

CONNECTING THE BLUEGRASS LGBTQ COMMUNITY

LinQ



JULY 2016 . VOL 38 / NO. 7 A Publication of the PCSO

WE ARE

by Christopher R. Bauer, JD, PCSO Board President & Josh Mers, Lexington Fairness Chairman

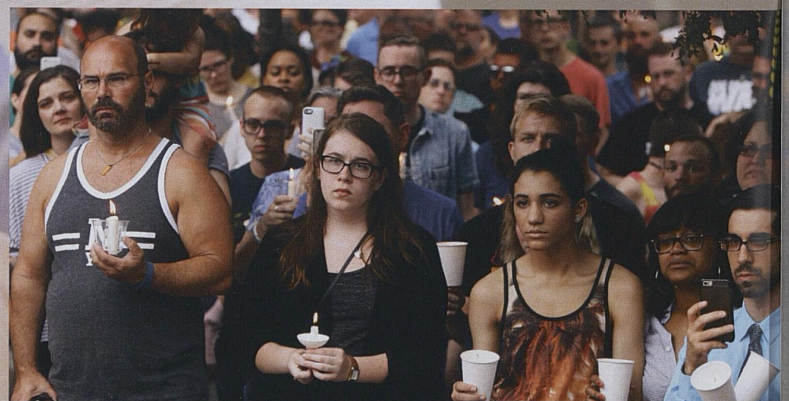
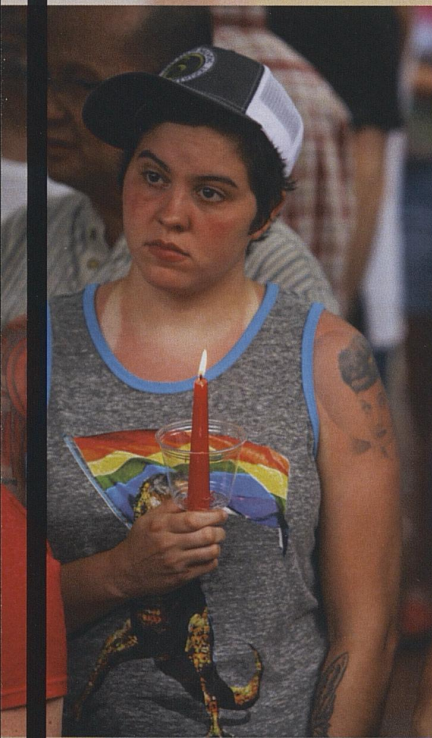


Below: Speakers and attendees at the candlelight vigil for victims of the Orlando shooting held at Triangle Park by Lexington Fairness & the PCSO

Our hearts break for the Orlando LGBTQ+ community and as the names of the victims are read aloud, through this tragedy we can see ourselves. We see our LGBTQ+ community, both in Lexington and beyond, hurting, angry, and scared. For generations, our people have hidden in the shadows, afraid to come out, afraid to make it known who they truly are. The quintessential “gay bar” has served for decades as a beacon, a haven for the LGBTQ+ community to gather, to be themselves, to dance, drink, hold hands, kiss... Things have changed, they have gotten better. LGBTQ+ community centers, fairness ordinances, and events like Pride parades and festivals have grown to add to the places where and when we can be ourselves. People are stepping out from those shadows, coming out of the closet and making their voices heard louder than ever. The tragedy of Orlando gives us pause.

“I love my husband. We met and fell in love in Miami, Florida, started a life together (9+ years now), married, and eventually moved to Lexington. Even in Miami, however, a city known for its vibrant cosmopolitan culture, there are places we would go where we did not dare hold hands or give each other a peck on the cheek and people to whom I would never refer to him as my spouse or my husband. In Lexington, we now live in a rather progressive city in what is an otherwise, let me just say, not so progressive state. However, there are still many pockets in Lexington where being openly out can get you hurt. I’ll go on TV and radio to stand up for our community, but will let go of my husband’s hand if I sense we are in an unfriendly neighborhood or around unfriendly people. This is just how it is for LGBTQ+ people, right? We are constantly coming out and often abstaining from doing so because of fear. The tragedy in Orlando makes such fear more enduring.” ~Chris Bauer

“As many of you, I grew up in rural Kentucky and migrated to Lexington. I fell in love with this city back then and decided to stay. My impression of Lexington was that it was a progressive city that offered me a safe space; a place to be proud of who I am. I’ll admit, it took me several years to truly be comfortable but I feel as if I continued to grow as a person. I found, again like many of you, the sanctuary of our local bar scene. These places allowed me to freely express myself, to find comfort in people that were “like” me. Despite these comfort zones, I was still very much closeted to the “outside world”. I was fearful about folks back home or people that I worked with knowing. As I grew more and more comfortable with myself, I continued to see growth in this city of ours. The community continued to build upon itself. It became more acceptable to celebrate who we are in public. But, were we truly at the same point as our heterosexual friends? Even after the marriage decision last year, I still check my surroundings before publicly being



ORLANDO

photography provided by Matt Goins

who I really am. And let me say, it is even worse for our transgender siblings and people of color within our LGBTQ+ community. We've come a long way, but it is clear that we have so much farther to go so that this city can be a real sanctuary for all of us, no matter our orientation, our identity, or our color." ~Josh Mers

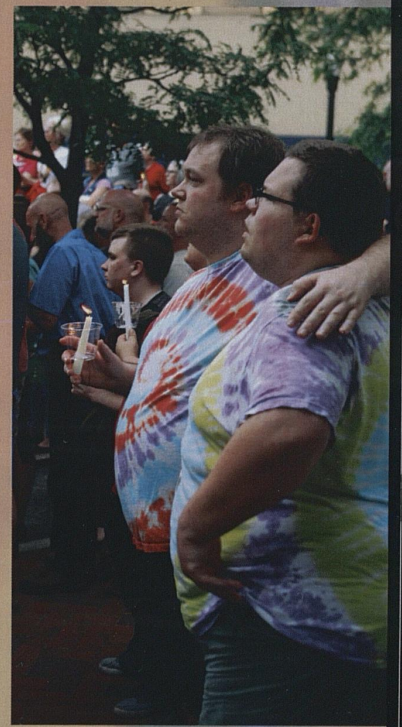
What does it mean to say WE ARE ORLANDO? For some, it's something that they will post on social media just to be trendy. Many others, however, will use this phrase as a way of showing their condolences for the senseless slaughter of so many. But, sadly, as the news cycle rolls on, and Facebook Frames expire, most will put this behind them and chalk it up as more of the same.

For us, the LGBTQ+ community and our allies, it should be a rallying cry! No longer can we be silent, we must unite with communities like Orlando and so many others and continue our struggle to bring people out of their shadows and fear. We have not "won" because of marriage equality; there is so much more for us to accomplish. As a community, we need to rededicate ourselves to the goal of full equality for everyone. This must include our siblings that are transgender and of color. Now, more than ever before, we must come together, we must speak up, and we will be heard! Together, with our allies, we must make it known that we will hold our religious leaders and those elected to represent us accountable for advocating for and legislating hate based on their own ignorance. We must make it known that words do cause harm; they demean us and they tear at the souls of our community, especially those of our LGBTQ+ youth. These words propagate bigotry, foment hate, and create the type of person who shoots up a night club and kills nearly 50 men and women based solely on who they love and how they identify.

Orlando is a turning point. What once was a safe space where we didn't have to look over our shoulders or be afraid to hold hands, is today a little less safe. We worry about going to the club now or going out to Pride. This is what those that seek to hurt us want, to shove us back in the closet and to shut us up. After Orlando, we need to fight back, show our resilience, and get out there and celebrate our diversity! We are Orlando not because we have experienced such a tragedy in our community and not because we know those whose lives were so senselessly taken. We are Orlando because, as an LGBTQ+ community, we know how hard it can be to live our lives openly and fearless of being our true selves. As in Orlando, we must fight back against hatred, remember all of those who have gone before us, and continue the struggle until we realize our true equality. 🏳️‍🌈



Below: Lexington Mayor Jim Gray and attendees at the candlelight vigil for victims of the Orlando shooting held by Lexington Fairness & the PCSO on Sunday, June 12, 2016





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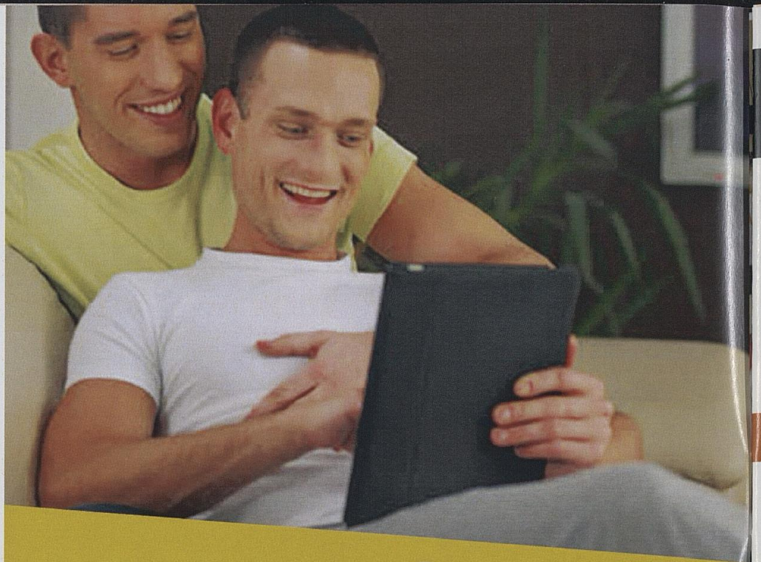
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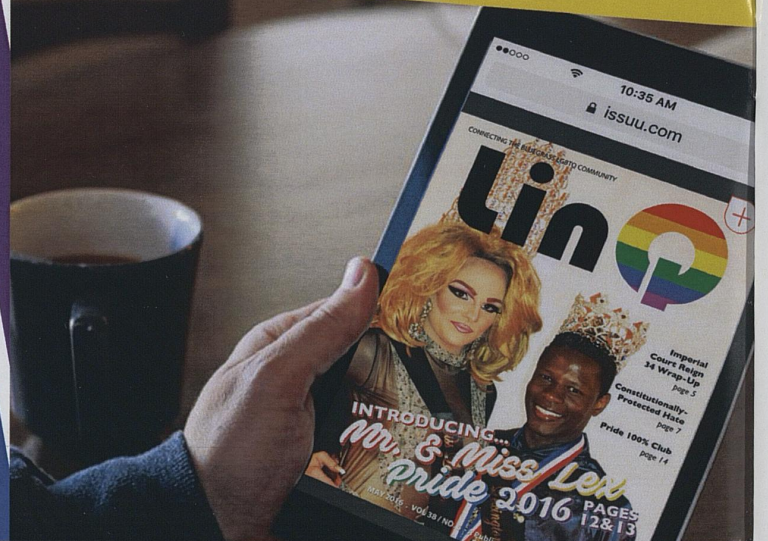
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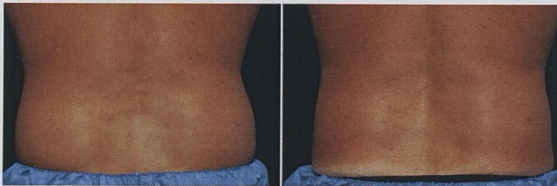
FEATURE STORY

Meet Jeri, Marty, and Crystal. They are a typical American Family that just happens to include a transgender teenager.

12&13

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That's What I'm TALKIN' ABOUT

by Helena Handbasket



What were you expecting me to do? Do you ever ask that question or has someone ever asked that of you? I bet your answer is, No... not really. That is a question that I think we need to ask and need to hear much more often.

How many times has someone thrown a fit because you didn't do something that they expected you to do? On the other side of that, how many times did you expect someone to do something for you and then felt let down because it didn't happen?

It seems to happen all the time and I hear more and more people who feel let down or disappointed or just plain angry because their expectation was not met. But, do we ever stop to ask ourselves if we communicated that expectation to them properly? Communication is crucial in our personal and professional lives. Without communication, relationships and even corporations can break down. By expecting someone to do something for you without making sure that you have properly addressed that expectation

with them is just unfair. To think that someone is so keyed in to my every thought, emotion, and movement and can interpret those in order to make sure my every need is met is just ridiculous. The diva in me of course believes that the world revolves around me and that my every whim should be catered to without me having to vocalize them. What do you think the chances of that happening are?

But what about when what you wanted or needed something done for you and it didn't get done? Was it a realistic expectation? Maybe communicating what you wanted them to do was not a problem. Possibly the expectation wasn't realistic because the person you relied on lacked the ability to perform whatever task you were expecting them to do. You have to be careful not to request a task from someone who cannot perform that task, whether it is because of lack of ability, strength, knowledge or even interest. You just might hear the words "Do it yourself". They might

not want to respond that way but some people would rather throw out a hateful comment before actually admitting that they can't do it. Be fair. Be kind to yourself and others. And, more than that... be thankful to anyone and everyone who takes the time to do anything for you. It could be the love of your life or the waiter that might not be as friendly as you would like but he still serves you, in spite of the bad day he is having. Be thankful and be appreciative.

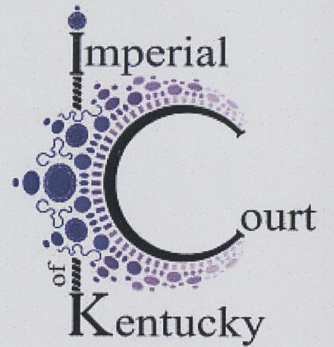
I don't want to set expectations on any of you that are too high so here is all I ask. Read my article each month and start living by my advice. Take every word I say as the absolute gospel and every time you hear that I am performing, come to every show. Never ever miss one of them and make sure to bring at least 10 friends with you each time. (Maybe I should refer back to my earlier comment on realistic expectations, huh?...). My, I still have a lot of work to do. LOL. Until next month ya'll. 🌈

Send comments or suggestions to: HelenaHandbasketKY@gmail.com



IMPERIAL COURT OF KENTUCKY NEWS

by H.M.I.M., Emperor XXXV of the Imperial Court of Kentucky, Russell Drake



The Rainbow Emperor of Dashing Wit and Gay Frivolity

Greetings from Reign 35 of the Imperial Court of Kentucky! On the weekend of June 10-13, our organization was honored to welcome guests from across North America to our signature annual event, "The Imperial Court of Kentucky Presents: The Bourbon Ball," as we celebrated the success of Her Imperial Majesty, Empress 34, Kali Dupree, and Her Most Imperial Majesty, Empress 35, Aurora Cummings and myself who were crowned the 35th Monarchs of the ICK. The weekend was a whirlwind of excitement and jubilation, but we were visited by the specter of tragedy with the events in Orlando on Sunday, June 12. As usual, our community responded with unbridled generosity and compassion, and as the candlelight vigil in Triangle Park concluded, we got to work across the street in the ballroom of the Hilton. Thanks to the help of the leaders of our beneficiaries,

who selflessly stepped up without notice, we raised over \$1,000 for the LGBT Center in Orlando in the space of a few minutes. The Imperial Court of Kentucky plans to continue our support for our brothers and sisters in Florida, and to work tirelessly within our local community making sure the places we gather are friendly, welcoming, and safe in the days and weeks to come.

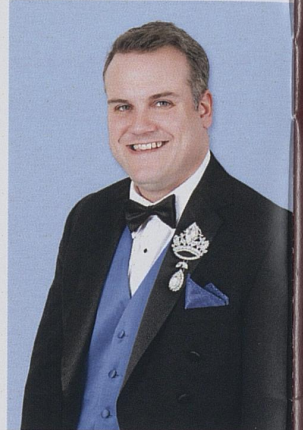
June is always a fun month for the LGBT community, but the spirit of unity and Pride that has erupted across the country in recent days is unprecedented. The founder of the International Court System, Mama José, famously said, "United We Stand, but Divided They Pick Us off One by One". Those words have never seemed so prescient, and as the community of Lexington gears up for our own Pride celebrations, The Imperial Court of Kentucky will present a special Opening Production, emphasizing our progress, shared humanity, and inevitable triumph at the 9th Annual Lexington Fairness Awards on June 24.

The 35th Reign will return the very next day, during the Lexington Pride Festival, and Aurora and I invite everyone to visit our booth to learn ways that you can become involved in the ICK. Everyone sees the fundraising that we do throughout the year, but many may not know that we were founded as a social organization. We plan to put on a variety of events this year, and while drag shows may be our bread and butter, Aurora and I are committed to making sure everyone's

ideas have the opportunity to be nurtured and explored. Our beautiful queens may get to have the sparkles and glitter, but they don't get to have all the fun! We

look forward to picnics and parties in the coming months in addition to our usual fare, and hope to see everyone enjoying our Reign. Further, our Board of Directors will be transitioning from Reign 34 to Reign 35 on Sunday, June 26, and there will be opportunities to serve as a Board Member for those interested in guiding our success from behind the spotlight! We strive for our events to look effortless, but they truly don't happen by magic. It takes hard work and dedication from people like you! Information will be available from Aurora and me at Pride. And don't miss Aurora and our Dowager Empress, Kali Dupree on the stage that day as well!

We are truly thrilled to begin this journey with the support of all of you in our Kentucky family! Please don't ever hesitate to approach me or reach out. In the coming days, our website: Imperialcourtkentucky.org will be updated with contact information for each of us involved with the Court. I'm sincerely interested in the ideas and excitement that each of you can bring to Reign 35. 🌈



LIKE A REED IN THE WIND

by Carol Taylor-Shim, MSW



I have started and stopped this piece for what feels like a thousand times. I would start with a thought and then the sadness would come and wash over me. Sadness for Orlando. Sadness for the Latinx community. Sadness for my Trans and Queer People of Color (TQPOC) community. Sadness for my LGBTQ community. Sadness for our humanity. It was just so heavy that the words wouldn't come. My words were replaced with tears, numbness, and pain. The kind of pain that hits you in your soul so hard it knocks the wind out of you. The pain that comes with an overwhelming sense of loss. Loss of assumed security and absolute safety in our own space. Our own community. More and more the places we knew were safe are being replaced by blood stained walls and floors covered in broken lives and sorrow. Schools, churches, clubs; which for some people IS church, our sanctuaries are no more. We are open and exposed like never before. Every single one of us. We all knew there was the potential for this because we live with it every day. Some of us have accessed privileges in a way that allows us to put that fear in a place that enables us to live as fully as possible.

So here we are. Again. Under attack because we LIVE. Because of

the hate that has been conceived, born, nurtured and reinforced in every possible way in America. You can be anything you want in America, with the exception of: Black, Lesbian, Queer, Trans, Latinx, Bisexual, Muslim, Gay, Brown, Indigenous to this land, Multiracial, living with visible and invisible disabilities, and any expression of gender outside of...you get where this is going. And when your life lands in the middle of multiple figure-eight intersections of marginalization, the pain courses

“I will bend like a reed in the wind.”
- Paul Atreides

through you without relief. It can be all consuming and sometimes we cannot carry it all. So here we are. Again. Having the same debates about gun control that we had when kindergartners were slaughtered. The entire world was in love with a Muslim last week. But this week its business as usual. A couple of weeks ago people were clutching their pearls about who was pissing in the bathroom stall next to them. But now people are praying for those

same lives lost in this senseless act of violence. As if that washes away anything.

What has brought me out of this fog of confusion is the way so many people have reconnected with their humanity. Enough that they can finally see what we've been talking about for decades. I was able to see firsthand what happens when people do that at the memorial held at UK. But it took 100 people being shot and 50 losing their lives for people to see what we all survive on a daily basis, to varying degrees of success. By the time this is printed, who knows how many we will have lost. That says a lot about where we are as human beings.

So we will do what we have always done. We will heal in whatever ways we need to, but we will continue to fight. Moving forward we will work in more intentional and intersectional ways. There is no way to deny the necessity of intersectionality. We will hold space for each other and help each other heal. We will exist in solidarity because we know we belong to each other. We will be better. We will be like the reed in the wind. We will bend, but we will not break.

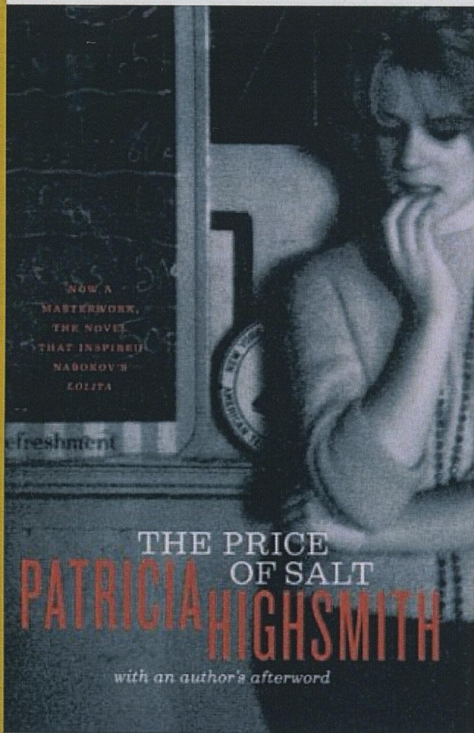
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AROUND THE LIBRARY

reviewed by Megan Lucy

CULTURE



The Price of Salt

written by Patricia Highsmith

The *Price of Salt* by Patricia Highsmith is the novel on which the film, *Carol*, is based. It is set in 1950s New York City and tells the story of two women as they fall in love but are constrained by social mores. Therese is a shop clerk and struggling stage designer. One day she meets the infatuating Carol, an older woman in the midst of a divorce. The two are drawn to each other and take a road trip that changes their lives. The book provides interesting commentary on the challenges that women face at different times in their lives, with Carol giving Therese advice that she wishes she could have given to her younger self. However, the book also has long stretches that are intentionally boring. Highsmith strives to evoke the same sense of anxious tedium embodied in the T.S. Eliot poem, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*. Like Prufrock, Therese and Carol find their lives measured out in coffee spoons and strive to make the revisions that will bring them happiness. *The Price of Salt* is located in the Adult Fiction section of the PCSO Library under A FIC H. 🌈

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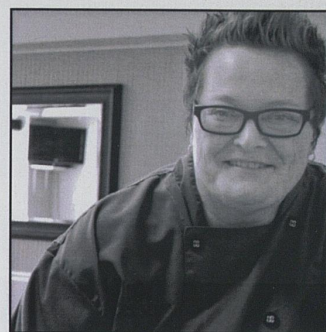
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DISCRIMINATION IS WHAT IS THE TRUE ABOMINATION

by Chef Ranada West-Riley



I, like all of you, am completely appalled and disheartened by the recent tragic mass shooting in Orlando. I know everyone will write about this, and I've found my voice on these issues. This mass shooting could've easily happened in a Lexington night club/bar. Lexington is 4th in the nation gay population per capita; sounds like a perfect target for hate crime to me. It also sounds like the perfect place to come together with a voice of solidarity and compassion, education and peace. This little city that I love could be where we are finally heard.

It's 2016. Why are we being targeted even more in recent years than ever? I believe it's because we are in the spotlight more with gay marriage and equal rights. We are in the media more, on television sitcoms and news shows. We are fighting for transgender rights, especially the right to use the restroom that conforms to one's gender identity. We are making headway, however slowly... we are getting there. It's a hot button topic and we've become a very rudely opinionated nation. Live and let live, as long as it doesn't cause someone to think or feel a little uncomfortable.

Courage. We've known courage our whole lives. This starts with courage, not fear. We have to have the courage

to stand up and promptly call people out on discriminatory words and messages. We cannot patronize discriminatory businesses. We cannot be a part of groups that do not represent our LGBTQ community openly and compassionately. We own a restaurant. We are not a gay restaurant, we are only gay owned and open to everyone. We stand for bringing people together and dispelling fears and hatred. We have suffered a few hate crimes, but we have had far, far, far more positive experiences with incredible people thanking us for teaching them about who the gay community is and what we represent.

We must stop teaching that discrimination in any form, no matter how small, is acceptable. This task will not always be comfortable-far from it-but whenever it is safe to do so, let people know that their words or actions mean something. Do not be an idle passerby. Be an integral part of an ever improving world. It's when we are outside of our comfort zone that we learn more about ourselves and others. This is not an issue of spirituality and religion. This is about core American values and acceptance, this is about humanity, and this is what this country is essentially all about. Freedom! 🏳️‍🌈



AN AMERICAN FAMILY IN TRANSITION

by Tuesday G Meadows

FEATURE



"...like everyone, we just want our kids to be safe, happy, and get their education."
Kim Pearson of TransYouth Family Allies
from her CNN Interview

Jeri, Marty, and Crystal are a typical American family living in the suburbs, navigating their way through life right along with so many other families. Like most teenagers, Crystal goes to high school and wants to find a summer job. Her parents, Jeri and Marty, work very hard to provide the things all of us want for our children: a great life, education, security, and love for their daughter. As a typical teenager, Crystal worries about the things that are important to her right now, like having friends and boyfriends. Crystal is also transgender.

Rather than just blend in and disappear into the crowd, Crystal decided to out herself to help others and to be true to herself at the same time. It would have been easy for her to go through life and keep her secret. Crystal is young, beautiful, and looks like many cisgender girls her age. A couple of years ago, she switched schools to one where no one knew her, but she chose to tell her friends and teachers that she was transgender. She wanted everyone to know that she is indeed a girl, and has always been a girl, but one that was born with a different body type than most other girls. She decided to live her life openly.

Like many of us transgender people, when she was very young, Crystal knew that her outsides did not match her insides. Around the age of 10, she got up the courage to tell Jeri, her future step-mom, that she was really female. At the age of 11, she started to socially transition and a couple of years later she started her medical transition. Transitioning means we finally become ourselves; we



don't become a different person.

Crystal's parents accepted and supported her, even though Marty and Jeri lived in a very conservative small town outside Lexington at the time they married and became a family. Marty's dad was a deacon in the local Baptist church, and Marty

had a very religious upbringing. He admitted he did not know much about transgender people until after he found out about Crystal. Jeri had never been exposed to transgender people growing up until she became friends with a transgender woman at her work. She said that working with a transgender woman opened her eyes to a whole new world.

Once they educated themselves, Jeri and Marty began to educate others. Jeri discovered a group, Trans Youth Family Allies (TYFA), which is a group of moms from across the United States who also have transgender children. One of the moms from TYFA, Kim Pearson, flew into Lexington free of charge to go to the school system to advocate for Crystal and all future transgender students. Jeri said that the help from TYFA made a big difference in Crystal's life.

As much admiration as I have for Jeri and Marty for being great parents, my greatest respect still goes to Crystal. Not only is she brave to transition at such a young age, but she also decided to do it openly. She really doesn't want to be anybody's role model or give "how-to" instructions to others because, like the rest of us, she is maneuvering through life and has more questions than answers. Whether or not Crystal likes it, she has become my hero. 🏳️‍🌈



TransKY ADVOCATE

by Tuesday G Meadows



OUR TRANSGENDER YOUTH

“Welcome to the human race with its wars, disease, and brutality. You with your innocence and grace restore some pride and dignity to a world in decline. Welcome to a special place. In a heart of stone that’s cold and grey. You with your angel face, keep despair at bay, send it away.” - *Show Me, The Pretenders*

We in the LGBTQ+ community must come together and figure out how we can create better conditions for our transgender youth. We need to have better safety, accessible healthcare, and equal opportunities for our youth. What kind of effort will it take to make this world a safe and accepting place for one of the most vulnerable segments of our community? How can we provide better healthcare? What about ending workplace discrimination?

Forcing little girls to use the boys restroom is just plain cruel. Forcing little boys to not act like little boys is also cruel. Many times we see exactly this happening when children come out as transgender. No other segment of our population has their identity erased more than transgender youth. Erasing them as if they never existed appears to be the goal of many of our religious and political leaders. Once, these same people attacked gay men’s use of public restrooms or marriage equality. Now, these haters have turned their hate toward these innocent children. We must help them. But how?

First, our priority must be safety. Our school systems must provide safe places for these adolescents to learn and not get bullied. Schools need to figure out how to let them pee in peace while they navigate their way through life and also get an education. Schools need to follow the Department of Education guidelines. Safe and appropriate public education is a moral obligation -- no ifs, ands, or buts.

Second, health care is a basic human right. Hospitals and

healthcare systems need to follow World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) guidelines that explain the best practices for caring for transgender youth and adults. This particular wheel does not have to be reinvented. There are several good programs in the US that could be copied and improved upon by our local healthcare providers.

Third, economics impact the ability of individuals to be able to meet their basic needs. Too many young transgender individuals who want to work will not or cannot because their IDs often don’t match their outward appearance. We need affirming companies to hire these young people and not shame them, or even out them, to the rest of their workforce. Getting real life work experience as a youth is many times essential in later success with a career.

Importantly, all young people need our support, especially the vulnerable, such as transgender youth. It is far too common of a story that a young person who transitions finds themselves bereft of their friends, family, and support. Transgender youth are 13 times more likely to attempt suicide when they are rejected by their parents versus children who have parental support. Our community needs to pick up the slack when these kids are left to fend for themselves.

Many states have enacted or are considering enacting hateful “bathroom bills” targeting transgender youth at schools. The stress from being vilified is causing great anxiety with these

children. Let’s work harder on making sure that these people stop getting elected.

What does the rest of the LGBTQ+ community need to do? We must fight unthinking and discriminatory comments that sometimes come from others within the community. A transgender female is not a feminine gay man. A transgender male is not a just a really butch lesbian. Stop thinking that just because you may have had it rough growing up or coming out that everyone should have it rough. Yes, I know, you survived and think that everyone should have that same experience as you because it made you tough. “It will be good for them to go through conversion therapy,” I was told by one heartless adult. When someone says something to you that is transphobic, even if it is another transgender person, stand up to them and tell them that they are wrong.

It wasn’t too long ago I heard people say that if marriage equality became law, people would be marrying their lawn mower, a tree, or something. Those crazy things didn’t happen and were used to justify not giving same sex couples the right to marry. We must now stand shoulder to shoulder and stop these people from saying similarly horrible things about our transgender youth.

You may write me at tmeadows828@gmail.com or follow me on Twitter [@trishgigi](https://twitter.com/trishgigi). Now Tuesday’s gone with the wind.



MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR TRANSGENDER CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

by Garrett M. Sparks, MD/MS



Late childhood and adolescence are times of examining personal identity, experimenting, and trying to figure out which aspects of your “old self” you want to keep and which parts you want to throw away. Most youth suffer through identity crises and struggle to figure out where they will fit into the world. Most youth also feel somewhat uncomfortable adapting to and growing into their changing bodies. Compared to their peers, transgender youth may face these challenges much earlier, and the difficulties may be much more intense.

Most children in elementary school are learning to read, write, do math, and generally how to be kids. Transgender children often have to deal with all of these responsibilities in addition to the identity crises that usually wait until the teenage years. Transgender children face stigma, discrimination, and rejection by peers and their families. With so much extra stress, transgender youth are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety, abuse drugs or alcohol, and even commit suicide.

Much of the research that identified these elevated rates of negative psychiatric outcomes studied children who either hadn't socially transitioned or might

not have been well-supported during their transitions. As more transgender children make the social transition to their identified gender, we find that we really don't know much about the mental health of transgender children who feel supported in living as their identified gender.

As part of the TransYouth Project (<https://depts.washington.edu/transyp/>), researchers at the University of Washington recruited a community-based national sample of 73 transgender prepubescent children aged 3-12 years who felt supported in their social transitions to their identified gender, along with a control group of 73 cisgender children and another control group of 49 cisgender siblings of the transgender children. The average age for all of the children was around 8 years old.

The well-supported transgender kids, their siblings, and the control children had very similar rates of depression. The transgender children were slightly more anxious on average, but not in a way that was clinically meaningful. When supported through their social transition, transgender kids have depression anxiety at about the same rate as their cisgender peers.

Notably, many of these

children were from white, affluent, well-educated households, and there are many ways that race, socioeconomic status, and culture could influence these results.

At the same time, this study supports an exciting notion: when families support their transgender children in making their transitions, the children are about as happy and healthy as everybody else. This study should help parents of young transgender children feel more confident that they are doing the right thing when they support their children in changing their names, their pronouns, their haircuts, and their wardrobes.

Garrett M. Sparks, MD/MS specializes in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic at the University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Sparks will be speaking at the University of Kentucky at the Healthcare Workshop for Parents of Transgender Children.

For more information on the workshop, contact Tuesday Meadows at tmeadows828@gmail.com



LOVE MAKES A FAMILY

Make a Difference, Become a Foster Parent with Benchmark Family Services



Benchmark
Family Services

by Kristen Young

What kind of future can you conceive for a child who is denied the joy of a typical childhood? If you imagine a future filled with anger, hurt, and distrust, you are catching a glimpse of the children being served by Benchmark Family Services. Children who are in desperate need of a stable, loving home with foster parents who will help them heal. Here at Benchmark, we recognize that foster homes come in all shapes and sizes, and as a population who itself has struggled to gain much deserved recognition, acceptance, and equality...what better home to raise a foster child than a LGBTQ home?

Benchmark Family Services is a private, non-profit agency providing therapeutic foster care for at-risk children and youth. Our mission is to advocate for children by ensuring opportunities for healthy physical, psychological, and emotional growth and development in the most normal and least restrictive setting possible. Since Benchmark Family Services beginning in 1994, we have grown to provide care for thousands of children throughout the United States, including Kentucky. Here, in the heart of the Bluegrass, you will find our Lexington office, which serves twelve counties, including Fayette, Scott, Franklin, Woodford, Jessamine, Bourbon, Harrison, Anderson, Mercer, Clark, Powell, and Nicholas. Benchmark Family

Services is proactively addressing the issue of generational abuse and neglect in our communities. Every day we are working to serve children in-need right here in our own backyard...in YOUR backyard.

Benchmark Family Services recruits and trains a network of quality, professional foster homes ready to take in at-risk children. We support our homes with on-going training, 24/7 on-call availability, respite care for foster children when needed, and premium financial reimbursement. Our program staff provides case management services by making regular contacts and visits with the youth placed in our homes. We also coordinate therapy and psychiatric services for the youth in our care. Our qualified team of staff is ready to assist our foster parents at a moment's notice.

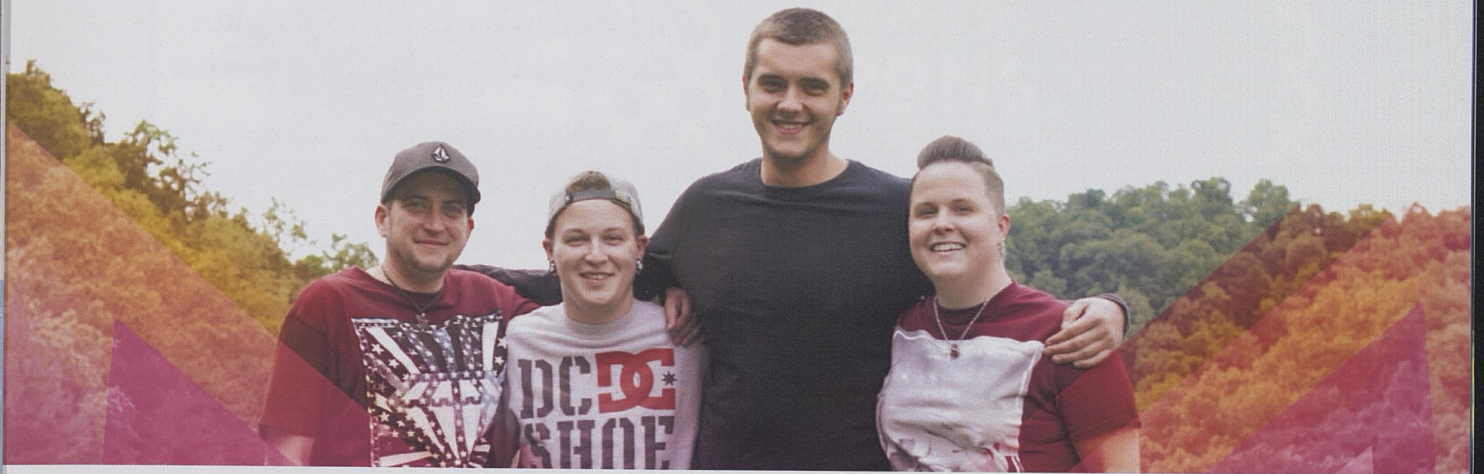
Benchmark foster parent Michael Short and his partner are from Lexington and recently became licensed foster parents, and in the span of just a few short months have found their experience to be life changing. "We began this journey of fostering in an effort to change the lives of little ones; little did we know they would change our lives. They have given us a life of love and happiness that we never knew," Short stated. While Short and his partner came in to foster care wanting to foster children, they also hope to expand their family permanently

one day through adoption. He noted that, "Just like children - blessings come in all shapes and sizes! We are blessed to have been given the gift of fatherhood". Although Benchmark is first and foremost a foster care agency, we certainly do have children who, after time, become adoptable, and are adopted by Benchmark foster parents on a regular basis.

So what does it take to become licensed with Benchmark? It may not be as difficult as you think. You must be 21 or older, have a steady income, go through a background check, submit required paperwork, complete 36 hours of in-class training, and undergo a home study with a safety audit. As everyone has a different schedule, flexible training hours are offered to fit your needs.

If you are interested in becoming a licensed therapeutic foster parent please call the local Benchmark Lexington office at (859) 260-1412 and ask to speak with Kristen or Tiffany. We would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have concerning fostering or the certification process. Additionally, Benchmark Family Services is proud to be hosting a foster care discussion on "Building Families in the LGBTQ Community" on Wednesday, July 13th 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the PCSO Pride Center. We would love to see you there!





FIRST ANNUAL MOREHEAD PRIDE

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 10 A.M.
MOREHEAD CITY PARK | MOREHEAD, KY

Join us for Pride in Morehead, Kentucky where Kim Davis gained notoriety for refusing to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Our inaugural Morehead Pride Festival will be a celebration of the LGBTQIA* community in Eastern KY, hosted by The Rowan County Rights Coalition and Adrian's Place. Our festival will take place Saturday, August 27, 2016 at the city park in Morehead.

The event will kick off at **10 a.m.** with a march down the sidewalk of Main Street, followed by a festival in the park with food, live music, guest speakers, vendors and other activities from **11 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Evening presentations and entertainment will take place on the community stage at Coffee Tree Books from **5 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

GUEST SPEAKERS

Speakers will include Aaron Jackson (Planting Peace/Equality House), Chris Hartman (Fairness Campaign), marriage equality plaintiffs Jim and Luke Meade-Barlowe and Tim Love and Larry Ysunza-Love, Tom Morgan and more. We will be recognizing couples who fought for marriage equality from across the nation on stage during the festival.

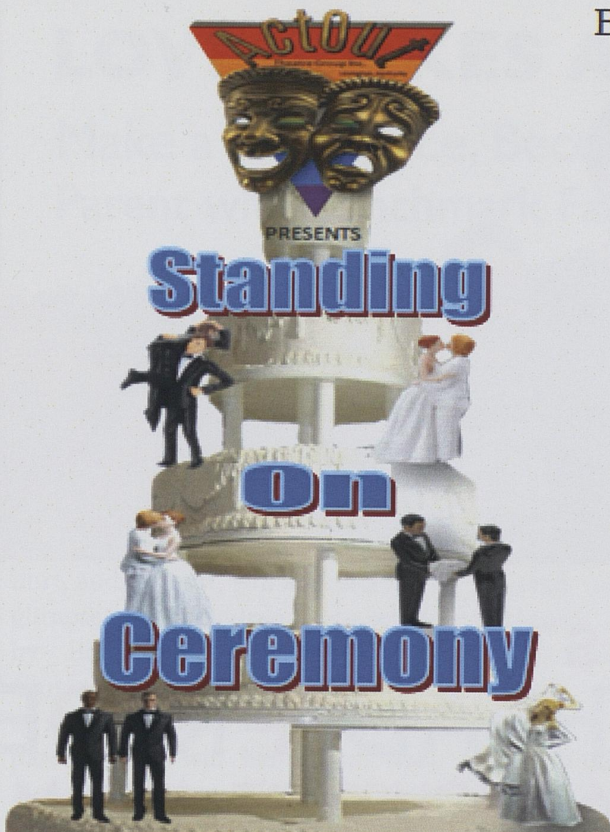
PERFORMERS

Featured performers include The Woodsheep, Voices of Kentuckiana, TKO, Deborah Greathouse, Mateesa Corn, drag performers and belly dancers.

For more information about attending Morehead Pride or participating as a vendor, performer, guest speaker, sponsor or volunteer, visit:

WWW.MOREHEADPRIDE.ORG

PHONE: 888-323-0260 | EMAIL: PRIDE@ROWANRIGHTS.ORG | FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM: @MOREHEADPRIDE



THE GAY MARRIAGE PLAYS

By Mo Gaffney, Jordan Harrison, Moisés Kaufman,
Neil LaBute, Wendy MacLeod, Jose Rivera,
Paul Rudnick and Doug Wright.
Conceived by Brian Shnipper

A Stage Reading

Directed by Marcus A. Roland

Sponsored by Just Fund Kentucky

Featuring:

Kim Dixon Tommy Gatton Deborah Martin
Burley Thomas Sherry Jackson Thompson
and Rick Wayman

Friday, July 1st at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, July 2nd at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, July 3rd at 2:00 p.m.

Lexington Downtown Public Library Theater
\$15.00 Suggested Donation

* SEXUAL ORIENTATION * GENDER IDENTITY * SEX * AGE * RACE *

* COLOR * FAMILIAL STATUS * NATIONAL ORIGIN * RELIGION * DISABILITY *

* COLOR * FAMILIAL STATUS * NATIONAL ORIGIN * RELIGION * DISABILITY *

LEXINGTON-FAYETTE
URBAN COUNTY
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
342 WALLER AVE., STE. 1A
LEXINGTON, KY 40504
859-252-4931
LFUCHRC.ORG
FACEBOOK @ LEXHRC
TWITTER @ LEXHUMANRIGHTS



* SEXUAL ORIENTATION * GENDER IDENTITY * SEX * AGE * RACE *

NAME-CALLING ALLOWED!

“Fierce” “Passionate” “Welcoming” “Honest”

PROUD

PFLAG Central Kentucky...
for you, your family, your allies

Meeting the 2nd Tuesday of the month at St Michael's Episcopal Church
July 12 at 6:30 P.M.

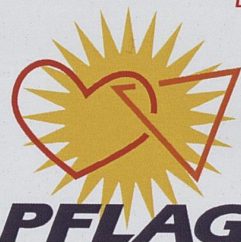
Updates on Advocacy: In the Classroom/In the Courtroom
August 9 at 6:30 P.M.

Clergy Panel: Path to Becoming an LGBTQ Ally

Our presentation and Q&A takes place the first hour, followed
by our confidential support group meeting. There is no charge.

FUNDRAISER!

August 1 from 4:00 P.M. to Close
Blue Stallion Brewery



www.pflagcentralky.org

info@pflagcentralky.org

(859) 338-4393

LEXINGTON PRIDE FESTIVAL IS PRESENTED BY THE



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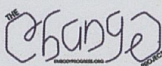


TATE HILL JACOBS architects AWESOME City



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AVOL AIDS Volunteers, Inc.



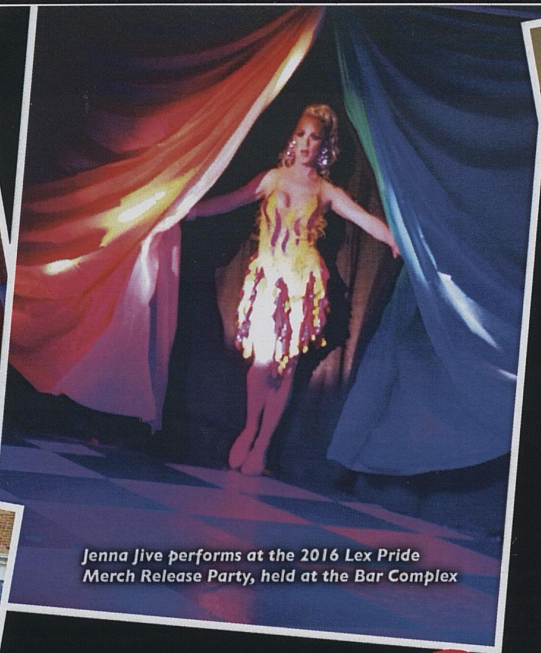
Transgender Resource, Education and Enrichment Services



BREATHE



Flag presentation at the ICK Coronation 35



Jenna Jive performs at the 2016 Lex Pride Merch Release Party, held at the Bar Complex



PCSO Booth at NKY Pride, held on June 4th
Submitted by 'kentuckygleek' via Instagram

OUT & ABOUT



Wake up to the Vision!

HIGH on Art & Coffee

523 E High St - Lexington, KY



**Stop by for a FRESH BUZZ!
Stay for the great food and art!**

Over 160 Artists represented – Diverse & Unique Items for everyone! Wood Crafts, Jewelry, Art, Candles, Clothing, Toys, and so many other things!

**Large Menu Selections:
Coffee, Tea, Milk Shakes, Smoothies, Sandwiches, Salads & MORE!**

**FUN EVENTS EVERY SATURDAY!
LET US PACK YOUR PICNIC LUNCH FOR WOODLAND PARK**



Jacob Boyd at the 2016 Lex Pride Merch Release Party, held at the Bar Complex



Miss Lexington Pride 2016, Serena Van Daren performs at the 2016 Lex Pride Merch Release Party, held at the Bar Complex



Cadillac Seville emcee's at the 2016 Lex Pride Merch Release Party, held at the Bar Complex



Lexington team poses with PWP founder Keith LaBelle at Powered with Pride 5K. Left to Right Kat Wilkie Kennedy, Adam Imparato, Chad Hundley, Jacob Boyd, Keith LaBelle, Wanda McCants, Vanessa Booker, Tuesday G Meadows, & Ernesto Scorsone

ABOUT

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Lexington, KY 40504
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discount code: **PRIDE**

2015-2016 MEMBERS & DONORS



With the help of these members, our programs to help all of our community are able to continue and expand to reach more than what we normally could! These members have fulfilled their listed level of commitment from the fiscal year starting on July 1, 2015 and ending on June 30, 2016. Thank you for your donations and 2015-2016 membership.

RAINBOW (BUSINESS):

Imperial Court of Kentucky, JustFundKY, and Kroger

PLATINUM:

Roberto L. Abreu & Christopher R. Bauer, Jacob Boyd, Jaime Carpenter, and Dell Rosa

GOLD:

Douglas Burnham, Paul Brown, Jennifer Crossen & Joan Callahan, Tony Huston, Charles & Jeffrey Jones-Ritzler, William F. Loggins, M.D. & Tony Burgett, Tuesday Meadows, Jane Minder & Ginger Moore-Minder, Kathy Schiflett, John A. Wade III

SILVER:

Ahava Center For Spiritual Living, Edgar Andrew Chambers, Jim Dickinson, Judy Goldsmith & Andrew Klapper, Lee Guice, Edwin Hackney & Gary Key, Amy Hatter, Tonya Hayes, Irvine Jones, Jeffrey Moore, Shelby Reynolds & David Bartley, Jeffrey Sauer, Keith Stewart, Frank Winchester

BRONZE:

Carrie Arps, Michael Averdick, Colby Cohen-Archer, Jonathan Coleman, Mary Freitag, Jill Hanna & Richard Haley, Chad Hundley & Adam Imperato, Danny C. Matherly, James McKeighen, Theo Meacham, Arturo Sandoval, Donald Schwinn & Terry Campbell, Brandon Stapleton, Barbara Stead & Paula Geran, Christopher Steele, Alan Thacker, David Williams, Katherine Wilkie-Kennedy

FAYETTE



GALLERY



"The Last Furlong" - by Elena Eros - Original Oil 36" x 12"

2573 Richmond Road · French Quarter Square · Suite 360 · Lexington, KY 40509
859-272-7111 · fayettegallery.com Mon - Sat: 10a to 6p · Sun by appointment
Follow Us on Facebook for Special Store Sales & Daily Prizes!

JULY CALENDAR & DIRECTORY

*All meetings & events below are hosted at the PCSO Pride Center unless noted with an *
For more details on events, view the full calendar at pcsoky.org at the bottom of the webpage*

Friday, July 1

7:30 p.m. - ActOut Theatre Group of Lexington presents:
'Standing On Ceremony:
The Gay Marriage Plays' *

Saturday, July 2

10:00 a.m. - Grief Support Group *
7:30 p.m. - TransKentucky Meeting
7:30 p.m. - ActOut Theatre Group of Lexington presents:
'Standing On Ceremony:
The Gay Marriage Plays' *

Sunday, July 3

2:00 p.m. - ActOut Theatre Group of Lexington presents:
'Standing On Ceremony:
The Gay Marriage Plays' *

6:30 p.m. - Team Lex Volleyball *

Wednesday, July 6

1:00 p.m. - "Living with Aging"
60+ Senior Discussion Group *
5:00 p.m. - Richmond's Alphabet
Soup Support Group *
7:00 p.m. - "Heart To Heart"
LGBT Discussion Group

Thursday, July 7

6:30 p.m. - PCSO Board Meeting

Saturday, July 9

9:00 p.m. - Kentucky Bourbon
Bears Board Meeting *

Sunday, July 10

6:00 p.m. - Imperial Court Meeting
6:30 p.m. - Team Lex Volleyball *

Tuesday, July 12

6:30 p.m. - PFLAG Meeting *
9:00 p.m. - LGBT Sci-Fi/
Horror Group

Wednesday, July 13

1:00 p.m. - "Living with Aging"
60+ Senior Discussion Group *
5:00 p.m. - Richmond's Alphabet
Soup Support Group *
7:00 p.m. - "Heart To Heart"
LGBT Discussion Group

Thursday, July 14

6:30 p.m. - Pride Community
Prom Planning Meeting

Friday, July 15

Editorial & Ad Deadline
for LINQ Magazine

7:00 p.m. - Senior's Bistro (Potluck)

Saturday, July 16

8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. SisterSound
Yard Sale, 1758 Blue Licks Road*
10:00 a.m. - TransLEX
Clothing Swap

Sunday, July 17

6:30 p.m. - Team Lex Volleyball *

Wednesday, July 20

1:00 p.m. - "Living with Aging"
60+ Senior Discussion Group *
5:00 p.m. - Richmond's Alphabet
Soup Support Group *
7:00 p.m. - "Heart To Heart"
LGBT Discussion Group

Thursday, July 21

6:30 p.m. - PCSO Board
Work Session

Sunday, July 24

3:00 p.m. - LGBT Sci-Fi/
Horror Group

6:00 p.m. - ICK's Board of
Directors / Membership Meeting

6:30 p.m. - Team Lex Volleyball*

Wednesday, July 27

1:00 p.m. - "Living with Aging"
60+ Senior Discussion Group *
5:00 p.m. - Richmond's Alphabet
Soup Support Group *
7:00 p.m. - "Heart To Heart"
LGBT Discussion Group

Thursday, July 28

6:30 p.m. - LexPrideFest
Committee Meeting

Sunday, July 31

6:30 p.m. - Team Lex Volleyball *

COMMUNITY & SOCIAL GROUPS

24-Hour Crisis Line	1-800-929-8000
24-Hour Teen Crisis Line	1-800-999-9999
AA/Alcoholic Teens	859-277-1877
Alcoholics Anonymous	859-967-9960
Arbor Youth Services	859-254-2501
Council for Peace and Justice	859-488-1448
Fairness of Louisville	502-893-0788
Gay-Straight Alliance, Teens	859-221-4396
"Heart to Heart" Discussion Group	859-253-3233
HOPE Positive	440-703-0050
Imperial Court of Kentucky	859-619-7521
KY Survivors Area of Narcotics Anonymous	859-253-4673
Lexington Fair Housing Council	1-866-438-8617
Lexington Fairness	859-951-8565
Lexington Human Rights	859-252-4931
Lexington Pride Festival	859-253-3233
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-8255
PCSO Pride Center	859-253-3233
PFLAG Central Kentucky, Inc.	859-338-4393
PFLAG Louisville	502-223-1323
Rainbow Bowling League	270-404-0211
SisterSound	859-806-0243
Social Services, Lexington	211
TransParentLex	859-230-0409
TransKentucky	cassiemt@yahoo.com
Transgender Youth Family Allies	1-888-462-8932
Trevor Lifeline 24/7	1-866-488-7386
United Way	859-313-5465

COLLEGE STUDENT GROUPS

Berea College ACE	859-958-3633
BCTC Gay-Straight Alliance	859-246-6365
Centre College BGLA	859-238-5332
EKU Alphabet Center	859-622-5041
EKU Pride Alliance	859-622-1027
Morehead State University	606-783-2071
TUnity (Transy)	859-445-3822
UK LGBTQ* Resource Center	859-323-3312

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Ahava Center for Spiritual Living	859-373-8910
Bluegrass United Church of Christ	859-233-0208
Embrace Fellowship	859-358-0580
Faith Lutheran Church	859-266-7621
First Presbyterian Church	859-252-1919
Hunter Presbyterian Church	859-277-5126
Lex Friends, Quakers	859-254-3319
Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church	859-255-1075
St. Martha's Episcopal Church	859-271-7641
St. Michael's Episcopal Church	859-277-7511
Unitarian Universalist Church	859-223-1448
Woodland Christian Church	859-266-3416

HIV/STD TESTING, SERVICES, & INFO

AIDS Volunteers of Lexington (AVOL)	859-225-3000
Health Department, Fayette County	859-288-2437
Health Department, Woodford County	859-873-4541
HIV/AIDS Legal Project	502-584-1254
Moveable Feast	859-252-2867
Northern KY Region	859-341-4264
UK Adolescent Medicine	859-323-5643

**Presented by: The Pride Community
Services Organization**



Stonewall Inn

2nd Annual Adult Pride Community Prom
Friday, Sept. 30 8 p.m. to 12 a.m.
Lyric Theatre & Cultural Arts Center, 300 E Third Street Lexington, KY
An 18+ Event

For more info: 859-253-3233 or visit pcsoky.org