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# LGBT News

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

**February 2009**

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## Director's Column: Coming Out

**“The most important political step that any gay man or lesbian can take is to come out of the closet. It's been proven that it is easier to hate us and to fear us if you can't see us.” ~Amanda Bearse**

And so it has been the same for the Center since August 2008-we have been coming out of 303 Pearl Street, with clear intention and desire to raise awareness. Over the past months we have held rallies, protests, marches, made the local news, and been in the paper-we are truly becoming more visible. With visibility comes opportunity to further the mission and vision of the LGBT Resource Center for the Seven Rivers Region. We strive to improve connections, provide education and put to rest myths and stereotypes, and develop an atmosphere for understanding. Through this work we will be able to ensure that all people living within our communities can truly be themselves and experience life fully.

It is important that we not forget that to truly challenge and address oppression and discrimination for the LGBT community, we will inherently address all forms of oppression. With this in mind we have a responsibility to recognize that many of us fall into the privileged group on certain "isms" as well as have other areas where we remain in the oppressed group. With privilege comes a need for people to let go of stifling guilt and use their privilege for the greater good of all. Image the collective power of a unified group of social justice advocates working toward equality across the backdrop of oppression that defines us throughout history. To end racism, sexism, ableism, religious oppression, heterosexism, and ageism we need to come together on common ground and value all people's right to equality and inclusion.

February is Black History Month and there are many great events planned in the community. UW-L's Black Student Unity is presenting: Reflections of Ebony featuring Comedian Azeem on February 7th and a collective group of student groups and universities are hosting "White Privilege 101: Getting in on the Conversations" on February 16, for more information feel free to stop in and check our community board. In recognition of Black History Month, the Center will be showing *The Secret Life of Bees* on Saturday, February 7, at 1-3:30 pm, and *Tongues Untied* on February 17, at 4:30-6 pm. There will be time for reflection and discussion after each video. Please join us if you can.

In unity,  
Rosanne St. Sauver

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## Transgender Health Care Conference: A Holistic Approach

**Register Online NOW!**

**When:** April 13, 2009, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

**Where:** UW-La Crosse Cleary Alumni & Friends Center

**Cost:** \$115, includes lunch and materials (reduced fee for UW-L staff, faculty and students)

**Earn:** .8 ceus or 8 contact hours

This is a community-campus conference designed for medical and mental health care professionals, including physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, therapists, student services and program administrators.

### CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

8 a.m. Registration

8:30 a.m. Transgender 101 (Berg and Feldman) This session provides a primer on transgender identity, including an overview of the physical, medical, and mental health processes and issues.

The session will describe the following four components of sexual identity (biological sex, gender identity, gender role and sexual orientation). Define the term transgender. Identify the steps of the coming out process and how might they apply to a transgender person. Describe the medical interventions that a transgender person might choose to pursue.

11:45 a.m. Lunch

12:30 p.m. Transgender Panel

The panel will discuss ways to provide culturally sensitive and competent care. Audience members will have an opportunity to ask questions.

1:15 p.m. Concurrent Sessions

Participants are invited to learn the fundamentals of providing culturally competent care as medical staff or mental health providers.

A. Dilemmas and Themes in Therapy With Transgender Clients (Berg)  
Understand the historical conceptual frameworks used in the therapeutic treatment of transgender people and assess their applicability. Describe the assessment and diagnostic phase of treatment. Develop strategies to transcend the gatekeeper in therapy with transgender clients. Identify therapeutic themes and how they apply to transgender clients.

B. Medical and Preventive Care for Transgender Patients (Feldman)  
Learn how to conduct a sensitive and thorough physical exam of their transgender patients. Know the general effects and side effects of masculinizing and feminizing hormone therapy. Learn appropriate preventive care for their transgender patients.

3:30 p.m. Building Cooperation (facilitated by campus and community providers)

The conference concludes with facilitated discussion among participants. This session's goal is to identify existing resources and gaps, and begin to develop appropriate practices for delivering quality care to transgender patients, clients, students and community members.

#### **FEATURED SPEAKERS:**

Dianne R. Berg, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Human Sexuality/Center for Sexual Health Medical School, University of Minnesota. As a psychologist, she provides clinical services to adults, adolescents and children with sexuality concerns, including compulsive sexual behavior, transgender issues, and the treatment of sex offenders. Working with pediatric endocrinology, urology, genetics and newborn screening, Berg provides a clinic for children/adolescents with Disorders of Sex Development (DSD). She is part of a CDC funded grant focusing on attachment theory and sex-related delinquent behavior. Berg earned her doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1999 and completed a postdoctoral clinical/research fellow in 2001.

Jamie Feldman, MD, Ph.D., received her MD and Ph.D. in medical anthropology from the University of Illinois, and completed residency training in Family Practice at Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge, Ill. in 1996. A board-certified family physician, Feldman is now an associate professor in the Department of Family Practice and Community Health at the University of Minnesota. As part of the Center for Sexual

Health, Feldman provides medical services including evaluation and treatment of sexual dysfunction and transgender care. She has presented and published extensively on transgender health issues, including primary/preventive care guidelines. She has also been involved with HIV/AIDS issues since 1987 and is the author of *Plague Doctors: Responding to the AIDS Epidemic in France and America*. Feldman trains medical students and residents in sexual health and maintains a primary care practice at the Women's Health Center at the University of Minnesota.

Use this link to view brochure and register online:

[http://www.mynewsletterbuilder.com/tools/view\\_newsletter.php?newsletter\\_id=1409823649](http://www.mynewsletterbuilder.com/tools/view_newsletter.php?newsletter_id=1409823649)

For more information:

Karen Langaard, 608.785.6508 or [langaard.kare@uwlax.edu](mailto:langaard.kare@uwlax.edu)

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## 2008 Annual Meeting Summary

The annual meeting was well attended with nearly 50 people enjoying brunch from Hackberry's and good conversation before the meeting began. Outgoing board members, Alice Benson, Lisa Jackson, Mary O'Sullivan, and Leslie Scheld, were presented with certificates of appreciation. Incoming board members spoke of their background and reasons for wanting to serve on the board. You can read their statements below.

Attendees also heard Rosanne St. Sauver, the Center Executive Director, summarize the key activities for 2008, Center involvement in the community and social justice events, and outlined plans for 2009. Members had an opportunity to offer suggestions and comments during the meeting.

A copy of our [2008 Annual Report is available on our website.](#)

Winners of the random drawing were Lisa Jackson who won the DVD, "She Likes Girls 3" that was donated by Wolfe Video, and Daina Skrove who won the cruise for two on the Julia Belle Swain. Daina Skrove then generously re-donated the cruise to Pride for an upcoming fundraiser.

## New Board Members

### Jillayn Hey

My name is Jillayn Hey and I have been a resident of the Coulee Region for more than ten years. I have a Masters degree in professional counseling and I provide Case Management and therapy to people with severe and persistent mental illness. Many of

the clients involved in our program are part of the LGBT community and daily, I see the need for support and acceptance in their lives. Much of my work includes advocating for my clients as they are often dismissed or misunderstood in our community because of their uniqueness. I have a heart for advocacy and community service in hopes that further generations will be more aware, accepting and inclusive of all people.

When I am not working, I am busily raising four children ages 15, 12, 12, and 8 with my partner Ken, whom I have been married to for 17 years. Our family is happily immersed in the LGBT community, thanks to many dear and cherished friends in our lives.

### **Kathy Lawson**

I am very excited about the opportunity and privilege to serve on the LGBT Center's board of directors. I am looking forward to contributing my skills and volunteer time to meet the needs of the community. I believe that we should all stand together in the fight for equality.

I was born and raised in the La Crosse area, and presently reside 24 miles away in Caledonia, Minnesota. I am a single parent of 3 grown children and I am currently employed at Houston County Women's Resources. I am active on Houston County's Child Abuse Prevention Council, facilitator of a Women's Chemical Dependency support group, parent education groups, Chairperson for the local Salvation Army Service Unit, and a member of the La Crosse area PFLAG support group. My interests include creating stained glass art, reading, cooking/eating, travel, my two cats Sandy and Tess, and my pet turtle Mr. Turtle or Turtley.

### **Bonnie Striegel**

Bonnie Striegel teaches 7th grade language arts at Holmen Middle School in Holmen, WI. She holds a Bachelor's degree in English and Journalism from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, and a Master's degree in Educational Administration from the University of Wisconsin-Superior. She formerly taught at Friedell and John Adams Middle Schools in Rochester, and at Aquinas Middle School in La Crosse. In addition, Bonnie coached high school girls' cross-country and middle school track for several years at Aquinas. Bonnie is an avid runner and has participated in several marathons. Her interests also include biking, skiing, tennis, home improvement projects, reading and spending time with her partner Jan and her two grown children.

### **Johnnie Loeffler Schmeckpeper**

I want to extend warmest greetings to everyone involved with the LGBT Resource Center for the Seven Rivers Region! I am Johnnie Loeffler Schmeckpeper. I was born and raised in La Crosse, Wisconsin by two great parents. I graduated from Central High School in 1988 at the age of 17, and then I went into the Army National Guard for four years. I initially served as a Combat Construction Specialist before ending my time as a Medic-in-training after four years of service. I held a variety of jobs throughout my twenties, but my specialty was professional office work. I had taken advantage of my

job skills when I lived down in St. Louis, MO for four years in my mid to late twenties where I worked at A.G. Edwards World Headquarters near downtown St. Louis for about two years before I became too homesick!

I moved back to La Crosse in 1999 where I once again held a few positions in professional office work until 2005. I officially became disabled in January of 2007 due to some non-life-threatening ailments. I had previously volunteered at the Moose Lodge in La Crosse where I was on the Board of Officers, and I also ran karaoke and cooked in the kitchen. I switched organizations in November of 2007 when I became a member of the Eagles Club where I currently volunteer cooking for monthly steak and fish fries.

It was a warm, spring day in May of 2007 when I stumbled upon my passion walking down Pearl Street in La Crosse, the LGBT Resource Center for the Seven Rivers Region! I talked with Connie Sutter, the America Corps worker at the time. Before I knew it I was helping out with staffing and coming up with a wide range of ideas to help the center grow into the beautiful blossom that it is today! I love the center, the workers, directors, members and volunteers that have truly made a big difference in helping the center to grow. I am here now to extend my range of volunteer work into a more in-depth and meaningful way. My ultimate goal, however lofty as it may be, is to expand the center's services and the center itself so that the center can help even more people and hold more events and fund raisers!

In my personal life, I am blessed to have a terrific partner and husband of over eight years and a super yellow Labrador named Buster who is eight years old. My original name was John E Loeffler until my partner and I held a commitment Ceremony at First Congregational United Church of Christ on August 4, 2007 where we vowed, like any other married couple, to spend our lives with each other through thick and thin times. I am truly honored to have such a special partner, and I would not be where I am today without his love and support!

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## Upcoming Center Activities

Check the Center [website calendar](#) for all events.

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**In recognition of Black History Month the Center will show: *The Secret Life of Bees***

**When: Saturday, February 7, 2009 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.**

**Where: 303 Pearl Street**

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## **Luncheon with Dr. April Herndon speaking on The Intersex Rights Movement**

**When:** Friday, February 13, 2009, 11:30 to 1:30; registration required by February 9, 2009

**Where:** Wisconsin Room 1 at the Radisson Hotel, 200 Harborview Plaza, La Crosse, WI.

Dr. Herndon served as the Director of Programming for the Intersex Society of North America from 2005-2006. During this presentation, she will provide a basic introduction to intersex conditions and explain how intersex conditions challenge dichotomous notions of sex and gender. Using writing by people with intersex conditions and activists in the field, the presentation will highlight the goals of the movement for intersex rights and the struggles people with intersex conditions face. [Register with this form.](#)

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## **In recognition of Black History Month the Center will show: *Tongues Untied***

**When:** Tuesday, February 17, 2009 from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

**Where:** 303 Pearl Street

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## **February Out & About**

**When:** Saturday, February 21, 2009: 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

**Where:** Green Island Ice Arena, 2312 South 7th Street La Crosse

Ice, ice baby...Ice, ice baby...

Put on your skates and listen

We're hitting the ice with group intention Someone grabs a hold of us tightly

Then we skate like angels all nighty...

Ice, ice babay -you want to go?

Thank you, thank you for enjoying my remix of Vanilla Ice's hit song to fit our Out & About. It will be a blast, so come on out and join us for some wintery indoors fun. We will be skating during their Open Skate Time. Cost is \$6 per person over 18 and \$5 for anyone under 18.

See you on the ice...

RSVP 608-784-0452 or [r.st.sauver@7riverslgbt.org](mailto:r.st.sauver@7riverslgbt.org)

## Ongoing Center Activities

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### Weekly Activities

#### LGBTQ Parents Group

When: Every Wednesday 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

#### Drop-in Group

When: Every Thursday 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

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### Monthly Activities

#### PGLAG

When: First Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

#### Gender Queer/Transgender Gathering at the Center:

When: First Wednesday 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Where: 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center, 303 Pearl Street, La Crosse

Do you identify as gender queer? How about Transgender? Do you ever feel like you don't fit in because of your gender identity or expression? Then come to a monthly discussion group at the 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center. The group meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00. For upcoming meeting dates, check the Center [website calendar](#)

**Genderqueer** - A gender variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders. This person may want to challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system.

**Transgender** - A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex.

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## The difference between *buying something* and *being sold something* By Christina Mae Olson, CFP®

Last month I wrote about a client of mine who wanted to buy a new Prius. I mostly addressed the issues of negotiating the price of new and used cars but also a bit on how to actually pay for the car. I gave some tips on how to check the actual “value” so you could feel confident you are paying a fair price for the car. The truth is - we really don’t buy a car. What happens in the process of acquiring a car is that we are sold the car.

(NOTE: I’m not making this stuff up about how to buy a car. Check out the February issue of MONEY magazine for a great series of short articles on how to get a great deal on your next car.)

There is a difference between *buying something* and *being sold something*. I can buy a box of cereal. The price is on the box and that’s what I pay. It may be cheaper at Woodman’s than at Quillin’s but I know that I have to pay the price on the box. If I wanted to save 25¢ I could drive to Woodman’s but it’d cost me 50¢ extra in gas to do that. These variables are known to me and I can make my purchasing decision based on the variables. I can’t ask the clerk at Quillin’s to sell me the cereal for 25¢ less just because Woodman’s sells it for 25¢ less. One doesn’t dicker at a grocery store (well, maybe on outdated or damaged items).

When I buy something I like to know and quantify all the variables. It’s hard for me to be sold something. I pity the sales person who tries to sell me something. It’s not easy for a sales person to disclose the variables - especially to a buyer who insists on knowing all the variables. For one thing, most of these items that are “sold” carry a commission to the seller. Often, the seller won’t tell you what they are getting paid. The higher the negotiated sales price - the higher commission to the seller. It pays and makes sense that the seller protects that information.

Buying a new car is like buying life insurance. There is really no “true” price for these products. “What you see is what you get,” just can’t be said of cars and insurance (or airplane tickets and caskets). The real value of these products is a mystery. We have to ignore the sticker price and accept that there will be negotiating involved. If I’m not satisfied I’m getting the best deal for my dollar then I will go elsewhere looking for a better bargain. State Farm and Allstate might offer the same superior property insurance but you can bet you won’t pay the same price for the exact same coverage. Why does \$100,000 of cash value life insurance cost 50% more at one company over the other? Why can I get a brand new Prius for \$20,500 and the next poor soul pays \$26,750 (same gadgets and accessories)? It’s no wonder that we are all ashamed and embarrassed to talk about the price we paid for our big ticket items. Who wants to ever find out that they could have bought the same thing for \$6,250 less? Why can’t there be one simple and true price for these things?

It just infuriates me to know that there could be literally hundreds of prices on one single item. If an airplane has 250 seats - it is very probable that there are 250 different price tags associated with those seats. I get frustrated when I buy a car, an airline ticket, hotel room or insurance (no caskets yet) and always wonder if I’m paying the least possible amount for my item. Why are 100 shares of Disney just \$9.95 through Etrade and \$250 through a full service broker?

Money is finite. Once you pay for something it is gone. I believe you are obligated to find the best price for every purchase you make. You owe it to yourself to negotiate rigorously on all the things that are “sold” to you. If you can spend less on an item by fairly negotiating then you must try and do that. \$2000 saved now could mean \$50,000 to you later if you invest it for your future.

I need to add that, for items which are “sold,” the buyer gets something known as “value added” quality thrown in for “free”. Value added means superb customer service, a birthday card or follow up calls from the sales person. Value added inspires repeat business and loyalty. I can’t tell you how many clients of mine stick with the same broker, insurance agent, and banker or car dealer because of this loyalty. The cost of this loyalty is outrageous - but that’s material for another article.

One spouse of a car sales person contacted me about my last article. She told me how tough it is to be in car sales right now. Cars are not selling and the sales staff is not making money. Her husband is clearing snow off of vehicles, teaching customers how to parallel park, changing tires, helping farmers calculate payloads and delivering gas to customers. He is lucky to be making minimum wage. This is all “value added” stuff that you can’t easily quantify or value in dollars. The fact is that people will continue to buy new and used cars

from dealers. You have to decide how much you want to pay if you like, need and appreciate these value added items.

Finally, I'd like to ask this particular car sales person to reveal himself - the LGBT community needs to know about you. It is really hard for gay and lesbian and/or trans customers to walk into a showroom and be treated with respect and dignity. Will you offer transparency in your negotiations and work out a fair deal for us? I'd love to know who you are and give you a chance to offer your "value added" service to our community. There is more to this discussion and I'd like to keep it going. Any other comments, readers?

*Chris Olson is a licensed Certified Financial Planner™ Practitioner with a fee-only practice. Sliding fee - no sales! What you see is what you get - judge for yourself on the "value added." Chris can be reached at 608-525-9818 or CMoney@centurytel.net.*



If you have comments on this article, please send them to Chris at the email address above, NOT to the LGBT Newsletter.

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## Opportunities to Help Your Center

There are new items on our Wish List. Check here for the complete [Wish List](#). [Volunteer](#) for some fun, fundraising activities for the Center.

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Become a member!

Your membership in the 7 Rivers LGBT Resource Center makes it possible for LGBT folks to have a presence in our community and to support the collaborative work we do with other organizations in the 7 Rivers Region. Your membership supports LGBT visibility! Please join us now by filling out [the membership form](#) and mailing it to the Center. Membership also comes with goodies from our Community Partners.