Same-sex marriage hits home for couple

By Charlotte Fife-Jepperson  
WEST VIEW MEDIA

Fairpark residents Gordon Storrs and Orlan Owen have been together in a committed relationship for almost 12 years. They were one of over 1,300 same-sex couples who got married during a brief, but historical 17-day period when same-sex marriage was legal in Utah last December and January.

On December 20, Storrs and Owen heard the news that U.S. District Court Judge Robert Shelby had struck down Utah's ban on same-sex marriage. Over the next couple of days, they followed the developing story with great interest, and Owen said to Storrs, “We should get married.” Storrs replied, “Well, you haven’t asked me to marry you yet.”

After an “official” marriage proposal, they decided to go to the Salt Lake County Clerk’s Office on December 23, “as much as anything, to witness history,” Owen said. There was a long line and lots of commotion. “It was a circus,” Owen said.

Community seeks solutions for poor air quality

By Tammy Reque and Maria Zagal-Crosby  
STUDENT CONTRIBUTORS, U OF U COMM 4670

It’s no secret. We cough and sneeze and blink our way through the crud for what seems like months, hoping for a storm just to blow the junk out of our valley.

Inversions are no secret, but solutions seem to be. At least 15 air quality bills were introduced this past legislative session. None seemed adequate to help us out of the
While removing trash from the Jordan River, Ray Wheeler takes a break to play with a ball he found floating in this island of garbage.

The unsinkable Ray Wheeler

By Scott Frederick
WEST VIEW MEDIA

Ray Wheeler looks the part of an environmental activist. His large stature, graying beard, hiking boots and cargo pants convey his love for life in the outdoors. When it comes to environmental issues, especially protecting the last remaining open spaces along the Jordan River, Wheeler is all-in. His 40-page manifesto on the subject can be found at his website, www.earthrestoration.net.

From removing literally tons of garbage from the Jordan by himself, to personally standing up to Salt Lake City and County politicians and developers, Wheeler has been on the vanguard of preserving open space along the river since 2004 — the year he and his wife moved into a house on the banks of the Jordan.

Wheeler's interest in the environment in general and his fierce protection of the Jordan in particular go back to his college days when he was a river guide on many of the major rivers in the West. After college Wheeler became interested in sea kayaking and has gone on expeditions all over the world, including a 700-mile trip off the coast of Alaska.

Wheeler's commitment and credentials in the environmental movement are formidable, (in no way is this a complete list of the projects and organizations he's been a part of). During his career with the University of Utah's Space Planning Department, Wheeler worked three-quarter time to enable major hiking and photography expeditions across the vast Colorado Plateau. Between 1992 and 1994, Wheeler completed a three-stage, 600-mile backpacking trek across the core wild lands of the Colorado Plateau, from Westwater Canyon, Colo., to Zion National Park.

From 1990-1994, Wheeler was a board member of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. He also was a principal co-author of "Wilderness at the Edge," which, according to SUWA's website, is "the definitive description of the original citizens' proposal for Utah wilderness."

In June 1983, Wheeler embarked on the kayak trip that inspired his interest in the Jordan and led him to find a home on its banks years later. That was the year of massive flooding in Utah, and riding the crest of the flood was Wheeler in his kayak, floating solo on the Jordan from Utah Lake to the mouth of the Bear River.

"I wanted to see the impacts of the flood from the river itself," Wheeler said. "So I did this long trip starting in Provo, carrying my kayak across I-15 with enough food for a week. I floated down the length of the river, camping and riding the crest of the flood."

"I floated the eastern shoreline of Utah Lake, down the entire length of the Jordan River, out into the Great Salt Lake, up its eastern shoreline, out to Fremont Island, over to the causeway, which I carried my boat over, and then up to the mouth of Bear River."
The trip took 10 days, covered between 75 and 100 miles and led Wheeler to form an intimate relationship with the river.

“That was a profound experience because very few people see a flood from its own point of view,” Wheeler reflected. “So, in 2004 we decided to buy this house and that’s how I ended up living on the river, but I had this pre-existing, very deep experience with exploring and discovering the river and the two lakes it connects and their shorelines.”

Wheeler says the Jordan has a reputation of being a trashy, dirty river.

“The quantity of trash floating in the river is really mind-boggling,” he said. “I mean, you think of [garbage] as being a problem in Third World countries, but it’s equally bad here, and I just couldn’t stand it, so I’d paddle upstream, pull it all out, put it in garbage bags and drag it to the nearest trash barrel.”

Ray Wheeler kayaks near a trash island during a Jordan River clean-up foray.

From shopping carts, to car tires, to drink bottles, Wheeler has a theory as to why so much trash gets into the river. “I think everyone has a fascination for moving water and they like to watch things float away and they like to see if things sink or float, so it’s probably curiosity — and I think many people regard the river as a conveyor belt to infinity,” he said.

Besides keeping the river clean and preserving what little open space remains near the river for the enjoyment of hikers, bikers, boaters and those seeking respite from the hustle of the city, there is another reason to consider implementing the Blueprint Jordan River plan. Millions of birds use Utah Lake, the Jordan River and the Great Salt Lake as part of their migratory path. Squeezing out significant open space near the river could have dire consequences for the health of these birds which would impact the entire ecosystem.

Removing trash from the river is therapeutic for many people, including Wheeler, but now he focuses on implementing the Blueprint Jordan River, a comprehensive study that lists as its No. 1 priority: “[To] Preserve and rehabilitate natural river features and functions to the greatest extent possible.” Also tasked with implementing the Blueprint is the Jordan River Commission.

According to its website, www.jordanrivercommission.com, “the Jordan River Commission was created by an interlocal cooperation agreement in August 2010. It was created to facilitate regional implementation of the Blueprint Jordan River, to serve as a technical resource to local communities, and to provide a forum for coordination of planning, restoration, and responsible development along the Jordan River corridor.”

Laura Hanson is executive director of the Jordan River Commission and has read Wheeler’s recommendations and communicated with him via email. “Although Ray and I don’t see eye to eye on some issues, he helps move the process forward, he is an out-of-the-box thinker and even though he has been critical of the Commission, I know he wants what’s best for the river,” she said.

Wheeler is unrelenting in his stewardship of his beloved river and urges anyone who wants to preserve and maintain its natural characteristics to get involved in the political process. “The most important thing people can do of course, is to speak out and contact their representative in city government, their city council member, their mayor, and their representative in the Utah State Legislature,” he said. “That is far and away the most important thing you can do.”

EMAIL: wvm.editors@gmail.com
Exploring identities

Recognizing my white privilege

Christina Caputo
COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR

I am a Rose Park girl through and through; raised from infancy to not only have pride in my west side neighborhood, but pride in my family name. Being a Caputo is central to my identity. The name is a badge of honor that carries a legacy which I inherited from a long line of well known community athletes, educators, and entrepreneurs. The family connections seem to be endless in the Salt Lake area.

For example, it is a common occurrence for random people to hear my last name and ask who my father or grandfather is, if I am related to the nice guy that owns the old Caputo’s grocery store in Rose Park, or they simply recite their favorite Godfather or Goodfellas movie line. From this, I learned at a young age that being a Caputo made me special and unique, but it was not until college that I discovered that this was about something more than just being special, it was about privilege.

During my sophomore year of college I participated in an alternative spring break trip to Mexico. While on this trip I had a life changing conversation with one of my fellow trip mates who was Mexican.

One night, we returned from dinner at a local restaurant where we celebrated the birthdays of some of our other trip mates. My friend was very upset following dinner. When I asked him what was wrong, he said that he was frustrated by the way some of our group members behaved by wearing traditional sombreros and acting like “funny Mexicans.”

He looked at me and said that I could not understand because of “my privilege.” He explained that he could see that I was sensitive to the experiences of others but I needed to recognize that my own identity and experience as a White person prevented me from recognizing this sort of thing for what it was, privilege and oppression.

I felt like someone knocked the air out of me. I had always been raised to be open and accepting of people from all backgrounds and taught not to “see” color. I grew up in a very diverse neighborhood where I had friends who never saw me as White. “You’re not White, you’re cool Caputo.” Furthermore, my own immediate family struggled financially for most of my adolescent and young adult life. I was the oldest of five children who lived in a small house on the west side with only one bathroom. Money was always

The writing on the wall

THE RACE CARD PROJECT

By Misty Brown
WEST VIEW MEDIA

Michele Norris, American journalist turned author, started The Race Card Project in 2010 “to help foster a candid dialogue about race.” She asked people to think about the word “race” to collect their questions, observations, hopes, and dreams on the subject. Then she asked them to take thoughts and “distill them” into one sentence using six words.

“The submissions are thought-ful, funny, heartbreaking, brave, teeming with anger and shimmering with hope. Some will with make you smile. Others might make you squirm,” Norris says on the website, explaining the importance of honoring a candid and open dialogue even when it is uncomfortable.

To create your own Race Card online or to learn more about the project, visit www.theracecardproject.com. To create one in person, visit Mestizo Coffeehouse located at 631 W. North Temple, where these cards and many more are currently on display.

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PHOTOS BY CHARLOTTE FIFE-JEPPERSON

 event info

Local race card events

Panel and Community Discussion, “Talk With Me, Not About Me”
March 25
6 p.m. – 8 p.m.
SLCC South City Campus, Multipurpose Room
1575 S. State St.

Student Conference on Writing & Social Justice
The Dream Revisited (or The Beloved Community Today)
April 23
2 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Salt Lake City Public Library
210 E. 400 South

Community Reading
Race: Perspectives Anthology
April 23
8:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Salt Lake City Public Library
210 E. 400 South

PRIVILEGE PAGE 5
tight and being the oldest, I had a lot of responsibility at a young age, which included taking care of my younger siblings and even having to help with family bills, pay for my own school fees. 

And all of sudden, in an instant, I was being told from a friend that, despite my own individual experience and struggles, skin color mattered and my White skin prevented me from being able to really understand or relate to his experience.

After this conversation I spent the rest of the trip wrestling with hurt, confusion, resistance and even resentment. How could I apologize or make up for being something I had no control over? I started to have discussions with some of my group leaders about this notion of privilege and what it meant, but I learned firsthand for myself when we prepared to cross the border to return back home.

We were stopped by border officials and questioned at length because they were suspicious that we were trying to sneak my friend back across the border. Because of his brown skin they did not believe that he was an American citizen and held us for quite a while to validate his identification and the nature of our business in the country. And there it was staring me in the face, something I would never have to experience because of my White skin.

This is the basis of privilege in general; unearned incentives or benefits that often go unnoticed by those that possess them. Everyone has a different set of privileges based on their backgrounds and life experiences in the areas of ability, gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality, and socioeconomic status. Who is privileged and who is not in a given area is grounded and informed by our social-historical context.

For example, historically men have been in a position of privilege compared to women with regard to their right vote, earn a fair wage, or receive career advancements. Although you may not have asked for these benefits simply because of your gender as a man, you still receive and experience them. Thus, White privilege works in the same way but based on skin color rather than gender.

I have learned to familiarize myself with the areas in which I am privileged. This does not mean apologizing for who I am or being ruled by guilt, but rather owning and recognizing my privilege so that I can be more aware of how to use it in positive ways rather than simply blindly benefitting from it.

Like I said, I’m a Rose Park girl through and through and I have a responsibility to recognize that my individual experience is not necessarily reflective of the rest of my Rose Park community which is made up of a variety of rich and distinct voices and experiences. Cristina “Teeny” Caputo is a Rose Park native and West High graduate. She worked for the University of Utah for over 5 years and graduated with her Master’s in Educational Leadership and Policy and currently works as the Assistant Director for Academic Enrichment at Indiana University Purdue University- Indianapolis (IUPUI).
Smith’s partners with Poplar Grove in weekly cleanups

By Charlotte Fife-Jepperson
WEST VIEW MEDIA

The friendly checkers, stockers and baggers at your local grocery store apparently aren’t getting enough satisfaction at work. Now they want to serve the neighborhood during their time-off.

Last February, a Smith’s employee approached the Poplar Grove Community Council to find out how they could better support the community.

Next thing you know, PGCC Vice Chair Dennis Faris found himself at Smith’s Food & Drug grocery store on 800 S. 900 West in a back room behind the produce. He was surrounded by eager employees sitting on plastic milk crates. They asked him, “What can we do to help?”

Now, Smiths is partnering with the PGCC to participate in weekly service projects in the Poplar Grove neighborhood, which includes the area from 900 South to North Temple, west of I-15.

Cleanups started in March and have taken place at the Native Plant Garden and 9-Line trail near 900 S. 900 West., the park behind Smiths, the Jordan River Parkway trail, and the new bike pump track on 900 South near I-15.

For now, folks meet every Sunday from 2 – 3 p.m. in the front foyer at Smith’s and go out for an hour or two.

Those interested in joining the cleanup efforts should “like” Poplar Grove Council on Facebook or email poplargrove-council@gmail.org for updates.

EMAIL: wvm.editors@gmail.com
Mestizo Arts & Activism Legislative Internship (MAA-LI) is a year-long program intended to support local high school students in gaining a better understanding of our local and state government in Salt Lake City, Utah. By creating a hands-on experience with its participants, the Mestizo Arts & Activism Legislative Internship provides high school students with the opportunity to develop and enhance communication, email writing, and lobbying skills with their elected officials. The program is rigorous, yet fun.

Co-director Israel Corrales said, “When you participate in the legislative session...you experience a space of representatives and senators that debate about a bill, and in the process, as a student, you are doing research and forming connections within the house and senate.”

There are two student components of MAA-LI: the mentors, who are undergraduate students that get college credit through the University of Utah Hinckley Institute of Politics, and the interns, who get high school internship credit through West High School.

Mentor Manuel Bernal Adame says, “The process of going through the Hinckley was very easy. As a mentor, I stated my responsibilities and the purpose of the program. The faculty love the local internship and are excited to work with us.” Their role as MAA-LI mentors require participating college students to take part in a two-step process. Prior to actually becoming mentors during the legislative session, prospective students were required to partake in preparation sessions and workshops during the 2013 Fall Semester. The students come from many different high schools across the valley.

In Utah, the culture of politics is informed mostly by male/white norms, an area in which Dr. Audrey Thompson, who is a professor at the University of Utah the Department of Education, Culture & Society focuses her scholarly work. Society needs to realize that diverse youth can have a strong role that can affect local legislation. Youth need the opportunity to have a voice and get involved in the legislative process. Youth have the right to know the discourse that circulates at the Capitol and to have a say in state policies.

In Rochelle McConkie’s undergraduate these she said,”students must decide how they will express their voice, and a big part of this is deciding which language to use. If critical pedagogy validates per-
Left to right, Rachel Twigg, Kyle Greeneisen, Andrew Hopkins (drum coach), Peter Chase, Brynn Allein, Robert Rehermann and Ava Halka get set to rock the house during February rehearsal at Musicgarage.org.

Musicgarage.org rocks the west side

By Scott Frederick
WEST VIEW MEDIA

On a typical Thursday at Musicgarage.org, students come in at 5 p.m., warm up for 15 minutes jamming, socializing, and catching up with their bandmates. Then comes the process of instruction and coaching. Students aren’t broken down into bands; rather they each have a part in several of the 15 songs they are working on. So that means a student may play guitar on one song, bass on another, sing on still another, or sit out a song altogether. The students nominate songs and then as a group they are voted on.

Musicgarage.org has found a home on the west side at 250 West 1300 South and is the brainchild of founder and director Steve Auerbach. Musicgarage.org’s new digs include a main stage, an outdoor stage, and multiuse rooms for practicing and production.

Auerbach realized early that Musicgarage.org did not want to replace music teachers within the community engaged in private practice. “We didn’t want to take a student away from a teacher that had nurtured the student up to that point,” Auerbach said. “We want to support music teachers by offering a service that’s modular.”

According to Auerbach, the No. 1 reason students drop out of music lessons is because they don’t have a goal. Musicgarage.org aims to provide the incentive and wherewithal to get students up on stage in front of their community and take a stab at being a rock star, he said, and that’s a powerful way to keep students engaged in their lessons and practicing.

“The student can attend as many seasons as they want at Musicgarage.org, and that actually helps the teacher retain that student, because that student now has a goal, the goal of getting on stage and performing with their friends.”

There is a social aspect to Musicgarage.org, and students find support and a whole new circle of like-minded people.

The schedule for instruction is broken down into semester-like seasons. Each season consists of 11 three-hour sessions on Thursdays from 5 to 7 p.m. In the 12th week, the musicians play two shows: one performance for their parents, and then — the highlight of the season — a real show for...
friends and the public. The fall, winter and spring seasons lead up to the biggest payoff of all for the students — the summer music festival season. “I’m very proud to say we provide more quality performance opportunities for our students per capita than any other youth organization on the planet, Auerbach said. We played 22 gigs last year, and only eight of those were on our stage. The rest were out in the community at fairs, festivals, special events and so forth. We also produce the Sugar House Fourth of July stages; the students run the stages, they don’t do the sound — yet — but that’s coming,” he says.

Auerbach encourages “any parent or uncle or aunt or friend of a kid that wants to sing or play to get over here and sing and play.”

Casey Frederick, longtime former student and current drummer for local act Disifornia, said Auerbach “works really hard and is a good role model for kids. He teaches a great work ethic and is there when [students] need him.”

Gina McDonald, whose son Aidan is a student at Musicgarage.org is happy Aidan has a professional, safe space to cultivate his commitment to music. “Here’s the great thing about Musicgarage.org, McDonald said, it’s a supervised environment, and it’s a professional space with professional lighting and professional sound. I guarantee [Musicgarage.org] has gotten Aidan further along faster than trying to form a band from among his school friends,” she continued.

“Any kid that thinks he or she can sing or play, do not worry about money. If you are amazing, we want you,” Auerbach said. I don’t care how much money they have, we will work it out. Because I want kids that are going to work, and kids that don’t have resources work hard. They understand the value of something when it’s given to them. Our scholarship fund is available, and it’s robust,” he said.

“The idea of Musicgarage.org is this, what we have today,” Auerbach said. “My vision has always been to have a place that is a venue, a rehearsal hall, and a training center for kids—and eventually for adults. Adult Jam Club will be coming soon. It’s like a fitness center for music for adults. For a small fee we will jam in our space once a week,” he said.

Note: People can donate to the scholarship fund through the Utah Arts Alliance, or they can donate old guitars or amplifiers. Visit Musicgarage.org for details.

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Visit us online at westviewmedia.org
FEAR AS AN INSTRUMENT OF IMMIGRATION REFORM?

By Robert “Archie” Archuleta

IMMIGRANTS’ STORIES

Compiled by Leyla Feize

MARIA

She was 16 years old when she left her parents fled from Sudan to Kenya. She grew up in a refugee camp, and only attended a religious school. When she moved to the U.S. with her family, she was 16 years old. She was placed in tenth grade. The huge high school was scary and she would get lost often. She could not ask for help because she did not speak English and was undocumented. One night, she hit and pulled my hair all the way up to her downturner. I was about to die, and my children were crying. I told my daughter to call 911.

At that time, I did not think about being undocumented, I just did not want to die. When the police arrived, I was almost unconscious. The police man treated me kindly and took me to the hospital, and later helped me go through the proper legal process as a domestic victim. I found my way in this society and raised my children successfully, but I want to tell people not to let us be barely abandoned because we are not documented. We should have the right to call the police for help anytime without fear.

NAIMA

She was 6 months old when her parents fled from Sudan to Kenya. She grew up in a refugee camp, and only attended a religious school. When she moved to the U.S. with her family, she was 16 years old. She was placed in tenth grade. The huge high school was scary and she would get lost often. She could not ask for help because she did not speak English and was undocumented. One night, she hit and pulled my hair all the way up to her downturner. I was about to die, and my children were crying. I told my daughter to call 911.

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GARCIA

He was a immigrant of Mexico. He used to be a taxi driver but then decided to come to the U.S. to “love my country,” Garcia said. “But the gangs and drug dealers do not allow us to live safely.” He came here almost 20 years ago, and has been deported more than 20 times. “The only thing I have ever wished for is to have a better life and live without fear,” he said. He believes that borders should not separate people. All of us are human and have rights to improve our lives. “This country was built on immigrants,” Garcia said. Garcia wishes that people like him would be judged based on their effectiveness and productivity for the society and not based on having the right to call the police for help anytime without fear.
Utah Crew brings rowing to the Jordan River

By Misty Brown
WEST VIEW MEDIA

In the spring, while driving along Redwood Road, you might miss what is going on down on the Jordan River surplus canal — the sound of water rebounding off a wooden dock, the gathering of gear, and the calls of rowers as the members of Utah Crew, a unique non-profit rowing club, take to the water.

Rowing in Utah? It might be surprising to learn that in a state known for its beautiful deserts and towering mountains, not only is rowing occurring in Utah, but there is a thriving community right here on the west side. “The rowing community in Utah is small, but passionate,” said Janet Frasier, a parent and Booster member for Utah Crew, one of several rowing clubs located in Utah. She said that rowing is relatively new in this valley, and that many of the coaches and “boosters” behind this sport grew up rowing in other places. “They are eager not only to find good places to row in this desert for themselves, but to introduce the kids of our community to the sport,” Frasier said.

Historically, as long as we have relied on rivers for transport and trade there has been rowing. According to George Sayour in his book “An Illustrated History of Rowing,” the sport is believed to have originated from traders competing for fares. The first recorded competitive event was held in 1715 on the Thames River in England. In the 1800s the sport flourished throughout college communities. It is in fact the oldest American college sport (1844) predating football (1871), baseball (1879), and basketball (1891). It debuted as an Olympic sport in the 1900 Paris Olympics, and added female events in 1976.

Often accused of being an elitist sport, rowing communities are increasingly reaching out to more diverse populations.

“Rowing is a very expensive sport, unfortunately, due to the very high cost of the equipment,” said Utah Crew Head/Competition Coach Jeff Massey, who explained that a new boat can cost upwards of $30,000. To help offset the high cost of participation, Utah Crew has a scholarship program. “We want anyone interested in rowing to be able to row,” Massey said.

Massey, a Boston native, rowed for Cornell University. He relocated to Utah four years ago. “It has been really fun and fulfilling for me to witness the tremendous growth of the sport in Utah. We have athletes being recruited to row at some of the top collegiate rowing programs in the country,” he said.

Under Coach Massey and Recreational Rowing Program Coach Josie Byerbegan, Utah Crew anticipates 30 youth rowers for the spring season - 20 male, 10 female. The majority of the athletes come from West High School, Skyline, Judge Memorial, East High, and Highland high schools but the program is open to anyone who might be interested. Their mission is “to develop team-oriented, disciplined, confident, mentally-focused, and physically fit young people, through the medium of the sport of rowing.”

The young athletes ages 13-18 don’t just train in the water, they train hard in the gym. During the winter months they train two hours twice a week in the basement of West High School. Their backpacks and discarded sweatshirts line the corridor while the steady sound of the coach’s counts and the whir of nearly a dozen rowing machines echo down the long narrow hallway. Workouts include strength training, cardiovascular endurance via running, and of course intensive rowing on the machines. Driven by the enthusiasm of their teammates, they are preparing for when they get their first feel of being on the water together.

But rowing enthusiasts say it goes beyond simple physical fitness. The young women of Utah Crew feel that the life lessons they learn from rowing - teamwork, leadership, and a sense of duty and community - are the key to their future. Recruited by older siblings and friends to the sport, they are hopeful they can raise the awareness of the benefits of rowing to others.

Rowing crosses boundaries between schools, genders, and generations. “It is a universal sport,” one young rower said. “I can’t believe how many people I talk to who have rowed. It ties us together instantly.”

There are other benefits of rowing. Involvement in the sport can boost a student’s college or job/internship application. There are also many college scholarships available for female rowers. According to the NCAA, Division I schools spend approximately $250,000 and Division II schools approximately $46,000 in athletics scholarships for rowing.

In mid-March, the Spring racing season opens and Utah Crew begins training in the surplus canal. Per arrangements with Salt Lake County, the dock is currently located at 830 South DeLong St. along the Jordan River surplus canal (approximately 2100 W.) and is
feel any differently by getting married," Owen said, “but it sealed our relationship.”

Storrs said they got married because they could. “We are not looking for other people’s approval,” he said. He feels that gay relationships are “purer” than some heterosexual relationships. “Our commitment is totally voluntary; we get together because of love.”

Storrs was not always openly gay. However, he had known he was gay since he was 8 years old after he read an article about homosexuality in Better Homes and Gardens. He had always been attracted to boys, but he was a devout Mormon and was taught that if he acted on his same-sex attraction, he would be separated from God. So, after serving an LDS mission, he married a woman he had grown to love, because he thought it was the right thing to do.

He was in this monogamous, heterosexual marriage for 32 years. He served in his local LDS bishopric and was a Boy Scout leader for 20 years. He and his now ex-wife had four children. “We were a model family,” he said.

One day in 1999, while working as Salt Lake Community College’s facility planner, he was asked to be the advisor of the college’s gay-straight alliance club. At the first club meeting, he learned that all 18 students in attendance had attempted suicide at least once.

Growing inner conflict led Storrs to consider the pros and cons of coming out as gay. He worried what it would do to his wife, his family, and to his professional life.

“I had been deceiving myself, and everyone else. You can only do that for so long,” he said. “And my wife deserved better.”

Storrs came out at age 51, while serving in the Bishopric in his local LDS ward and as Chair of the Poplar Grove Community Council. As a result, he was ex-communicated from the LDS church.

“God still loves me and always will. My relationship is with God, not the church. I’ll always love the [LDS] Church because of how it guided my life and formed my character, but there’s no place in it for me now,” said Storrs.

Storrs and Owen are hopeful that the 10th Circuit Court will reaffirm Judge Shelby’s decision.

Oriel Owen and Gordon Storrs recall the story of their marriage at their home in Fairpark in March.
Glendale students weigh in on air quality

By Luis Sengua and Horatio Beltran

Air pollution, both indoors and outdoors, poses health risks to millions of Americans every day. Rising temperatures can make smog pollution worse and increase the number of “bad air days” when it’s hard to breathe. Since 1970, the Environmental Protection Agency has worked to protect public health by setting and enforcing standards to protect the quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink.

On a larger scale, governments are taking measures to limit emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. One way is through the Kyoto Protocol, an agreement between countries to cut back on carbon dioxide emissions. The United States has not signed the Kyoto protocol, but if Americans are serious about protecting the environment, we should lobby politicians to reconsider the international agreement. Another method is to put taxes on carbon emissions or higher taxes on gasoline, so that people and companies will have greater incentives to conserve energy and pollute less.

During the 1970s, the U.S. government began to regulate dangerous chemicals like chlorofluorocarbons, which were used in refrigerants and aerosol propellants until they were banned because of their deteriorating effect on Earth’s ozone layer.

Utah’s population has doubled in size since 1980, and yet the state is still growing. By the year 2050, the state population is expected to grow to three times its current size, so we must take action now to make sure we can sustain our population in an environmentally safe way.

Air pollution is especially a problem on the west side of Salt Lake City, and it causes many people to get sick. It has built up a thick smog affecting people with asthma and breathing problems. As air quality became worse during the winter, local news outlets talked about smog and how to stop it from affecting Utahns. We believe that if air is causing many people to be very sick, we need to stop the cause of the pollution.

According to the National Geographic website, many things cause air pollution. First, using cars produces a lot carbon dioxide which is a greenhouse gas that causes pollution. Another factor is methane being burned in factories. Also, a lot of people use firewood to keep warm when they don’t have a heater, and others rely on it to survive during the frigid winter. All the smoke from fires may cause some smog, but not as much as the factories on the west side. Pollution can even come from abandoned factories due to the left over chemicals from past production.

We believe we can work together and stop the pollution. We can start by not driving cars. If everyone rides a bike or takes TRAX or FrontRunner, the west side wouldn’t be as polluted, and we all would breathe fresher air. It also would help if the public transportation on the west side were a real alternative to driving. We can also advocate to make factories use less dangerous chemicals by contacting our local representatives like state Rep. Angela Romero and City Councilman Kyle LaMalfa.

EMAIL: wvm.editors@gmail.com

about the writers

Luis Sengua and Horatio Beltran are students in the Dreamkeepers Project at Glendale Middle School. They are both concerned that Salt Lake City and Utah are not doing enough to improve air quality after another winter of difficult breathing. Dreamkeepers Mentor and West View intern Ivan Ottaviano helped edit this article.
in the water seasonally from April through November.
Unfortunately, the site lacks good viewing and spectator areas. On-site parking for rowers, coaches and parents has to be pre-arranged with the neighboring business. The rowing community is hopeful that a better situation for both rowers and spectators is in their near future. Michael Horrocks, founder of Wasatch Rowing Foundation, a nonprofit, is leading the charge to construct and maintain a permanent boathouse facility. He is hopeful such a venue would help promote not only the sport of rowing but better use and enjoyment of the Jordan River and the surplus canal. Supporters say the project has a long way to go, but it is an attainable vision.

That vision was given a boost when a public draft of the West Salt Lake Master Plan, released in January, stated that “in conjunction with Salt Lake County, [Salt Lake City] should explore the opportunity of creating a small summer recreation center to complement the existing, temporary rowing facilities in place at Indiana Avenue and the surplus canal.”

“We plan on seeing a lot of change in the next 10 years in the rowing community in Utah,” Janet says, speaking hopefully of expansion and improvements to the program. Utah Crew offers programs for beginning as well as competitive rowers. The cost of the Learn to Row eight-week recreational program is approximately $200. The price steadily increases for those rowing competitively to around $425, not including travel expenses. To help students whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent their participation, scholarship funding is available.

EMAIL: wvm.editors@gmail.com
“OUR STORY” ABOUT MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Geoff and John Clapp
COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTORS

John: The term “marriage equality” holds layers of significance to me. Marriage represents to me validation, equality, recognition and safety. I hope marriage will be the catalyst for change, to bring fair housing and employment opportunities and security to us. To not fear holding hands in public. To not worry about being victimized or assaulted for who we are. To fully hold our heads high, and be valued for the creative, intelligent, and giving human beings we can be.

Geoff: Ever since I was a young boy, I had no doubt in my mind that I would one day marry the one I loved. Of course, back then I was oblivious to the laws of the land and society’s perspective on the roles we give ourselves. I met the man I would soon marry, John Clapp, at a gay men’s group. From the moment I saw him I was head over heels. No sooner after we had met I knew I would spend the rest of my life with him. In the following months we prepared our wedding arrangements. We chose our rings, fitted our clothes and purchased the plane tickets, among other things (we were first seen by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ policy on same-sex marriage, calling it “hateful,” “backward,” and “cruel.” Those words have also been used to describe LDS persons who support their church’s stance on the issue, in addition to the all-too-common label “bigot.”

As a person who considers herself an active and faithful Latter-day Saint, I think it is important to acknowledge that equally offensive things have been said by LDS persons toward the gay community; I believe this hurtful language must stop.

I do not in any way speak officially for the LDS church’s official policy on gay marriage (please visit the website www.LDS.org). I speak as a Latter-day Saint who takes a compassionate stance against gay marriage. To many, that may seem impossible, an oxymoron, even. In the legislative process, passions are high and tempers are heated as both sides advocate for what they feel will best suit our society.

I see the relationship between a man and a woman to be a critical one, illustrated not only in major religious texts but also biologically. All Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) view this union between man and woman to be God ordained and life giving. My lived experience has led me to feel strongly that men and women, united in marital union, perfect and refine one another as they work together as equal partners. There is incredible power and capacity in this male/female union not only in its unique ability to support the opposite sex but also to create life.

When possible, marital unions welcome children into their home who are ideally supported through the efforts of both “mom” and “dad.” Though such marriage and family situations are not possible for all, I see marriage between a man and a woman as the “standard” for which society should aim when creating family units. I see marriage as having a two-fold purpose: 1) to emotionally and physically support one’s spouse and 2) to provide a structured and loving environment where children can see both parents modeling cooperation and support between their two genders, setting the standard for love, cooperation, and respect between genders for the next generation.

I cannot be in support of a legislative effort that legalizes gay marriage, because it is my belief that such a standard would move society away from an ideal that is best for maximizing the security and prosperity of humankind. While holding such a view, I believe it is possible to stand firm in one’s convictions while at the same time showing compassion to those of differing views. As a member of the LDS community, I encourage others of my faith to get out of their comfort zones and get to know people different from them, specifically those who consider themselves an active part of the LGBT community. If we don’t allow ourselves the chance to hear another’s story, then how can we truly engage in compassionate dialogue?

Kajsa is married, has a baby boy and lives in Poplar Grove. She is finishing her thesis and will be graduating soon with an MA in Biblical Studies.

RELIGIOUS VIEW ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Kajsa Berlin-Kaufusi
WEST VIEW MEDIA

Recent legal events in Utah surrounding marriage equality have intensified the rhetoric against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ policy on same-sex marriage, calling it “hateful,” “backward,” and “cruel.” Those words have also been used to describe LDS persons who support their church’s stance on the issue, in addition to the all-too-common label “bigot.”

I see the relationship between a man and a woman to be a critical one, illustrated not only in major religious texts but also biologically. All Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) view this union between man and woman to be God ordained and life giving. My lived experience
Glendale residents make plea for safer roads

Genaro Zaragoza-Valencia wore a white cowboy hat. He walked the streets in Glendale beside his wife in her motorized wheelchair as they collected cans to recycle. He always had time to smile and say hello. He was funny and liked to tease.

Some of us who live in the area may not have known him well, but on November 25, 2013, when we saw police cars blocking access to 1000 West at 1700 South, red and blue lights flashing in the darkness, and a white cowboy hat lying in the road among a few aluminum cans, we instantly knew who had been the victim of a tragic auto/pedestrian accident.

Upon hearing the news of his death my young daughter gasped, “Who will walk his wife?”

For two days following the accident, the cars driving up and down 10th West drove by slowly. The pedestrians carefully crossed in the crosswalks, looking both ways, following all the rules. But over time, people forget.

I, however, cannot forget how dangerous this road is. I too lost someone at that intersection. My loss was not as severe as losing a husband, a father, or a grandfather. Mine was a sleek black dog that could run like the wind – a dog I drove round-trip 14 hours to bring home from Best Friends Animal Society in Kanab, Utah. His name was Kilo and he had never seen grass.

Kilo and I were paired after my sister was found dead in her apartment and I could not recover from the loss. I was struggling to make it through each day. I felt abandoned and isolated in seemingly endless grief. Trapped by memory. Haunted by the details of her death and yet afraid to forget. I was too lost and alone to make much sense of the world around me. I needed to find a light. And I found one in that dog.

One dark, early morning before sunrise, our family was loading up for a day canoe trip on the Weber river. Kilo slipped out through an open gate, looking for me. Not finding me in the driveway, he must of headed south toward the route we ran together on the Jordan River Trail. His broken body was discovered in the road by his own family, as we spotted him in his dying moments in our headlights.

In the grass within sight of the stop sign, a small memorial for Genaro Zaragoza-Valencia still stands all these months later. The makeshift cardboard sign which read, “Please Slow Down” is gone, but the message still lingers here.

While working in the ER of the University of Utah, I saw first hand the devastation of careless drivers and pedestrians alike. A car, like a train, can be a horrific weapon that a person is simply no match for. I am very careful to mind the speed limit in the neighborhoods that I drive. Even with that caution, I have had close calls. It scares me to think that the day before Zaragoza-Valencia was hit, I narrowly avoided hitting a small child who had darted out in the road at the exact spot the memorial now sits.

Any one of us could accidentally hit a person or an animal in the road, due to sunlight or darkness, rain or...
GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY COUNCIL!
Community councils are neighborhood-based organizations developed to help community members directly advocate for change in their communities. Their job is to provide various city departments with input and recommendations generated directly from the community. These councils consist of local residents, service providers, property and business owners. Meetings are open to the public. In fact, involvement from the community is essential to the process. After all, who better understands the issues and needs of a community than the people who live, work, and play there? To find out which community council area you live in, go to www.westviewmedia.org

FAIRPARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Fourth Thursdays: March 27, April 24, May 22, 6:30 p.m. Northwest Multipurpose Center, 1300 W. 300 North
Chair: Steven Johnson: philogooch@yahoo.com 801-521-3168
Website: www.fairparkcommunity.org

JORDAN MEADOWS COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Second Wednesdays: April 9, May 14, 6:30 p.m. Day Riverside Library, 1575 W. 1000 North
Chair: JoAnn Anderson: zcar1977@netzero.net 801-355-5583

ROSE PARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL
First Wednesdays: April 2, May 14, 6:30 p.m. Day Riverside Library, 1575 W. 1000 North
Chair: Blake Perez: blakeperez@hotmail.com 801-702-2522
Facebook: Rose Park Community

WESTPOINTE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Third Wednesdays: March 19, April 16, May 21, 7 p.m. Day Riverside Library, 1575 W. 1000 North
Chair: Erin Youngberg: erin@westpoineconc.org 801-815-0130

POPLAR GROVE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Fourth Wednesdays: March 26, April 23, May 28, 7 p.m. Pioneer Police Precinct, 1040 W. 700 South
Chair: Andrew Johnston: poplargrovecouncil@gmail.com, 801-699-1381
Facebook: Polar Grove Community Council

GLENDALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Third Wednesdays: March 19, April 16, May 21, 7 p.m. Mountain View Elementary, 1380 S. Navajo St. (1335 W.)
Chair: Randy Sorenson: 801-973-6652

BALLPARK COMMUNITY COUNCIL
First Thursdays of each quarter: April 3, May 1, 7 p.m. Horizonte Center cafeteria, 1234 S. Main Street
Chair: Elke Phillips: Ballparkcc@gmail.com 801-708-3915
Website: www.ballparkcc.org
Facebook: Ballpark Community

GET INVOLVED. MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD.
Apply to be on a Salt Lake City Board or Commission
Salt Lake City boards and commissions are a vital link between constituents and City government. Volunteering to be a member is a great way to voice opinions, raise concerns and help represent your community in government decisions. And, with over 20 different advisory bodies, there is something for every skill-set or interest.
To learn more about vacancies in your area, visit www.slcgov.com/bc/vacancies or call 801-535-6006. Salt Lake City looks forward to hearing from you.

GIVE BIG. FEEL HAPPY. Volunteer for Salt Lake City.
Making Salt Lake City the best place to live, work, play and do business is at the core of the City’s goals. With such a full plate, the City gratefully relies on the help of interested residents who are willing to donate their time and energy in a spirit of community engagement.
Volunteers improve the many public spaces, natural and urban, that contribute to the great quality of life in Salt Lake City, and, in turn, enjoy a fulfilling, meaningful and satisfying experience.
The upcoming months are packed with fun and engaging volunteer opportunities for groups, individuals, youth and adults. To learn more, visit www.slcgov.com/volunteer.

YOUTH ARTS & MUSIC FESTIVAL
August 23, 2014
Noon - 8 p.m.
At the Bridge Over Barriers Art Project, 300 N. from 600 W. to 800 W. in Salt Lake City.
Free and open to the public.
Facebook: Youth Arts & Music Festival, Salt Lake
Twitter: @YAMFSaltLake
#YAMF #SLC #Utah #Youth #Arts #Music

If you would like to be a part of the festival, come to the planning meetings at 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at NeighborWorks Salt Lake, 622 W. 500 North.

The Rythmos Project
RHYTHMOS: FEEL THE HEARTBEAT!
Monday March 31
3:45 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Mountain View Elementary
Special guests, George Grant and Alex Caldiero work with students in an interactive workshop and performance that explores rhythms found in life.

RHYTHMOS: EXPLORING THE HEARTBEAT OF LIFE
Wednesday April 2
3:45 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Interactive Concert with Special Guest George Grant

The Rythmos Project is the search for unity between different cultures and aspects of life through all art mediums incorporating verbal and non-verbal communication. In this interactive performance you will explore, reflect, and express your artistic voice by examining rhythm as an underlying element experienced in all facets of life.

For additional information about the Rythmos and Mundi Project programs, please contact: Hana Janatova
801-487-8594 (Office)
801-897-2297 (Mobile)
janatova@mundiproject.org
EGG DIVE  
Friday, April 18, 6 p.m.  
Swimming Pool  
Cost: free to members, daily admission for all others

EGG HUNT  
Saturday April 19, 9 a.m., Free

GIRLS SOFTBALL RECREATIONAL LEAGUE  
Ages 6 to 15. Season runs April 22 - mid-May  
$36  
Two games per week, one weekend and one Saturday. Register early to ensure practice time with a coach.

TRACK & FIELD  
Ages 6 and up. Registration opens late April, early May, $26  
Practices begin the end of May.  
Two practices per week, days of week TBA. Participants learn proper running form, stretching, relays, field events, and more. Meets are held throughout the season ending with a qualifying regional meet for All-County Championships.

ON GOING EVENTS:

EARN A BIKE PROGRAM  
Every Saturday  
March 15 - April 26  
Noon - 3 p.m. for youth, ages 10 to 18  
Want to earn your own bike? Earn a Bike Program is a six week basic bike mechanics course offered for free, totaling 18 solid hours of instructional time. Upon graduation, students will earn their own bicycle to keep and ride with pride. Limited to 12 youth. For more information or to register, please call 801-535-6536.

MONTHLY COMMUNITY NEWSROOM  
Third Tuesday of every month  
6 p.m. – 8 p.m.  
Check the West View Media Facebook page for possible schedule changes or email wvm.editors@gmail.com with questions.  
Join folks from The West View newspaper to collectively brainstorm future content, learn about the community journalism process, and construct quality news stories for your local newspaper. Come with feedback and any suggestions to make the newspaper a better forum of communication.

TEEN MOTHER WORKSHOPS  
Every Tuesday  
5 p.m. – 7 p.m.  
Are you pregnant or a mother under age 18? You can become a member of our weekly support group. Teen Success Members benefit by earning $10 for each week of completed class, $100 bonus for every 25 weeks attended, and free snacks and child-care provided. For more information, call Paco with Planned Parenthood at 801-521-2741 or visit www.facebook.com/ppacofutah.

HORIZONTE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES  
Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Free  
Register for classes at the Sorenson Unity Center. Sign-up with instructor, all levels are taught. Please bring a driver’s license or utility bill for proof of address when registering. Childcare is available from 9 -12 p.m. for ages 8 weeks to 7 years old. $1.50 per hour, per child or purchase a 15 hour punch pass.
West side wildlife

The garter snake, often called the garden snake, is probably the most common snake in America. The most common subspecies of this garter snake in the West is found from the valley floors all the way up to the tops of our mountains, and as its subspecies’ name (vagrants) implies, it wanders everywhere, including into our own yards.

Unfortunately, the wandering of this snake is also contributes to its most common cause of death, being run over by cars, especially in highly urbanized areas like Salt Lake City.

Locals usually refer to this subspecies as the “water” snake, probably because it is commonly encountered near waterways like the Jordan River where it can swim equally well on top and below the water.

This snake is easy to identify (see photo above) with its grey-brown body, dark brown spots, a single body length buffy yellow dorsal stripe, and another yellow stripe down each side to the tail.

They commonly grow to about two feet, but larger ones can grow to 40 inches.

Their closest competitor on the Jordan is probably the non-native bullfrog.

Active from April through October, they hibernate underground during the colder months, sometimes in large groups.

They often all emerge and breed shortly afterward in the spring.

Like humans their babies are born live, but give birth to broods of up to 70 young.

Most reptiles, amphibians and fish typically lay eggs that hatch later.

If provoked they are known to bite people, although generally considered to be non-poisonous, and considered harmless and certainly nothing to be afraid of.

Its saliva does have toxins that can cause pain, prevent blood from clotting, and may cause other unpleasant reactions in some people, so I think it is best leave them alone.

This saliva can, however, kill some of the very small prey that they actively hunt during daylight.

They are known to feed on live and dead animals alike, and may have the widest diet of any snake.

In urban habitats they are beneficial predators, often eating pests like mice and garden insects.

Their best defense is a stinky, offensive musk odor they exude from their anus.

That musk apparently did not prevent me from spending many hours as a kid catching and handling these, and many other critters that I carried home to the displeasure of my mom who usually told me to set them free.

Letting them go in our neighborhood sometimes resulted in screams from the neighbors who later encountered these transplanted serpents in their yards.

On the positive side, I think it may have been this snake that originally caused me to be so infatuated with wildlife that I ended up in graduate school seeking a higher degree in zoology and my passion for serpents in their yards.

The Legislative Internship was created through University Neighborhood Partners. One of the main reasons college students in the Social Justice Scholars (SJS) program created the Legislative Internship was to give communities on the west side of Salt Lake City a voice, especially minorities.

SJS students feel that the Utah State Capitol is primarily filled with white, male individuals who have easy access to a public space that is meant for everyone. Israel Corrales says, “As a participant of this program I have seen that the Capitol should be accessible to everybody, even west side residents. In order to change the space of the Capitol, we need to get involved and be the agents of change in our community.”

The SJS students back in 2008 wanted to create that voice for teens that have different ethnic backgrounds, to give them that opportunity to go up there and talk to their representatives and senators and voice their opinions. This pathway has created a more inclusive practice towards having community members participate in legislative sessions.

**MAALI**

continued from PAGE 7

Roads

snow, distraction or carelessness. An auto/pedestrian accident is devastating to everyone involved, not just the victim. The driver, whether at fault or not, has their life altered in an instant. Their family and the victim’s family are all impacted. Lives are changed forever.

Every school day morning I watch the children of our neighborhood walk to school. They cross the streets in tiny hopeful packs; they are our future. These are not just streets, these are the gateways to our homes. Please slow down and remain vigilant on our roads. Please travel these roads with care.

**Misty Brown is a Glendale resident and avid gardener, runner, blogger and writer for The West View.**