



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

October-November 2000

Newsletter 207

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 Tuesday of each month at the Westwood United Methodist Church, 10497 Wilshire Bl., NE corner of Wilshire and Warner. Take 405 Freeway to 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 6:30 pm.

PFLAG starts each meeting with a rap group where individuals can share their concerns, questions and understanding about and with the gay person or persons in their families. After the rap session, we generally have a speaker or panel of speakers whose topic includes subjects pertinent to the families, gays and lesbians. If needed, a separate group for people wishing to share and learn about people with AIDS (PWAs) is held, along with a Spanish speaking support group facilitated by Spanish speaking parents.

OUR NEXT SPEAKERS

October 17, 2000

The October PFLAG meeting will feature a presentation by Mark Abellsson, formerly with Hollywood Supports and GLAAD. Mark is now a diversity consultant specializing in sexual orientation issues. Mark has developed his own "Sexual Orientation Issues in the Workplace" program. The goal of this program is to help companies eliminate ignorance, fear and discrimination based on sexual orientation. The program is very interactive, using self-guided and facilitated exercises to generate ideas and discussions around workplace issues. Topic areas include identifying workplace issues, legal requirements and company policies, stereotypes and assumptions, and tools for promoting a workplace environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Mark will present an overview of this program, highlighting a few of the exercises he uses.

November 21, 2000

Our November speaker is The Honorable Thomas Burrows, a Los Angeles County Superior Court Referee, and active member of the L.A.U.S.D. Advisory Committee on gay and lesbian issues to Board member Caprice Young. Thomas will speak about how our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender children are treated as wards of the Court when in the custody of the Los Angeles County Probation Department in foster homes and other secure facilities.

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: 373 2351

Area Code 323

291 2990 (Elfi Martin)

Area Code 562

Long Beach Chapter: 984 8335

Area Code 626

Pasadena Chapter: 914 1241 (Denny)

Area Code 661

Santa Clarita Chapter: 254 2177 (Peggy)

Area Code 714

Orange County Chapter: 997 8047

Area Code 805

Ventura Chapter: 644 5864

Area Code 818

Studio City: 788 8678 (Lynette) Lynette114@aol.com
Woodland Hills: 340 8945 (Irene & Alvin)

Area Code 909

Claremont Chapter: 624 6134
Redlands Chapter: 335 2005 (Kathy)

Area Code 949

South Orange County: 380 7035

OTHER HELPLINES / RESOURCES**Spanish Speaking:**

(323) 465 1008 (Silvia)
(310) 453 8506 (Angela)

African American:

(323) 731 0888 (Shirley)

Asian Pacific Islander:

(818) 368 2008 (Ellen) HKameya@juno.com

Parent of person with AIDS:

(818) 342 1064

LA Gay & Lesbian Center:

(323) 993 7400

Straight Spouses:

(626) 449 3267 (Onnolee)

TREVOR - 24 hr suicide prevention line

for gay, lesbian, bisexual and questioning youth:
(800) 850 8078 www.trevorproject.com

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.
(213) 250 8787 www.nccjla.org

Hablando Entre Hombres

(213) 273 8723

PFLAG National

(202) 638 4200 www.pflag.org

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

If there is anything you would like to see in the newsletter, please e-mail me at haichi_ca@hotmail.com, call me at (323) 460-4849, or just drop me a note at our PFLAG meetings! Sincerely, Chris Haiss

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community has enjoyed the most support and greatest recognition of rights during the last 8 years than we have in any other period in modern times.

We have worked hard locally, statewide and on a National level to achieve equal rights. The battle is waging, and now a clear line has been drawn. With the election just weeks away a choice must be made by us all. That choice is clear, and probably the most important voting choice you will make in your lifetime.

Do we continue the battle with support from our elected officials in the government, or do we undo all the gains we have made these last few years by electing people who don't believe we are entitled to live our lives as free and equal human beings?

Your obligation is not only to get to the voting booth, but to talk the talk, speak the issues, and fight for and support the candidates who recognize that we are entitled to and deserve nothing less than full equality in all aspects of life.

Don't let them push us back into the closet, and take away the gains we have achieved and fought for. VOTE, SUPPORT CANDIDATES FINANCIALLY, SPEAK ABOUT THE ISSUES TO ALL YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND CO-WORKERS, AND FIGHT FOR VICTORY IN THIS ELECTION.

Thank you,
Larry Sperber

Nothing planned for Saturday, October 14? Then this is the place where you should be!

WEST COAST SINGERS, L.A.'s premier 65-member lesbian and gay chorus, invites you to a musical celebration of National Coming Out Day at our "Out and About" concert in West Hollywood. Join us on Saturday, October 14, 2000, at 6:00 p.m. at West Hollywood Park, 647 N. San Vicente Blvd. Guest speakers will include Jeffrey Prang, Mayor of West Hollywood; Pat Rubin from PFLAG; and longtime lesbian activist Ivy Bottini. Funded by a grant from the City of West Hollywood, this concert is FREE to West Hollywood residents, \$10 for nonresidents, and \$ 5 for PFLAG members. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Friends of Project 10. For tickets and information, call 1-800-439-4WCS or visit our Web site: www.westcoastsingers.org

Clínica Para Las Américas es una organización no lucrativa que provee servicios de salud a personas sin seguro medico. Aquí en la clínica hacemos pruebas de TB (Tuberculosis), VIH (Gratis y Anonimo), Exámenes de Enfermedades Transmitidas Sexualmente, entre otros. En la actualidad el departamento de Prevencion de VIH esta trabajando con la comunidad del area de Pico/Union con hombres latinos gay. Creando así un programa de apoyo en Español ya que no existe ninguna ayuda de este tipo en el area. Para solventar esta necesidad hemos creado el grupo:

HABLANDO ENTRE HOMBRES

Este es un grupo de apoyo que se reúne los días Martes de las 7:00 a las 9:00 de la noche, en la Clínica Para Las Américas, ubicada en 318 S. Alvarado St. Los Angeles, CA, 90057. En estas charlas se tocan temas de importancia, por ejemplo: Homofobia, Sexo Seguro, Silencio Sexual, Salir del Closet y otros temas necesarios para apoyar a la comunidad y evitar la propagacion de enfermedades transmitidas sexualmente incluyendo VIH.

Las personas encargadas de llevar a cabo estas reuniones son Ramón Ramírez Tel (213) 273 - 8723 & Walfred López Tel (213) 273 - 8715

Excerpt of the speech by Elizabeth Birch, Executive Director, Human Rights Campaign, at the Democratic National Convention

"I am honored to speak here as a gay American. Tonight, we celebrate the American family. But we know that America's family is not yet whole.

For the color of his skin, James Byrd Jr. was dragged behind a truck in Jasper, Texas, until his body was shattered on a drainage ditch. Because of her faith, 14 year old Kristi Beckel was gunned down as she worshipped in a Texas Baptist church. Because Matthew Shepard was gay, he was driven into the countryside on a freezing Wyoming night, beaten and hung on a fence to die. His gentle voice still asks why, as do the families who have paid for our national lesson with their children's lives.

Tonight, we dedicate ourselves to healing the fractures - soothing the wounds - to make our American family truly whole.

I speak here tonight with the parents and political leaders whose action or apathy will determine the fullness of the American family.

To parents - some of whom have left their gay children at the margins of family life and out of a vision for America, I say this: I want you to know that your gay children are gifted and strong. All are heroic in the way they have conquered barriers to their own self-respect. Many have suffered cruelty or violence. Some serve their communities with leadership and grace. Many are rich in faith, and have a deep love for this nation and democracy. Tens of thousands have served with distinction in the armed forces. Many have lost their lives. Many have lost their jobs. All were created by God.

Healing America's family requires resolve, not simply a refrain. Not a single gay American seeks special rights or favored treatment. We seek simple equality - the equal right to work, raise a family, serve our country in every way and be free from the shackles of brutality and hate.

As long as a young man can be left on a fence to die, our American family is fractured; as long as gay parents live in fear that their children might be taken from them, our family is torn; as long as hardworking Americans can be fired in 30 states simply for being gay, our family is not whole; as long as gay people are barred from serving openly and with dignity in the armed forces of the United States, our family is not just; as long as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth are at risk for suicide...until there is a cure for AIDS for men, women and children here and around the world...then the American family we celebrate tonight is not yet healed. It is not enough to love your own children. Leaders must love all children and safeguard the family called America. We don't have a single child to spare...I don't know how our young twins will one day judge my partner Hilary and me as parents, or as people. Our hope and prayer is that we will measure up in the way Dr. Martin Luther King asked people to judge themselves. He said: 'In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.'"

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

Rev. Lou Sheldon, Traditional Values Coalition:

"An American is three times more likely to be killed by lightning than to be murdered in a hate crime."

ARE YOU A GAY PARENT?

Check out the Gay Parent magazine! You can pick it up at the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center, or go directly to their web site at <http://www.gayparentmag.com>

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

Larry and Lynette Sperber, Angie Kiel, and Jeremy Pentergast did a PFLAG presentation at Cal State Long Beach for a graduate class of school counselors.

Larry and Lynette Sperber introduced the film "Could be Worse" at Outfest, the Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, on behalf of PFLAG, Community Collaborators with Outfest.

Larry and Lynette were part of the Host Committee for GLSEN's Annual Graduation Party on July 22nd. The party was a huge success, both in having a great time and raising lots of money.

On July 28, Larry and Lynette Sperber were part of a Panel Presentation for the Torrance School Board. Brett Mathews, Harold Kameya and Marla Weiss made up the rest of the panel. It was an important presentation as PFLAG is asking the Torrance School Board members to put us on the Approved Speaker's List. We will know the outcome in early September. There were lots of PFLAGer's at the meeting in support of our cause.

CHECK OUT THESE CHECKS!

Go to <http://www.messageproducts.com>

Click "Checks, Labels, and Check Covers"

Click "Social Issue Organizations"

Scroll down to "Lesbian & Gay" and click "PFLAG"

Don't they look great?! PFLAG receives 10% of sales, providing us another stream of income.

(Info provided by Jay Heavner,
Deputy Director of Development, PFLAG)

Clínica Para Las Américas is a non-profit organization which provides health services to people that cannot afford medical insurance. Here at the clinic we test for TB (Tuberculosis), HIV, STDs, and others. The HIV prevention department is currently working with the gay Spanish-speaking Latinos of Pico/Union. Due to the fact that there is no other help of this kind, we have created the Spanish support group for Latino Gay Men:

HABLANDO ENTRE HOMBRES

This support group meets every Tuesday from 7pm to 9pm at Clínica Para Las Américas, 318 S. Alvarado St., Los Angeles, CA 90057. The support groups deal with issues such as: Homophobia, Safe Sex, Sexual Silence, Coming Out of the Closet, and other very important issues that can be considered taboos within our families. The purpose of these groups is to educate the community and prevent the spreading of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

The people in charge of conducting these support groups are:

Ramón Ramírez (213) 273-8723 &
Walfred López (213) 273-8715

LAW & ORDER

The Louisiana Supreme Court upheld its state's sodomy law. "Simply put, commission of what the Legislature determines as an immoral act, even if consensual and private, is an injury against society itself."

Editor's note: My biggest fear of "injury against society" is hate covered under the umbrella of "morality", and drunk drivers. I've experienced first hand these injuries against society and the damage they do to individuals and families. If YOU know of actual injury against society that occurred through consensual private intimacy between two adults, please let me know and we'll print it in our next newsletter.

DID YOU KNOW?

The first woman to run for President of the United States, Victoria Woodhull, stood in 1872 on the ticket of popularizing free love.

*They worked at their jobs!
They shopped for groceries!
They even went to the movies!
They lived...*

The Homosexual Lifestyle

*SEE...them do their laundry!
HEAR...them order from the local take-out!
FEEL...your spine tingle as they watch TV!*

PG PLEASE GET OVER IT

AT THE MOVIES

by Walter Lippmann



We've been blessed in recent years with a massive outpouring of movies with LGBT themes. This reflects the growing strength of our communities as well as interest in the LGBT world by the broader culture. The result has been what now has become a steady stream of pictures. Coming-of-age and coming to terms with one's sexuality are no longer the principal themes of these productions. Two new movies reflect these developments.

AIMEE & JAGUAR is based on the story of a German Jewish woman during the final years of Nazi regime who meets and falls in love with what we might at first glance call a model housewife. The latter is Aryan, married to a Nazi officer, and also the mother of his four sons. The Jewish woman, Felice Schragenheim, performed magnificently by Maria Schrader, is an active and conscious lesbian. She's also a daredevil and thrill-seeker who takes risks others in her circle wouldn't even contemplate. She conceals both her sexuality and her Jewishness to work undercover in a Nazi newspaper. And, she's so effective that she becomes the indispensable right-hand to the editor! Covertly, however, she steals secrets to which he has access and passes them on to the anti-Nazi underground.

The German woman, Lilly Wust, played beautifully by Juliane Koehler, was unhappily married and seems to have had a series of unhappy sexual relationships with men outside her marriage. He's away at the front during much of the movie's time frame. When Lilly and Felice meet, they are drawn to one another, though Lilly doesn't really grasp what's happening. Of course it takes time for them to work this out, but we see their evolving relationship as it goes through its trials and tribulations.

It's a tragic story, as Felice is then ultimately captured by the Nazis and disappears. The narrative is book-ended by images of Lily in the present (in real life, she's still alive) speaking longingly of Felice, who even fifty years later, remains the love of her life. The movie's exquisite use of dark visual tones: browns and blacks, accentuates a foreboding sense of the tragic fate which awaits Felice.

It's a true story, which became both a best-selling book and a widely popular theatrical release. The movie was first shown at OUTFEST last year, along with a documentary of their lives, **LOVE STORY**, that may be available on video. The book was a bestseller and the movie was a box office hit in Germany. Tragic, beautiful, great!

BUT I'M A CHEERLEADER

PFLAG has been active in the public protests against "Dr." Laura Schlessinger, the anti-gay physiologist whose hectoring "advice" talk radio programs are set to expand to television soon. Ironically this makes **BUT I'M A CHEERLEADER** most timely. It's a sardonic assault on the idea of "reparative therapy" through which numerous lesbian and gay children have been placed by rigidly heterosexual parents.

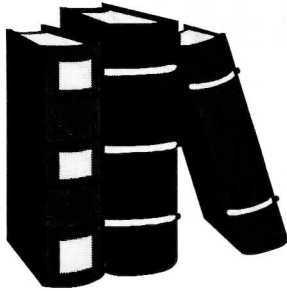
Pretty redhead Megan (Natasha Lyonne of **THE SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS**, **AMERICAN PIE** and **IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK II**) finds herself disgusted by her boyfriend's sloppy kisses. Her friends and family note the pictures of girls rather than boys in her room and school locker, and they sense things about Megan she doesn't see herself. After all she asks, incredulously, "But I'm a Cheerleader?" To head off the dreaded future the parents' instincts sense, they stage an "intervention" and force Megan into a "residential treatment" facility called True Directions.

This institution, presided over by a ruthless autocrat, and staffed by an amusingly de-dragged RuPaul provides a series of surreal images in which the "presumed normal" forms of gender expression (pink for the girls, blue for the boys) and socialization training (housecleaning for the girls and sports for the boys) are inculcated with a mixture of carrots and sticks. Like a 12-step program, the inmates are forced to attend group therapy, and to "admit" their homosexuality, whether they believe their own words or not. Only then are ready to be set on the narrow and straight path.

Among the involuntary inmates, Megan meets Graham (Clea DuVall), an angry, cynical, cigarette-smoking dyke who knows with certainty who she is. In time she and Megan are drawn to one another and a youthful romance begins. Graham challenges Megan sharply, and helps her figure out who she herself (Megan) is, and that she's in love with Graham. The affection between the two is palpable, and I found it the most credible part of the picture. There's also a lot of cute cross-chatter at times, but much of the humor of the picture is based on tired stereotypes. Most of the rest of the movie was so stereotypically overdrawn as to defeat its laudable purpose.

Critic David Ehrenstein, writing in **NEW TIMES LA**, noted a "striking parallel to the true love story of Exodus International, an 'ex-gay' ministry whose founder met, fell in love, and abandoned the organization they helped found in order to fight it." (<http://www.newtimesla.com/issues/2000-07-20/film2.html>) It's timely stuff presented in a tired manner, unfortunately.

OFF THE BOOK-RACK



Homosexuality = Unnatural? Think again after reading

"BIOLOGICAL EXUBERANCE - Animal Homosexuality and Natural Diversity"

by Bruce Bagemihl, Ph.D.
ISBN 0-312-19239-8

Excerpt from the introduction:

"The subject is so vast, the types of behaviors so varied, and the number of species involved so large, as to defy any attempt at comprehensiveness...To help narrow the field, certain parameters have been chosen: only examples of homosexual behavior or transgender that have been scientifically documented, for example, are covered in this book...In addition to discussing an extensive array of species (nearly 300 mammals and birds), the book draws upon more than two centuries of scientific research."

This book is geared towards an academic and a nonacademic readership. It lets the reader look into the amazing world of two hundred years' worth of documented homosexual wildlife and gives the reader a broad picture of homosexual behavior in the animal world of baboons, chimpanzees, gibbons, dolphins, whales, seals, deer, giraffes, antelopes, buffalo, elephants, bears, ducks, gulls, and parrots, just to mention a few.

If you thought homosexuality is "unnatural" and man-made as part of a "gay agenda", this book teaches you different!

THE UGLINESS OF HATE CRIMES AND WHAT YOU CAN DO

For 1998 the FBI reported 1,439 crimes motivated by victims' sexual orientation. Since the death of Matthew Shepherd, 37 murders of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people have occurred.

In Los Angeles County, according to the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations, lesbians and gay men have consistently been the No. 1 or No. 2 target of hate crimes. Many victims never report the anti-gay, lesbian and transgender harassment or violence they experience for fear of being outed, or being concerned about law enforcement insensitivity.

The Anti-Violence Project of the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center provides a comprehensive range of victim recovery and empowerment services for victims of homophobic, anti-transgender, and anti-HIV/AIDS violence, threats of violence, vandalism, and harassment. Help to document hate incidents based on actual or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity such as violence, slurs, name calling, derogatory words, threats, vandalism, by reporting these to the Anti-Violence Project at (800) 373 - 2227 (English hotline) or (877) 963 - 4666 (Spanish hotline).