



MIDWEST RAINBOW NEWS



FEBRUARY 2023

VOL. 3 ISSUE 2

"My silences had not protected me. Your silence will not protect you."

-Audre Lorde

HOUSEKEEPING

DISCLAIMER

The ideas and opinions in the Midwest Rainbow News are solely those of our contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Midwest Rainbow News.

The Midwest Rainbow News makes no representations as to the accuracy of statements made by individual authors, including but not limited to legal and medical information.

By sending submissions to the Midwest Rainbow News, you are agreeing to have your submission published. We may edit submissions to fit our anti-oppression values and/or our own editing guidelines.

Missing your copy?

Although things seem to be improving in terms of uniform delivery of the newsletter, please reach out if you do not receive your copy for more than one month in a row. Thank you!

Midwest Rainbow News
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Pittsburgh, PA 15217

MAMA SAYS

Happy Valentine's Day! Here it is February, and springtime is just around the corner! So let's show some love, give your Brothers and Sisters a big hug and a few kind words. Sometimes that's all we have, but that can be an invaluable uplifting gesture to someone who may be having issues only they know about.

I want to take a moment to welcome our newest subscribers. The Midwest Rainbow News is published in order to help fill a void and to give our readers a voice. We operate independently and are now beginning a new partnership with Liberation Lit. We try to answer questions, educate about LGBTQ+ issues and provide emergency advocacy when needed. As we entered into a collaborative partnership with Liberation Lit, we learned that the void identified here in Missouri also exists in Kansas. So it is our pleasure to welcome our first group of LGBTQ+ readers from Kansas to the Midwest Rainbow News! We hope you enjoy and participate by sending in stories or resource information.

There have been some troubling developments with the care being given to the transgender community by our new contracted healthcare provider, Centurion. Although we do not know the extent of the problem, we will continue to monitor the situation and report our findings to a great group of attorneys. We will let you know more when we can.

Mother's leg seems to be on the mend. The swelling has gone down a lot and the pain isn't as bad. But I proved one thing for certain—the older you get, the less you bounce!

With a Mothers Love,
Patricia

THE PRISON JOURNALISM PROJECT

The Prison Journalism Project is a great place for any prisoner to express their views while working to establish themselves as a credible writer and journalist. Many first time authors have been published on the Prison Journalism website. It only takes imagination and willingness to write your story. It is 100% free, costs you only time and dedication. Ask about their writing program and upcoming correspondence-based classes. For more information on how to get started, contact them at:

Prison Journalism Project
2093 Philadelphia Pike #1054
Claymont, DE 19703



LESS THAN 10% OF 2022'S ANTI-LGBTQ STATE BILLS BECAME LAW, REPORT FINDS

NEWS

Source: NBC News 1/26/2023

State legislators across the country proposed a record number of bills targeting LGBTQ rights last year, but less than 1 in 10 have become law, a report published Thursday by the Human Rights Campaign found.

The LGBTQ advocacy group's 2022 State Equality Index, an annual review of state legislation and policies that affect the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people, found that state legislators introduced 315 bills that the Human Rights Campaign described as "anti-equality." Just 29 became law.

The majority of the new laws target transgender minors. In the last three years, 18 states have banned trans youths from playing school sports on the teams that align with their gender identities, and four states — Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas and Tennessee — have restricted or prohibited their access to gender-affirming medical care. The American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics and other medical associations oppose efforts to restrict gender-affirming care for minors.

JoDee Winterhof, the senior vice president of policy and political affairs at the Human Rights Campaign, said the 315 bills are part of a coordinated conservative response to LGBTQ rights gained over the last few years.

"We consider this to be part of the backlash from the gains around marriage equality, from the gains in overall equality through the courts or through cities and other states," Winterhof said.

Some lawmakers, she added, believe the bills will motivate conservatives to head to the polls, although she said the track record of last year's anti-LGBTQ bills and midterm election polling have led her to believe otherwise.

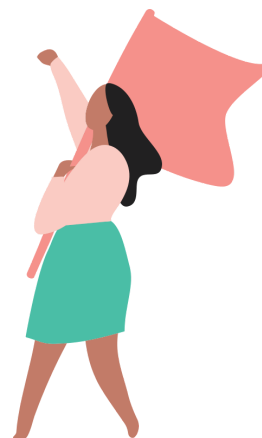
She pointed to a Human Rights Campaign poll of 1,000 voters, who were surveyed online and by phone the week of the midterm elections, that asked which issues motivated them to head to the polls. The top two were inflation, at 52%, and abortion, at 29% (an NBC News Exit Poll found the same two issues were also top-of-mind for voters). Gender-affirming care for trans youths or trans participation in sports came in last, with less than 5% identifying them as issues that motivated them to vote, the Human Rights Campaign found.

This year's State Equality Index also found that state legislators introduced 156 "pro-equality" bills, of which 23, or just under 15%, became law.

An increasing number of states are passing "pro-equality" legislation, according to the Human Rights Campaign. For example, 21 states restrict conversion therapy, which is the discredited practice of trying to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity; 25 ban insurance exclusions for transgender medical care; and 38 allow trans people to update their names and gender markers on their driver's licenses, while 27 allow them to do the same on their birth certificates.

However, many states still have "anti-equality" laws on the books. Nearly half of states (22) don't protect people from discrimination in public accommodations based on sexual orientation, and 23 don't provide protections based on gender identity. Seventeen states bar Medicaid from covering certain transgender medical care.

The report warns that, even though 2022 was a record-breaking year for legislation targeting LGBTQ people, 2023 is already expected to outpace it. In just the first few weeks of the year, state legislators have introduced nearly 150 such bills, the majority of them continuing to target LGBTQ youths, according to an NBC News analysis.





WHAT'S ON OUR HEARTS AND MINDS



IS THE HIGH-FIVE GAY? THIS HISTORIAN THINKS SO

Decades before Michael Sam and Jason Collins, Glenn Burke scores points for queer men in sports.

Glenn Burke co-invented the high five. It was the home game of the Dodgers, the last of the regular season on October 2, 1977. Glenn's teammate Dusty Baker had just hit a home run in front of forty-six thousand cheering fans. Glenn was next up to the plate and put his hand up to great Dusty coming into home plate. Dusty recalled: "His hand was up in the air, and he was arching way back, so I reached up and hit his hand. It seemed like the thing to do." Glenn then hit his first home run in the majors and Dusty high-fived him on his return. The practice took off in the following years, first within baseball, then in all sports. By 1980, the Dodgers were selling trademarked high five t-shirts. Glenn's ex, Michael, asserted it as a gay pride symbol, "a legacy of two men's hands touching."

Glenn Burke 1952-1995

Source: [Queer, there and everywhere: 23 people who changed the world](#) by Sarah Prager

"HONOR FREEDOM FIGHTERS DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH"

As many of us know, Black and Brown people fought hard for their and our basic and civil rights and to honor them on the inside we must do the same. Recently I noticed that my state tip was reduced by .38¢ from 8.50\$ to \$8.12. Sounds petty to be quarreling over, but a little goes a long way in prison. Soups have went from .32¢ to .47¢ to .57¢ in less than 3 months here. We must advocate for the small things that should be provided to us all, don't let anyone treat you or pay you unequally no matter who you are, conjure up the spirit of those whom by any means necessary fought for their rights and fight for yours. We matter and we must make sure that others know, I implore you to check and make sure you always get and have what the state is legally supposed to give you and nothing less.

Here are some fun Black History facts for you to enjoy. Listen up....

- In 1822 former American slaves who were skilled artisans and community builders left the continental United States for Liberia and started their own settlements.
- 1960 Black Students start successful sit-ins at Woolworth counters and after being refused service in Greensboro, NC.
- 1962 James Meredith became the first black person to attend the University of Mississippi, on October 1 after 3,000 troops were brought in to put down riots. 1963 March for Civil Rights begins in Birmingham, Alabama which led to landmark civil rights legislation.
- 1967 Thurgood Marshall sworn in as first Black United States Supreme Court Justice.
- In 1984 Jesse Jackson became the first African American to win a state's presidential primary (Wisconsin).

In 2023, family elevate your minds in order to get yourselves together. Black History is all of our history.... we are all we got! United we ball, divided we fall. love y'all Summer B.

A MEDITATION ON LOSS

HAPPY NEW YEAR FAMILY! With the turn of the calendar comes resolutions. Some of us made resolutions to diet, work out, repair relationships, or to open up and be afraid no longer. With resolutions such as hiding no more may come criticism from others and the loss of those who cannot accept us as we are. My hopes and dreams for all my family this year is that we all find true happiness, serenity, peace and love.

THAT WHICH IS NO MORE

Over time, people say it will become easier. Time is a crucial element in a healing process most of us refuse to allow its needed path. We as humans box our losses and hide them in the trunk of the car, instead of allowing the healing process to forge a new, clean, healthy, and positive life. Much of the time we think it easier to just box it up and toss it somewhere. Although, we spend more energy and put up more effort avoiding the subject than we would have just dealing with the hurt and loss in the first place.

Mourning is a process. A process of acknowledging the person we lost. A loss of a person who is still living can be just as painful as losing a person through death. Losing a person who is still living can even cause more pain, regret, and self-doubt than losing someone to death.

Mourning a person we lost due to them being incapable of accepting us as we are, can be quite difficult and is extremely painful. We continually hold onto a sliver thread of hope that maybe one day they will come around, love, and accept us as we are. Though rarely this is the case. When we hold on to the tiny little thread of hope it slowly painfully cuts into us deeper and deeper. Eventually leaving us so scarred and scared we become helpless.

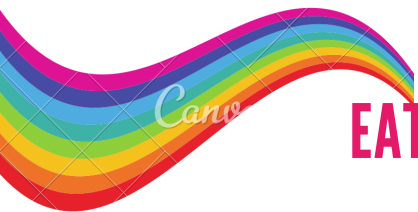
No matter the cause, a loss is a loss and we feel the pain. The only way for us to heal and become viable is to accept the loss, mourn the loss, heal from the pain and grow with it.

Many of us have grown and matured through a loss but many just box it up and hide it away. When pain, hurt, loss and all the emotions involved are boxed up and hidden away eventually the boxes become tattered and fall apart. And with time the toxicity of all the boxed-up emotions and pain become cancerous. Which in turn eats away at us mentally, spiritually, physically, and emotionally. Not dealing with the hurt, pain, and loss is detrimental to everything in our lives.

Personally speaking as of the 28th of December 2022 I have lost the last few remaining family members because I am who I am. I am my own special creation.....and they gave me the boot. I am in so much pain, and I am mourning the loss of those whom I had. But, I am me and will not fall! I am lost, but my path is still before me.

Family, be not afraid of the losses you may face for being you. Be afraid of losing yourself for the sake of others.

To my sisters and brothers, trans, gay, bi and lesbian, We are family I got you and you got me. Love yourself and if you can't, we will no matter what. That which is no more can be remembered but cannot rule our lives. The pain is temporary, the memory forever. Live life and make the most of it.



EATING LIKE A QUEEN/KING ON A BUDGET



BAD BITCH NACHOS

This is a cheap meal that will help you fight inflation, with prices skyrocketing and limited stock on staple items it's very hard to make a decent meal...so I pray this helps you all

Bad Bitch Nachos

Serves 3 to 4 for around \$10

Ingredients

- 1 Bag of Ripple chips
- 1 chilli with beans
- 1 cup dehydrated onions
- 1 cup bacon bits
- 1 tub of sharp cheese or habanero
- 1 cup of jalapeños
- 1 cup of salsa
- 1 cup of BBQ sauce
- 2 cups of rice
- 1 ramen soup packet or taco seasonings
- 2 fish steaks

Empty chips into a bowl, use the bag as a serving tray. Place chips on chip bag. Heat up chilli with beans with stinger or in a microwave. After heating, pour chilli in a bowl. In a separate bowl cook the 2 cups of rice and add it to chilli. In yet another separate bowl empty contents of the tub of cheese. Pour boiling hot water onto the cheese and stir until it turns into sauce. Add onions, fish steaks and seasoning to mixture. Pour chilli mixture over chips, pour cheese over chips, add bbq sauce, salsa, garnish with bacon bits and jalapeños and serve.

To top it off make drinks to quench your thirst..... in a pitcher filled with ice add a Hawaiian Punch single and pour an Orange/ 7-up soda. Put lid on tight and shake.....eat good brodies and bishes..... Summer breeze



ICE CREAM CHEESECAKE

Ingredients

- 1 pint Vanilla ice cream
- 2 (16oz) Duplex cookies
- 1 (12oz) 7-up or a sun drop
- 1 (1/2) coffee mug instant milk
- 1 teaspoon country time lemonade
- 1/4 coffee mug maple brown sugar instant oatmeal
- 3 (2oz) package cream cheese
- 2 oz salted peanuts

Directions

Set pint ice cream aside. Scrape cream from both packages of cookies into a cereal bowl and set it aside. Crush only vanilla cookies into a fine powder a few at a time in a milk bag and place into a big bowl. Add 4 and a half Tablespoons soda to big bowl and knead into a pliable dough. Then flatten out in the bottom of the same bowl. Starting in the bottom center, using your knuckles, press down firmly, working your way towards outside of the bowl. Your dough should start to began to climb up the sides of the bowl. Work this into your crust and smooth out once done. Place bowl in front of your fan to dry for a couple hours. Once setup and dried some, in a separate big bowl combine instant milk, country time lemonade, Sifted oatmeal to get just the maple brown sugar. (Save the oatmeal to eat some other time.) Then add the cream cheese to the milk and lemonade mixture, Then slowly add 1/2 the melted ice cream as you Whip Good make sure all the powdered milk has dissolved. Once Whipped Good, add the cream from the cookies and Whip Good Again. This should be a very thick mixture. Pour cheesecake filling into your crust and spread it out evenly. Decorate with peanuts if you want, put lid on the bowl. And put the bowl on ice until it is firmly set at least 1 Hour before you cut. Make sure you eat within 24 hours.



POEMS

SOMETIMES MY HEART HURTS WHEN IM DAYDREAMING ABOUT YOU! PAIN IS MY TEARS OF WANTING YOU, MY PAIN IS MY LOVE FOR YOU WHICH IS SO TRUE. UNDERSTANDING COMES FROM A TRUST and BOND THAT " WE", SHARE AS ONE! LIFE IS THE BEGINNING OF "OUR" ETERNALITY TOGETHER. SOMETIMES MY HEART HURTS! LOVE YOUR BROTHER MYLOWE.

Freedom

Cherish your freedom for if you let freedom slip away your life skies will turn dull and grey.
Cherish your freedom for if you let freedom go life is like a beautiful river that has lost its flow.
Cherish your freedom for if you let freedom die life is like a Boeing 747 that cannot fly.

Summer Breeze

Stay Warm and Safe this winter
Michelle "Sauce Queen" Miller

AN APOLOGY

To our readers:

Recently, I was contacted by one of our beautiful sisters, letting me know that she feels we have let her down. After reading her mail over and over I realized she is somewhat right, and for that I am sorry.

Two years ago, when this little newsletter was started, it was my intention that it was to be YOUR voice, to say what you needed the world to know. That was fine for a long time, but as we all know, they seldom let good things continue without causing issues.

We had to end the practice of letting people write letters and/or poems dedicated to friends/lovers or shoutouts not a part of an article due to the new mail policy. Due to the costs associated with mailing each issue, we try to keep the newsletter at or below five sheets of paper (10 pages, max). We encourage all of our readers to write in, send poems and/or articles. We even encourage you to send us complaints about the conditions of your confinement and any time you are mistreated by prisoners or staff.

All complaints about mistreatment or your personal safety will be sent to a great group of attorneys as quickly as we can. We cannot promise they will act on every complaint, but your complaints will be reviewed by one or more attorneys. We will never print anything in the newsletter about the complaints, for your safety.

To my young and beautiful sister who wrote me such a heartfelt letter pointing out my many faults, I say thank you and apologize for the oversight regarding your deadname — if you have recently finalized a legal name change, please write to us so we know to update your information in our records. We do know the newsletter comes on your tablet and Jpay doesn't always reflect our legal name changes, but we do our best to make sure we properly address each newsletter. You are always welcome to submit stories or articles and I will do my best to have them published, as long as they are not outside our publication guidelines.

We try to help, try to make a difference. I know sometimes I fall short and for that, I am so sorry and I will try to do better.

With a Mothers Love,
Patricia

GOOD NEWS

Good News for those leaving prison and eligible for Medicare

According to Emily Widra, Senior Research Analyst at the Prison Policy Initiative, January 1st brought with it some important rule changes.

We all know our prison population is growing old, more wheel chairs and walkers than I have ever seen. But for those 65 and older, signing up for Medicare can be confusing and expensive. What many didn't know is, people who are incarcerated when they initially become eligible for Medicare had been expected to enroll and pay monthly premiums without access to any Medicare benefits or coverage, or pay increasingly higher premiums for the rest of your life once released.

Effective January 1, 2023 a special enrollment period for recently released, formerly incarcerated people has been created. The creation of this special enrollment period allows formerly incarcerated people to enroll in Medicaid in the 12 months the following their release without facing any financial penalties for late enrollment.



WRITE FOR US!

We are actively seeking material from our readers to publish in future issues. We will no longer publish messages from one reader to another.

We are looking for:

- Articles with accurate information about relevant DOC policies, legal developments, and current affairs (cite your sources!)
- Tips, life-hacks, and how-to articles that our readers would find useful
- Media recommendations — books, authors, podcasts, tv, movies etc. Preference given to free things. Write a little bit about why you're recommending it and/or what you got from it.
- Personal essays on topics relevant to our community, including but not limited to: mental health, personal growth, what sucks about being LGBTQ in prison, what's cool about being LGBTQ in prison, pride, shame, self-acceptance, friendship, liberation from oppression, dealing with difficult family relationships, etc.
- Good news — if you have something to celebrate!
- Reports from your camp on conditions for LGBTQ prisoners
- Responses — If you have something constructive to add to a particular conversation, you can write a response to a previously published piece

SEND SUBMISSIONS TO OUR PO BOX OR THE BLACK-PINK GAZETTE TABLET CONTACT

IF YOU'RE A NEW SUBSCRIBER AND DON'T HAVE THE CONTACT ON YOUR TABLET YET, PLEASE BE PATIENT. IF YOU'RE STILL MISSING THE CONTACT AFTER A COUPLE WEEKS, WRITE TO OUR PO BOX.



**Reach us at:
Midwest Rainbow News
PO Box 81624
Pittsburgh, PA 15217**

LEGAL/ADVOCACY

NEWSLETTER

RESEARCH

Lambda Legal
C/O Help Desk
4221 Wilshire Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90010

Missouri Cure
P.O. Box 28931
St.Louis,MO 63132

Liberation Lit (inquire for free books)
P.O. Box 45071
Kansas City, MO 64171

ACLU
906 Olive St., Suite 1130
St. Louis, Mo. 63101

LAGAI (Ultraviolet)
3543 18th St #26
San Francisco,CA 94110

Library of Congress
101 Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20540-4660

Missouri Protection and Advocacy Services
925 S. Country Club Dr.
Jeff City, Mo. 66109-4510

Black and Pink
6223 Maple St., #4600
Omaha NE 68104

Centurion
1400 Edgewood Drive
Jefferson City, Mo. 63109

Transgender Law Center
P.O. Box 70976
Oakland, CA 94612

Prison Health News
4722 Baltimore Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19143



National Center for Transgender Equality
1032 15th St NW
Suite # 199
Washington, D.C. 20005

Slingshot (quarterly radical newspaper)
3124 Shattuck Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94705



GLAAD
18 Tremont St Suite # 950
Boston, MA 02108

Prisoner Express (twice a year)
Prisoner Express
PO Box #6556
Ithaca, NY 14851



TGI Justice Project
370 Turk St # 370
San Francisco, CA 94102

LEGAL/ADVOCACY



Southern Poverty Law Center
400 Washington Ave.
Montgomery, AL. 36104

The Midwest Innocence Project
3619 Broadway Blvd., Suite 2
Kansas City, MO 64111



MacArthur Justice Center
906 Olive Street, Suite 420
St. Louis, MO 63101

National Lawyers Guild
PO Box 1266
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