

# Herland Voice

volume twenty-five number eight

september 2007

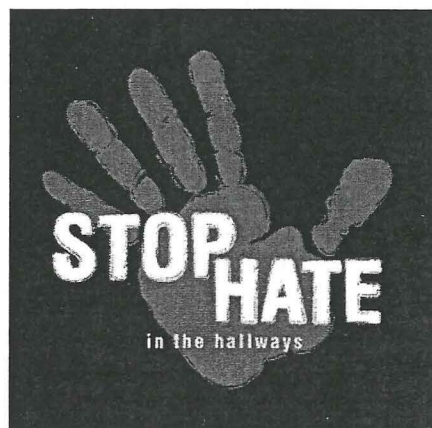
## a bullying prevention conference

**C**imarron Alliance Foundation and other community partners are sponsoring **Stop Hate In The Hallways—A Bullying Prevention Conference** to address bullying based on race, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Training will be provided for the intervention and prevention of bullying and harassment in a variety of break-out sessions. Keynote speaker will be Kevin Jennings, Founder & Executive Director of GLSEN. The one-day conference will be held:

October 11, 2007  
Metro Tech Springlake Campus  
1900 Springlake Drive  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

### Why is this conference needed?

Harassment and assault in high schools is still a big problem for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender teens. Most teens (75%) report hearing homophobic remarks at school often or at least sometimes. As the current hit teen movie *Superbad* illustrates, calling someone "fag" is still a very common putdown in high schools. While the name-calling is



rather benign in *Superbad*, in reality almost all LGBT students report having been harassed or assaulted at school for their perceived or actual orientation. Two-thirds of those students never report it and LGBT students are much more likely than straight students to say that they do not feel safe at school.

Students of a race other than white are also much more likely to experience harassment due to their race.

Most schools do not have an anti-harassment policy that includes sex-

see Conference P. 2

## come play at the herland fall retreat

**I**t's that time of year again! Time for a quick getaway to womyn and nature. Don't miss this opportunity to relax, hike, read a book, tie-dye a T-shirt, bird watch, ride a bike, fish, play games, listen to live music, or play your new song at the open mic. Coming up on Halloween weekend in October, Herland will have its Fall Retreat at Lake Eufaula State Park.

We've always had great weather at Eufaula in the fall and we don't expect this year to be any different. Since it is Halloween weekend, consider bringing a costume (for you and any four-legged friend you might bring) and enter the Saturday evening costume contest. Another contest will feature pumpkin carving (please bring one if you can). Last year's entries in both contests were great! Look for more details and a registration form in next month's *Voice*.

## calendar

### september

**PFLAG OKC** Tues. Sept 4 Church of the Open Arms 7 pm

**OGLPC Meeting** Monday Sept 10 Neighborhood Alliance 1236 NW 36th 7:30 pm

**General Voting** for OK County Commissioner Tues. September 11

**PFLAG Norman** Thursday Sept 13 St Stephen's Church 7 pm

**Herland Supper Club** Sat. Sept 8 TGI Fridays 4239 NW Expressway 5:30 pm

**Herland Scrabble** Saturday Sept 15 2 pm

**Herland Board Meeting** Sunday Sept 16 4 pm everyone welcome

**Herland Craft Day** Saturday Sept 22 2—5 pm

**McPride Family Picnic** Saturday Sept 22 Chadick Park McAlester

**Queer Queens of Comedy** Saturday Sept 22 Ft Worth 8 pm

**Herland Voice Mailing** Wednesday Sept 26 6 pm

**AIDS Walk** Sunday Sept 30 Myriad Gardens registration 12:30 stepoff 2 pm


**Center Cinema** Free films every Friday at Tulsa Equality Center 7 pm

### october

**Stop Hate in the Hallways—A Bullying Prevention Conference** Thursday Oct 11 Metro Tech

**Herland Fall Retreat** Fri. Sat. Sun Oct 26-28 Lake Eufaula State Park

## oklahoma must recognize out of state adoptions by gay couples

he 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that a state law preventing gay couples from getting birth certificates for children adopted in other states is unconstitutional.

The Adoption Invalidation Law, hastily passed at the end of the 2004 Oklahoma legislative session, had said that Oklahoma "shall not recognize an adoption by more than one individual of the same sex from any other state or foreign jurisdiction." Although single gays may become the parent of adoptive children in Oklahoma, same-sex couples were barred from adopting and the state could invalidate adoptions where couples have been awarded joint parenting rights in states where co-adoption is legal.

Lambda Legal, representing same-sex couples, took the state to court. Lambda represented two same-sex couples and their families who adopted children while living in other states and later moved to Oklahoma or wanted to visit the state with their family. Lambda Legal argued that the law was unconstitutional based on the United States Constitution's guarantees of equal protection, due process and right to travel, as well as the mandates of the Full Faith and Credit Clause.

In 2006, U.S. District Court Judge Robin Cauthron agreed, finding that the statute violated the United States

Constitution by singling out a specific group for discrimination. Now the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has upheld Cauthron's ruling and declared Oklahoma's law unconstitutional. (Likewise, in 2004, Oklahoma's own Attorney General gave an official opinion that the law would violate the Ninth Amendment.)

In a 31 page ruling, the court was highly critical of the state legislature for passing the law. "The very fact that the adoptions have occurred is evidence that a court of law has found the adoptions to be in the best interests of the children," wrote Cauthron. "To now attempt to strip a child of one of his or her parents seems far removed from the statute's purpose and

therefore from [the state's] asserted important government objective."

"Gay and lesbian parents in Oklahoma can now breathe a collective sigh of relief because their relationships with their children are no longer threatened by the state of Oklahoma," said Lambda attorney Ken Upton. "We're gratified that justice has been handed down in our case and that the court saw to it that Oklahoma has to treat the children of gay and lesbian parents the same as all other kids."

*"The very fact that the adoptions have occurred is evidence that a court of law has found the adoptions to be in the best interests of the children," wrote U. S. District Judge Robin Cauthron.*

conference | cont'd. from P. 1

ual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, specifically. But most teachers believe that anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies would be helpful in securing a safe learning environment for LGBT students.

### Who should attend?

School Administrators, Classroom Educators, Mental Health Professionals, Law Enforcement Officers, School Psychologists, School Superintendents, National, State & Local Policy Makers, School Police Officers, Social Workers, Attorneys, and School Board Members are encouraged to attend.

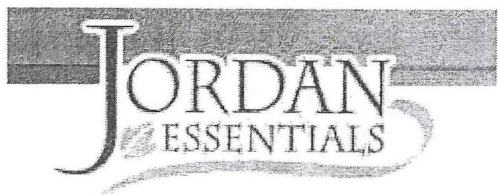
Total tuition for the conference is \$35 which includes lunch. You may apply for a conference scholarship by sending a letter of need to: Mr. Randy Tate, Conference Chair, North Care Center, 4436 NW 50th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. Or call him at (405) 858-2700 office or fax (405) 858-2720.

### Dr. Dawn Singleton, Ph.D.



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The Voice is published monthly by Herland Sister Resources, Inc. 2312 NW 39th, OKC, OK 73112. The Voice is offered as an open forum for community discourse. Articles reflect the opinions of the author and not necessarily those of Herland Sister Resources. Unsolicited articles and letters to the editor are welcomed and must be signed by the writer with full name and address. Upon request, letters or articles may be printed under a pseudonym or anonymously. Herland reserves the right to edit or not publish any article. Subscriptions to The Voice are free upon request although a donation is requested to meet publication and distribution costs.

## supper club

This month the Supper Club will meet at T.G.I. Fridays, 4239 Northwest Expressway, on Saturday, September 8, at 5:30 pm. They have everything from salads, sandwiches, and burgers to pasta, seafood, ribs, and steaks. A little something for everyone, no matter what your taste.

Afterwards, you are welcome to head back to Herland with us for the last few episodes of the *L Word, Season 4*.

## scrabble

Break out your board and join us on Saturday, September 15, at 2 pm for an afternoon of lightly competitive Scrabble. All levels are welcome. Or, you are always welcome to come and visit and watch others play.

## aids walk

AIDS Walk OKC 2007 will be Sunday, September 30, at the Myriad Botanical Gardens. Registration will open at 12:30 pm and the Walk will step off at 2:00 pm. It's a short 1 mile through Bricktown and returning to the Gardens.

Southwest Airlines has donated 2 roundtrip tickets to anywhere in the continental US that they fly. Raffle tickets (\$1 each) will be sold for the chance to win them. The drawing will be at the end of the Walk.

## craft day

Join us on Saturday, September 22, from 2 to 5 pm for Craft Day at Herland. This is a family-friendly event. We'll have glass beads and wire for making wire animals and decorations, glass tiles for decorating light switch covers, glass objects and coasters, and a variety of papers for making small artist books... these are all flexible craft ideas which can be combined into multi-media pieces. Jeanne will be available for instructions and idea development. If anyone wants to bring their own art supplies, bring them on! If someone has a craft they want to teach or learn, please let us know!

## mcpride family picnic

The third annual McPride Family Picnic will be held Saturday, September 22, from 11 am to 5 pm in Chadick Park in McAlester, OK. The picnic will feature speakers, games, booths of information, and fun for all people—gay and straight alike. Come out for an afternoon of fun and heartwarming experiences. (Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in Chadick Park.) The purpose of the picnic is to create an opportunity to share pride in who we are, express the love and acceptance of our families, and create an opportunity to meet and get to know each other. For more info, see [www.mcpride.org](http://www.mcpride.org).

## wishing chair



The musical duo Wishing Chair will perform at Church of the Open Arms Thursday, September 20 at 7:30 p.m. Admission is on a sliding scale of \$10-15. The women criss-cross the country several times a year playing to appreciative audiences everywhere they go. Take the opportunity to come hear them in Oklahoma City.

Since 1995, multi-instrumentalist Miriam Davidson and songwriter Kiya Heartwood have made an art of inspiring performances and award winning songs. A Wishing Chair concert is a passionate mix of intelligent lyrics, spell-binding storytelling and breathtaking harmony over a full roots and roll sound. Heartwood's percussive guitar work and wide-open vocals compliments Davidson's soulful use of a myriad of instruments: piano, accordion, banjo, hand drums and bouzouki. This gifted duo seduces the listener with soulful confessions, political broadside, and a wicked groove. Wishing Chair is sure to leave the listener fully satisfied. Their latest CD, *Underdog*, was awarded Best New Folk CD of 2006, by JPFolks, an Indie organization of over 40,000 music industry professionals.

*"Good lyrics for thinking people; music with meat on its bones." - Omaha Review*

Curve magazine says of Wishing Chair, "Engaging performances, haunting harmonies, poetic, political, stellar vocals." "Kiya Heartwood and Miriam Davidson score again. They have never sounded tighter or more energetic in their performance. Wishing Chair just keeps getting better," says Rich Warren, Sing Out! Magazine.

For more information about the band and to hear samples of their music, check them out on the web at [www.wishingchair.com](http://www.wishingchair.com).

## health notes

### friends can help

A study by the New England Journal of Medicine found that social networks are more important than genes when it comes to determining what a person weighs. These findings may explain why people's best efforts to slim down on their own are often short-lived. It also suggests that public health initiatives to help people achieve a healthy weight should take social networks into account.

The study by Harvard researchers found that behavioral norms shift depending on how people in a social circle look and act. In particular, the chance of a person gaining weight rose 71% if a same-sex friend had gained weight. There was a lesser effect of one spouse on the other for straight married couples and no effect from neighbors who weren't part of the social network.

In other studies, networks have been found to be important for shaping political attitudes and teen sexual behavior.

The researchers hypothesize that if weight gain can spread through a social network, then presumably, so can healthy eating habits. Medical and public-health interventions to promote achieving a healthy weight might be more cost-effective than previously thought since health improvements in one person might spread to others.

### how racism affects the mind and body

Preliminary findings of research at St. John's University and Howard University are suggesting that racism could help explain disparities in health across races. Discrimination seems to act as a source of chronic stress the same way that marital conflict or strains at work do, increasing the stress hormone cortisol, raising blood pressure, and suppressing the immune system.

One of the studies found that racism experienced in the day led to elevated blood pressure at night, suggesting the body can't turn off its stress response. Other studies have shown that the stress of suppressing the inner turmoil caused by racist encounters can itself lead to ill effects.

### sports benefits

Girls who played sports in high school are far more likely to gain a college diploma than their peers, according to a recent study by researchers at Brigham Young University. Girls in the study were 73% more likely to complete a bachelor's degree within six years of graduating from high school if they had been athletes. And, it did not matter if they continued to play sports in college or not. The female students who had been athletes said that playing sports taught them to persevere. Sports kept them grounded, kept them out of trouble, and put them in a group that had the same mind-set.

### dallas emerges as among most gay-friendly cities

Dallas has become one of the most gay-friendly cities in the US according to Time Magazine. It boasts the ninth-largest concentration of same-sex couples in the country and has a lesbian city sheriff, gay county judge, and gay district clerk. Dallas City Councilman Ed Oakley, who is openly gay, carried 40% of the vote in the election for Dallas mayor in June and thus had a chance of being the first gay mayor of a large US city.

The increasing gay friendliness reflects a rise of more liberal attitudes in Dallas. Gays have gentrified once-crumbling neighborhoods while the city's booming cultural scene has been a magnet for many gay and lesbian professionals.

But some of the old, conservative Dallas remains. President Bush is expected to move there once he leaves the White House.

### forum reflects gays' clout

The August 9th Los Angeles presidential forum on issues important to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Americans showcases the status gay votes and money have earned in the Democratic Party. The fact that no Republican candidates accepted the invitation illustrates the continued controversy that gay issues cause them. And two Republican contenders, Romney and Giuliani have pivoted away from their previous stands favoring gay rights as they seek the nomination.

The Democratic field's support of gay rights is similar—all the major candidates favor civil unions for gay couples and repeal of the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy against openly gay service members. Surveys suggest gay people have higher incomes than the general population and are more likely to make political contributions.

Still, the Democrats' courtship of gay voters only goes so far. None of the leading Democrats supports gay marriage rights, reflecting fear of an issue Republicans used effectively in 2004 to put them on the defensive and mobilize conservative voters.

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## hate crimes?

by moc

**A**t a meeting of gay and gay-friendly progressives the other night, I heard a nice young gay man wonder why we need hate crimes legislation. Hate is hate and crimes are crimes, and why combine the two? He implied that he thinks that seeking hate-crime legislation makes us seem like whiney-babies asking for our mommies to take care of us.

So I've been thinking about it: Hmm. Whiney babies. Would that be maybe – Emmett Till, who was mutilated, lynched, and burned for no other reason than he was a young black man who possibly said “hi” to a white woman? Or... James Byrd, who fifty years later was dragged through the streets of Jasper Texas until he was decapitated, for no other reason than he was a black man alone on a country road? Or Matthew Shephard, who was hung from a North Dakota fence to die, for no other reason than he was gay and

trusting?

Now, it is true that murder is murder, and a vicious murder will, these days, be tried as such, with a nice vicious penalty applied, whether it is designated a hate crime or not. I think this was our nice young man's point. However, the reason that murders of this sort *must* be specifically identified as crimes of hate is to allow our *leaders*, both secular and religious, to *lead* us all in a spirited denunciation of the attitudes that engendered them.

Far more numerous than hate murders are the racist graffiti, the swastikas painted on synagogue walls, the desecration of Jewish cemeteries, the beatings nearly unto death of interracial couples and homosexuals, and on and on; and it is for this kind of activity that the enhanced punishment accorded by hate crimes statutes is intended. Vandalism intended to intimidate an entire group of people should carry a higher penalty than overturning trash cans on Halloween. Violence intended to spark fear in the hearts of

an entire group of people, intended to dampen a group's feeling of being at home in their own country and in their own skin, is a great crime and should be acknowledged and treated as such.

Hate crimes are, purely and simply, a form of terrorism. They are used to intimidate an entire class of people, and they are very effective. As an editorial in the Washington Post in May of this year said, “...*crimes that target someone because of his or her race or sexual orientation are more than an offense against that individual. They are crimes that terrorize whole communities.*”

I'll close with a quote and a couple of questions. The quote is from the website of an organization not usually considered wimpy, sissy, or whiney: the Federal Bureau of Investigation ([www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov)). “*Crimes of hatred and prejudice—from lynchings to cross burnings to vandalism of synagogues—are a sad fact of American history, but the term “hate crime” did not enter the nation's vocabulary until the 1980s, when emerging hate groups like the Skinheads launched a wave of bias-related crime. The FBI began investigating what we now call hate crimes as far back as the early 1920s, when we opened our first Ku Klux Klan case. Today, we remain dedicated to working with state and local authorities to prevent these crimes and to bring to justice those who commit them.*”

The questions: Seeing as there already exist Hate Crime laws at the Federal level and in most states, including Oklahoma; and that they usually cover, at a minimum, *race, color, religion, ancestry, and national origin*; and considering that *anti-gay* hate crimes make up about one third of all reported hate crimes, why on earth would we not want to add sexual and gender orientation to these laws? And, how on earth does doing this make us whiney-babies?

### herland voice subscription renewal

If you enjoy reading the Voice and keeping up with what's happening in our community, please help us with a small annual donation. Just \$15 a year will go a long way toward covering our costs. Herland is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Your contribution is deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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www.equalityforum.com



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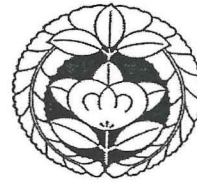


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Sept 21<sup>st</sup> Rev Kawamura visits from Tokyo

"Teach this triple truth to all:  
A generous heart, kind speech,  
and a life of service and compassion  
are the things which renew humanity."  
-- Buddha

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