The entire Panic family would like to thank our friends in the community for the tremendous support you have shown us after the untimely passing of our dear friend, Kelly Erisman.

Since 1982, Panic has been a cornerstone of the LGBT community. Kelly’s countless gifts of energy, creativity, time, money and compassion have made Lincoln a better place for us all. It is a legacy that Panic is proud to continue.

**Join us for our first annual Pedal for Pride!**

Pump your pedals from Panic to the Pinnacle for pride!

**SATURDAY, JULY 9TH**

Enjoy a fabulous brunch on our patio, then join the bicycle parade down the new N Street Cycle Track to Pinnacle Bank Arena to join the festival!

10:00am

Brunch is served!

NOON

Gather for group ride to Pinnacle Bank Arena

Get ready for our incredible Panic Anniversary Weekend July 15th-19th

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TO BECOME A VOTING CORPORATION MEMBER, SIMPLY ATTEND ONE MEETING PER FISCAL YEAR

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Kelly Erisman
City of Lincoln
Proclamation

“Star City Pride Day”

Whereas, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people are our family members, neighbors and coworkers; and

Whereas, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people make significant contributions to the economic, political, social and intellectual life of our City, State and nation; and

Whereas, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people continue to face discrimination; and

Whereas, the City of Lincoln prides itself in maintaining a great quality of life; and

Whereas, the City is committed to fighting discrimination and seeking equal opportunity, fairness and inclusiveness for all its residents,

Now, therefore, I, Chris Beutler, Mayor of the City of Lincoln, Nebraska, do hereby proclaim July 9, 2016 as “Star City Pride Day” and encourage all residents to celebrate this day and join the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender members of our community in the continuing struggle for justice, peace and equality.

July 9, 2016
Date
Mayor Chris Beutler
Welcome to Star City Pride 2016! Today, I “Stand Proud” of what has been accomplished the past few years in order to make this year’s big move to the Pinnacle Bank Arena Festival Lot.

I would like to recognize a few people that have contributed so much to Star City Pride since its inception, helping to become the nonprofit organization we are today.

First, I want to recognize Tami Lewis-Ahrendt, whose idea to create and launch Pride for Lincoln in its inaugural year, is the foundation this organization is built on. Tami organized a nice picnic in the park with music and food. She was on the Star City Pride Board of Directors for several years and helped it grow bigger and better every year. Thank you, Tami for your great idea, and for your dedication!

When Tami first thought up the idea, she went directly to the Panic Bar owner, Kelly Erisman, and Kelly’s partner, Kara Kugler. Without hesitation, they were onboard in assisting the setup and running of Star City Pride. Over the past eight years, Kelly has allowed Star City Pride to use the Panic to host hundreds of fundraisers and countless Corporation meetings. She also spent many hours and a lot of her own money putting together the Pride Guide through 2014. Most importantly, however, Kelly and Kara provided a safe space at the Panic to let our community celebrate Pride for many years.

We suddenly lost Kelly recently and she will be greatly missed by all that knew her. She had a huge impact on so many people who were just trying to be themselves and not be judged for it. She provided so many with encouragement, and created a safe place for people to go for so many years. I would like to say “Thank you” to Kelly for her many years of support of Star City Pride. I think she would be proud of what we have accomplished to make this year’s Pride the best and biggest it has ever been.

I would like to extend thanks to Kara Kugler as well for all of her hard work and support for Star City Pride. She served many years as a Board Member and dedicated many hours assisting Star City Pride, Inc., to obtain its 501(c)3 status.

To all other Board Members who have served since the beginning—I want to thank you all as well for your time and dedication in making Star City Pride what it is today! Without all of you, Star City Pride would not exist.

Last, but not least, I owe a big thank you to all of our sponsors, volunteers and supporters. Without your time, donations and support, we would not be able to come together to celebrate Star City Pride each and every year.

STAND PROUD of yourselves and of our community, and enjoy the Star City Pride festival this year. There will be many more to come! Thank you all for your continued support and participation in Star City Pride!

Sincerely,

Vadra Stutzman, 2016 Star City Pride President
DIRECTIONS TO PINNACLE BANK ARENA
FESTIVAL LOT (FREE PARKING)

• Take West “O” Street to Sun Valley Boulevard.
• Take a right onto Sun Valley Boulevard and go north to Line Drive.
• From Line Drive follow the signs to the Festival Space parking lot.

Patrons may walk to the arena utilizing the connecting Pedestrian Bridge and will land at the northeast corner of the arena, approximately 28 feet off the ground and will also connect to the east side of the arena at ground level.
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY
4 P.M. PRIDE BEGINS
7 P.M. STAGE GRAND OPENING
7 - 9:30 P.M. LINCOLN & OMAHA HOUSE SHOWS WITH SPECIAL GUEST DENA CASS
9:30 & 11 P.M. D’FUNK
10:30 P.M. MR. & MISS STAR CITY PRIDE 2015 & 2016
12:30 A.M. GATES CLOSE

SATURDAY
1 P.M. GATES OPEN
5 - 7 P.M. COMMUNITY SPEAKERS
7 - 9:30 P.M. LOCAL PERFORMERS WITH SPECIAL GUEST DENA CASS
9:30 & 11 P.M. PIE IN THE SKY
10:30 P.M. MR. & MISS STAR CITY PRIDE 2015 & 2016
12:30 A.M. GATES CLOSE

KIDS ZONE
FRIDAY 2 - 7 P.M.

FOOD VENDORS
D’LEON’S
MANILA BAY
HEOYA

VENDOR BOOTHS
FRIDAY 4 - 8 P.M.
SATURDAY 1 - 9 P.M.

PRIDE PICNIC UNITARIAN CHURCH
FRIDAY 6 - 8 P.M. | 6300 A STREET

PRIDE IN THE PARK WITH OUTLINC
SATURDAY 11 A.M. - 1 P.M. | 21ST & Q

PRE-PRIDE PARTIES AT THE PANIC & THE ALLEY
THURSDAY NIGHT

BRUNCH & BIKE RIDE AT THE PANIC
SATURDAY 10 A.M. | 18TH & N

POST-PRIDE PARTIES AT THE PANIC & THE ALLEY
SUNDAY

PRIDE IN THE PARK
SATURDAY JULY 9
10A TO 12P | 20TH & U ST.
SNACKS, GAMES, PRIZES & FUN!
HOSTED BY OUTLINC
Always and forever known as “The Tower of Power,” Jessica Bower began her career as a female impersonator in September 1999. She took her first steps at Club Q right here in Lincoln, Neb., with a packed house and nervous as all get-out. Jessica embarked on a journey she knew was going to take her far and wide.

Competing for her first competition at The Max in Omaha, she reigned as Miss Max 16 in the year of the millennium. Jessica then went on to win many more titles including Top 10 Finalist at International Plus, Miss Nebraska International Plus, Miss Q 16, Miss Gay Capital City, Diva of the Midwest, Drag Idol #1, Former Grand Zarina to ICON, Miss Fire and Brimstone #1, Miss City Sweetheart, Miss Nebraska International Plus, Miss Jones St., and Nebraska National Showgirl @ Large. Jessica Bower is the reigning Miss Alley #1.

During her free time, Jessica has been a fulltime server for 9 South CharGrill for the past 9 years and will continue to serve the community with a smile…and her witty comments. She was the former fulltime show host at Club, and former Show Director for Karma Nightclub. She is now the Thursday night show host for The Alley. Jessica has traveled from state to state making a name for herself and also competing in three National competitions—placing top 10 in two and fourth in the nation for National Showgirl at Large. Working with many famous entertainers, she has been blessed to meet some of the finest entertainers in the business. She has worked with Joan Rivers, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Ralph Machio, Jerry Lewis, and The Osmond Family…just to name a few. Jessica has also worked with Drag stars Detox, April Carri-on, Yaria Sofia, Max, India Ferrah, William, and Chad Micheals.

Jessica West Bower is honored to come back for year two as our special guest Emcee for Lincoln’s Star City Pride.

“It is truly a blessing to have the chance to come back and show Lincoln that no matter how far you dream, only your ambition, hard work and dedication will take you as far as you wish,” Jessica said. “Happy Pride to all and remember, ‘It’s nice to be important, but more important to be nice.’

It’s nice to be important, but more important to be nice.

—JESSICA WEST BOWER
Born in Beardstown, Ill., Dena Cass began her career in the early ‘90s as a little boy with a dream. She believed that a dream could become a reality if you worked hard to make it happen. Dena is an 11-time National Title holder and has had the privilege of traveling the nation for more than 25 years. She resides in Davenport, Iowa, where she enjoys spending time with her husband-to-be and just living the housewife life!

“My life has been a fairy tale,” Dena said. “Not only have I met my prince, I’m now the All-American Goddess.”

As a headliner, Dena Cass has traveled to entertain in just about every state in the continental U.S. She has inspired many other entertainers to be grand in their art of illusion. After appearing on the The Ricky Lake Show, she came on to the drag scene and began touching the hearts and souls of many.

“No Matter how big you are, beauty is on the inside,” Dena says. “The shell on the outside is what you make of it!”

Dena took on the world of pageantry and has captured more than 115 titles including 11 National titles. Among them: Miss Gay USofA At Large, Miss Continental At Large, Miss National ShowGirl, Miss National United States At Large, and All-American Goddess @ Large…to name a few. She is a staple in the world of female Impersonation, encouraging others to dream big and make it happen!

As one of the headliners for Star City Pride 2016, Dena Cass wants you to sit back, relax and enjoy this journey as you witness The Big, The Bold and The Beautiful. We welcome the incredibly talented, humble and legendary, Dena Cass!
D*FUNK is a seven-piece dynamic and diverse cover band formed in 2003 in Lincoln, Neb. Stylistically, D*FUNK never strays too far from its veteran funk roots, yet always manages to infuse modern Top 40 pop, as well. The band’s level of professionalism is always high while creating a party atmosphere at every opportunity they have.

D*FUNK consists of experienced musicians who push themselves to stay tight and in the pocket, paving the foundation for a killer male and female vocalist. The result—in almost every instance—is an alluring dance floor full of people sharing in the experience. Their schedule stays filled with booking parties years in advance from corporate, weddings, Husker Tailgates, annual city celebrations, neighborhood associations, clubs, and opening up for national acts like The Temptations.
With more than 35 years of performing under her belt, Miss Star City Pride 2015 Sheza Mann brought the legendary vocal classics to the stage at every turn. Known for her quick wit and sharp tongue-in-cheek humor, Sheza raised a great deal of money this year for Pride. However, she has been a supporter of the festival since its inception, with countless fundraisers to her credit.

She may be known by some as “The Queen of Mean,” but her heart for this organization has always been pure. There’s a saying that has reigned true for decades: “If you don’t want it done, then don’t ask Sheza.” She has done many things for the Lincoln community over the years, and often jokes she’s done more fundraisers for NAP, Friendship Home, Camp Kindle and Star City Pride than she has for herself in years.

The former show director for The Q, a former board member of the Lancaster County Health Department, the creator and producer of the performance troop The Q Review, Sheza has done a little bit of it all.

“I’ve done so much crap, it’s hard to remember it all,” Sheza joked.

A Mr. and Miss Imaginations, Miss Capital City, Miss Q, Miss City Sweetheart, Mr. Parallel Galaxy and more, Sheza’s resume has continued through time. Producing and directing plays, acting, makeup design, and countless show cast memberships, she remains humble and has always tried to give back to her Queens and her community. She was proud to add the Miss Star City Pride title and reign to experience, and will surely assist for years to come.

“I’m wishing you all a safe and happy Pride this year,” Sheza said.
As your Mr. Star City Pride, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone in the community. For without you Star City Pride would not have been possible in 2015 and a greater one in 2016. The Volunteers were amazing and Holly Pierce did an amazing job organizing them and ensuring that they were available during pride to help. To the Board of Directors, Riley ("yes you can wear the sash"), Kimmer, Nellie, Kephanie, and Vadra, thank you for your support over the last year from helping me with fundraising ideas, collecting money, and putting up with my silly costumes.

To the owners of the Panic Bar, Kara and Kelly, you provided me with a place to express myself, a place for people to gather for some entertainment, and a venue for Star City Pride. Without you and your establishment none of this would have been possible. Jason McMorris and Alexander Perez, you provided invaluable assistance in helping me with costume ideas, performing techniques, makeup ideas, and giving me that crazy look when I wanted to do something different. Your initial reactions to costume ideas and a good slap upside the head helped me become a better performer and entertainer.

I would especially like to thank my husband, John W. Smith-Burns Jr. You stood by my side when I wanted to run for Mr. Star City Pride, you helped me get to and from shows, you provided me with the emotional support I needed when I thought things were going downhill. You helped me remember costume items and even forget a few. I will always appreciate what you have done for me this year and the unconditional love you gave me all year long. I love you from the bottom of my heart.

I hope to see you all this year at Star City Pride 2016 at the Pinnacle Arena on July 8th and 9th. It is going to be one heck of a Star City Pride. Thank you for letting me serve as your Mr. Star City Pride over the past year.
Thursday: Pre Pride Strip Night $200 1st $100 2nd place prizes
Friday: Fendi
Saturday: Gigi’s Dollhouse 2.0
Sunday: Post Pride With Dena Cass

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HISTORY OF STAR CITY PRIDE

Kelly Erisman’s contributions to Star City Pride and the LGBT community were countless.

From hosting the event outside her establishment for years, to the monetary contributions from fundraisers, The Panic and her own pocket, she always gave back. For years, she even designed and created the annual Pride Guide.

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– Sen. Adam Morfeld
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Southeast Community College adheres to a set of core values that drive the decisions and actions of the institution.

1. Excellence – Commitment to the highest level of performance in all facets of the College’s programs, services, and operations through effective investment and support of all assets.
2. Integrity – Continuous pursuit of fulfillment of mission and goals through transparency and ethical practices in all College operations.
3. Innovation – Commitment to inquiry and the respectful challenging of assumptions to promote creativity, alternative points of view, and opportunities for ongoing discovery.
4. Inclusion – Promotion of opportunities and advancement for a diverse and dynamic student, faculty/staff, and community population through the creation of a positive, compassionate, and reflective culture.
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It is the policy of Southeast Community College to provide equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in all admission, attendance, and employment matters to all persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, marital status, national origin, ethnicity, veteran status, sexual orientation, disability, or other factors prohibited by law or College policy. Inquiries concerning the application of Southeast Community College’s policies on equal opportunity and nondiscrimination should be directed to the Vice President for Access/Equity/Diversity, SCC Area Office, 301 S. 68th St. Place, Lincoln, NE 68510, 402-323-3412, FAX 402-323-3420, or jsoto@southeast.edu.

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La política pública de Southeast Community College es de proveer equidad, y prohíbe discriminación, en todos asuntos referentes a la admisión, participación, y empleo contra toda persona por motivo de raza, color, religión, sexo, edad, estado civil, origen nacional, etnicidad, condición de veterano, orientación sexual, incapacidad, u otros factores prohibidos por ley o política del Colegio. Preguntas relacionadas a la política sobre uidad/antidiscriminación de Southeast Community College deben dirigirse a: Vice President for Access/Equity/Diversity, SCC Area Office, 301 S 68 St Place, Lincoln, NE 68510, 402-323-3412, FAX 402-323-3420, o jsoto@southeast.edu.

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A friend, a lover, a boss, a business woman; an intellect, a giver, a joker, a mentor. You can ask just about anyone, and each will have their own story to tell about a woman that meant so much to the community, and always found a way into your heart.

Kelly was loyal, honest, and sensitive. She always had a good poker face and a tough outer shell. Most can recall her infectious smile, and an almost calm, but wise, humble manner about her. And none can forget her ornery side. She loved to laugh and play pranks on people with patience, calculation, and premeditation...always waiting in anticipation with that infamous burst of laughter.

While many know of her longtime bar business, some often forget her athleticism, love of the ocean and marine life, and her sense of adventure. She was techy through and through, and never scoffed at the chance to learn something new all on her own. Most can say they’ve never seen her eat an entire meal, but just about everyone knows of her cooking…and her cheesecake! And lest we forget: Kelly’s love of and for people.

After bringing home the first-ever Big 8 title in softball for the Husker’s in 1982, this centerfielder was injured and later redshirted. Already talented and loved in life, at 19, and in this moment, Kelly’s true legacy and legend began. She bought into the bar business and opened “Cherchez La Femme” in the lower level of the original N Street drive-in. This was in the era where many men’s and women’s bars were separated. After buying out her business partner a few
years later, she acquired the entire bar and changed the name to “Kelly’s.” It was in 1987 that she brought on Joe Swanda as a business partner, remodeled the upstairs bar, combined both bars, and renamed the establishment, “The Panic.” Derived from the name and use of a “panic room,” Kelly created an inclusive, safe space for all. In a short time, she developed business and personal relationships that would last her a lifetime.

Kelly shared her business with all like it was an extension of her family living room. In nearly 35 years of business, she never closed the doors and always remained open. She created a warm and welcoming atmosphere and instilled those values onto her staff. One of many hallmarks in her career and business was cooking and serving a free Thanksgiving feast to the community and her patrons, year after year. Realizing many members of our community back in the day (and even some today) were left without a home to go to for traditional “family” holidays, this was one small way she could give back to the community. Whether you supported her business or not she always supported and fought for you.

As most know, Kelly gave and gave and gave…all back to the community. She hosted countless benefits for many charitable causes, never taking a dime “off the door.” She also gave personal donations, her time, her energy, and her art to many of those causes. She was a self-taught graphic artist, who put a lot of clever thought into each advertisement that she did for her bar, as well as other performers, events and benefits. Six previous Pride Guide designs are also a testament to her creativity. Payment for services: free of charge.

Infamous for her love of Halloween, she and her staffs spent countless hours decorating the bar each year for their grandiose parties. It was also known by many that every July 15 was also a national holiday…her birthday! She absolutely loved receiving the silly gifts she could later use as pranks. If it shocked or awed, she was always one for the surprise. Her generosity for others carried to her staff with her outlandish monetary gifts from one-nighters in Vegas, to iPhones, to front-row concerts galore. It was always important for her to give back.

Not long after getting in to the bar business, Kelly met Kara Kugler, whose friendship would develop into the love of her life after only a few years. They built a home filled with love and laughter, friends and pets. They complemented one another, filling in the gaps of strengths and weaknesses. They weren’t looking for love when they came together, but they were having too much fun to be with anyone else. That’s not to say they didn’t drive each other nuts from time to time—they knew how to “push each other’s buttons!” Kara and Kelly would have celebrated 29 years together on May 28. While they both lived a very public life with the bar, they quietly married on December 28, 2015, shortly after the Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality. They decided their “28 and a half-year engagement” was long enough.

Kelly was diagnosed with stage 3 melanoma in 2010. She fought through surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, and many medications’ side effects. After surviving all of this, she developed pancreatitis and was in severe pain in her final year. She had every type of test and was poked and prodded at by a team of very good doctors and nurses trying to help. Kelly kept a stiff upper lip, and put on her “poker face” for others, as she didn’t let most know she was suffering. That was her way—simply not to say. Life wasn’t always fair, but she always got back up, and she never gave up.

Kelly’s last day on Earth was spent doing what she loved—relaxing at home with her dogs, Oso and Onyx, on the deck smoking a brisket. She was catching some sun, and watching the baby Finches nesting above her deck.

We know these few words are but a snapshot of her life and only a glimpse into her worth, but Star City Pride owes her a tremendous amount of gratitude for her dedication and support to this organization as well as the community. Her endless contributions to Star City Pride helped build the foundation that we stand together on today.

Kelly’s laughter and spirit will live on in all of us, forever, and while she will be truly missed…she will never be forgotten.
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LINCOLN, NE 68510
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