



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

June-July 2007

Newsletter 247

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

June 20, 2007 (Wednesday)

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

July 18, 2007 (Wednesday)

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

Mark your calendar
and march with us in the Pride Parade!

Sunday, June 10

For details see page 5

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! Regards, Chris Haiss

Deadline for submissions: July 1
(August/September 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

I am a frustrated PFLAGer. I am frustrated because there are too few members of gay families who are willing to stand up and fight for the rights of gay people. Oh, yes, we see one or two new moms and dads come through our doors to our monthly support meetings, tell their stories, get support, get some education. However, most of them never return, never come back to stand with the activists in the chapter to fight for the rights of their gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender family members.

When I describe myself to others, I say that I am a gay rights activist. What does that mean? It means that I won't accept the fact that my son, who happens to be gay, is a second class citizen in this state or in this nation. That I will fight until my dying breath for him to have ALL the rights that heterosexuals enjoy - including marriage. That I will tell the truths about what it means to be LGBT to anyone who will listen. That I will use the media in all its forms for my message of LGBT rights.

I use all of my "personae" to achieve the goal of equality for LGBT persons. I stand up as a PFLAG Dad. I stand up as a member of my faith community. I stand up as a member of my political party. I stand up as an employee of my company.

We need the power of every PFLAG PARENT to do the same. We need to take the bully pulpit away from the heinous religious leaders who demonize our children. We need to take the bully pulpit away from the cowardly politicians who mince words and distance themselves from the morality of our cause.

I challenge all of you who read this newsletter to stand with me. Only together, will we achieve true equality in California for our children. Please email me at stevek@bipedinfo.com if you will join me on the front lines - as PFLAG parent volunteers, as PFLAG LA Board members, as truth tellers to the world. Please don't stand idly by.

Steve Krantz, PFLAG Los Angeles

Montana

Legislation that would have made it a crime to discriminate against gays, lesbians and the transgendered in Montana died in committee following objections from the Catholic Church and other groups.

H.R.Res. 22

(Federal Marriage Amendment)
Introduced in the House by Rep. Lungren (CA-3) and supported by CA Reps. Calvert, Hunter, and Radanovich, it would not only ban marriages between two persons of the same sex, **it also would strip all U.S. and state courts of their constitutional duty to examine the proposed law's legality.**

Indiana

A proposed constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage failed in the Indiana General Assembly. Five of the state's largest employers (Cummins, Emmis, Eli Lilly and Co., WellPoint and Dow AgroSciences) had urged its demise, saying it would make it harder for them to recruit employees.

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

ASSEMBLY JUDICIARY COMMITTEE OVERWHELMINGLY PASSES BILL (AB 43) SUPPORTING MARRIAGE FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES

April 10, 2007

Sacramento - Members of the Assembly Judiciary Committee on Tuesday passed AB 43, legislation giving same-sex couples the choice to marry in California. Authored by Assemblymember Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, and sponsored by Equality California, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection gives all couples the social support and legal protections that only marriage provides. The bill passed the committee with a 6-3 vote.

"Two people in a committed, trusting relationship deserve the honor and social support that comes with marriage," said EQCA Executive Director Geoff Kors. "Denying someone the opportunity to marry the person he or she loves hurts couples and families that are dedicated to building their lives together. It is time to move forward as a state and let all loving and committed couples who want the responsibilities of marriage to get married."

Lawmakers passed a nearly identical bill, AB 849, also authored by Assemblymember Leno, in 2005, becoming the first legislative body in the nation to approve a measure allowing same-sex couples to marry. Like its predecessor, AB 43 protects religious freedom by reaffirming that no religious institution would be required to solemnize marriages contrary to its fundamental beliefs.

"Our march toward marriage equality continues with another victory today," said Assemblymember Leno. "We will not stop until all citizens are afforded their constitutional right to marry the person they love and raise their families with the respect, dignity and validation which are their birthright."

California law allows same-sex couples to register as domestic partners, which gives them many state protections. However, domestic partnership remains a separate institution from marriage and shuts out same-sex couples from the universal recognition and consideration married couples enjoy. A separate system for same-sex couples leaves them without critical support systems that would benefit them in older age, upon illness or disability and in times of crisis.

Dr. Kate O'Hanlan, a practicing surgeon and health researcher from Portola Valley, presented peer-reviewed scientific literature and consensus statements from the nation's top scientific and health organizations, including the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Health experts and these organizations agree that excluding same-sex couples from marriage hurts LGBT people and their families because treating a certain group of people differently creates social isolation and victimization, alienates them from health, family and social support systems, and perpetuates inaccurate stereotypes.

"Medical science is unambiguous and unanimous in endorsing absolute equality for same-sex couples, including access to civil marriage," Dr. O'Hanlan said. "The nation's experts in child health, mental health, psychological health, women's health and family health have reviewed the research and issued policy statements endorsing equal access to civil marriage because it would improve mental and physical health of America's families, and harm no one."

<http://www.eqca.org>

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"I want to puke when I hear about a woman married to a woman raising children because, frankly, I think that it's child abuse to do that to children without their permission."

Michael Savage, Talk Radio Host

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"Gay and lesbian families deserve respect. What we don't need are constitutional amendments designed to exclude supportive, devoted couples. We need to extend the rights due to all of us as Americans."

Presidential Candidate & New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

- Steve Krantz spoke to the Adat Chaverim Congregation about equal marriage rights at their Friday evening service on March 16.
- Maurie Davidson, Joseph Harounian, Steve Krantz and Marla Weiss spoke to students at Pressman Academy.

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.

Read our newsletter
online at

<http://www.pflagla.org/resources.html>

Looking for LGBT books?

Check out Haworth Press!

<http://www.haworthpress.com/lgbt/>

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

It's that time of the year again. We've attached our membership envelopes to this issue of the newsletter. For those who contributed at the first of the year, we thank you.

Please fill out the information for renewal or consider making a contribution or tribute for someone you care about. We'd also love to send our newsletter to someone you care about.

All contributions go to help our operating costs and expenses. PFLAG Los Angeles is a 100% volunteer operation.

We thank you for your continued support!

Please join us on Sunday June 10 for the annual Christopher St. West Parade to celebrate Pride Weekend in West Hollywood.

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

Wear a red T-shirt if you can.

This is a wonderful event you will not soon forget!!!

T R A N S A C T I O N

Iowa Becomes 10th State to Pass Transgender-Inclusive Nondiscrimination Law

On April 26 Iowa made a historic stride forward in protecting the civil rights of transgender people. With bipartisan support, Iowa's House of Representatives voted 59-37 to approve a bill outlawing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The Iowa Senate affirmed their desire to see this bill become law with a concurrence vote of 34-16.

"The National Center for Transgender Equality congratulates advocates in Iowa who helped the Hawkeye state become the tenth state to pass a law that explicitly protects transgender people from discrimination," said Mara Keisling, executive director of NCTE.

Now ten states, the District of Columbia and 80+ cities and counties across the country have passed explicitly transgender-inclusive anti-discrimination laws.

<http://www.nctequality.org>

Don't miss TRANS-UNITY!

TRANS-UNITY PRIDE is an annual multi-cultural, substance free celebration of the Southern California regional transgender community: transsexual, transgender, gender-queer, and cross-dressing individuals, and those who love and care for them. This event is FREE!

Participants come together for a day of educational workshops and discussion groups led by well-known advocates on topics such as political activism, healthcare access, substance abuse, career planning and youth issues.

The Village at Ed Gould Plaza - Home Of TU Pride
1125 N. McCadden Place, Los Angeles, CA 90038

Friday, June 1 6PM - 12Midnight
Saturday, June 2 11AM - 12Midnight
Sunday, June 3 10AM - 8PM

For more information please contact Farina (323) 860-7394 or Chanel (323) 860-7335.

New book!

What Becomes You (American Lives)

By Aaron Raz Link and Hilda Raz

Publisher: University of Nebraska Press

Aaron used to be Sarah, Hilda's daughter, now her son. The book is an amazing testament to the humanity of each of these people as they struggled with each other throughout Aaron's transition.

Description:

"Being a man, like being a woman, is something you have to learn," Aaron Raz Link remarks. Few would know this better than the co-author of *What Becomes You*, who began life as a girl named Sarah and twenty-nine years later began life anew as a gay man. Turning from female to male and from teaching scientist to theatre performer, Link documents the extraordinary medical, social, legal, and personal process involved in a complete identity change.

Hilda Raz, a well-known feminist writer and teacher, observes the process as both an "astonished" parent and as a professor who has studied gender issues. All these perspectives come into play in this collaborative memoir, which travels between women's experience and men's lives, explores the art and science of changing sex, maps uncharted family values, and journeys through a world transformed by surgery, hormones, love, and . . . clown school. Combining personal experience and critical analysis, the book is an unusual—and unusually fascinating—reflection on gender, sex, and the art of living."

The Advocate
Thursday, May 3, 2007

House passes hate crimes bill

Just hours after the White House issued a veto threat Thursday, the House voted to add gender and sexual orientation to the categories covered by federal hate crimes law.

The House legislation, passed 237-180, also makes it easier for federal law enforcement to take part in or assist local prosecutions involving bias-motivated attacks. Similar legislation is also moving through the Senate, setting the stage for another veto showdown with President Bush.

"This is an important vote of conscience, of a statement of what America is, a society that understands that we accept differences," said House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md.

The White House, in a statement warning of a veto, said state and local criminal laws already cover the new crimes defined under the bill, and there was "no persuasive demonstration of any need to federalize such a potentially large range of violent crime enforcement." It also noted that the bill leaves other classes, such as the elderly, the military and police officers, without similar special status.

"Our criminal justice system has been built on the ideal of equal justice for all," said Rep. Lamar Smith of Texas, top Republican on the Judiciary Committee. "Under this bill, justice will no longer be equal, but depend on the race, sex, sexual orientation, disability or status of the victim."

The House bill would extend the hate crimes category to include sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or disability and give federal authorities greater leeway to participate in hate crimes investigations. It approves \$10 million over the next two years to help local law enforcement officials cover the cost of hate crimes prosecutions.

Federal investigators could step in if local authorities are unwilling or unable to act.

But Dr. James C. Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, warned that the true intent of the bill was "to muzzle people of faith who dare to express their moral and biblical concerns about homosexuality." If you read the Bible in a certain way, he told his broadcast listeners, "you may be guilty of committing a 'thought crime.'"

"It does not impinge on public speech or writing in any way," countered Judiciary Committee Chairman John Conyers, D-Mich., pointing out that the bill explicitly reaffirms First Amendment and free-speech rights.

Conyers said in a statement that state and local authorities will continue to prosecute the overwhelming majority of such cases and the bill requires the attorney general or another high-ranking Justice Department official to approve any federal prosecutions.

From the editor

The King James Version of the Bible has **142** references to "abominations".

Two out of the 142 refer to
"...lying with mankind as with womankind..."

It also names **61** situations where someone
"shall surely be put to death."

One out of these 61 refers to
"...lying with mankind as with womankind..."

None of the Ten Commandments mentions
homosexuality.

The list of Seven Deadly Sins **does not include**
homosexuality.

So can anybody please explain to me why so many Americans believe that HOMOSEXUALITY is the one thing we as a nation should worry about and why this belief should be justification enough to DENY gay/lesbian citizens equal rights and protections?!

'Cause if we'd apply the same measure to citizens in regard to all the other Biblical abominations there wouldn't be too many Americans left with any rights and protections!

What a shame for America to have a president who threatens to veto this hate crimes bill!

What hypocrisy to hear the "pro life" movement speaking out against this bill! They obviously couldn't care less about YOUR LIFE if you happen to be LGBT!

And Congressman Smith believes that under this bill justice will no longer be equal???! Congressmen, are you kidding yourself???! You call it EQUAL when it EXCLUDES LGBT Americans, a major target group of hate crimes?!

Dr. Dobson worries that this bill would muzzle people of faith who dare to express their moral and biblical concerns about homosexuality? Dr. Dobson, what about the other 140 abominations???!?

Maybe it IS time to muzzle people who dare to misuse the Bible in order to deny fellow citizens equality and justice...after all, we're not (yet) a theocracy.

Everybody talks about immigration, nobody talks about LGBT immigrants & their families and the widespread discrimination our community faces under current immigration laws.

"There are no immigration benefits available to [gays] based on their relationship. With that said, there's certainly nothing that says a U.S. citizen cannot move to another country."

--Chris Bentley, spokesman for the Department of Homeland Security's Citizen and Immigration Services, LA Weekly, January 9, 2004

Unfortunately, nothing has changed since Chris Bentley's outrageous statement of January 9, 2004, and more U.S. citizens were forced to leave the United States in order to be together with their same-sex foreign partner...

The Political Made Personal

By Marcy Sheiner

Monday, January 1st, 2007

Last night I went to a big rowdy New Years Eve party in San Francisco. I don't often go out for New Years—this was the first time since 2000—but I couldn't miss this particular party: it served double-duty as a farewell for my friend Phyllis and her life partner Helen.

Phyllis and Helen are moving to England, Helen's birth land, because they're a gay international couple unrecognized as legitimate by the U.S. government. For years they've been maneuvering the red tape of the immigration system, organizing their lives around complicated and sometimes senseless laws. They'd get work or school visas on one side of the pond or the other, buying six months here, two years there, sometimes enduring long separations. Meanwhile they petitioned, wrote letters, and demonstrated for changes in immigration laws. About a year ago, the British government removed one unnecessary obstacle to the lives of people in love, and passed what amounts to a domestic partnership law. Thus, after two years in the States, with another visa deadline approaching, they began packing their bags.

Phyllis came to San Francisco in her twenties seeking the Promised Land—which she found: she's a brilliant, accomplished photographer. She was a vital force in helping to create a close-knit community of mostly lesbian artists. Helen, a writer, fit right into this community and with Phyllis's closest friends. She was happy living in the house Phyllis had bought years before they met—not just a place to live, but a commitment to the city Phyllis loved, a place where creative projects were constantly in progress. Not only is Phyllis leaving the city and the community she loves; she's also leaving her biological family, who she regularly visits in Buffalo, New York.

On my way to the party, I worried we might cry all night.

There must've been about 200 people crowding the hall, the stairway, and every room in the house. I saw people I haven't seen in years. Simple and elaborate gifts were brought for the emigrating couple—chocolate candy; a guided walking tour of London; even an "I Love America" T-shirt.

With all the fun, it was easy to forget the party's primary purpose. Only when I looked at Phyllis from time to time, hugging someone with tears in her eyes or laughing as she opened some gag gift, did I feel the widening crack in my heart and wonder if anyone realizes the tangible, direct effects of our country's restrictive and archaic laws.

If you've never seen her work, mosey on over to <http://www.phyllischristopher.com>. Then sit down and write your Congresspeople demanding changes in immigration, domestic partner and gay marriage laws.