

Blind LGBT Pride

The "Inside Out" Newsletter

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The Newsletter of Blind LGBT Pride International is published in March, June, September, and December. Material for consideration for inclusion in the newsletter that is of interest to the membership is welcome. All material for inclusion must be received by the first of the month of publication. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions and to include or exclude materials submitted. Items for consideration should be sent to: Connie Torrisi, Editor, InsideOutEditor@Blind-LGBT-Pride.org

Blind Pride is a Special Interest affiliate of the American Council of the Blind and is dedicated to facilitating the free exchange of ideas, opinions and information relative to matters of concern to blind people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Visit us at www.blind-lgbt-pride.org

EDITOR'S NOTE: You can skip to the next article or section of the newsletter by using your word processor's Find or Search function to find the ## sign.

AUDIO VERSION: The Inside Out Newsletter is now available by phone! BPI's quarterly publication is now available in an audio version by phone. To listen to the latest edition call 773 -572-7846 and follow the prompts. (Check with your provider to determine if toll charges apply.)

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From The Presidents Desk

By Guillermo Robles

Greetings from Los Angeles!

Happy 2013 to one and all! It's hard to believe that we are just weeks away from spring. With spring comes the anticipation of putting things in order, digging out of snow in some places, and getting out to more pleasant weather elsewhere. Spring is also the precursor for fun exciting times in the summer. Yes folks, this does include our 2013 convention in Columbus Ohio on July 4-12 at the Hyatt Regency. Details on the finer points for this upcoming convention will be found in our June newsletter. The convention

committee does have an exciting program planned for BPI as well as partnerships with other ACB affiliates

While we're on the subject of partnership, at our February open board meeting, a provisional charter of affiliation was given to the newly formed Blind LGBT Pride of Texas. The following people were elected as BPT's first officers: Will Burley, President; Kevin Ratliff, Vice President; Cynthia Faub, Treasurer; and Leah Brown as secretary. This new affiliate has hit the ground running. They will be getting involved with local and statewide community and legislative activities as they come up. Stay tuned as this organization continues to grow

What's next from BPI? It is that time when we start planning to fill vacancies on our board of directors. Our constitutions and Bylaws committee has now morphed into the Elections and Nominations committee. This committee is chaired by Will Burley. Read on to find out what positions are up for election and for details on submitting your nominations. If you want to take part in the ongoing change that will be taking place with this unique organization, this is your chance to get involved and make a difference. Remember, this organization could not be made possible if not for you the members. I encourage you to submit your nominations and help bring us to a new level.

Finally, BPI relies on the generous support of its membership. We ask that you go above and beyond your membership dues to contribute to BPI's current and future programs. You can make your donation of any amount in one of two ways. You can pay securely through our website at www.blind-lgbt-pride.org and click on the donate now button which will direct you to our PayPal processing center. Also, you may mail checks payable to Blind LGBT Pride International to:

Blind LGBT Pride International

Attention Guillermo Robles

5010 Echo Street, Unit A.

Los Angeles, CA 90042.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get a hold of me at president@blind-lgbt-pride.org. Here's wishing you all the best. As always and until next time,

With Pride,

Guillermo Robles, President

Editorial:One of Our Own

Connie Torrisi, Editor

What would it mean to the LGBT community if Abraham Lincoln was determined to have been gay, or for that matter, bisexual?

There are a number of books out there now that either hint at or boldly imply that Lincoln was indeed gay. Much of this is based on his "relationship" with Joshua Speed. The fact that Lincoln and S shared a bed seems to imply that more than sleeping occurred. However, many historians brush this off as mere necessity due to Lincoln's inability to afford a hotel room.

The question regarding Lincoln's sexual orientation is most likely never to be answered with 100% certainty simply because Lincoln and all those ever associated with him in any capacity, are long dead. We can make assumptions based on old records but we are unlikely to ever reach the

point where we can make a definite determination one way or the other. There are, however, people who do think the question is settled, as does Sylvia Rhue in her article, Lincoln's Family History, reprinted in this issue of Inside Out. Rhue presents some strong evidence toward a gay Abe.

So what would it mean if we could conclude with a preponderance of evidence, that Lincoln was gay or bisexual? For millions of American LGBT citizens it would be quite the ego boost. Imagine it! One of the greatest, if not the greatest President of the United States gay or bisexual! Around the world, people would be astonished to know that this great man, who struggled so much to hold the United States together, was a gay or bisexual.

Lincoln being gay would be proof that LGBT people are a valid segment of society. Lincoln would become our official role model and I am sure his image would be carried on posters in every gay pride parade for decades to come.

But the fact remains, we do not know for certain if Lincoln was gay or bisexual. Gay people throughout history have married in order to hide their true sexuality; we can not be sure why Lincoln married Mary Todd Lincoln. Did he love her or was it more of a marriage for political convenience?

I suspect the debate will continue. But until and if Lincoln's sexuality can be firmly established beyond a reasonable doubt, we can only dream that this great man, this great President, was, indeed, one of our own.

Lincoln's Family History Points Toward A Gay Abe

By Sylvia Rhue, PhD.

Over 16,000 books have been written about Abraham Lincoln, our greatest president. Many of these books either allude to or specifically report on Lincoln's ambiguous relationships with men. Lincoln lived with and shared a bed with Joshua Speed for four years and they remained friends years after they no longer lived together. He also had a close relationship with Captain David Derickson, who would stay with Lincoln overnight at the Soldier's Home (a retreat from the White House) when Lincoln's wife Mary left town. There were reports of Captain Derickson wearing Lincoln's nightshirt, and Lincoln has been quoted as saying with a "twinkle" in his eye, "The captain and I are getting quite thick."

Many historians are quick to say that men shared beds due to a bed shortage and that surely Lincoln, the savior of the Union, could not have been gay. The studied impulse to make Lincoln absolutely heterosexual reflects a discernible societal discomfort with the complexities of human sexuality and sexual orientation, as well as deeply embedded streaks of homophobia.

American history is written not only in books but in the sacred narration of family stories that endure as indelible parchment in our hearts. Thomas Jefferson had an affair with his slave Sally Hemings, fathering many children with her. The family history of Sally Hemings' descendants never wavered from the fact of Jefferson's paternity, though their claims were disputed by many offended historians. Surely, these historians protested, the author of the Declaration of Independence would not have had sexual liaisons with a slave. Genetic testing proved them wrong.

America's founding fathers had sex with slaves. There's no dispute over that fact. This brings us to my own family

history. Growing up, my mother told me that we were from Blair House, the White House's official guest house. She stated that her great-grandmother was a servant at Blair House, had an affair with the master of Blair House and also babysat Lincoln's kids. The affair produced a child, Mattie, born Oct. 20, 1860.

When I began to research this family story, I found that the master of the house was none other than Montgomery Blair, Lincoln's Postmaster General (a member of the cabinet) and a lawyer for Dred Scott in the infamous *Dred Scott v. Sandford* case. His father was Francis P. Blair, one of the founders of the Republican Party. While I have not yet learned the name of my great-great-grandmother, I found indisputable evidence that the Blairs owned slaves and had set them free before the Civil War. I also found that most of those former slaves remained working for the Blair families. Because this research also led me to learn more about Abraham Lincoln, it resulted in my falling in love with him. I read about Lincoln's great soul, his better angel genius, his love for his children, his love of animals, his soaring words, his melancholy and his signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. And as I went on this journey, I also read about his apparent male preference in his social life. This led me to find increasing evidence about his sexuality. As a sexologist, I posit that Lincoln was a Kinsey 4 -- homosexual with more than incidental opposite-sex contact. But as I studied Lincoln's magnificent life, I realized that William Herndon, Lincoln's law partner for 20 years and the keeper of Lincoln's legacy, never mentioned anything that would leave one to believe that Lincoln was gay.

One day I was having lunch with Rev. Cindi Love, the executive director of Soulforce. I was telling her about my family history, my burgeoning love affair with Abraham Lincoln and my quest for more information. "I have been researching Lincoln and found a lot about his relationships

with men, and I am getting this from a many sources," I told her. "But I am puzzled about one thing: William Herndon has not mentioned or written anything that would indicate that Lincoln was gay."

She gave me a telling look and said, "Well, here is the missing piece of your puzzle. My maiden name is Herndon. William Herndon was my great-great-uncle, and he was gay, and he was Lincoln's lover." She went on to talk about how this information was handed down from generation to generation in the Herndon family.

There are history books, and then there are generational stories that give character and quality to the threads on the loom of history. I believe that Lincoln was gay, and I see that as simply the sweet icing on the cake of the life story of our greatest president.

Blind Extraordinaire

Jacob Bolotin (1888 – 1924) (pronounced bo-LA-tin) was born in Chicago in 1888 to poor Jewish parents. Like his older brother Fred, Jacob was blind from birth, a severe disability in an age when the blind and deaf were considered largely useless to society and confined to institutions. Jacob was a highly precocious child with an insatiable desire for new knowledge, and at the age of four started attending a Jewish school (he and Fred were denied admission at their local public school). To give the brothers the specialized help they needed, the head of the Jewish school, Professor Bamberger, transferred the boys to the Illinois State School for the Education of the Blind in Jacksonville, IL, where they stayed for the next nine years without seeing their parents. It

was at this school that Jacob began to develop and train his heightened senses of touch and hearing.

After finishing school, Jacob through sheer persistence got jobs selling matches, then toothbrushes, then typewriters to help support his family, even though no one ever wanted to hire him initially. But walking all over Chicago to sell his wares was unsatisfying, not to mention dangerous, so Jacob determined to realize his dream of becoming a doctor. To save the necessary tuition money, he spent four long years traveling alone to every state in the Union selling typewriters for the Bennett Typewriting Company. Finally, in 1908, Bolotin was able to enroll at the Chicago College of Medicine and Surgery.

Medical school was an extraordinary trial of endurance and ingenuity for Bolotin. None of the textbooks were available in Braille and the charts and diagrams used by professors and students were useless to him. A group of resentful students harassed Bolotin and tried unsuccessfully to have him expelled. But Bolotin persevered. He found a true friend in fellow student Herman Friedman, a recent emigrant from Poland, who needed help with his English. The two struck up an arrangement where Friedman would read from the textbooks to Bolotin so he could commit the lessons to memory, and Bolotin would explain the lessons to Friedman. Bolotin also made clay models of all the internal organs so he could master human anatomy. To earn much-needed money, he even started a magic act with a friend called "The World's Greatest Swami" that performed all over Chicago. Brilliant and hard-working, Bolotin was one of only four students (out of 300) to intern at the renowned Frances Willard Hospital, where he amazed his professors with the superb accuracy of his diagnoses, on one occasion correctly diagnosing a girl with heart failure who other doctors said only suffered a psychological disorder.

After graduating from the Chicago College of Medicine and Surgery in 1912 and passing the exam set by the State Board of Health (which initially refused to let him take the exam), Bolotin officially became an M.D. Private practice proved difficult at first, because if people found out he was blind they assumed he was not a “real” doctor, but Bolotin established his reputation as an incredible heart and lung specialist by working unpaid at the Municipal Tuberculosis Clinic and the Cook County Tuberculosis Hospital in Dunning. These efforts finally led to his full appointment as attending physician at Dunning at the age of 25. As word of his expertise spread, Bolotin was able to resign his state appointment and support himself and his parents on private practice alone.

Jacob Bolotin met Helen Willens and the two married in 1914; Helen was a great support to her husband but she worried about the strains he put on his health. In addition to his booming private practice, Bolotin accepted teaching appointments at his alma mater, the Chicago College of Medicine and Surgery, as well as at Jenner Medical College, the Chicago School of Medicine, and the Progressive Preparatory School and even taught classes for dentists to instruct them on heart attacks. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, Bolotin volunteered to serve on the Army Tuberculosis Board of Examiners, and spent long days examining enlisting soldiers. He tried to be everywhere and do everything.

In addition to being sought out for his medical brilliance, after the war Bolotin also became a hugely popular public speaker, often giving speeches to four different groups in a single day. Though he was uncomfortable talking about himself, Bolotin advocated passionately for the blind community. To his wife’s dismay, Bolotin never turned down a request to speak and never accepted fees. He became devoted to working for the Kiwanis after being invited to speak at their national convention and he also started the Boy Scouts of America Troop 300, one of the first troops of blind

scouts in the world. But Bolotin's constant and unrelenting work as medical practitioner, teacher, public speaker and community leader took a great toll on his health, and at the age of 36, he suffered from heart and kidney failure. After being an inspiration to countless people in his short twelve-year medical career, Jacob Bolotin passed away on April 1, 1924. Over 5,000 people attended his funeral.

Editor's Note: Rosalind Perlman's biography titled The Blind Doctor: The Jacob Bolotin Story was published in 2007. Perlman, whose husband Alfred was Jacob Bolotin's nephew, worked on the biography for many years with her husband before her death in 2004. The book was the most remarkable biography I have ever read.

World Blindness

More than 180 million people are visually disabled throughout the world.

Of this group, 45 million people are completely blind.

And of this group of 45 million blind people, 90% of them live in the developing world.

Can You Imagine Being Blind in the Developing World?

In the developing world, a blind person is most often found living in a subsistence community or a squalid slum. In rural areas, a family member who becomes blind changes from being a contributor to a family burden. A husband cannot work in the fields, a mother cannot walk over rough terrain to take her goods to market, or collect water, and a child cannot attend school (if that is a possibility.)

Not only can this blind individual no longer work but extra care is required from a family member who would otherwise be making a living or contributing to the community work force. The physical and emotional toll impacts not just the individual and family but the social and economic fabric of the communities and everyone's existence. Sudden blindness of one individual in a family can become the tipping point for survival when they are impoverished to begin with.

When someone becomes blind in the developing world:

90% of these individuals can no longer work.

Life expectancy drops down to 1/3 that of a matched peer, in age and health.

50% of the blind report a loss of social standing and decision-making authority.

80% of all women note a loss of authority within their families.

The blind person is totally dependent. If the family cannot afford the time for someone to help their blind family member, the individual is totally neglected and often left alone in a corner for the day.

Trivia Spot

Jane Addams (1860 – 1935) Jane Addams is the founder of Hull House in Chicago and a pioneer in the field of social services. She was the first American woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. She lived and worked with her partner of 40 years, Mary Rozet Smith. They considered themselves married, and openly shared a bed at home and when traveling.

Are Online Hookups Safe?

NEW YORK -- The night before Valentine's Day, a group of around 35 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender New Yorkers gathered in the Jackson Heights neighborhood in Queens and talked about their fears related to online dating. Just a few weeks ago, a gay man was found dead in his apartment in the neighborhood, one of three brutal homicides of gay men in New York City in the last month. The meeting was closed to the press, but Ejeris Dixon, who works at the Anti-Violence Project, the advocacy group that organized the event, described what went on. "Some people spoke about their own experiences of very life-threatening violence and how it feels to survive," Dixon said Thursday. "We had to do a lot of work of helping people not blame themselves or others for meeting people on the Internet. It's been a constant debate: some folks saying that maybe we shouldn't do this, and other people were like, 'No, it's OK.'" Wednesday night's meeting was the second the Anti-Violence Project has held in recent weeks to talk about safety and online dating. Dixon said that since the beginning of the year, the group has noticed an uincrease in reports of anti-LGBT violence in general, and the recent tragedies have sparked anxiety throughout the community. Dixon declined to discuss the specifics of the meeting, which was confidential, but some details of the incidents that formed its backdrop are beginning to emerge. Although police have not confirmed whether any of the recent homicides of gay men involved online dating or mobile apps like Grindr -- which allow men to find other men in their vicinity -- there were no signs of forced entry in any of the cases, a fact that suggests that the victims willingly let in their attackers. On Thursday, police arrested Lleuyel Garcia for the murder of Joseph Benzinger, a gay man who was strangled to death in a hotel room on Saturday. Police believe that Benzinger and Garcia had been romantically involved, but do not yet know how the two men met. Police say they don't believe Benzinger's murder was connected with the slayings of two other gay men who were also found strangled in recent weeks, but they are continuing to investigate the case as a possible hate crime. Charges are still pending in the homicides of David Rangel and Carles Romo, both gay men in their 40s. Two of the deaths occurred in Council Member Daniel Dromm's district in Queens, and Dromm, who is openly gay, held a press conference earlier this week to urge members of the LGBT community to use online dating services cautiously, especially when meeting people for the first time. "More and more people are hooking up online and that's what gives me concern," Dromm said in an interview. "People really need to know who the person is that they're meeting." While

straight people also use the Internet to hook up, gay men can be more vulnerable to violence in such situations, Dromm said. "There are people who like to take advantage of gay people, and there's a stigma attached to the reporting of online dating and being gay, and sometimes people target those that they think are more vulnerable." Christian Grov, an associate professor of public health at Brooklyn College who studies the sexual health of gay and bisexual men and how men use the Internet to hook up, has found that gay and bisexual men are especially at risk in online dating. "It is socially acceptable for gay and bisexual men to use the Internet and mobile apps to hook up, yet difficult to know if the other party is genuine or malicious," Grov said. Robert Lopez, a gay man who works for an apparel company and attended Wednesday night's meeting, said he knows the potential risks, but he still meets up with guys he finds online. "I have a buddy system for me personally," he said. "I tell my best friend where I'm going and what I'm doing." Lopez first encountered the Anti-Violence Project about a year ago at a bar, where organizers were talking about staying safe when going out. The recent slayings, he said, have made him think twice before he meets up with someone. "I think, 'Do I know this person, should I do this?'" he said. "But I don't think that online dating is ever just going to go away. We're at a point where it's just become such a part of what our society is."

Staying Safe When Hooking Up

By: Will Burley

On February 13, 2013 a story broke in the New York area concerning three middle-aged gay men who were murdered. Many observers feel online hookups led to these murders.

David Rangel, 53, was found dead under the couch in his Jackson Heights, Queens, apartment on January 26, apparently the victim of choking. Two days later, the body of Charles Room, 48, was found in his Hamilton Heights apartment in Upper Manhattan by his housekeeper. He had been tied up and a bag was placed over his head. On February 9, police found Joseph Benzinger, 54, also the apparent victim of strangulation, in a room at the Crown Motor Inn on Queens Boulevard in Elmhurst.

In Houston, Texas, a 44 year old gay man that was vision impaired was found in his home dead from multiple stab wounds. There was no sign of forced entry and no suspect has been found.

This death in Houston is the reason this article has been written; I knew the victim.

Meeting unknown men for sex will not uncommon and not likely to stop anytime soon. The question becomes, “How do we stay safe when hooking up?” Below are a few tips:

1. Use common sense. Always try to talk to the person before hooking up. Hear what you need to hear rather than what you want to hear. We all have that inner voice that usually tells us that something is not quite right. Listen to that voice.
2. Tell someone. Let someone you trust know that you are going to be hitting the sheets and to check in at a certain point. It may be wise to let someone know the contact info of the person you will meet as well as the name...or the name you've been given.
3. Protection. Keep a means of protection, that is, a weapon in your general vicinity just in case you need to use it.

Is this a bit overboard? Many would likely say yes. I say what's the harm in taking a few precautions? You may come up with other ways to stay safe when hooking up.

From a Women's Perspective

By Connie Torrisi

From a women's perspective, the idea of going out and meeting strangers, male or female, purely for sex is a foreign concept. As a rule, women do not seek out strangers purely for sexual contact. I am not saying it hasn't happened, especially among the younger

generation. What I am saying, is that women generally do not put themselves at risk just for sex.

When straight women answer personal ads online or anywhere else, their main objective is to meet a man for dating and perhaps a permanent relationship. Likewise for lesbians; they are seeking to find a long term partner, not a quick sexual encounter.

It is clear that men, straight or gay, have a much stronger sex drive than women. The reasons for this are well known and not relevant to this discussion. The point is, women rarely put themselves in situations that are risky just for the sex. They may take some risks in order to meet a future husband or female partner, but not just for sex alone. For women in general, sex is part of the whole relationship package, not just an encounter for physical release. This is, I think, the most fundamental difference between men and women all over the globe. For men, sex and emotional connections are easily separated. For women, sex and emotional connections are usually tied together.

From a women's perspective, online hookups are dangerous regardless of sexual orientation. Even when taking precautions, the concept of sex with strangers does not feel right. It is a male activity that just seems void of deep human connection.

What happened to those men in New York is nothing new. I have been hearing such stories since I came out in the early sixties. Such murders will not end because men can not seem to suppress their sex drive. It is simply the nature of the male species.

If gay men are going to seek sex with strangers, then the suggestions that Will Burley offers in his article above make sense. However, if you are going to carry a weapon, I hope you are physically strong enough and psychologically ready to use it if need be. This seems highly questionable for blind persons because it is difficult to escape or defeat an attacker if you can't see.

Keeping a weapon “in the vicinity” is equally implausible if you are blind.

Online hookups carry a level of risk that all gay men should be conscious of. For blind gay men, the risk appears to double. From a women’s perspective, the potential loss of life does not seem worth the momentary pleasure.

In Review : What We Have Done

What We Have Done: An Oral History of the Disability Rights Movement
By Fred Pelka

Book review by Foreward Reviews - 2012

Although most Americans have some knowledge of the history of the civil and women’s rights movements, comparatively few possess awareness of the trials and tribulations and subsequent self-determination of this country’s largest minority—people with disabilities. *What We Have Done: An Oral History of the Disability Rights Movement* by Guggenheim fellow Fred Pelka, author of a previous encyclopedia on the subject, successfully fills this gap for the uninitiated. His book includes viewpoints of people with a variety of conditions, including deafness, dwarfism, mental retardation, psychiatric illnesses, and physical disabilities, as well as the narratives of a few able-bodied allies who assisted in the struggle.

The author states that his goal is to “recount the political struggle for disability rights in the United States, focusing on the decades immediately preceding the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990.” Using an interview-based format, excerpted segments are grouped into short chapters based on common overarching themes rather than a strict chronology. Prior to collaboration on the ADA, the history of the disability rights movement was characterized by various disability groups fighting independently for the rights of that group’s membership and thus requires some shifts back and forth in time to be fairly represented. Because of his

emphasis on political struggle, Pelka chooses narratives of discrimination that propelled people into activism and stories that led to the birth of influential organizations or the development and enforcement of landmark legislation to integrate people with disabilities.

In a scholarly, meticulously footnoted introduction, Pelka concisely describes the convergence of social attitudes and legal actions that led to the emergence of the empowerment of people with disabilities. Each short chapter has an introduction to provide context for the excerpted interviews that follow, and each narrative is preceded by a brief biography of the disability-rights icon featured. Attention-grabbing quotations capture the essence of each individual's story. Because the book consists entirely of first-person accounts, it possesses a sense of immediacy often hard to capture in history texts written in the third person. Presented with the truth of an individual's story, instead of analysis by historians, the audience is invited to feel as though they too are reliving the events being recounted. Pelka's detailed footnotes continue throughout the book, establishing this manuscript as a rigorously researched monograph. Although this volume is easily read from beginning to end, its format of short chapters consisting of brief excerpts also facilitates dipping into any section on its own.

While it is published by a university press, Pelka has written *What We Have Done* to introduce a variety of audiences to the disability experience. The people interviewed speak in vernacular instead of jargon so that everyone can understand them. For readers who want to know how people with disabilities lived prior to being integrated, there are stories of discrimination and isolation at home or in institutions. Those interested in demonstrations can read about various protests spurred on by various groups. Law buffs and attorneys will be interested in the bipartisan negotiation and coalition-building that led to the passage of the ADA. People interested in the rights of other oppressed groups—women, gays, and African Americans—will be fascinated by the stories in which disability rights and the rights of other marginalized peoples converge. Readers with disabilities will discover that they, too, have a rich and storied legacy. In sum, so many need this account that no library or bookseller can afford to be without it.

Availability: BARD download, hardcover and paperback.

Positions Available On Board of Directors

If you are interested in serving our organization, consider becoming a candidate for a seat on the Blind LGBT Pride International board of directors. These are volunteer positions that require attendance at monthly meetings conducted via telephone conference as well as completing the duties assigned to the specific position.

This year there are four positions open: Vice President, Secretary, and two Member-at-Large seats. Candidates are elected at the Annual Convention by the membership. Each position is a two year term beginning immediately after the close of the 2013 Convention.

A brief summary of the duties of each position is as follows:

Vice-President: In the absence of the President, shall oversee the operation of committees as delegated by the President; performs other duties as assigned by the President.

Secretary: Under the direction of the President and Vice-Presidents is responsible for maintaining general records of the organization. The secretary is responsible for taking notes (i.e. minutes) at each board meeting and transcribing them into a reasonably detailed and organized report that shall be distributed to all board members prior to the next meeting.

Member-at-Large: At-Large Board Members serve on the Board of Directors as general representatives of the membership. Duties vary according to the needs of the organization.

You may request a nominations form for yourself or someone you wish to nominate. The deadline for submitting candidacy information is May 10th, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. EST. Please send your

information to the Elections Committee at: elections@blind-lgbt-pride.org with "Nominating Form" in the subject line,

All bio information and candidate statements will be included in the June issue of the Inside Out Newsletter. A candidates' forum will be scheduled prior to convention for those members unable to attend convention but wish to ask questions of those running for office.

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Blind Pride's Board of Directors retains sole discretion to reject ads, which are considered to be offensive or inappropriate for the intended audience of the newsletter.

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