



PFLAG - LA

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

P. O. Box 24565 Los Angeles, CA 90024 (888) PFLAG88 <http://www.pflagla.org>

FALL 2008

Newsletter 253

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.

Our meetings typically include rap groups where individuals can share their concerns, questions, and understanding about the gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered person(s) in their families, and invited guest speakers on topics pertinent to our families. There is a short refreshment break between the rap session and the speaker(s).

For upcoming speakers, please check our website www.pflagla.org

OUR OCTOBER SPEAKER

Curt Shepard - Calling All Families!

PFLAG is about families. Our families include LGBT persons of all ages from children to seniors. They are about sons, daughters, spouses, partners, grandchildren, in-laws, and extended family. In this crucible where ages, stages, and personalities mix, all kinds of issues arise and all kinds of emotions surface.

Curt Shepard is used to dealing with the wonderful complexities of families. He is the Director of Children, Youth, and Family Services at the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center. As the former Director of Government Relations for the Center, he also knows how legislation affects our families. Curt has worked extensively with teenagers and young adults, as director of the Campus Organizing Project of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

So round up your questions. Whatever kind of a family you come from; wherever you are on your journey as parent or child, Curt will have suggestions for you and introduce all of us to the resources the Gay and Lesbian Center provides for families.

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)

Area Code 949

South Orange County: 459 2834 (Karyl)
Costa Mesa: 276 6997 (Norma)

Area Code 951

Riverside: 500 6904 (Jo Ann)

OTHER HELPLINES / RESOURCES

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

Asian Pacific Islander:
Harold Kameya, HKameya@gmail.com, (818) 368 2008
Bev Toyama, btoyama@ca.rr.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

PFLAG National
(202) 467 8180 www.pflag.org

Hablamos español!

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

Julio 310 500 8645
espanol@pflagpasadena.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

Find more resources on our website at
www.pflagla.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Make History!

I often feel that history is made someplace else—Washington, D.C., Iraq, the "swing states." We Californians get to watch from a distance. An occasional email to our congressman or letter to the editor doesn't really change things much. This fall, it's different. If we can secure the defeat of Proposition 8, and prevent anti-gay forces from amending our state constitution, we will have made civil rights history.

It's going to be close. Our opponents are better funded than we are, and many are stirred by religious fervor. Every single one of us must act if we're going to defeat Proposition 8. That is the challenge. That is the opportunity. What you and I do in the few days before the election can make history that people will be writing about a hundred years from now.

PFLAG parents Julia and Sam Theron have acted. They filmed a beautiful commercial for the No on Eight Campaign that aired on the premier of ABC's mega-hit *Dancing with the Stars*. Its gentle message reached hundreds of thousands of Californians. But it cost a LOT of money. To buy a national ad on this red-hot program costs \$250,000 for a 30-second spot. A local ad, no doubt, costs less, but still has a price tag of thousands of dollars.

What can you do in the fight against Proposition 8? Donate money to keep that ad on the air. As the economy lurches from crisis to crisis, it's a bad time to be giving hard earned dollars away. But this is when it's really going to count. Go to www.noonprop8.org, click on "Take Action," and go to "Donate."

Sign up to volunteer a few hours at a phone bank. You'll be trained on what to say, and may even be able to make your calls from home. Again, the steps are simple. Go to www.noonprop8.org, click on "Take Action," and go to "Volunteer." You'll be reminding our allies to vote, and helping the "moveable middle" to see our side of the issue.

Put out a yard sign, attach a bumper sticker, wear a pin. Let's let people know that there is a lot of opposition to Proposition 8. You can buy all these supplies through www.noonprop8.org website. Some of the campaign headquarters have them, also.

Register, get your friends to register, get young people 18 or over to register. Above all VOTE.

On November 5, we're all going to wake up to a changed California. Each one of us will have had a part in that change, either by our actions or our failure to act. I want to see a state that has affirmed the rights of EVERY Californian to marry the person he or she loves. I want to tell my children I changed history.

Mariette Sawchuk

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

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

California made some progress, but our biggest challenge is right ahead of us

2008 Legislation Signed Into Law By Gov. Schwarzenegger:

- AB 2654, the Civil Rights Act of 2008, amends existing nondiscrimination provisions to be consistent with the nondiscrimination protections in the Unruh Civil Rights Act and Government Code Section 11135, which prohibits discrimination in state-funded programs and activities.
- SB 1729, LGBT Senior Care Training, requires licensed health professionals who have constant interaction with seniors in nursing homes and senior care facilities to receive training to better understand how to foster an environment that is free from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- AB 3015, Foster Youth School Safety Education, requires that existing training programs for foster youth, foster youth group homes, child welfare personnel, foster parents, and relative caregivers, include information on current school safety laws that protect students from bias-motivated harassment and discrimination.

(from: www.eqca.org)



**It's not too late
To STOP PROP. 8**

From the editor: Wouldn't it be so much easier if the other side would admit that they simply don't want same-sex couples to have the same options and choices they enjoy instead of trying to brainwash and manipulate people with their usual threat tactics and lies?

You've heard them stating that they don't want same-sex marriage to be forced upon them just like they don't force their beliefs onto others. This is why we cannot redefine marriage and, therefore, have to pass Prop 8. Um, I hope you caught the contradiction. Also keep in mind that California (and the U.S. as a whole) is NOT a theocracy in which religious beliefs determine what is law.

You've heard their false statement that, if Prop 8 were to pass, all churches would be forced to marry same-sex couples against their will and if they refuse, they would become victims of legal actions. First of all, it is not clear to me which same-sex couple would want to spend the happiest day of their life in a church that doesn't welcome them! Only those folks can come up with such an irrational notion. But back to the fictitious legal actions: The California Supreme Court made it pretty clear in their ruling (S147999), explicitly stating that "Finally, affording same-sex couples the opportunity to obtain the designation of marriage will not impinge upon the religious freedom of any religious organization, official or any other person; no religion will be required to change its religious policies or practices with regard to same-sex couples, and no religious officiant will be required to solemnize a marriage in contravention of his or her religious belief."

You've heard them refer to "tradition" and the "historical" definition of marriage as being between a man and a woman. THIS "tradition" exists in California since 1977!

It's up to US to make California a better place for ALL families. Religious beliefs, traditions, and personal dislikes CANNOT be the determining factor in deciding who gets what civil rights and who's left out. It's not too late to stop Prop. 8.

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

through speaking engagements/education, activism & advocacy:

- Herman Eastmond, Sylvia Weisenberg and Terry McIntyre spoke to fashion design students at California Design College.
- Lisa Wilson and Frank Elliott spoke at Cleveland Humanities Magnet.

The Williams Institute invites you!

Thursday, November 13, 2008

Election 2008: A New Administration, the LGBT Vote, and Proposition 8

**UCLA School of Law Room 1347
6:30-8:30pm**

**For details check their website at
<http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute>
or call (310) 267-4382**

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Read our **newsletter online** at

http://www.pflagla.org/PFLAGLA_Newsletters.html

and check out our **MYSPACE** page at

<http://www.myspace.com/pflagla>

(Excerpt)

KFSN-TV Fresno, October 5, 2008

Fresno Priest Speaks Against Prop 8

Father Geoffrey Farrow of the Saint Paul Newman Center in northeast Fresno shocked parishioners Sunday morning when he came out against Proposition 8, an initiative that would eliminate the right for same sex couples to marry in California.

After 23 years as an ordained Catholic Priest, Father Geoffrey Farrow has likely given his final mass.

The homily taught of acceptance, love and rejection. But it was his closing remarks that left some parishioners stunned. "What most Catholics hear about being gay or lesbian at their parish is silence."

"In directing the faithful to vote yes on proposition 8, the California Bishops are not only entering the political arena, they are ignoring the advances and insights of neurology, psychology and the very statements by the church itself that homosexual is innate," says Fr. Geoff.

The priest acknowledges his controversial comments will have consequences. "I know that these words of truth will cost me dearly. But to withhold them would be far more costly and I would become an accomplice to a moral evil that strips gay and lesbian couples, not only of their civil rights but of their human dignity as well."

T R A N S A C T I O N

Calpernia Addams at PFLAG LA

By Mariette Sawchuk

The sixty people waiting for Calpernia Addams at PFLAG LA's September meeting were expecting beauty, energy, and wit. They got even more—honesty, vulnerability, and a gentle femininity that was more than skin deep. Dressed in a simple gauze top and jeans, the red-headed actress told the story of her life to a group including young people from Lifeworks Mentoring, who hung on her every word.

She described growing up in rural Tennessee in a family so religious that the wearing of wedding rings was considered “vanity.” At an early age Calpernia felt a disconnect between her feminine spirit and her boy's body, a difference she was forced to accept: “I knew that I could grow wings more easily than I could be a girl. It wasn't going to happen.”

The military gave her a way out of Tennessee. Recruiters told her she could choose any career she wanted, and she asked to be a nurse. After several years in the Navy/Marines, she resigned in order to get on with what she thought would be her life as a gay man.

It was in Nashville's LGBT community that she realized she wasn't gay but transgender, and took the first steps in a long journey to womanhood. When asked how she began, she said, “Makeup. It's external. It's inexpensive, and it's fun to play with.” She described a life of continual learning—how to style her hair, how to apply eye make-up, how to choose clothing. Although these activities were exciting, they were also dangerous: “You don't always get it right, and people can be very cruel.”

There were also physical changes to make—electrolysis on unwanted facial hair, testosterone suppressing drugs, estrogen, surgeries. Transgender women helped her through all these experiences. Perhaps the hardest part of the transition was learning the culture of womanhood. Just as an American emigrant to another country has to learn the unwritten rules of behavior and the unspoken clues to situations, Calpernia had to learn how to respond as a woman.

In spite of all the difficulties she has encountered, including the tragic killing of her beloved boyfriend, she was upbeat and positive. She emphasized the warmth of family life in her childhood rather than the restrictiveness of the religious sect. When asked about her female role models, she described her mother and aunts: “Strong, unadorned women. Feminine without accoutrements.” Although her family does not accept her transition and still uses her childhood name, they remain in touch, and she sees them at least once a year “for some good Southern cooking.”

She talked candidly about dating, answering questions about how and when she tells her dates about her transition and how she avoids dangerous situations. She talked about dealing with moments of depression and self-doubt: “When you look in the mirror and see all the flaws.”

As she talked about her life and answered questions, she repeatedly emphasized the need for all of us—LGBT and straight, parents, children, allies, young and old—to concentrate on being healthy—physically, mentally, and emotionally. The health that she's worked so hard to achieve radiates from Calpernia Addams and warmed us all.



Del Martin

(May 5, 1921 – August 27, 2008)

*Without you, we wouldn't be where we are. Thank you, Del.
Our condolences go to Del's wife Phyllis Lyon.*

Lesbian rights pioneer Del Martin dies at 87

*By Rachel Gordon, San Francisco Chronicle Staff Writer
Thursday, August 28, 2008*

SAN FRANCISCO -- Lesbian rights pioneer Del Martin, whose trailblazing activism spanned more than five decades, most recently in the battle for same-sex marriage, died Wednesday, just two months after she made history again by wedding her longtime partner in San Francisco City Hall.

Ms. Martin's crusading began in 1955, during an era in America known more for social conformity than for rebellion, when she co-founded a lesbian social-turned-political organization, Daughters of Bilitis, named after a 19th century book of lesbian love poetry.

This year, on June 16, she and her partner of 55 years, Phyllis Lyon, were legally wed. San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom officiated. Theirs was among the first same-sex nuptials in California.

"Her last act of activism was her most personal - marrying the love of her life," said Kate Kendell, a longtime friend of the couple and executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

"Ever since I met Del 55 years ago, I could never imagine a day would come when she wouldn't be by my side," Lyon, 83, said in a statement. "I am so lucky to have known her, loved her and been her partner in all things.

"I also never imagined there would be a day that we would actually be able to get married," Lyon said. "I am devastated, but I take some solace in knowing we were able to enjoy the ultimate rite of love and commitment before she passed."

Ms. Martin had been in failing health for some time, weakened to the point where she was pushed in a wheelchair to her wedding ceremony. In an interview in her hillside Noe Valley home just days before she took her marriage vows in the mayor's office, Ms. Martin described as fortunate the timing of the California Supreme Court decision that gave gays and lesbians the right to marry.

"We're not getting younger," she said.

Ms. Martin and Lyon were plaintiffs in the lawsuit that got the state ban on same-sex marriage lifted. They were married at 5:07 p.m., just minutes after the ruling took effect.

Ms. Martin's activist reach extended into the feminist movement when she became the first open lesbian to serve on the board of directors of the National Organization for Women, and she helped spearhead a successful campaign to get the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its roster of mental illnesses.

In 1995, Sen. Dianne Feinstein named her as a delegate to the White House Conference on Aging, where she and Lyon, a delegate appointed by Pelosi, focused attention on the needs of aging gays and lesbians.

Feinstein said Wednesday, "Del and Phyllis were a loving couple, cherished by an entire community. They inspired so many, young and old."

Ms. Martin, whose given name was Dorothy but who went by Del, was born in San Francisco in 1921. Her first marriage, at age 19, was brief but produced a daughter, Kendra Mon, who lives in Petaluma. She also is survived by two grandchildren.