



**SPC Launches TG Support Group**  
*by LisaJo Neary,*  
*Group Coordinator*

In the Modesto area, transgender people have not had much opportunity to meet with other transgender people for sharing, caring and mutual support.

Until now.

In February, the Stanislaus PRIDE Center began hosting the Stanislaus Transgender Support Group. Meetings are held in Modesto on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. Attended by both male-to-female and female-to-male persons, the group is open to all Transitioning, Transitioned and Gender-Questioning individuals.

Since confidentiality and safety are of utmost importance to us, we do not publicize the meeting location. We provide an accepting, caring, kind and nonjudgmental environment in which all Transgender issues and concerns can be expressed. Although our paths may be similar, we all have different situations and life goals. While we celebrate our commonality, we respect our differences and our right to have them.

If you have never been in a room with a dozen or more Transgender persons, each sharing and caring with each other, you have missed a unique opportunity for growth and fellowship. You don't need to miss it anymore.

We Transgendered have lived lives of quiet isolation. Break free of that isolation and meet with us.

*To learn more, contact the Stanislaus PRIDE Center at (209) 567-3121, [mtf@stanislauspridecenter.com](mailto:mtf@stanislauspridecenter.com), or [fm@stanislauspridecenter.com](mailto:fm@stanislauspridecenter.com).*



**SPC Wins \$5000 Grant for Community Collaboration Program**

In February, the Stanislaus PRIDE Center's Grant Team announced the approval of their first application. The SPC will receive \$5000 from the Community Technology Foundation of California (CTFC) for its Mobile Technology Training for GLBT Leaders.

This one year project aims to integrate technology into current Central Valley GLBT education and advocacy activities. The grant will fund the purchase of two laptops with wireless Internet access. This will be used to show leaders of groups such as PFLAG and EQCA how to connect with other community members in civic engagement. The key is collaboration for social change.

The program will be coordinated by Martina Virrey, who wrote the grant proposal as part of her Strategic Impact Project for the CTFC's ZeroDivide Fellowship.

*To learn more about how you can get involved with the SPC's Mobile Technology Training, contact Martina Virrey at [martina\\_virrey@yahoo.com](mailto:martina_virrey@yahoo.com).*

## What's New with the SPC

Thanks to your support, the Stanislaus PRIDE Center has been able to start several programs since launching last spring. Though we're still working on securing a physical facility—one of our top goals for 2006—we've found there's a lot we can do for the community even before we have a home of our own.

Our most used resource is our online information hub, stanislauspridecenter.com. Traffic to the site has doubled each month, and we now average over 2000 monthly page views. Visitors are coming to rely on features like our calendar, news, and directory of GLBT-friendly businesses, the *SPC Equality Pages*, to stay connected with their community.

We have retooled much of the site to make it more user-friendly. Upgrades will continue through this year.

In February, we started the Stanislaus Transgender Support Group. (See related article.) Nearly a dozen individuals now take part in meetings twice a month. In March, some of the group traveled to a San Francisco

job fair where they learned ways of countering the high unemployment rates faced by transgender people.

More programs are on the way.

In April, the SPC will begin hosting monthly mixers to provide more social networking opportunities for GLBTs of all ages. Friends, families and allies are all welcome. The kickoff event will be held at the Queen Bean on Sunday, April 23, from 3-5 p.m. Future events will be held on the fourth Sunday of each month.

Two more programs are in the works. One is educational outreach for businesses, professionals, organizations, and educators. With this, we aim to help community members understand how all can benefit from understanding GLBTs and creating safer and more tolerant environments. We are also developing a healthcare referrals program, creating a screening process to help us locate providers who are sensitive to GLBT health issues. We hope to make these referrals available online by year end.

*To get involved in making these programs happen, just fill out and send in the coupon on page 7.*

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**SPC Star Volunteer: Patrick Pokorny**  
*by Marilyn Mettler*

The first things you notice about Patrick Pokorny are the twinkle in his eye and his infectious smile. He is full of enthusiasm for everything he does, and what he does so well is help through community service.

His willingness to lend a hand whenever needed makes him the Stanislaus PRIDE Center's first Star Volunteer.

He says the reason he gives so freely of his time is that he was, and still is, the recipient of someone else's volunteerism. Several years ago, Patrick nearly died from a life-threatening illness. He was fortunate to have a case manager with the Stanislaus Community Assistance Project (SCAP) who "inspired him to want to give back."

And give back he has.

Patrick has done a tremendous amount of volunteer work for the SPC during its first year. He has helped with bulk mailings, doing the usual folding, stuffing, and stamping that have been crucial to getting the word out about the SPC. He has also participated in outreach activities, distributing flyers and stickers, and encouraging people to take the SPC's first Survey of Needs.

During the holidays, Patrick helped the organization with fundraising, arranging for volunteers to wrap purchases at the Modesto Barnes & Noble bookstore. Using his great people skills, Patrick led the way in donating hours to wrapping and generating good will and more great buzz about the Center. Thanks to Patrick, the SPC brought in over \$500 from this fundraising activity alone.



Patrick's pet project, however, is "building" library stock for the SPC. "When I go shopping for DVDs, videos, and books, and I find something I already have or think people might be interested in, I buy it for the PRIDE Center and donate it." He has also contributed many items from his personal collection. He says he would love to see others start donating media materials, too.

Thank you, Patrick, for your generosity and putting your time and talents to good work in bringing the PRIDE Center to life!



Next time, Star Volunteers  
**MELICIA AND RANDI COLES,**  
who helped us expand the SPC *Equality Pages!*

*You can be an SPC Star Volunteer, too! Just fill out and send the coupon on page 7.*

 <p><b>GARY WAGNER, MD, MS FAAD</b> Dermatology Dermatologic Surgery Dermatopathology</p> <p><b>Gary Wagner, M.D.</b> Dermatologist</p> <p>1500 McHenry Avenue • Modesto, CA 95350 (209) 571-DERM • FAX: (209) 571-2841</p>	 <p>Rick D. Wetherington</p> <p>4703 Yosemite Blvd. Modesto, CA 95357-0503</p> <p>Ph: 209-521-8655 Fax: 209-521-4583 Email: sabp2000@aol.com</p>
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# The SPC Sustained Giving Circle

The Stanislaus PRIDE Center is grateful for the financial contributions of all those listed below. Thank you for making the SPC's first year possible and a greater success than anticipated. We couldn't have done it without you!

The Stanislaus PRIDE Center is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation.

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*(through October 2005)*

*Includes financial gifts, sponsorships, and in-kind donations*

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\* *Donation allocated to Capital Fund*

**From the SPC Equality Pages : Mutt-Minders**  
by Valerie Broin

For fifteen years, Traci Jennings worked in the high-pressure world of Silicon Valley law firms. Then she left the Silicon for the Central Valley to create a job she truly loves: caring for animals.

Jennings' business, **MUTT-MINDERS**, provides care for critters, "from hamsters to horses," she says. Though most of her work involves dog walking and training, as well as general pet-sitting, she also cares for exotics, such as a 95 year old tortoise named Darwin who loves his veggies.

Clients call her when injury prevents them from walking their dogs, when they're off on vacation, and when kennels (few of which take cats, and often no birds or fish) are not an option. She can provide insulin injections for diabetic dogs, filter care for fish and waste removal, along with whole house and plant care when a client is away on vacation or commuting. She also cares for the pets of elderly nursing home clients who want to stay close to their beloved extended family members.

Mutt-Minders was one of the first businesses to list in the *Equality Pages*, and Jennings is pleased that the Stanislaus PRIDE Center is bringing more visibility to GLBTs in our region. In the early 80s, she herself was a founding member of the Gay and Lesbian Youth Association of Seattle, and also lent a hand to Lambert House, a resource center for gays and lesbians.

Mutt-Minders allows Jennings to continue community work, being available for animal rescue, her other passion. For the past two years she has been a Board Member with California Sharpei Rescue. Her own household includes four rescued dogs, as well as a cat and a one year old interactive albino goldfish. Sometimes, her dog Jesse comes along with her to play and walk with her clients' dogs.

Jennings understands the love that people feel for her pets—and the high level of trust needed for her to do her job. She is fully bonded and insured, and has a business license with the City of Modesto.

Interested parties should contact Jennings for an initial interview at 209-345-5967. And while you and your pets get to know her, she can learn about their favorite toys and scratching spots.

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## Making a Difference: The Central Valley Stonewall Democratic Club

Our region has a new political player: the Central Valley Stonewall Democratic Club (CVSDC).

This local chapter of the national group was formed less than a year ago by David Burr (*pictured*) and his neighbors Susan Eggman (*pictured*) and Renee Hall. It already boasts over 50 members, gay and straight alike. It is the sole Democratic club serving the needs of Valley GLBTs between Sacramento and Fresno.

The CVSDC mission is “to advance equal rights for all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.” Their work includes voter ID and education, and supporting local political candidates with volunteers, endorsements and funding.

Two members of the local chapter are currently running for office: Anne Baird for San Joaquin County Commissioner, District 2, and Eggman for Stockton City Council, District 5. As chapter leaders and invested citizens, Burr (President), Eggman (Vice President) and Hall (Secretary) hope to see even more GLBTs and allies run for office, especially on school boards and city councils.

“From a historical perspective, rights are never given. You have to fight for them,” says Eggman. It may be even more important now for local GLBTs, she adds. “Forces are mobilizing against our core civil rights. But there is power in numbers.”

Numerous candidates have already sought the CVSDC’s endorsement. Burr notes that 3 of the 4

candidates for the 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District have already spoken to the group, and the fourth has been scheduled. “These are mainstream candidates,” says Burr, who also chairs the San Joaquin Democratic Central Committee. “They are recognizing the power of this group.”

Along with expanding their membership and funding for GLBT-friendly Democratic candidates, the CVSDC is working on two big projects. One is working with allied groups on the Defeat Pombo ’06 Campaign, the Tracy Congressman having received “zero” ratings from both Equality California and the Human Rights Campaign. They are also preparing to fight one or more of four anti-domestic partner/marriage propositions that may make the November ballot. Fundraisers and other events are being planned to support these efforts.

At bottom, the group fosters a sense of power. There is much to be gained, says Burr, from simply “being with people of like minds and working for the same cause. . . . [There’s] a feeling that you have a bigger voice.”

“We’re a club of relevance, both locally and nationally,” adds Eggman. “And if we are relevant, then our members are relevant.”

To learn more about the CVSDC, visit their website, [www.cvstonewall.org](http://www.cvstonewall.org). Meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month from 4 to 6 p.m. at Valley Brew in Stockton (157 W. Adams).

Know of a person, group or business who is serving our region’s GLBT community in unique and important ways? Let us know: [newsletter@stanislauspridecenter.com](mailto:newsletter@stanislauspridecenter.com)



## Get involved with the Stanislaus PRIDE Center!

- I would like to volunteer with the SPC.
- Enclosed is my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_. (Please make checks out to SPC.)
- I would like to be listed in the SPC *Equality Pages* of businesses and professionals.
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Please return completed form to: **Stanislaus PRIDE Center, P.O. Box 1850, Modesto, CA 95353**

## Thank You OESCI!

This past December, representatives of the Stanislaus PRIDE Center were pleasantly surprised by a substantial donation from the Owl Empire of Stanislaus County, Inc. (OESCI).

The OESCI is a charitable community service organization and local branch of the International Court System.

During the OESCI's December 2005 Investitures ceremony, Emperor 31 Art announced a gift of \$939 to seed the SPC's Capital Fund. This gift begins paving the way for the establishment of a physical home for the Center.

The SPC will officially launch its first Capital Campaign at a later time.

In the meantime, we thank Emperor Art and Empress Debbie of the 31<sup>st</sup> Imperial Court, Emperor 32 Big Mac Sandy and Regent Empress 32 Jacqueline, and all our friends at the OESCI for their great and continued support of the Stanislaus PRIDE Center.

## The SPC Wish List

As the Stanislaus PRIDE Center enters its second year of operations, we have special need for the items listed below. These are things that will help us continue to grow and sustain the SPC. If you can help make any of these wishes come true, let us know. Just fill out the coupon on page 7 and return it to us.

1. A **BUILDING** to house the Center
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