



PFLAG-LA

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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

2011 / Newsletter # 259

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 At
www.pflagla.org !

New support meeting in
Silverlake!

Please see page 2 for details.

We invite you to a one-of-a-kind experience you'll never forget!

Please march with us on **Sunday, June 12** in the annual LA PRIDE Parade
in West Hollywood to celebrate LGBT Pride!

Please plan to line up near the corner of Crescent Heights and
Santa Monica Blvd at 10am. **Parade steps off sharply at 11am.**

Wear a red T-shirt if you can.

HELPLINES, CHAPTERS & CONTACTS 9AM-9PM

1-888-PFLAG88 or 1-888-735-2488 www.pflagla.org

- West LA: 310-454-6681 (Liz)
LIZARM@aol.com
- Pasadena: 626-797-1732 (Patti)
ploitz@earthlink.net
- San Fernando Valley: 818-788-8678
(Lynette)
- South Bay: 310-831-2967
(Joyce and Jerry)
- Hablamos español!
<http://www.pflagla.org/Home-Espanol.html>
Leonor 818-956-7533
- Transgender: 818-985-9319 (Chris)
- PFLAG National: 202-467-8180
www.pflag.org
- PFLAG/LA Speakers Bureau:
Ron & Andy, andynron@gmail.com
- Asian Pacific Islander:
- Harold Kameya, HKameya@gmail.com,
818-368-2008
- Bev Toyama, btoyama@ca.rr.com
- Straight Spouses:
510-525-0200 (Amity)
- The TREVOR PROJECT
24-hour nationwide suicide prevention line for
GLBT and Questioning youth.
866-4 U TREVOR / 866-488-7386
www.thetrevorproject.org
- Transgender Youth Clinic
(323) 361-2153
<http://www.transyouthla.com>
- LA Gay & Lesbian Center:
323-993-7400
www.lagaycenter.org

* Need to get in touch with the editor? Send an email to Chris at haichi87@sbcglobal.net *

Officers:

President: Mariette Sawchuk
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| Lenor Holmstrom | Barry Mason |
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Regional Director:

Steve Krantz

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

Silverlake Meeting!

When: 2nd Thursday of each month
from 7:30pm to 9pm
Where: Metropolitan Community Church
4953 Franklin Ave
Los Angeles 90027
Contact: Dawn at
silverlake@pflagLA.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcoming Betty DeGeneres

On April 20th at 7:30 pm, PFLAG Los Angeles proudly welcomes Betty DeGeneres as our speaker. The mother of the world's most famous lesbian talks about her personal journey from an ordinary mom to a spokesperson for acceptance, tolerance and LGBT rights.

Initially many parents go into the closet after their child comes out. Betty DeGeneres didn't have that luxury. In 1997 when Ellen came out on the television program that bore her name, Betty was thrust into the spotlight, supporting Ellen through the cheers and attacks her honesty occasioned. Although her own process had begun in 1978, when Ellen told her mother about her sexual orientation during a walk on the beach, Betty had to deal with intense public scrutiny.

She has worn her notoriety well. In 1997 Betty was named the first non-gay spokesperson for the Human Rights Campaign's National Coming-out Project. Since that time, Betty has spoken at universities and corporations throughout America on the subject of acceptance of diversity and equal rights for our gay family members.

She has written two books: *Love, Ellen - A Mother/Daughter Journey* and *Just a Mom*. Her columns, *Ask Betty*, on Planetout.com, and a monthly interview column on HRC.org/familynet, were website favorites until her recent retirement.

Betty was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, where she met and married Elliott DeGeneres. Following a divorce and remarriage, she moved to East Texas where she studied to become a licensed speech pathologist, ultimately working at Cedars Sinai Medical Center in the Rehabilitation Department.

A long-time friend of PFLAG, Betty shares her journey with her famous daughter with the wit, kindness and courage that both of them are famous for.

Mariette Sawchuk
msawchuk-pflag@earthlink.net

Gay marriage in California won't resume for now, appeals court rules

March 23, 2011 | <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com>

Gay marriage won't be allowed to resume until state and federal appeals courts decide the fate of Proposition 8, the voter initiative that limited marriage to heterosexual couples, three federal judges ruled Wednesday.

Gay-rights advocates had asked the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals to lift the hold put on a San Francisco federal judge's ruling last year that Proposition 8 is unconstitutional and said California authorities should cease enforcing it.

That ruling was stayed by the judge who made it, U.S. District Judge Vaughn R. Walker, and the injunction was kept in place when the 9th Circuit said last fall that it would put the appeal by Proposition 8 backers on a fast track.

But the appeals court in January turned to the California Supreme Court with a question about whether those who drafted the initiative banning same-sex marriage have the right to appeal Walker's ruling in place of the original defendants, the governor and attorney general, who have refused to defend the ballot measure, which they deem discriminatory.

The state high court has indicated it won't hold hearings on the question of standing until at least September, meaning that the 9th Circuit won't address the case again until the end of the year or later.

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

Here's what's happening in California:

SB 651 -- Domestic Partnership Equality Act (Mark Leno):

Many inequalities exist between marriage and domestic partnership in California. For example, couples who wish to enter into a domestic partnership must first be living together, while there is no such requirement for marriage; and same-sex partners of public employees don't get equal access to long-term care insurance coverage. SB 651 would correct nine differences that remain between marriage and domestic partnerships, bringing our state one step closer to equality while we wait for a final ruling in the federal case against Prop. 8.

Status: Introduced on February 18, 2011.

SB 747 -- LGBT Cultural Competency Training (Christine Kehoe):

There are less than 40 health care facilities in California that are known to have strong trainings on providing care that meets the needs of LGBT people. At our state's hundreds of hospitals and thousands of medical offices, LGBT people often do not receive the understanding medical help they deserve. SB 747 will require regulatory boards that license or certify health care professionals to require continuing education on LGBT cultural competency in health care, ensuring safe and understanding care.

Status: Introduced on February 18, 2011.

SB 182 -- Judicial Applicant and Appointment Demographics Inclusion Act (Ellen Corbett):

Diversity on the bench matters, yet California's Judiciary suffers from a lack of diversity. SB 182 would ensure that voluntary data on the gender identity and sexual orientation of potential judges is gathered through the state's Judicial Applicant Data Report, alongside existing questions on gender and racial or ethnic identity.

Status: Introduced on February 7, 2011. Passed by the Senate Judiciary Committee on April 5, 2011 on a 3-2 vote.

SB 117 -- Equal Benefits Bill (Christine Kehoe):

State agencies currently must ensure that any contractors they hire who are paid more than \$100,000 do not discriminate between married employees and employees in domestic partnerships when providing benefits. However, the current law doesn't adequately cover married same-sex couples. SB 117 would remedy this by requiring that all contractors who are paid more than \$100,000 do not discriminate on the basis of gender or sexual orientation of their employees' spouses or domestic partners. This bill would ensure that all same-sex couples who are legally married are equally protected.

Status: Introduced on January 20, 2011; passed by the Senate Committee on Governmental Organization on March 22, 2011, 7-5. Passed by the Senate Judiciary Committee on April 5, 2011.

SB 416 -- Survey Data Inclusion Act (Christine Kehoe):

California collects demographic information such as age, gender, ethnic/racial identity and other information on statewide surveys. However, there are no demographic questions regarding sexual orientation or gender identity. SB 416 would add voluntary demographic questions on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, domestic partnership status and spouse's gender to statewide surveys. This bill can help to bring money to California by giving the State the data that it needs to apply for foundation and government funding.

Status: Introduced on February 16, 2011; passed by the Senate Committee on Governmental Organization on March 22, 2011, 7-5. It will be heard shortly by the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

Information provided by Equality California / www.eqca.org

Note from the editor: Never think voting does not matter!

California's lawmakers are fighting over legislation that would require public schools to include the historical contributions of LGBT people in their curriculum.

Senate Bill 48, the "Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful Education Act", introduced by state Sen. Mark D. Leno (D- San Francisco), would require the state's new social study and history textbooks to include "a study of the role and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans."

Republicans are aggressively opposing the measure. Sen. Robert Huff (R-Diamond Bar), said measure would "sexualize the training of our children at an early age."

From: <http://www.lgbtqnation.com>

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

through speaking engagements/education, activism & advocacy:

- Chris Coleman, Gizella Czene, Herman Eastman, Bill Fields, Kadin Henningsen, Karen & Barry Mason, Heather Mickelson, and Flo Trapani talked to Maya Wolfson's Health Classes at East Valley High School in North Hollywood.
- Chris Coleman, Gizella Czene, Mitch Grobeson, Ann Weisman, and Marla Weiss spoke to health classes at Beverly Hills High School in Beverly Hills.
- Thuy Choa, Kadin Henningsen, Steve Krantz, Anne Rodman, Flo Trapani, and Stephen Waters spoke at California State University Northridge to graduate students in Michael Laurent's Marriage & Family Therapy Program.
- Karen Mason, Lacey, Stephen Waters, and Sylvia Weisenberg spoke at the Los Angeles headquarters of Planned Parenthood to their volunteer speakers who go into classrooms all over LA and present on topics ranging from sexuality and relationships to pregnancy and birth control.
- Jessica Sackman, Lacey, and Brenda Thompson spoke at La Paz Geropsychiatric Center in Paramount.
- Harry Drasin, Stuart Huggins, and Steve Krantz spoke at the UCLA School of Public Health on the issue of student safety in schools.
- Gizella Czene, Kadin Henningsen, and Stephen Waters spoke to a Human Diversity class at Alliant International University in Alhambra.

The Williams Institute/UCLA School of Law

If you have never attended an event from The Williams Institute/UCLA School of Law, you've really missed out on something. Here are two of their upcoming events:

Wednesday, April 27, 2011

Same-Sex Marriage and Sexual Liberation

UCLA School of Law, Room 1314

12:20-1:40pm

Speaker:

Michael Boucai, Law Teaching Fellow,
Williams Institute

Wednesday, June 1, 2011

Minorities and Health Privacy *Works-in-Progress Series*

UCLA School of Law, Room 1314

12:20-1:40pm

Speaker:

Craig J. Konnoth, Legal Research Fellow,
Williams Institute

The Williams Institute advances sexual orientation law and public policy through rigorous, independent research and scholarship, and disseminates it to judges, legislators, policymakers, media and the public. A national think tank at UCLA Law, the Williams Institute produces high quality research with real-world relevance.

For more details on events or to take a look at their research studies please go to their website at <http://www2.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/home.html>

T r a n s A c t i o n

Transgender Advocacy Day

May 1-2, 2011, Sacramento

Join the Transgender Law Center to
advocate for transgender equality!

For more information and to register
please go to
www.transgenderlawcenter.org
and click on

"It's time to fulfill the California Dream"

Janis Walworth (Director, Center For Gender Sanity) on gender markers on drivers' licenses:

At our presentations we are often asked about the possibility of doing away with gender markers on drivers licenses which is a legitimate question. The gender markers are supposedly there for identification purposes, but aren't very effective: they narrow down the possibilities of who you might be from 6 billion to 3 billion.

Furthermore, if your ID picture does not clearly present your gender, the gender marker is more a disguise than a helpful tool for identification purposes.

If they want to identify us by our sex, they should put pictures of our genitals on the drivers' licenses.

www.gendersanity.com

Gender Non-Discrimination Act (AB 887)

On April 5, 2011, the Assembly Judiciary Committee passed the Gender Nondiscrimination Act (AB 877) by a 7-1 vote. The bill was authored by Assemblymember Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) and is sponsored by Equality California and co-sponsored by the Transgender Law Center. AB 887 seeks to strengthen employment, housing, and other civil rights protections for transgender people and others who do not fit narrow gender stereotypes.

AB 887 takes existing protections based on gender identity and expression and enumerates them as protected categories in non-discrimination laws. Clarity about what the law requires will reduce litigation and costs to employers, landlords, and others.

"All hardworking people in California, including transgender people, should have the chance to earn a living and provide for their families," said Masen Davis, Executive Director of the Transgender Law Center in his testimony before the committee. "The Gender Nondiscrimination Act would strength existing protections and ensure that confusing legal language does not come between transgender people and our rights."

Vital Statistics Modernization Act (AB 433)

On March 22, 2011, a bill that would alleviate the confusion, anxiety and even danger that transgender people face when they have identity documents that do not reflect who they are, passed the Assembly Judiciary committee in a 7-5 vote. Authored by Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal (D-Long Beach), sponsored by Equality California and co-sponsored by the Transgender Law Center, the Vital Statistics Modernization Act (AB 433), would streamline current law and clarify that eligible petitioners living or born in California can submit a gender change petition in any jurisdiction in the State of California.

The bill would also allow people who were born in or who live in California to use a simplified process that requires medical certification from an attending physician that the individual has undergone "clinically appropriate treatment" to obtain a new birth certificate to reflect their gender.

California has allowed gender changes on birth certificates for the last 34 years. All but a handful of states allow for gender changes on birth certificates, and the US Department of State allows it for passports and people born on US territory abroad.

In Memoriam



Thank you for your decision to stand by your gay son at a time when California still had its sodomy laws on the books and the United States banned homosexuals from entering the country.

Thank you for standing up for what is right rather than following majority opinion and attitude which was and still is a major barrier toward achieving equal protection for gay/lesbian, bisexual, and transgender human beings.

Thank you for helping so many parents and families who happened to have a gay/lesbian child and had no one else to turn to.

Thank you, Adele! You will be missed.

Remembering Adele

As the weather gets warmer, Mother's Day is just around the corner. This year our thoughts turn to one particular mother, who turned her personal story into a lifelong crusade for LGBT rights: Adele Starr.

Adele, who passed away last December, is the founder of our chapter, although she would be the first to give credit to her husband Larry and the other dedicated parents forming the core group. She tried to start a parents' support group at the fledgling Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center, but parents were afraid to be seen in a building labeled "Gay." On March 8, 1976 she and Larry held the first successful support meeting at their home and 30 people showed up. PFLAG Los Angeles was born.

Right from the start, Adele was a passionate activist, speaking at the 1979 National March for Gay and Lesbian Rights on the steps of the Capitol, where she met leaders from other, similar grassroots organizations. The next day at a local church parents attending the march met to discuss forming a national organization. In 1981, at the Starr home, 33 people from all parts of the country met to begin the process of formally incorporating. Adele became the first president, and ran the national organization out of her den for six years.

PFLAG got a tremendous boost in 1981 when "Dear Abby" mentioned it in her advice column. How did Abby know about this small grassroots organization? Adele called her. That column generated 7,000 pieces of mail, each of which Adele answered personally.

Even as her health declined, Adele stayed active in PFLAG Los Angeles, answering a helpline from her bed until a few years ago. She loved to hear about the activities of the chapter and gave good advice, continually urging us to reach out to underserved communities—African American, Latino, Persian, and communities of faith. Consequently, donations made to PFLAG Los Angeles in her honor will be used to support our satellite outreach meetings.

So, thanks Adele, from every person who has ever walked through the door of a PFLAG meeting in the greater Los Angeles area. Thanks particularly from the officers, board, and members of PFLAG Los Angeles. It's an honor to continue your work.

Mariette Sawchuk, President
PFLAG Los Angeles

**UN Human Rights Council:
A Stunning Development Against Violence**

Unprecedented Support for Statement on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

(March 22, 2011) In a stunning development for the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, today at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva, Colombia delivered a Joint Statement during General Debate (Agenda Item 8 – Follow-up and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action) that called on States to end violence, criminal sanctions and related human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and urged the Human Rights Council to address these important human rights issues. The statement was delivered on behalf of a broad grouping of 85 States from all regions of the world.

**Estimated 9 million Americans
identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or
transgender, study finds**

About 9 million people across the United States identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, according to a UCLA study released Thursday, April 7, 2011.

The estimate was created by the Williams Institute at UCLA's School of Law and argues that any estimate of the population is difficult because of insufficient and inconsistent national surveys.

Obama: DOMA Unconstitutional, DOJ Should Stop Defending In Court

WASHINGTON -- In a major policy reversal, the Obama administration said Wednesday it will no longer defend the constitutionality of a federal law banning recognition of same-sex marriage.

Attorney General Eric Holder said President Barack Obama has concluded that the administration cannot defend the federal law that defines marriage as only between a man and a woman. He noted that the congressional debate during passage of the Defense of Marriage Act "contains numerous expressions reflecting moral disapproval of gays and lesbians and their intimate and family relationships - precisely the kind of stereotype-based thinking and animus the (Constitution's) Equal Protection Clause is designed to guard against."

www.huffingtonpost.com 02/23/2011

Apple under fire

BY Aliyah Shahid /DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Saturday, March 19th 2011

Apple is being slammed by gay rights groups after it approved an app by a religious organization that seeks to help gay people become straight.

The app, Exodus International, was created by a ministry with the same name. It received a "4" rating from Apple, which means the company has "no objectionable material," according to the Huffington Post.

The app is targeted at "homosexual strugglers" and allows users to learn more about Exodus, which maintain people have a choice to be gay and can choose not to be.