



# PERCEPTIONS

## SAGINAW VALLEY

Serving the Tri-City Area's LGBT Community

July/August 2013

[www.PerceptionsSV.org](http://www.PerceptionsSV.org)

Free



Perceptions Attends Tri City Pride

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 Supreme Court Cases,  
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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 Members, Friends, and Allies' Generosity Makes 2013 Yard Sale A Success

by Tom Brubaker

This year's Perceptions Annual Charity Yard Sale for AIDS Walk was another success thanks to your donations of items, volunteers who helped set up and work at the event, and all of you who came and bought items. Thanks to all of you, we raised a total of \$725.01! Yes that's a penny at the end of that figure. Beautiful weather, hard-working volunteers, and a great location in the center of Saginaw Township, I believe helped contribute to our success.

\$500 of the yard sale proceeds will go to Perceptions' sponsorship of the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Walk Great Lakes Bay Region to be held at Wenonah Park on Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>. The additional \$225.01 will be credited to Perceptions' walk team fundraising effort.

There are so many people to thank, especially the following: Randy, Jim, Shawn, Rick, Joel, Kelly, Fred, Dann, Clint, Kay, Janice, Bruce, Patrick, and Daphne! I also want to thank my special "friend" Marc who was so patient with all of us at our house and made lunch on Saturday.

Thank you so much Perceptions friends and allies for your generous support of AIDS Walk. You have been such an important partner in this annual walk event since it began back in 2005. Your donations make it possible for support services to be there for the 170+ clients living with HIV/AIDS in our region, that we serve.

I look forward to seeing many of you, as we join in the fight against HIV/AIDS, at AIDS Walk on September 21<sup>st</sup>!

# Third Annual Tri City Pride Festival

by Kathy Lloyd

If there was anything that stood out, about this year's pride festival, it was the heat!! The comments ranged from, "like a sauna", "it was broiling", "it's crazy hot" to "sizzling". Even though the heat probably acted as a deterrent to some, approximately 2,000 hearty souls, spent the day on Ojibway Island, celebrating LGBT pride.

The speakers included Mayor Greg Branch of Saginaw, Congressman Dan Kildee and attorney Alicia Skillman, all returning speakers from last year, who were there to show their support for our community.

Everywhere you looked and walked were booths. Fifty-five booths, up from last year's 32, were lined up, making it a virtual tent city. There was something for everyone. The old standbys like Perceptions, PFLAG of Tri-Cities, the Transgender Booth, GLAAD of Midland, and PFLAG of Flint were all there again, showing their support, passing out information, and even giving out some free stuff!

The new booths this year included a Buddhist Booth, the UCC Church of Midland, the VA of Saginaw and many others. There were plenty of places to get food and drink. Everyone was carrying water. Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate...I think we all got that one. The rainbow paraphernalia was beautiful, colorful and everywhere. Not to mention the clothes and T-shirts for sale this year. My favorite T-shirt said Real Dykes Ride Harleys.

The entertainment consisted of Kris Pride of Bay City, Asio Aviance (aka Corey Northern), Sandy Mulligan and her band of Gypsies, Abby Stauffer of Ann Arbor, April Devine, The Bay-side Bombshell Burlesque Troupe and Missy MiCock performing Adele. Once again, the entertainment was a rollicking good time.

Dow, a strong and consistent ally of LGBT rights and our fight for equality, again stepped up to the plate, with a \$3,000.00 donation to fund this event. Please support them, as they support our community. They were one of the first companies to really "get it." Our communities produce good, hardworking, strong workers who, let's face it, make them money.

Again this year, Rev. Kathy VanBuskirk produced and organized this event, which is no small task. Her energy, drive and vision are what started Tri-City Pride to begin with. She is already at work on Tri-Fest IV and plans to include a family parade and a Mr. Tri City and Miss Tri City contest. She asks that all people

interested in running for Mr. Tri City (males, transgender FTM and drag kings) and Miss Tri City contestants (females, transgender MTF and drag queens) contact her at [tricitymichiganlgbtpride@yahoo.com](mailto:tricitymichiganlgbtpride@yahoo.com).

She also needs volunteers for next year. There is room for everyone with skills, ideas and drive to help put this event on. Please contact her at the above e-mail, if you think you would like to volunteer. Next year's date is the last Saturday of June. June 28th to be exact.

As with any event this large, there are bound to be some glitches. A rather large one was discovered after the event itself. People who didn't donate to get in the main gate, were turned away. Rev. Kathy wants everyone to know, that donations are purely voluntary and apologizes to anyone who was affected by this mix up.

Last of all, there were protestors at the main entrance. WOW, have we arrived or what! They were a handful of people, carrying professional signs, with those same old tired bible verses on them. The man whose eye I tried to catch, looked mortified to me. As far as I know, they were respectful to us, and we were to them. So get ready for next year, the last Saturday of June. Let's have next year's LGBT Tri-City Pride event the biggest yet. Let's make it so big that Westboro Church comes to protest. Hell, we might even make it on CNN.



Members of PFLAG Tri Cities pose in front of their booth.

## Six Honored at 5th Annual Pride Awards Banquet

On June 25, local LGBT's and allies gathered for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Pride Banquet. Five individuals and one business received awards for their contributions to bettering life for the local LGBT community. The awards were given as follows:

### **Business Pride Award: Pasong's Cafe**

"Pasong" and her daughters, Nonnie Blondin and Tina Saycosie, have long supported the LGBT community. Pasong's is currently owned by Tina, a lesbian, and has donated to the Holiday Party, the Chocolate Party, and other fundraisers, over the years. The family and employees have been involved in the AIDS Walk and other community projects as well.

### **Political Pride Award: Annie Boensch**

Annie is a member of the Saginaw City Council, and has been a huge supporter of equal rights for not just LGBT's, but all of Saginaw City and County residents, as well. She was the first Saginaw County political leader to sign a statement from Unity Michigan LEAD (Local Elected Against Discrimination.) LEAD proudly supports non-discrimination protections for LGBT residents.

### **Pride Award: Alberto (Beto) Jiminez**

Alberto is an openly gay Latino who created an "Equality" float for Saginaw's 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Cinco de Mayo Parade, in an effort to fight LGBT discrimination within the area, especially within the Latino community. The float was sponsored by Perceptions & PFLAG and took second place. Alberto has also volunteered for the Tri City Pride Festival for the last three years and was involved with La Union Civica Mexicana, Saginaw's oldest Mexican American organization. He serves on the board of the Mexican American Council and is starting a business called Party Loco.

### **Pride Award: Kay Sural**

Kay served on the board of Perceptions for six years, several of them as Vice Chair. She has been a huge champion for LGBT rights in the Great Lakes Bay Region, through her friendliness and a natural ability to connect with others. She was a leader in planning many of Perception's annual holiday parties, and other events, as well.

### **Pride Award: Rick Farrand**

Rick has been active in the LGBT community for almost 25 years. He was a founding member of Dignity Tri-Cities, and helped with fund raising, candlelight vigils, and making AIDS Quilt panels. He participated in marches in Detroit and Lansing in the 1980's and 90's. He was a member of the Buddy Program, visiting residents of the Tri-Cities who were living with AIDS. He has helped Perceptions organize dances, fundraisers, banquets and Highway Cleanups.

### **Lifetime Achievement Pride Award: Dr. Dale Merkle**

Dale is a former president of the local PFLAG group and was a member of the Bay City Board of Education from 1998-2002. He was instrumental in establishing a non-discrimination policy, that includes sexual orientation, in Bay City schools. He has written more than 30 articles that address LGBT rights and became PFLAG's Gulf Regional Director after moving to Atlanta, Georgia.

Please join Perceptions in congratulating all of this year's Pride Award recipients.

## Current Events

events.PerceptionsSV.org

▼ **August 2<sup>nd</sup> - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions friends this week at El Mexicano, 3593 Center Ave., Essexville. If you plan to attend, please reply to [RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org](mailto:RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org) by 3:00 pm Fri.

**Thurs. & Fri., August 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> – PFLAG Tri-Cities Yard Sale** 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. 3545 Christy Way S., Saginaw. Please donate yard sale items. Call 989-941-1458 or 989-798-6660 or email [pflag@pflag-mbs.org](mailto:pflag@pflag-mbs.org) All proceeds will be used for the Sept 21th AIDS Walk.

▼ **August 9<sup>th</sup> - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions friends this week at Sullivan's, 5235 Gratiot Rd., Saginaw. If you plan to attend, please reply to [RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org](mailto:RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org) by 3:00 pm Fri.

**Sat., August 10<sup>th</sup> – Transgender Pride in the Park** Noon to 6:00 pm. All Trans-people and allies welcome. Picnic, fun, great friends. Hot dogs provided. Please bring a dish if you wish. Geary Park, Pinecrest Drive at Earle Blvd., Ferndale. [www.transgendermichigan.org](http://www.transgendermichigan.org)

**Sun., August 11<sup>th</sup> – Genesee County PFLAG Meeting** 2:00 pm. UU Church of Flint, 2474 S. Ballenger Hwy, Flint.

▼ **August 16<sup>th</sup> - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions friends this week at **Diamond Jim's**, 101 E. Main St., Midland. If you plan to attend, please reply to [RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org](mailto:RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org) by 3:00 pm Fri.

**Sat., August 17<sup>th</sup> – EqualityFest 2013** 11:00 am to 8:00 pm. Live music, informational booths, artists, food, workshops. Keynote address by Mel White: “The power of Gandhi’s Satyagraha and other social justice movements to achieve marriage equality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” On the grounds of **Harrisville Holistic Center**, 200 N. State St., on Hwy 23 near Hwy 72 Jct, 30 miles north of Tawas. Free camping. [www.harrisvilleholistic.org](http://www.harrisvilleholistic.org)

**Sun., August 18<sup>th</sup> – PFLAG Tri-Cities Meeting** 2:00 to 4:30 pm. The meeting takes place at Our Saviour Lutheran Church, 2525 Hemmeter Rd., Saginaw. For more information contact [pflag@pflag-mbs.org](mailto:pflag@pflag-mbs.org) or 989-941-1458.

▼ **Tues., August 20<sup>th</sup> – Men’s Discussion Group** 7:00 pm. This gathering is intended as a discussion and informal support group for gay and bisexual men. The group will be facilitated by Chris Lauckner. You may contact him at [Chris@PerceptionsSV.org](mailto:Chris@PerceptionsSV.org) for additional information or to let him know you’ll attend. Light snacks will be provided. **The Alderton Bldg.**, 301 Cass Street, Old Town Saginaw.

▼ **Thurs., Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup> – Perceptions Summer Picnic** 5:00 to 8:00 pm. All members, friends, family and allies are welcome. Members receive free picnic food, free beverage and free Perceptions T-shirt. Non-Members \$4 food & beverage / \$12 T-Shirt. **Harvey R. Wickes Park**, 7431 McCarty Rd., Saginaw Twsp.

▼ **August 23<sup>rd</sup> - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions friends this week at **Rusty Saw BBQ**, 1205 Washington Ave., Bay City. If you plan to attend, please reply to [RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org](mailto:RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org) by 3:00 pm Fri.

▼ **Sat., August 24<sup>th</sup> – Michigan Pride** State Pride March & Rally at the Capitol, Diversity Festival in Old Town Lansing. [www.MichiganPride.org](http://www.MichiganPride.org)

▼ **August 30<sup>th</sup> - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions friends this week at Macy's Lakeshore Grill, 4750 Fashion Square Blvd., Saginaw. If you plan to attend, please reply to [RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org](mailto:RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org) by 3:00 pm Fri.











▼ **Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> – Shore to Shore Equality Ride** An annual bike ride from Metro Detroit to Saugatuck and a project of the Community Center Network. We’d love to find cyclists who will ride for Team Perceptions. For more information, visit [equalityride.dojiggy.com](http://equalityride.dojiggy.com) or contact Andi Greer, Event Coordinator, at 248-677-7215 or [AGreer@GoAffirmations.org](mailto:AGreer@GoAffirmations.org)

▼ **Sat., September 21st - AIDS Walk Bay City / Midland / Saginaw** The 9th Annual AIDS Walk Bay City / Midland / Saginaw will take place at Wenonah Park in Downtown Bay City with registration at 9:30 a.m., walk rally at 10:30 a.m. and an 11 a.m. walk time. This event helps provide support services for the clients of Sacred Heart Rehabilitation Center’s AIDS Care Program, as well as free and confidential HIV testing and prevention education at several locations in the Tri-Cities and Greater Flint Regions. Visit the AIDS Walk website to register. For more information, please contact Tom Brubaker, AIDS Walk Coordinator at Sacred Heart Rehabilitation Center, 989-776-6000, extension 7514.

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

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

# AUGUST 2013

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 Tri-Cities PFLAG Meeting Our Saviour Lutheran 2525 Hemmeter Rd. Saginaw, 2:00 - 4:30 PM	19	 Perceptions Men's Discussion Group The Alderton Bldg. 301 Cass St., Saginaw 7:00 - 8:30 PM	21	 Perceptions Summer Picnic <b>H. R. Wickes Park</b> 7431 McCarty Rd. Saginaw Twsp., 5 - 8 PM	 Friday Night Dinner <b>Rusty Saw BBQ</b> 1205 Washington Ave. Bay City 7:00 PM	24 Michigan Pride State Pride March & Rally at the Capitol, Diversity Festival in Old Town Lansing																																																																																				
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# The Fight For Same Sex Marriage Comes to Michigan

## by Brent Theisen

On June 26, a historic day for LGBT rights, the Supreme Court handed down decisions on two high profile cases. A key provision of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) was struck down, allowing same-sex couples many of the federal benefits which heterosexuals take for granted. Married same-sex couples in thirteen states—and the District of Columbia—now have their unions legally recognized by the federal government and will receive social security benefits and be able to file joint tax returns.

On the same day, the Supreme Court also ruled that the defendants in *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, which challenged the constitutionality of California's Proposition 8 ban on gay marriage, had no standing in court. They dismissed the case, allowing a lower court ruling, which found the ban unconstitutional, to stand. The ruling, allowing same sex marriages to resume in California, has no effect on the 37 states that do not allow gay marriage.

So the battle for equality in the rest of the country continues. Here at home, April DeBoer

and Jayne Rowse, a lesbian couple from suburban Detroit, are challenging Michigan's constitutional ban on gay marriage. The couple of ten years, six of them living together, are also suing for the right to adopt each others children. DeBoer has an adopted daughter and Rowse has two adopted boys, all of whom were adopted since the couple moved in together.

U.S. District Court Judge Bernard Friedman has scheduled oral arguments for October 1. He is expected to issue a written opinion soon after. Refusing to dismiss the case, Friedman said, in a written statement, that the couple was "entitled to their day in court and they shall have it."

Will Michigan be one of the next states to strike down an anti-gay amendment to its state constitution? One thing is certain. With the majority of Americans nationwide now supporting gay marriage, as well as the majority of Michiganders, equal marriage rights are just a matter of time.



On Tuesday, July 2nd, Perceptions hosted a "Celebration Happy Hour" at Harvey's in Saginaw, to applaud the Supreme Court rulings. There were drinks, appetizers and a few prizes were handed out.

# New Transgender Group to Form

by Amy McDonald

My name is Amy McDonald. Late this spring, I was honored to be asked to serve as an adviser to the Perceptions Board. I have been involved in activities and events in the past. I am looking forward to helping this organization in any way I can.

I have been asked to facilitate a Transgender Support Group. I think that could be an exciting way to get to know more of you.

I have begun to plan the group and would like to see meetings start this fall. I have met with Rebecca Dunn, Rachel Prenzler and Tim Atkinson to help prepare. I am hoping to get more feedback to better understand the needs of the group. Please complete the survey to the right on Survey Monkey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JCXC2BL>. You could also complete the survey and email it to me at [amycmu@yahoo.com](mailto:amycmu@yahoo.com)

I look forward to starting this group and helping with other projects at Perceptions. I would like to start a Bisexual Support Group if needed. Please feel free to share any feedback about that group or other interest you have.

1. Have you participated in a Transgender Group with Perceptions in the past?  
A. Yes B. No
2. Do you think that a Transgender Group is needed in the area?  
A. Yes B. No
3. What kinds of educational speakers/ events would you like to see or do?
4. What kind of fun events do you feel could be beneficial to a Transgender Group.
5. Do you feel the public has an understanding of Transgender folks?
6. Do you feel others in the LGBT community have an understanding of Transgender folks?
7. If you were to attend a Transgender Support Group, would you like allies in the group?
8. If you were to attend a Transgender Support Group, how often would you come and what days work best?

# Volunteers Enjoy Highway Cleanup

by Randy Hasso

The Perceptions Highway Cleanup was a success on July 13th. We had 14 volunteers helping with the 2 mile clean-up of I-75. Everyone had a great time and I want to thank Dave, Dave, Mike, Alberto, Felipe, Rick, Bob, Andrew, Joel, Kelly, Dann, Leo, and Brian with helping out on a very hot sunny day.

We were able to fill 33 highway clean-up bags and also get rid of lots of bulky items like tire rubber and even a car door. We had a quick breakfast and then got

started with the task at hand. With such a great volunteer crew, we were able to finish both sides of the highway in a little over 2 and a half hours.

Afterwards we had a nice picnic lunch at the rest stop next to our designated clean up site. The picnic was relaxing and full of laughter and smiles. The last clean up of the year will be in mid September. Please consider helping out with this great Perceptions community event. Thanks.





## PERCEPTIONS SAGINAW VALLEY SUMMER PICNIC BASH [AN LGBT GATHERING FOR MEMBERS, FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND ALLIES]

**When:** Thursday - August 22

**Where:** Harvey Randall Wickes Park  
7431 McCarty Rd., Saginaw Twsp

**Time:** 5 pm - 8 pm

MEMBERS RECEIVE FREE PICNIC  
FOOD, DRINK, AND FREE  
PERCEPTIONS TEE-SHIRT  
NON-MEMBERS: \$4.00 / FOOD & DRINK  
\$12.00 / T-SHIRT  
PERCEPTIONS: AN EDUCATIONAL,  
SOCIAL, ADVOCACY, OUT REACH  
ORGANIZATION SERVING THE GREAT  
LAKES BAY REGION.

## LGBT Athletes/Spectators Could Be Arrested At the Winter Olympics in Russia

The disturbing news out of Russia keeps on coming. A new law, signed by President Vladimir Putin on June 30, allows the government to arrest and detain gay or pro-gay foreigners for up to 14 days, before expelling them from Russia. On July 3, Putin signed another law that bans the adoption of Russian born children by anyone—straight or gay—living in a country where gay marriage is legal. An earlier law had already classified “gay propaganda” as pornography.

So what does all this mean? In a *New York Times* op-ed piece, actor Harvey Fierstein said, “...any teacher who tells students that homosexuality is not evil, any parents who tell their child that homosexuality is normal, or anyone who makes pro-gay statements deemed accessible to someone underage is now subject to arrest and fines. Even a judge, lawyer or lawmaker cannot publicly argue for tolerance without the threat of punishment.” Fierstein goes on to relay a rumor that Putin will soon sign a law allowing the removal of children from any parent who is believed to be homosexual.

All of this is of more importance because the 2014 Winter Olympics are being held in Sochi, Russia, next February. Under pressure from human rights groups, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) released the following statement: “The IOC would like to reiterate our long commitment to non-discrimination against those taking part in the Olympic Games, the IOC is an open organization and athletes of all orientations will be welcome at the Games.” Many are not assured and some are calling for the United States to boycott the games all together.

You can read Fierstein's full article at [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/22/opinion/russias-anti-gay-crackdown.html?\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/22/opinion/russias-anti-gay-crackdown.html?_r=1&)



## Dollars 'n' Cents

by Greg Gwaltney

In our continued effort to be transparent, we are sharing additional Perceptions financial information. This quarter, we'll discuss the annual budget. The Board of Directors approves a budget each year. The budget guides the activities of the organization. The actual financial statements are compared to the budget monthly. This is the 2012 and 2013 budgets:

	2012 Annual Budget	2013 Annual Budg- et	
<b>REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT:</b>			
Memberships	\$3,230.00	\$2,780.00	
Newsletter Advertising Sales	\$200.00	\$100.00	
2013 Events	\$12,750.00	\$19,500.00	<b>A</b>
Interest	\$22.00	\$15.00	
Donations:			
Unrestricted	\$1,750.00	\$1,500.00	
Restricted	<u>\$1,650.00</u>	<u>\$5,300.00</u>	<b>B</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES/OTHER SUPPORT:</b>	<u>\$19,602.00</u>	<u>\$29,195.00</u>	
<b>EXPENSES:</b>			
Event Expenses	\$10,000.00	\$14,550.00	<b>C</b>
Unallocated General Expenses	<u>\$7,975.00</u>	<u>\$13,125.00</u>	<b>D</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<u>\$17,975.00</u>	<u>\$27,675.00</u>	
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	\$1,627.00	\$1,520.00	
Percent of revenue retained	8%	5%	

As you can see, certain numbers have changes significantly. Please see the descriptions below:

If you have any questions regarding the budget, please contact the Perceptions Treasurer Greg.

- A** This increase is due primarily to the expected increase in Holiday Party Revenue, based on last year's results.
- B** This increase is due primarily to potential counseling revenues; the board is investigating potential grant opportunities.
- C** This increase is related to the expected increase in Holiday Party Expenses, based on last year's results.
- D** This increase is related to the addition of "Outreach Emergency Care" and "Program Expense" line items. Increases in sponsorships and training/seminars are also contributors.