



PERCEPTIONS Newsletter

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2005 Tri-City AIDS Walk a Big Success!

Rob Cummings



Bay Area Social Intervention Services (BASIS) hosted the first-ever AIDS Walk in the Tri-Cities. Earlier this year, the board of Perceptions voted to sponsor the walk and held a rummage sale to raise the \$500 sponsorship fee. Board member Al Shinaver and member Neil Wolicki coordinated Perceptions' participation in the event.

On a bright and sunny Saturday morning, 272 walkers from all over the Saginaw Valley descended on Bay City's Veterans Memorial Park for the walk Oct. 1. Several of the sponsoring organizations were there in full force – for example, Meijer donated food and water for the walkers and Marshall Field's donated prizes for the top walkers. In the end, the walk raised \$25,400 for BASIS' HIV Program. The Tri-City walk came in fourth out of the eight Michigan walks in terms of total contributions. Not bad for the first year!

The Perceptions team raised the most money with over \$4,400 in contributions. In fact, several Perceptions members were in the top ten fundraisers for the event including the overall top fundraiser! Tom Brubaker from BASIS attended the October General Meeting and shared pictures from the event and thanked Perceptions for the great effort and results.

Thanks to all the members and friends from the Perceptions team who made our participation in this event a success!

Annual Potluck and Food Drive Planned for November Meeting

This month's meeting has been scheduled for **Thursday, November 17** in observance of Thanksgiving Day. Please bring non-perishable food items and personal care products to donate to the BASIS food pantry.



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Day of Caring: Changing Perceptions One Person at a Time

Kevin Appold

In September, nine Perception members and friends took an afternoon from their busy schedules to change a few perceptions about the GLBT community in our area. Through the United Way of Bay County's "Day of Caring," they worked alongside local community members to spruce up the playground at Hampton Township's Pondsides Park.

The project provided the rare opportunity for soccer moms and dads to get to know us at a personal level. While I was working alongside one of moms, we each discussed how we got involved in the project.

She lived just down the road from the park and wanted to help because so many people use it including her grandchildren. Although I started coming out several years ago, the fear of how people will react when they find out I am gay is still with me. I was pleased to find that she treated me with respect and was very nice. So not only did I possibly changed her perception of gays, she changed mine as well. I learned I shouldn't assume straight people will have a negative reaction towards me.



Many were surprised to find after talking with someone that they were gay or lesbian. One gentleman asked, "What does GLBT stand for?" Being out in the gay community for several years, I was shocked to realize how so many people are at the very beginning of their journey to understanding us. Now I am realizing how much basic education we can do in our own local community.

The Bay City Times and a local news station were at the site to cover the event. One of our members, Charles Lisee, was quoted in an article stating, "I like to give back to the community" even while studying full-time at Delta College.

Working on a charitable activity like this allowed people to see the good in us before assuming the worst. What a fantastic way to show that we are assets to our community and to build allies! Thanks to **Dave Stickles, Neil Wolicki, Susan Edmonds, Charles Lisee, Mike Dini, Rob Peters, Beth Rakestraw, and Rob Cummings**. Hopefully even more people will be able to participate next year and change perceptions even if it is one person at a time.



Time to ‘Deck the Halls’ at the Montague Dec. 16!

Troy Rhyan



The Perceptions Holiday Party is just one month away, and details are being finalized for the event, which is the highlight of our organization's year long list of events, as well as our main fundraiser. Your support of this event is phenomenal each year, and we believe the same will hold true this year.

The Montague Inn will prepare the fabulous appetizers and serve the libation of your choice for your enjoyment. Socialize and peruse the items on display for our Silent Auction while enjoying the string ensemble who will deliver some delightful sounds for your listening pleasure. Make sure to bid on your favorite items on the bidding sheets near each item, but reserve some funds for the Live Auction, which is new for us this year and sure to be a hit. A few of our most desirable items will be reserved for the live bidding, which should make for some high-intensity excitement!

Be sure to mark your calendars for this grand occasion, and then contact a board member regarding your ticket orders. Admission to the event will be \$30.00 in advance, \$20.00 for students. Online purchases are also available via PayPal for \$31.50 each—please visit the [Perceptions website](#) for more information. If you choose to wait until the evening of the event, the admission will increase to \$35.00 and \$25.00 for students, so get 'em in advance to save yourself a few dollars. Members and friends are encouraged to invite our straight allies to attend this year. We appreciate them, and would love to see them join in the festivities!

Remember Perceptions during 2006 Membership Drive

Kevin Appold

It's that time of year again to start thinking about renewing your Perceptions membership. If you like the activities Perceptions offers and want to see those continue, please join as a member. Your membership fee provides the majority of operating funds for the coming year and allows us to continue to serve you.

For 2006, the Perceptions board has approved some changes to the Membership benefits that we hope will prompt you to join. As a member, you will get \$5 off the price of your ticket to events such as the Valentine's Dance and Holiday Party. You also will receive \$5 off the price of a Perceptions t-shirt. As a bonus, you will receive a copy of our newsletter sent to you in the mail as a courtesy of being a member.

As always, your membership entitles you to nominate and vote for board candidates as well as serve on the board. So don't delay—fill out the enclosed 2006 membership form and send it by mail to the address on the form or go to www.PerceptionsSV.org/member.html and fill out our online membership form.

A Seamstress Says ‘No’ and Jim Crow Falls

diedra knox



During the fight for civil rights for Black people in this country, there were fists raised and lunch counter sit-ins. There were people facing trained police dogs and standing (and quickly falling) against the high pressure of fire hoses. There were bombed churches with living souls inside. All of these still leave their mark, but none more powerful than that left by an Alabama seamstress on her bus ride home from work. Ms. Rosa Parks decided that this would be the last time she would move in order for someone else to be seated. When the driver threatened to call the police, Ms. Parks calmly replied, “You may do that.” Her action was the symbol Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. needed. It provided the symbol of his nonviolent approach to strike down the Jim Crow laws of the South. These laws upheld the notion that Blacks were second-class citizens.

While we can’t put words in Parks’ mouth, the GLBT community should surely thank her for her sacrifice because her own words do say, “[I] gained strength to persevere in my work for freedom, not just for blacks but for all oppressed people.”

I imagine that she would have understood how being judged on the basis of difference is an ugly and hurtful thing. I think that while she sat waiting for the police, she realized how degrading it is to have one’s life categorized by others. Maybe she thought, as they processed her through her arrest, how wrong it is to make laws that rob you of basic human dignity in your time of need.

I don’t think Rosa Parks cared whether those who wanted her removed from that bus liked her or not. I think she simply wanted them to respect her humanity and treat her accordingly. It is her legacy that empowers us all.

We Miss You, Ms. Rosa



*Special thanks to our friends at **Glen Rowan Estate Coffee Roasters** for sponsoring our refreshments during the October Monthly Membership Meeting and for warmly hosting the Saginaw Meet & Greet last month. We received very positive feedback from some of the 24 guests who visited the coffee shop that evening!*

*The next Meet & Greet at Glen Rowan is scheduled for **7:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 7**. It is located at 212 S. Washington Avenue in Downtown Saginaw.*

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, November 9th - 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, November 11th - "Friday Night Dinner" 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions members and friends on Friday nights for dinner at a local eatery. Each week we meet at a different restaurant for food, fun and conversation. **This week we're meeting at The Savoy Grill**, 127 S. Franklin St, Saginaw, MI If you plan to attend, email Alan@PerceptionsSV.org by 3:00 pm on Friday. An email is sent through our [Yahoo Group](#) every week to announce the week's venue. Read about previous dinners in the [Online Forum](#).

November 11 & 12 - Twentieth Annual Women in the Arts Festival Come celebrate lesbian and feminist culture—crafts, workshops, day stage, and food! Evening events include Sistrum Women's Chorus, comedian Karen Williams, and jazz violinist Tia Imani Hanna. Admission (more if you can, less if you can't): \$40/weekend, \$20/evening programs (either night), \$3/day pass only. Edgewood United Church, 469 N. Hagadorn, East Lansing. E-mail hansenm3@msu.edu or call (517) 230-7884 to reserve tickets.

Tuesday, November 15th – Womyn's Circle 7:30 - 9:00 pm. This program provides support to Tri-County lesbian women and facilitates community awareness projects in partnership with Perceptions and PFLAG. It has provided safety and help to many women and their families experiencing hostility, abuse and isolation. The free, confidential support group sessions are facilitated by Mary Jo Hall, MSW, CSW, ACSW. Meets at the YWCA located at 3405 Midland Rd. in Bay City.

Wednesday, November 16th - Bay City Meet & Greet 7:00 to 9:00 pm. An informal gathering of the Tri-Cities' GLBT community. All are welcome in this smoke-free environment. [Gypsies](#), located at 510 Third Street offers a variety of delicious drinks, sandwiches and desserts. If attendees are interested in having a reading done, please contact Marianna at Gypsies, 892-5105, by noon the Tuesday before. If attendees are interested in having food ready for them at Gypsies from Jack's Deli, they may call Jack's at 893-6931 by 4:00 pm Wednesday.

Thursday, November 17th - Perceptions Monthly Membership Meeting 7:00 pm. Annual Potluck dinner and Food Drive. Bring non-perishable food items and personal care products. This year, we will donate to the [BASIS](#) food pantry. Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Midland, 6220 Jefferson Ave. For more information, contact [Perceptions](#).

Thursday, November 17 - Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance A day to honor and remember individuals from the transgender community who were murdered in hate/bias crimes. It will take place from 7-9 pm at the Metropolitan Community Church of Detroit. Call [Affirmations](#) for additional details.

November 17, 18, 19 & 20 - "The Laramie Project" Presented by U of M's School of Music, Department of Theatre & Drama in the Mendelssohn Theatre, Ann Arbor. Performances on Thursday, November 17 @ 7:30 pm, Friday & Saturday @ 8:00 pm, and Sunday @ 2:00 pm. [Ticket information](#). (See the [Organizing for Unity](#) web site for information about the Fred Phelps protest on Saturday.)

Friday, November 18th - "Friday Night Dinner" 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions members and friends this Friday night at The Stockpot, 1007 Washington Ave., Bay City. Since the restaurant closes at 7:00, this will be a private party for Perceptions members and friends only. In addition to the regular menu, Vince will set up a special buffet featuring his Greek specialties. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Alan@PerceptionsSV.org by 3:00 pm on Friday.

Saturday, November 19th - Transgender Monologues A Dramatic Presentation Written, Performed, and Produced by Transgender Individuals and their Allies In Honor of the Transgender Day of Remembrance To Support the Services of [TransGender Michigan](http://TransGenderMichigan.org). 7:00 pm, Good Beans Café, 328 North Grand Traverse St., Flint. Tickets are \$7 in advance and \$10 at the door. For advance ticket sales, please visit [TransGender Michigan's web site](http://TransGenderMichigan.org). For additional information, please contact Carrie Tune-Copeland at 810-397-1026 or carrietunecopeland@comcast.net

Friday, November 25th - "Friday Night Dinner" 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions members and friends on Friday nights for dinner at a local eatery. Each week we meet at a different restaurant for food, fun and conversation. An email is sent through our [Yahoo Group](#) every week to announce the week's venue.

Sunday, November 27th - PFLAG Meeting 2:00 - 4:30 pm. Located at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 6220 Jefferson, Midland.

Thursday, December 1st - World AIDS Day Started in 1988, World AIDS Day is not just about raising money, but also about raising awareness, education and fighting prejudice. World AIDS Day is also important in reminding people that HIV has not gone away, and that there are many things still to be done. The theme for 2005 is **Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise.** "Keep the Promise" is an appeal to governments and policy makers to ensure that they meet the targets they have agreed to in the fight against HIV and AIDS. For more information, go to <http://www.avert.org/worldaid.htm>

Thursday, December 1st - World AIDS Day Candlelight Service 7:00 p.m. in the [SVSU Student Center](#), Multipurpose Room. This event is free and open to the public. All are welcome. Sponsored by the Tri-County/Thumb Area HIV/AIDS Task Force and SVSU Student Life Center. For more information, contact Tom Brubaker at BASIS, 989-894-2991.

Friday, December 2nd - "Friday Night Dinner" 7:00 pm. Join Perceptions members and friends on Friday nights for dinner at a local eatery. Each week we meet at a different restaurant for food, fun and conversation. An email is sent through our [Yahoo Group](#) every week to announce the week's venue.

Wednesday, December 7th – Saginaw Meet & Greet 7:00 to 9:00 pm. **NEW LOCATION!** [Glen Rowan Estate](#) Coffee Roasters, 212 South Washington Ave., Saginaw. Additional parking is available in The Saginaw News parking lot, across the street.

Friday, December 16th - Perceptions Annual Holiday Party 6:00 - 10:00 pm. Perceptions returns to the [Montague Inn](#) in Saginaw for the annual holiday party and charity silent auction. Additional information and advance ticket sales available [online](#).



Contact Us!

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