



Top row left to right: • Upstate Board Co-Chair Duffy Palmer and Master of Ceremonies Elvira Kurt. Duffy also served as Co-Chair of the event.
 • The state's only openly-gay mayor, Dan Stuart (R-Plattsburg) with SUNY-Plattsburg student intern Lisa Dekanip • Table Captains Chris Wilson & Mary Collins • Second row: • Assemblymember Susan John and Dinner Co-Chair Tim Tompkins

SECOND ANNUAL



The Second Annual Spring Dinner on April 28 at the Rochester Convention Center was attended by over 300 guests and raised \$53,000, another fundraising record for a gay and lesbian event in Western New York.

This year's event honored **Arizona State Representative Steven May** for his leadership in fighting the armed forces' infamous "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. He waged a 21-month battle to keep the Army from expelling him and ultimately prevailed, becoming the first openly gay person to win the right to serve his or her country in the armed forces. Rep. May, a Republican representing a portion of Phoenix, was also responsible this year for Arizona repealing its law that made "cohabitation" by unmarried persons a crime.

The event also honored **Scott Pusillo**, the Northeast Region Director for Scouting For All. A 21 year-old former



Eagle Scout and Assistant Scoutmaster, he was expelled from his troop on the same day the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Boy Scouts could discriminate against gay people. Scott was presented an award for his outstanding efforts in working to overturn that policy and to educate people about discrimination and prejudice.

Member of Congress **Louise Slaughter** attended this year's dinner along with many other dignitaries, including State Senator **Rick Dollinger**, State Assemblymembers **Susan John** and **David Koon**, Rochester Mayor **William Johnson**, Police Chief **Robert Duffy**, and City Councilmembers **Brian Curran**, **Nancy Griswald**, **Tim Mains**, **Wade Norwood**, **Gladys Santiago**, and **Bob Stevenson**. Other elected officials present were the openly gay Mayor of Plattsburg, **Dan Stewart**, and Monroe County Legislators **Chris Wilmont** and **Jose Cruz**. The evening's honorary Co-Chairs were State

SPRING DINNER



Senator **Rick Dollinger** and Assembly-member **Deborah Glick**.

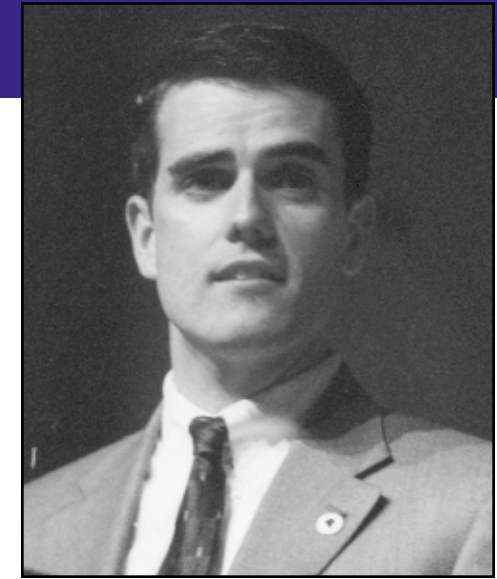
The dinner's success was due to the hard work of co-chairs **Duffy Palmer** and **Tim Tompkins** and an extraordinary host committee. Many thanks go to our table captains, sponsors, and donors of items for the silent auction. Thanks also to **Little Bakery** for donating pastries, photographer **Doug Meszler**, and to former Board Co-Chair **Sue Cowell** and **Ace Mailing Services**. The Third Annual Spring Dinner will be on Saturday, May 4, 2002.

Top row left to right: • Cathy Mazzotta with her partner and Board member Ellen Yacknin; together they organized three tables at the dinner. • Dinner Honoree Scott Pusillo, Northeast Regional Director of Scouting for All • Keynote Speaker Arizona State Representative Steve May



Second row: • Table Captains Bruce Rockwell and Scott Wistner with Board Member J. Bland
 • Barbara & Bill Moehle with Honorary Co-Chair State Senator Richard Dollinger
 Third row: • Table Captains Joe Nardone and Dan Myers with John Lee

All Photos: Doug Meszler



Remembering and Honoring...

*An Interview with Rick Landman,
Organizer of the 1971 March on Albany*



In 1971, Rick Landman was a 19 year-old college student attending the State University of New York in Buffalo (UB) and president of the Buffalo chapter of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF). After learning that several gay rights groups were planning a march on Albany, he decided to bring a contingent from Buffalo. On March 14, 1971 the first-ever gay rights march on a state capital took place in Albany.

Q. That was a very early stage in the fight for gay civil rights and you were very young. What made you want to get involved?

My parents gave me the courage to speak out for what I believe in. Through my life I have been insulted, embarrassed and even assaulted four times, but it is nothing like what my parents went through as Holocaust survivors. They taught me to stand up for my beliefs. Besides, I was very young and very optimistic.

Q. How did the day come about and what were your goals?

I had read about the march in *The Advocate*. It was being planned by the Tri-Cities (Albany-Troy-Schenectady) Gay Liberation Front along with GLF groups in New York City, Rochester, Cornell, and Syracuse, and other groups such as the NYC Gay Activists Alliance, Daughters of Bilitis, Street

Transgender Action Revolutionaries (STAR), the then NY Community Center, Buffalo's Women's Liberation, the Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier, and groups from Watertown, Plattsburgh, Binghamton, Olean, and Niagara Falls. A contingent even walked all the way from Manhattan to Albany.

I made a few phone calls, rented some buses, filled them with about 200 people, and we went to Albany. I think we went down on the Friday beforehand and had parties. On Sunday we marched down to the capitol building. We stood on the steps and held up our hands in the limp-wrist pose. We made our demands to repeal the consensual sodomy law, enact a fair employment practices act to cover sexual orientation, enact a fair housing act to cover sexual orientation, repeal the state solicitation laws, repeal the loitering laws, and repeal the laws against cross-dressing and impersonation by one sex of the other. At the time we felt very avant-garde for including transgender issues in our demands.

The most conservative estimate was that there were 3,000 people attending. It felt more like 10,000 people. Very few newspapers covered it, but a few did and we were very nervous to get our pictures in the paper.

Q. Did you think that we would still be working to have those demands met 30 years later?

We thought this would only take 2-3 years to pass. We were the types of students who ran for student government and started organizations. We felt very hopeful that the laws would be changed as soon as the politicians found out how wonderful we were.

Q. The 70's seemed to be a much more hopeful time. Do you agree?

We started out hopeful, but that changed for me as I got more involved in political groups as I got older. I became more disillusioned as I learned the reality of how government works. Once I got more involved I learned just how stacked the system was against us.

I'm glad that groups are still working on this. I feel more optimistic now than I have in the last 20 years. I feel that we are at a turning point in acceptance of gay issues. Gay issues are no longer a fringe issue. They are now part of the Democratic Party and are a staple of urban matters. At least in New York State, Republicans who want to be seen as centrist can no longer ignore our concerns.

Now that there are 26 states that have passed gay-inclusive hate-crimes legislation, the tides are starting to turn. It helps to have out gay politicians such as Deborah Glick and Tom Duane. Just to have them in the room when issues are being discussed means that people have to stop using prejudicial language, and they learn to see gay people as their peers. It also helps to have gay-friendly politicians like Chuck Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton in office.

Q. How have you stayed involved in the movement through the years?

I helped to organize the first march on Washington D.C. for lesbian and gay rights in October of 1979. I worked with the CLGR's (Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights) Diversity Task Force in New York City to draft the first domestic partnership policy for NYC. I have started an LGBT Alumni Association for UB, I was on the Board of Directors for Congregation Beth Simchat Torah, and I am the spokesperson for the International Association of Lesbian and Gay Children of Holocaust Survivors.

My biggest priority now is gaining recognition for the gay and lesbian victims of the Nazi era. Since 1996 I have asked the Brooklyn Borough President's office to add a stone marker to the Holocaust Memorial Park in Sheepshead Bay to commemorate the other victims: gays, disabled people and gypsies. He wouldn't agree, but each of the candidates who is running for that office this fall has agreed to change the policy and add a commemorative stone for gays if they get elected. When that happens, NYC will have the one of the first such memorials in the United States.

Q. What advice do you have for moving the agenda forward now?

Like all other cultures, we need to respect and remember our past. Unfortunately, because of the AIDS epidemic, much of the leadership from the first march has died. Those people need to be remembered for the work that they did. Also, there has been an awful lot of work that was done to move the agenda forward between the Stonewall uprising and having Ellen come out on primetime television. All of that work and those leaders should be remembered.

I also think that we have to support each other more as leaders in the gay movement. There is too much fighting that goes on among us, and it detracts from our ability to fight our common enemy, the external forces of discrimination. Finally, I would like to establish a LGBT Memorial Day for all the people who have been killed along the way. There have been large numbers of people who have been assaulted and killed due to their sexual orientation or gender and we should honor them. This is our history and no one will respect it if we don't.

Q. How will you feel when the Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act finally passes?

When SONDA finally does pass, I'm not going to jump up and down because it's long overdue. I'll be happier when we have full equal rights, and that will only come when we have legal recognition of our relationships. I will be more excited when New York legalizes marriage for us because that will be more cutting-edge.

Suffolk to Expand Powers of Human Rights Commission

Suffolk County is poised to enact a law to significantly expand the powers of its Human Rights Commission, including the ability to enforce judgments rendered in cases of anti-gay discrimination. The measure is being championed by openly-gay County Legislator Jon Cooper and another long-time supporter in the Legislature, Maxine Postal.

Suffolk's anti-discrimination laws were amended in 1988 to include discrimination based on sexual orientation. However, its county commission did not have any enforcement powers and was only able to refer findings to the State Division of Human Rights (DHR). This meant that cases involving sexual orientation discrimination went nowhere, because DHR did not have the statutory jurisdiction to handle these cases. The new law will give the County Commission broad powers to enforce its findings, including requiring those who discriminate to pay back pay, compensatory damages and fines, and to reinstate or promote victims of discrimination. The law will also give the County the authority to impose criminal and civil fines.

Rochester Expands Anti-Discrimination Laws

On May 15, the Rochester City Council voted 8-0 to adopt a local ordinance making discrimination – including discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity – unlawful. The measure also



The May 4 City Hall press conference before the hearing to amend NYC's human rights law to cover anti-transgender discrimination. Front row (l-r): Councilmembers Ronnie Eldridge and Christine Quinn, NYAGRA's Pauline Park, and State Senator Tom Duane. Photo: Joe Tarver

codifies previously-passed resolutions banning discrimination in city employment, contracting and the provision of city services. The bill was proposed by City Council President Lois Geiss, and Councilmembers Tim Mains and Wade Norwood. Mr. Mains, elected to the Council in 1985, is the state's first openly-gay elected official.

The ordinance is the first in the state to specifically extend non-discrimination protections to transgender persons. (In 1999, Ithaca adopted a local hate crimes bill that includes hate-motivated violence against transgender persons.)

Hearings Held on NYC Bill to Ban Anti-Transgender Discrimination

On May 4, the New York City Council conducted public hearings on a bill to extend non-discrimination protections to transgender persons. The Pride Agenda has been pushing the bill in partnership with the New York Association for Gender Rights Advocacy (NYAGRA) for the last 18 months. The legislation would be the first significant expansion of the human rights law since sexual orientation was added as a protected category in 1987.

Awards & Honors

On April 21, the Pride Agenda and Long Island Field Organizer Stephen Sebor received the annual Rich Amato Award at the annual dinner and awards ceremony of Long Island Pride Press. Rich Amato was a long-time leader and activist who died in 1990.

On May 16, Matt Foreman received the Special Ally Award from the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault for his work on the Sexual Assault Reform Act of 2000.

On June 3, the Capital Region Chapter of GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network) named the Pride Agenda its 2001 Network Organization of the Year in recognition of our work around the Dignity for All Students Act. Legislative Counsel Ross Levi and Foundation Program Director Sheila Healy accepted the award on behalf of the Pride Agenda.

On June 5, Downstate Field Manager Ralph Wilson received a Community Leader award from NYC Comptroller Allan Hevesi at the Comptroller's Annual Gay & Lesbian Pride event in City Hall.

Matt Foreman was named a grand marshal of New York City's 32nd Annual Gay Pride March on June 24 and spoke at the Pride Rally on June 17. He was also the keynote speaker at Buffalo's Pride Rally on June 3 and at the Manhattan Borough President's Pride Ceremony on June 27.



Dan Conviser, Senior Counsel to the Rules Committee of the State Assembly, receiving an award for his "energy, tenacity and leadership in fighting for a tough law to combat hate violence." The award was presented at Lobby Day in May. Photo: Colleen Brescia

Getting the bill to the public hearing stage was considered a significant victory and was due to the leadership of the bill's prime sponsors, Margarita Lopez, Bill Perkins, Christine Quinn, Ronnie Eldridge, and Phil Reed, and the Chair of the Public Welfare Committee Steve DeBrienza. We also recognize Council Speaker Peter Vallone for supporting the hearings going forward. Efforts are now being focused on bringing the bill to a floor vote before the end of the year.

Nassau Legislature Votes Unanimously On Non-Discrimination Law

With the support of all nine Republicans and all ten Democrats, the Nassau County Legislature passed a bill outlawing discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing and public accommodations. The law, which took effect in mid-January, also added the categories of age and disability to sections of the County's human rights law where those categories were not previously included.

The new law capped an 18-month effort spearheaded by the Pride Agenda, which played a leading role in the Nassau Coalition for Human Rights, a broad coalition that lobbied for the bill, and devoted staff and financial resources to passing the legislation. In contrast to the bitter struggle in Westchester County over a human rights law just 12 months before, not a single person spoke in opposition to the bill during the public testimony preceding the vote. Organized opposition may have been muted by a countywide poll commissioned by the Pride Agenda finding that 80% of the people of Nassau County supported non-discrimination protections for lesbians and gay men.

Special recognition goes to the legislature's Presiding Officer Judy Jacobs for making this legislation a priority. In 1999, Ms. Jacobs became the first Democrat in decades to head the body. Long Island Field Organizer Stephen Sebor and Downstate Field Manager Ralph Wilson also played critical roles in this effort.

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school sensitivity trainings, family crisis counseling, and other programs to help LGBT youth. In Manhattan, a gay community center doubled its outreach program to LGBT people in immigrant and elderly communities. And in Buffalo, the only program serving LGBT youth in Western New York strengthened its youth outreach and after-school programs.

The report also documents the progress being made in seven state agencies to make them more responsive to LGBT needs.

The document, written by Foundation Program Associate Tara Herman, was issued in conjunction with the NYS LGBT Health & Human Services Network. It is available on-line at: www.prideagenda.org/pride/publications.

NEW GRANTEES

(Fiscal Year 2000-2001)

- Callen-Lorde Community Health Center (Manhattan)
- Capital District Gay and Lesbian Community Council (Albany)
- Center for Crime Victim and Sexual Assault Services of Tompkins County
- Community House of Long Island
- Gay Men of African Descent (Manhattan)
- The LOFT (White Plains)
- Heights-Hill Mental Health Service (Brooklyn)
- Men of Color Health Awareness Project (Rochester/Buffalo)
- Mano a Mano (Manhattan)
- Metropolitan Community Church of New York (Manhattan)
- People of Color in Crisis (Brooklyn)
- Shades of Lavender (Brooklyn)
- Queens Pride House (Queens)
- Unity Fellowship Church (Brooklyn)

Work with State Agencies Yields Results

The Foundation has been working aggressively to increase the awareness of state agencies (beyond the Department of Health) of the urgent needs of the LGBT community by initiating meetings with top-level officials in seven other state health and human service agencies. In addition to the new rules requiring all public schools to document bias-related violence (see page 12), this work has already produced significant and tangible results as follows:

- The State Office for the Aging included for the first time ever in its official planning document *Project 2015: The Future of Aging in New York State* a section devoted to the needs of LGBT seniors.
- The Division of Criminal Justice Services included LGBT victims of domestic violence as an underserved population in its implementation of the federal S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and allocated federal funds to support a LGBT domestic violence program.
- The Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services and the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence developed training curricula, in collaboration with members of the Network, that educates service providers on how to work with LGBT people.
- The State Education Department is working closely with the Foundation

to implement a seven-point Commissioner's initiative to protect LGBT youth against violence and harassment in public schools. One component of this initiative is state funding for anti-violence training and prevention.

- The Office of Children and Families now funds four organizations that promote the well-being of LGBT youth, including strategies to prevent school violence as well as counseling and support services.

Meet the Candidates
Candidate Forums in New York City

DEMOCRATIC MAYORAL CANDIDATES
Thursday, July 19 7 to 9pm

PUBLIC ADVOCATE & COMPTROLLER CANDIDATES
Wednesday, July 25 7 to 9pm

NY CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES
With Out Gay Candidates & Their Opponents
Thursday, July 26 7 to 10pm

Each forum will be held at the Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, 208 West 13th Street, New York, NY

Sponsored by Empire State Pride Agenda, Gay Men's Health Crisis, Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, New York AIDS Coalition, NYC Gay & Lesbian Anti-Violence Project, People of Color Political Action Committee, Pride Senior Network, and Queens Lesbian and Gay Pride Committee

Welcome to New Board Members

We welcome to our Board six individuals elected in February. **Yvette Burton, Ph.D.**, is a Senior Consultant and Researcher for IBM Global Services. She has a long record of service to the community, including being a founding Board Member of the Audre Lorde Project and working as the Gay and Lesbian Liaison to Mayor Dinkins' Citywide Council on Women and Health Care. **Rob Cooper**, a resident of Huntington, is a father of five adopted children and is active in Suffolk County politics. His partner is Jon Cooper, Suffolk's first openly gay county legislator. **Tom Grant** is a partner in Taylor-Grant Communications and was Vice-Chair of the 2000 Fall Dinner. He has served on the Board of the Princeton Gay and Lesbian Alumni Association, and worked on many events for the Pride Agenda, SAGE, and the Anti-Violence Project. **Todd Hamilton** is CEO of CAMP Systems International, has served on the boards of Make A Wish Foundation, the Young American's Bank, and People to People International, and was a presidential appointee to the First Flight Advisory Board. His partner, Andy Rutberg, co-chaired this year's Night of 100 Parties. **Douglas W. Jones** is a partner at Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy and has served on the boards of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund and the Anti-Violence Project. He and his partner Louis Bradbury have been involved with the Pride Agenda for many years. **Sean Maloney** is Chief Operating Officer of Kiodex, Inc., and served in the Clinton Administration

from 1997 to 2000 as Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary. He and his partner, Randy Florke, have two children.

New Officers for 2001

Duffy Palmer of Rochester was elected as upstate Co-Chair, succeeding **Kate Gallivan**. Kate – who served as Vice-Chair for two years and Treasurer before that – remains on the Board. **Amy Zimmerman** succeeded Mr. Palmer as a Vice-Chair, and **Maureen Burnley** was elected Secretary. **Craig Bossi** was re-elected Treasurer.



Joseph S. Grabarz

Joseph S. Grabarz, Jr., has joined the Pride Agenda as our new Deputy Executive Director. Joe succeeds the amazing **Tim Sweeney**, who is now working as a Program Officer for the Evelyn &

Walter, Jr. Haas Foundation in San Francisco. Tim joined the staff of the Pride Agenda in 1995 and helped create the Pride Agenda Foundation, led efforts to create a network of gay and lesbian health and human service organizations, and was the principal architect of the Pride Agenda's successful efforts to pass a hate crimes law, repeal the consensual sodomy statute, and win nearly \$6 million in funding for gay services.

Joe has an extraordinary 15-year history of accomplishment as an elected official, a municipal administrator, a lobbyist, and a defender of civil rights. For the

last five years, Joe was Executive Director of the Connecticut Civil Liberties Union, where he was incredibly successful in fighting for gay and lesbian rights, including the passage of a second parent adoption statute and defeating anti-gay marriage legislation. Joe previously served two terms in the Connecticut Legislature (in 1987 and 1989) and was that state's first openly gay state elected official. During his four years in the General Assembly, he sponsored and waged successful fights to enact statutes that: banned discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing, education and credit (the third in the nation); required collection of hate crime statistics (one of the first in the nation); increased penalties for hate crimes (one of the first in the nation); and ordered a study of teen suicide (one of the first to deal with LGBT teens). Joe also lobbied federal lawmakers on behalf of the Human Rights Campaign in the early 90's.

Joe Tarver joined the Pride Agenda in April as Media Director. Joe has a wealth of marketing and political experience, including serving on President Clinton's presidential campaign and transition committee, working for two prestigious government relations firms in Washington, DC, and as a legislative assistant to U.S. Representative Solomon Ortiz (D-TX).

Roey Thorpe, Ithaca Field Organizer since 1998, has been named the Executive Director of Oregon's statewide LGBT organization, Basic Rights Oregon. With one of the nation's most sophisticated field operations, Basic Rights Oregon

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Seventh Annual Ithaca Brunch

Attracting just over 300 guests, Ithaca's Seventh Annual Pride Agenda Brunch on March 25 was sold out for the second year in a row. The keynote speaker was **Beth Robinson**, Chair of the Vermont Freedom to Marry Coalition and co-counsel in *Baker v. Vermont*, the historic court decision ordering equal rights for same sex couples. Ms. Robinson recounted years of grassroots work leading up to the lawsuit, told inspiring stories of personal and legislative courage in the successful effort to get the Vermont legislature to implement the court decision, and described the ongoing struggle to preserve both the civil union law and protect supportive legislators from attacks by the right.

Special thanks go to **Maureen Kelly** and **Roey Thorpe** and the other members of the event committee – **Lisa Maurer**, **Michael Busch**, **Roxanne VanWormer**, **Nancy Kleaver**, **Michell Buckstrup**, **Tish Keen**, **Bill Goodman**, **Cat Tague** and **Kristine Shaw** – and the brunch's sponsors and table hosts. The event, held at the Statler Hotel on the Cornell Campus, grossed over \$12,000, another record.



Buffalo's Fifth Annual "Day of One Brunch"

Over 140 supporters attended the Fifth Annual "Day of One Brunch" held on May 6 in the historic Butler Mansion on Delaware Avenue. Nationally-recognized gender rights activist, author, and Buffalo native **Leslie Feinberg** gave an insightful and thought-provoking address on gender, and the need for the gay and lesbian community to work with the transgender, women's, and people of color communities. Community service awards were presented to three cornerstones of Buffalo's gay and lesbian community – long-time activist **Babs Conant**, attorney **William Gardner**, and **Buddies** bar.

Many thanks to **Cecile Biltekoff**, **Sherrie Bloom**, **Bill Goodman**, **Brian Kawaler**, **Tim Kupinski**, and **Art Ziller** for their hard work and leadership on the event committee. The brunch raised \$8,000, an all-time high.



Clockwise from top row, left to right:
 • Lana Benatovich, Executive Director of the Buffalo branch of NCCJ, with Board and event committee member Brian Kawaler • Chris Brown, Bob Meredith, and Jayne Rand • Former Buffalo City Councilmember Barbra Kavanaugh, Lynn Edelman, Erie County Legislator Judith Fisher, and Assemblymember Sam Hoyt (D-Buffalo) • David Canfield, Andrew Cardarelli, and Jim Estep

Our deep apologies to all our wonderful supporters in Ithaca who attended the annual brunch – our camera malfunctioned and we don't have any photos for the newsletter.

Sunday, July 8

Second Annual Rochester Tea Dance

Poolside at the East Avenue home of Jeff Briggs, with DJ's Hector and Henry. 4 to 8pm

Saturday, July 14

The Ninth Annual Hamptons Tea Dance and VIP/Sponsor BBQ

At the oceanfront home of Ken Kuchin and Bruce Anderson in East Hampton with a repeat performance by DJ Lydia Prim (4 to 8pm). Followed by the VIP/Sponsor Barbecue at the home of Jeff Pfeifle in Water Mill (begins at 8pm) and featuring a performance by Broadway star Liz Callaway.

Saturday, August 4

La Bella Luna

The Ultimate Women's Party in the Hamptons
 At the Bridgehampton home of Olive F. Watson and Joanne Grover. DJs Millie & Skye will spin under a full moon. 7 to 11pm

Saturday, August 4

Rites of Summer II

At the oceanfront home of Alan Gandolfi and Will Schulz at Fire Island Pines with music by DJ Phil B, making his East Coast and Fire Island debut. 4 to 8pm

Thursday, October 4

The Tenth Annual Fall Dinner

At the New York Sheraton Hotel & Tower in Manhattan. 6 to 10pm



Flavio Longhi, Greg Holt, and Otho Kerr at last summer's Rites of Summer event on Fire Island.

Monday, November 5

The Broadway musical Mamma Mia!

The smash London musical, based on the songs of ABBA, comes to Broadway. (Already sold out through Spring of 2002)

Call us at (212) 627-0305 or see our website (www.prideagenda.org) for further information.



Roey Thorpe with Long Island Field Organizer Stephen Sebor.

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has defeated more than a dozen statewide anti-gay initiatives launched by the Oregon Citizens Alliance. Roey has been an inspirational leader both in Ithaca and statewide. She was the first openly gay person to be elected to the Ithaca Common Council, where she served from 1994 to 1997 (also serving as Acting Mayor of Ithaca for two years). She was a leader in the successful efforts to pass a countywide non-discrimination law in Tompkins County and in Ithaca adopting a transgender-inclusive hate crimes ordinance. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Roey and wish her all the best.

On Our E-Mail Alert List?

If you want to receive regular legislative updates and action alerts from the Pride Agenda via e-mail, please e-mail us at prideagenda@prideagenda.org

Bill description	Legislative action to date	Pride Agenda Goal
A.1971 (Sanders) / S.720 (Goodman) The Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act (SONDA): prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in employment, housing, credit, education or public accommodations.	Passed Assembly Government Operations Committee 8-2, and Assembly Codes Committee 15-1. Passed the Assembly by a vote of 113-33 on 2/12/01. Passed the Senate Government Operations Committee 11-1. Advanced to the third reading calendar, and reported back to Senate Rules Committee at completion of regular session. Awaiting final action.	Enacted into law by completion of the 2001 session
A.2634 (Sanders) / S.1628 (Duane) The Dignity for All Students Act: prohibits and prevents discrimination and harassment in public schools on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and expression), sex or disability.	Passed Assembly Education Committee 29-2. Referred to Assembly Codes Committee. Referred to the Senate Education Committee.	Passage by the Assembly in 2001. Secure additional Senate sponsorship and pass the Senate in 2002
A.8919 (Sullivan) / S.3292 (LaValle) Requires colleges to address bias harassment on college campuses.	Passed the Assembly Higher Education and Codes Committees with no dissenting votes. New Assembly sponsor secured (Chair of the Higher Education Committee) and language amended so that definition of bias crime comports with the Hate Crimes Act of 2000 and includes actual or perceived gender and sexual orientation. Advanced to third reading rules calendar, and awaiting a floor vote. Passed the Senate Higher Education Committee with no dissenting votes. Advanced to third reading calendar. Bill was amended so that definition of bias crime comports with the Hate Crimes Act of 2000 and includes actual or perceived gender and sexual orientation. Reported back to Senate Rules Committee at completion of regular session.	Enacted into law in 2001 or 2002
Follow up to Sexual Assault Reform Act (SARA), including removal of "sodomy" and "deviate sexual intercourse" from penal law. Bill language still being negotiated.	Governor's omnibus program bill (S.5653) containing items other than the language change was passed by the Senate unanimously on 6/20/01. A compromise bill is currently being negotiated between the Assembly, Senate and Governor.	Enacted into law by completion of the 2001 session
Expanded definition of family, to allow access to family courts for same-sex partners. Bill language still being negotiated.	Current domestic violence mandatory arrest law sunsets on July 30. Assembly, Senate and Governor are currently in three-way negotiations to renew the law, and possibly add on an expanded definition of family.	Expanded definition of family to be included in the renewed mandatory arrest law
A.2678 (Gottfried) / S.719 (Goodman) Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in insurance underwriting.	Passed the Assembly Insurance Committee unanimously, and the Assembly Codes Committee 17-1. Advanced to the third reading rules calendar, and awaiting a full floor vote. Referred to the Senate Insurance Committee.	Passage by the Assembly in 2001
A.892 (Seminario) / S.2195 (Maltese) State "Defense of Marriage Act," making same-sex marriage or civil unions absolutely void.	Referred to Assembly and Senate Judiciary Committees.	Continue to block in both Assembly and Senate.

Law Firm Finds Local Non-Discrimination Laws "Inadequate Alternative" to SONDA

While twenty towns, cities or counties in New York have enacted laws covering anti-gay discrimination, these laws rarely provide rights and remedies comparable to those available under state law to victims of other forms of discrimination, according to a report by the prestigious law firm Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP. The report, prepared on behalf of the Pride Agenda, also found that the local laws vary widely in scope and enforceability and create disparities based on where an individual works, resides and where the discrimination occurs.



(Albany County, City of Albany, New York City, and Westchester County) extend somewhat comparable remedies to victims of anti-gay discrimination. The report found that "the other sixteen local laws lack adequate enforcement procedures and/or remedies. Seven of the local law laws have no enforcement provisions at all."

The report discussed the significant downside of having a non-discrimination law without a human rights commission empowered to

investigate and enforce its findings, stating, "Since a victim of discrimination may be hard pressed to find an attorney who will pursue his/her claim in a court of law, the absence of a human rights commission leaves many victims of discrimination, as a practical matter, devoid of relief."

The report also raised a further complicating factor: the authority of municipalities to pass laws that are enforceable in State court, as opposed to municipal court. The amount of damages that are available through municipal courts is significantly less than that in State court.

The report, available at www.prideagenda.org, was distributed to all state senators. We express our deep appreciation to Milbank, Tweed for donating extensive staff time and resources to this important project.

The report found that the scope of coverage of existing local non-discrimination laws is extremely uneven. For example, nine of the twenty local laws apply only to public employment and/or government contracting and do not extend to other areas, such as discrimination in private employment or in public accommodations (for example, stores and hotels/motels). Seven of the laws cover discrimination in education, while thirteen do not; eleven cover housing, but nine do not.

The report also found that remedies available to victims of discrimination vary widely. Under the State Human Rights Law, a victim of discrimination based on race, for example, has the right to file a claim with the State Division of Human Rights or bring a lawsuit in State court. However, only four localities

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AGENDA FLASHBACK



Thirty years ago

The first-ever gay rights march on a state capital takes place in Albany. Nearly 3,000 people from across the state come to Albany to push for issues including non-discrimination measures and repeal of the consensual sodomy statute. Groups include the NYC Gay Activists Alliance, Daughters of Bilitis, Street Transgender Action Revolutionaries (STAR), NY Community Center, Buffalo's Women's Liberation, the Mattachine Society of the Niagara Frontier and groups from Watertown, Plattsburgh, Binghamton, Olean and Niagara Falls. A contingent even walks all the way from Manhattan to Albany.

Photo: Richard C. Wandel / Courtesy Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center National Archive of Lesbian and Gay History.

A broad non-discrimination bill, the first version of SONDA, is introduced in the State Assembly by Al Blumenthal (D-Manhattan) and in the State Senate by Manfred Ohrenstein (D-Manhattan).

EMPIRE STATE  PRIDE AGENDA



Ten years ago

The Pride Agenda organizes a statewide march on Albany, with over 1,000 people from across the state participating. Queer Nation activists burn an effigy of then Senate Republican Leader Ralph Marino (R-C-Nassau) to protest Senate inaction on SONDA and hate crimes.

Photo: Francisco De León

Eight years ago

The Assembly passes SONDA for the first time by a vote of 90 to 50. 81 Democrats and 9 Republicans vote for the bill; 14 Democrats and 36 Republicans vote against it. By 2001, the vote margin increases to 113 to 31.

One year ago

Eleven years after the Assembly first gives its approval, the State Senate passes a hate crimes bill that enhances penalties for bias-motivated crimes, including crimes motivated by anti-gay hate. The vote is 48 to 12, including the support of all 24 Democrats (with one absent) and 24 of the 36 Republicans. Signed into law on July 10, 2001 by Governor Pataki, it is the first statewide law to explicitly provide protections to lesbians and gay men.