

For Pride Week, gay means happy

By Lisa Svanevik
Emerald Contributor

The Gay and Lesbian Alliance will kick off its annual Gay Pride Week on Monday with a banquet that will celebrate the week's theme — "Gay Still Means Happy."

The banquet will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Seymour's Greenery Restaurant, 996 Willamette St. Tickets are \$4 at the door and include admission and dinner.

Other activities on the schedule include several workshops and film presentations.

"I really want to stress that these are available to everyone; we invite everyone to come," said GALA co-director Ryan Kennedy. "The workshops are not debates ... they are for people who are gay or lesbian, but everyone is welcome to come and learn."

Kennedy said "the big thing this year" will be Jeans Day on Thursday.

"Wearing jeans or denim on that day is an overt statement that one supports gay and lesbian rights" in addition to all civil rights, Kennedy said, adding that he hopes people will "consciously wear jeans or not," depending on their position on the issue.

Kennedy and fellow co-director Jennifer Bills both noted that the function of GALA and of Pride Week has shifted away from educating the heterosexual community about gays and toward celebrating the gay lifestyle and gay pride in recent years.

The emphasis now, Kennedy said, is as much on education as on simply having a good time.

Last year's co-director Tim Hughes said the event "creates a safe space for people to come out (of the closet)" and that the number of participants increases every year.

Pride Week daytime events begin Monday afternoon at 12:30 with "Ripe Fruits and Budding Flowers," a perspective of older and younger lesbians and gays in the community. It will be held at the Koinonia Center, 1414 Kincaid St.

The Willamette AIDS Council will present a "Safe Sex Extravaganza" at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, also at the Koinonia Center.

A workshop on building and maintaining healthy gay and lesbian relationships will follow at 1 p.m. at the Center.

A look at diversity in the gay and lesbian community entitled "Through Another's Eyes" will take place at noon on Wednesday in the EMU Forum Room.

"Dispelling the Fear," a panel discussion on sadomasochism will begin at 10 a.m. Thursday in the Forum Room.

Weekday events conclude Friday with a noon rally in the EMU courtyard.

Weeknight entertainment includes a full slate of films with gay themes. *Before Stonewall* and *Maurice* play on Tuesday, *The Life and Times of Harvey Milk* and *Parting Glances* on Wednesday, and *Waiting For the Moon* on Thursday.

All films begin at 7 p.m. in the Forum Room, and a \$2 donation is appreciated.

The week concludes with the Lavender Rhythm Ritual, GALA's Pride Week dance, from 8 p.m. to midnight at the Laurelwood Golf Course, 2700 Columbia St. Admission is \$4.

Saturday features a gay and lesbian parenting workshop at 11 a.m. at the Koinonia Center, and the showing of *Torch Song Trilogy* at 7:15 p.m. and 9:45 p.m. in 150 Geology.

Tickets for the movie are \$2 for students and \$2.50 for general admission.

Sunday is "Gay Day," which will be celebrated with Pride Brunches at three local restaurants. Participants are encouraged to wear black and white with lavender or purple accents while brunching at the Bagel Bakery (Eighth Avenue and Monroe Street), the Great Society Cafe (11th Avenue and Patterson Street) or Scarlet O'Heifer's (13th and Lawrence).

Partial proceeds from the brunch will benefit the new Gay and Lesbian Helpline.

The week's big event will be a "Late-Night Double Feature" concert of Romanovsky & Phillips together with the Washington Sisters at 8 p.m. Sunday in the EMU Ballroom.

Tickets are \$10 only in advance and may be purchased at the EMU Main Desk or Mother Kali's Bookstore. GALA will have an information table in the EMU from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. during Pride Week to answer questions.

New GALA co-director promises inclusiveness

By Sing Chan
Emerald Contributor

An agenda emphasizing cultural, educational and political activities is the top priority of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance's (GALA) new co-director, Ryan Kennedy.

"My goal is to make the GALA office a safe place for people who are having questions about their sexuality and for people who are looking for a safe place to stay and to meet other people," Kennedy said. "GALA is for people who want to become aware of the political and social issues that circle around the gay community and around minorities in general."

GALA is a diverse organization that welcomes everyone, Kennedy said. "We want to be inclusive to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and straight people."

Kennedy is a senior psychology major originally from Baker. He spent a year in Belgium as an exchange student and was recently in Pennsylvania on the National Exchange Program. A transfer student from Eastern Oregon State College, Kennedy has been at the University for a year.

Along with Jennifer Bills, GALA's other co-director, Kennedy will plan cultural and political events for the gay and lesbian community. He will also coordinate activities between GALA and other student groups such as Students Against Apartheid and Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

GALA's youth group provides a forum for young people (21 and under) to talk about various issues and problems that affect their lives.

"There are a lot of questions about gay bashing and violence against women. We also discuss coming out to parents and coming out on the job," Kennedy said, adding that despite these serious topics, the youth group is also a way for people to get together and have fun.

Although GALA is respected as a politically active organization, there are people who feel threatened and uncomfortable with the group. "There is a lot of hate and misunderstanding towards our group because of what we represent - sexual diversity. A lot of people are afraid to come here (the GALA office)," Kennedy said. The office has received several harassing phone calls.

One of the main reasons Kennedy wanted to become co-director of GALA was to insure that Gay and Lesbian Pride Week (April 24-30) was a success. Workshops on gay and lesbian relationships, gay and lesbian parenting and safe sex will be presented. A banquet, discussion panels, and a film festival are also planned.

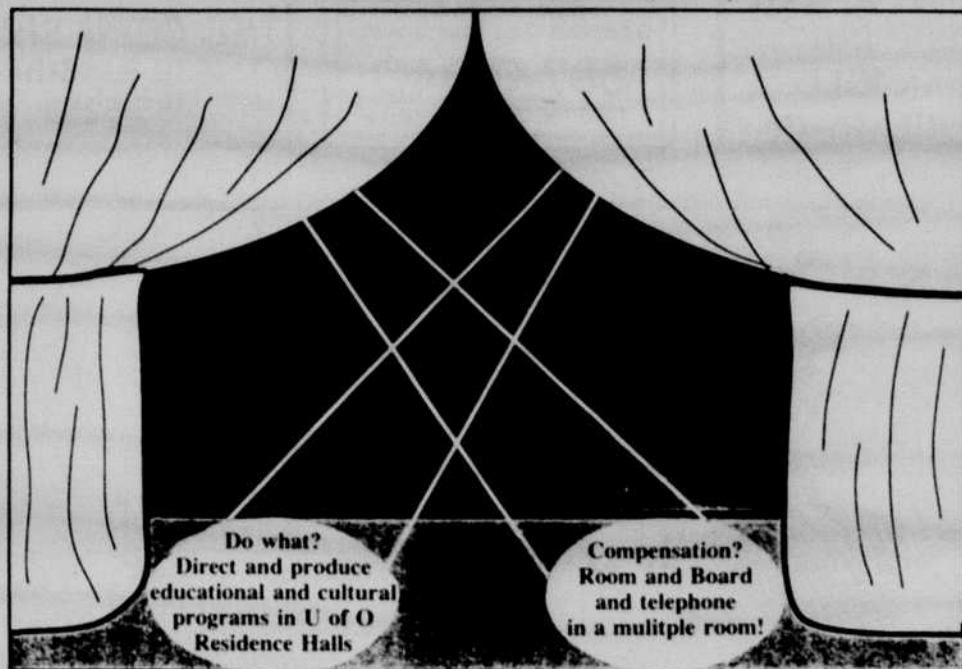
Anyone who wants additional information about GALA is encouraged to call the GALA Helpline at 686-3360 or to stop by the office in EMU Room 319.



Ryan Kennedy

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