trying a change of venue. Borders welcomes any reading group with free coffee, and 20% discounts on reading group selections.

Look for a scandalous story next month on the rebellion of my oldest daughter at an ex-gay rally on her fundamentalist university’s campus. We’re talking the “R” word! It is about to happen as I am writing this.

Chuck Hart is a gay single father of three, and an Alaskan for 40 years. Comments are welcome at chart@gei.net.

Alaska GLBT News

Alaska GLBT News is an e-mail broadcasting system providing information about Gay & Lesbian activities throughout Alaska.

We distribute messages concerning upcoming events, news, your business, rental opportunities, personal items for sale or sought, special announcements, etc.

For more information about receiving notices and/or sending your message, please contact AlaskaGLBTNews@yahoo.com

April 2004
Imperial Court of All Alaska 2004 Fur Rondy Parade Float

Once again, the ICOAA parade float wowed Fur Rondy fans. The Court, with Duchess Daphne DoAll at microphone (of course!), entertained the crowd during the 2004 Fur Rondy Parade Feb. 21.

(photoby Ron Swartz)

The Last Frontier Men's Club 11th Annual Black & Blue Ball

Contest winners from TLFMC Black & Blue Ball: Tim Slade, Mr. Bear Alaska; Kurt Hezel, Mr. Alaska Leather; Gene Rachinsky, Mr. Alaska Levi; and Delmar Neely, Alaska Bear Cub

(photoby Roger Crandy)
Identity Programs

Winter & Spring  Living Out Loud Youth Program
October  Pride Conference
Daily  Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Anchorage (GLCCA), Ste. 103, 2110 East Northern Lights Boulevard, Anchorage. 907-929-4528
Nightly  Helpline for GLBT information and referrals (6 PM to 11 PM). 907-258-4777 or 888-901-9876
Monthly  NORTHVIEW newsmagazine

Anchorage Events

Mon  AA: Gay, Joyous, and Free; 7 PM; the GLCCA
Tues  PFLAG; 7 PM, third Thursday (except November & December); Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembroke St.; 566-1813
SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous); 8 PM; 566-1133
Line dance lessons/dancing; 7-9 PM, Mad Myme's
Wed  IMRU2; 5:30 - 7 PM, first and third Wednesdays; the GLCCA; 566-IMRU, leave message for more information
GLSEN; 7 PM, second Wednesday; the GLCCA
LGBT Reading Group; 7 PM, third Wednesday; Border's Cafe; 334-4099 (Chuck, Mon - Wed), chart@goi.net.
"Karaoke Night" hosted by "K" Entertainment; 8:30 PM; Mad Myme's
Thu  SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous): 5:30 PM; Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship; 566-1133
Friends and Family Support Group; 6:30 PM; 263-2050
Country Dance Night; lessons 7-8 PM, open dancing 8-10 PM, Mad Myme's
"Karaoke Night" hosted by "K" Entertainment; 10 PM; Mad Myme's
Fri  Lunch: everyone invited (HIV+, volunteers, and friends); 12 noon - 1 PM; Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association (4A's), Ste. 102, 1057 W. Fireweed Ln.; 263-2050 (Lori)
"Friday Night Divas Show"; 9 PM; Mad Myme's
Sat  SLAA (Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous); 12 noon; Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship; 566-1133
Sun  Buddhist Morning Service; 11 AM; White Lotus Center for Shin Buddhism, 123 E. 11th Avenue.; 268-1851
Center for Spiritual Practices & Education Worship Service; 11 AM; 8050 Old Seward Highway; 522-0940 (Rev. Guy Johnson)
Metropolitan Community Church Service; 2 PM; Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembroke St.
Northern Exposure Bowling League; 4 PM; Park Lanes, 4350 Ames Ave.; 561-8744
Sunday Dinner; 5 - 8 PM; Mad Myme's; 276-9762 (Jim)

Fairbanks Events

Tue  GLSEN; 5 PM, third Tuesday; Fairbanks Education Association on S. Cushman St.
Wed  "Dames on the Dial"; 10 PM - midnight; KSUA-FM 91.5
Fri  Free anonymous HIV testing; 3:30 - 5:30 PM; Interior AIDS Association: 710 Third Ave.
"Outlooks"; 5:30 - 7 PM; KSUA-FM 91.5
Socializing and dancing; 9 PM - 3:30 AM; Club G (mix crowd), 150 Farmer's Loop
Arctic Bears; first Friday; 907-479-8680
Sat  Socializing and dancing; 9 PM - 3:30 AM; Club G (mix crowd), 150 Farmer's Loop
Sun  PFLAG; 4 - 5:30 PM, third Sunday; Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 4448 Pike's Landing Road

Juneau Events

Wed  Social gathering; afterward: Summit Lounge
"Women's Prerogative"; 9 -10 PM; KTOO-FM
Fri  Juneau Pride Chorus; 5:30 - 7:30 PM; Resurrection Lutheran Church; 907-769-6167 (Marsha)
Sat  PFLAG; 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM, first Saturday; Mendenhall Library Conference Room

PLEASE HELP KEEP THIS SECTION CURRENT!
SEND NEW AND UPDATED LISTINGS TO NORTHVIEW@IDENTITYINC.ORG

APRIL 2004
OVERVIEW: RESOURCES

PLEASE HELP KEEP THIS SECTION CURRENT!
SEND NEW/UPDATED LISTINGS TO
NORTHVIEW@IDENTITYINC.ORG

ORGANIZATIONS

Adam and Steve, a 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 Four A’s at 7 PM) who plan all activities. Come meet new young queer men in a safe and supportive environment. 907-263-2081. www.adamandsteve.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. Many services cater specifically to women. 1057 W. Fireweed Ln., Ste 102, Anchorage. 907-263-2081 (Anchorage), 800-478-AIDS (statewide).

Alaska Civil Liberties Union, a membership-based non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to preserving and defending the guarantees of individual liberty found in the Alaska Constitution and the U.S. Bill of Rights through litigation, education and legislative advocacy. We are the Alaska state affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). P.O. Box 201844, Anchorage, AK 99520-1844. Phone: (907) 276-2258, Fax: (907) 258-0288, Email: aclu@alaska.net.

Alaska Gay/Lesbian Association (a UAF student organization). c/o Student Activities Box 4, Wood Center, University of Alaska, Fairbanks 99775. 907-474-1136. rgbk@saint.ua.edu www.uaf.edu/agi

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 intersex people in all aspects of personal and public life. 907-566-ACR1. AlaskansforCivilRights@yahoo.com

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

Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, GLBT-friendly liberal religious church, where people of all beliefs are welcome. 3201 12th Ave. S., Anchorage. 907-248-0715.

Anchorage Women’s Political Caucus. Open to all women. 7 PM, first Wednesday. Elmer’s Restaurant: New Seward and Fireweed.

Arctic Bears. First Friday. Fairbanks. 907-479-8680.

Aquarian Foundation services. 8 PM Wednesdays, 11 AM Sundays. 3500 LaViente Drive, Anchorage. 907-349-9955.

Breakeven Productions has been bringing up LGBTQ performers from around the country since 1987. 907-277-5630 for upcoming events or productions. akqpup@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. 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. Call the WERCA of Anchorage for eligibility guidelines, enrollment, and group presentation opportunities: 907-644-0620 (Anchorage), 1-800-610-2666 (statewide).

Celebration of Change, a performance of women artists for women. 907-566-3783 (for performance and volunteer information). celebrationofchange@gmail.com

Committee for Equality. P.O. Box 34202, Juneau, AK 99803. bsears@ghi.net

Fairbanks Gay Youth Group. 907-457-3524 (leave message for more information).

The Family (a UAA Student Club), hosts discussion groups, potlucks, and various other social, political, and awareness activities. You DO NOT have to be a UAA student to attend. Many that do attend UAA are non-traditional students. www.uaa.alaska.edu/council/thefamily

Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Anchorage (GLCCA). The Home of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered Individuals and Our Allies. The GLCCA is a safe space to meet, hang out, hold or attend a meeting, or use the resource library or computers. Staffed by trained volunteers 7 days a week. 3 - 9 PM Mondays through Fridays, 12 - 6 PM Saturdays and Sundays. 2110 E. Northern Lights Blvd., Ste. 103 (between the Burger Cache & Don Jose’s). 907-929-GLBT; glccal@identityinc.org.

Gay & Lesbian HelpLine, an information and referral line sponsored by Identity, Inc. The HelpLine is staffed by volunteers and provides information and referrals to businesses, professionals, and service providers supportive of the goals and objectives of Identity, Inc. 6 - 11 PM daily. If you need information or would like to be a part of this service, please call 907-258-4777 (Anchorage), 888-901-4876 (statewide).

GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network). Membership is confidential. We welcome educators and non-educators who are interested in the problems of GLBT youth in our public schools. Anchorage 907-562-7161 (Fred) hillman@alaska.net, Fairbanks Lisa Slayton or Jeff Walters c/o GLSEN, PO Box 85315, Fairbanks, AK 99708. 907-457-2787.

Identity, Inc., a nonprofit Alaska corporation concerned with issues of sexual and gender identity. Identity envisions a world where all are free to express and be proud of their sexual and gender identities. The mission is to build the infrastructure for a strong GLBT community in Alaska. Programs include the Gay and Lesbian HelpLine, NorthVIEW, PrideFest, Living Out Loud Youth Conference/Seminar, and the Gay & Lesbian Community Center of Anchorage. P.O. Box 200070, Anchorage, AK 99520-0070. 907-929-GLBT. www.identityinc.org.

Imperial Court of All Alaska (ICOA), sponsors the Memorial Day weekend Ektutna picnic, the Fun Roddy parade float for the GLBT community, PrideFest Festival on the Parks, Labor Day weekend Coronation, and numerous other events. PO Box 104032, Anchorage, AK 99510-4032. www.icoaa.org

IMRu2, the social group for GLBT youth, ages 13 to 18. We eat, chat, watch videos, play events, and do lots of laughing. Join us and tell your friends. 5:30 PM Wednesdays at GLCCA. 907-566-IMRu2 (4678) to leave message.

Interior AIDS Association (IAA) Fairbanks offers medical and dental program assistance, “buddies” (volunteers who help HIV & People Living With AIDS), meal delivery and food supplement program, lending library, and counseling support. 907-452-4222 (for assistance or volunteering information).
OVERVIEW: RESOURCES

the Levi/leather/bear community. Brief/business meeting & potluck social at 6 PM second Sundays at Mad Myrna’s, 530 E. 5th Avenue, “Dinner Night Out” and several camps are open to all throughout the summer. Check the website for information and list of community events. TLFM C, PO. Box 202054, Anchorage, AK 99502-2054. 907-339-3862. info@tlfmc.com www.tlfmc.com

Metropolitan Community Church of Anchorage (MCC), a predominately gay/lesbian/bi/transgendered Christian church where ALL are welcome to worship a loving and compassionate God. 2 PM Sundays, Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembroke St. (East of 24th Ave. & Boniface Pkwy.). See website for location map and calendar of current events. 907-256-5266. mccanchorage@yahoo.com www.geocities.com/mccanchorage

Northern Exposure Bowling League for bowlers of all genders. 4 PM Sundays. Please call to confirm time and venue: Park Lanes, 435 N. Amos Avenue, Anchorage. 907-561-8744 milty@alaska.net

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

OPAL, a social organization open to all Lesbians. OPAL sponsors different events throughout the year and occasional potlucks. 907-345-3818 (Annie) opal@geci.net

Out North. Cutting edge art, theatre, film, educational programs, and more. See online calendar: 1325 Primrose St., Anchorage, AK 99508. 907-279-8099 (voicemail), 907-279-8200 (box office), 907-279-8100 (fax). email@outnorth.org www.outnorth.org

PFLAG of Anchorage (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians & Gays). Meetings: 7 PM third Thursday except November & December. Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 2311 Pembroke St. 907-566-1813 (voicemail).

PFLAG of Fairbanks, promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons and their families and friends through support, education and advocacy. 907-45-PFLAG (for meetings and events).


sitkapflag@yahoo.com

PrideFest Steering Committee of Identity, Inc., plans and presents the annual Anchorage Gay Pride Week events in June. Meetings start in September. The committee invites and celebrates corporate and individual sponsors, parade entries, entertainers, volunteers, and more. 907-929-GLBT prideofthepark@yahoo.com

RAW (Radical Arts for Women), a nonprofit group which supports and promotes women in the arts. Grant funding available for artistic endeavors. 907-566-3783. RAW@admain.net.


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. 222 Seward, Ste 200. P.O. Box 22655, Juneau, AK 99802-2265. 907-463-5665, 800-476-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. PO. Box 21542, Juneau, AK 99802-1542. 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. 1-4 PM Mondays and Wednesdays. 907-279-5019 (Anchorage).

Support Group (Soldotna), a group of people with HIV, AIDS, families, or friends. 907-262-2589 (Jan).

Transgender Social/Support Group meets weekly at the GLCCA. 907-929-4528 (for more information).

Women’s Music Fest, July 4th weekend. 907-258-0312 (Gay Wolfengerber).

Women’s Ultimate Frisbee. 10:30 AM Sundays. West end of Delaney Parkstrip. 907-276-5179 (Jen or Karen). Jenkus@al.com

E-MAIL LISTS

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

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: alaskagbtnews@yahoo.com

AnchoragePride, a mailing list for information concerning Anchorage & Southcentral Alaska’s GLBT community. http://groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/anchoragepride

FairbanksPride, a mailing list for information concerning Fairbanks & Interior Alaska’s GLBT community. http://groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/fairbankspride

Griz List, a mailing list for the Women’s Community. Event announcements, inquiries, issue discussion, and relevant topics of concern for women. Delivered every Thursday. GrizList@geci.net

National and Political GLBT News. Landmark case decisions and other news worthy announcements from national organizations. To join, send an e-mail to bsara@geci.net

PUBLICATIONS

Alaska Women Speak, a publication by/for Alaskan women. 907-689-7922.

The Anchorage Press, an alternative weekly paper that is not focused on the GLTB community but is friendly. There is a large personals section. 907-561-7737.

The Perspective, a newsletter published for the Southeast Alaskan. SEAGLA, PO. Box 21542, Juneau, AK 99802-1452. 907-586-GAYS.

The Pink Ink, a newsletter published in Fairbanks for the Fairbanks GLTB community. Interior Newsletter, c/o IAA, PO. Box 71248, Fairbanks, AK 99707. 907-452-4222. pinkink@alaska.com

April 2004

17
"Quality of Life is our Goal"

725 Northway Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508

(800) 262-8055     279-8055     (Fax) 279-8054

Karen Marcey
Registered Pharmacist

Danita Fischbach
Registered Pharmacist

+ Home Infusion Services
+ Oral Prescription Drugs
+ Insurance Billing
+ Free Delivery
+ One-on-one counseling in a confidential environment

A quiet, confidential, knowledgeable environment to get prescription medications and information. Information available on HIV/AIDS medications, clinical trials, parallel tract drug protocols, indigent-patient assistance programs and insurance billing.

QUESTIONS WELCOME.