

# Perceptions Newsletter

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

## OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING NEWS



Great food and good discussion highlighted October's general meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Midland as Perceptions hosted a "Bring a Friend" Potluck and celebrated its accomplishments in a PowerPoint presentation. There were about 60 persons present, including many first-time attendees who were given Perceptions T-shirts as well as provided information about our organization.

The discussion continued after we had finished our meal as Perceptions Board Member Rev. Beth Rakestraw made a brief presentation on the ethics of Gay Marriage and solicited responses from the crowd. Rev. Rakestraw suggested that two ways gays and lesbians can positively contribute to the institution of marriage is by modeling for heterosexuals how to engage in a committed, egalitarian relationship between equals and modeling relationships in which roles are negotiated by partners rather than arbitrarily designated according to gender. Previously, according to Rev. Rakestraw, the "success" of the institution of marriage has depended upon the female partner accepting a submissive role in the relationship and both partners fulfilling strict gender roles according to inflexible societal norms. If marriage as an institution is failing, it is in some part because heterosexuals have not yet learned how to address positively the changing roles of men and women in today's world. Rather than destroying the institution of marriage, lesbians and gays actually provide one means of rescuing it. Subsequent lively discussion among audience members addressed the issue of whether or not the GLBT community should actually participate in the institution and the rights, responsibilities and risks of doing so. The discussion featured much laughter as well as much insight.



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

Calendar Highlights:

- Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup> - Perceptions Indoor Co-Ed Volleyball 6:30 - 8:30 pm. Delta College.
- Wednesday, December 1<sup>st</sup> - Saginaw Meet & Greet 7-9 pm
- Sunday, December 5th - Perceptions Indoor Co-Ed Volleyball 3:30 - 5:30 pm. Delta College.
- Monday, December 6th - Coming Out Support Group 7:00 - 8:30 pm in Bay City
- Wednesday, December 8th - Midland Meet & Greet 7:00 pm. Espresso Milano, 137 Ashman
- Friday, December 10th - 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@yahoo.com](mailto:PerceptionsSV-owner@yahoo.com)



## Proposal 2--Next Steps

Mindy Pennington

It's two days after the election and I'm feeling pretty good. How, you ask? First of all, I know that I contributed my time and money to defeat this constitutional amendment and I know many other GLBT people and allies who worked extremely hard as well. We did fairly well considering The Coalition for a Fair Michigan was outspent 2 to 1 by the supporters of Proposal 2.

If you look at the percentages from other states, Michigan's amendment passed by a lower margin. Six states passed amendments by a margin of over 75%; Michigan's was passed by 59%. Sounds terrible, right? It's not. **That leaves 41% of Michigan voters that said NO.** We can be proud of the work we've done in the past several months.

Eleven states passed amendments defining marriage as one man, one woman. Several states worded their amendment like Michigan's, the "or similar union" kind of language that would outlaw domestic partnerships and civil unions. Now is the time to build a larger coalition and garner support from more organizations, more GLBT people and more heterosexual allies. If unmarried couples are denied domestic partner benefits then we can add them as supporters to change this amendment. The AARP came out against this amendment in Ohio and we can work on pulling that organization in to help as well.

News stories have reported that many of these anti-gay initiatives came about so conservatives would mobilize their voters such as evangelical Christians. Reports from post-election polls state that "moral values" were a major factor in people voting conservatively this year. I believe there is a return to conservatism in this country. I lived in Ohio until May of 1993--and I can tell you that Ohioans are turning back the clock on the treatment of GLBT people--attitudes, beliefs and anti-gay rhetoric are stronger than ever. I am not going to pick on Ohio--eleven states passed these amendments and there is much work that will need to be done to repeal them.

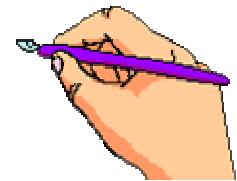
Is there a bright side to this story? Yes, there are two. First, Cincinnati, Ohio. They took a major step forward in un-doing discrimination there. Cincinnati has had a city charter since 1993 that barred the city from offering any protection to gays and lesbians. The *Associated Press* reported on November 3<sup>rd</sup> that corporate executives teamed with gay rights activists to defeat that charter, the only one like it in the nation. Secondly, *The Advocate* reported that 21 openly gay candidates won in state and national elections.

Don't obsess on the negatives--fair treatment of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people does happen. And when it doesn't, I know that Perceptions members will step up to balance the playing field. Come out, come out wherever you are!

One final note: Many of you know that I have been job-hunting these last few months. I have accepted a position in Cincinnati, Ohio and Shelly and I are moving around the first of December. It has been a true privilege and an honor to volunteer my time for this organization. I've met so many enthusiastic and committed individuals and I would like to especially thank the Board members for their dedication to the membership. They help make this community a safer, more open place for people to live. In addition, thanks to Charles Lisee, Vice Chair, for his ideas, new program development, and keeping me sane. Perceptions has made great strides in UNITING the gay and allied communities in Mid-Michigan--keep up the good work!

Farewell, my friends!

*Mindy Pennington,*  
Chairperson





## Mid-Michigan Trio Attend National Conference

Jackie Anderson (Midland), Chad Grandy (Mt. Pleasant) and Leo Romo (Saginaw) attended the 17<sup>th</sup> National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's *Creating Change* Conference in St. Louis, MO, Nov 10 -14. More than 2,500 activists learned much through excellent speakers and workshops to best communicate with the LGBT and allied communities.

The conference started just after 11 states approved anti-gay amendments including Michigan's Proposal 2. They will share information learned as part of the **Tri-Cities Call to Action** meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Sunday, Dec 5th at 2 pm.

## Montague Inn Fast Approaching!

The Annual Holiday Party and Auction is gearing up to be our biggest ever! Remember, this year we are having a live auction as well. Bill Ballor has 20 years experience as an auctioneer and antique dealer, and is a past president of the *Michigan State Auctioneers Association*. We are so lucky to have Bill donating his services for this event!

Tickets are selling fast and we have many donations to report already. The list below is just a SAMPLE of the wide variety of items that will be available.

**S.C. Johnson and Son**, two duffle bags with SC Johnson products

**Little House Gifts**, holiday item

**Dinner Cruise** for 4 on 38 foot sailboat

**YWCA of Bay County**, two 3-month Single Premier Memberships

**Walk in the Woods Kennel**, pet supplies and certificates for services

**Tri City Fire Protection**, ??????????

**St. Laurent Brothers**, Basket of holiday goodies

**A Woman's Prerogative Bookstore**, books for men and women

**Dean Boivin**, Gift Basket, Apple Mountain Reality

**Ralph Collins**, Attorney, 1 Free Consultation

**Brian Goff**, 1 Hour Plane Ride

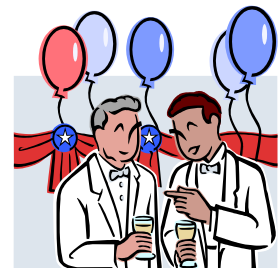
**Rev Beth Rakestraw**, Officiate Commitment Ceremony with counseling

## Perceptions

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### Phone:

989.891.1429



[WWW.PERCEPTIONSSV.ORG](http://WWW.PERCEPTIONSSV.ORG)

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

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

**[Tuesday, November 30th – Perceptions Indoor Co-Ed Volleyball](#)** 6:30 - 8:30 pm. [Delta College](#). 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. Show up early and take advantage of all that your day pass has to offer. Make sure you let the gym staff know that you are with "Perceptions" to get your discount. Bring a friend and join us for some fun, casual volleyball excitement.

**[Wednesday, December 1st - World AIDS Day](#)** 7:00 p.m., the Tri-County/Thumb Area HIV/AIDS Task Force will hold a candlelight vigil in Saginaw at Victorious Believers Church, located at 624 South Outer Drive (just off East Holland Road ext off I-75 South). This is a free, community-wide event. Members of the task force include: American Red Cross East Shoreline Chapter, BASIS, Bay County Health Dept., Midland County Health Dept., The Hearth Home, Health Delivery, Inc.; Riverhaven Coordinating Agency, a division of Bay Arenac Behavioral Health; and the Saginaw County Health Department.

**[Wednesday, December 1st - 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

**[Sunday, December 5th – Tri-Cities Call to Action](#)** This is one of several coordinated gatherings around Michigan on this weekend so that together we can decide how to move Michigan forward after the passage of Proposal 2. Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Midland, 6220 Jefferson Ave. 2:00 - 5:00 pm.

**[Sunday, December 5th – Perceptions Indoor Co-Ed Volleyball](#)** 3:30 - 5:30 pm. [Delta College](#). 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. Show up early and take advantage of all that your day pass has to offer. Make sure you let the gym staff know that you are with "Perceptions" to get your discount. Bring a friend and join us for some fun, casual volleyball excitement.

**[Monday, December 6th - Coming Out Support Group](#)** 7:00 - 8:30 pm in Bay City. Coming out is a life long journey. Whether you're just coming out, started a new job, need to talk, don't know where to turn, or are questioning your sexual identity, join others just like you as they discuss, ask questions and try to resolve their issues and come to better understanding of who we are. Contact [info@perceptionssv.org](mailto:info@perceptionssv.org) or call 989-891-1429 for meeting location or more information.

**[Tuesday, December 7th – Perceptions Indoor Co-Ed Volleyball](#)** 6:30 - 8:30 pm. [Delta College](#). 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. Show up early and take advantage of all that your day pass has to offer. Make sure you let the gym staff know that you are with "Perceptions" to get your discount. Bring a friend and join us for some fun, casual volleyball excitement.

**[Wednesday, December 8th - 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.

**[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.

**[December 10th & 11th - "Family Christmas"](#)** The [Greater Lansing Gay Men's Chorus](#) will perform a joint Christmas Concert with [Sistrum](#), Lansing's Women's Chorus, on Friday and Saturday, December 10 & 11. It will be held at All Saint's Episcopal Church, 800 Abbott Road, in East Lansing. Both performances will be at 8:00 pm.

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