

Knox County Commission



AMY BROYLES
COMMISSIONER, SECOND DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: March 14, 2014

On Saturday, March 15, Commissioner Amy Broyles will be speaking at a rally organized to show solidarity with Ugandan & Nigerian LGBT people. In February, an Anti-Homosexual Law was signed in Uganda. Since then, members of the LGBT community there and in Nigeria have been harassed, beaten, murdered, disowned by families, fired from their employment, and many are on the run, underground and in hiding.

"This is what can happen when discrimination is codified into law," remarked Commissioner Broyles. "Those of us who are fortunate enough to live here in the United States cannot turn a blind eye to those around the world who do not enjoy the same freedoms we do. We cannot ignore that these people are being persecuted, even killed, simply because of who they love."

This is a multi-city event to show support for the LGBT people of Uganda & Nigeria, organized by local activist and "Lavender Table" host, Gary Elgin. "We gather together to voice our support for the United States to grant immediate political asylum and expedite the visas of these people. We also gather to vehemently protest anti-LGBT laws around the world," states Elgin.

The rally will take place at Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, at 2:00 pm.

"Our own congregation here at TVUUC has experienced first-hand the violence born of fear, hatred, and discrimination of LGBT people," adds Commissioner Broyles. "We cannot stand by and allow it to flourish elsewhere. The Ugandan and Nigerian LGBT people need our help, as well as that of the entire world. I hope to see many people come out in support."

For more information call: (865) 446-0584 or e-mail: thelavendertable@gmail.com

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Commissioner Amy Broyles will be appearing on "The Hubert Smith Radio Show" this coming Sunday, March 16, 10 a.m. - 12 noon (EDT) on WUTK-FM 90.3 (also streaming on www.WUTKradio.com and simulcast on UTTV Comcast digital TV ch. 194 and campus ch. 65).

Commissioner Broyles will be discussing recent and pending actions taken by the Knox County Commission, including the "Free Speech" Ordinance, which is up for second reading at this month's Commission meeting on Monday, March 24th.

She will also be discussing her recent trip to the National Association of Counties Legislative Conference in Washington, DC, to promote the role of county government, and study and advocate on issues that are being debated in Congress that affect our county's residents. She will also have information about her work with Women of NACo.

Additionally, she has a lot to relate about her recent trip to San Francisco, California, to study and work with the Network of Spiritual Progressives. The Network of Spiritual Progressives is an interfaith advocacy arm of *Tikkun* magazine, seeking to transform our materialist and corporate-dominated society into a caring society through consciousness raising, advocacy, and public awareness campaigns that emphasize generosity, peace, and social transformation. The NSP shifts mass consciousness by challenging status-quo ideas about what is possible. It was founded in 2005 by *Tikkun* Editor Michael Lerner, Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister, and Princeton University Professor Cornel West (author of *Race Matters*).

"The contacts I made and the information I gained in California help sustain me in the kind of work I engage in here in Knox County. I believe in building bridges, collaborative problem solving, the inherent worth and dignity of every person, non-violent communication, and the sacredness and wonder of the universe of which we are all a part. These are all part of the NSP message, and it resonates deeply for me," said Commissioner Broyles.

She also adds, "You don't have to believe in God, deny science, or be part of a religion to be a spiritual progressive. Spiritual progressives use an enhanced value system, called the New Bottom Line, to assess the value and impact of the economic, political, and social arrangements of our world. We also seek to heal and transform the world - which is what *Tikkun* means, literally translated."

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