

SASP celebrates, supports and unites Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Seniors in Southern Arizona

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### **Thank You Gary!**

Gary LaCroix has been a long-time (10yrs) volunteer with Senior Pride. He has worked hand in hand, (or should I say computer to computer) with Rick Jorgenson our newsletter editor. This July issue is Gary's last "lay-out" of the Senior Forum; he wants more time to paint.

You have been loyal, dedicated, reliable, consistent and an all around generous guy and all of us at SASP appreciate you.

We thank you and wish you the best!

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### **Neighbors Care Alliance**

Bridget Roads of Pima Council on Aging (PCOA) is the Outreach Coordinator for the Neighbors Care Alliance. She spoke at the June Business Meeting. What an incredible resource the Alliance is to older adults and people with disabilities who want to stay independent and safe in their home.

One major reason people need assistance is that they can no longer drive. Neighbors Care Alliance trains and schedules volunteers to provide rides to doctors, dentists, grocery stores, pharmacies, and a variety of destinations. Volunteers also call an elder or person with a disability regularly to visit and check-in. There are neighborhood groups in many areas throughout Tucson.

When Neighbors Care Alliance volunteers are trained they are asked to sign a code of conduct. Included in the code of conduct is this Non-Discrimination Clause: Non Discrimination: to maintain an environment that is free from discrimination or harassment, and to appreciate and embrace the diversity in our group, respecting differences in culture, religion, race, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

If you would like to know more about Neighbors Care Alliance or inquire about a

group volunteering in your neighborhood call Bridget Roads: 520-258-5063.

PCOA is an outstanding organization that provides many services to older adults in our community. For more information about their services call the Help Line: 520-790-7262 or visit their website: [www.pcoa.org](http://www.pcoa.org)

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### **BISBEE PRIDE JUNE 20, 2015**

Lavina Tomer, Theresa Barerras, and Dea Brasgalla tabled an event at the Bisbee Pride Celebration held Saturday, June 20, 2015. We were at Grassy Park on the grounds of the Copper Queen Hotel. We had a lot of folks who showed an interest in the newsletter and other events in the future. At 7:15 p.m. we were in the f#6 position for the Parade. We had 6 bunches of rainbow colored balloons attached to my car as well as our Senior Pride Banner. Lavina and Theresa held a rainbow flag, that Noel deTierra lent us, out the passenger side windows. It was a magical event and minus 450,000 persons reminded me of the energy exhibited at the New York City Pride Parade. We all laughed when someone yelled out, "Go Grandma"!! There were people everywhere and everyone had a camera it seemed and was taking pictures of the paraders. also a gentleman with a remote control was sending a white drone over the parade route..I think he might have been taking pictures. Theresa and Dea left at 8 p.m. for our return to Tucson, and we got back at 10:30 p.m. I was up for 20 hours altogether and was really tired but have recovered. Submitted by Dea Brasgalla, Roving Reporter. Here is a chuckle I want to include: One day I said to Siri, "Siri I'm an 81 year old Lesbian looking for a girlfriend. And she replied, "It's just you and me" How cool is that??

## **Interview** with Shawn Cullen

By way of introduction: Desert Voices is Tucson's gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and allies chorus. We are a non-profit organization; I am dedicated to bringing Arizona beautiful music and to forging a positive and resolute LGBTQ presence in the community. Our unique chorus welcomes all voices to attend our rehearsals and come to our performances, regardless of age, gender, race, creed, sexuality. Our members are diverse in voice and musical performance and the harmony of community to Tucson. Our purpose is to give voice to those whose songs go unheard. Shawn Cullen, Artistic Director of Desert Voices.

**Dea Brasgalla:** Who is Shawn Cullen? Tell me about yourself.

**Shawn Cullen:** I grew up here in Tucson with my parents and two brothers, Neil and Kyle (twins). From an early age I was introduced to the power of music, and fell hard, in love, for what would soon become my passion. I remember singing and dancing to "La Cage Aux Folles" in the living room, always entertaining as best I could! I grew up playing the trumpet and later explored choir classes as well.

After high school I attended the University of Arizona and earned a Bachelor's of Music in Music Education and started teaching in the Tucson Unified Schools as a Director of Instrumental and Vocal music in various schools working with kids K-12. I started singing with Reveille Men's Chorus in 2004, traveling with them as the first gay chorus to perform in Brazil, and was appointed Artistic Director years later in 2009. Also in 2009, I began five years teaching at the University of Arizona as the Director of the UA Pep Band, performing at many community and athletic events here in Tucson and nationally during NCAA Pac 10(12) men's basketball tournaments. I went back to school in 2011 to earn my Masters of Music in Conducting and soon became the Principal Conductor for Arizona Repertory Theater in the School of

Theater, Film and Television with some of my recent favorite conducting credits including "The Full Monty", "Avenue Q" and "Into the Woods".

I was hired by Desert Voices in 2013 for their 25th Anniversary Season and now serve as Artistic Director/Conductor for Desert Voices and Reveille Men's Chorus, both of the GALA (Gay and Lesbian Association) Choruses here in Southern Arizona. Along with working as a mentor teacher and writing curriculum, I am still in the classroom daily working with students K-8 for Tucson Unified Schools. When I am not working in music, I enjoy time with my partner Matthew of almost 5 years, great food and wine, building wonderful friendships, great travel experiences and my two rescue dogs, Cody and Clark.

**DB:** What inspires you? Where does your passion lie?

**SC:** My passion lies in working with both Desert Voices and Reveille Men's Chorus here in Tucson. Both of these organizations bring so much to Southern Arizona not only in unique artistic products, but they create an experience for the performing member incomparable to any other. We provide creative spaces for people to explore their talent and build their skills through a journey that is filled with friendship, laughter, and REALLY hard work. With Reveille's mission statement being "Changing Lives through Music" and Desert Voices' new updated mission of "Fostering Community through Song", it's easy to be inspired.

**DB:** Who are your heroes?

**SC:** My heroes include both my Mother and Father for working so hard to provide my brothers and me with values that have driven us to set goals, be kind, and to appreciate the gifts that are in our lives. My musical heroes have included Leonard Bernstein! Pianist, composer, writer, and such an amazing, inspirational conductor! I would be amiss if I didn't mention both William Finn, writer/composer and Stephen Schwartz, writer/composer, for what they have brought to

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the medium of musical theater in the last few decades. On a day-to-day basis, my heroes are the ones who stand up for who they are in the LBGTQ community and break down the ignorance as they build up the acceptance! These are the people that continue the legacy of all the people who fought for these rights decades ago.

**DB:** If you could wave a magic wand, what would the LGBT community look like in 5 years?

**SC:** Boy would I love a magic wand! If I did have one, and made one giant "swosh", I would see an LBGTQ community embraced, protected, accepted, and equal. Parents would be more accepting of their children struggling with their sexuality or gender identity, schools would be utilizing curriculums to foster open-minded thinking, and our country and countries abroad would recognize the need to treat ALL PEOPLE with respect, dignity and most importantly, equality.

**PS:** Desert Voices will have an open house August 12, 19, and 26, 2015. Anyone who'd like to come and sing with us is welcome to join us at around 6:45 PM at the Metropolitan Community Church, 3269 North Mountain Ave.

## Senior Pride Contact Information

email:

**soazseniorpride@gmail.com**

phone number:

**520-704-5830**

facebook page:

**soazseniorpride**

*please Like US !!*

*Classified Ads* in **Senior Forum**  
15-20 words - \$5. Yard Sales, Events,  
Memorials, Anniversaries, Weddings,  
Houseing, For Sale, Services, etc.

Gary: 520-510-7835 or glart13@aol.com

## Classified Ads

**services** Available for weddings, baptisms, and funerals. Also Past Life Regressions, Contact Rev. Dea Brasgalla Phone: 520-433-2780.

## July Events

### Meander in Tucson Meetup Group

List of events for lesbian women  
<http://www.meetup.com/MeanderinTucson>

### Monday Meditation Group

Every Monday starting in April (except holidays), 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM at the United Fellowship Chapel, 4718 E. Hawthorne St in Tucson.

### Monday Mah Jongg

Every Monday (except holidays), 12:00 noon to 3:00 PM at Himmel Park Public Library branch, 1035 North Treat Ave.

Tuesday, July 14

### Senior Pride Planning Meeting

2 PM at Himmel Park Library  
1035 N. Treat Avenue (off Speedway) ph. 594.5305

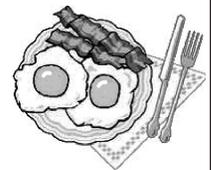
Saturday, July 18

(every 3rd Saturday of the month)

### 40s and Better Breakfast

**Group** A welcoming network of lesbians

Royal Sun Best Western Restaurant SW corner of Speedway and Stone 9:30 - 11:00 AM  
Phone contact: Carol Ehrlich 520.584.0339



Saturday, July 25

### Senior Pride Monthly

### Potluck

(every 4th Saturday of the month)

Cornerstone Fellowship - Fellowship Hall  
2902 North Geronimo (and Laguna.....near First Ave. and Glenn) 12:00 noon - 2:00 PM  
Phone contact: Lee Roden 520.398.6826



Serving the LGBT Community  
**SASP**  
Southern Arizona Senior Pride

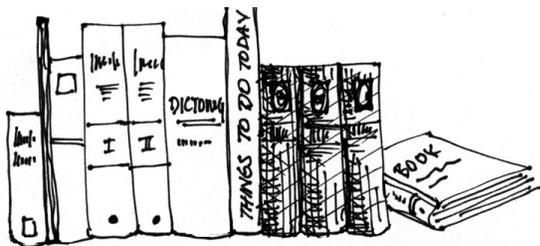
375 S. Euclid Avenue Tucson, AZ 85719

**Save the Date for “Words of Wisdom”**

Southern Arizona Senior Pride is planning a Senior LGBT Poetry Reading for later this year entitled “Words of Wisdom”.. It will be held on October 3, 2015 at 2:00 PM at the University of Arizona Poetry Center, 1508 E. Helen St, the Hillman Odeum.

Anyone interested in reading with us at this event should contact Curt Stubbs by email at [curtstubbs69@yahoo.com](mailto:curtstubbs69@yahoo.com) or by phone at 520.293.8401. Please let your interest be known before August 15, 2015.

More details will be forthcoming as the event draws nearer.



**Book Review**

***A Fighting Chance*** by Elizabeth Warren, 2014, non-fiction, 365 pages

This is the fifth and most personal book that Warren has written. It is a nice blend of autobiographical detail and political activity. It covers her life from the late 1960s to 2013.

Warren’s political career began in 1995, when she became a senior advisor to a federal commission on bankruptcy law. It was here that she gained a powerful ally and friend—Ted Kennedy. He supported Warren until the day he died. In 2012, Warren was elected to fill his senatorial seat.

As a politician, Warren’s goal is to get back the America that created opportunities for

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in Memo Line so we get it.  
Thanks for helping us thrive

anyone to get ahead through hard work—the America where everyone has a fighting chance. She’s anti-big business and was totally opposed to the bailouts of the banks and insurance companies during the recent recession. In her campaign for the Senate, she accepted no money from big business. The people supported her, with 80 percent of their contributions under \$50. She raised \$42 million.

It seems that her whole career has been about empowering the middle class. I begin to wonder if she is a one-trick-pony. Granted, it’s a pretty good trick.

Liking to be fair and balanced, after finishing this book, I searched for an anti-Warren one. There weren’t any. Is she the real deal? Is she really as good as she sounds in her own words? Could she be Clinton’s running mate? Is America ready for an all-women’s ticket?

Submitted by Les Cole

