



PERCEPTIONS

SAGINAW VALLEY

Serving the Tri-City Area's LGBT Community

April 2013

www.PerceptionsSV.org

Free

Chocolate Party a Huge Success

Rick Farrand

I would first like to thank everyone who showed up and donated to this year's Chocolate Party! Delicious and Fabulous, the chocolate was out of this world! Also I would like to thank these business that donated: the Savoy Grill, Fuzzy's Restaurant, Tim Horton's, The Gourmet Cupcake Shoppe, Hamilton's Bakery, and Maria Elena's Bakery. Without all of you this could not have happened! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

I also want to thank Dann, Randy, Chris, and Lee for helping with set up and helping put out food. We made the news! Channel 5 was there, and they interviewed some of our guests. The news story appeared on the 11 o'clock news that same night.

We tried something different this year and went to the [Castle Museum](#) for the party and this venue worked out really well for us! We raised over \$1,000.00 and that gets split between the two organizations: PFLAG and Perceptions. Great job to all! I would also like to thank Terry Z., Kevin R., and Bill O., who in the past, had our party at their beautiful Victorian styled homes! If you haven't been, maybe next year? I would also like to thank the staff of the museum, Barb (Custodian/Special Arrangements), Lisa (Marketing Specialist), Tom (Deputy Director) who gave great informative tours, and Rick who helped out Tom! We owe you our biggest thanks for all your hard work to help make it a success!

We don't have all the numbers in yet, but we figured there were about 100 people who attended this year! Job well done on all aspects, and thank you Leo for putting up with me again! I think we made a great team! We can only get bigger and better, so the sky is the limit for next year! Any ideas?

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www.PerceptionsSV.org

Perceptions Saginaw Valley is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your contributions are deductible as charitable donations for federal income tax purposes.

Perceptions is Mid-Michigan's leading resource for enriching and empowering LGBT individuals and their community.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide superior educational programs, networking opportunities and services for the well being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender individuals and their community.

Perceptions: Capturing the Moment, Gaining Momentum, Hearing A Call To Action

Chris Lauckner

The Perceptions Board of Trustees at their regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, March 12, 2013, reached consensus to move the organization, its members, and allies through a discovery process, a "Call To Action" and a time to "Listen." The initiative will involve persons associated with Perceptions Saginaw Valley, at any level, to have an opportunity to express their personal input as they have seen and experienced strengths, weaknesses and potential opportunities that the organization needs to hear and recognize.

A committee has been named to accomplish this task: Kathy Lloyd, Diedra Knox, and Ben Dowd have volunteered to champion this effort. The end goal of the discovery process is to gain enough information in order to formulate a direction for the organization covering a time period of longer than a one year duration. This effort may include a combination of the following: focus groups - offered in each of the metropolitan areas served, an on-line and/or mailed survey tool, texting initiative. The committee has been charged to have recommendations for discussion at the April Board of Trustees Meeting.

One thing is certain as we live in our fast paced, techno-savvy world: all organizations need to remain focused on attainable goals if they are to remain relevant. Perceptions Saginaw Valley, over the past ten years, has remained relevant and that fact was celebrated at the Holiday Gathering in December. The organization has made tremendous strides in meeting the needs of LGBTQI persons living in the Saginaw Valley Region. Perceptions Saginaw Valley with its leaders, members, and volunteers have been recognized for that effort. However, considering the ever-changing environment with the tremendous amount of crossing of political, social, and religious boundaries, and with a nation continuing to banter with equal rights protection under the United States Constitution, there is now a "Call To Action" and need to "Listen" and "Hear" as a way to plan the future of Perceptions Saginaw Valley and its role in the communities that it serves. What is our "Call To Action" with the organization is today given its vision?

Perceptions is a non-profit community organization that offers educational, social and networking opportunities for residents of the Tri-Cities (Midland, Bay City and Saginaw) and surrounding areas. Perceptions strives to foster a positive image for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender community and our allies.

Please give this serious thought. Your opinions are needed!

U.S. Supreme Court Hearing Historical Marriage Equality Cases: Prop. 8 and DOMA

Leo Romo

The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments for historical two same-sex marriage cases in March 2013. On March 26 they heard arguments for California's ban on same-sex marriage (Proposal 8) and on March 27 heard arguments on the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Both cases define a marriage as an union between one man and one woman. This is the first time that the high court considered same-sex marriage.

What is Proposal 8?

Proposition 8 is a California ballot proposition and a state constitutional amendment passed on November 5, 2008 that said "only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California."

By restricting the recognition of marriage to opposite-sex couples, Proposition 8 overturned the May 15, 2008 California Supreme Court's ruling that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. California's State Constitution put Proposition 8 into immediate effect the day after the election.

Same-sex couples and government entities filed lawsuits with the California Supreme Court challenging the proposition's validity and effect on previously administered same-sex marriages. On May 26, 2009, the California Supreme Court upheld Proposition 8, but allowed existing same-sex marriages to stand.

On August 4, 2010, United States District Court Judge Vaughn Walker overturned Proposition 8 in the case ruling that it violated both the Due Process and Equal Protection clauses of the United States Constitution. Walker issued an injunction against enforcing Proposition 8 and a stay to determine suspension of his ruling pending appeal.

On February 7, 2012, a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals panel affirmed Walker's decision declaring the Proposition 8 ban on same-sex marriage to be unconstitutional. On June 5, 2012, the Ninth Circuit denied a petition for rehearing and stayed the ruling pending appeal. The proposition's proponents filed a petition with the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court heard arguments on March 26 and its ruling is expected by late June 2013.

What is the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)?

The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), enacted on September 21, 1996, is a United States federal law that defines marriage as the legal union of one man and one woman for federal and inter-state recognition purposes in the United States. The law passed both houses of Congress and was signed into law by President Bill Clinton. Under the law, no U.S. state or political subdivision is required to recognize a same-sex marriage from another state. Section 3 of DOMA codifies the non-recognition of same-sex marriages for all federal purposes, including insurance benefits for government employees, Social Security survivors' benefits, immigration, and the filing of joint tax returns.

Section 3 of DOMA has been found unconstitutional in eight federal courts on issues including bankruptcy, public employee benefits, estate taxes, and immigration. On March 27, 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court heard an appeal in one of those cases, *United States v. Windsor* on behalf of a New York surviving same-sex spouse whose inheritance from her deceased spouse who was required to pay more than \$363,000 in federal estate taxes. If federal law accorded their marriage the same status as different-sex marriages recognized by their state, she would have paid no

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APRIL 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
	1 April Fool's Day	2	3	4	5  Friday Night Dinner Café American 1525 Washington St. Midland 7:00 PM	6																																																																																																		
7	8	9  Perceptions Board of Trustees Meeting	10 Speaking Out Loud Presents Jonathan D. Lovitz Rhea Miller Hall @ SVSU 8:00 PM	11	12  Friday Night Dinner Savoy Grill 127 S. Franklin St. Saginaw 7:00 PM	13																																																																																																		
14  Genesee County PFLAG Meeting UU Church of Flint 2474 S. Ballenger Hwy Flint, 2:00 - 4:30 PM	15 Taxes Due	16  Perceptions Men's Discussion Group The Alderton Bldg. 301 Cass St., Saginaw 7:00 - 8:30 PM	17	18  Perceptions General Meeting The Alderton Bldg. 301 Cass St., Saginaw 7:00 PM	19  Friday Night Dinner Mandarin House 3000 Center Ave. Essexville 7:00 PM	20																																																																																																		
21  Tri-Cities PFLAG Meeting Our Saviour Lutheran 2525 Hemmeter Rd. Saginaw, 2:00 - 4:30 PM	22 Earth Day	23	24 Admin Assist Day	25  Meet & Greet (Game Night) The Mixx & Metro Grille 115 N. Hamilton St. Saginaw, 7:00 PM	26  Friday Night Dinner El Potrero 5516 Fenton Rd. Flint, 7:00 PM Co-hosted by Motor City Bears	27																																																																																																		
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Current Events

events.PerceptionsSV.org

▼ **April 5th - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions this week at **Cafe American**, [1525 Washington Street](#), Midland. If you plan to attend, please reply to RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org by 3:00 pm Friday.

April 8th to 12th - CMU Pride Week The Office of LGBTQ Services at CMU presents a full line up of events and activities for Pride Week 2013 including a keynote address by Charlene Strong, a nationally respected advocate for marriage equality and LGBT civil rights; a poetry reading; Drag Show! hosted by Sabin; panel discussions; and Day of Silence photo shoot with Matthew Bryan Pruitt. For more info, see the [full schedule](#).

Wed., April 10th - Drag Show! With Sabin 7:00 pm. This event is part of the [CMU Pride Week](#) celebration. Drag queens that know how to dance, romance, and entrance! Featuring Sabin, one of the fiercest hosts that CMU has ever seen! Students tipping their favorite queens ... and a lap dance or two. Finch Fieldhouse, Mt. Pleasant.

Wed., April 10th - Jonathan D. Lovitz 8:00 pm. Speaking Out Loud presents advocate and entertainer [Jonathan D. Lovitz](#). An accomplished stage and screen actor, Lovitz is perhaps best known for his seasons on MTV Networks' "Setup Squad" and "1 Girl 5 Gays" as well as host and interviewer for MTV, NPR, Broadway TV and The Red Carpet Network. His career includes multiple Broadway nation tours, regional theatre throughout the US and Europe, as well as commercials and ads running worldwide. Listen to Lovitz at this community event as he speaks on the topic of Being an "Accidental Advocate." As a gay rights advocate, Jonathan travels the country speaking out for marriage equality, LGBTQ youth issues, and positive exposure for the community -- especially in the worlds of business and education. Rhea Miller Recital Hall at SVSU.

Wed., April 10th - Open Hearts 6:00 pm. Positive thinking group for disabled members of the LGBT community. Discussion, speakers and support. Meets at Butman Fish Library in Saginaw. For info call Rev. Kathy at 989-392-6874.

▼ **April 12th - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions this week at the **Savoy Grill**, [127 S. Franklin St.](#), Saginaw. Please reply to RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org by 3:00 pm Friday if you plan to attend.

Sat., April 13th - A Soulforce Training on Non-Violent Resistance Presented by [Inclusive Justice](#). Rev. Dr. Cindi Love, Exec. Dir. of [Soulforce](#), and keynote speaker will address the changing face of activism, "Pop Ups, Flash Mobs & Digital Activism in the Public Square." Following the keynote, interactive seminars will focus on the "how to" of social and digital actions designed to change the hearts and minds of religious and political oppression. Registration begins at noon. Dinner included. EMU Student Center, 900 Oakwood St., Ypsilanti.

Sunday, April 14th - Genesee County PFLAG Meeting 2:00 - 4:30 pm. The meeting takes place at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Flint, [2474 S. Ballenger Hwy.](#) For more information, contact pflagflint@yahoo.com.

▼ **Tues., April 16th - Men's Discussion Group** 7:00 to 8:30 pm. The Alderton Bldg., [301 Cass St.](#), Old Town Saginaw. This gathering is intended as a discussion and informal support group for gay and bisexual men. The group will be facilitated by Thomas Brubaker. Contact Thomas@PerceptionsSV.org for additional information or to let him know you'll attend. Light snacks will be provided.

Wed., April 17th - Womyn's Room II 6:00 pm. This women's group is designed as a safe place for Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender women, who are out or not, to come for support and socialization. For more info. contact Rev. Kathy VanBuskirk at 989-392-6874.

▼ **Thurs., April 18th - Perceptions General Meeting** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions for our monthly meeting, featuring a panel discussion about gender identity. The Alderton Bldg, [301 Cass St.](#), Saginaw. Refreshments will be served. All are welcome. For more information, contact info@PerceptionsSV.org.

Fri., April 19th - Day of Silence The [Day of Silence](#) is a student-led national event that brings attention to anti-LGBT name-calling, bullying and harassment in schools. Students from middle school to college take a vow of silence in an effort to encourage schools and classmates to address the problem of anti-LGBT behavior by illustrating the silencing effect of bullying and harassment on LGBT students and those perceived to be LGBT.

▼ **April 19th - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions this week at **Mandarin House**, [3000 Center Ave.](#), Essexville. Please reply to RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org by 3:00 pm Friday if you plan to attend.

Sunday, April 21st - PFLAG Meeting 2:00 - 4:30 pm. The meeting takes place at Our Saviour Lutheran Church, 2525 Hemmeter Rd., Saginaw. For more information contact pflag@pflag-mbs.org or 989-941-1458.

▼ **April 26th - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join friends from Perceptions and Motor City Bears this week at **El Potrero Mexican Restaurant**, [5516 Fenton Rd.](#), Flint. If you plan to attend, please reply to RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org by 3:00 pm Friday.

▼ **Event sponsored or endorsed by Perceptions.**

To be informed about upcoming events, simply send a blank email to: PerceptionsSV-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Meet the Advisor

Amy McDonald

I am pleased to serve as an advisor on the board of Perceptions and forward to working with the organization. I am hoping to help re-energize the Transgender group as my first task working with Perceptions. In the future I would like to explore a bisexual support group as well as any other support groups that will be needed.

I received my Master of Arts in Professional Counseling from Spring Arbor University and hold the Limited License Professional Counselor (LLPC) designation. I am a counselor with the Fresh Aire Samaritan Counselor center and am an LGBTQ safe counselor. I have a background in domestic violence, parenting and family preservation. I am currently accepting new clients.

I have worked for Lutheran Child and Family Service for the past seven years. Working to help keep families together and become stronger has been a wonderful experience.

When I am not working I enjoy helping my church, the United Church of Christ. I enjoy the outdoors and spending time with my family and friends.

Supreme Court Hearings, Continued

taxes. On the day of DOMA hearing, The Wall St. Journal interestingly wrote, "...both the federal and state governments agree with the plaintiffs that the challenged laws are unconstitutional, and have declined to defend them on appeal." The Court will rule by late June 2013.

Michigan and same-sex marriage?

In 2004, Michigan voters passed a constitutional amendment, Proposal 2, that said: "To secure and preserve the benefits of marriage for our society and for future generations of children, the union of one man and one woman in marriage shall be the only agreement recognized as a marriage or similar union for any purpose."

The amendment prohibited same-sex marriages, civil unions, and some public employees from providing health insurance and other benefits to domestic partners.

Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette argued that the state should be able to ban gay marriage and wrote that "same-sex relationships are different in that they lack the natural capacity to bear children and the ability to provide a biologically-connected role model of both womanhood and manhood."

Support for gay marriage is growing in Michigan, mirroring changing attitudes in many parts of the United States. A 2012 Michigan State University survey found that 56 percent of the state's residents support gay marriage while 39 percent oppose it. While President Obama endorses marriage equality and hopes Proposal 8 and DOMA will be found unconstitutional, we have no idea how the final ruling will affect Michigan's same-sex marriage ban.

Same-day Supreme Court audio and transcripts

The Supreme Court will post audio files and transcripts on its website (<http://www.supremecourt.gov>) after the proceedings on March 26 and March 27, 2013.

References

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Proposition_8
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Defense_of_Marriage_Act
- <http://www.wzzm13.com/news/article/249253/2/Bill-Schuette-wants-Supreme-Court-to-let-states-keep-gay-marriage-bans>
- <http://www.pridesource.com/article.html?article=59162>

Same Day HIV Testing in Saginaw

Leo Romo

If you are active sexually, make sure you check your HIV status regularly. Same day HIV testing is available in Saginaw now - results in about 20 minutes. HIV tests are always confidential and fast. Same day HIV testing is available at Hearth Home and the Saginaw County Department of Public Health on the days and hours below:

Saginaw County Department of Public Health

1600 North Michigan Ave.

Saginaw, MI 48602, .Room 312

Phone: 989-758-3880

Website: <http://saginawpublichealth.org/>

Walk-in services:

Tuesday: 8:15am - 12:00pm and 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Wednesday: 1:00pm - 7:00pm

Appointment Only:

Monday, Thursday, Friday:

8:15am - 12:00pm and 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Hearth Home

732 Hoyt Ave in Saginaw, Michigan

Phone: (989) 753-9011

Website: <http://www.healthdelivery.org/programs-services/hearth-home/>

Monday-Friday: 9am - 5pm, open at lunch

Jimmie L Burkhead Jr.

Hearth Home

HIV Intervention and Outreach
Coordinator

(989) 753-9011

Jburkhead@healthdelivery.org



April Meeting

Daphne Barkley

Mark your calendars now for Thursday, April 18th at 7:00pm for the next Perceptions General Meeting.

April's meeting will feature a panel on Transgender issues. Among the confirmed panel members are parents of a MTF transgender, a MTF transgender, and a professional counselor who specializes in LGBTQ issues.

We are working on several other panel members as well. The panel will include a moderated discussion with panel members as well as a question and answer portion. We hope to see you there.

The meeting will be in Saginaw at one the second floor of the Alderton Building located at [301 Cass Street](#).

2013 Membership Incentive

Compliments of The Mixx Nightclub & Metro Grille

Throughout 2013, show your Perceptions Membership

Card at the door and receive \$2 off adult cover or \$3 off minor cover (18 to 20). This offer is good for regular nights and most show nights. Exclusions apply for Fundraisers, New Years, and Special Shows.



SAVE THE DATE
Perceptions 12th Holiday Gayla
Saturday, December 7, 2013

Apple Mountain Resort
4519 North River Road
Freeland, MI 48623

(989) 781-6789

<http://www.applemountain.com/>