



PFLAG - LA

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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

2009 / Newsletter # 255

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 **U**pcoming **S**peakers, Please Check Our **W**ebsite At
www.pflagla.org !

Please join us on **Sunday June 14** 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!!!

HELPLINES, CHAPTERS & CONTACTS 9 am to 9 pm**Area Code 310**

West LA: 454 6681 (Liz)
 LI ZARM@aol.com
 South Bay Chapter: 546 2721 (Dick)

Area Code 562

Long Beach Chapter: 403 1234

Area Code 626

Pasadena Chapter: 797 1732 (Patti)
 ploitz@earthlink.net

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)
 lynnepersperber@yahoo.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@gmail.com

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 818 956 7533
 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

TAKE PRIDE

It's almost June. Time for graduations and weddings: endings and beginnings. It's a bittersweet time for the LGBTQI community as we reflect on all the couples who can't get married thanks to the passage of Prop 8.

As this newsletter goes to press, we await an imminent decision from the California Supreme Court either upholding or overturning Prop 8. While all of us hope for the best, none of us will be surprised if the discriminatory and mean-spirited proposition is upheld.

Still, there is a lot to be proud of. Hundreds of thousands of our community came together to man phones, canvass neighborhoods, put up signs, and donate money to defeat Prop 8. Coalitions with a number of civil rights groups and faith communities were built. Untold numbers of people had conversations with family members, friends and co-workers explaining the importance of voting no. These efforts did change minds and votes. We lost by a very narrow margin.

We can also be proud of the protests after the passage of Prop 8, the vast majority of which expressed our anger and disappointment in peaceful ways, and demonstrated to the public at large how many and how determined are the supporters of marriage equality. Thanks to the dedicated attorneys at Lambda Legal, the National Center for Lesbian Rights and the American Civil Liberties Union, a serious legal challenge was launched immediately.

The nation was watching as well. The example of the state of Massachusetts and the struggle in California put marriage equality on the agendas of many states. Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, and Vermont have joined Massachusetts in legalizing civil same-sex marriages. A bill extending marriage rights to gays and lesbians is on the governor's desk in New Hampshire.

In fact, the fight for LGBTQI rights has not been stopped. It's only just begun. That is why this year's Pride Parade is so important. It's time to be proud of all that we have done to secure equal rights for all people. It's time to dedicate ourselves to fighting every battle until we win the war. Wear red and march with PFLAG LA on Sunday June 14. We are gathering at 10:00 am and stepping off at 11:00 am. TAKE PRIDE.

Mariette Sawchuk
msawchuk-pflag@earthlink.net

White Knot for Equality!

WhiteKnot.org is the website for White Knot for Equality, a non-profit organization founded by Frank Voci in November 2008 in response to the passing of Proposition 8 in California and bans on same-sex marriage and the denial of equal rights for LGBT persons across the nation and around the world.

White Knot for Equality's mission is to work to achieve equal rights for the LGBT population by:

- * educating people on the importance of Marriage Equality,
- * engaging people in the conversations needed to change hearts and minds,
- * and showing the wide-spread support Marriage Equality truly has.

We believe in peaceful and conscientious displays of support wherever there is injustice.

For more information, please go to <http://www.whiteknot.org>

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

You shall not steal
"Misled Californians try to steal the right to marry
from legally married same-sex couples
under the guise of Christianity."

While at press time we are still awaiting the California Supreme Court ruling on Prop. 8, other states have bypassed us in creating 'one nation' or, better said, 'one state', where all loving families are legally recognized and protected under the laws. Civil laws, that is. Civil laws that have nothing to do with religious rites and/or sacraments.

IOWA:

On April 3, 2009, the Iowa Supreme Court unanimously struck down the 1998 state ban on marriage for same-sex couples in their decision *Varnum v. Brien*. Same-sex couples can get married in Iowa since April 27, 2009.

VERMONT:

On April 7, 2009, the Vermont Legislature passed a bill extending the freedom to marry to same-sex couples. Vermont is the first state in the nation to extend the freedom to marry through the legislative process. Marital bliss for same-sex couples start in Vermont September 1, 2009.

NEW HAMPSHIRE:

On April 29, 2009, the New Hampshire State Senate voted in favor of legislation that would permit same-sex couples to marry. The House had voted in favor previously. However, since the Senate voted on an amended version of the bill, the legislative process continues.

MAINE:

On May 6, 2009, Governor Baldacci of Maine signed into law a bill extending marriage equality to same-sex couples. Marriages for same-sex couples will tentatively start September 14, 2009, if not overruled by a voters' referendum.

DC:

On May 7, 2009, D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty signed a bill that would recognize same-sex marriages performed legally in other jurisdictions.

NEW YORK:

On May 12, 2009, the New York State Assembly voted in favor of same-sex marriage. The bill now moves to the State Senate.

And where will California go? The California Supreme Court will rule on the challenge to Prop 8 before June 3rd. Decisions are announced on Mondays and Thursdays. Stay tuned and join the Day of Decision. <http://www.dayofdecision.com>

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"The application and content of First Amendment principles are not determined by public opinion polls or by a majority vote."

William Overton, U.S. District Judge, 1982

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"Nothing is unchangeable but the inherent and unalienable rights of man."

Thomas Jefferson, Third President of the United States (1801-1809)

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

through speaking engagements/education, activism & advocacy:

- Dee Cappelli, Jenn Kennedy, Lisa Kimsey, and Steve Krantz spoke at a Human Relations Symposia at Mount St. Mary's College, and Steve Krantz spoke at KPMG in Los Angeles.
- Dee Cappelli, Lisa Kimsey, and Sylvia Weisenberg spoke at Woodland Hills Community Church (United Church of Christ).

A special **thank-you** goes to the following businesses who provided the food for our PFLAG - Los Angeles Regional Conference on March 7, 2009:

Starbucks, 8595 Santa Monica Bl, West Hollywood, CA 90069
Ms. Susan Nodilo, 310-659-1856

Bristol Farms, 9039 Beverly Bl, West Hollywood, CA 90048
Mr. Jeff Babb, 310-248-2804

Ralphs Market, 7257 Sunset Bl, West Hollywood, CA 90046
Mr. Martin Torres, 323-512-8382

Trader Joe's, 8611 Santa Monica Bl, West Hollywood, CA 90069
Mr. Rob Weiner, 310-657-0152

California Pizza Kitchen, 121 La Cienega Bl, Los Angeles, CA 90048
Mr. Martin Marquez, 310-854-6555

Subway, 8617 Santa Monica Bl, West Hollywood, CA 90069
Mr. Ari Monosson, 310-659-4225

Koo Koo Roo, 8250 Santa Monica Bl, West Hollywood, CA 90069
Mr. Jose Chavez, 310-657-3300

Please show your appreciation by frequenting these businesses.

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

Just send an e-mail to Barrybarrym@yahoo.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.

We'd like to ask for your **email address** to ensure that if we ever have an event on short notice YOU WILL hear about it. Please email your email address to info@pflagla.org or to karenhmason@yahoo.com

Got OUTRAGE?

Watch out for *OUTRAGE*, the new documentary film from Kirby Dick!

Film Summary:

From Academy Award-nominated documentary filmmaker Kirby Dick comes OUTRAGE, a searing indictment of the hypocrisy of closeted politicians with appalling gay rights voting records who actively campaign against the LGBT community they covertly belong to.

Boldly revealing the hidden lives of some of the United States' most powerful policymakers, OUTRAGE takes a comprehensive look at the harm they've inflicted on millions of Americans, and examines the media's complicity in keeping their secrets. With analysis from prominent members of the gay community such as Congressman Barney Frank, former NJ Governor Jim McGreevey, activist Larry Kramer, radio personality Michelangelo Signorile, and openly gay congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (Representative, Wisconsin 2nd district), OUTRAGE probes deeply into the psychology of this double lifestyle, the ethics of outing closeted politicians, the double standards that the media upholds in its coverage of the sex lives of gay public figures, and much more.

T r a n s A c t i o n

Report on the State of Transgender California

A big thank you to the Transgender Law Center for putting together this report which you can download at

<http://transgenderlawcenter.org/pdf/StateofTransCAFINAL.pdf>

Key Findings:

- Transgender respondents are almost twice as likely to hold a bachelor's degree as the general California State population.
- Transgender respondents are twice as likely to be living below the poverty line of \$10,400 when compared to the general population.
- Transgender Californians have been legally protected from discrimination and harassment in employment since 2004.
- Seventy percent of the transgender community reports experiencing workplace harassment or discrimination directly related to their gender identity.
- Transgender Californians have been legally protected from discrimination and harassment in housing since 2004.
- 1 in 5 respondents have been homeless since they first identified as transgender.
- California prohibits discrimination in public accommodations, including medical care, based on gender identity.
- Thirty percent of the community reports postponing care for illness or preventive care due to disrespect or discrimination from doctors or other health care providers.

Trans Unity Event

When: June 4 – 7, 2009

Where: The Village

The L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center
1125 N. McCadden Place
Los Angeles, CA 90038
*[1 block east of Highland Ave.,
1/2 block north of Santa Monica Blvd.]*

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.

More than 25 vendors and other community organizations participate in the celebration by setting up booths at the event to inform and educate our community about the services and resources available to them.

For more information contact

Farina (323) 860-7394 or
Chanel (323) 860-7335 or
Vicky (323) 860-7314

or to join the Trans-Unity Mailing List at

<http://www.freewebs.com/transunity/>

Transgender Empowerment Institute,

June 27

Minority AIDS Project in collaboration with Transcend Empowerment Institute is hosting a daylong event on June 27th for Transgender persons, allies, significant others and providers. This event addresses self-esteem issues in trans communities and links persons to healthy HIV care and treatment services.

For more information, please contact Valerie Spencer at Transinstitute@aol.com or ValerieSpn@aol.com
Phone 213-944-1242

Hate Crimes Bill Passed in House

On April 29, 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives voted in favor of the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act (H.R.1913), moving one step closer to the passage of the first federal law to include gender identity and transgender people.

This bill would add sexual orientation, gender identity, gender and disability to the categories included in existing federal hate crimes law and would allow local governments who are unable or unwilling to address hate crimes to receive assistance from the federal government.

Asian Pacific Islander PFLAG College Scholarship Essay Challenge

Think, Write, Win: Choose Love

Asian Pacific Islander Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (API-PFLAG) issued a challenge to all graduating college-bound high school seniors and returning undergraduates: Write a sharp, well-argued essay in favor of same-sex marriage and win a college scholarship in one of two categories: English language or Chinese/Korean language. Total prize money is \$5,000. The contest, which closed on May 1, 2009, was open to all students who permanently reside in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. Fourteen English language essays and two Korean essays were received. Winners will be announced in a press conference on May 27, 2009 at the Asian Pacific American Legal Center.

Entrants answered the following question: "From the perspective of Asian Pacific Americans, why should marriage between two people of the same sex be considered a fundamental civil right (marriage equality)?" Writers were encouraged to include examples from Asian Pacific American legal history or culture in their argument.

A project of PFLAG LA, API-PFLAG has three goals for this essay contest: 1) to promote marriage equality media coverage in the Asian Pacific Islander communities and public awareness of the injustices to a minority community; 2) to encourage deep, serious discussion of civil rights issues among parents and other family members, with extended families and among peers; and 3) to motivate API youth to be more conscious of social issues in the future and to become more active citizens as adults.

"We are very pleased at the quality of the essays we received," said Harold Kameya, chairman of API PFLAG and one of the contest organizers. Essay titles demonstrate a wide range of approaches. They include "Them Chinks," "Civil Rights of Same-Sex Marriage from the Perspective of Japanese-Americans," "Sensibility and Equality," "API's Untold Story," and "Beyond the Heterosexual Mystic," to name only a few.

Prominent Asian Americans are judges, including Reverend Jonipher Kwong of California Faith for Equality, Reverend Dae Jung of the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, Dr. Julius Nam, professor of religion at Loma Linda University, State Board of Equalization Chair and congressional candidate Hon. Judy Chu, and State Assembly member Hon. Mike Eng.

A portion of the prize winnings was donated by a grant from the PFLAG National Diversity Outreach Chapter Program. Other sponsors include Asian Pacific Islander Parents and Friends/Family of Lesbians And Gays (API-PFLAG), PFLAG Los Angeles, PFLAG national office, Lambda Legal, Korean Resource Center, National Korean American Service and Education Consortium, Jia Lan Literature Foundation, Chinese Rainbow Association, API Pride Council, and API Equality Los Angeles.

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

Great joy...

200 Supporters of Gay & Lesbian Community March in 2009 Los Angeles Chinatown New Year's Parade

Contingent Organized by API Equality-LA Draws Record Participation

Los Angeles – On Saturday, January 31, 2009, a record 200 people joined the API Equality-LA contingent in the Golden Dragon Parade in Los Angeles' Chinatown, one of the city's most popular community events. Saturday marked only the fourth time in the parade's 110-year history that a contingent representing and supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) members of the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) community has participated in the parade.

"We expected a strong turnout after all of the energy in our community since the November 2008 election, but we were absolutely astounded to welcome 200 participants – nearly three times as many as last year!" said Ericson Herbas, API Equality-LA steering committee member and one of the organizers of the contingent. "Particularly meaningful for all of us, we were also joined this year by same-sex couples who had been able to legally marry before November 2008."

To read the entire press release, please go to http://www.apiequalityla.org/news_020209.php
For event photos, please go to <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ericsonherbas/sets/72157613263712248/>

Great sadness...

"Homosexuality is a mysterious gift of God's grace."

We mourn the loss of Bishop Melvin E. Wheatley, who served as senior pastor at the Westwood United Methodist Church (PFLAG's meeting place) for nearly two decades. Bishop Melvin E. Wheatley, who risked censure in the United Methodist Church for appointing his denomination's first openly gay pastor in 1982, died March 1 at the age of 93 after a lengthy illness.

In 1972, the year he became bishop, the United Methodist Church took its first official stand against homosexuality. Six years later, in 1978, Wheatley stunned his fellow bishops when he announced that he could not support any church teaching that discriminated against members because of their sexual orientation.

In an emotional speech, he declared that he and his wife, Lucile, knew and cherished several gay people whose lives were "as close to authentic Christian living as we perceive ourselves to be." Those individuals, he added, included one of his own sons, John, who came out to his family in 1973. At the church's 1980 General Conference, he was the only bishop who refused to sign the statement that condemned "the practice of homosexuality" and called it "incompatible" with Christian teaching.

Please go to

*<http://www.latimes.com/news/obituaries/la-me-melvin-wheatley15-2009mar15,0,2511233.story>
to read Elaine Woo's story about this outstanding human being and caring father of a gay son.*