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OutCenter October 2015 Newsletter

1 message

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Serving the LGBT+ Community in Southwest Michigan

OUT and a bOUT

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October 26, 2015

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

We need your support!

Your LGBT community center is committed to staying informed and on the forefront - for you, for your loved ones, and for every person in this community.

Please help us help others in need now!

Help us create more Communities That Care across Southwest Michigan!

You can make this possible with your contribution.

[OutCenter Affiliate \\$100](#)

[OutCenter Friend \\$250](#)

[OutCenter Benefactor \\$500](#)



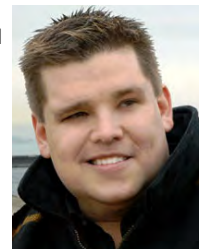
The Holiday Pride Concert Returns!

Saturday, November 21, 7 PM

[The Heritage Museum and Cultural Center](#)

As ever, this is THE way to ring in the Holidays! It is an evening filled with love, thanksgiving, and community building! Come join the growing family!

This year's concert features **Paul Mow**, Tenor, and **Paul Flyger**, Pianist, with other local talent joining this once a year celebration.



Both Mow and Flyger bring an amazing ethos about music to their work. They create joy, compassion, connection, and build community one song, one heart, and one mind at a time.

You don't want to miss this celebration!

Tickets are [on sale now!](#) (\$40 in advance.)

Check out the [Facebook](#) Events page for details.



communities that
CARE

*Free Counseling at the
OutCenter*



If you or someone you know would like to speak with a therapist-in-training, please know the OutCenter is host to a tremendous resource: Lynn Marzke, Masters and PhD Candidate in Psychotherapy.

You can call and leave a confidential message to set up an appointment:
269.925.8338

**Teen Pride Meetings
thru December!**

Join a growing number of Teens in the area who are dedicated to LGBT+ Equality!

**Whole Lives,
Healthy Lives:
Adult Support Group**

Proceeds support OutCenter programs.



**Teen Pride Pop Up
Halloween Party!**

LGBT+ Teens & Allies, 14-18

Friday, October 30, 5-8 PM. FREE
Berrien Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
4340 Lincoln Avenue, Saint Joseph, MI

***DJ, great food, great fun,
great people, great time!***



**It's been a tough start to the
School year for some
LGBT+ Teens in Berrien
County!**

Leanne Chambers

No person, let alone a young person, should ever be told that there is something inherently wrong with them because of their sexual orientation or gender expression. Yet, this dangerous idea continues to be perpetuated within our own community. Recently, Saint Joseph's Michigan Lutheran High School invited Scott Barefoot-a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) affiliated church, Grace Evangelical Church located in Church Falls, Virginia-to talk to its students about "overcoming homosexuality" as this year's back to school message entitled, "Leaving the Gay Lifestyle for God's Grace". Mr. Barefoot offered to help not just the students who are "struggling", but was on site to visit with students' friends and families who are "struggling" as well, helping them to help their LGBT+ friends or children to, in essence, "pray away the gay."

High school is tough, and anyone who may be considered different is usually the victim of bullying. By inviting Mr. Barefoot to speak, Michigan Lutheran High School has placed a huge target on the backs of those who are gay, or are perceived to be gay, by effectively telling the rest of the student body that, yes, there is something different and wrong with some of the students. Who can LGBT students turn to when bullying ensues? Obviously not to the school administration - which I'm sure does not condone bullying...to a point.

Unfortunately, there is no anti-discrimination policy in place protecting students regarding their sexual orientation or gender identity. Michigan Lutheran High School is accredited through the National Council for

Fall & Winter Schedule is here!

**Whole Lives Healthy Lives
Adult Support Group**
Fall & Winter 2015 Schedule

Weekly Monday Meetings
(September 14 thru December 31, 2015) **7-9 PM**
No Meeting on Labor Day, September 7th
No Meeting on December 28th

Schedule of Volunteer Professional Facilitators

- 1st Monday of the month: Margo Runkle
- 2nd Monday: Ron Robinson
- 3rd Monday: Sandy and Larry Feldman
- 4th Monday: Ron Robinson
- 5th Monday (November): TBD

OutCenter Community Room, 132 Water Street, Benton Harbor, Michigan, 49022 269.925.8330
www.outcenter.org

Monday Nights
7-9 PM

A great opportunity for adults to connect in a supportive and healthy environment. Attend and find out more about this great group of folks!

Foundation Support



Frederick S. Upton Foundation



Private School Accreditation. In order for Michigan Lutheran High School to stay accredited, "The accrediting association will approve and implement an appropriate statement of nondiscrimination when applicable for all areas of its operation that complies with federal law and regulations." (Section 2.8 of NCPSA Manual). However, without a state or federal law protecting LGBT students from institutional bullying, Michigan Lutheran High School can continue to invite people such as Mr. Barefoot to teach its students that being gay is wrong while still adhering to anti-discriminatory laws.

All students in Southwest Michigan deserve to be equally protected and get through school without discrimination or bullying.

Here are some really great resources for students, families and schools:

GLSEN:
Ensures that LGBT students are able to learn and grow in a school environment free from bullying and harassment. [Learn about policies that matter](#), understand [your role as a student](#), and there's a [great resource for teachers](#). They also have a great resource for starting a [Gay-Straight Alliance \(GSA\)](#) at your school.



GLAAD:
Rewrites the script for LGBT acceptance. Find out about [GLAAD's "Got Your Back"](#) campaign for allies. "Speak out now and show the world the importance of LGBT acceptance."



Welcoming Schools:
Provides starter kits, resources and more for teachers, support staff, students, and the larger school community.

Know your school. And help them know you, what is important to you, and how they can address your need for a safe and INCLUSIVE school.
STOP THE BULLYING NOW!

OutCenter receives funds from Saugatuck LGBT Foundation!

The OutCenter was selected as a recipient of inaugural grant making cycle from the Saugatuck LGBT Foundation. Funds were raised as a part of sales at [Campit Outdoor Resort](#).

Foundation Board member, Vivian Ahlers, stopped by the OutCenter to present the \$1,500 award to Executive Director, Mary Jo Schnell who noted, "We are ecstatic to be included at all let alone to be a recipient in this, the first grant making activity of Saugatuck LGBT Foundation."



Funds received are being used to support a newer Teen Pride outreach and engagement initiative, traveling to area restaurants and coffee shops and working to establish "safe zones" for LGBT+ teens at locations throughout the area.

Vivian Ahlers presents grant to Mary Jo Schnell.

Stay Connected



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