

Another Pride come and gone...No! Wait, I'm not ready to let go!  
by Scott LaCombe

This year, I marched with Rainbow Seniors in the Pride Parade. Led by flower power marchers, with their homemade tie-dyed shirts, and our Psychedelic shack, Rainbow Seniors proved that you can rock out pride at any age. Some very dedicated members dressed in costume, despite the heat, and played the Laugh-In characters Ruth Buzzie, Artie Johnson and Da Judge. We even managed to win one of the parade awards! How's that for groovy?!

As we made our way along the parade route, I saw many friends and acquaintances, of course, but hundreds of unfamiliar faces as well. I always wonder where all these LGBTI people disappear to after Pride weekend? I was disappointed to see the usual protestors twisting words of peace into words of hate. At the same time, I was heartened to see the churches of our straight-allies, right next to them, supporting us.

Many of you saw me at the picnic asking you for your money. Almost everyone I spoke to generously parted with it, a fact I greatly appreciate! You all listened to me talk about RSWNY and the community dance coming up October 28<sup>th</sup>, something I appreciated almost more than the money (almost!) Speaking of money, Thomas Dupuis, of Rochester, won \$176. That means we raised \$176 for Rainbow Seniors. Thank you all for your continued support!

My favorite thing about Pride? No, it wasn't the beads or the explosion of rainbow products. I love the unity, the freedom and that warm-fuzzy feeling you get for your community. It's like Christmas for Gays! After all, it's the one time of the year when everyone is 'family' and we all get along. Wouldn't it be nice to have that feeling all year 'round? The best way to hold that pride in our hearts is to build something to be proud of.

One phrase I heard over and over Pride weekend was, "Rainbow Seniors? You're not a senior. What are you doing with them?" The answer is simple. No, I'm not a senior. Anyone at least 21 yrs and over may join or volunteer with Rainbow Seniors. At twenty-eight, I'm with RSWNY to build my community and to improve the future for all LGBTI's here in our area.

Ageism, in the gay community, is a curious animal to me. I can somewhat understand it from the younger crowd, who may have some maturing still to do, but I hear many 40's-50's folks say 'senior' like it's a dirty word. In a community where our ranks have been decimated by an epidemic, which we have yet to conquer, we should be thankful for every elder we have.

I am very proud to be part of a group like Rainbow Seniors. They strive to bring together the generations of our community and work toward a better future for us all. Growing old is a part of life, no matter how much we fight it. For more information on Rainbow Seniors join us August 20<sup>th</sup> for our picnic in Ellison Park, email us at [RSWNY@rainbowseniorswny.org](mailto:RSWNY@rainbowseniorswny.org) or call us at 585-442-6369.

