

# A VISUAL JOURNEY: FROM AIDS TO MARRIAGE EQUALITY

MARK A. LEE  
PHOTOGRAPHER

Photographer Mark A. Lee rode his bicycle from Los Angeles to New York between June 16 and August 11, 1986. During that time, he was known for photographing "Cows Across America."



Mark A. Lee has been an Indianapolis photographer for thirty years. His work has appeared in a number of area newspapers and magazines, including the Indianapolis Star, NUVO, Unite Indy, and Hamilton Business Magazine, and nationally, in Frontiers Magazine and the Advocate. A recipient of CICOA's Caregiver of the Year Award in 2014, Lee is currently working on a book based on his experience caring for his father, who had Alzheimer's and emphysema. As of June 2016, Mark is now the managing editor for Unite Indy.

*"This exhibit is dedicated to the man who made me into the person I am today: my father, James B. Lee."*

- MARK A. LEE

Indiana LGBT Collecting Initiative supported by the Efroymson Family Fund and a grant from The Indianapolis Foundation, a CICF affiliate

Presented by:





# IN MEMORIUM

## REVEREND HOWARD WARREN

Reverend Howard Warren was the associate pastor at Orchard Park Presbyterian Church before being outed as HIV positive and gay in December 1988. He then went on to work as the director of pastoral care at the Damien Center. Howard *flourished* in his new position for the next ten years and quickly became known throughout the community as **God's Glorious Gadfly!** I cannot help but think it is because of Howard, and the person he was allowed to become that we now have marriage equality in the Presbyterian Church.

He could often be seen wearing purple-sequined hats and multicolored garments, always with a smile on his face! Even in the face of anger and hostility toward him, he never lost his love for people, and he never really gave up on the idea that *"Somewhere there's a place for us..."* In the words of Reverend Jane Spahr, Howard was a man who *"exploded out of the closet!"* This particular photo was taken two years before Howard died. The sad and distant look in his eyes shows the devastating effects Alzheimer's had on him.



*"Our job as God's More Light people is to bring everyone alive, set them free to live and love, here and now and forever."*

Reverend Howard Warren,  
McKinley Presbyterian Church  
in Champaign, IL, 1998.



***"As a gay man in my fifties, it can be argued men of my generation have lived our lives backwards: we dealt with death and dying in our twenties, began adopting kids and raising families in our thirties and forties, and marrying in our fifties and sixties."***

Mark A. Lee, *Traces of Indiana and  
Midwestern History*, Summer 2015



# AIDS

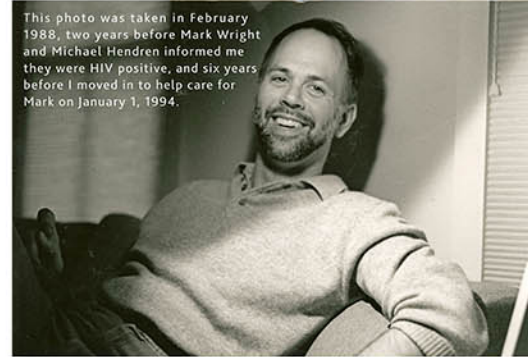
Mark Wright and Michael Hendren in the basement of their home in February 1988. At the time, they said it was because they were old, and wanted photos taken while they "still looked good." They were twenty years older than me, so I believed them.



Michael Hendren loved to cook! For the last seven years of his life, I would take him to the grocery store on a Wednesday, and he would cook an elaborate meal for me and four or five of his friends on a Sunday.



This photo was taken in February 1988, two years before Mark Wright and Michael Hendren informed me they were HIV positive, and six years before I moved in to help care for Mark on January 1, 1994.



Mark Wright about a week before he passed away, January 1994.

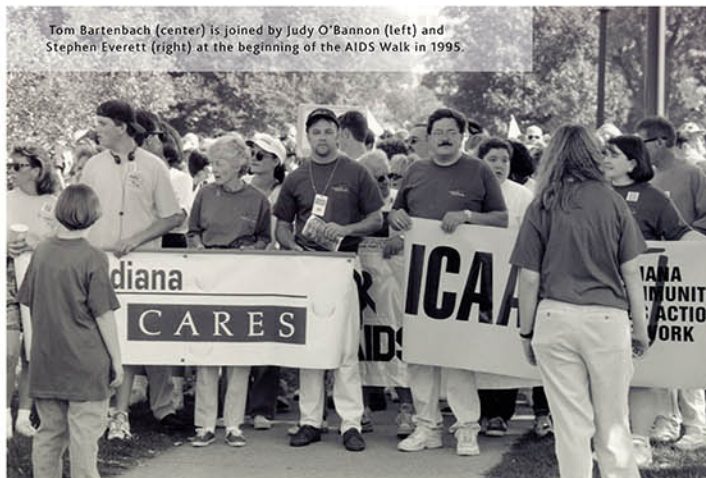


Mark Wright first spoke at Orchard Park Presbyterian Church on "AIDS and the Caring Church" at the insistence of Reverend Howard Warren in the summer of 1987. I became a volunteer buddy at the Damien Center shortly after listening to him speak. Seven years later, I moved in with Mark to help care for him during the last thirteen days of his life.

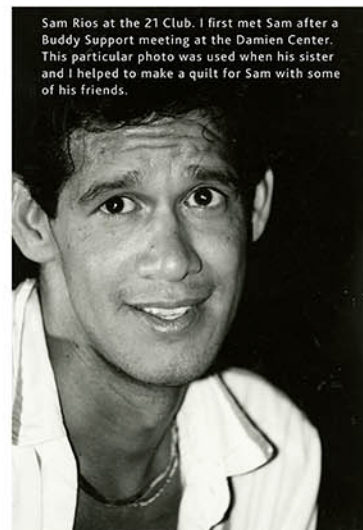
Michael Hendren and Sam Rios (center, behind the couch) were members of the Person with AIDS (PWA) Support Group at the Damien Center. There were a few other members as well who did not care to be photographed and left the room when I asked permission to take a group photo.



Tom Bartenbach (center) is joined by Judy O'Bannon (left) and Stephen Everett (right) at the beginning of the AIDS Walk in 1995.



Sam Rios at the 21 Club. I first met Sam after a Buddy Support meeting at the Damien Center. This particular photo was used when his sister and I helped to make a quilt for Sam with some of his friends.





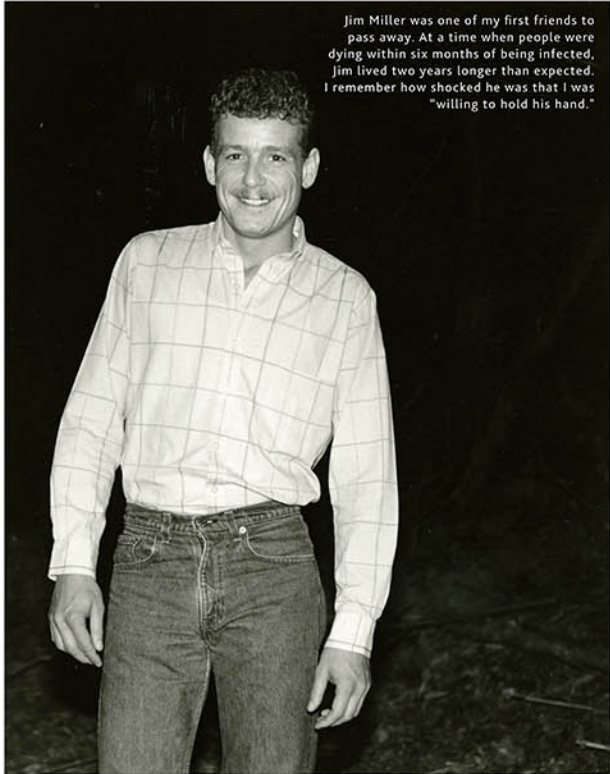
# AIDS



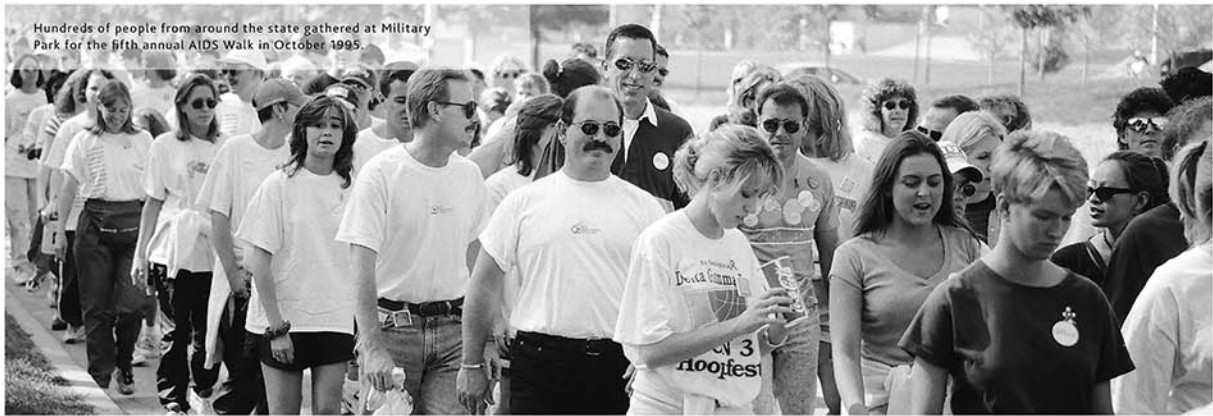
Pamm Phares (kneeling) and I went to grade school thru high school together. We reconnected when I began working for Indiana Community AIDS Action Network (ICAAAN), and she was a care coordinator at the Damien Center. This photo was taken with one of her clients, Doug VanDeGrift, at the AIDS Walk 1995.



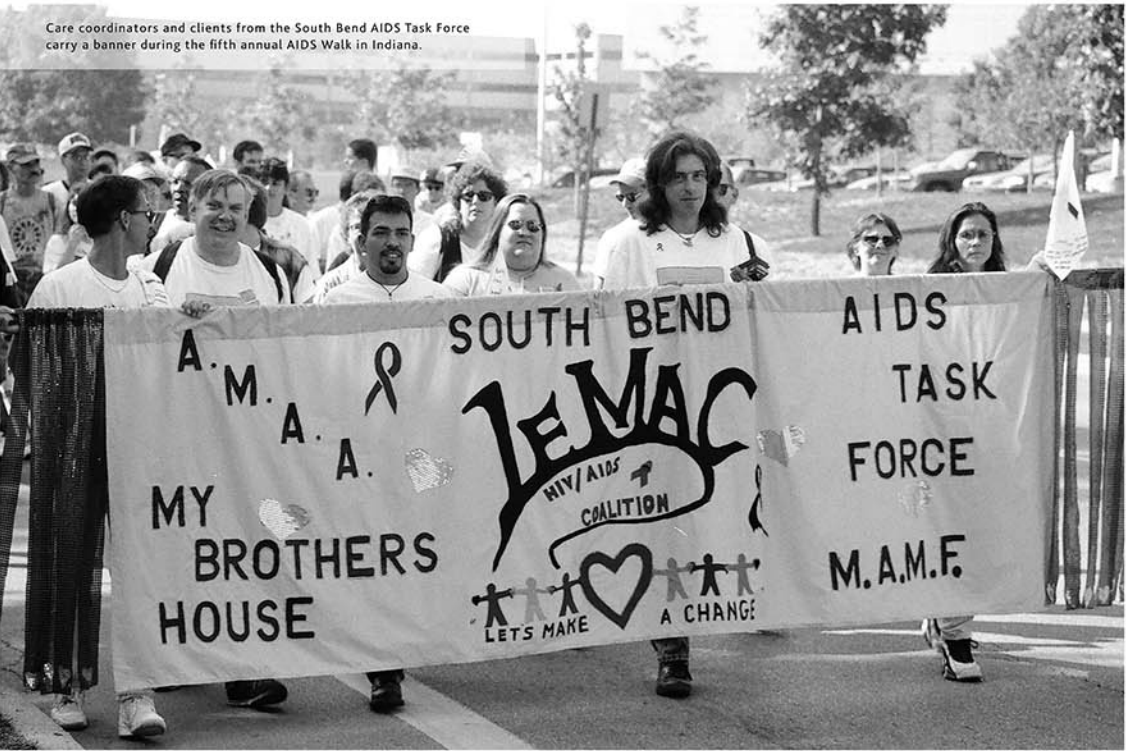
The Damien Center staff in 1991. Standing (l to r) Sister Marilyn, Bobbi Griffin, Gerry Breedlow, Griffith, and Rob Bullock. Seated (l to r): Gordon Chastain, and Reverend Howard Warren.



Jim Miller was one of my first friends to pass away. At a time when people were dying within six months of being infected, Jim lived two years longer than expected. I remember how shocked he was that I was "willing to hold his hand."



Hundreds of people from around the state gathered at Military Park for the fifth annual AIDS Walk in October 1995.



Care coordinators and clients from the South Bend AIDS Task Force carry a banner during the fifth annual AIDS Walk in Indiana.



Steve Johnson (far right) is joined by his mother Carol (far left) and a couple of others as about fifty people took a bus from Indianapolis to Washington, DC, to lobby congress for AIDS Watch '96.



# BAG LADIES



James Quick (Ladonna Williams) checks in for the evening at Greg's Place prior to heading for the bus.



Adam Freeman (Summer Clearance) holds court at the Blu Martini during the Bag Lady Bus Tour, 2006.

In October 1981 a group of men, many of whom still had full beards and mustaches, dressed in drag and called themselves the Bag Ladies. Since then, it's been high camp with a purpose, as they pride themselves on putting the FUN back in fundraising! As silly as the evening may sound to an outsider, they have raised between one and two million dollars over the last thirty-five years for the HIV-positive community and LGBT youth.



One of the Bag Lady founders, Coby Palmer (Blossom), ducks down at English Ivy's to keep his hat from hitting a chandelier during the Bag Lady Bus tour, 2006.



Jeremy York (Sequoia Q. Pentecost, Bag Lady Queen 2006) gets her groove on at the Blu Martini during the Bag Lady Bus Tour, 2006.



# BAG LADIES



Vicci Lane introduces the Bag Ladies when they first enter the Ten.



Greg Chenault (Alana Steele) applies makeup to Tracy DeRamcy (Dixieland Redwater) in the home of Greg Fisher (Chasity Boner), prior to the Bag Lady Bus Tour, 2009.



Anthony Scott Perkins checks out his look at the Works, as they stop in to raise some funds during the Bag Lady Bus Tour, 2006.



After squeezing into their dresses and donning their wigs, Matthew Gordon and Doug Shoemaker are ready for their first Bag Lady Bus Tour, 2009.



Rob Hoaglin is all smiles as everyone loads back onto the bus.



Andy Gilliland applies wax over his eyebrows before applying his makeup for the evening. Bag Ladies meet at each other's homes and begin getting ready for the bus tour as early as 10:00 a.m.



# BAG LADIES



Mel Brandenburg (Liza Nellie, Bag Lady Queen 1986) and Ed Talucci (La Trina D'or, who did not become a Bag Lady Queen until 2005). Talucci is one of the original Bag Ladies.



John Nichols (Nora Castleton, Bag Lady Queen 1985) is among the original Bag Ladies who continues to return for the Bag Lady Bus Tours.



Bag Lady Queens past and present join Queen Mother Blossom (Coby Palmer) on stage at Talbott for a group photo on the eve of her seventieth birthday party in 2014.



Longtime supporter of the Bag Ladies, Dannon Crews, welcomes the Bag Ladies to Olly's in 2010.



Ken Cox and Gary Brackett (Cadillac Barbie, Bag Lady Queen 2002) strike a pose during the Bag Lady Bus Tour, 2010.



After originating the Bag Ladies, and riding the bus for thirty-four years, Coby Palmer (Blossom) was never crowned Bag Lady Queen. But they made it up to him, by crowning her Queen Mother Blossom on the eve of her seventieth birthday celebration at Talbott.



# IN MEMORIUM

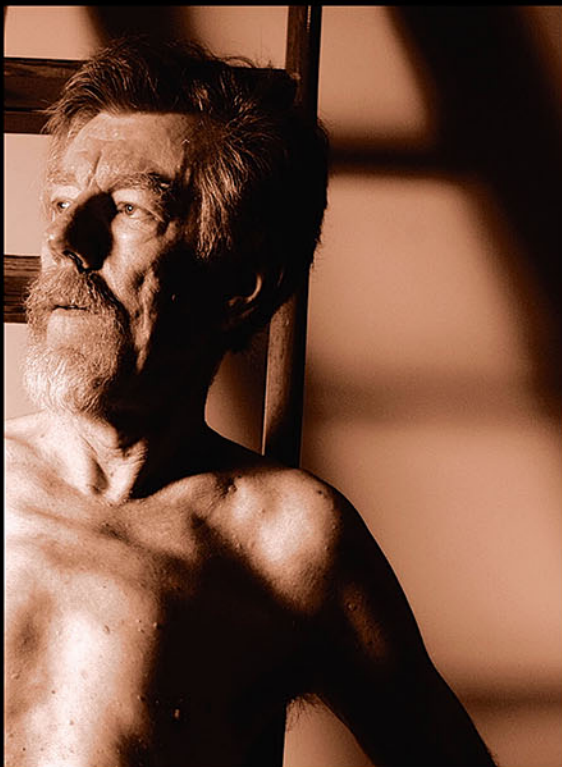
## CAROL TREXLER

A trailblazing social activist, **Carol Trexler** was a passionate, loving woman, who cared about breaking the cycle of poverty and about equality for all. Within the LGBT community, she is perhaps best known for leaving directly from one of her last treatments of chemo therapy to testify against HJR-3. On January 22, 2014, the packed room listened closely as she testified how her wife, Donna, was denied access to medical records from the hospitals. Her voice was hoarse from the chemo, but her convictions were strong.

*"Despite all of our legal documents, the doctors didn't look at Donna as my wife when I was in the hospital with cancer," she said. "Every form I filled out was another reminder that we were treated differently . . . I want to be sure that Donna will be with me at the end, and that she will have the same rights of a surviving spouse."* Representative Brian Bosma and the Elections Committee voted to pass HJR-3 on to the rest of the House, but it was too late. A fire had been lit in the rest of us as we listened to Carol's words. Carol lived the rest of her life the same way she had always lived, *"Carpe Diem!,"* by seizing the day, and making the most of it!

*"I was a hospice chaplain, so the act of dying is not ugly. It's a beautiful moment,"*

- Carol Trexler



## MILTON LINDREN JR

I first met **Milton Lindren Jr.** when he was doing some accounting for New Hope Presbyterian Church in Fishers, Indiana. He was recently divorced (after his wife found out he was gay), and starting his life over. Upon learning I am also gay, he approached me about taking some photos of him in his birthday suit, to help commemorate his sixty-fifth birthday.

Five years later, I was shocked to learn both he and his partner, who was also in his seventies and confined to a wheelchair, had been brutally murdered in their home. At the time of his funeral, there were rumors that it was a hate crime, and some neighborhood boys had left a note on their front door a few weeks before with the word *"Fag"* written across it. It turns out these rumors were started by **Michael Brown**, who has since been convicted of killing both men with a hammer and an aluminum baseball bat he stole from his girlfriend's home.

Brown was a con artist, pretending to be a doctor who was down on his luck, who Lindren allowed to live in his home for six months prior to the murders. Brown later confessed he had killed the men because "they had found out that he'd been stealing from them." Brown is currently serving two consecutive sixty-year sentences (one for each man). He tried to appeal in 2010, and his appeal was denied.



# IN MEMORIUM

## PAUL CHASE

A kind, gentle, highly intelligent, funny, and humble man, **Paul Chase** left his father's law firm to advocate for the rights of those who were HIV positive in the late 1980s and early 1990s, pro bono. He and his partner, Terry Briner, were together for forty years before Paul was killed in a car accident on June 25, 2014, the same day same-sex marriage was legalized in Indiana. Terry has since joined with Paul's mother Lorraine to help create the **Paul M. Chase Memorial Prize** for high school students in Paul's honor.

*"There was no hate in Paul, no evident resentment of the people who would deny him a place at the civic table, no vitriol for the vitriolic. Just an abundant kindness, an inner serenity and a killer sense of humor."*

- Shelia Kennedy



## STEVE JOHNSON

Often referred to as the *"right hand man"* of Paul Chase and the heart and soul of the Indiana Community AIDS Action Network (ICAAN), **Steve Johnson** was known for his infectious laughter and incredible bear hugs. Steve worked tirelessly with Paul's other assistant, Amy Hendren, to help organize AIDS Watch '96, lobbying congress in Washington, DC, for more funds for people with HIV. Steve loved pushing boundaries and getting people to step outside of their comfort zones.

*"Outside is where all of the really good stuff happens."*

- Steve Johnson





# PRIDE



Sometimes a simple t-shirt can say a thousand words . . .

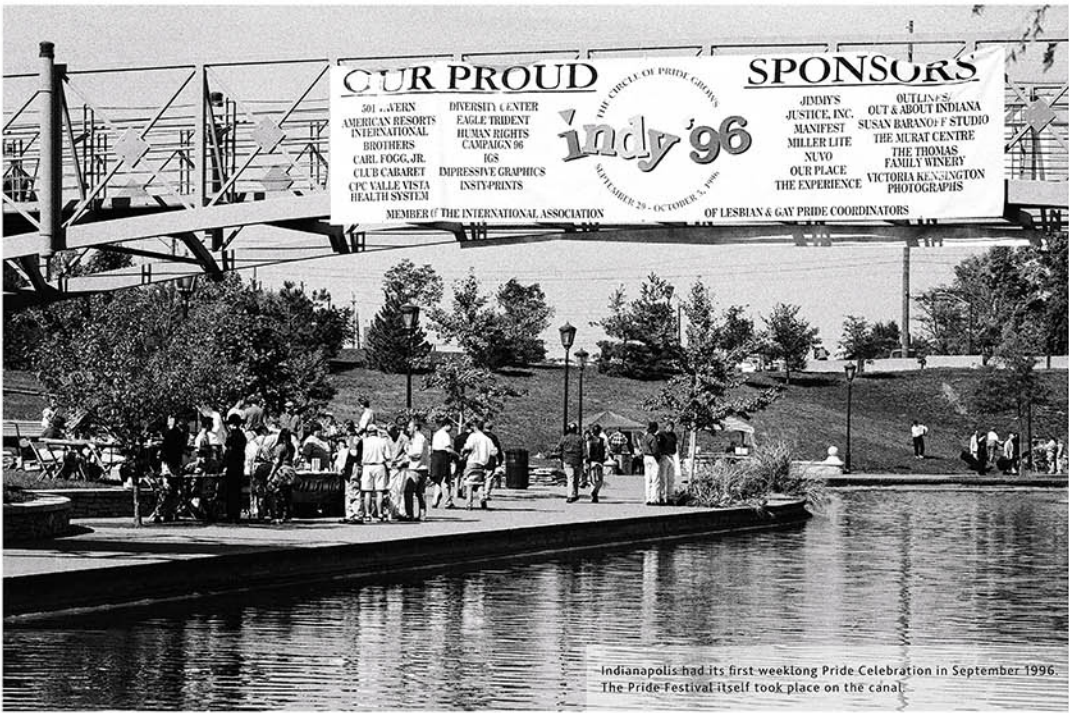


Terence Smith ran for President of the United States as his drag persona, Joan Jett Blakk, in 1992. She is seen here campaigning during Indy Pride.

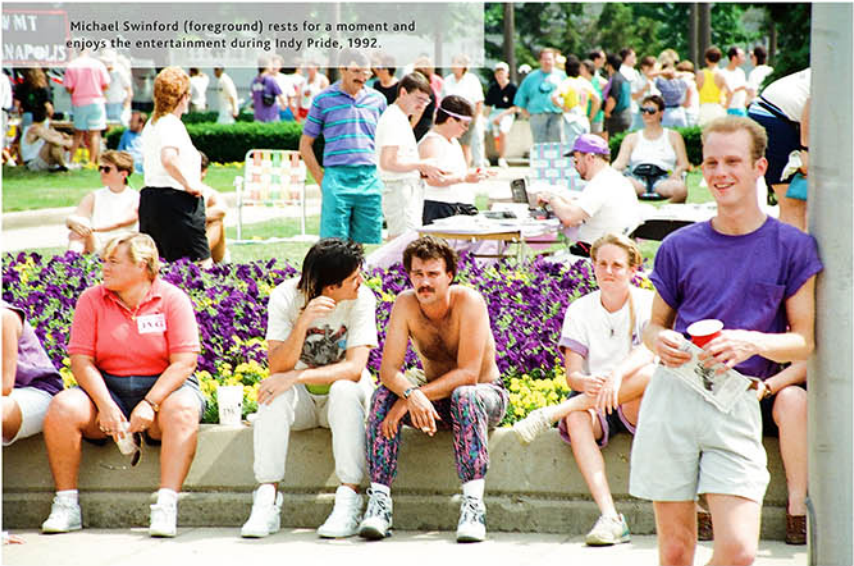
The first public Pride event was held on the Circle in 1990. Gay men were still being arrested at the time for "cruising" the Circle, so it was important for us to take a stand.

*"I knew we made it as a gay community three years ago when they closed down part of Meridian Street for the Pride Parade. That's when I knew we had arrived!"*  
NUVO 2015.

Michael Bohr,  
Founder of the Chris Gonzalez  
Gay and Lesbian Archives  
NUVO 2015.



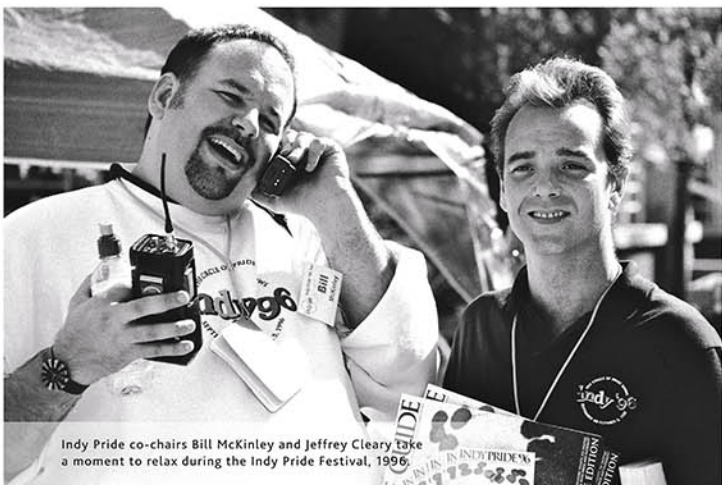
Indianapolis had its first weeklong Pride Celebration in September 1996. The Pride Festival itself took place on the canal.



Michael Swinford (foreground) rests for a moment and enjoys the entertainment during Indy Pride, 1992.



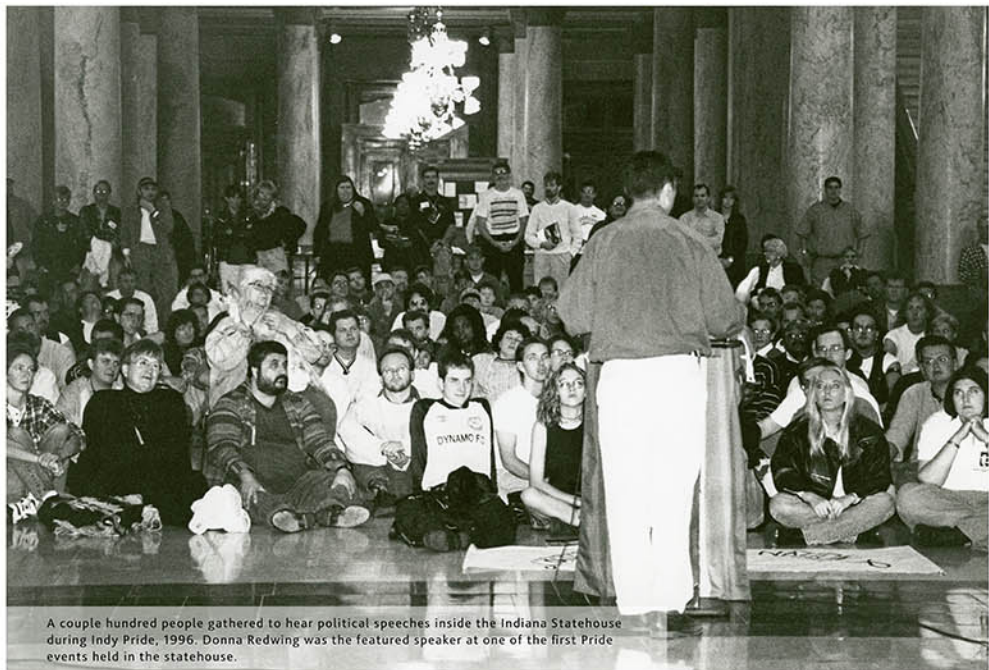
# PRIDE



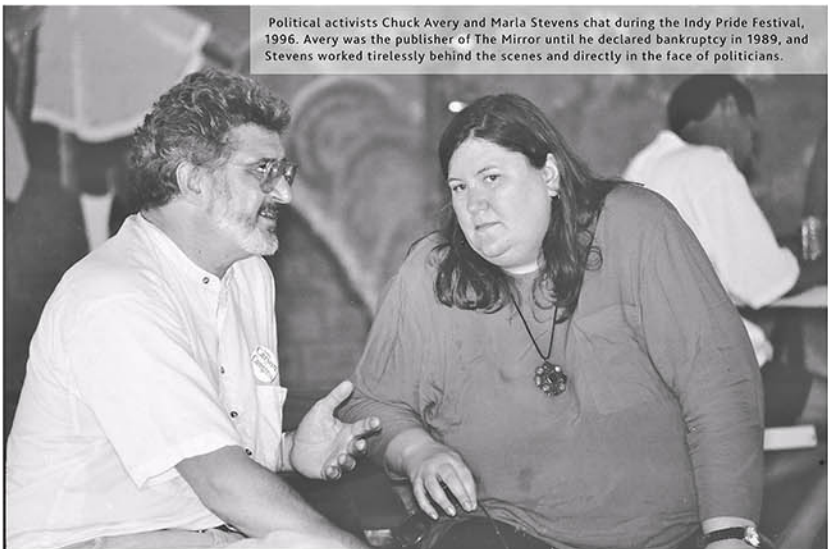
Indy Pride co-chairs Bill McKinley and Jeffrey Cleary take a moment to relax during the Indy Pride Festival, 1996.



Kids from Indiana Youth Group (IYG) high five members of the crowd during the Cadillac Barbie Pride Parade, 2014.



A couple hundred people gathered to hear political speeches inside the Indiana Statehouse during Indy Pride, 1996. Donna Redwing was the featured speaker at one of the first Pride events held in the statehouse.



Political activists Chuck Avery and Marla Stevens chat during the Indy Pride Festival, 1996. Avery was the publisher of The Mirror until he declared bankruptcy in 1989, and Stevens worked tirelessly behind the scenes and directly in the face of politicians.



# PRIDE



Members of the Circle City Pentecostals set up a booth and speak with passersby during Circle Center Pride, 2009.



A straight ally shows support for her gay friends during Circle City Pride, 2009.



City Council Member Zach Adamson with his husband, Christian Mossburg, during the Cadillac Barbie Pride Parade, 2014. Adamson was the first openly gay candidate elected in Indiana.



Dogs and their owners gather for the talent portion of Pet Pride, 2014.



Lori Morris and Chris Paulsen have lots to celebrate at the Indiana Equality Action booth during Indy Pride, 2014.

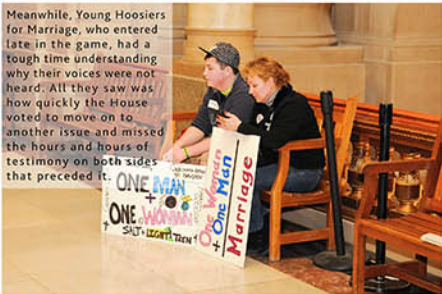
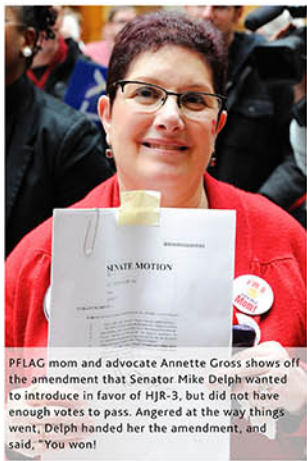


# MARRIAGE EQUALITY



For two and a half days, between June 25 and June 27, 2014, same-sex couples who had been together for anywhere from a few months to several decades, were able to legally wed in Indiana. The pure joy and abundant love that filled the room as each couple tied the knot was unforgettable. It would be several months before same-sex marriages were legal yet again in Indiana, and almost a year to the day when it became legal in the entire country on June 26, 2015.

"No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice and family," Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote. "In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than they once were."





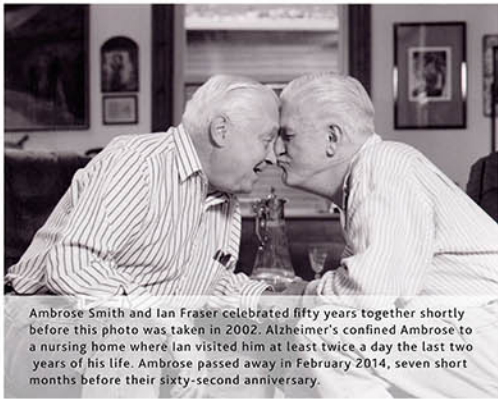
# MARRIAGE EQUALITY



Freedom Indiana volunteer Justin Lewandowski hugs his friend Cameron Cooper after the surprising vote.



Several hundred members of Freedom Indiana gathered for the second reading of HJR-3 at 1:30 p.m., and remained until the amendment was voted on around 7:00 p.m. Charlotte Egler (center) mugs for the camera in the middle of the hearings. Charlotte was a plaintiff in the first marriage equality case in Indiana, Morrison v Sadler in 2005.



Ambrose Smith and Ian Fraser celebrated fifty years together shortly before this photo was taken in 2002. Alzheimer's confined Ambrose to a nursing home where Ian visited him at least twice a day the last two years of his life. Ambrose passed away in February 2014, seven short months before their sixty-second anniversary.



Kelly Dickens and Rustyna Hodo tied the knot in 2007. They were the first same-sex couple to get married in the Conrad Hotel.



Friends and family gathered together to help celebrate the marriage of Kassie George and Joni Warner (seated). Kassie and Joni's ceremony was officiated by Virgene Cline (center), who stepped in to help officiate several weddings before the day was done.



Kimberlee Schaler and Kristy Schaler bow their heads in prayer as Beth White blesses their wedding rings on June 25, 2014. Unsure of how long it would be before the Solicitor General's file for an appeal would be granted, the City County Building stayed open past 10 p.m. to perform ceremonies.



Anthony Kariotis makes sure all of his paper work is in order, as his friend Brad Tracy and soon-to-be husband, Daniel Barrett, look on.



(L to R) Tammy and Karen Vaughn- Kajmowicz, Ruth Morrison, Martha Leverett, Pam and Candace Batten-Lee, Beth Piette, and Teresa Welborn. Plaintiffs from Lee v. Abbott celebrate before heading back to Indianapolis. Retired Battalion Chief Ruth Morrison (third from left) was the first to sue the State in 2002, in Morrison v. Sadler, and when asked what the difference was between the two lawsuits, her response was simple: "The community is behind us now."



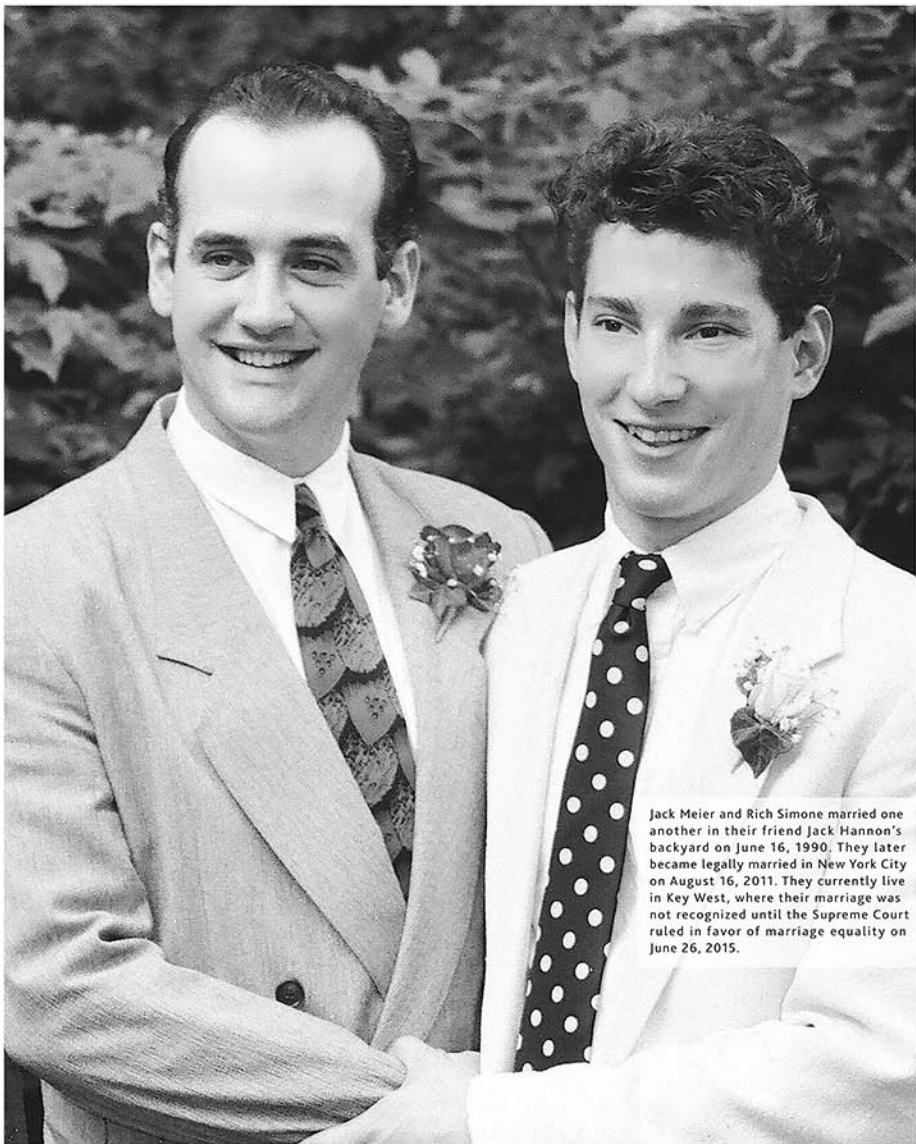
ACLU legal director Ken Falk speaks with reporters in the Chicago area as his plaintiffs look on. In regards to the unintended children the State harped on during their arguments, Falk argued, "Most children don't grow up thinking, 'I'm intended, or I'm not intended'."



Long lines of people wait to make their marriages legal at the City County Building in June 2015.



# MARRIAGE EQUALITY



Jack Meier and Rich Simone married one another in their friend Jack Hannon's backyard on June 16, 1990. They later became legally married in New York City on August 16, 2011. They currently live in Key West, where their marriage was not recognized until the Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality on June 26, 2015.



Brittany Jones and Alice Hoenigman were "super excited" to get married in their home state. They had been engaged since December, and planned on getting married in Illinois the following month. When Chief Judge Richard Young ruled in favor of marriage equality, it opened the doors for Hoosiers to get married in their home state. Brittany and Alice were among the first to take advantage of this ruling on June 25, 2014.



# TRANSGENDER



Dominic was a depressed and angry little boy until his mother realized he identified as a girl. "Suddenly, she was a brand new person, like a butterfly coming out of her cocoon. She started talking (signing) constantly, so full of life, and she hasn't stopped since," says her mother, Tuesday. Now Dominice (age nine) loves doing everything, "gymnastics, cheerleading, basketball, volleyball. . . she wants to be with her friends." Through the love and support of her family, Dominice is a happy-go-lucky little girl, surrounded with pink frilly things, baby dolls, and love. - Amber Stearns, NUVO

"The fight for full equal protection has just begun. The fact remains that we can still be fired from our jobs, or kicked out of our housing, just for being gay or lesbian. And in the case of our transgender brothers and sisters, we can be kicked out of bathrooms as well"

Mark A. Lee,  
Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History,  
Summer 2015



Jacqueline Patterson, Michael Woodward, and Marissa Miller were the featured speakers during Indy Pride's first annual "History Night: Being Transgender in Indiana" program at Indy Reads Books on June 10, 2015. They spoke before a packed house, and three satellite locations listened to what they had to say via a live broadcast on the Web.

This photo of Vicci Lane was taken when she was still a female impersonator at Bullwinkles in Bloomington, IN in 1985. I was attempting to make a calendar entitled "Kings and Queens", pairing drag queens with male dancers, and Vicci was the first person to agree to participate. Since then, with her family's blessing, Vicci started her journey to begin her transition for sex reassignment surgery in 1991, and her surgery was completed in 1996 by surgeons in Montreal, Canada. From the time I met Vicci till now, her smile and infectious laughter have remained the same

