



December 2002  
Volume 1, Issue 3

# Perceptions Newsletter

*Perceptions Inc. P.O. Box 1525, Midland, MI 48641 (989) 891-1429*

## Calendar Highlights:

- **Wed. Dec 18, 7-9 pm, Bay City Coffee & Tea Meet and Greet**
- **Thurs. Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm, Perceptions Monthly Meeting, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Midland**
- **Sun. Dec. 22, Tri-Cities PFLAG Meeting 2-4:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Midland**

To receive email alerting about upcoming events, send your email address to [PerceptionsSV-owner@yahoogroups.com](mailto:PerceptionsSV-owner@yahoogroups.com)

## First Annual Holiday Party A Total SUCCESS!

Thanks to everyone who attended the Montague Inn Holiday Party! The event was a total success!

Did you know?

- The event was sold out
- The Silent Auction was a great success
- There were people in attendance who've never come to a Perceptions event, and
- Everyone had a GREAT time!

As a follow up, I encourage you to invite your friends to become members on the Yahoo group so they can receive email alerts of all Perceptions events.

So, if you brought a friend (or 4) to the Montague and they are NOT on the Yahoo list, email us at [PerceptionsSV-owner@yahoogroups.com](mailto:PerceptionsSV-owner@yahoogroups.com) and we will add them.

Don't forget that our Meet and Greet at Bay City Coffee and Tea (on Saginaw Street downtown) is Wednesday, December 18th at 7:00 pm and the Perceptions monthly meeting is December 19th at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Midland at 7:00 pm.

See you then!

Perceptions Board

## From the Desk of the Co-Chairs

Mindy Pennington

As we prepare for 2003, I want to announce a change in the Perceptions Board. Terry King, the Co-Chair, has resigned from the Board. We will miss his enthusiasm and organizational abilities, but wish him the best as he starts more courses toward his Master's degree. We all understand the need for prioritization in life; and [sometimes], real work has to come before our volunteer work! Good luck with your classes, Terry.

**The Board members moved quickly to fill the vacant position and they have elected Paul Wright as the new Co-Chair.** Many of you have already met Paul, and he was profiled in last month's Perceptions newsletter. He lives in Midland County and works as an attorney at Dow Chemical in Midland. Paul has been involved in Perceptions since the beginning and has many contacts in local and national gay and lesbian organizations. Please welcome Paul as the new Perceptions Co-Chair.

## Monthly Meeting Notes

Paul Wright



At the November meeting of Perceptions participants, we learned about the Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) at three area schools – Delta College, Saginaw Valley State University, and Central Michigan University. Each GSA sent two representatives to talk to the participants. Keri, Emily, Russ, Lois, James and Nick each talked about the activities they have been involved in at each of their schools.

At Delta, Keri and Emily have organized movie nights during Pride Month. Their group is growing and has plans for a gay prom in the Spring. They have their work cut out for them as even some of the faculty have expressed negative reaction to the group's presence on campus. However, they are persistent and have some support as well.

At SVSU, Russ and Lois started the GSA group in May of this year. In just a few months, their group has grown, especially thanks to the help of the Genesee County PFLAG group. They meet weekly on campus and have the support of the University President, who has attended one of their meetings. They hope to sponsor other diversity events on campus. A new logo is in the works and they are planning to learn more about other campus' efforts at the GLBT conference to be held at Ohio State University.

James and Nick head CMU's group, which was formed in the Spring of 2002. Their group has regular meetings and recently sponsored the *Journey to a*

*Hate-Free Millennium* program. The program was held on campus and drew a crowd of 100 people. Their current effort is focused upon being granted the status of an approved student organization so that funds will be available from the University for their events. They stress, though, that a lot of GLBT-related events can be conducted without cost through the use of their own personal efforts.

*Perceptions* participants identified one common theme – all three groups have a challenge of sustainability. Students lead all the groups and those students will eventually move on so developing leaders among the younger classes will be important. *Perceptions* offered whatever assistance they need, including publicizing their events. If any *Perceptions* participants could not attend the November meeting with the GSA representatives, but would like more information about getting involved on campus, just email us at:

PerceptionsSV-owner@yahoo.com.

All members of Perceptions can help these organizations--just ask them how you can help.

## Financial Coordination

Jeff Illig



### Joy, Peace, Friendship, Peace, Love, Peace, Family, Peace, Fellowship, Peace.

This is what I wish for all of you, today and always. This time of year tries the patience and rattles the nerves. But when all is said and done, we cherish this season because it allows us to share the best of ourselves with others. And it's quite easy to do that with those we care about and associate with all of the time. But our willingness to share ourselves with strangers is the true test of our humble spirit.

I'm not going to write about membership drives and Perceptions' need for funding. During this holiday season, I ask only that we all take some time to think about those in our extended communities who have less we do, who need our support... emotionally, spiritually, physically, and financially. There are many within the TBLG and allied communities who would gratefully accept our generosity, no matter what form it takes.

Each of us possesses unique resources from which many others can benefit: both friend and stranger. There is always someone in a more desperate situation than we are. We can donate our time. We can donate our emotional and physical strength. We can donate our food. We can donate our clothes. We can donate our money. And if we cannot afford to sacrifice any of these, we can hold these precious human beings in our warm thoughts and, if so inclined, in our prayers.

You see, it doesn't take a lot of effort. Generosity of spirit can take many forms. If you can afford and are moved to help financially, there are many organizations ready to put your donations to good use. I'm sure you can think of many. But here are a few that continue to support our community.

- Human Rights Campaign (HRC)
- American Foundation for AIDS Research (AMFAR)
- The Triangle Foundation
- The Southern Poverty Law Center
- Saginaw Area Rainbow Association
- Affirmations
- Universalist Unitarian Fellowship
- PFLAG
- Perceptions
- GMHC
- Bay Area Women's Center
- B.A.S.I.S.
- American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
- Underground Railroad Inc.

Remember just one thing. ***Generosity is its own reward.*** And it really feels good.

May peace reign throughout this season.

Yours in Service...Jeff

## Communications Corner

Charles T. Lisee

As this is being written, the final touches are being made to the Perceptions website [www.perceptionsSV.org](http://www.perceptionsSV.org). An enormous amount of work and collaboration have gone into developing our site. You will soon find just how resourceful this tool will be in uniting, supporting and empowering the thriving glbt community through out Saginaw Valley. As always, your input is appreciated and is vital to Perceptions continued success.



In January the Full Board of Perceptions will participate in a strategic planning retreat. This retreat will focus our energies on specific, tasks, projects and objectives. If you have any ideas or suggestions as to ways Perceptions can work "to provide visible leadership throughout the greater Saginaw Valley which promotes equality, respect, and understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Individuals" please share those ideas with the board via email or at our next general meeting Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>.

Looking a little bit forward to February, we are looking to have a delegation representing Perceptions at the Midwest Bisexual, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Ally College Conference at Ohio State University in Columbus, OH Feb. 14-16<sup>th</sup>. Cost for the conference is \$35 plus transportation, food and lodging. Carpool and lodging arrangements, with emphasis on affordability, will be coordinated for this event. Website:

<http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu/glbts/mblgtacc.html>  
Contact Charles Lisee at [clisee48708@yahoo.com](mailto:clisee48708@yahoo.com) if you'd like to be part of the organized Perceptions group.

Let's reign in the New Year with an open mind...open to success, love and understanding.

My you and yours have a blessed holiday season,

Charles T. Lisee

## Meet a Board Member: Douglas Barron

Douglas and his partner Brian Goff of eleven years reside in Saginaw County.

Douglas has been involved with Perceptions since January 2002. He joined the temporary board to help with the Social events and continues to flourish in that role today.

From our fabulous Montague Inn Holiday Party and Silent Auction to the monthly potlucks, bakery auction, PFLAG Chocolate Party, the Summer Garden Party, and the Perceptions float for Lansing Pride 2002 it has been Doug doing much of the "behind the scenes" work. His endless creativity and dedication to Perceptions are evident in all he does.

Thank you Douglas for making a difference!

## Calendar of Events

**Dec thru – 2003 Womyn Out & About** lists social, cultural & professional opportunities for lesbians. Most activities are in the Southeastern MI.

Events: <http://www.glbtcntral.com/woa/events.html>

Links: <http://www.glbtcntral.com/woa/links.html>

**Wed. Dec. 18 Perceptions Meet and Greet 7-9 pm 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. of every month** Bay City Coffee & Tea, 810 Saginaw St., Bay City Phone for directions: 893-0872 Activity: Informal get together, non-smoking hip coffeehouse with hot and cold drinks, desserts and sandwiches. Come join the fun!

**Thurs. Dec. 19, Perceptions Monthly Meeting**, 7 pm at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Midland, 6220 Jefferson, Midland, MI. Anne Clevering, a Saginaw counselor, addresses stress and depression during the holidays with emphasis on GLBT issues. Anne's interactive presentation will allow us to work through the emotional "madness" that can happen during the Holidays and give us a chance to reflect on the positive happenings in our lives at this time of the year.

**Sun. Dec. 22, Tri-Cities PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Meeting**, at UU, 6220 Jefferson at Wackerly in Midland 2 - 4:30 pm Two women speak of their struggle being in the closet.

**Jan 24-31, 2003 Michigan's GLBT Film Festival**, a project of the Triangle Foundation. Films that celebrate the diversity of the GLBT and allied communities. 8 days, 16 screenings, 28 films. Main Art Theater, downtown Royal Oak. For a film festival guide , call toll-free 877-787-4264 or go to [www.reelpridemichigan.com](http://www.reelpridemichigan.com)

**Feb 14-16, 2003 Midwest Bisexual, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender and Ally College Conference**, Ohio State University campus, Columbus, OH. Cost: \$35 Website: <http://multiculturalcenter.osu.edu/glbts/mblgtacc.html> At least 4-5 Perceptions, Gay Straight Alliances of SVSU & CMU people will attend. Contact Charles Lisee at [clisee48708@yahoo.com](mailto:clisee48708@yahoo.com)



### Perceptions Mission Statement:

"To provide visible leadership throughout the greater Saginaw Valley which promotes equality, respect, and understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Individuals"



Opening doors for the  
Mid-Michigan GLBT  
Community

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*We're on the Web!*

*See us at:*

[www.PerceptionsSV.org](http://www.PerceptionsSV.org)

## Mindy's Cooking Column

Some friends and I will celebrate a special Anniversary this week. It's not a relationship anniversary--it's a baking anniversary.

I moved to Michigan in 1997 and quickly found a couple of friends who also like to bake holiday cookies. Our event is slightly different from a standard cookie exchange--we each bring our dough to the appointed house and bake cookies all day. We call this day our Cookie Marathon and it's our sixth year. Last year we had four people and 10 cookie varieties.

This year (for the first time) it's at my place and I have some dough ready and waiting in my freezer.

This recipe is from Land O'Lakes, the only cookie book I consistently purchase every holiday season. It doubles very easily and the dough and cookies freeze well. I never make the glaze, but I have included it as part of the recipe if you decide you like the look of a drizzled cookie.

TIP: If your cookie sheets are dark, your cookies will be darken quickly. If you want lighter cookies, line your sheets with parchment paper.

## Raspberry Almond Shortbread Thumbprints

### COOKIES

2/3 cup sugar

1 cup butter, softened (unsalted is better)

1/2 teaspoon almond extract

2 cups all-purpose flour

1/2 cup raspberry jam\* (I use seedless)

### GLAZE

1 cup powdered sugar

1 ½ teaspoons almond extract

2 to 3 teaspoons water

Heat oven to 350°. In large mixer bowl, combine sugar, butter and almond extract. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often, until creamy (1-2 minutes). Reduce speed to low, add flour. Continue beating until well mixed (1-2 minutes). Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on cookie sheets. With thumb, make a small indentation in center of each cookie. (Edges may crack slightly, just press them back together). Fill each indentation with about ¼ teaspoon jam. Bake for 14 to 18 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Let stand 1 minute; remove from cookie sheets. In small bowl, stir together powdered sugar and 1 ½ teaspoons almond extract. Gradually stir in enough water to make a thin glaze. Drizzle over warm cookies. YIELD 3½ dozen cookies.

\*Or you may use your favorite jam