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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sussex Pride Marks the 25th Anniversary of the Transgender Day of Remembrance

DELAWARE – Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) will be observed this year globally on November 20th. This observance offers communities an opportunity to remember transgender people lost in the previous year to violence, as well as to highlight ongoing anti-trans issues across the world.

TDOR was initially founded by Gwendolyn Ann Smith, Nancy Nangeroni, and Jahaira DeAlto, in order to memorialize two black transgender women who had been murdered: Rita Hester and Chanelle Pickett. A third woman, Monique Thomas, was also memorialized and included in the creation of the web project “Remembering Our Dead”. The first TDOR vigil was held in San Francisco in 1999 and today is observed worldwide. Candlelight vigils are generally held, with participants reading the names of those who have been lost as a result of anti-trans violence.

Gwendolyn Ann Smith has stated that “Transgender Day of Remembrance seeks to highlight the losses we face due to anti-transgender bigotry and violence. I am no stranger to the need to fight for our rights, and the right to simply exist is first and foremost. With so many seeking to erase transgender people — sometimes in the most brutal ways possible — it is vitally important that those we lose are remembered, and that we continue to fight for justice.”

This year in particular, the fear of anti-trans violence is at the forefront of many minds. At the time of this writing 350 transgender people have been murdered in 2024 globally, an increase from 2023. It is imperative to note that trans women of color are disproportionately affected by this violence. Multiple human rights groups have also noted an increase in hate crimes against transgender people, while a lack of legal protections often leaves the community under supported and without options for justice. Each name on each annual TDOR list marks a person who should still be here, and who deserved to live a full and happy life. Each year, communities dream of a world in which not one more name is added to these lists.

Now more than ever, transgender people globally need allyship and action towards full equality and freedom. “I think that for trans people like us, these losses can feel so heavy and overwhelming,” stated Sussex Pride volunteer Soren Ruppelius. “But, I think that we have the potential to hold even more hope. We are a strong community, and we know how to care for one another. No one of us is alone, even on the darkest days. Today we will mourn, and tomorrow we will continue the work of creating a better world.”

Sussex Pride's TDOR vigil will be held at the UUSD Unitarian Universalists of Southern Delaware (UUSD) on November 20th at 6:30pm. UUSD is located at 30486 Lewes Georgetown Highway, in Lewes, Delaware.

This event will include a candlelight vigil and reading of names, as well as light refreshments and resources from community representatives. Event co-chairs include Vienna Cavazos, Randi Johnson, Lee Trueheart, and Soren Ruppelius. Please join us as we mourn those lost, and strive for a safe and brighter future.

References

GLAAD. (2019, November 8). Transgender Day of Remembrance | GLAAD. [Glaad.org. https://glaad.org/tdor/](https://glaad.org/tdor/)

Wareham, J. (2024, November 16). 350 Transgender People Murdered In 2024: "Will The Violence Ever End?" Forbes. [link](#)

Wikipedia Contributors. (2019, July 29). Transgender Day of Remembrance. Wikipedia; Wikimedia Foundation. [link](#)

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SUSSEX PRIDE

Sussex Pride works to celebrate, strengthen, and support the LGBTQ+ community in Sussex County and the state of Delaware, working through a social justice lens. We focus on arts & culture, health & wellness, social and support groups, and advocacy for our community. (www.sussexpride.org)

SUSSEX PRIDE TRANS

Sussex Pride Trans is a community of trans & nonbinary individuals in Sussex County and greater Delaware (www.sussexpride.org/trans)

DELAWARE ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT

Delaware Anti-Violence Project, a program of Sussex Pride, works to address violence against the LGBTQ+ community. The Delaware Anti-Violence Project is a proud member of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. (www.sussexpride.org/antiviolence)