



PERCEPTIONS

SAGINAW VALLEY

Serving the Tri-City Area's LGBT Community

May/June 2014

www.PerceptionsSV.org

Free

Pro LGBT Ordinance Fails in Saginaw

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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

Perceptions mission is to provide inclusive educational, networking and advocacy programs for the diverse Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender individuals, allies and organizations in the community.

Perceptions Scholarship Award Winners Named

The 2014 Perceptions Saginaw Valley Scholarship winners have been selected. They are: **Brody Cragg**, Chesaning High School, receiving a \$750.00 award and **Magda Hlavcek**, a graduate of the Saginaw Arts and Science Academy and presently a sophomore at Harvey Mudd College, Claremont, CA. Harvey Mudd College is a liberal arts school with concentrated studies in mathematics, science, and engineering. Ms. Hlavcek received a \$500.00 scholarship award.

Mike Mercer, member of Perceptions, was the organization's ambassador as he represented Perceptions at the Excellence in Education, 2014 Scholarship Award Program held at the Horizon Conference Center, Saginaw on Monday, May 19. The program brings together representatives of the various businesses and organizations, providing a scholarship, and the scholarship award winners and their parents. The [Saginaw Community Foundation](#) accepts an administrative role as it manages the scholarship accounts.

This year's committee that reviewed and rated the Perceptions Scholarship applicants were: Tim Atkinson, Kay Sural, Floyd Andrick, and Mike Mercer. We thank them for their time and effort!

From Last Year's Winner:

"Dear Friends,

As this is the close of my second semester at Delta, I wanted to share my gratitude for the scholarship funding you provided. You have given me the opportunity to take courses I love which have steered me toward pursuing an Associate's in Science. I was on the President's list and have been accepted as a member of Phi Theta Kappa, the national honor society for two year colleges.

Your support has allowed me to participate in so many wonderful activities, including a three-day astronomy event where I interacted with professors from Eastern Michigan University and Delta and observed several planets, stars, and cluster galaxies through telescopes. In May, I will be accompanying three Delta professors and several students and community members to Costa Rica to bring school supplies to an impoverished elementary school near Monteverdi.

With gratitude, I will continue to honor your investment in me by paying it forward."

Sincerely,

*Caroline Sawatzki
(Saginaw, MI.)*

Saginaw:

Another Lesson in Building a Welcoming Community

by Char Davenport

The results are in: after a marathon of a meeting, the Saginaw City Council killed the proposed Human Rights Ordinance by refusing by a unanimous vote to re-introduce it.

Here is a rough time line of events:

April 7: Council member Annie Boensch introduces the Human Rights Ordinance. She is immediately catapulted into the spotlight as the issue takes over the front pages of local papers and is the lead story on local broadcast news programs. "This is long overdue," she said. "I am committed to getting this approved." Many of those from the faith community who are opposed to the ordinance express a concern that the ordinance will force them to compromise their deeply held religious convictions.

April 21: More than 120 people attend the City Council meeting. Most of the 29 people who speak to the City Council support the ordinance. Arguments for the ordinance include its positive economic impact, its protection from discrimination, and the welcoming message it sends to young people who are moving back into urban neighborhoods. But, after a nearly five-hour meeting, the Saginaw City Council passed a motion from Mayor Pro Tem Amos O'Neal to postpone indefinitely any consideration of the ordinance, or at least until all sides have been heard from and the language of the ordinance is clarified. There is confusion over what an "indefinite postponement" is, and City Attorney Andre Burrello asks several times if O'Neal knows what he is proposing. The *Saginaw News* reports the next day that the ordinance provides

"controversial protections against discrimination for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals." Council member Dan Fitzpatrick announces he ". . . will never vote for this, ever, no matter how many amendments you put in here."

May 5: Even though it's not on the agenda, nine people speak on the Human Rights Ordinance (five in support, four opposed). Those in favor continue to speak about the positive impact that inclusion and acceptance have on a community that has historically thrived because of its diversity. Those who are opposed point out that the ordinance would discriminate against those who have ethical and religious objections to treating members of the LGBTIQI community equally. "We don't just practice church on Sunday," an opponent says. Mayor Pro Tem Amos O'Neal, who made the motion to postpone the matter in April, says he is ready and willing to meet "behind closed doors . . . with people from both sides" to discuss possible changes to the proposal.

May 18: Rumors on the Internet indicate that the City Council will vote on the ordinance at the May 19 meeting, along with an amendment that would effectively ban transgender people from using any facility in the city that is gender specific. Another amendment would essentially allow discrimination against any "class of people" not already protected by state and Federal law. At a PFLAG meeting, Mayor Pro Tem Amos O'Neal and Council member Annie Boensch speak to the 25 people in attendance, but do not mention the amendment until they are backed into a rhetorical corner. O'Neal will not say how he will vote.

May 19: Even though it is not on the agenda, more than 120 people gather in City Hall for the meeting, which would last almost six hours. Thirty speak on the ordinance. After everyone spoke (21 in support of LGBTI rights and 9 against), council members comment on matters of concern. Members of the audience audibly gasp and are visibly shocked to hear Council member Dan Fitzpatrick tell them, "Most people know my position. What I'm totally amazed at is a number of people I've talked to or heard from say, 'Come on, just pass this thing.' Find out what it means later. Well how does that sound? Doesn't matter; if it's bad, fix it. Fix it later. It's going to happen eventually; just get with it. Be progressive. In about 1933 there was a real big youth



Continued on Next Page



Continued from Page 3

movement in Germany called the party of national socialists. A lot of people said, 'You know, I don't like them. I don't know; I don't understand. But man they're good for business.'" Afterward, the council flies through about 25 motions with up or down votes. During the "unfinished business" portion, Fitzpatrick makes a motion to bring the HRO back up for a vote, without the amendments. The motion is seconded and almost called to a vote, but City Attorney Andre Burrello points out that on April 21, the board did not table the ordinance, instead they "indefinitely postponed" the ordinance. "This effectively killed the ordinance," Borrello says. "You can't vote on this tonight. All you can do is introduce it as a new ordinance." So, after about another 45 minutes to an hour of discussion, the council voted unanimously to not re-introduce the ordinance. Members of the LGBTQI community and allies in support of human rights are relieved that the amendments were never enacted and that the ordinance, which has far too many flaws, is not approved.

May 20 & 21: Daniel Fitzpatrick's comments draw the attention of local, state and national news media who call him out for comparing the LGBTQI community to Nazis. MLive and Huffington Post and other national media outlets, publish the text of his comments. Predictably, rumors begin to circulate that he will eventually be forced to give up his seat on the council.

Opinion: On the night after City Council's "non-decision," nearly 700 comments are posted on the MLive page. There are too many to try and keep score of those in support and those opposed. Truth is, I didn't read more than a couple. It's not that I don't care what people say, but very few of those who post comments online ever include their real names. It's one thing to keep your identity a secret because you are afraid you might lose your job, your apartment, your friends, your children, and your life; but to hide your identity behind a cloak of secrecy so you can intentionally use hateful, angry and venomous language so as to berate and intimidate others is another entirely. I see no courage on display with such talk. And when you also consider what transpired in Bay County where a similar ordinance failed, it might feel to anyone who is gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or an ally that the entire Saginaw River Valley is regressing, rather than progressing, when it comes to human rights.

However, many from our community do not agree with that sentiment, and I am one of them. In fact, I am one of those who would argue that we are winning, not losing, these public debates before city council members and county commissioners. Even though I may not agree with the nine people who spoke against what I believe, at least they had the courage to openly express what they believe. And the same is true of the 21 people whose position on human rights agree with mine. Regardless of how divided they may be on this issue, those who spoke and those who were in the audience but did not speak, are the courageous leaders our community needs. Together, those of us who do not hide behind hate and false identities form the basis of a community that will sit with one another and break bread in an effort to hold Saginaw together. Focusing on Fitzpatrick's intentionally derisive comments will serve only to distract us all from the dialogue that must take place in the LGBTQI communities of the Saginaw River Valley. —Char Davenport



Bishop Ousley:

"Fear of Others is the Basis of Prejudice ... Respect Others...Reach Out"
by Kay Sural

Perceptions members, friends, and allies had the privilege of having Todd Ousley, Episcopal Bishop of the Eastern Diocese of Michigan as the presenter at the April General Meeting held on Thursday, April 24. Bishop Ousley was joined by Mike Spencer, Canon of the Ordinary and Katie Forsyth, Director of Communication and Public Education. The meeting was held at St. John's Episcopal Church in Saginaw. There were 40 attendees present for the event.

Bishop Ousley's topic was entitled: "Moving Forward in Hope." At one point, the Bishop mentioned that he had a prepared text; however, he began his presentation addressing the recent postponement, by the Saginaw City Council, to vote on the proposed 'Human Rights Amendment' as introduced by Councilwoman Anne Boensch. Given that the Saginaw Council meeting took place just a few days earlier, individuals at the meeting had questions and so a conversation was started with Bishop Ousley taking on the role of both presenter and facilitator.

Bishop Ousley did speak at the Saginaw City Council Meeting in support of the Ordinance. He shared his thoughts on how it might be able to be passed. One of his key points was, regardless of how we were taught to

relate to others, we must show respect for each other. The common thread, love your neighbor, love God and all the rest that is left to question "is just stuff." A second point that Bishop Ousley made was: "Fear of the other is often the basis for prejudice ...we must set aside this fear of the other." It would seem to follow that prejudice, based on fear, results in a person creating a pre-conceived idea of another individual. If there is an inability to reach out, respecting, hearing, and understanding the dialogue of each individual, then fear remains and prejudice continues. With making the two points, Bishop Ousley suggested that if people reflect on them and make them their personal call to action, a Human Rights Ordinance could be adopted allowing the City of Saginaw to have a bright future. He suggested that the LGBT community become visible: "Introduce yourself and shake as many hands as you can .. open yourself to your neighbors, coworkers, and family".

Bishop Ousley also shared that the Episcopal church is open and affirming to the LGBT community and in fact, allows same sex blessings.

It was an exceptional evening and the discussion left those who came to the meeting feeling, at its conclusion, hopeful for the future.

Spring Cleaning I 75

Beautification, Building Awareness and Community

by Chris Lauckner

Many of us move through the 'ritual' of spring cleaning the inside of our home or apartment. Ah, opening the windows, maybe cleaning them inside and out, only to move on to cleaning the carpets, and getting rid of some of those cobwebs, created over the winter months, and hanging from some corner. And, for the most part, when the task is accomplished we breathe in some fresh air that has, maybe, a scent of Pine-Sol, Clorox Bleach, rug cleaner/freshener, or furniture polish.

There are also those individuals who spring clean a bit of the great outdoors! Depending on the weather, they may have applied some sunscreen to protect the skin from the spring sun (you just never know how many rays you're getting on those cooler spring days).

Their heads may have been protected by the rain and sun by wearing a cap with eyes protected by wearing sunglasses. Their cleaning tools are their legs and hands and plastic bags with the assumption they wear gloves all the while they work.

These men and women are our Perceptions "ADOPT A HIGHWAY CLEAN UP" volunteers. On behalf of the board of trustees, members, friends, and allies I want to THANK each of the individuals who took part in the first clean up of the year held on Saturday, April 19.

The crew was headed up by Randy H. with the following individuals helping out: Mike M; Dann F; Rick F; Bob E; Alberto J; Rob T; Freedom and Dave S. For the majority, as the phrase goes: "This wasn't their first rodeo."

They are experienced handlers of those big plastic bags and picking up the litter along our adopted segment of I 75. It was reported that 45 bags of trash were picked up from both sides of the

highway; that's 5 bags of trash apiece if my math is correct. And, they accomplished the task in 2.5 hours! (It would take a lot longer, with the same number of people, to clean out our basement!) After their outdoor work they enjoyed sharing a nice lunch arranged by Randy H.

For most of us, we probably don't envision ourselves enjoying highway cleanup duty. Maybe it is more of a matter of realizing that the enjoyment is felt by those who are driving and can reap the benefit of viewing a clean length of highway. If motorists

or their passengers need to pull off on to the shoulder of the road then they have less of a chance to step on cans, broken bottles, or plastic containers where they could potentially fall and become injured. I supposed the analogy could be made that it is like a host who does all the prep for the party only to have it enjoyed by the guests. Analogously, the ADOPT A HIGHWAY CLEAN UP program is our way, as hosts, of welcoming out-of-state guests to PURE MICHIGAN.

What can the example of these nine individuals offer us? 1) the condition of our state does matter; in its natural state it is beautiful;

2) an awareness that it is up to each of us to maintain our environment and to keep it healthy by not littering; 3) the knowledge that a sense of community and friendship can continue to move forward by Perceptions' members, friends, and allies by coming together to reach an attainable goal.

Thanks to nine individuals who have made a difference and thanks, too, to the many other individuals who have taken part in our ADOPT A HIGHWAY CLEAN UP activities over the course of years. Your actions speak louder than words.



A CHALLENGE TO OUR READERS:

Are you willing to take 2.5 hours out of one day in MID-JULY to help with the next HIGHWAY CLEAN UP event?

Current Events

PerceptionsSV.org/events

▼ **June 13th - Friday Night Dinner** Join Perceptions this week at the annual **Greek Festival**, St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, 4970 Mackinaw Rd., Saginaw. Some Perceptions members will be there from 1:00 pm on into the evening. Come and go as you wish. No RSVP is necessary. If you have any questions, contact RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org.

Fri., June 13th - Public Forum on Second Parent Adoptions 7:30 pm. Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church, 23925 Northwestern Highway, Southfield. It Matters to Children! The Federal Sixth Circuit Court in Cincinnati will be hearing arguments this summer not only on the right of Michigan same sex couples to marry, but also to adopt each others' children. Learn more about this issue, from both a legal and a personal perspective. **FEATURED SPEAKERS:** Jay Kaplan, an attorney with the Michigan ACLU's LGBT Legal Project and one of the litigants in the federal appeals case; State Representative Jeff Irwin, who introduced legislation to legalize second parent adoptions in Michigan; and Colleen McInerney and Mary Mueller will share their story of raising two children, but were denied an adoption. This event is sponsored by the Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network (MUUSJN) and the Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church. Register online at <http://www.uujustice.org/conferenceregistration2.html> or call Randy Block at 248-549-5170.

June 13th & 14th - Kalamazoo Pride Arcadia Creek Festival Place, Kalamazoo. www.kglrc.org/pride

Sat., June 14th - Annual Cathedral District Community Yard Sale 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. **Hearth Home** parking lot, 732 Hoyt St., Saginaw.

Sat., June 14th - West Michigan Pride Calder Plaza, Downtown Grand Rapids. www.grlgbt.org/pride-2014/pride-festival-june-14th-2014/

Sun., June 15th - PFLAG Tri-Cities Meeting 2:00 pm at Our Saviour Lutheran Church, 2525 Hemmeter Rd., Saginaw. PFLAG offers support, education and advocacy for families, friends and LGBT individuals.

▼ **June 20th - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions this week at **Fuzzy's**, 1924 Court Street, Saginaw. If you plan to attend, please reply to RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org by 3:00 pm Fri.

Sat., June 21st - LGBT Older Adult Summit 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. "Living in the Spirit of Now 2014." Join us for the Fourth Annual LGBT Older Adult Summit, as they explore what it means to live in the spirit of now in multiple ways! Michigan State University Detroit Center, 3408 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Free of Charge. Register at bit.ly/R9gKEM

▼ **Tues., June 24th - Saginaw Valley LGBT Pride Awards Banquet** Local individuals, politicians, businesses and organizations will be recognized for their contributions to the betterment of the LGBT community. Andersen Enrichment Center, 120 Ezra Rust Dr., Saginaw. PerceptionsSV.org/pride

▼ **June 27 - Friday Night Dinner** 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions this week at **Café American**, 1525 Washington St., Midland. Please reply to RSVP@PerceptionsSV.org by 3:00 pm Fri. if you plan to attend

Friday, June 27th - Annual National HIV Testing Day For the fourth year, The Saginaw Community HIV/AIDS Task Force has committed to testing 200+ Saginaw & Bay City area residents for HIV in one day. Mark your calendars and set the date for free same day HIV results. Everyone 13 and older is welcome to participate in testing! See article on p. 15 for testing locations. For more information please contact Lilianna Reyes 989-753-9011 (lreyes@healthdelivery.org) or Jimmie Burkhead at 989-753-9011 (jb Burkhead@healthdelivery.org).

Sat., June 28th - Flint Pride in the Park 11:00 am to 7:00 pm. **University Pavilion Annex** (formerly the Skating Rink at Water Street Pavilion, S. Saginaw St. @ E. Union St.) and adjacent Riverbank Park. The intent of this event is to celebrate diversity in the Flint area, affirm gay and transgender individuals, increase viability and to build a sense of community. Pride events are a positive stance against discrimination and violence toward LGBT people. \$5 suggested donation.

Sat., June 28th - Holland Area Pride hollandareapride.com

Sun., July 13th - PFLAG Genesee County Support groups at 2:00 pm followed by refreshments and presentation at 3:30 pm. The meeting takes place at the **UU Church of Flint**, 2474 S. Ballenger Hwy.












July 22nd to 27th - Hotter Than July The second oldest African American LGBT social justice rally in the U.S. Detroit. www.hotterthanjuly.org

Sat., August 9th -- Transgender Pride in the Park Noon to 6:00 pm. Celebrating Transgender Michigan's 17th anniversary. All trans people and allies welcome. Hot dogs & fixings provided; please bring a dish to share if you're able. Geary Park, Earle Blvd @ Pinecrest Dr., Ferndale. www.transgendermichigan.org/events/pride.html

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

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

JUNE 2014

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 1 | 2 | 3  Perceptions Men's Discussion Group St. John's Episcopal 123 N. Michigan Ave. Saginaw, 7:00 PM | 4 Jazz on Jefferson Downtown Saginaw 4:45 PM | 5  Perceptions Transgender Group Populace Coffee 1003 Washington Ave. Bay City, 7:00 PM | 6  Friday Night Dinner Taboon 5212 Bay Rd. Saginaw 7:00 PM | 7  Motor City Pride Hart Plaza Detroit www.motorcitypride.org | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8  Genesee County PFLAG Meeting UU Church of Flint 2474 S. Ballenger Hwy Flint, 2:00 - 4:30 PM | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13  Friday Night Dinner Coco Loco 201 N. Euclid Ave. Bay City 7:00 PM | 14 Flag Day | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 Father's Day  PFLAG Tri-Cities Meeting Our Saviour Lutheran 2525 Hemmeter Rd. Saginaw, 2:00 - 4:30 PM | 16 | 17  Perceptions Board of Trustees Meeting | 18 | 19 | 20  Friday Night Dinner Fuzzy's 1924 Court St. Saginaw 7:00 PM | 21 Summer Solstice | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 22 | 23 | 24  Saginaw Valley LGBT Pride Awards Banquet Andersen Enrichment Cntr Saginaw 6:00 PM | 25 | 26 | 27  Friday Night Dinner Café American 1525 Washington St. Midland 7:00 PM | 28 Ramadan begins Flint Pride in the Park University Pavilion Annex & Riverbank Park Flint 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Cinco de Mayo Parade -- Don't Rain On My Parade!

Alberto Jimenez, a Saginaw Latino gay and community activist, created another EQUALITY float for the 35th Annual Cinco de Mayo Parade on Saturday, May 3. He made, and was able to submit, the first Equality float in 2013.

Even with the rain, Alberto hung Perceptions and PFLAG banners on the rainbow float as he and friends passed candy and information cards about Perceptions and PFLAG in the two mile parade.

The EQUALITY float was a perfect outreach project that was viewed by thousands. Alberto was quoted, "Don't rain on my parade!" Guess what? It did not rain!



Perceptions Mission Statement Gets an Update

by Dylan Moorehead

Change is afoot. Is it just me, or is this truly an exciting time in which we live? It is in the air, the water, under our very feet. Day after day the laws of our land are becoming more inclusive and despite some local set backs, the mere fact that some of these proposals are even having hearings at the municipal level as indeed a step in the right direction.

Change is afoot. In keeping step with all that is going on around us, we have updated and refocused the Perceptions Mission statement. The board felt a change was needed for a variety of reasons. In part, we felt it was very important that we directly address where you, the membership, view the future of this organization and where it needed to go. Further, it was important in lieu of all these changes that we face these challenges head

on, being the voice the community needs us to be. The previous mission, which has served Perceptions well in the past, neither reflected what the organization truly is currently doing, nor the directions in which it is going. The previous mission was: *Our mission is to provide superior educational programs, networking*

“Our mission is to provide inclusive educational, networking, and advocacy programs for our diverse Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender individuals, allies and organizations in the community.”

opportunities and services for the well being of gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender individuals and their community. Now, let's be clear. It is not that Perceptions is distancing itself from the works done in the past, or changing what the core values of the organization are.

After working and soul-searching, conversations and comments, reflection and deliberation, the NEW Perceptions Mission statement is as follows: *Our mission is to provide inclusive educational, networking, and advocacy programs for our diverse Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender individuals, allies and organizations in the community. The new wording is more inclusive of the groups in which we actually serve and connect with. It also focuses more on the advocacy the organization does and will continue to do. Finally, as we*

strive to make every decision based on how well it aligns with Perceptions' Mission, it will streamline the process and sharpen our focus as we move forward. I hope you will share in the excitement of the new things happening in our membership, our organization, and our community. Change is afoot.

Review: May's General Meeting **"Making Your Garden Grow"**

by Bob Enszer

A cool and exceptionally rainy spring could not dampen the spirits of the members and friends who attended the May 15th General Meeting of Perceptions. Program presenter Ed Hutchison, a master gardener and author, challenged us to think spring and try container gardening. He had a variety of flowering annuals, foliage plants, and herbs, purchased by Perceptions for the evening's activity, to capture our attention.

Using three large planters thoughtfully provided by Perceptions leaders, Ed proceeded to demonstrate how pots can be organized for full sun or shade settings as well as for a home herb garden. While he deftly planted flowers such as geraniums and ageratum and foliage plants such as coleus, Ed handled questions from enthusiastic on-lookers just as expertly. Topics such as type of container to use, potting soil mixes, compatible plants, how many plant varieties to use in a pot, and moisture requirements were all considered.

Then volunteers were recruited from the audience to plant the last of the three containers, which truly acted as a call to action for the rest of us to become involved as garden enthusiasts. An instructional handout written by Ed Hutchison with tips on container gardening culminated the well-planned event.

A raffle at the end of the evening awarded the three large now-planted containers to lucky winners and all people present were able to select greenhouse pots planted with herbs such as basil, cilantro, rosemary, parsley, or chives to serve as reminders of a pleasant evening and to promote gardening interest, reinforcing the satisfaction it brings.



Saginaw Valley LGBT & Ally Pride Awards Banquet

The 6th Annual Pride Awards Banquet is Tuesday, June 24th. We will honor individuals, organizations, and businesses who have made great contributions to the LGBT community. It will take place at the Andersen Enrichment Center, 120 Ezra Rust Drive, Saginaw, MI. The night will be as follows:

6 pm - 7 pm - Garden Reception
 7 pm - 8 pm - Dinner catered by the Savoy Grill
 8 pm - 9 pm - Pride Awards Program and Ceremony

Charis Urbano will be the emcee.

Nominations are due by **June 13th**. A nomination form is attached and is also available on the web site. You may nominate individuals, organizations, and businesses who have made great contributions to the

LGBT community.


Sponsorships are due by **June 20th**. Sponsorships defray the cost of the banquet and help keep tickets affordable. Sponsorship levels begin at only \$10. The sponsorship form is on page 13 or on the web site. Sponsors' names will be posted on the Pride Awards Banquet's website and printed in the program. They can be given in memory of, or in honor of, another. Of course, sponsors may remain anonymous.

Tickets are \$25 in advance or only \$15 for students online. Nomination and Ticket & Sponsorship forms are available on the next two pages. Tickets and Sponsorships may also be purchased online on the web site. If you have any questions, call 989-891-1429 or email pride@perceptionsSV.org

Perceptions is One of Four Community Centers in Michigan Awarded Grants for LGBT Health Data Collection

CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers today announced that four LGBT community centers located in Michigan will receive grants for the purpose of collecting health related data, such as tobacco use rates, from their community members at various locations and programs throughout the summer months, including PRIDE events and various locations. The awards came as a result of technical assistance provided by CenterLink's Network for LGBT Health Equity to The Michigan State Department of Community Health Tobacco Section, which is funding the grants. The four agencies are Perceptions Saginaw Valley, serving the Great Lakes Bay Region; Affirmations Lesbian and Gay Community Center in Ferndale, MI; The Network in Grand Rapids, MI; and KICK-The Agency for Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transgender African Americans in Detroit. Very little health data exists on the LGBT population. The intent of this project is to collect and analyze health related data from Michigan's LGBT community through a Wellness Needs Assessment which has been developed, and will be analyzed, by CenterLink's Network for LGBT Health Equity. In addition to the collection of data, the four agencies have committed to disseminate culturally competent "quit tobacco" messages and facts to their constituents, healthcare professionals and legislators in order to demonstrate the need for increased funding of, and access to, health related services for the LGBT population. Christopher Lauckner, Chair of Perceptions stated: "Our organization is very pleased to partner with the Michigan Department of Community Health and CenterLink by gathering health related information, like tobacco use, from Michigan's LGBT population. Having been a past health educator and administrator for the Central Michigan District Health

Department, I am aware that the Wellness Needs Assessment data will offer extremely important information to further the development of health education programming, adding additional access to medical care and treatment for the LGBT community in the State of Michigan. I personally encourage all LGBT persons to take part and complete the Wellness Needs Assessment." Access to the assessment will be made available in multiple ways: 1) Perceptions planned events, activities; 2) PRIDE events, where hard copies of the health assessment will be made available; 3) Online at: www.PerceptionsSV.org, where a custom link will offer easy access to the assessment on June 9, 2014. Perceptions Saginaw Valley is a non-profit organization, formed in March of 2002. Over the years, Perceptions has been a steady force in the Great Lakes Bay Region, advocating for acceptance, equality and respect for all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. As an all-volunteer non-profit organization, Perceptions offers a variety of educational, social and networking opportunities for residents of the Great Lakes Bay Region and surrounding areas.



Bodhi Mind Zen
 A Taego Zen Buddhist Sangha
Rev Bup Ahn Brian
 Guiding Teacher
 Meditation, Teaching, Pastoral Services

1015 Court St
 Saginaw MI 48602
 989 574-8097
bupahn@yahoo.com

**Open, Affirming,
 Inclusive**

**DUE
JUNE 13**

AWARD NOMINATION FORM

for The LGBT & Ally Pride Awards Banquet

June 24, 2014 Andersen Enrichment Center

We invite you to nominate outstanding individuals or organizations who have helped the Saginaw Valley LGBT community. Read the award descriptions below and use as a guide for your nomination.

Lifetime Achievement Award The highest award given to an individual who has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to attain a better life for LGBT people and who has demonstrated effectiveness at reaching the goal of equality, fairness and justice for the entire LGBT community.

Business Award Given to a business that has shown dedication and commitment to our local LGBT community and has demonstrated their work to empower the LGBT people within the Saginaw Valley region to achieve civil and social equality.

Political Award Given to an outstanding leader who has worked to improve the quality of life for LGBT people through the political or electoral process.

Champion of Pride Awards Given to individuals, couples or organizations that have made an exceptional contribution to the LGBT community and through their advocacy of community pride may be deemed a role model for other LGBT people and allies. The Champion of Pride Award may recognize those who have done such things as:

- contributed to awareness of LGBT issues
- provided support to LGBT organizations
- challenged discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity
- taken action to improve the climate for LGBT people

Rising Star Award Given to an individual who is a newcomer to the community or the equality movement and who has demonstrated outstanding potential to become a leader and supporter of the LGBT community.

Nominees will be evaluated on the basis of leadership, impact and commitment to the LGBT community. Pride Nomination Committee members are ineligible for an award.

To help us to evaluate the nominees, please include a letter that answers the following questions fully and succinctly.

1. Describe the nominee's involvement in or support for the LGBT community. Be as specific as possible.
2. Briefly describe why this nominee deserves an award at the Saginaw Valley Pride Banquet.
3. Describe how the nominee's actions have made a difference in the quality of life for the LGBT community in the Saginaw Valley region, or at the state or national level.

I NOMINATE: _____

Full name of the individual or organization that you wish to nominate.

Nominee's phone: _____

Nominee's email: _____

Name of Award: _____

My name: _____

My phone: _____

My email address: _____

Submit this form & a short letter that describes the nominee.

Mail or scan & email to:

PRIDE Nomination Committee
c/o Perceptions Saginaw Valley
P.O. Box 1525
Midland, MI 48641

Or Pride@PerceptionsSV.org

DATE DUE: June 13, 2014

**Saginaw Valley LGBT & Ally
Pride Awards Banquet**

Tuesday, June 24, 2014
Andersen Enrichment Center
120 Ezra Rust Drive, Saginaw

6:00 pm Reception

7:00 pm Dinner and Program

Tickets or info: PerceptionsSV.org/pride
or 989-891-1429

Saginaw Valley LGBT & Allies Pride Awards Banquet Sponsorship & Ticket Form – *due June 20, 2014*

Yes, I will support the Saginaw Valley LGBT Pride Awards Banquet to be held on June 24th at the Andersen Enrichment Center!

Sponsorship

Names of contributors will be printed in the evening program unless instructed otherwise. Select your level of sponsorship below.

- \$10 Patron \$25 Advocate \$50 Ellen DeGeneres
 \$100 Harvey Milk Other Amount \$ _____

Clearly PRINT the exact name(s) for the program: _____

- Anonymous Donation of \$ _____.

Sponsorships must be received by June 20, 2014 to be included in the program.

Tickets

- I wish to purchase _____ tickets @ \$25 per person.
 I wish to purchase _____ discount tickets @ \$15 each for students or persons with limited funds.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Street Address: _____ Email: _____

City, State & ZIP: _____

Make checks payable to **Perceptions** with the notation "Pride" in the memo.

Mail to: Perceptions
PO Box 1525
Midland, MI 48641



Cut & Save

Saginaw Valley LGBT & Allies Pride Awards Banquet
Tuesday, June 24, 2014
Anderson Enrichment Center, 120 Ezra Rust Dr., Saginaw, MI.

6:00 pm Appetizer Reception

7:00 pm Dinner

8:00 pm Program & Pride Awards recognizing local LGBT people & Allies.

Tickets: \$25 per person. Information: www.PerceptionsSV.org or 989-891-1429 or Pride@PerceptionsSV.org



SAVE THE DATE

Saturday—December 6

PERCEPTIONS

HOLIDAY

GALA



THE GREAT HALL

MIDLAND, MI

Overnight Accommodations

Available @ Best Western

At Reduced Rates

Our Goal: 200 People

Annual National HIV Testing Day

Saginaw, Michigan - For the fourth year, The Saginaw Community HIV/ AIDS Task Force, Saginaw County Department of Public Health, Sacred Heart, and Health Delivery Incorporated have committed to testing 200+ Saginaw area residents for HIV in one day. Mark your calendars and set the date for free same day HIV results. The annual National Testing Day will be on **Friday, June 27, 2014**. There will be various testing locations throughout Saginaw and Bay City.

Health Delivery, Inc. Hearth Home will be providing HIV testing from 9a-7p. Everyone 13 and older is welcome to participate in testing!

“I get tested every year on National Testing Day. Everyone is always so friendly and I get my results quick.” ~ Anonymous tester. Testing and activities are free! Too many people don't know they have HIV. In the United States, nearly 1.2 million people are living with HIV, and almost one in five don't know they are infected. Getting tested is the first step to finding out if you have HIV. If you have HIV, getting medical care and taking medications regularly helps you live a longer, healthier life and also lowers the chances of passing HIV on to others.

The following sites have agreed to provide testing on National Testing Day:

| FACILITY | ADDRESS | CITY | Phone Number | Hours |
|---|-------------------------|------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Bridgeport Community Health Center | 6297 Dixie Highway | Bridgeport | (989) 753-6000 | 9a- 5p |
| Bayside Community Health Center | 3884 Monitor Rd. | Bay City | (989) 671-2000 | 8:30a- 5p |
| Janes Street Community Health Center | 1322 Janes St. | Saginaw | (989) 755-0316 | 8:30a- 5p |
| Roosevelt S. Ruffin Community Health Center | 229 Gallagher Rd. | Saginaw | (989) 755-3619 | 8a- 4p |
| David R. Gamez Community Health Center | 501 Lapeer St. | Saginaw | (989) 753-6000 | 8a- 5p |
| Hearth Home | 732 Hoyt St. | Saginaw | (989) 753-9011 | 9a- 7p |
| Sacred Heart (Saginaw) | 301 E. Genesee St. | Saginaw | (989) 776-6000 ext.7514 | 8a- 5p |
| Sacred Heart (Bay City) | 1106 N. Washington Ave. | Bay City | (989) 894-2991 | 8a- 5p |
| Saginaw County Dept. of Health | 1600 N. Michigan Ave. | Saginaw | (989) 758-3800 | 8:30a- 5p |

For more information please contact Lilianna Reyes (989) 753-9011 (lreyes@healthdelivery.org) or Jimmie Burkhead at (989) 753-9011 (jbukhead@healthdelivery.org). We will be happy to answer any questions you may have.



View From the Chair

by Chris Lauckner

Someone asked me the other day: "So, what's been happening with Perceptions?" When someone asks me that question I usually answer with the question: "Is there anything specific that you would like to know?" These day, I really need to have folks 'drill down' to an issue or topic. So, let me offer a few insights:

The Board of Trustees:

At the outset, let me say that Board Members are very dedicated to the work of Perceptions and furthering the LGBT presence and, based on our mission, the causes within our community. Beth Sibray reported in the last newsletter about the Strategic Planning Process. Following the general meeting that took place in March and a board gathering, facilitated by Terry King, there were three areas that were identified as priorities: Communication, Technology, and Partnering. Board members have paired up and are working toward designing a plan to address each area. This effort is above and beyond the regular monthly board meeting, board duties and any other Perceptions event they might involve themselves with and/or attend. It is for this reason that a board member may personally reach out to you and request some assistance with upcoming events. Over the past weeks I am aware of requests that were made and folks generously stepped up to help out. We certainly appreciate it!

Based on the work already completed with the Strategic Planning Process, the Board of Trustees did review Perceptions' mission statement and developed a new mission statement that is reflective of the organization moving forward. Dylan Moorehead offers some insight into that effort in this edition of the newsletter. At the June board meeting, we will review the vision statement and make any appropriate changes.

I am pleased to announce that Char Davenport has been appointed by the trustees as a Board Advisor. This occurred at the last meeting that took place on Tuesday, May 13th. As a transgender woman, with tremendous passion for the LGBTQ community, Char has found herself involved at several tables championing a variety of LGBTQ causes. She is a dedicated professor, teaching at Delta College and Saginaw Valley College. Char will be offering LGBTQ related news and opinions, based on key issues identified at the national, state, and local levels, in the Perceptions Newsletter beginning with this issue.

Community Involvement/Upcoming Events:

Many people have been following the Saginaw

City Council and its handling of the Human Rights Ordinance proposed by Council Woman, Annie Boensch. I had the opportunity to attend the majority of those meetings and was a vocal representative of Perceptions. However, I was not alone! There were numerous individuals who spoke in support of the proposed ordinance and equality. The outpouring of support was astounding! Even though the end result was not what we had hoped for, our community was able to claim what matters and that we are not standing alone. We are a PROUD community and we have support. More will be happeningstay tuned!

Perceptions was granted a mini-grant through the Michigan Department of Community Health and its partnering with CenterLink. The grant deliverables involve the distribution of a Health Assessment Survey to LGBTQ persons throughout the summer months predominantly at Perceptions sponsored events, PRIDE events, and other forms of outreach. The survey will cover questions related to a number of health topics and health care accessibility. Distribution will begin in June and end in mid-September. Approximately 12 people will be needed to assist with this project.

Pride Awards Banquet:

Tuesday, June 24th / Anderson Enrichment Center, Saginaw

Mid-Michigan LGBT Pride / Mid-Michigan LGBT Pridefest:

Saturday, August 19 / Ojibway Island, Saginaw. A whole host of volunteers are needed. If you are interested in volunteering, contact: volunteer@midmichiganpride.org.

Holiday Gala - Planning Team

If you like to plan parties, then here is an opportunity you just don't want to miss! There are two facets to planning this event: 1) auction/raffles and 2) theme, dinner, entertainment, invitations, marketing - social media. Email: Chris@PerceptionsSV.org, Facebook, Phone/Text: 989-708-4536 - **by JUNE 21.**

In closing, and given all of the political activities taking place in our nation and state. Let us recall the words of a person who spoke on behalf of us all:

"HOPE WILL NEVER BEEN SILENT."

Harvey Milk