

Valentine's Day - Is it still the same?



Your Sweetie is still your Sweetie

By: Bethany Roses

I've always hated how commercialized Valentine's Day has become. If you truly love someone, you shouldn't need a special day to show it. Even with that being said, I've still participated in the 'going out to dinner' thing and the 'buying flowers' thing. I think it's all in an effort to say that you didn't forget about the holiday. On another note, whether it's Valentine's Day or not, I do enjoy being thought of spontaneously. Whether it's a quick note in the morning, a surprise date night, or your wife randomly throwing guacamole in the shopping cart because she knows you love it and never buy it (yes, this actually happened!), it's nice to be genuinely loved by someone, even if it's in the simplest ways. Sometimes I miss who my spouse used to be; I miss the masculine qualities (emotional and physical). Through this transition, though that man is gone, I still get everything I need to fulfill my life. My sweetie then is still my sweetie now.

Valentine's Day - A Fresh Perspective

By: Hazel Grace Roses

What a beautiful day! I remember Valentine's Day as being a holiday where I always had to go crazy to be the romantic guy in the relationship. However, beginning my transition has given me a different outlook. Whether it's your first or 50th Valentine's Day, practice some self care and love YOURSELF. Go out and treat yourself to some flowers and a nice dinner. And perhaps if you have a partner, suggest that they be the one to treat you so can feel like the princess you should have always been!

Renaissance Shopping Event - Feb 1st

Save the date because we have been invited back to the Perfect Fit Resale Boutique for another fun shopping event! If you are looking for amazing casual or career clothing, footwear and jewelry at even better prices, this is the place to be. They even offer personal stylists!

This event will be taking place on February 1st from 6-9pm at the Perfect Fit Resale Boutique On the Arts Walk. The address is 26 N 6th Street, Allentown.

Upcoming Speakers - LV Renaissance

We look forward to having the following speakers at our monthly LV Renaissance meetings:

- February: Shelbie Pletz from Lehigh Valley Electrolysis
- April: Carley Bergey, Voice Therapist

Quotes to Inspire you!

"Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help create the fact." - William James

"The great thing in this world is not so much where you stand, as in what direction you are moving." - Oliver Wendell Holmes



Transgender Day of Visibility - March 22nd, 6-8pm

We know that when someone meets a trans person they are 32% more likely to support us publically. That is why part of Renaissance/EPTEP's mission is to encourage allyship so that trans folk face less stigma than in the past and that is what our TDoV programming is all about!

This year we will once again be cohosting an event with the Bradbury-Sullivan Center that is focused on educating the general public about trans folk, the issues that impact us and how intersectionality further creates challenges. The event will include a moderated panel discussion, audience Q&A and a meet and mingle. Last year we had over 120 trans and cis gender people in attendance. Will you help us to break that record?

Transgender Services Fair & Open House - April 30th, 6-8pm

We are pleased to announce the EPTEP and the Bradbury-Sullivan Center are cohosting a new program just for trans and gender-diverse people. You will have an opportunity to meet with multiple service providers that support the trans community and while you are at it you can meet and mingle with others from the gender-diverse community. Watch this space for more details but save the date now!

Keystone Conference - March 25-29

It is still not too late to register for the conference! This is one of the largest gender-diversity events in the country. Whether you are going to meet people, to learn, meet with medical practitioners, or give going full-time in a safe environment a try you are unlikely to be disappointed. The Keystone Conference will be taking place on March 25-29, 2020. Registration is now open as well! You can find out more about the conference at <http://www.keystone-conference.org/>.

PA LGBT Health Survey

Please be on the look-out for an announcement about the PA LGBT Health Survey. If we can get 1,000 trans people to participate it will allow us to have a scientific sample of trans folk where we can break out trans-only data. This is VERY important. So please watch this space and please participate when announced.

New Videos on Renaissance Website

We have completed the development of two 10-minute videos about HRT for trans people. They are available on the Renaissance website and the EPTEP [YouTube Channel](#).

Spouses and Partners Transition Too

Last month's Partners Support Group meeting was a great success! We are continuing to run this event at the same time as the Renaissance meet-up. Spouses/Partners are invited to meet separately for around an hour or so. They can then join-in for socializing with the Renaissance group. All spouses and partners are welcome and all information shared at this meeting is strictly confidential. [Learn more here.](#)

Professional Development Workshops and Career Clothing Assistance

LV Renaissance and EPTEP have a referral arrangement with the YWCA Allentown and their Perfect Fit for Working Women program. This program helps more than 650 women each year find the clothing and confidence necessary to start a job and grow a career. At a woman's first visit to the Perfect Fit, she is greeted by a personal stylist who helps her shop from our well-stocked boutique of women's professional and business casual clothing to select the perfect outfit to ace her job interview. Once she gets the job, our client returns for a full week's worth of clothing perfectly suited to her new career and does not have to spend her first paycheck on a new work wardrobe.

The YWCA Allentown also sponsors Professional Development Workshops that assist job seekers in developing the skills they need to succeed including: Employer Expectations; Professional Etiquette; Networking; Difficult Conversations at Work and more. These services are FREE and they are trans-friendly. If you would like a referral to either of these programs, email Corinne at Corinne.Goodwin@PATransEquity.org.

Transgender Topics in the News

- Here is a great article from [Psychology Today](#) that speaks to the importance of being “trans-informed” not just “trans-friendly.”
- The US military [is not alone](#) in discriminating against transgender troops;
- Do transgender [athletes](#) have an unfair advantage?
- Over a dozen new bills target [trans youth](#)
- [Caitlyn Jenner](#) speaks out for transgender rights at Women's March
- The [Virginia Senate](#) has passed four measures that ban conversion therapy and introducing a policy on accommodating trans students in schools among other reforms
- The [pronoun wars](#) are heating-up...
- The United Methodist Church [may formally split](#) over LGBTQ inclusion
- Lawmakers [call on ICE to release transgender prisoners](#).
- Closer to home a woman was charged with setting fire to a building that houses Pittsburgh's [SisTersPGH](#), a black, trans-led advocacy organization.
- New Jersey has become the [9th state to ban the “Gay & Trans Panic Defenses”](#)



Corinne's Corner - Spreading the Word About Inclusiveness Improves Your Outlook

The Holiday Season is over and the election season is heating up. For better or worse that means the culture wars - wars which seem to be centering more and more on LGBTQ and Trans people - are becoming front and center.

There is no doubt that trans people are something of a lightning rod these days. During times like these it is easy to follow your instincts to either fight or flee. But, sometimes it is best to blaze a different trail and to do something that is counter intuitive.

For me and many of the leaders of EPTEP and Renaissance, we have chosen to engage and interact. That is because we know that people are 32% more likely to support LGBTQ people and the causes that are important to us when they personally know an LGBTQ person.

Of course we do a lot of our official work through speaking engagements and events like our upcoming TDoV Panel on March 22nd.

The big events are effective, but I tend to think that it is the individual interactions that we have in our day-to-day lives that can be more impactful. After all, they are more intimate and they prove to our friends, family, coworkers and others that there is more to us than being trans.

So join a bowling league, attend a church service, volunteer at a homeless shelter, or go to a meet-up of people with similar interests. You will find that you not only have fun and make friends, but that you are exerting influence that can help the Trans Community in what is certainly a heated political climate.

Always Stay in the Know - Follow Us on Social Media!

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Upcoming Events

- February 1st 6-9pm - Trans Women's Shopping Event @ The Perfect Fit
- February 1st 9pm - MATC First Saturday at the Stonewall Inn, Allentown
- February 8 - LV Renaissance Meeting @ MCCLV from 7:30-9pm (Doors open at 6:30)
- February 8 - Spouses and Partners Support Group Meeting @ MCCLV from 7:30-9 (Doors open at 6:30)
- February 9 - Oscar Party sponsored by The Gay Journal @ The Steel Inn, Hellertown from 7pm-12am
- February 12 - Parents of Trans Kids @ Bradbury Sullivan Center from 6-7pm
- February 25 - Transmasculine Group @ Bradbury Sullivan Center from 6:30-8pm
- February 26 - Parents of Trans Kids @ Bradbury Sullivan Center from 6-7pm
- February 26 - Transfeminine Group @ Bradbury Sullivan Center from 6:30-8pm
- March 22 - Trans Day of Visibility Event @ Bradbury Sullivan Center from 6-8pm
- April 30 - Trans Services Fair & Open House @ Bradbury Sullivan Center from 6-8pm

Ongoing LGBTQ Services

- Free HIV & STI Testing - 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 4-6pm @ Bradbury Sullivan Center
- LGBT Legal Clinic - 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 4-6pm @ Bradbury Sullivan Center
- LGBT+ Cancer Support Group - 2nd Tuesday @ Bradbury Sullivan Center
- LGBT Mental Health Group - 3rd Wednesdays - 6-7pm @ Bradbury Sullivan Center
- Bereavement Group - 4th Tuesday, 5:30-7pm @ Bradbury Sullivan Center

More Gender-Diversity Events Coming Your Way

- **NEPA Trans Health Conference:** Located right in our backyard and held on Tuesday, April 14, 2020 - this conference is targeted at healthcare providers as well as others that work with the gender-diverse population. <http://www.nepatranshealth.com/>
- **Trans Youth Forum:** The Trans Youth Forum is an annual event provided by HiTOPS. This all-day conference includes guest speakers, workshops, and activities where transgender, nonbinary, and otherwise gender expansive youth are able to connect and learn together. For more information on this event, click [here](#).
- **Philadelphia Trans Wellness Conference:** Taking place on July 23-25, 2020, the Philadelphia Trans Wellness Conference is all about community. Started by [Charlene Arcila](#) and a group of transgender community members, providers, and community base organizations, it has grown to become the largest FREE trans-specific conferences in the world.
- **TAVA Transgender Military Retreat:** The Transgender American Veteran Association will host a weekened retreat in Atlanta, Georgia from September 25-27, 2020. There is also an opportunity to attend an Atlanta Braves baseball game for an addition fee. For more information, please click [here](#).
- **Diversity Conference at Kutztown University:** Kutztown University will be hosting its 10th Annual Diversity Conference sponsored by the Commission on Human Diversity. The date is Friday, February 28 from 9 am - 4 pm at the McFarland Student Union. You do not have to stay for the entire day and it is free and open to the public - although sponsorships are welcome. The registration link is not open yet, but we'll keep you posted.
- **Annual Rainbow Gala:** On June 12, 2020, The LGBTQ Business Council will be hosting its 6th Annual Rainbow Gala from 6-11pm at The Steel Club in Hellertown, PA. Single tickets are \$100 and couples tickets are \$190. At the event will be cocktails, dinner, dancing and a silent auction. Please RSVP to brittanyw@lehighvalleychamber.org

Privacy Notice: Lehigh Valley Transgender Renaissance and the Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Center respect everyone's right to privacy. You received this email because you signed-up for the Renaissance mailing list. If you no longer wish to receive emails from us, please reply to this email with that request.