

DignityUSA works for respect and justice for all gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons in the Catholic Church and the world through education, advocacy and support.

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Message from Bill Welch, Editor

Due to my illness and Publications Committee Chair Leo Egashira's out-of-town activities, the July 2009 *Dateline* has been merged into a July-August edition.

GLBT Pride 2009: 40 Years of Progress!

By Mark Matson, President, DignityUSA

As I write this, I am anticipating travel to San Francisco for our 40th Anniversary party and walking in the Gay Pride Parade there with the rest of DignityUSA. We just celebrated Pride in my home of Columbus, Ohio. And I am indeed feeling proud. Proud of being the person God made me. Proud of how things have changed in my life-time and proud of the contributions I have made in that regard as a member of Dignity. I see no reason you should not feel the same.

Last year I had the privilege of walking with Dignity/New York in their Pride Parade. This was the city where the Stonewall Riots initiated the modern Gay Pride movement 40 years ago—the same time Dignity was established. Our paths have run parallel ever since. The results in society are incredible. I could see it all around me in Columbus. Our city newspaper ran a front page article on our Grand Marshall, Rupert Starr—an 83 year-old veteran of WWII and POW who established the Columbus Jaycees. Another photo showed a little girl in a stroller with a sign “I love my two grandmas.” And there were lots of religious congregations in the parade. The judgmental Christians were still there, but small in number and drowned out by the festivity around them. On the sidelines I saw two women holding a sign that read “Married in New Hampshire – What Gives Ohio?” I never thought I would see the day same-sex couples would be married by the state—anywhere! I share with you a photo of our chapter's contingent (see page 4) in our parade knowing shots like this could have been taken where you live. We have indeed come a long way as a movement.

The Dignity/Columbus contingent marched in front of New Hope Methodist Church and a woman holding a sign that read “Straight, Married and another Lutheran for Equality.” Just in front of us was a newly ordained Episcopal priest in his clerical garb and his partner of many years from Integrity. Same-sex married clergy of a major denomination. Incredible. I admit feeling a bit sad at realizing how far my own Catholic Church is from such inclusivity. But we marched on—carrying our own signs “Dignity: Proudly Gay, Proudly Catholic.” And we connected with many other Catholics lining the parade route who also yearn for inclusion. I have no doubt Dignity is a sign of hope for them, as it has been for me. We have been that voice of challenge and inclusion for 40 years now. And while we can't measure the same progress in Church policy that we can measure in society, the Spirit has been using us for good. And she's not done with us yet.

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GLBT Pride 2009: 40 Years of Progress!
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Back to the Grand Marshall of our Parade. The *Columbus Dispatch* newspaper noted that Rupert (known locally as “Twink”) served his country with courage as a POW in Poland. But when he returned to the States, he lived in fear of the judgment of his fellow countrymen. He and his partner lived together for 54 years, most of it in the closet. He came out to fight “Don’t Ask, Don’t tell.” While in the closet, he found camaraderie in a group of other gay men from his Lutheran Church. When I read that, I thought of Dignity and how we have been a place of safety and friendship for countless GLBT people through the days when being gay and out was very, very hard. I have no doubt Dignity has made a huge difference in many, many lives—keeping them connected to God, to Christ, to a Gospel of Love, and to kindred spirits on the path to the Promised Land. We have much to be proud of. I am charged with enthusiasm for the good work that lies ahead for us as we move into our 5th decade. And a lot of that optimism comes from the people of Dignity I am connected to, including my good friends in my local chapter, and my life partner Chris. Love frees. Indeed.

DignityUSA National Election Results

The following candidates were elected by the DignityUSA membership to serve on the national board of directors for the period October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2011.

President:	Mark Matson, Dignity/Columbus
Vice President:	Lourdes Rodriguez-Nogues, Dignity/Boston
Director:	Gene Corpuz, Dignity/Honolulu
Director:	Alice Knowles, Dignity/Boston
Director:	Ramon Rodriguez, Dignity/Cincinnati

All of the above candidates received a majority of the votes cast.

Nominated by Mark Matson and Lourdes Rodriguez-Nogues, the following were elected by the national board to serve a two-year term, October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2011.

Secretary:	Lewis Tanner, Dignity/New York
Treasurer:	Greg Potosnak, Dignity/New York
Director:	Linda Pieczynski, Dignity/Chicago
Director:	Tom Streeper, Dignity/Philadelphia

Members and chapters will receive ballots to vote on the proposed bylaws amendments previously mailed in May 2009. Please return the ballots as directed as soon as possible upon receipt.

CHAPTER NEWS**Dignity/Honolulu Celebrates 33 Years**

Dignity/Honolulu celebrated its 33rd Anniversary on Sunday, April 26, with a special liturgy and reception. Activities included door prizes and awards. The awards were: St. John Award (Friend of Dignity) given to individuals or groups that have contributed to the Honolulu chapter. This was awarded to Bishop Jack Isbell and his

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Happy Anniversary & Congratulations to:

July 2009

Honolulu (HI) - 33 years
Central Pennsylvania - 34 years

August 2009

Las Vegas (NV) - 15 years
Nassau (NY) - 30 years
San Antonio (TX) - 33 years
Denver (CO) - 35 years
Metro New Jersey (NJ) - 35 years

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spouse Father Nick Eyre (United Ecumenical Catholics) who preside at Dignity Mass once a month. They have hosted the DignityUSA House Party fundraiser at the Teahouse located on their condominium property. Over \$800 was raised .

The St. Peter's Award (Rock of Dignity), given to chapter members, was awarded to Gene Corpuz for his work as board member, liturgist, GLBT networking, and advocacy (testifying at the Hawaii State Legislature in support of the civil unions bill).

Approximately 25 people were present for the festivities.

News from Dignity/Washington

By Raymond Panas, Chapter President

We recently held elections of officers. The officers for the next year will be Raymond Panas, President; Jake Hudson, Vice President; Kevin Hennessey, Treasurer; Tom Bower, Secretary. We want to acknowledge that Bob Miailovich has stepped down from the board after serving for many years as treasurer. Under his watchful eye, we have developed a solid financial platform upon which we can grow and serve our community.

Dignity/Washington — thanks to many of its members — has managed to pay off the mortgages for our Dignity Center. We are now debt free with a wonderful building to serve our community. The Center has also become a useful location for several other non-profit organizations that meet on a regular basis.

Dignity/Washington is working hard to organize DignityUSA Convention 2011. We have a committee of folks that are busy arranging the hotel, speakers, and various other tasks that bring the next convention to the East Coast. We attended Convention 2009 in San Francisco and announced our 2011 plans. We started taking early registrations as part of the kick-off to 2011.

The Washington, D.C. City Council voted to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states. It has been signed by the Mayor. Congress has passed the measure which became law on July 6, 2009. Dignity/Washington supports the actions of our city government and Congress.

Dignity/Seattle Raises \$2,500 for Charities

At its 21st Annual Pride Week Breakfast, held Saturday, June 27, 2009, Dignity/Seattle served nearly 200 breakfasts, conducted a raffle and collected old cell-phones & inkjet cartridges, raising \$2,500 to be divided among Bailey-Boushay House (hospice & day-care facility), Multifaith Works (housing & spiritual support for persons living with life-threatening illnesses) and Dignity/Seattle's convention assistance fund.

TRANSITIONS

In MEMORIAM

BIRTHS

ADOPTIONS

MARRIAGES

HOLY UNIONS

WEDDING/UNION ANNIVERSARIES

Please send DignityUSA member name(s) of the affected person(s) and event to Operations Manager Peggy Burns by email to info@dignityusa.org or by phone 800-877-8797.

For example, in events such as births and adoptions, the name(s) of parent(s) and child or children, or number of girls or boys, and chapter affiliation or city and state. In events such as marriage or holy union, the names of the couple and chapter affiliation or city and state.



CHAPTERS IN LOCAL PRIDE PARADES



Dignity/Columbus Contingent, Columbus Gay Pride Parade
Saturday, June 20, 2009



Dignity/Boston Contingent, Boston Pride Parade
Saturday, June 13, 2009