



P. O. Box 24565 Los Angeles, CA 90024 (310) 472-8952 <http://www.pflagla.org>

February-March 2007

Newsletter 245

OUR MISSION

Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) promotes the health and well-being of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered persons, their families and friends through: **support**, to cope with an adverse society; **education**, to enlighten an ill-informed public, and **advocacy**, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. PFLAG provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

Our meetings are always held on the 3rd **Wednesday** of each month at the Westwood United Methodist Church, 10497 Wilshire Bl., NE corner of Wilshire and Warner. Take the 405 Freeway to the Wilshire Bl. East exit. Continue 1.5 miles. The entry on Warner has an elevator; another entry is through the sanctuary to the corridor, then upstairs to the Fellowship Hall - 3rd floor. There is also easy access from the north driveway. Doors open at 7:00 pm; general meeting begins at 7:30 pm.

PFLAG starts each meeting with one or two rap groups where individuals can share their concerns, questions, and understanding about and with the gay person or persons in their families. Additionally, if there is sufficient interest, an advocacy group will meet simultaneously and discuss how to effectively influence change in GLBT civil rights. After these sessions, there is a short refreshment break followed by a speaker or panel of speakers whose topic includes subjects pertinent to the families, gays and lesbians.

OUR NEXT SPEAKERS

February 21, 2007 (Wednesday)

HRC (**Human Rights Campaign**) - Doug Dombek will be our guest speaker and present the mission and activities of this important gay rights organization.

March 21, 2007 (Wednesday)

Jim Stramel, Professor of Philosophy at Santa Monica College, will be our guest speaker and present the state of the science on the causes of sexual orientation and whether that matters to gay rights.

HELPLINES, CHAPTERS & CONTACTS 9 am to 9 pm

Area Code 310

West LA: 454 6681 (Liz)
LIZARM@aol.com

West LA: 472 8952 (Adele)

South Bay Chapter: 546-2721 (Dick)

Area Code 562

Long Beach Chapter: 403 1234

Area Code 626

Pasadena Chapter: 914 1241 (Denny)

450-9279 (meeting info)

Area Code 661

Santa Clarita Chapter: 254 2177 (Dave)

Area Code 714

Orange County Chapter: 997 8047

Area Code 805

Ventura Chapter: 647-0558

498 4964 (Rita or Steve)

Area Code 818

San Fernando Valley: 788 8678 (Lynette)
Lynette114@aol.com

Woodland Hills: 340 8945 (Irene)

Area Code 909

Redlands Chapter: 335 2005 (Kathy)

Colton: 825 8368 (Norma)

Area Code 949

South Orange County: 459 2834 (Karyl)

OTHER HELPLINES / RESOURCES

PFLAG/LA Speakers Bureau / Contact Ron & Andy
andynron@adelphia.net

Asian Pacific Islander:
(818) 368 2008 (Ellen) HKameya@juno.com

Transgender: (818) 985-9319 (Chris)

PFLAG's Transgender Special Outreach Network
(TSON):

Karen Gross (216) 691 HELP / KittenGr@aol.com
www.transfamily.org

LA Gay & Lesbian Center:
(323) 993 7400

Straight Spouses:
(510) 595 1005 (Amity Pierce Buxton)

The TREVOR PROJECT

24-hour nationwide suicide prevention line for
GLBT and Questioning youth.

(866) 4 U TREVOR / (866) 488 7386
www.thetrevorproject.org

Merging Identities:

One of the National Conference for Community &
Justice's programs that helps gay, lesbian and
bisexual youth develop positive identities relative to
sexual orientation, culture, religion and family.
(562) 435 8184 www.nccjla.org

PFLAG National

(202) 467 8180 www.pflag.org

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

If there is anything you would like to see in the newsletter,
please e-mail me at haichi87@sbcglobal.net, call me at
(818) 985-9319, or just drop me a note at our PFLAG
meetings! Regards, Chris Haiss

Deadline for submissions: March 1
(April/May issue)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Two thousand and seven should be the year of conversations - conversations with friends, colleagues, family, neighbors, and acquaintances. Tell them about our families - how much we love our gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual children; how same-sex couples love each other just like opposite-sex couples; how they deserve equal rights, just like anyone else.

Why, you may ask? Because there was a lot of good news over the past 3 months to capitalize on and so much we can gain in the next two years if we succeed.

First, given the sea-change in the US Congress in November, using our children's rights to drive voter turnout appears to have been discredited nationwide. One clear upshot is that the Federal Marriage Amendment is dead - for at least the next two years.

Second, steam seems to be running out of the anti-same-sex marriage campaign in our nation. Although seven states did pass new constitutional amendments last November, their margin of victory was lower than in previous state votes. Our neighbor Arizona rejected such an amendment push - a happy occasion indeed.

Third, in December, esteemed state assemblyman Mark Leno re-introduced the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act to our state legislature (AB 43). It is likely that we will be needed in Sacramento later this year to lobby for its passage. Who knows, maybe the Governor will sign it this time - he has just declared himself a centrist and can no longer seek re-election.

Fourth, the California Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal of a lower court ruling that upheld the state's ban on same-sex marriage. We have right and reason and a great team of lawyers to argue for our families.

Please do your part in spreading our message. Seek out speaking opportunities - at political club meetings (these people vote!), churches, synagogues, PTA meetings - wherever the movable middle is present. The movable middle is the roughly one third of the US population that believe in fairness and equal rights, but don't yet understand the great need for true equal rights for our LGBT children. The other two thirds are those who are already on our side and those who just won't listen.

So, repeat after me:

Share our truths with the movable middle in 2007.

Share our truths with the movable middle in 2007.

Share our truths with the movable middle in 2007.

Steve Krantz, PFLAG Los Angeles

You can share our truths, for example, by writing a letter to the editor! Here's Steve's LA Times letter re "Haggard bares his soul in note to congregation," Nov. 6

I suspect that the Rev. Ted Haggard knew he was gay from an early age, but his religious fundamentalist environment taught him to despise his very nature.

So what is a gay man to do — be himself and be ostracized or hide his sexuality and be accepted?

Unfortunately, Haggard made the wrong choice. The root cause of this and similar tragedies is religious fundamentalism and orthodoxy — the belief in the literal truth of ancient texts. Much of the world's suffering today stems from this kind of rigid and misguided thinking.

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

NEW YEAR, NEW LAWS!

EIGHT NEW LAWS ADVANCING LGBT EQUAL RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS IN CALIFORNIA!

California's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community will ring in the new year with more legal protections and rights. On January 1, eight new laws affecting LGBT Californians went into effect, including a law that requires companies contracting with the state to provide employees with domestic partners the same benefits given to employees with spouses:

Equal Benefits in State Contracting (2003)

AB 17: Assemblymember Christine Kehoe, D-San Diego

Prohibits the state from contracting with businesses that do not offer equal benefits to employees with domestic partners on the same terms that benefits are offered to employees with spouses.

State Income Tax Equity Act

SB 1827: Senator Carole Migden, D-San Francisco

Enables registered domestic partners to file joint state income tax returns and have their earned income treated as community property.

Civil Rights Housing Act of 2006

AB 2800: Assemblymember John Laird, D-Santa Cruz

Prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability and sex (including gender identity), marital status, sexual orientation, familial status and source of income.

Older Californians Equality and Protection Act

AB 2920: Assemblymember Mark Leno, D-San Francisco

Ensures that LGBT seniors are adequately served by government services available to older Californians.

Nondiscrimination in State Programs and Activities Act

SB 1441: Senator Sheila Kuehl, D-Santa Monica

Prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in state-operated programs.

Equality in Prevention and Services for Domestic Abuse Act

AB 2051: Assemblymember Rebecca Cohn, D-Saratoga

Creates a fund to develop and support education and services for LGBT victims of domestic violence.

Gwen Araujo Justice for Victims Act

AB 1160: Assemblymember Sally Lieber, D-San Jose

Creates jury instructions and prosecutor training to limit the use of so-called "panic strategies" to influence criminal trial proceedings.

Code of Fair Campaign Practices

AB 1207: Speaker pro Tem Leland Yee, D-San Francisco

Prohibits the use of negative appeals based on prejudice against LGBT people by candidates who sign the voluntary pledge in the Code of Fair Campaign Practices. (Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed a similar bill in 2005.)

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

- Joseph Harounian, Steve Krantz, Marty Olsen and George Unger talked to students at Milken High School.

**Please help us reduce costs
by signing up to receive our newsletter
electronically!**


Just send an e-mail to sjcgeo@rocketmail.com , list name and address under which you currently receive our newsletter by snail mail so that we can delete that address from our mailing list, and we'll make sure that you'll receive the next newsletter by e-mail.

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"
 "When the world is made better for one gay or lesbian person, it's made better for everyone."
Ang Lee, Director of Brokeback Mountain


Great News!
 Now you can read our **newsletter online** at
<http://www.pflagla.org/resources.html>

A great place to volunteer and help GLTQ youth in crisis!


The Trevor Project, the only national crises and suicide prevention hotline for Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Questioning youth, is looking for individuals to be trained as Helpline Counselors.
If you have the willingness and desire to help others, we want to hear from you!
 No experience is required- all training will be provided. The next 40-hour training program will be held March 7 (evening only), March 10 – 11, and March 17-18. Upon completion of training, your commitment is only 10 hours per month. We hope you will become part of this amazing and rewarding program.
 For more information or to sign up for the training, please contact Brian Goldman at 310-271-8845 ext 228 or brian.goldman@thetrevorproject.org

South Africa 

On November 30, South Africa became the first country in Africa and only the fifth in the world to legalize same-sex marriages!

Mexico 


On November 10, Mexico City legalized gay unions and became only the second Latin American city to authorize gay unions after Buenos Aires in 2002.

Arizona 


On November 7, Arizona became the first state to defeat an amendment to ban same-sex marriage, bucking a strong national trend by refusing to change its constitution to define marriage as a one-man, one-woman institution.

Israel 

In an unprecedented ruling, Israel's Supreme Court ordered the government on November 21 to recognize same-sex marriages performed abroad.

Massachusetts 

On January 2, Massachusetts lawmakers approved a measure that could give voters a chance next year to ban gay marriage in the only U.S. state where it is legal and overturn a historic ruling by the state's highest court.

United Nations (UN) 

On December 5, Norway, on behalf of 54 states, delivered a historic UN statement condemning human rights violations directed against people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

T r a n s A c t i o n

Trans in Los Angeles?

GenderQueerRevolution Coffeetalk

The Los Angeles chapter of GQR meets monthly on the 4th Sunday of every month in the meeting room of Cafe Tropical, 2900 W. Sunset Blvd., Silverlake, CA
www.genderqueerreolution.org

Guys Chat

Organized by the FTM Alliance, meets on the third Sunday of every month from 11am-1pm at Plummer Park Community Center, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046
http://www.ftmalliance.org

Transgender Perceptions

Organized by the LA Gay & Lesbian Center, meets every 1st & 3rd Friday, 8 - 9:30 pm, at The Village, 1125 N McCadden Place, Los Angeles 90038.

Trans in Orange County?

OCFTM meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at 5:00pm at the new OC Center (12752 Garden Grove Blvd, Suite 101, Garden Grove CA 92853). No minors please, unless they are transgendered youth.

Contact Pat for more details:
ocftm@aol.com ~or~ patman420@juno.com
ocftm voice mail (714) 534-0990 ex 340

Trans in Long Beach?

Trannytalk

Contact Alexandra McGee at 562-489-1017 to find out more about *Trannytalk*, a transgender support group that meets every 3rd Sunday of the month from 4-6 pm.
[*Trannytalk* is sponsored by Unity Fellowship Church of Long Beach, 717 E. Pacific Coast Hwy, Long Beach, CA 90806]

Trans-Tastic CLUB

Meets at the Long Beach Center on Thursday evenings from 6:00-7:30 pm. Contact Anna Rubin at The Center (562) 434-4455 ext.231

Trans in Victorville?

Contact Priscilla at westnart@yahoo.com for date, time, and location of their monthly dinner! Although primarily for the trans community, the dinners are open to all LGBT people and their friends/families/supporters.

First Openly Transgender Person Elected to a State-Level Office in the US!

"As a father, I am proud of all my children when they set goals for themselves that are life-affirming and benefit a greater good. I feel that same sense of pride in Kim Coco."

--Robert Iwamoto Jr.

Hawaii--Kim Coco Iwamoto's successful run for a Board of Education seat is being hailed by transgender groups in Hawaii and on the mainland.

Iwamoto, a 38-year-old civil-rights attorney who holds a Juris Doctor from the University of New Mexico School of Law, beat two former state lawmakers and an incumbent on November 7 to take an at-large Oahu seat on the board. She joins 13 other members who will oversee the statewide Department of Education and set policies for public schools.

With her win, Iwamoto, who was born on Kauai, reached the highest office ever for an elected transgender, said Denis Dison of the Victory Fund, a Washington, D.C.-based group that monitors races involving lesbian, gay and transgender candidates.

Marriage Oath In Ohio County Asks If Person Is Transsexual

By 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(Springfield, Ohio) Couples planning to marry in Clark County, Ohio are asked if either person is transsexual. Under Ohio law a person's birth gender is the only one considered legal. It is believed to be the only jurisdiction in the country where people are asked to swear they are not transgendered before receiving a marriage license.

The practice in Clark County came to light when the Springfield News Sun asked county clerks across the state for copies of the oaths they use when issuing marriage licenses. "Do you solemnly swear you are not a transsexual..." the Clark clerk asks people when they apply for a marriage license.

The addition of the sexuality question dates back to 1987 when a judge ruled a woman and her fiancé could not be granted a marriage license because the fiancé had been born female but had female-to-male sex reassignment surgery.

The ruling held that chromosomes, not genitals, determine sex. Following the decision the county decided to ask the question in the oath.

But while a trans woman can legally marry a female in Ohio gay and lesbian couples cannot marry. In 2004 Ohio passed a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage.

[Note from the editor: Right, we all **know** our chromosomes!]

Siblings of "out" GLBT

Hi, S. - welcome to PFLAG!

We're glad that you have found us. My son came out to us at age 14. I didn't handle it with nearly the grace and strength that you have, but we made our way through that time despite my and my husband's many missteps. Our son is now 21, and a happy, healthy young man.

I just want to share some thoughts about your daughter's situation. Our daughter was at the end of fifth grade when our son came out. She and her brother were and are very close, and she rallied to his side right away. Her loyalty to him and her protectiveness of him were genuine, but none of us realized until later, when she was ready to talk about it, just how hard those days were for her. We were living in a very conservative area, and our son's coming out made a lot of waves.

She started middle school as the sister of "that gay boy." She was teased about it, and made to feel different because of it. Her family's stability and values were questioned, and she absorbed a lot of the critical speech being directed our way. Just this year, she had to write an essay about an experience that was difficult for her, and she chose to write about those middle school years, and even her early high school years, when she was in the shadow of her big brother and his notoriety.

She wrote about how in defending him--loudly, proudly, unflinchingly-- she lost sight of who she was as a person unique to herself. She also wrote about how she battled a lot of resentment of the brother she loved so much, feeling guilt over the anger she felt toward him for turning our lives upside down. She was angry with us, too, first because we did not support him, and then because we came to support him so actively (our calendar was full of events involving PFLAG or the Lesbian and Gay Rights Lobby, and we spent a lot of our energy in defending ourselves to family and church). She wrote that after years of defending her brother, after he had somehow reached a place of acceptance and even of belonging among his classmates, she was left with a two-year history of being the embattled, angry sister.

How had it happened that Eric now had friendship and support in his junior and senior years, while she had built so many walls between herself and her peers that she was the lonely freshman and sophomore? That little girl carried so much on her shoulders during those sixth and seventh grade years when her biggest concerns might have been whether or not she made first chair in band or whether or not the boy across the classroom had a crush on her. We didn't see the pressure she felt at the time, because she handled it so quietly and behind such an outwardly strong demeanor.

If I had to do it over again, I would not change the fact that she knew of her brother's revelation, nor would I change the fact that our family went to great lengths and made substantial changes in order to safeguard our son's mental health and physical safety. But I would change the amount of time I spent in watching, listening to, and just plain being with my daughter in every step our family took along the way. I would

change the way I didn't look deeply enough or long enough or silently enough into her eyes when we did talk about it all. I would listen more and listen better than I did to the quiet girl who seemed to have it all together, but secretly needed more than she was getting. Our daughter ended up benefiting from seeing a therapist--her brother's same therapist--because that man could help both kids work through all that had happened in our family over those years. She needed to be heard, and when she began therapy, we all learned more about how to hear what she was finally starting to say.

So, I'm not saying your family experience will run the same course, or that your daughter may find it all as difficult as mine did. I'm just saying as a mom who has been there that the siblings of the kids who come out may not always be coping as well as we think they are. I'm saying that we need to be careful with them, as in full of care...watchful...sensitive.

Again, welcome...and as others have said, what an amazing lady you seem to be. Your children are lucky to have such a mom.

Love, TK

◆
Read more about the November election at
<http://www.victoryinstitute.org>

GAY CANDIDATES WIN IN RECORD NUMBERS ACROSS U.S.

Sixty-seven *Victory*-endorsed candidates were elected to federal, state and local offices, with some winning historic races that make them the first openly gay or lesbian candidates ever elected in their states or legislative bodies such as

Patricia Todd, the first openly gay person ever elected to any office in the state of **Alabama**;

Kathy Webb, the first openly gay person ever elected to any office in the state of **Arkansas**;

Al McAffrey, the first openly gay person ever elected to the **Oklahoma** state legislature;

Jolie Justus, the first openly gay state senator in **Missouri** history;

Matt McCoy, the first openly gay candidate ever elected to the **Iowa** legislature;

Ken Keechl, who won a seat on the Broward County Commission in **Florida**, beating an appointee of Gov. Jeb Bush;

Jamie Pedersen, who becomes the third consecutive openly gay person to be elected in the **Washington** State House;

Judge Virginia Linder will join Rives Kistler on the **Oregon** Supreme Court, making it the first state ever to have two openly gay Supreme Court Justices.