



PFLAG - LA

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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

December-January 2008

Newsletter 250

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

December 19, 2007 (Wednesday)

Lana Lawless, Professional Golfer, will talk about her life experiences as a transgender woman.

January 16, 2008 (Wednesday)

To be announced; please check with our website www.pflagla.org

**When you don't need PFLAG any more
that is when PFLAG needs you!**

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: 798 3794 (Brian)
linus_blanket_2001@yahoo.com

Area Code 661

Santa Clarita Chapter: 254 2177 (Dave)

Area Code 714

Orange County Chapter: 997 8047

Area Code 805

Ventura Chapter: www.pflagventura.org
647 0588
Thousand Oaks 498 4964 (Rita & Steve)
Ventura / Ojai: 646 5318 (Tom & Nanette)

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)

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! Happy New Year! Chris Haiss

Deadline for submissions: January 1
(February/March issue)

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

NEW!!! Hablamos español!

Leonor 818 243 5306 (home)
818 378 6406 (cell)

Julio 310 500 8645
espanol@pflagpasadena.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the fall gives way to the holiday season, we are celebrating some changes at PFLAG-LA.

President Steve Krantz has been elected Regional Director for the Southern Pacific Region of PFLAG National. We offer him our congratulations and thank him for his service to our chapter.

Karen Mason and I have been elected co-presidents by our chapter's board of directors. Ron Elecciri, who runs the Speakers Bureau so ably with his partner Andy, is our new vice-president.

In our first message, we thought we'd tell you a little about ourselves and our vision for the chapter. I'm Mariette Sawchuk, a member of PFLAG-LA for six years. I've served on the Board of Directors as secretary for four years. Professionally, I have been a teacher, a writer, and a fundraiser for non-profit organizations. My husband and I have identical twin sons who are both gay. Although we have always been supportive of them, I experienced a lot of pain and confusion when they came out to us. The only thing that helped was PFLAG. Thanks to the warmth, kindness, and generosity of everyone I met at PFLAG, I have grown to be not only a proud mother, but an advocate for the rights of all peoples and families.

Karen Mason is also the mother of a gay son. She has been a member of PFLAG-LA for seven years, and has served on the board of directors as treasurer for six years. A former newspaper journalist who owns a small business with her husband, Karen has participated in the Speakers Bureau and at monthly meetings. She, too, was upset by her son's coming out, and for many months spoke about it only at PFLAG meetings.

As parents who desperately needed the help and understanding of the rap groups, Karen and I are committed to making sure that support is available for every LGBT person, family member, and friend seeking it. To that end, we are looking for effective ways to reach the people who need us. We have developed two new brochures that target educators and therapists, in hopes of reaching young people and their parents. If you fall into one of those categories, we'd be happy to provide you with copies. Everyone can help spread the word by talking about their good experiences with PFLAG.

On behalf of the board, we'd like to wish you all a happy holiday, and extend an invitation to come back to a meeting in the new year.

Mariette Sawchuk and Karen Mason

Please support PFLAG!

We are enclosing an envelope for your TAX-DEDUCTIBLE annual dues and/or a year-end TAX-DEDUCTIBLE donation to PFLAG.

Your continued support is greatly appreciated. We are all in this struggle together, and every little bit you give goes a long way.

**Thanking you in advance!
Your PFLAG LA Board**

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

Conservative Groups Attack LGBT Youth Protections in Federal Court

November 27, 2007

SACRAMENTO – Anti-LGBT activists have filed a lawsuit in U.S. Federal Court attempting to repeal a new law designed to protect students that was recently signed into law by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. A coalition of conservative organizations is attempting to undo student safeguards designed to protect all youth, including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT).

The Student Civil Rights Act, SB 777, clarifies and reinforces existing protections currently in the state's education code, including California's definition of gender, which has been in place since 2000. The bill was authored by Sen. Sheila Kuehl, D-Santa Monica, and sponsored by Equality California. SB 777, which goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2008, protects students from harassment and bullying in public schools by making sure teachers and school administrators understand their responsibilities to protect youth and make California schools safer. Students are protected based on gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation.

Approximately 30 percent of California youth in grades seven to 11 report experiencing harassment or bullying based on their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation, according to the 2006 California Healthy Kids Survey.

Statement by EQCA Executive Director Geoff Kors:

"Both the Legislature and the governor have sent the clear message that discrimination will not be tolerated in California's public schools," said EQCA Executive Director Geoff Kors. "It is ironic that organizations that claim to support families are working to overturn a law that will protect students and help keep them in school. Equality California will work to preserve this law and ensure that all California students are safe in school."

Equality California is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots-based, statewide advocacy organization whose mission is to achieve equality and civil rights of all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Californians. You can visit their website at eqca.org

GAY HISTORY with LISA DIGUARDI

January 3, 1990

United State Secretary of Health & Human Services Louis Sullivan wrote a letter to Representative William Dannemeyer (R-CA) to assure him that the Department would not reprint a government report which showed that already high suicide rates among GLBT youth were skyrocketing. The report infuriated Dannemeyer, who claimed that recommendations of tolerance and anti-discrimination programs in schools would undermine family values.

Twenty-eight New Military Generals and Admirals Call for Repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell

Military Leaders Say Repealing Policy Banning Gays and Lesbians from Military Service Would Be Beneficial
11/30/2007

WASHINGTON- On the 14th anniversary of the signing of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, 28 retired, high-ranking military leaders have signed onto a letter calling for the policy's repeal. In the years since Don't Ask, Don't Tell was enacted, over 12,000 men and women have been discharged from the military under the policy. This sign-on letter marks the single largest number of Generals and Admirals from the U.S. Armed Forces to come out against the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy at one time. Here is the full text of the letter:

We respectfully urge Congress to repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. Those of us signing this letter have dedicated our lives to defending the rights of our citizens to believe whatever they wish. As General Colin Powell, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs said when the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy was enacted, it is not the place of the military or those in senior leadership to make moral judgments.

Scholarly data show that there are approximately one million gay and lesbian veterans in the United States today, as well as 65,000 gays and lesbians currently serving in our armed forces. They have served our nation honorably.

We support the recent comments of another former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General John Shalikashvili, who has concluded that repealing the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy would not harm, and would indeed help, our armed forces. As is the case in Britain, Israel, and other nations which allow gays and lesbians to serve openly, our service members are professionals who are able to work together effectively despite differences in race, gender, religion, and sexuality. Such collaboration reflects the strength and the best traditions of our democracy.

Lieutenant General Jerry Hilmes; Branch: Army
Vice Admiral Harold Koenig; Branch: Navy; Field: Medical
Vice Admiral James Zimble, Midlothian, VA; Branch: Navy; Field: Medical
Major General Leslie Burger, Vancouver, WA; Branch: Army; Field: Medical
Major General Alexander Burgin, Salem, OR; Branch: Army NG; Field: Artillery
Major General Michael Conrad, McLean, VA; Field: Infantry
Major General James Delk, Fair Oaks, CA; Branch: Army; Field: Medical
Major General Jack Farris, New Jersey; Branch: Air Force; Field: Aviation (pilot)
Major General Fred Forster, Tennessee; Field: Aviation
Major General David Hale, Hampton Bays, NY; Field: Combat
Major General Randy Jayne, McClean, VA; Branch: Air NG; Field: Aviation (pilot)
Major General Dennis Laich, Dublin, OH; Branch: Army; Field: Military Police
Major General Dennis Malcor, Vine Grove, KY; Branch: Army; Field: Combat
Major General Michael Scotti*, Arlington, VA; Branch: Army; Field: Medical
Major General Harry Sieben, Minnesota; Branch: Army and Air NG
Rear Admiral William Retz; Branch: Navy
Brigadier General Clara Adams-Ender, Woodbridge, VA; Branch: Army; Field: Medical
Brigadier General Dale Barber, Waverly, NY; Branch: Army; Field: Infantry Engineer
Brigadier General Harold Bowman, Pleasant Hill, IA; Branch: Army NG; Field: Medical
Brigadier General Douglas Bradley, Diablo, CA; Branch: Army; Field: Medical
Brigadier General William Colvin; Branch: Army NG
Brigadier General Bob Hardy; Branch: Army
Brigadier General JD Johnson, Salt Lake City, UT; Branch: Army
Brigadier General Phil Peay, Utah; Field: Engineering
Brigadier General Robert Poirot, Evergreen, CO; Branch: Army; Field: Artillery
Brigadier General Philip Pushkin, Randallstown, MD; Branch: Army NG
Brigadier General Donald Schenk, Troy, MI; Branch: Army; Field: Combat Systems
Brigadier General Daniel Wardrop, Williamsburg, VA; Field: Artillery

*General Scotti passed away in September, 2007 after agreeing to sign onto this statement. His widow has requested that he remain on the statement

T R A N S A C T I O N

Voice of California Democrats on Transgender Inclusion

Posted by Cecilia Chung, Transgender Law Center
November 21, 2007

This was adopted this past weekend by the California Democratic Party:

FULL EQUALITY FOR TRANSGENDER AMERICANS

WHEREAS the California Democratic Party has long stood by the principle of justice and equality for all people, regardless of gender, gender expression or sexual orientation and

WHEREAS Congress leaders have expressed their intent to remove non-discrimination provisions covering transgender persons from the federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), the new version will mean that "you can't be fired for being lesbian, gay or bisexual but you can be fired if your boss thinks you fit their stereotype of one," and

WHEREAS transgender people are among the most marginalized and vulnerable groups within the LGBT community, with a 2006 survey of transgender people conducted by the Transgender Law Center finding that 57% reported being discriminated against in employment and 60% earned less than \$15,300 a year,

BE IT RESOLVED that the California Democratic Party reaffirms its support for full legal equality, including anti-discrimination protection at all levels for transgender people and other members of the LGBT community who express their gender in non-normative ways,

AND BE IT RESOLVED that the California Democratic Party calls upon all clubs, County Central Committees, elected officials, activists as well as our friends and allies in labor and the broad progressive community to make public their support for full equality and justice.

Submitted by the Santa Barbara County
Democratic Central Committee;
Daraka Larimore-Hall, Chair, Santa Barbara DCC
Adopted by CDP on 11-18-2007
E-board Meeting at Sheraton Hotel, Anaheim

Transgender student elected king

PASADENA - For Andrew Gomez, the month of November was one of firsts. First, he broke the news to his mother that he was transitioning from a female to a male. Then the 24-year-old transgender student was elected Homecoming King at Pasadena City College.

Neither event came easily, but the second milestone nearly did not happen. PCC's homecoming committee initially ruled Gomez ineligible because of his pierced ear.

But after students complained, lodging charges of discrimination, the committee relented and reversed its decision. Gomez said his election earlier this month as Homecoming King surprised him, even though he initially ran hoping to become a source of inspiration for other gay, lesbian and transgender students.

"I wanted them to feel like they could do something like this, instead of having them feel, 'I am not straight so I can't do this,'" Gomez said. As child, Gomez was a tomboy, he said, always piling his long hair into a baseball cap. "My mom would get really mad when I did that," he said.

Two years ago, he cut his hair short.

But Gomez is still in a transitional period. He hopes to have surgery, but acknowledges it will not happen for some time. There are still specialists to see, male hormones to be prescribed and a myriad of other changes before Gomez's transformation can be complete.

For now, he has taken simpler steps. Gomez binds himself, although "it is unnecessary, since I am nearly flat-chested," he said.

Gomez, a creative-writing major, said getting his family to accept his decision has been difficult. Last summer, he posted a message on his Facebook page declaring his intention to become a man. Yet it was only earlier this month that he actually revealed it to his mother.

To his surprise, she had already suspected; she was mostly angry with him for not telling her earlier. She continues to struggle with Gomez's decision.

"I was prepared to pack my bags, because I wasn't going to stay there if she wasn't going to support me," Gomez said. "It is going to take a long time for her to use the male pronoun."

Although he originally enrolled at PCC under his birth name, this semester Gomez began asking professors and fellow students to call him by Andrew. The fact that most people now do so makes him grateful, Gomez said.

Study Finds Massive Increase of Same-Sex Couples in the U.S.

Salem-News.com
November 15, 2007

Largest increases in the most conservative parts of the country: Mountain, Midwest and Southern States.

(LOS ANGELES, Calif.) - The Williams Institute for Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy at the UCLA School of Law released a report today documenting a gay demographic explosion in some of the country's most politically and socially conservative regions.

The study examines recently released data from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). The analysis show that the number of same-sex couples in the US has quadrupled since 1990, growing at a rate 21 times that of the population. Increases have been the most dramatic in the Midwest, Mountain, and Southern states.

"Clearly, more same-sex couples are willing to openly identify themselves as such on government surveys," said Gary Gates, Senior Research Fellow at the Williams Institute and author of the study.

The Williams Institute study also found that state recognition of same-sex couples was inversely related to increases in the number of same-sex couples reporting their relationship.

Other findings from the study include:

- East South Central states of Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee saw a combined increase in same-sex couples of 863% from 1990 to 2006
- Mountain states of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Montana, Utah, Nevada, and Idaho had an increase of 698%
- Same-sex couple increases were 55 times larger than population increases in the Upper Midwest (Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin)
- Three cities (among the 50 largest) showed decreases in same-sex couples from 2000 to 2006: Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Detroit

In all three cases the cities lost same-sex couples while surrounding counties showed large gains.

The Williams Institute for Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy advances law and public policy through rigorous, independent research and scholarship, and disseminates its work through a variety of education programs and media to judges, legislators, lawyers, other policy makers and the public. This study can be accessed at the Williams Institute website:
www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute

SignOnSanDiego.com /The Union-Tribune
REUTERS / November 29, 2007

Uruguay set to legalize gay civil unions

MONTEVIDEO – Uruguay will legalize civil unions for homosexuals and heterosexuals next month, making it the first Latin American nation to treat gay and straight couples alike, a lawmaker said Thursday.

Deputies in the early hours of Thursday passed legislation allowing gay and straight couples to form civil unions after living together for at least five years.

The Senate has already approved the measure.

"This recognition of the legal status of couples ... recognizes the legal status of homosexual couples, which gives it a completely new dimension," said Edgardo Ortuno, a member of the center-left ruling party.

Before it can be applied, senators must consider the law again because some revisions were made to the document. Ortuno said he expects it to take effect by mid-December.

Under the law, couples will be granted rights related to social security payments, pensions, inheritance and parenting. To gain these cohabitation rights, couples must register the relationship with authorities. They also will be able to register the end of a union.

Gay civil unions are allowed in the Argentine capital Buenos Aires and in Mexico's capital and in Coahuila state. Uruguay's law would be the first nationwide measure.

UCLA School of Law's Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy:

Gay nuptials would net Maryland \$3.2 million a year

If Maryland were to allow same-sex couples to get married, the Institute estimates that spending on gay nuptials could top \$280 million the first three years, generating \$14 million in tax revenue during that time.

While the state would see some reductions in other tax revenue, including income, transfer and inheritance taxes, the study concludes that extending marriage benefits to gays could result in a net gain of \$3.2 million a year.

The good (at least in regard to sexual orientation):

ENDA (Employment Non-Discrimination Act):

November 7, 2007

The House of Representatives passed a version of ENDA that includes protections on the basis of sexual orientation but not gender identity. It is very unlikely that ENDA in any version will be voted on in the Senate this year and the White House has promised to veto it if it ever got that far.

The bad:

Saturday, October 13, 2007

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act (AB 43)

Same-sex couples in California continue to be denied the dignity, benefits and responsibilities of marriage with the Governor's veto that would have given all committed couples the option to marry.

The Governor's statement:

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 43 without my signature.

As I stated in vetoing similar legislation in 2005, I am proud California is a leader in recognizing and respecting domestic partnerships. I believe that all Californians are entitled to full protection under the law and should not be discriminated against based upon their sexual orientation. I support current domestic partnership rights and will continue to vigorously defend and enforce these rights.

In 2000, the voters approved Proposition 22, a challenge to which is currently pending before the California Supreme Court. I maintain my position that the appropriate resolution to this issue is to allow the Court to rule on Proposition 22. The people of California should then determine what, if any, statutory changes are needed in response to the Court's ruling.

Sincerely,
Arnold Schwarzenegger

And the ugly

**(...the "family values" hypocrites – where actions speak louder than words...
In more religious terms: "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves.")**

November 15, 2007

Republican Florida State Rep. Bob Allen was sentenced to six-months probation on a misdemeanor count of solicitation for prostitution - in the *Space View Park* men's room Allen agreed to pay an undercover police officer \$20 to perform a sexual act.

Allen co-sponsored a bill months before his arrest that would have increased public sex charges from a misdemeanor to a felony. The proposed bill addressed "unnatural and lascivious acts or exposure or exhibition of sexual organs" within 1,000 feet of a park, school or child care facility.

GAY HISTORY with LISA DIGUARDI

December 28, 1986

Terry Dolan, an anti-gay, "family values" advocate, was discovered to have been gay after his death from AIDS at age 36.