Looking Ahead
A Billy Visioning Retreat
Saratoga Springs, March 2 – 5, 2017

Who are the Billys?
Better yet, who do we want the Billys to be?

Come join us for a weekend at Saratoga Springs Retreat Center where we will explore new opportunities and relationships opening up to the Billys. At the same time, we will look at ways we can better support our existing members while continuing our outreach to a growing and ever more diverse community.
Creating a Community Vision

Once every two years the Billy community comes together in the relaxing atmosphere of our home base at Saratoga Springs to reflect, take stock of where we’re at, and look ahead to the future. Sponsored and co-coordinated by the Billy Board, this not a gathering in a traditional sense. The 2017 Visioning Retreat is a supportive planning weekend that includes heart circles and a playful surprise or two. And, of course full use of the Saratoga grounds and hot tub.

For the 2017 Billy Visioning Retreat, the Billy Board invites you to participate in a weekend of large and small group planning discussions. As you will see in the following pages: new relationships and opportunities are opening up for the Billys! At the same time, we must ALWAYS be mindful of our entire community, including those who can’t afford to come to gatherings or have other barriers limiting their participation.

HERE’S THE KINDS OF QUESTIONS WE’LL BE LOOKING AT:

- How can we make our gatherings better or more relevant?
- What new ideas or programs might we want to consider over the next two years?
- Any creative or fun ideas about how to attract more resources (money, volunteers, expertise, etc) to support what we’re doing?
- Ideas about how to reach out to long-term Billys while also extending invitations to people of color, trans men, younger Billys, or Billykin?
- How do we identify the potential and enthusiasm within the Billy community and put it to work?

YOUR QUESTIONS

While the board has designed the general outline and format of the Retreat, our primary goal is to hear from our community. Flexibility has been built into the schedule for YOUR ideas and questions. New outreach to asylum seekers? Better support for our aging population? Is the impact of national politics something we need to respond to as a community? Got ideas about a fundraiser or connections to a Foundation? Any ideas about inviting more healing or health related workshops? Should we do more between gatherings? Your ideas?????

We invite your ideas and participation
Community Relationship Building Projects Undertaken by the Billy Community and Board Since the Last Visioning Retreat

Free Hugs Anyone?

It doesn’t take much sometimes to have an impact. Led by Phat’s apparent desire to hug every gay man in Northern California, this Community Outreach effort has had Billys giving free hugs this summer at Pride events in Guerneville, San Francisco, Oakland, or San Jose. Fabulous! Fun! More word has gone out about Billy gatherings and potlucks through this project than just about anything taken on by the Billys in years.

Partnership with the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and the Elizabeth Taylor 50-Plus Network

The San Francisco AIDS Foundation is a national leader in providing outreach and support to what is a growing at-risk population: gay men over 50 who are surviving the long-term effects of living with HIV/AIDS. Created by Project Manager Vince Crisostomo and funded by a five-year grant by the Elizabeth Taylor Foundation, this project provides outreach, support, and practical assistance to a population that the Billys have been serving for many years. Through this partnership, individuals are provided scholarships from the Elizabeth Taylor Foundation to attend Billy gatherings where they find support, reduction in isolation, new friends. 50+ers have become among the most active and supportive of our growing Billy family.

2016 Labor Day Gathering at Groundswell

The Billys ventured to a new location this Labor Day in hopes of creating an interesting new approach to a gathering at a more affordable site. Groundswell, a new queer community and retreat center in Mendocino County, is a cauldron of energy and creativity. The Billys are looking forward to a return trip in 2017.
The Billys have been talking about increasing our diversity almost since our founding but there has been only modest change over the years. Sponsored by a major heart-centered gift from a thoughtful Billy, we are in the very early stages of learning how to do this through a long-term outreach and relationship building effort. Change can be difficult -- these are not easy issues and the underlying passions can be volatile and easily accessible. Our hope is that looking ahead our gatherings will be increasingly rich, meaningful, supportive, and diverse. Isn’t that what being a heart-centered community is about?

**Transmission**

Colin Close and Kris Shanks, co-coordinators of the first Transmission gathering

In the fall of 2015 the Billys partnered with Colin Close, Kris Shanks, and others to sponsor Transmission – the first-ever heart centered gathering for the transmen community that we are aware of in the United States. Brave, exciting work and life-changing for those who attended. 87 trans men from over 12 states attended Transmission II this past September at Saratoga, Transmission III will take place February, 2017. We are proud and happy about this new collaboration and welcome Kris as our new Resource Coordinator as well as our new trans friends that we see at our gatherings.

**Mendocino Pride Alliance**

Many years ago, when the office was located in Ukiah, the Billys sponsored the first-ever LGBT organization for Mendocino County -- the Community Action Coalition. Over the years Community Action Coalition became the Pride Alliance Network and hopefully, in 2017 that will become the Mendocino Pride Alliance. Because of Billy sponsorship the group can secure the permits it needs and have its finances handled while it progresses towards establishing itself as Mendocino County’s newest LGBT organization.
Looking Ahead – A Billy Visioning Retreat  March 2-5, 2017

Scholarship Deadline:  5pm Thursday, February 9 at the Billy Office
Regular Registration Deadline:  5pm Thursday, February 16 at the Billy Office

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Faerie name/AKA:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
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<td>Phone:</td>
<td>Email:</td>
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The information above will be included in the printed directory distributed at the gathering. Check the box next to any information you DO NOT wish to be included in the directory. Want to have your picture included as well? Please email a picture to office@thebillys.org

I am a person of color (we ask as part of an initiative to increase diversity of the Billys)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergency contact:</th>
<th>Auto License#</th>
<th>Housing request:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I NEED a ride from:</td>
<td>Food allergy/restrictions:</td>
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<td>I can OFFER a ride from:</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can help transport items TO the gathering</td>
<td>I can help transport items FROM the gathering</td>
<td>I want to offer a workshop:</td>
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<tr>
<th>OVERNIGHT ($100-$135 sliding scale)</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>DAY USE ONLY ($50-75 sliding scale)</th>
<th>Registration Fee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 3/2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Richard Locke Scholarship Donation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 3/3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Billy Emergency Support Fund Donation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday 3/4</td>
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<td>General Fund Donation</td>
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<tr>
<td>We are departing Sunday 3/5 by 2pm</td>
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<td>(Your donations are tax deductible)</td>
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Mark the days OR nights you plan to attend. What time are you planning to arrive? SCHOLARSHIP REQUEST amount  
Please read the back page!  
TOTAL

Pre-registration is required! Full payment is due prior to the start of gathering. No free drop-ins. Gathering starts at 3pm, Thursday March 2.

Liability Release
I am a responsible adult and will try not to harm myself, anyone else, or any property during the gathering. I understand there are no guarantees given or expressed to assure my safety, or the safety of my property at the gathering by the Billy Foundation, and I have read the policies on the back page. Parking is at my own risk. Falling trees and other acts of nature are unlikely but possible. Be aware that neither the Billy Foundation nor the facility we rent will take responsibility for damage to your vehicle. By signing below, I therefore release the Billy Foundation from all liabilities caused by my, others or the Billy Foundation’s actions and/or inactions during the gathering. Thank you!

Signature Date

Please sign your check and mail it with this completed form to: The Billy Foundation, PO Box 12205, Santa Rosa, CA 95406-2205
Phone: 707-545-1044  Email: office@thebillys.org  Register and donate online: www.thebillys.org
Housing and other special concerns:
We desire to accommodate and support people of varying physical abilities, yet our gathering site has inherent access and use limitations. Let us know any special needs or concerns you have. Camping is available and encouraged at Saratoga Springs. All indoor housing is shared, with priority for those with special health needs. Please indicate in your housing request if you are requesting indoor housing, wish to share a room with someone special, use a CPAP, or have other concerns. Feel free to attach additional pages if the little tiny box does not meet your needs.

Registration Fee Information
The Billy Foundation board works hard to make gatherings accessible to all. Our actual cost per person in 2014 was approximately $111 per night. Paying at the higher end of the sliding scale helps us pay for the overall programs and administrative costs of the Billy Foundation, and enables us to provide more scholarships for those who need assistance to attend. Please help us keep our fees as low as possible by interpreting your place on the sliding scale as generously as you are able, or by making a tax-deductible donation to our General Fund.

Your Tax-Deductible Donations
The Richard Locke Scholarship Fund is used to help reduce financial barriers that make it difficult for some to attend our gatherings.
The Billy Emergency Support Fund supports all Billys and HIV+ non-Billys in northern CA counties, and pays for emergency needs like rent, utilities, etc.
The General Fund supports all the activities of the Billy Foundation.

Scholarship Policy
Scholarships awarded from the Richard Locke Scholarship Fund are solely based on need as expressed by the applicant, and are not granted after the scholarship deadline. We strongly encourage you to pay a minimum of $15 per day. Your scholarship request will be honored if we have the funds. In the event scholarship requests for a gathering are greater than available funds, a reduced scholarship may be offered. It is the goal of the Billy Foundation to assure that everyone has the opportunity to attend at least one night. You are encouraged to consider the needs of others in assessing whether to request a scholarship.

Late Registration Policy
Any registration received after the regular registration deadline is considered late registration. Late registration is available at an increased rate ($110/night or $55/day) and is subject to availability of housing and food. Please contact the Billy office to confirm there is space available before registering.

Refund Policy
Refunds must be requested within two weeks of the close of the gathering. Registration fees, minus a $25 handling fee will be refunded. After two weeks, the registration fees will be considered a donation. Exceptions to this policy will be considered on a case by case basis by the Board President and the Resource Coordinator.

Billy Food and Drug Policy
Those needing supplemental food for their special dietary needs should bring it with them. We will make every effort to provide space for storage and preparation. Billy Gatherings are alcohol/recreational drug free. Please continue to take your prescription medication if you need it to remain stable throughout the gathering.

The mission of the Billys is to foster community, intimacy and personal exploration among gay, bi and queer men through shared values and heart-centered brotherhood.