

Blind LGBT Pride
The "Inside Out" Newsletter
September, 2013
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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: Elizabeth Hubbard, 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](tel:773-572-7846) and follow the prompts. (Check with your provider to determine if toll charges apply.)

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From The President's Desk

By Guillermo Robles

As I write this, I can't help but reflect on this past convention. I was honored to be able to attend this year's 52nd annual conference and convention. I was one of two recipients of the Durward K. McDaniels fund. Each year the American Council of the Blind's DKM committee seeks applications from those members who have never attended a national convention. The committee selects 2 applicants to attend the convention on ACB's dime. They select one person from East of the Mississippi and one from

West of the Mississippi. The winners are then presented at the opening general session of the conference and then a reception is held in their honor later on that week. It was truly an awesome experience attending all of the general sessions and other break out sessions that occurred that week. Even more awesome was meeting people that I have kept in touch with for many, many years. It was also nice to meet many of you for the first time. My thanks to those of you who were able to give me some much needed help during the week, you know who you are. Needless to say, I cannot wait for the convention in Las Vegas next year.

If this convention was any indication, we were very successful with joint programming with other ACB affiliates this year. It is our hope that we can take it a step further next year. A couple of the affiliates that we've partnered with have expressed an interest in working with us again, and we hope to do so this year. We will also reach out to other affiliates and committees within ACB to help us further our goals for the upcoming year. Also on the alliance front, we will encourage committee chairs to work with national committees, i.e. membership, fundraising, etc. so that they will be more efficient in carrying out their duties for BPI.

Secondly, one of the most crucial components to any organization is fundraising. It is my hope that we can take on a more active fundraising campaign so that we may be able to provide more tangible services to our membership. As fundraising chair, I encourage you to give any suggestions as to what we should focus our efforts on. It is important that we come up with a goal that is centered on non-convention activities.

Finally, a demographic that we are not seeing represented is our youth. It is my hope that we can develop a youth component that would provide supportive services to our blind and LGBT youth. I feel that this organization is in a position to do this. It is crucial that we come up with a component that would consist of mentoring and other types of support. Both membership and Outreach committees have begun talks with ACB Students to begin to formulate a strategic plan to implement this in both organizations. Stay tuned as developments occur

In closing, I'd like to say how pleased I am to see long time members who have been standing in the wings (so to speak) become a more active part of the BPI community. I would like to encourage you to keep it up. Your contributions do matter. Feel free to get involved in the work that BPI is doing. To find out how, please refer to the "Get Involved" section of our website.

I'm sure that our committee chairs would be happy to hear from you. Also, I would like to ask each of you to show your friends to our Facebook and Twitter pages. Help us get BPI out there in the public eye. Remember, BPI is as effective and as good as you, the member, make it. I look forward to working with you this upcoming year. Here's to a fun year ahead.

With Pride,

Guillermo Robles

President, Blind LGBT Pride International, Fundraising Chair

Editorial: Picking Up The Torch

In the last edition of Inside Out, your longtime editor, Connie Torrisi stated that she would be stepping down from her position in order to pursue other writing opportunities. As a writer myself, I can certainly understand her desire to focus on her writing career! My name is Elizabeth Hubbard, and in addition to being a writer, I am a former Special Education teacher of children with Mild to Moderate Disabilities. I run an organization called RPGMLK Foundation, which is devoted to peace officer and citizen safety during police stops of civilians. This edition of Inside Out is the first edition that I have put together as the editor. I hope that you enjoy this edition and future editions and I look forward to working with the members of BPI in ensuring that our newsletter is the best and that it is interesting and fun to read. I will be requesting

submissions for the newsletter in the future, so you will be hearing from me! In the meantime, if you have any submissions, feedback, requests, or other info, please send your emails to InsideOutEditor@Blind-LGBT-Pride.org

With Pride,

Elizabeth Hubbard, Editor

A Message From Our New Membership Chair

By Caitlin Hernandez

My name is Caitlin Hernandez, and I'm lucky enough to be the new Membership Chair for Blind LGBT Pride. This year promises to be a great one, and I'm beyond excited to be a part of it. I've already chatted with a lot of BPI members, and if I haven't bumped into you yet on the HeyTell group, email list, or Facebook page, don't hesitate to write to me and say hello! My email address is: membership@blind-lgbt-pride.org

A little about me: I'm a California native, and I graduated from UC Santa Cruz last year with a BA in literature. In the spring, I'll be attending San Francisco State University to earn my masters degree in special education. My goal is to teach students with mild to moderate disabilities in either the elementary or middle school setting. Among other things, I love to read, write, hang out with family and friends, rollerblade, and eat way too much ice cream. I also enjoy singing; I was in an a cappella group, called Acquire A Cappella (pun intended) during all four years of college. And yes, I'm a perfect pitcher (yay!). For anyone who's curious, I was born totally blind--I'm an LCA kid--and I'm also a huge Braille nerd. My BrailleNote is constantly on my person and, at any given time, you can pretty much always find me writing or reading.

2013 was my gap year between undergrad and graduate school, and I loved every second of it.

By far the highlight of this year was receiving the opportunity to write and perform in my own short musical, called *Dreaming In Color*. It's based on a short story I wrote in high school, about a teenage girl who, after losing her sight, learns to find the positive side of blindness. The nonprofit organization that put on my play, CRE Outreach, consists of the only all-blind theater company in the country. They are amazing! Writing the music, lyrics, and script, living and rehearsing in LA throughout June, and performing the show for two weekends in July was a rewarding and challenging experience. In addition to that, our cast became super close and, as a group--I called us The Dream Team, because of the title of the play--I like to think we sent a strong and accurate message about blindness.

So that's who *I* am! I can't wait to meet all of you and hear your stories. The BPI Board has some really neat things in the works this year, so stay tuned ... we're going to have a blast!

With pride, hugs, and rainbows,

Caitlin Hernandez

Resolution - American Counsel Of The Blind

American Council of the Blind

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BPI Concerns

American Council of the Blind Resolution 2013-12

WHEREAS the American Council of the Blind of Texas (hereafter known as ACBT) denied the application for affiliation of Blind LGBT Pride of Texas, (hereafter known as BPTX), and WHEREAS the stated rationale for denial of affiliation was that BPTX does not have a clear blindness mission or focus, as well as that individual members of BPTX did not apply for membership in ACBT; and

WHEREAS Blind LGBT Pride International and all of its affiliates have a clear blindness mission which is aligned with that of the American Council of the Blind which is: to provide for the betterment of the lives of those who are visually impaired and who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and transgendered by providing a forum for the views and concerns of visually impaired persons interested in issues facing those who are LGBT; by providing information about publications of interest to members that are produced in accessible format and by encouraging the production of such material in accessible format; and by providing education on accessibility awareness.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the American Council of the Blind in convention assembled on this the eleventh day of July, 2013, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Columbus, Ohio, that this organization believes that there are sufficient grounds for suggesting that the application for affiliation of BPTX should be reconsidered by ACBT.

REFERRED

Marlaina Lieberg, Secretary

This resolution is referred to the ACB Constitution and Bylaws Committee with the following directions:

Review both the ACB Constitution and the ACBT Constitution and its history to determine whether any actions are in violation of the ACB Constitution;

Examine whether amendments should be proposed to the ACB Constitution and Bylaws in order to ensure that all persons who are blind or visually impaired receive equal and nondiscriminatory treatment with regard to membership in ACB or any of its affiliated organizations.

Op-ed: What I Have In Common With Superman

By Riley Chattin

Being transgender is a lot like being a superhero. Shortly after accepting myself and telling others that I am transgender, someone asked me, "What kind of a man do you want to be?" It was an almost confusing question as I did not see how my social actions as a man would be different than as a woman. I would continue to treat people with respect and compassion. Now, of course, I recognize there are social expectations of men, such as opening the door, standing to offer seats to women, elders and other elements of general male politeness.

I did not think about that question again until I saw *Man of Steel*, when Clark's father said to his son, "You have to decide the kind of man you want to grow up to be, Clark."

There it was again. The same question asked not only of any superhero, but one of my all-time favorite heroes, Superman.

I might have a special place in my heart for Superman perhaps because the Christopher Reeve movies were released during my impressionable pre-teen and teenage years. Still young enough to feel like one day I was going to fly, but also at a time in my life where I was realizing I was different from everyone else. I would run through our ranch style house from one end, out the side door, and leaping off the side of the porch, for weeks after I watched the first *Superman* movie. I hoped that one day, I would lift upward into the sky. That did not

happen, but I knew I would wake up one day with a sense of clarity and understanding over what was going on in my life.

I have always identified with superheroes and their solitary ways. This was not by choice, but by being different and being cast aside by people who did not understand me.

I cried when The Hulk died on his show years ago. I felt that connection of still wanting and knowing I could be loved even if I held this monster inside. Though I quickly learned, hiding our "secret identity" can make us turn into the Incredible Hulk and live in fear of anyone finding out. I felt like Wolverine traversing the forest, moving from place to place not to get too attached to anyone or place, because someone will discover the monster I held inside. Thankfully we learn that not unlike our heroes in Lycra, we are able to declare our differences and act upon how to live our lives fully. I personally feel like I should have gone to Xavier Institute of Higher Learning to develop all of these unrefined powers. Maybe then I would have embraced these differences sooner.

It is for many reasons that we often hold onto our secret identities. Whether our secrets are self-imposed, or we are told that we should never disclose it, we learn that it must remain hidden behind the exterior that society accepts. Only in the dark of night, like Batman, do we go out with completely different clothes. Maybe we even hide our faces in a figurative webbed Spider-Man-like mask so those closest to us cannot recognize us.

We shift through visits to counselors, doctors, surgeons, friends and others who help us shift our bodies and minds. It is part of the journey of any hero. We have our guides like Yoda that help us to identify the path for our journey to our true selves. We have philosophers that help us to understand the changes that will occur in our bodies and minds. Each of them take us as far as they can. Often we have to move on our path alone, before the next guide or teacher comes to us. As I approached yet another milestone in medical transition from female to male, I was assured I had the ability to be a shape shifter. I realized I am a superhero, as are all transgender people whether realized or not. Like superheroes, we learn at different stages of our life about our unique abilities to become shapeshifters. We begin finding the courage deep inside of us; finding the gift of being transgender, and being able to experience life from both genders.

Although many people will enter our path, many will fall away. They cannot identify us by the name we have chosen or the person we are becoming. They do not wish to understand our true identities. People will not be able to see us for who we are at times, that is part of social roles that can be like kryptonite for our spirit. People who do not use our correct name or correct gender-identity pronouns don't understand how that hurts. Think of it this way: when Tony Stark is in his Ironman suit, no one calls him Tony Stark. Yet everyone knows that Tony Stark is Iron Man. People still honor and respect Ironman, while recognizing that Tony is still a part of Ironman.

And just like superheroes we will have a beast to battle, whether it is our body dysphoria, rejection, social stigma or something else, we will repeatedly be asked to stand up for what we believe. According to Joseph Campbell's theory of mythology, the hero has to battle the beast before the hero can achieve greatness or an understanding of the meaning of life. I have become my own hero, continually striving to be a man of integrity and respect to those around me. Recognizing the ability to release limitations, then embracing the power we have within ourselves to achieve greatness, overcoming obstacles and living with compassion is a gift of being transgender.

RILEY CHATTIN is a writer and blogger sharing the spiritual journey of transition. He may or may not be found in Lycra in Roanoke, Va. Follow him on Twitter [@findingrile](https://twitter.com/findingrile)

Good news for people who lose their foveal vision due to macular diseases

Press, Cell. "Good news for people who lose their foveal vision due to macular diseases." *Medical News Today*. MediLexicon, Intl., 19 Aug. 2013. Web.

21 Aug. 2013. <<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/264917.php>>

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When something gets in the way of our ability to see, we quickly pick up a new way to look, in much the same way that we would learn to ride a bike, according to a new study published in the Cell Press journal *Current Biology*.

Our eyes are constantly on the move, darting this way and that four to five times per second. Now researchers have found that the precise manner of those eye movements can change within a matter of hours. This discovery by researchers from the University of Southern California might suggest a way to help those with [macular degeneration](#) better cope with vision loss.

"The system that controls how the eyes move is far more malleable than the literature has suggested," says Bosco Tjan of the University of Southern California. "We showed that people with normal vision can quickly adjust to a temporary occlusion of their foveal vision by adapting a consistent point in their peripheral vision as their new point of gaze."

The fovea refers to the small, center-most portion of the retina, which is responsible for our high-resolution vision. We move our eyes to direct the fovea to different parts of a scene, constructing a picture of the world around us. In those with age-related macular degeneration, progressive loss of foveal vision leads to visual impairment and blindness.

In the new study, MiYoung Kwon, Anirvan Nandy, and Tjan simulated a loss of foveal vision in six normally sighted young adults by blocking part of a visual scene with a gray disc that followed the individuals' eye gaze. Those individuals were then asked to complete demanding object-following and visual-search tasks. Within three hours of working on those tasks, people showed a remarkably fast and spontaneous adjustment of eye movements. Once developed, that change in their "point of gaze" was retained over a period of weeks and was re engaged whenever their foveal vision was blocked.

Tjan and his team say they were surprised by the rate of this adjustment. They note that patients with macular degeneration frequently do adapt their point of gaze, but in a process that takes months, not days or hours. They suggest that practice with a visible gray disc like the one used in the study might help speed that process of visual rehabilitation along. The discovery also reveals that the oculomotor (eye movement) system prefers control simplicity over optimality.

"Gaze control by the oculomotor system, although highly automatic, is malleable in the same sense that motor control of the limbs is malleable," Tjan says. "This finding is potentially very good news for people who lose their foveal vision due to macular diseases. It may be possible to create the right conditions for the oculomotor system to quickly adjust," Kwon adds.

People can acquire the capacity for echolocation

Munchen, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universitat

"People Can Acquire The Capacity For Echolocation" *Medical News Today*. MediLexicon, Intl., 2 Sep. 2013 Web

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/265441.php>

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As blind people can testify, we humans can hear more than one might think. The blind learn to navigate using as guides the echoes of sounds they themselves make. This enables them to sense the locations of walls and corners, for instance: by tapping the ground with a stick or making clicking sounds with the tongue, and analyzing the echoes reflected from nearby surfaces, a blind person can map the relative positions of objects in the vicinity. LMU biologists led by Professor Lutz Wiegrebe of the Department of Neurobiology (Faculty of Biology) have now shown that sighted people can also learn to echolocate objects in space, as they report in the biology journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*.

Wiegrebe and his team have developed a method for training people in the art of echolocation. With the help of a headset consisting of a microphone and a pair of earphones, experimental subjects can generate patterns of echoes that simulate acoustic reflections in a virtual space: the participants emit vocal clicks, which are picked up by the microphone and passed to a processor that calculates the echoes of a virtual space within milliseconds. The resulting echoes are then played back through the earphones. The trick is that the transformation applied to the input depends on the subject's position in virtual space. So the subject can learn to associate the artificial "echoes" with the distribution of sound-reflecting surfaces in the simulated space.

A dormant skill

"After several weeks of training, the participants in the experiment were able to locate the sources of echoes pretty well. This shows that anyone can learn to analyze the echoes of acoustic signals to obtain information about the space around him. Sighted people have this ability too; they simply don't need to use it in everyday situations," says Lutz Wiegrebe. "Instead, the auditory system actively suppresses the perception of echoes, allowing us to focus on the primary acoustic signal, independently of how the space alters the signals on its way to the ears." This makes it easier to distinguish between different sound sources, allowing us to concentrate on what someone is saying to us, for example. The new study shows, however, that it is possible to functionally invert this suppression of echoes, and learn to use the information they contain for echolocation instead.

In the absence of visual information, we and most other mammals find navigation difficult. So it is not surprising that evolution has endowed many mammalian species with the ability to "read" reflected sound waves. Bats and toothed whales, which orient themselves in space primarily by means of acoustic signals, are the best known.

Wiegrebe and his colleagues are now exploring how the coordination of self-motion and echolocation facilitates sonar-guided orientation and navigation in humans.

Medicare Open Enrollment Period Begins Oct. 15, 2013

<http://www.disabled-world.com/medical/healthcare/us-medicare/2014-enrollment.php>

During the Medicare annual enrollment period, Oct. 15 to Dec. 7, all Medicare beneficiaries have the option to change their Medicare plans for the coming year to better match their needs. This includes anyone using original Medicare, Medicare Advantage or Part D prescription drug plans.

"Because the federal and state-run health insurance exchanges open for business just two weeks prior to Medicare enrollment, some people may be confused," said Paula Muschler, manager of the Allsup Medicare Advisor®, a Medicare plan selection service offering personalized help that includes customized research and enrollment assistance.

"Medicare beneficiaries may falsely think they need to enroll in an exchange plan to avoid penalties. Or, they may be so flustered that they don't carefully evaluate their Medicare plan options for 2014, which could be detrimental if their plan or their needs have changed," Muschler said.

Another potential area of confusion is for those individuals turning 65 during Medicare annual enrollment. "Because some seniors become Medicare eligible during this time period, they need to look at their Medicare selections for coverage that takes them through year-end 2013, as well as coverage that will begin Jan. 1, 2014," Muschler said. "These first-time enrollees can benefit from the help of a Medicare specialist like Allsup when it comes to navigating their Medicare plan decisions."

What to Expect: Medicare Coverage 2014

Nearly 50 million people are enrolled in Medicare. Each year, annual open enrollment brings with it changes that can affect their Medicare plan selections.

Following are factors to keep in mind for 2014 coverage:

Medicare is not part of the Health Insurance Marketplace. Anyone with Medicare is considered covered and won't face penalties for being uninsured under provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Medicare annual open enrollment runs Oct. 15 to Dec. 7. (Note: Health Insurance Marketplace enrollment is from Oct. 1, 2013, through March 31, 2014, according to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS).)

Medicare recipients reaching the drug donut hole will benefit from lower costs. The gap in prescription drug coverage starts when someone reaches the initial coverage limit, estimated at \$2,850 in 2014. It ends when they have spent \$4,550, when catastrophic coverage begins. (These are reductions of \$120 and \$200, respectively, from 2013.) During the donut hole, all costs are covered by individuals out of their own pocket. In 2014, those who reach the donut hole can receive a 52.5 percent discount on brand-name drugs and 28 percent discount on generic drugs (an increase from 21 percent in 2013).

Under catastrophic coverage, they are responsible for a copay of \$2.55 for generic or preferred multisource drugs (down from \$2.65 in 2013) with a retail price up to \$51 and \$6.35 for all other drugs (down from \$6.60 in 2013) with a retail price up to \$127. For 2014, however, beneficiaries are responsible for a 5 percent cost-sharing fee for drugs over those retail prices.

Medicare Part B premium changes are expected

In each of the past three years, Part B premiums have increased. The 2013 monthly premium for Medicare Part B (medical insurance) was \$104.90, an increase from \$99.90 in 2012. In addition, because Part B premiums are based on the beneficiary's income and those income levels are frozen at 2010 levels, more individuals could see their premiums change. Information on the standard Part B premium for 2014 should be available by the time Medicare annual open enrollment begins Oct. 15.

Prescription drug Part D plans will see slight changes in deductible and premiums

The Part D initial deductible decreases by \$15 to \$310. HHS also recently reported the Part D monthly premiums will remain relatively stable, at \$31 for a basic prescription drug plan in 2014. This is close to the reported average premium of \$30 for the past three years (2011-13). Part D premiums are subject to the same income-based thresholds as Part B.

Changes anticipated for Medicare Advantage plans

Not all plans change every year, but common changes include costs, such as premiums, deductibles and copays, and changes to covered procedures, tests, medical facilities and other provisions. Some plans may be eliminated, which means beneficiaries will need to select a new plan or default to original Medicare Part B. Enrollment in Medicare Advantage plans continues to grow with 14.4 million people enrolled, an increase of more than 1 million from 2012, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Most Medicare participants will receive their Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) and Evidence of Coverage (EO) from their current Medicare Advantage and Part D providers by Sept. 30, according to Muschler. "It's crucial people review materials as soon as they receive them and assess their current health care needs," she said.

"Healthcare costs are a critical line item in most people's budget, and especially so for seniors and people with disabilities," Muschler added. "Believing your current plan will continue to cover your needs in the same way can lead to unexpected and costly surprises."

Medicare specialists such as Allsup are available to help consumers and their family members review Medicare plans and choices for 2014 coverage, Muschler added.

"For many people, this can be a time-consuming, confusing and complex evaluation process, especially when comparing Part D plans or Medicare Advantage plans," Muschler said. "Many Medicare beneficiaries are pleased to find out there are Medicare specialists like Allsup who look at the comparative details of the plans, and then provide them the assistance they need to make choices that suit their needs and budget in the coming year."

The Allsup Medicare Advisor is an affordable, flat-fee based service for Medicare-eligible individuals.

For an evaluation of Medicare options, call an Allsup Medicare Advisor specialist at [\(866\) 521-7655](tel:8665217655) or visit Medicare.Allsup.com to learn more about the service.

The Allsup Medicare Advisor also has features that help financial advisors guide their clients to the Medicare plans that match their specific lifestyles and health care needs. Employers also use Allsup Medicare Advisor for their employees who are retiring and transitioning to Medicare. For more information, go to [Financial Advisor.Allsup.com](http://FinancialAdvisor.Allsup.com), or call [\(888\) 220-9678](tel:8882209678).

Medicare Open Enrollment

October 15 to December 7 is when ALL people with Medicare can change their Medicare health plan and prescription drug coverage for 2014. Information on 2014 plans will be available beginning in October. People with Medicare can call [1-800-MEDICARE](tel:1800MEDICARE) or visit www.medicare.gov for plan information. If a person is satisfied that their current plan will meet their needs for next year, they don't need to do anything.

New Report Reveals 'Broken Bargain' for Trans Workers

<http://www.advocate.com/politics/transgender/2013/09/06/new-report-reveals-broken-bargain-trans-workers>

A new study, titled "A Broken Bargain for Transgender Workers," reveals widespread discrimination of transgender workers in the U.S. workforce.

A new [report](#) reveals startling inequities for transgender people in the American workforce.

The study, titled "A Broken Bargain for Transgender Workers," was coauthored by the Movement Advancement Project, the Center for American Progress, the Human Rights Campaign, and the National Center for Transgender Equality.

Discrimination in the hiring of transgender workers is widespread, and only 17 states and the District of Columbia have employment nondiscrimination laws that protect this demographic, according to the study. Currently, there are no federal protections for workers against discrimination based on gender expression or identity, despite the fact that 77% of voters would support such a law.

The lack of legal protection has resulted in a number of problems, including employment and income inequalities as well as the unequal access to health insurance benefits. Transgender workers are twice as likely to be unemployed than cisgender workers, and those who are

employed report significantly lower salaries. Fifteen percent of transgender adults make less than \$10,000 per year.

In addition, the report reveals rampant discrimination against transgender people in the workplace. Nearly 80% of workers reported discrimination or maltreatment in the form of verbal abuse or ridicule. One in 14 claimed they were the victims of physical violence in this environment.

In order to address these inequalities, "A Broken Bargain" recommends systemic change on the federal, state, and local level that would provide protections to transgender people in the workplace and access to affordable health insurance benefits, including coverage for gender transition procedures. It also advises employers to adjust their policies to address the needs of their transgender workers, which may include medical leave.

"While some protections for these workers exist based on the federal prohibition against sex-based discrimination, for many transgender people in the United States the workplace remains a minefield of harassment, discrimination, unjust firing, and unequal pay, and benefits," the report concludes. "This hurts transgender workers and their families, while also undermining the ability of employers to build the cohesive, positive and innovative work environments that spur success in today's economy."

"Fixing the broken bargain for transgender workers will help ensure that they are treated fairly no matter where they work, that they receive the same compensation for the same work, and that they can access important benefits available to other workers to protect their health and livelihood. It is time to send transgender workers the message that they matter, and to show that our nation and our economy are stronger when we treat all workers fairly."

Trans Americans Twice As Likely to Serve in Military, Study Reveals

<http://www.advocate.com/politics/transgender/2013/08/01/trans-americans-twice-likely-serve-military-study-reveals>

While transgender people are twice as likely to serve in the military as is the general population, they still face discrimination during their service and after they separate, according to the largest study to date surveying trans and gender nonconforming people.

Transgender Americans are twice as likely as their cisgender (non-trans) peers to serve in the Armed Forces, according to a study's [findings released today](#) by the Williams Institute at the University of California Los Angeles' School of Law. Twenty percent of trans people surveyed have served in the military, compared with just 10% of cisgender people. Nearly 30% of trans women reported serving in the military, while nine percent of all trans veterans surveyed said they were discharged for reasons relating to their gender identity.

"Despite the repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' this study highlights the ongoing discrimination faced by transgender people who serve in the military," said lead researcher Jody L. Herman in a statement.

While the 2011 repeal of DADT removed the congressional block to open service by gay, lesbian, and bisexual soldiers, it had no impact on the service of transgender Americans, who are prohibited from serving openly by a set of military regulations that declare any condition or treatment relating to gender dysphoria a disqualifying mental illness.

The study also revealed that trans and gender non-conforming veterans were more likely than their cisgender peers to have lost a job, due to anti-transgender bias, with 36% reporting they

were fired because of their gender identity, and 53% reporting they were not hired by a prospective employer because of their trans status.

The National Transgender Discrimination Survey was conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and over a six-month period in 2008, interviewed almost 6,500 trans and gender nonconforming people in the United States — the largest study to date featuring people who identify as a gender different than that which they were assigned at birth.

Ted's Famous Frito® Burgers On Onion Buns:

Ingredients:

2 LBS 85/15 Ground Beef (You may also use Ground Turkey)

8 Oz. Original Frito® Corn Chips (Ground into bread crumbs)

1 TBSP Garlic Powder

1 TBSP Onion Powder

1 TBSP Cumin Powder

1 TSP Freshly Ground Black Pepper

½ Stick Butter + 2 TBSP butter or substitute 1/8 cup Vegetable Oil. + 2 TBSP Oil

8 Onion (Or Your Choice) Hamburger Buns

8 Sandwich Slices Mild Cheddar Cheese (Optional)

Enough of your Favorite Burger Toppings for 8 Burgers.

Directions:

Place ground beef, Frito® crumbs, butter, and spices into a large bowl.

Using your hands, mix the ingredients together thoroughly. Be sure the spices and crumbs are spread evenly throughout the meat.

Cover bowl with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator for a minimum of 2 hours, 4 would be better.

(This will allow the crumbs and spices to soak up any excess moisture in the meat firming the texture of the final burger, as well as allowing the flavors to meld and infuse into the proteins of the meat.)

Just before you remove the burger from the fridge you will want to set your cooking surface up. A cast iron skillet works best, but any large frying pan or even an electric griddle (set to 400) will do a good job with these burgers. You will want to set your pan on medium high heat or just the highest you have for those of you with an electric stovetop.

After the burgers have rested for 2 – 4 hours in the fridge, you can begin forming the patties. This mixture will make 8 ¼ LB Patties. If you have a digital scale, now is a good time to break it out. After you have the patties formed, it's time to begin cooking them. Cook for 9 – 12 minutes per side, depending on how well you like your burgers.

After the burgers are done cooking, remove each patty from the heat and place on a couple of paper towels. Let stand for 5 minutes so that the burger will reabsorb all of the juices, making a better, tastier burger.

Dress as you so desire, eat and repeat.

ASK DOTTY

Yes! Yes! Yes! All the rumors were true; I am indeed back in all of my finery and magnificence! Please don't ask Dotty where she's been and who she's been with. Aside from it being none of

your business, the answer to that question would completely compromise the privacy of some very powerful international dignitaries, not to mention our national security, if you get my drift. My, my, it's been so long, Dotty hardly knows where to start. Don't worry my durlins, Dotty will get to some of your heartfelt, all be it sometimes annoying, questions, because Dotty knows exactly how much you depend on her to iron out the wrinkles of your remotely interesting lives. Before I do, I would violate all ethics of journalistic wherewithal if I didn't report on the going ons during the BPI convention in Columbus. I can't tell you how nice it was to see so many old friends and meet all the new ones. As for those old friends... Dotty wonders about the possibility of including cosmetic surgery as a BPI membership benefit, I'm just saying . And for my new durlins.. . Dotty just wants you to slow down a bit. I understand the excitement of being in a new city, meeting so many interesting people and perhaps having one cocktail too many . Dotty wouldn't want you to be branded as a common convention floozy. Did you hear two BPI members became engaged while in the Buckeye State? Ain't that the sweetest thang you ever did hear? Y'all know Dotty is the soul of discretion and would never divulge names, but their initials are R.B. and P.W. Y'all get them something nice, hear? I understand they are registered at 7-11. I paid no never mind to the grumblings about the Sunday afternoon mixer. Personally, I think it's chic to set up a party after guests arrive. I can't wait til next year. Dotty plans to rock the strip in Lost Wages. I mean Las Vegas.

Dear Dotty,

I've been in what I thought to be a loving relationship with the same woman for the past twelve years. Over the past six months, I lost all of my vision as a result of an infection caused by a rare virus. Last week while away at a residential rehabilitation center, I received a text from Julie telling me that she can no longer be in a relationship with me. She said, "because of your blindness, I can no longer depend on you to take care of me." I am beyond devastated as you might imagine. Over the years, I've worked so hard to provide Julie with a new house, cars, expensive vacations and more. I'm afraid my feelings have now moved from anger to vengeance. I don't want to do something that I might later regret, please help.

Vengeful in Virginia Beach

Dear Vengeful,

It's perfectly understandable why you'd have these feelings. Breathe them in, embrace them, and own them. Because you have these feelings doesn't mean you have to, or will, act on them. For what it's worth, Julie is scared. She is operating under the misguided notions many people hold about blindness. My advice to you is to seek out a professional at the rehab center to talk with and find professional help for both you and Julie. Sweetie, please remember: the best revenge is having a good life.

BPI Board Of Directors

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Florida

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BPI Committees

Legislative and Advocacy Committee

Chairperson - Mark Richert

advocacy@blind-lgbt-pride.org

With board approval, the Legislative and Advocacy committee shall develop and implement blindness and/or LGBT related advocacy strategies, follow and report on legislative issues, and educate Membership and allies as to trending issues as needed.

Budget/Finance Committee

Chairperson - Gabriel Lopez

treasurer@blind-lgbt-pride.org

Co-Chair - Richard Marion

The Treasurer shall Chair the Budget and Finance committee which shall be responsible for preparing and implementing an annual budget approved by the board of directors.

Constitution, Bylaws and Resolutions Committee

Chairperson - Harlow Pease

bylaws@blind-lgbt-pride.org

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall be available to any member who wishes to propose amendments. It shall be responsible for sending

notices of pending amendments and changes adapted to voting members. It shall initiate changes that it believes will make BPI more democratic and effective.

Fundraising Committee

Chairperson – Guillermo Robles

fundraising@blind-lgbt-pride.org

The Fund Raising Committee shall seek and select methods of increasing the organization's income. Its decisions shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. It shall be responsible for carrying out fundraising activities which have been given such approval.

Membership Committee

ChairPerson - Caitlin Hernandez

membership@blind-lgbt-pride.org

The membership committee exists to maintain BPI's member base. It works to develop recommended strategies to outreach to new members and retain current members. This committee also works in conjunction with other committees to meet the mission and goals of BPI. The Outreach committee is a sub-committee of membership.

Elections Committee

ChairPerson - Harlow Pease

elections@blind-lgbt-pride.org

shall carry out BPI's nominating process and elections, in accordance with the provisions set forth by BPI's constitution and bylaws.

Programs Committee

Chairperson - Don Brown

programs@blind-lgbt-pride.org

The Program Committee shall be responsible for developing programs for BPI's conference and convention and other meetings, as approved by the board of directors. It shall also serve as a hospitality committee as needed.

Public Relations Committee

Chairperson - Will Burley

vicepresident@blind-lgbt-pride.org

A liaison between ACB as well as other blindness related organizations, LGBT organizations and the media. In charge of promotion of BPI on both national and international level.