
Spahrkle

The Monthly Newsletter of
The Spahr Center

June 2019

Donate Now!

Marin County Recognizes LGBTQ+ Pride Day, and History is Made!



On June 18, Spahr Center staff and supporters were present as the Marin County Board of Supervisors met to consider a Resolution, sponsored by Supervisors Damon Connolly and Dennis Rodoni, to declare June 22, 2019 Pride Day. The Board devoted over an hour to hearing about the history of the LGBTQ community and the Pride flag, and to consider moving testimony in support of the Resolution from community members.

Click [here](#) to read more.

ENOUGH WAS ENOUGH!! **50th Years Ago, the Stonewall Riots Set Change In Motion**

June 28 marks 50 years ago when the patrons of the Stonewall Inn decided that brutality of LGBTQ people at the hands of the New York Police Department had to come to an end. The actions of justifiably angry and courageous activists touched propelled the movement for full civil rights of our community. What progress we have made as a result – with much more to be done!

Please click the button below to watch this video marking the occasion – *noting that it includes some adult language.*

Watch Video

Meet the Spahr Center's Youth Advocacy Coalition

The Spahr Center's Youth Advocacy Coalition is a group comprised of queer and trans youth, high-school aged and up, who are passionate about activism and changing societal norms surrounding the LGBTQ+ community in Marin. Founded in March of 2018, the Youth Advocacy Coalition meets every week to organize and plan our events. Nina Friedman was our first program coordinator, and over the last three months, Fel Agrelius has taken that role.



The group is entirely youth-led and directed. We pursue projects that we are most passionate about, and we prioritize those that show the most demonstrated need in our community. We initially started out planning social events, but as we grew together as a group, we realized we wanted to focus more on activism and community advocacy. Our group provides a way to get involved with other LGBTQ+ identified folks and create meaningful change, connecting those in and outside of the community and reducing the ignorance and prejudice with which we have personal experience.

Click [here](#) to read more

40 PEOPLE STEPPED UP, NOW ONLY \$2,000 MORE IS NEEDED TOWARD A \$25,000 GOAL TO PROTECT LGBTQ STUDENTS, SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH HIV

Good news: We recently announced that our **Cause to be Proud Campaign** had received a generous \$5,000 challenge grant from Sid Hartman and Miguel Ruelas. To date, already \$23,000 has been raised to meet this challenge. These funds will sustain and help us *grow* our vital programs that support and empower LGBTQ+ youth and seniors, and people living with HIV.

Sunday, June 30 is the last day of our fiscal year and Pride Month. Please help reach our \$25,000 goal by contributing as generously as you can toward our \$2,000 shortfall in reaching that goal by midnight 6/30. Note that you can make a monthly recurring gift that might just make it possible to increase your contribution!

Today's *Spahrkle* highlights the truly impressive work of our Youth Advocacy Coalition, which is preparing an important back-to-school training program for Marin County educators on the best ways to support a positive learning environment for LGBTQ+ students. The \$2,000 we hope to raise before July 1 will help us to meet the costs of this program, building the kind of welcoming environment we all wanted and needed when we were in school. **Please donate by clicking the button below**, or call our Executive Director Dana Van Gorder who will happily accept your gift or monthly pledge by phone 24/7 on his cell phone 415.987.7061.

[Donate Now!](#)

Welcome to New Board of Directors Members Wade Flores and Bobby Moske

Assuring that its membership is inclusive of all people being served by The Spahr Center is a key priority of the Board of Directors. And so, it is with admiration and excitement that we welcome Bobby Moske and Wade Flores to the Board to help assure the effectiveness of services to our 255 clients living with HIV, as well as to prevent new HIV infections.

Both Wade and Bobby have selflessly and effectively represented the needs of people living with HIV as members of the Marin HIV Care Council, the official body that guides the spending of some \$800,000 in federal Ryan White Program funding coming to the County.

Click [here](#) to read more

Marin PRIDE Picnic

A Sweet Afternoon of Community, Fun and Purpose

The June 22 Marin Pride Picnic was a great event — bringing 225 people together to celebrate the contributions of the LGBTQ+ and HIV communities in Marin County, and re-dedicating themselves to assuring our visibility and well-being. We heard from many people how happy they were to attend their first LGBTQ+ event locally, to make new friends, or to run into people they had not seen for many years. And we are thrilled to have been able to provide this opportunity.

Many people helped to make Saturday such a great afternoon. Special thanks to Bri Silva and Fel Agrelius of The Spahr Center staff, as well as members of our brilliant Youth Advocacy Coalition, who put great thought and energy into the event. Marshall Grimes and Jeff Devoto outdid themselves standing over a hot, smoky grill for hours to feed grateful guests delicious grass fed beef hamburgers donated by [Stemple Creek](#) of West Marin. And our deep gratitude to Kaiser Permanente, Westamerica Bank, and Thomas Henthorne of Sotheby's for their sponsorship of the festivities.

Attending the Picnic to express their strong commitment to addressing the needs of the LGBTQ+ and HIV communities were Assembly member Marc Levine; Supervisors Damon Connolly and Dennis Rodoni; and Amy Schroeder, representing Congressman Jared Huffman. The Spahr Center looks forward to continued work with these and other elected officials from Marin to assure a powerful future for our community. Make sure to keep your eyes peeled for the announcement of the date of the 2020 Marin Pride Picnic. Trust us, you won't want to miss out on the friendship and warm spirit that permeate this event.

We Remember

Nancy Flaxman, MSW, Senior Program Advisor

In February 2016, I was contacted by Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa to present on working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender seniors at a Grand Rounds for physicians and other medical staff on June 21st. The Kaiser LGBT Employee Association was sponsoring this cultural competency forum for Pride month.

The week before the Grand Rounds, on June 12, 2016, 49 people were killed and 53 others wounded at Pulse, a gay night club in Orlando, Florida. This was the deadliest mass killing by a single shooter in the United States and the deadliest incident against LGBT people.

Click [here](#) to read more

The Spahr Center lobbies for PrEP and PEP

Andy Fyne, Testing & Prevention Manager

PrEP and PEP are exciting and important strategies for helping us to prevent new HIV infections. But both



medically-based prevention strategies are suffering from alarmingly low levels of use. The Spahr Center is engaging in advocacy of state legislation to address this problem by allowing pharmacists to provide both PrEP and PEP to people who request it. You can help secure passage of this important legislation, and help make sure people you care

about know of these prevention strategies.

PrEP (PRE-exposure prophylaxis) is a once-daily pill for HIV-negative people that almost entirely eliminates the risk of contracting HIV. PEP (POST-exposure prophylaxis), on the other hand, is medication that a person takes after potential exposure to HIV, in order to prevent the virus from taking hold.

Click [here](#) to read more.

LGBTQ Senior Luncheon

Mark your calendars now! Our next LGBTQ luncheon will be held on Wednesday, August 28th. 12 pm - 3 pm at The Marin Yacht club! We can't wait to see you there!

Join AIDS WALK 2019!

Andy Fyne, Testing & Prevention Manager

It's a great time to show some PRIDE and begin your fundraising for AIDS Walk 2019. It's coming right up on July 14th! Whether you join us in Golden Gate Park and stroll the 10K or whether you cannot physically be there and sign up as a Virtual Walker, we want you to join our team! Tell your friends and families just how proud you are of the wonderful work that is done every day at the Spahr Center and watch the donations pour in!

Some of us have already begun asking our friends and families AND dentists, dry cleaners, carpool riders, neighbors, coworkers, frenemies, butchers and book club participants for contributions. It's really easy and people are happy to give when you tell them why you care about The Spahr Center's mission and good works.

Some of you have reached out to me for assistance in making this happen. I AM HAPPY TO HELP! I can help with personalized web pages, provide flyers and other technical assistance. I also have giveaways to entice your contacts to give generously. Everyone has their own style of fundraising and I can help you tailor your appeal. Give me a call at 415-886-8556 and let's get started. OR

If you want to register right now, call 415-615-WALK or go to: <https://sf.aidswalk.net> and click the register button. Select The Spahr Center as your team.

If you wish to donate, please click the button below and give a donation with PRIDE!!

[Donate to our AIDS WALK team](#)



Harm Reduction Saves Lives

“It’s an epidemic [syringe sharing]. That’s how bad it’s getting. I mean, you’ve got four or five people sharing a needle, and then they’ll throw it down on the ground and maybe somebody else come along and they pick it up and they think burning it with a lighter will sterilize it. Well, that’s not so. And then the next thing you know, four or five people use that needle. One needle will probably do 15 people.”

In a recent [qualitative study of program participants](#) by researchers at Johns Hopkins University, one person who injects drugs recounted this terrifying new reality of using drugs when syringe services programs aren’t readily accessible. We are hearing similar anecdotes from our syringe access site participants. Is a cluster of HIV cases down the road for Marin as well? Read the following article for more background: [HIV Transmission in People Who Use Drugs](#)

The Spahr Center distributed 146K syringes in 2018 when we were located at our home in San Rafael. Now that we cannot provide syringe access from our offices, we are located at five evening mobile locations. Our distribution is down 83% in the first half of 2019 because of the disruption our move has brought. We need to step up our outreach so that people can once again find us and use all our Harm Reduction services including lifesaving Narcan and connection to treatment.

We need to step up our volunteer team also- **not only to** staff our five (and soon to be more) mobile sites, but to help us meet people and spread the word about our lifesaving services. Call Andy at 415-886-8556 or email Rhiannon at rhiannon.spahr@gmail.com and find out how you can get involved and help us prevent an increase of HIV and Hepatitis C in Marin.

Results of the Ryan White – HIV Services Satisfaction Survey

Each year, the County of Marin reaches out to all the clients who have accessed Ryan White Program funded HIV services to measure their satisfaction with the full range of services being provided by The Spahr Center. For 2019, 176 surveys were distributed to clients, who were offered two ways to complete the survey - online or on paper. A total of 89 surveys were returned, yielding a solid 48 percent response rate. This is higher than last year’s response rate of 45 percent.

The Spahr Center was honored by the outcome of the survey this year. While our scores have always been in the high 80’s and low 90’s, this year all but one program rated in the mid 90’s. These are our best results yet for the annual survey. We have carefully reviewed individual comments made by survey respondents and are addressing each one that asked us to do better. We greatly appreciate this helpful information, and take each comment very seriously.

Many thanks to our HIV services team – Leslie Gallen, David Mon, Maria Camacho and Andy Fyne - for the devotion and skill they put into their work.

For more information about the results of the Satisfaction Survey, contact Leslie Gallen at lgallen@thespahrcenter.org

Support Groups

The Spahr Center offers a variety of social support groups. Below is a list of the groups, with a short description. Please click any of the groups to learn more!

HIV Groups

- [Latino Support Group](#) - this group is for Latinos living with or affected by HIV.
- [Women's Support Group](#) - this group is for women living with or affected by HIV.
- [Long Term Survivors Group](#) - this group is for any individual who identifies as a "long-term survivor" of HIV.

LGBTQ Groups

- [Parent Groups](#) - these groups are for parents/caregivers of gender expansive and/or questioning youth
- [Youth Drop-in Groups](#) - these groups are for any LGBTQ youth
- [Senior Discussion Groups](#) - these are facilitated discussion groups for LGBTQ identified adults of any age.
- [Men's Brown Bag Lunch](#) - this is a casual discussion group for men that meet for lunch and discussion.

Donate Now!

Upcoming Outside Events

Here are some events coming up in April that are not sponsored by The Spahr Center; however, we think they might be of interest to you.

- 6/29 - [The Artists Behind the Art](#) - 2 artists sharing their views of their art.
- 7/4 - [OUT at the Fair](#) - the official LGBTQ+ festival of the Fair industry!!
- 7/16 - [LGBTQ Senior Game Day](#) - at Sam's in Novato
- 7/18 - [LGBTQ Senior Breakfast](#) - at Sam's in Novato
- 7/18 - [Healing w/ Feeling](#) - an Attitudinal Healing Support Group
- 7/18 - [A Great Ride](#) - A film screening of "A Great Ride: Adventures in Lesbian Aging"

Until Next Time.. Spahrkle!

The Spahr Center | 415-457-2487 | 150 Nellen Ave, Suite 100

