

It was standing room only at Story Time



June 21, 2023

Peavine Mountain Media

The local GLBT news and information source for northern Nevada and the eastern Sierra

The Rainbow (Umbrella) Brigade, as they called themselves, members of the LGBTQ community and allies, were out in force to shield those attending the local Drag Queen Story (Hour) Time on June 15 and 17 at branches of the Washoe County Library System. Of course there were several protestors and a "proud boy".

"A full house heard beautiful stories of self-acceptance, adventure, unicorns, feelings, and love," Miss Ginger Devine, a local drag entertainer said in a Facebook post. "...while an incredible group of volunteers and library staff created a wonderful space and container for the kids and families to feel loved and supported."

Miss Devine has been reading to library patrons since 2019 when the first local Drag Queen Story Time was held by the local library system in Sparks. This event drew over 800 people to the library meeting room that held 103. A small band of protestors appeared, but were non-confrontational. There was a single member of the Nevada Salt and Light Brigade, who used a loud speaker to voice his opinion and try to incite.

The local event has drawn the ire of conservatives in the Nevada Family Forum, Nevada Patriots, the Chairman of the Washoe County Republican Party (Bruce Parks) and a Schools Board Trustee (Jeff Church). These groups use children to incite hate as a means to garner community support. Their support is coming from the "older" members of the community where hate and intolerance still live. They use the same old tired theme, drag queens are recruiting children. Recruiting to what, other than imagination and entertainment, is a good question.

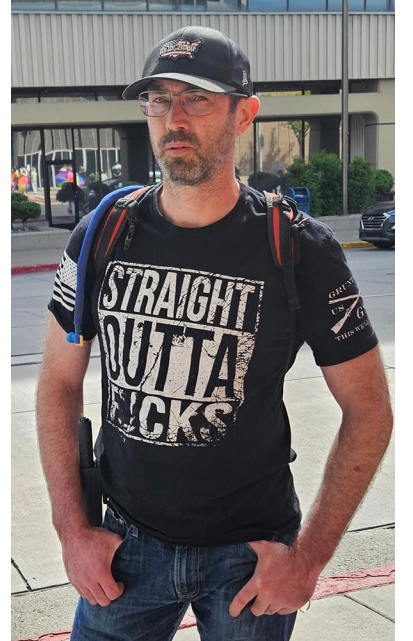
A drag queen is simply an entertainer, nothing more. They are usually flamboyant and over the top in performances. But at story time they simply read to children



Members of the Rainbow (Umbrella) Brigade shield those in line for Story Time from protestors' potential rants and raves



The set for Story Time and reader Miss Ginger Devine



A protestor?

through performance art to spur a child's interest in reading.

In a Facebook posting, Joe Mitchell, Jr. wrote, "... now reno has the trannys on sidewalks telling stories to little kids.... This is definitely not ok..." Mitchell misuses the word "tranny" as a "tranny" is not a drag queen. Tranny is a derogatory term used to insult and refers to a transvestite or transgender persons. A drag queen can be transgender but not usually, drag queens simply entertain.

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Elko Pride sees a crowd to celebrate the rainbow



Elko Pride had a photo area for attendees to get a picture under

"I had so much fun! Being around people who are just like me made me feel such a sense of community," Leah Armstrong said. "... which I feel is very rare for a tiny town like Elko. Thank you guys for arranging and planning everything so that all of us could have a wonderful time!"

This is the response resonating from the more than 150 people who turned out for Elko Pride on Saturday, June 17, held at the Stage Door in the northeastern Nevada town of 20,000. Dawn Viloa has been hosting a similar event the past three years and was joined this year by Dan King, who recently moved from Texas to Elko.



Elko Pride's fund raiser handmade swag t-shirts patrons got to tie-dye

King told therenogaypage, "We plan on doing this event annually and expanding it each year. We also do bi-monthly community potlucks at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, a local accepting and affirming church. Pastor Julie Vice helps us out with those and we do other assorted activism based events. Like for Trans Day of Visibility on

March 31, we were outside of the Elko County Courthouse with signs and such."

Elko Pride is working on becoming a 501(c)3 organization and has been raising funding to do so. The organization is planning to do more activities after the outpouring of support at this year's event.

While small in comparison to Northern Nevada Pride or Sassa-bration, it is a place for rural Nevadans to be who they are and as-

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The across the street protestors who protested against reading to children

Chelsea Towers-Jar

SDC crowns XLVIII Empress



Chelsea Towers-Jar takes the oath of office as the newly elected Empress

The Silver Dollar Court elected its XLVIII Empress at its annual Coronation celebration at the Virginia Street Brewhouse on June 10. Chelsea Towers-Jar was publicly elected and crowned to lead the organization through its next year.

Investitures have been set for the Butterfly Court of Fun, Fund-raising and Community for July 8 6 pm at Carls-The Saloon.

Coronation is a celebration of the previous year culminating the elevation or crowning of the new reign. This year there was no aspirant for Emperor.

The elected Empress will represent the organization at out of town events as well as spearhead fund raising efforts during the next year, in her realm of Nevada (except Clark, Lincoln and Nye counties) and the Lake Tahoe Basin and eastern Sierra territories.

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Standing room only

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Jeff Scott, the director of the Washoe County Library System was even attacked at a County Commission meeting, some calling for him to be removed. The Washoe County Library is a separate entity of the county that Commissioners do not control. Those so vehemently opposed to drag queen story time claim that tax payer dollars (public funds) being used to pay for this event. The event is funded through the Friends of Washoe County Libraries.

This year library and volunteer staff took a class in defusing a situation if it got out of hand taught by Black Rock Rangers.

"Volunteers won't be engaging with any protestors," Jon Lawhead and Danielle Gann-Lind, of the Rangers group, explained when asked about their plan of action. "Instead, they are going to spread positivity at the event."

At the Sparks event last year, several "Proud Boys" showed up carrying guns to intimidate those attending the event. This year, OUR Center reached out to the library to assist in making the event, fun, educational and teaching children about the importance of reading.

Many times the "modern day" LGBTQ community forgets the best defense against the hate is to be non confrontational. Not react to the yelling and screaming and hateful things being



The pop-up outdoor Story Time in front of the main library

said. There was nothing but positivity at the two recent Story Time events, with one to still be held July 15 at the Sparks Library branch, 10 am to 2 pm.

At the downtown branch on June 15, the room quickly filled to its capacity of 75 with many more waiting to attend. That didn't stop the festivities as a volunteer from OUR Center, the local LGBTQ Community Center, set up a pop up story time area in the waiting line and read to children.

"Drag Queen Story Time is all about getting children interested in reading," Miss Ginger Devine said. "This is an entertaining way, through theater to present the joy of reading."

With modern day technology everybody has video

or a camera and there was lots of that being taken. In the middle of the mix was the chairman of the Washoe County Republicans taking video of everything going on.

No issues were reported and there were no attempts at intimidation. Most of the very small group of protestors remained across the street. The entire event was a sea of rainbows in front of the library branches.

"OUR Center reached out last year for support to see if they needed anything and we had a conversation with some of the staff at Our Center about partnerships for this," said Jeff Scott, director of the Washoe County Library System. "That's a natural alliance for us. We're working on our diversity, equity, inclusion, programming,



The crowd in front of the downtown library demonstrates the popularity of the Washoe County Libraries Drag Queen Story (Hour) Time.

strategic planning, that was a big thing that came out of it and so we're looking to strengthen those partnerships."

"This kind of event is a great thing to get children involved in books and reading," Melissa, who did not wish to give her last name, told therenogaypage. "My kids are seven, five and four and they had such a great time." The sentiment seemed to be echoed by most attendees at the two story times.

At story time, the library's policy is that there are no unaccompanied adults and no children without an adult.

"One, children's literacy is important, and it's important in Nevada first and foremost. This is an opportunity that folks have to inspire children to read, to have children captivated by stories and stir their imaginations and instill within them a want to get their library card and to check out books for summer reading," Miss Devine said.

On Saturday, June 17, the RainbowFest event at

the North Valley's Library, Ginger Devine was joined by Dino Valentino to read to children. Bruka Theatre was on hand with members of their cast of *Kinky Boots* as well as the Rainbow (Umbrella) Brigade. During the event the North Valley Branch of the library was closed to host the special event.

Nevada has some of the strongest protections for the LGBTQ community, including guaranteeing marriage equality in the state constitution. Yet the community remains under attack, mainly because people are uneducated about the community. They have long been traditionally exposed to the off beat fringes of the community that are outlandish. Maybe the "straight" community needs to be portrayed the same way.

Washoe County will conclude its drag Queen Story time in July, as locally that is when Pride is celebrated as part of Artown. The event should again be as popular as the first two.

The rural rainbow shines

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sociate with like minded people.

"It was really great for my queer kid to get to see other people being their true selves," a mother with her daughter at the event who wished not to be identified, said. "And her shirt is in the wash. It turned out pretty great!"

At the Family friendly event held from 11 am to 7 pm at the Stage Door, participants in Pride could socialize check out the several vendors and even help out Elko Pride by purchasing a t-shirt and tie-dyeing it.

"We bought white t-shirts at the local thrift store to create our hand made merchandise," King said. "We silk screened the Elko Pride logo on them and let people tie-dye them. We asked for a donation to support our cause. No one was turned away from a t-shirt if they couldn't afford it."

Participating at Elko Pride this year were: the InterTribal Council of Nevada Family Violence Prevention Program; Immunize Nevada; Marvelous Beads, a local native American bead jewelry company; Endless Pawsibilities, a local animal rescue; and Street Tarian, a local food truck.

Following the family friendly day, Stage Door turned into a 21+ venue for the night where celebrants danced the night away it was reported.

In 2015 and 2016 Elko held two pride events with a parade and small festival, but the person behind the event left the area. Elko now has a Pride groups that ha hosted three small Pride events and is planning more and to expand in the future. Elko Pride runs a Facebook page: Elko Pride and also an Instagram page. Information and activities can be found on these pages about Elko Pride.



A creative fund raiser by the Elko Pride group to raise funds to help them become a 501(c)3

Tahoe Pride events celebrate rainbow



Lake Tahoe Pride, the more than a decade old LGBTQ group at the southshore of Lake Tahoe, celebrates its pride in various ways throughout the month of June. They have no festival.

Upcoming on June 22 at 5:30 is the group's Pride Mixer at Sidellis Brewery, 3350 Sandy Wy. So. Lake Tahoe. On Saturday, June 24 is Trail Pride Day at Castle Rock, co-hosted by the Tahoe Rim Trail

Association and Queercrush Tahoe. The day starts at 9 am with volunteer trail work on the Rim trail. At 11 am Educational guided tours will begin.

June 28 is the final Pride month event when the group raises funds for its Pride Scholarship at Lake Tahoe Community College. Sidellis Brewery, is the host site and will be contributing 50% for their proceeds to the scholarship fund from 5 pm until closing. The first three hours will be family friendly activities. At 8 pm its adults only (21+) until closing.

Lake Tahoe Pride partnered with the following groups to celebrate its Pride this month: Keep Tahoe Blue, City of South Lake Tahoe, Flat Stick Pub, Live Violence Free, The Idle House, Queercrush Tahoe, The Tahoe Rim Trail Association, Sidellis Brewery and the Turn Bar.

Information can be found on the groups Facebook page: Tahoe Pride.

Reno readies to celebrate Pride in July

June is recognized as Pride month simply because it is when members of the gay and lesbian community in 1969 said enough is enough and rioted at the Stonewall Inn in New York City. It wasn't the first uprising there had been one in San

Francisco two years earlier at the Compton Cafeteria. Reno celebrates its Pride with Northern Nevada Pride in July as part of Artown .Pride. celebrations are held at various times throughout

the year.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, July 22, as the rainbow will line Virginia Street for the annual Community Pride Parade starting at 10 am at Fourth and Virginia.

Activities move to Wingfield Park in the middle of the Truckee River for the annual Festival from 11 am to 6 pm.

The festival features a wide variety of vendors, food trucks and entertainment on the Amphitheater stage. A dance tent is also set up on

the westside of the park.

This year's featured entertainers are Jody and Mo Heart.

Hosting the Main Stage entertainment again this year is the incredible Stephanie Nicole LaDream. She has been handling the MC duties since Northern Nevada Pride started in 2014. Entertainment on the main stage starts at noon.

A special \$10 fast pass will be available online in advance. Gate entry is \$5 day of Pride.

Jeromy Manke, chairman of Northern Nevada Pride told therenogaypage, a request for hardship is also available for those in need.

Northern Nevada Pride is

always looking for volunteers to help operate the huge event which in 2022 drew 20,000 people to Wingfield Park. Those interested in volunteering, having a vendor booth, if not sold out or participating in the parade can get information by visiting NorthernNevadaPride.org or following it on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

All proceeds from Northern Nevada Pride Festival and Community Pride parade benefit the local LGBTQ Community Center, OUR Center. This is the biggest fund raiser of the year from the organization. The Center offers the LGBTQ commu-



The Northern Nevada Pride 2023 t-shirt

nity a safe place to gather, socialize, recreate and find educational programming for the LGBTQ community.

This year, a special designed t-shirt will be on sale at various events OUR Center is at as well as the festival. Proceeds from the shirt benefit the Center.

