

The Center Project Update (TCP) - June 2007

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2. Don't be baffled! Here's how you can get *your* tickets for our 2nd Annual TCP Raffle!!
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Monthly Features:

8. Spark Story: Meet Volunteer Hilary Aid!
9. Did you know? Gay & lesbian adoptive & foster parents are a valuable social and financial resource!

Please read more about these activities below and find out how you can get involved! If you are a member our list serve, you can also download board meeting minutes and our approved business plan for review--look for these under the "files" section at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/thecenterproject/files/>.

1. ADP II

Oowhee, Marie, Shake it, shake it for me!...at the **hottest summer dance party in mid-Missouri**...fab video production and dance music, amazing raffle and door prizes...and oh, we've planned a few surprises too...you'll have the time of your life!

WHAT: **2nd Annual Atomic Dance Party: Community Fusion!**

WHEN: Saturday, June 9th, 8:00 -1:00 a.m. (after PrideFest <http://www.midmopride.org/>)

WHERE: The Blue Note, Downtown Columbia (17 N 9th St, Columbia, 65201)

COST: \$5-10 (Sliding Scale)

2. Don't be baffled! Here's how you can get *your* tickets for our 2nd Annual TCP Raffle!!

6 tickets for \$5, or \$1 each (suggested donation).

Get your raffle tickets while they're still available!! Email Debbie at centerproject@hotmail.com

GRAND PRIZE: **Wellness Package**- Personal Trainer, Massage, Acupuncture, Yoga Equipment, & Sparky's Ice Cream!

SECOND PRIZE: **Mini Home Remodel**- Handyerson Services, Interior Design Consultant, Floral Arrangement & more!

THIRD PRIZE: **Rocheport Getaway for 2**- Stay at a B&B, Picnic for 2, & Bike Ride!

FOURTH PRIZE: **iPod Nano & Music Download Gift Card!**

For a complete prize list of each package, please see our website: www.thecenterproject.org

3. We want YOU! To Become a TCP Board Member

We're looking for GLBTQ and ally adults and youth to run for a Board position for the 2007-2008 fiscal year. Elections will take place at our Annual Meeting on **Wednesday, June 27th, 7:00-9:00 p.m.** *People of color, trans and gender non-conforming adults and youth are strongly encouraged to apply.* Please see our website for the "TCP Board Member Position Description" for more information: http://www.thecenterproject.org/bod_position_description.pdf.

Are you interested in being a board member? Or do you know someone who would be a great board member? You can nominate them by emailing us at: centerproject@hotmail.com by

5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 20th. After the nomination is received we will contact the person to discuss the position and confirm their interest.

4. TCP Annual Meeting & Ice Cream Social

Join old and new friends at our 2nd Annual Meeting & Ice Cream Social on **Wednesday, June 27th, 7:00-9:00 p.m.** for *FREE* Sparky's Homemade Ice Cream, door prizes, a slide show of ADP II photos and past TCP events, and more! We will review highlights from the past year, elect our 2007-2008 board and unveil our new fundraising campaign that will help open the center doors in 2008!

5. Inch by Inch...Help Build Our Resource Library!

Calling all bookworms...The Center Project is now gathering donated materials for our resource library. We are requesting donations of social justice and diversity related books, movies, and music, especially those emphasizing LGBTQQAA experiences and issues. We are also looking for an LP record player. Do you have some items to donate? If so, please contact Hilary at:

librarian_tcp@hotmail.com

4. Out and About

Thanks to everyone who came out for our Burly-Q Review fundraiser at the Blue Note on April 25th! Visit TCP at the following upcoming events:

- **PrideFest** (<http://www.midmopride.org/>) Stephens Lake Park on Saturday, June 9.
- **Twilight Festival** (<http://www.discoverthedistrict.com/>) in Downtown Columbia, Thursdays in June. We'll have an informational table on **Cherry Street** (a new location for nonprofits)– June 7, 14, 21 and 28.

5. Join a committee!

TCP committees need YOUR help to accomplish our goals! Committee meeting date & times are posted on our web site calendar at: <http://www.thecenterproject.org>

- **Fundraising – Donors Committee:** This committee is working to develop the donor program for TCP. Some of the activities that will be worked on include performing various forms of donor solicitation, creating media (handouts and web) to educate potential donors, and maintaining the TCP donor database. For information about this committee, email: Carols_tcp@hotmail.com
- **Fundraising – Events Committee:** This committee plans fundraising events for TCP, including: carwashes, dog/cat treat sales, and special events such as the Atomic Dance Party and Raffle. For information about this committee, email: centerproject@hotmail.com **Note: We still need more volunteers for the Atomic Dance Party!**
- **Grants Committee:** This committee researches, writes and submits grants that will support starting costs and fund programs provided by the center. For information about this committee, email: centerproject@hotmail.com
- **Outreach & Education Committee:** This committee educates the general community about TCP and its mission. They organize the TCP informational booth for events like the Twilight Festival, the Jefferson City Multicultural Festival, Earth Day and Pride Festival. Other activities for this committee include participating in the Speakers Bureau, organizing coverage for attendance at community meetings with ally groups, and creating/maintaining the TCP Event Calendar web site. For information about this committee, email: Julie_tcp@hotmail.com

- **Volunteer Coordination Committee:** This committee identifies and coordinates people who want to volunteer for The Center Project, whether it involves staffing a table at an event, doing behind the scenes work such as making dog and cat treats, or volunteering on TCP committees. Activities for this group include recruiting volunteers, tracking volunteer hours, creating volunteer appreciation communications and events, and creating/maintaining a volunteer database. For information about this committee, email: Kim_tcp@hotmail.com

Don't see a committee you want to join, but you KNOW you have ideas and talents to share? No problem! There are tasks that we will need help with that might not be assigned by a specific committee. For instance, we might need help gathering donations for the TCP library that will be housed within the Center. Or, we might need help posting fliers around town for an event, or even folding brochures for our community events in the spring. We have tasks of all kinds waiting for you if you'd like to help!

6. Spark Stories: Meet volunteer Hilary Aid!

In 2006 we began sharing our "spark stories", personal accounts of what inspires board members and volunteers to dedicate their time, money and energies to opening an LGBTQQA community center. In past updates we have highlighted 5 board members and 2 volunteers. This month we're hearing from long-time volunteer & chair of our library committee, Hilary Aid.

Igniting the Flame

My spark story is really a rekindling story. Years ago, I, newly out and looking to find a place in the LGBT community, attended the very first meetings that led to TCP's conception. After struggling to find Columbia's LGBT community and resources, I was thrilled to work toward a community center where information on community groups and LGBT topics will be at our fingertips. I baked cat treats, helped at Twilight Festivals, and religiously attended TCP meetings.

Banking the Flame

Then grad school hit, but the ashes smoldered. I kept on the list serve and watched TCP grow.

The Rekindling the Spark

TCP began talking about gathering library resources, and as a library student, I have happily found ways to combine school projects and my love for TCP. I needed to learn how to catalog books and write library policies, so I cataloged what books TCP had already collected and wrote policies for TCP's future library.

The Flame

Now TCP's library is over 300 items strong, and I've connected with the community much more than I ever initially dreamed possible. People don't just give books to our library; they give significant artifacts representing pivotal moments in their lives. Stories of coming out, living in feminist communes, first loves, and loves lost have all been shared at what I originally assumed would simply be book drop offs. Each response to my book drive ad includes stories of hopes for the center, enthusiasm to help, and wishes that there had been a center when they were younger. I can't wait for us to have a center where these stories can be shared.

My Smoke Signals

If you are behind the TCP cause but find you are too busy to be actively involved right now, stick with the list serve. You never know when you'll see the perfect spot for your little flame to burn. And if you have books, videos, or other LGBT and social justice

materials sitting around that you would like to share with the community, please send them my way before grad school tries to take over again.

7. Did you know?...Gay & lesbian adoptive & foster parents are a valuable social and financial resource!

According to a March 2007 study by Gary J. Gates and M.V. Lee Badgett of the Williams Institute and Kate Chambers and Jennifer Macomber of the Urban Institute,

- More than one in three lesbians has given birth and one in six gay men have fathered or adopted a child.
- More than half of gay men and 41 percent of lesbians want to have a child.
- An estimated two million GLB people are interested in adopting.
- An estimated 65,500 adopted children are living with a lesbian or gay parent.
- Same-sex couples raising adopted children are older, more educated, and have more economic resources than other adoptive parents.
- An estimated 14,100 foster children are living with lesbian or gay parents.
- 114,000 children in the foster care system await adoption.
- Gay and lesbian parents are raising three percent of foster children in the United States; 3% single gay or lesbians and & 1% gay or lesbian couples.
- A national ban on GLB foster care could cost from \$87 to \$130 million and displace 9,000 to 14,000 children.
- Costs of a national ban to individual states could range from \$100,000 to \$27 million.

This report estimates that only 161 adopted children in Missouri (ranked #41) are living with gay and lesbian parents. In comparison, an estimated 16,458 adopted children live with gay or lesbian parents in California (ranked #1) and 7,042 in New York (ranked #2).

Be informed...read more at:

<http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute//publications/FinalAdoptionReport.pdf>

8. Get Involved! There are lots of ways to get involved with TCP...we need and want your help! We need help staffing our booth at 2007 community events, cutting and folding brochures, and making our famous dog & cat treats. Don't worry! This is fun work and someone from the group will help guide you through your first volunteer experience. If you don't want to volunteer publicly we have other jobs that entail online research and writing. Just let us know what your interests are and we'll find the right job for you!

Join us at one of our upcoming meetings...

- **Thursday, May 17th: Board Meeting:** 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church (2615 Shepard Blvd-Just off Old Hwy 63)
- Please visit us regularly at: www.thecenterproject.org to learn more about our progress in establishing a community center and to find a list of upcoming events.
- Keep up-to-date about The Center Project through our discussion list which you can join at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/thecenterproject> . Don't worry, you won't get a lot of random messages, just great info about the progress we're making and notifications of upcoming events.