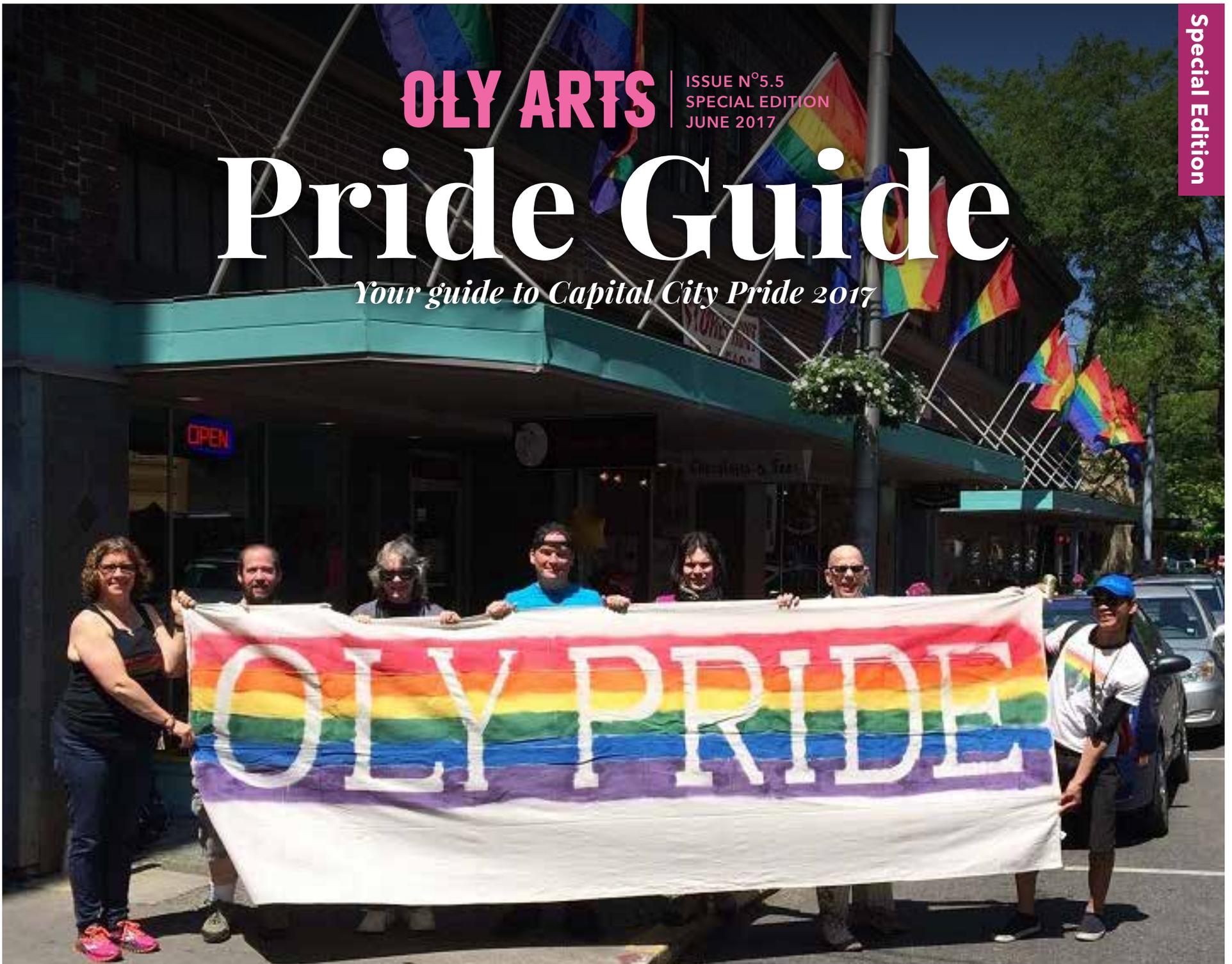


OLY ARTS

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SPECIAL EDITION
JUNE 2017

Pride Guide

Your guide to Capital City Pride 2017



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Welcome to 2017 Capital City Pride

By MOLLY GILMORE

“Resist hate. Celebrate love.” That’s the theme of the 27th annual Capital City Pride, and it reflects the two sides of the event’s past and present. The festival, here and across the country, has long been both an opportunity to stand for LGBTQ rights and a celebration of that community and its many gains.

This year, the dichotomy is in particularly sharp relief. In part, that’s due to the national political climate, which sparked the nationwide Equality March on June 11. But there’s a local angle, too: When Olympia organizers sought feedback on where the festival could go, some younger LGBTQ people objected to Pride’s lighter side and traditional emphasis on connecting with allies and the broader community.

“For a while, it looked like there might not be a (Capital City) Pride going forward, and I didn’t think that was good enough,” said Gina Thompson, festival chairperson. “Pride is a very important event that happens not just here in this town but all over the nation and world, and it’s so sacred to a lot of people. It captures how people identify. I find that so important and worth the work.”

With the Equality March, supported but not organized by the local Pride organization, focused on activism, Pride will be traditional, with fun and family friendly activities along with speeches and awards. There’ll be a bounce house for kids, a food court, a parade and a lineup of entertainment that includes poets, guest speakers, musicians and lots and lots of drag shows. The event is Friday and Saturday only, shorter than the weekend-long celebrations of recent years.

One sign of the times: Festivalgoers who want to buy T-shirts for the occasion will this year be able to choose between wearing the “Capital City Pride” logo and sporting the slogan “Resist.”

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| Capital City Pride Event Schedule

PRIDE POWER-UP

Thursday, June 15

9 p.m. *Dance Party* –
Jake’s on Fourth,
311 4th Avenue



PRIDE KICK-OFF

Friday, June 16

Street Party in front of Oly Underground

- 7:30 p.m. *Music* — DJ Aaron Fury
- 8:00 p.m. *Welcome* — Jadys Diamond, MC
- 8:05 p.m. *Welcome* — Gina Thompson, Pride Chair
- 8:10 p.m. *Breakdancing Superstars* — Thunder RAJ
- 8:25 p.m. *Welcome speeches* — Local elected officials
- 8:30 p.m. *Speech* — Dr. Karen Johnson
- 8:35 p.m. *Drag Superstars* — Court of Tacoma
- 8:45 p.m. *Poetry* — Lennee Reid
- 9:00 p.m. *Drag Superstars* — Terronce
- 9:10 p.m. *Drag Superstars* — Miss Tina Turntable
- 9:15 p.m. *Drag Superstars* — Moi-Bear Miguel
- 9:20 p.m. *Vamp Walk* — The Glitteratzi
- 9:30 p.m. *Fire Show* — Phlame Crew
- 10:45 p.m. *Closing* — Jadys Diamond, MC
- 11:00 p.m. *Karoke* at Oly Underground (21 and over)

Pride Kick-off Dance — Jake’s on 4th Avenue (21 and over)

PRIDE PARADE & FESTIVAL

Saturday, June 17

Parade — 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.

Festival — 1-6 p.m.

- 11:00 a.m. *Pre-Parade Show* — DJ Aaron Fury / Breakdancers – RAJ / Jazzercise Dancers
- 12:00 p.m. ANNUAL PRIDE PARADE
- 1- 6:00 p.m. PRIDE FESTIVAL — Heritage Park (corner of 5th and Water Street)
- 1:00 *Welcome Vamp* — Dr. Lauren and friends
- 1:15 p.m. *Drag* — The Fabulous Jakettes!
- 2:15 p.m. Dr. Lauren and friends
- 2:30 p.m. Whitney Mongey
- 3:15 p.m. *2017 Pride activist of the Year* Meg Martin
- 3:30 p.m. *2017 Pride Parade Marshall* Alejandro Rugarcia
- 3:45 p.m. *2017 Pride Day Award* Justin Taylor
- 4:00 p.m. *Music* — Sexbots
- 4:30 p.m. Dr. Lauren and friends
- 4:45 p.m. *King of Pride* Parker Perry
- 4:50 p.m. *Queen of Pride* Lindsey Hall
- 5:00 p.m. *Drag Extravaganza* Caravan of Glam
- 6:00 p.m. Closing
- 8:00 p.m. *Dance* — Eagle’s Club (All ages)
Dance — Jake’s on Fourth (21 and over)

For more information, visit Capital City Pride
online at Capitalcitypride.net

Past & Present: Honoring Anna Schlecht

By HEIDI SMITH

Olympia Celebrates 40 Years of Activism, Advocacy and Progress

Capital City Pride 2017 will be the first such celebration in decades without local activist Anna Schlecht at the forefront. In honor of her work over the years, here's a retrospective of Schlecht's social-justice work, co-presented by ThurstonTalk and OLY ARTS.

Anna Schlecht has been at the heart of the social-justice movement in Thurston County for over three decades. During that time, Schlecht has been a tireless activist, advocate, community organizer and fundraiser on behalf of civil rights, the homeless, LGBTQ rights and seniors. She's founded multiple organizations and played key roles in creating such community events as Capital City Pride. Now Schlecht has stepped down from one of those roles. After 26 years she will no longer act as chair of Capital City Pride, an event that bears her indelible stamp.

Friends and supporters marked the change in early April with a private celebration. "We had speakers and entertainers and toasts because Anna loves pulling off toasts at events," says fellow activist Alec Clayton. "It was also a fundraiser for Pride because that's what she would do." The event recognized Schlecht's powerful effect on the community. "She's always been the one that pulled everything together," says Clayton. "She's had a huge impact. For the longest time she insisted on making Pride family-friendly."

Clayton and his wife Gabi met Schlecht under heartbreaking circumstances. In 1995 the Claytons' 17-year-old son Bill was attacked in a hate crime after he came out as bisexual. "Anna heard about it, and she called us and said she wanted to organize an anti-hate rally in Sylvester Park," says Clayton. "We said 'Yes, by all means,' and so did our son." Hundreds of people showed up for the rally, and the Claytons were inspired by the outpouring of goodwill. Unfortunately, Bill committed suicide a few months later.

Schlecht and the Claytons became close in the aftermath. "She has a huge heart and so much passion and energy and compassion," says Gabi Clayton. "Her love and support after the hate crime and Bill's suicide really helped us and buoyed us through the initial shock. We are angry, but there's a way to use the energy from anger for something positive rather than letting it destroy you, too. That's something I've seen her do over and over again: figure out a way to use that energy."

"Schlecht's courage has made her a target at times," says Kathy Baros Freidt, former executive director of the Washington State Human Rights Commission, who has worked with Schlecht on numerous campaigns. "Her tenure, informally tracking hate crime groups and activities for years, means these groups know who she is.



With her antennae up she anticipates potential community conflicts, and these situations frequently put Anna at risk herself. She's cut from the same cloth as early suffragettes and civil rights leaders."

One of Schlecht's key accomplishments was to play a major role in the defeat of proposed state ballot initiatives 608 and 610 through the efforts of Hands Off Washington. A conservative organization attempted to restrict the civil rights of state and local public employees based on actual or perceived sexual orientation in Washington state. Hands Off Washington repelled repeated attempts to get discriminatory laws on the ballot, and Schlecht played a central role. "It was statewide," says Alec Clayton. "They went to all of the little communities in eastern Washington that were not gay-friendly and succeeded in defeating that. Anna was one of the main leaders in Thurston County."

"Schlecht's absence will definitely leave a hole," says Baros Freidt, "but will also allow for change. It's like turning over the soil in an old field, and it's consistent for how Anna would step back in order to make space for other voices at the table."

Celebrate Capital City Pride on June 17, 2017 in downtown Olympia. 0

Original Article courtesy of ThurstonTalk with edits by OLY ARTS staff.

Our Future: Celebrating love, resisting hate

Interview with New Pride Leaders By NED HAYES

Capital City Pride celebrates 26 years in 2017, and with this year's celebration, the torch of leadership has passed. Anna Schlecht has formally left her management role, while Gina Thompson and Lucas Miller are co-chairs this year, alongside treasurer Christina White, board secretary Kai Abrahamson and volunteer coordinator Tiffany Casman. Last weekend, Abrahamson, Casman, Schlecht and Thompson shared their thoughts with **OLY ARTS** to discuss this change and the meaning of Pride.

"Pride is a very sacred event in our community," says Thompson. "My first pride was one of the first places I felt really connected. I think it's really important to have it available to all in our community."

"Pride has always been very important to me, and I was 10 years old when I went to my first Pride. A lot of emotion in just being proud of who you are. I've always attended, but this is my first year volunteering. Pride is very dear to me," explains Casman.

Abrahamson is also new to the scene – his first Olympia Pride was last year. "Pride is an act of celebration for all people," says Abrahamson. "Coming together peacefully can be really spiritual and holy. Recognizing the differences in our communities can be healing."

Schlecht offers the perspective of a community elder. "Part of the reason I'm stepping away from running Pride is that my generation of older LGBTQ

activists have been running the show for a long time. Younger activists are more racially diverse, and benefit from a broader worldview because of their exposure to online information. While Pride is deeply personal and important to me, I want to help others lead now."

"It was a transition year, and we needed people to step up, and that's why I joined the board. I felt like there was more I could do to ensure Pride continued and flourished," says Casman.

The team is also excited to know Schlecht will continue to be a resource to the Pride team. "There's a wealth of knowledge that comes from the decades of this work and activism," says Abrahamson. "And we can carry the flag further because of the foundational work that was done here."

The Pride team does feel a certain urgency to their work right now. "This year, there is a lot of fear and anxiety for people who are marginalized," explains Abrahamson. "Pride helps create a safe place for people who are not only accepted, but celebrated for their differences."

"Our theme this year is to resist hate and celebrate love," says Thompson. "With the current Administration, there are people in our community who are getting directly attacked. It is important that we celebrate love with the same intensity that we are resisting hate." 0



Pride Proclamations

By OLY ARTS STAFF

Capital City Pride is the culmination of the month-long celebration of LGBTQ life in our state. Last year, Governor Jay Inslee honored that history by issuing a public proclamation that stated, in part:



“The state of Washington has a long and proud history of honoring diversity. Our own law against discrimination predates the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and we were one of the first states to extend civil rights protections to our LGBTQ neighbors, friends, and family members. In Washington we know that the diverse families, expressions of personal identity, and experiences of all our residents enrich our future. We traditionally celebrate June as LGBTQ Pride Month... yet our commitment to diversity and inclusion extends beyond a single month of recognition.”

Olympia Mayor Cheryl Selby joins in this acclamation: “Pride is an integral part of the Olympia community, not only because it lifts up the experiences of LGBTQ members of our community, but also because we have the opportunity to stand with our friends of all genders and all experiences and demonstrate what it means to be a true community, here in Olympia.”

Supportive faith communities in Olympia, such as Olympia Unitarian Universalist Congregation, St. John’s Episcopal Church, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, First Christian Church and the unified Presbyterian and United Church of Christ congregations at United Churches, also take part in Pride festivities. Ted Ryle of the Community for Interfaith Celebration notes his faith community’s participation:

“Our family has deeply enjoyed participating in Cap City Pride over the years in celebration, support and solidarity with our friends and the community. We’ve marched regularly with our open and affirming Community for Interfaith Celebration,” says Ryle. “Our children always enjoy the festivities and entertainment. It’s one of the yearly Oly events where downtown comes alive and expresses what our city stands for, and who we stand with!” 0



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| Pride Recognitions

Each year, Capital City Pride recognizes local members of the community. Attendees at open Pride meetings throughout the year can nominate people for recognition, and the awardees are selected democratically. This year, Capital City Pride chose to recognize the following three individuals:



MEG MARTIN
*2017 Pride Activist
of the Year*

Recognized for her work in the community. As a founding member and Program Director of the Interfaith Works Emergency Shelter, she was instrumental in the creation of Thurston County's first low barrier harm

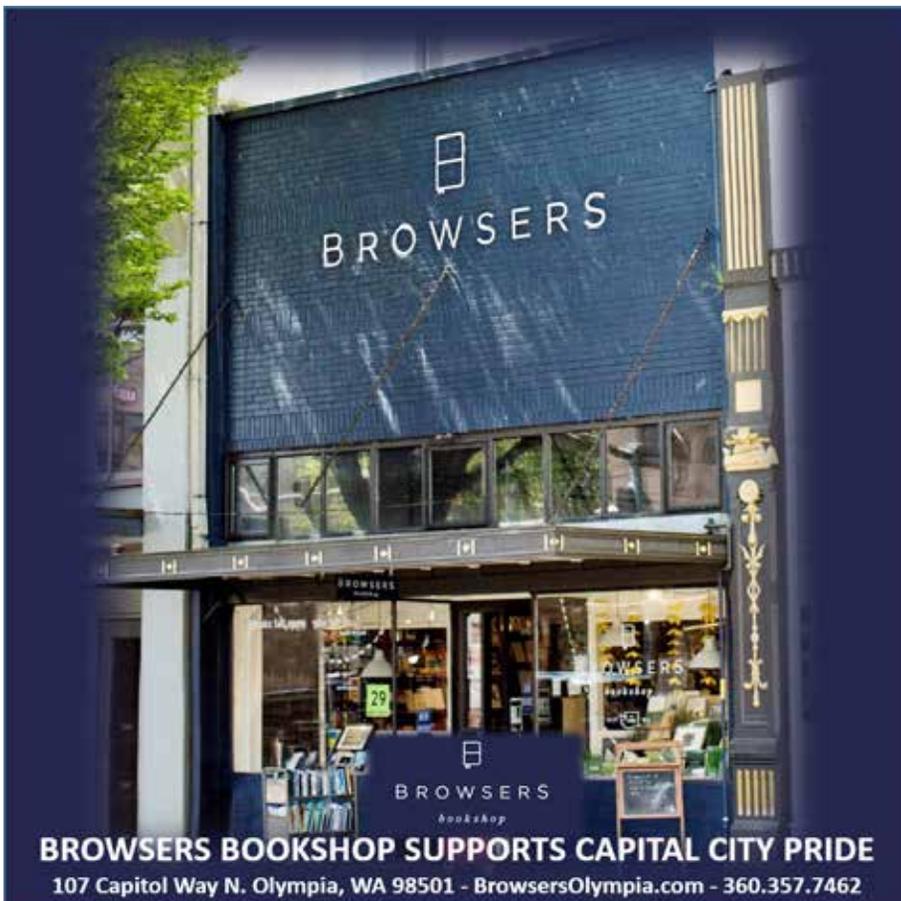
reduction shelter and for her volunteer work with Stonewall Rock Camp and Emma Goldman Youth and Homeless Outreach Project (EGYHOP). Note that queer youth comprise up to 40% of homeless youth. 0



ALEJANDRO RUGARCIA
*2017 Grand
Parade Marshall*

Recognized for his work with Safe-Place and advocacy in outreach in providing better services to both LGBTQ and women who are victims of domestic violence. Alejandro

recently also served on the police advisory committee that formed after last year's police shooting, to look at issues of diversity and relationship with marginalized community members, minority communities, Latinx community and the LGBTQ community. 0



JUSTIN TAYLOR
2017 Pride Day Award

Recognized for his ongoing commitment to the community, which includes volunteering for Capital City Pride, founding Empowerment Washington, statewide leadership on TQ rights and service to the greater community. 0

Why Pride?

Pride is a public experience that affirms the presence and reality of the lives in our community who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or gender fluid (LGBTQ). In fact, claiming the identity of “pride” is a radical act that confronts the idea of shame. It is a positive stance towards inclusion and against discrimination. Pride is a celebration of individual and community identity designed to promote self-affirmation, dignity, equality rights, increase our visibility as a social group, build community, and celebrate sexual diversity and gender variance.

Pride celebrations happen today around the world. Celebrations span the spectrum from solemn to celebratory. In the United States, Pride takes place in June to commemorate the Stonewall Riots in June 1969, which were a watershed moment in LGBTQ civil rights. The Stonewall actions were part of a long struggle towards affirmation of LGBTQ rights worldwide and decriminalization of sexual diversity in the United States.

Pride is also an affirmation of the continuing struggle. In many regards, LGBTQ citizens are still second-class citizens. Marriage equality is still under threat in the United States. In 29 states, it is still legal to fire someone for being gay, lesbian or bisexual. In 32 states, the same acts remain legal when taken against trans individuals. Pride is a time when LGBTQ and their allies remember the past and seek a stronger, better future together. 0



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