

# Perceptions Newsletter

Perceptions Inc. P.O. Box 1525, Midland, MI 48641 989.891.1429

## Volunteer News: Perceptions Members Give Back to the Community

Perceptions members have been taking on more community projects!

Neil gathered over 10 volunteers for the September **Adopt a Highway Program**. The group cleared "our" section of I-75 in no time flat! Thanks to Neil for coordinating and thanks go to the volunteers who keep our stretch of the road squeaky clean!



Kevin found a new community improvement project for Perceptions members this year. He coordinated the **Midland Day of Caring** in September. Our volunteers primed, painted, and did other household repairs for Midland residents in need.



**Thank you everyone for a job well done!!!**



### *Opening doors for the Mid-Michigan GLBT Community*

Calendar Highlights:

- Thursday, October 28<sup>th</sup> - Perceptions Bring a Friend Potluck & Membership Meeting  
7-9 pm. Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6220 Jefferson, Midland
- Wednesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> - Saginaw Meet & Greet 7-9 pm
- Wednesday, November 10<sup>th</sup> - Midland Meet & Greet 7-9 pm
- Wednesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> - Bay City Meet & Greet 7-9 pm
- Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup> - Perceptions Holiday Gala and Charity Auction 7:00 - 10:00 pm.

To receive email alerting about upcoming events, send your email address to

[PerceptionsSV-owner@yahoogroups.com](mailto:PerceptionsSV-owner@yahoogroups.com)



## PERCEPTIONS HOSTED CFM TRAINING EVENT TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

Thursday evening, August 19, Perceptions co-hosted with the Coalition for a Fair Michigan [CFM] a Marriage Amendment Speakers Training designed to assist people in discussing the unintended consequences of this amendment and persuading people to vote against it. Perceptions and PFLAG members served both as trainers and trainees, and many Delta College students participated as well.

Except for a false fire alarm, evidently pulled by someone in an attempt to derail the event, the evening went smoothly. Sean Kosofsky from the Triangle Foundation made an introductory presentation about some of the talking points used to defeat the amendment, now known as Proposal 2, then the audience split into several small groups to strategize together and role-play how to best persuade potential voters to vote against amending the constitution. Event planners also distributed materials to participants to help empower their efforts in speaking against Proposal 2. Approximately 50-60 persons attended and, at the end of the event, contributed over \$1000 to the CFM. Most participants reported after the event that they felt more empowered to address this issue with friends, families and co-workers.

Special thanks to Perceptions Chairperson Mindy Pennington, Perceptions Board Member Leo Romo, and Perceptions Member Charissa Urbano who planned and prepared for this event by obtaining the room, preparing materials and providing refreshments and food.



## NATIONAL LATINO AIDS AWARENESS DAY

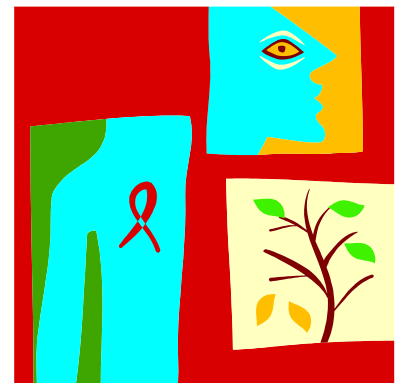
October 15th is the one day we set aside to renew our commitment to ending the spread of HIV and ensuring quality of life for those with HIV, regardless of their Spanish speaking country of origin or immigration status. We do so whether we are Latino, African American, Asian, White or Native American. The theme for National Latino AIDS Awareness Day 2004 is *Abre Los Ojos: El VIH No Tiene Fronteras* (*Open Your Eyes: HIV Has No Borders*)

In recognition of the rising infection rates among Latinas and young Latinos, organizations around the country will use National Latino AIDS Awareness Day to promote and sponsor activities on prevention, ranging from HIV testing to cultural events, in an effort to reduce new infections and provide care for Latinos living with the virus.

Upcoming as well is the observance of **World AIDS Day on December 1**. The theme for this year is "Women, Girls HIV & AIDS: Have You Heard Me Today". In commemoration, the Tri County / Thumb Area HIV/AIDS Task Force is hosting a memorial candlelight service at Victorious Believers Ministries, located at 624 S. Outer Dr., Saginaw. The program is from 7-8 p.m., with refreshments afterward.

This year we hope to see greater GLBT involvement in this day of remembrance, and prevention promotion. We encourage you to set aside Wednesday evening, December 1<sup>st</sup>, for this important ceremony. As plans are finalized, information will be provided to all Perceptions members. For those who would like to become involved there is opportunity for volunteering in the planning process and at the event.

For more information about either of these activities, contact Tom Brubaker at BASIS, 989.894.2991, or Ricardo Bowden at Hearth Home 989.753.9011.



## Letter from the Chair

Mindy Pennington

### Vote No on Proposal 2

It's a critical time for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and allied community in our state. I have written about Proposal 2 before and more organizations have come out against this constitutional amendment. Some people are still confused by the language of the proposal and ask, "Oh, do I vote "yes" or "no" on that amendment?"

It is confusing. This so-called marriage protection amendment is not protecting families, it is discriminating against families. The actual text of the amendment (Proposal 2) will be:

The proposal would amend the state constitution to provide that "the union of one man and one woman in marriage shall be the only agreement recognized as marriage or similar union for any purpose."

Should this proposal be adopted? **YOU MUST SELECT NO.**

This amendment will eliminate domestic partner benefits for unmarried couples that work for public entities. For example, if you work for Saginaw Valley or University of Michigan and insure your domestic partner with your medical plan, you will NO LONGER be able to do that. It doesn't matter if you are straight or gay; you will lose that partner coverage if you aren't married because the amendment does not recognize any other union except marriage between one man and one woman. This will also take away the possibility of civil unions in this state.

GLBT individuals and our allies need to understand that this amendment is discriminatory on so many levels. Many organizations and newspapers have publicly stated that they are against this amendment: The AFL-CIO, the Michigan Education Association, the Detroit News, The Bay City Times, Saginaw News, the Michigan Women's Commission, the Anti-Defamation League, the Detroit Free Press and a hundred others.

If you haven't already, talk to your neighbors, your friends, your lunch buddies, your waiter, the person in the checkout line next to you at the grocery store. There are so many opportunities to help people understand that this isn't just a gay issue--it's a civil rights issue.

Remember, if you stay home because you feel your vote won't make any difference, it might as well be another YES vote. So, get your butt down to the voting booth on November 2nd and cast your ballot--**Voting Is Everyone's Responsibility, Not a Chore.**

Wear your "I Voted" sticker with pride on November 2nd!

Mindy



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### Perceptions

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#### Phone:

989.891.1429

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**DO YOU HAVE AN EVENT YOU'D LIKE ADDED TO PERCEPTIONS CALENDAR OF EVENTS?**

**Submit your event to [board@perceptionssv.org](mailto:board@perceptionssv.org)**

**[Monday, October 25th – "Gay Rights, Civil Rights, and the Black Vote: Why It Matters"](#)** 7:00 pm. Join us for a panel discussion examining the State Marriage Amendment's potential impact on communities of color. Hoyt Library Auditorium, 505 Janes, downtown Saginaw. Scheduled panelists include Carl M. Williams, State Representative (D-95th District); Adriel Thornton, member, Triangle Foundation Board of Trustees; and diedra knox, Delta College faculty member and community activist. Click here to [download flyer](#).

**[Tuesday, October 26th – Proposal 2 Candlelight Vigil](#)** 6:00 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6220 Jefferson Avenue, Midland. Besides the lighting of candles for enlightenment and justice, this non-sectarian vigil will feature the testimonies of those who will suffer tremendous injustice should Proposal 2 pass as well as a few words from the [Coalition For A Fair Michigan](#). Exactly one week before the election, let us gather together to raise our powerful voices of justice, reason and truth!

**[Thursday, October 28th - Bring A Friend Potluck & Membership Meeting](#)** Invite your friends, family and allies to the October General Membership Meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Midland. We're planning a potluck dinner and a speaker discussion regarding "Ethical Issues for Gay Marriage." Child care available at monthly meetings. For more information, contact [Perceptions](#).

**[Wednesday, November 3rd - Saginaw Meet & Greet](#)** 7-9 pm. An informal gathering for the Tri-Cities' GLBT community. All are welcome. Meet your old friends and make some new ones while eating fantastic baked goods. Enjoys hot and cold drinks in a non-smoking environment! Crumbs Gourmet Cookie Cafe is located at 4882 Gratiot just east of Center Road and behind Edward's Men's Shop. tel: 989-498-4010

**[Saturday, November 6th - Fourth Annual Affirming Women Festival](#)** Scholarship Fundraiser starts with Happy Hour & cash bar at 4:00 pm, followed by Catered Dinner, Live Auction and a Dance with DJ Butch Hanner. Centennial Hall, 306 W. Michigan St., Mt. Pleasant, MI. Download a [flyer](#) for this event. For more information on the auction items (including a kayak) visit their [website](#).

**[Wednesday, November 10th - Midland Meet & Greet](#)** 7:00 pm. Espresso Milano, 137 Ashman, downtown Midland. 989-832-3222. This event will repeat on the second Wednesday of each month.

**[Wednesday, November 17th - Bay City Meet & Greet](#)** 7:00 - 9:00 pm. An informal gathering of the Tri-Cities' GLBT community. All are welcome in this smoke-free environment. Located at 810 Saginaw Street (between Center and Fifth Aves.), the Bay City Coffee and Tea offers a variety of delicious drinks, sandwiches and desserts.

**[Wednesday, December 1st - World AIDS Day](#)**

**[Friday, December 10th - Perceptions Holiday Gala and Charity Auction](#)** 7:00 - 10:00 pm. We're going to keep with our annual tradition of the holiday party at the Montague Inn. This is the event that you won't want to miss. Click here to [read more](#) or [purchase tickets](#) online.

## **On-Going Programs**

HIV+/AIDS support group meets every Tuesday in Bay City from 5:30 pm to 7 pm. Contact Tim Neal at 989.894.2991 for locations for the meetings.

Anonymous and confidential HIV testing is available at The Hearth Home in Saginaw. Gay men who participate will receive a Meijer's gift certificate if they choose to test. Contact Ricardo Bowden or Ric Nelson at 989.753.9011 for further information.

Perceptions Indoor Co-Ed Volleyball meets at Delta College every Sunday from 3:30-5:30 and every Tuesday from 6:30-8:30. Go in P wing to the Fitness Center and you'll be directed to the "hyper" gym on the second level. Perceptions discounted cost is \$3.50 per person and your pass is good all day with access to the entire fitness center.

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