



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

December-January 2003

Newsletter 220

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; general meeting begins at 7:25 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.

OUR NEXT SPEAKERS

December 17, 2002

Brenda Freiberg - PFLAG Mom and former Chairperson of Aids Project Los Angeles (APLA)

January 21, 2003

Rob Hennig of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)

One of our last great leaders is gone...

We remember the leadership and vision of Harry Hay, a pioneer in GLBT activism, who passed away October 24 at the age of 90. Hay devoted his life to progressive politics and in 1950 founded the secret network of support groups for gays known as the Mattachine Society.

He was an actor living in Los Angeles in 1934 when he first became an activist in left-wing politics. Hay quickly realized he needed to do similar organizing in the gay community.

Hay and his partner of 39 years, John Burnside, moved to San Francisco three years ago after a lifetime in Los Angeles. Hay was diagnosed several weeks ago with lung cancer.

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: 403 1234

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: 498 4964 (Rita or Steve)

Area Code 818

Studio City: 788 8678 (Lynette) Lynette114@aol.com

Woodland Hills: 340 8945 (Irene & Alvin)

Area Code 909

Claremont Chapter: 624 6134 or 981 2332

Colton: 825 8368 (Norma)

Rancho Chapter: 335 2005 (Kathy)

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 haichi_ca@hotmail.com, call me at (310) 460-4849, or just drop me a note at our PFLAG meetings! Happy Holidays, Chris Haiss

Deadline for submissions: January 1
(February/March issue)

OTHER HELPLINES / RESOURCES

Spanish Speaking:

(310) 453 8506 (Angela)

African American:

(323) 731 0888 (Shirley)

(323) 305 1853 (Glynis)

Asian Pacific Islander:

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

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

Spanish support group for Latino Gay Men

(213) 273 8723 (Ramon Ramirez)

PFLAG National

(202) 467 8180 www.pflag.org

PFLAG's Transgender Special Outreach Network (TSO):

Karen Gross (216) 691 HELP / KittenGr@aol.com

Mary Boenke (540) 890 3957 / maryboenke@aol.com

www.transfamily.org

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Can we find a cure for Hatred?

National Coming Out Day has come and gone and it seems that in the fight to secure equal rights for the GLBT community, progress moves with the two steps forward, one step backwards approach. This summer, with the attention of the national press, there were several assaults in West Hollywood. Although suspects have been arrested, I was shocked to hear that the LA district attorney, Steve Cooley was not going to prosecute the accused under the hate crime laws in the state, despite the severe beatings that many of the victims underwent.

In schools today, it is very common to hear derogatory comments about gays that go unnoticed and unpunished. In a sense we are saying it's "OK" to make sure offensive remarks. A former NFL lineman, Esera Tuaolo, who played in the league for nine years recently came out on television with his life partner of 5 ½ years. Esera had to endure hearing slurs from his teammates and suffered depression and thoughts of suicide as a result. To quote one of his former teammates, had Esera come out while he was still playing, "he would have been eaten alive, and he would have been hated for it." In American society where the professional athlete has been exalted to such level, it's sad to see such behavior condoned.

It is impossible to think we can change the minds and hearts of everyone, but the more GLBT's come out, the harder it will be to ignore us. We can also make a difference with our elected officials. I encourage you to write LA's district attorney Steve Cooley at 210 W. Temple St., LA CA 90012, and tell him what you think about the West Hollywood beatings and not using hate crime laws to prosecute.

Finally, it is with a heavy heart that I must mention the passing of fellow Los Angeles PFLAG Board Member Bill Clayton. Bill was always anxious to lend a helping hand with our chapter, and was wealth of knowledge concerning the city's history of the past 60 years. A good friend and attorney, he will be sorely missed and our thoughts and prayers are with him.

George Unger - Co-President, PFLAG Los Angeles

IN MEMORIAM

BILL CLAYTON

June 7, 1924 – October 9, 2002

PFLAG has lost a dear and beloved member. With profound sadness, Larry and I learned of the death of our wonderful friend, Bill Clayton. I cannot remember a meeting or an event that we attended that I did not see Bill's sweet, smiling face. His contributions to PFLAG were so valuable. He was such an incredible source of information of what it was like to be gay and closeted in the '40's and 50's. When he shared his stories with others in our PFLAG discussion groups each month, there was rapt silence as younger men and women got to hear what it was like back then. He was truly a courageous pioneer, always willing to help and participate at all levels. He became our much-needed librarian, carrying all the books, fliers, pamphlets and other pieces of information, each month and seeing that they were set out on the table for easy access.

Whatever activity or event we were at, Bill was always attentive and observing, being his sweet unobtrusive self, but wanting to be supportive and available. It will be a huge void for us not to be able to share these times with him. Goodbye my dear friend. Your spirit remains in my heart and my thoughts. We will miss you terribly, but take comfort in knowing you will continue to be wherever we are, watching and observing in your dear, sweet, quiet way.

With love,
Lynette

GAY HISTORY with LISA DIGUARDIOctober 7, 1987:

A US Justice Department report declared the most frequent victims of hate crimes are gays, lesbians, and bisexuals.

GAY HISTORY with LISA DIGUARDIOctober 13, 1998:

In a New York Times article, Steven Schwalm, a spokesman for the Family Research Council, said that hate crimes laws criminalize pro-family beliefs.

HATE CRIME IN WEST HOLLYWOOD

September 2, 2002

Last night, Trev Broudy, a 33-year-old actor, was struck in the back of the head, kicked and punched as he and a friend walked in the 8900 block of Cynthia Street near San Vicente Boulevard. Broudy was taken to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where he was treated for serious head trauma and underwent two surgeries on his brain to stop internal bleeding. He has been unconscious since the attack. Police are investigating this horrible assault as a hate crime.

UPDATE:

The Sheriffs did arrest the suspects for the hate crime and submitted the reports and facts to the district attorney. The District Attorney's Hate Crime task force leader DDA Scott Millington refused to file hate crime charges as he felt they would not be sustained in court.

**THREE MEN ARRAIGNED IN DEATH OF TRANSGENDERED TEEN
NTAC URGES HATE CRIME CHARGES IN BRUTAL BLUDGEONING DEATH**

The body of a transgendered Newark, California teen who failed to return home after an October 3 party was discovered nearly two weeks later, buried in a shallow grave 150 miles away. Seventeen-year old Gwen (born Eddie) Araujo was found on Wednesday, October 15, after her mother reported her missing. Araujo was severely bludgeoned about the head, then strangled. Police are currently investigating the murder as a possible hate crime.

Statement from Senator Sheila James Kuehl:

"I am outraged by this shameful murder, which can only be classified as a hate crime. At the heart of hate crime murder is the assumption that entire categories of people are less than human; that they somehow "deserve" to be eliminated simply for being who they are. That kind of crime threatens the very foundation of our diverse, democratic society. My prayers go out to the family and friends of Gwen Araujo, and I pledge to do everything I can, as a legislator, to build a state and a world in which everyone is treated with simple decency and respect."

A different opinion (excerpts):

Zach Calef / Iowa State Daily Staff Writer:

Araujo didn't tell the men his gender. He tricked them into having sex with him, but if they would have known his sex, they wouldn't have been interested. That is just as bad as rape. They were probably "temporarily insane" -- they did just find out that they were tricked into having sex with a man. The men did what they did because Araujo violated them. These men were truly violated. They were raped. If a woman is raped and kills her assailant, would she be charged with murder?

Note from the editor:

These are only two examples reflecting the brutality towards gay/lesbian/transgender human beings in this country. The United States of America seems to be the only industrialized western democratic country where citizens are brutally attacked, slaughtered and bludgeoned to death because they are gay/lesbian/transgender. YOU can even lose YOUR life if others PERCEIVE you as a member of this category (remember the man who held his wife's purse while she was going to the restroom; he went to the men's room and got killed because he was perceived as being gay?!) How many more men and women have to die just because they are hated by others? Where is the outcry from the people who claim they are "pro-life"?!

Have a look at Gwen Smith's web site "Remembering Our Dead" that is dedicated to transgender men and women who were brutally killed by fellow citizens. <http://www.rememberingourdead.org>

**If you have been hurt or harassed contact The Anti-Violence Project
of the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center at 1.800.373.2227.**

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

- October 5th: Karen and Barry Mason headed up the PFLAG information booth at the Human Rights Campaign's Open House on the UCLA Campus.
- October 11th: George Unger and Sharon Fane represented PFLAG at UCLA's Coming Out Festival at the UCLA Campus.
- October 13th: George Unger, and Adele & Larry Starr spoke at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Santa Monica.

Ohio here we come!

(By Rosemary Hendler)

PFLAG holds a National Conference every two years. This year's meeting was in Columbus Ohio, from September 27-29, and we (Joel and Rosemary Hendler, co-president and board member of PFLAG-LA) attended. The tail end of Hurricane Isadore wetly welcomed us into this lovely town, the 13th largest city in the US, capitol of Ohio, home of the second largest enrollment University in the country (Ohio State). The hotel (Hyatt Regency) and town, with a vibrant downtown and arts area, warmly welcomed us. Here's hoping for the same, two years from now, in Salt Lake City.

The opening session on Friday night was highlighted by a fine talk by Ambassador James Hormel. This openly gay man, after much debate, was confirmed as our ambassador to Luxembourg. He is an inspiring and excellent speaker, with whom we chatted afterward. His partner, active in 9-11 funds collection and distribution, and his daughter, an autism activist, both spoke movingly. We met some old and made some new friends, mingling with the crowd of more than 600 attendees.

David Tseng, the new Executive Director of PFLAG, was a personally and professionally impressive guy, having been a Clinton White House senior policy advisor and running the meeting at relatively short notice. On Saturday, there were small workshops galore. Joel went to one on chapter success, and found challenges were similar nationwide, and got a bunch of ideas we'll discuss at the Board soon. I attended "Advancing Legal Rights for GLBT Families", learning there are many strong resources backing our cause and there is still lots of work to be done. The morning Plenary session was a Diversity panel, regarding building cross-racial alliances and featuring our own Harold Kamaya, with his Asian Pacific Islander viewpoint.

At our Regional Caucus, we learned that we have the pleasure of a new Southern California Regional Director, Pam Woody of Orange County. Other workshops discussed Effective Media Strategy and the scientific latest on The Origins of Sexual Orientation (before birth, the evidence indicates).

There was lots more, with personal interaction a big part. We met the meeting's final speaker, Sam Thoron, who is the new PFLAG President, and is from just up the road in San Francisco. He will surely visit sometime soon.

P F L A G / L O S A N G E L E S N E E D S Y O U R S U P P O R T !

We are enclosing an envelope for your **TAX DEDUCTIBLE** annual dues and/or a year end **TAX DEDUCTIBLE** donation.

Your continued support is greatly appreciated. Every little bit you give goes a long way. Remember, we are an all volunteer organization.

Your donation helps defray our expenses.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

Joel Hendler & George Unger / Co-Presidents

GAY HISTORY with LISA DIGUARDI

February 15, 1951:

A lesbian WAF who had received an undesirable discharge sent a letter to the ACLU requesting that they take action to stop the military from destroying lives by discharging homosexuals. The response she received was that discrimination against homosexuals was not a violation of civil liberties, and recommended she drop the whole matter and get medical treatment to get rid of her homosexual desires.

COMMITTED GAY COUPLES DON'T HAVE THE CHOICE OF MARRIAGE

DEAR ABBY: A mother wrote asking if it was wrong to insist her gay son visit her without his partner because she did not support his lifestyle. You compared her son's lifestyle to being married with a spouse.

Sorry! This man and his partner are NOT married.

Before I was married, my husband and I did not sleep together at my parents' home. My parents were not naive, but they did not want unmarried people sharing a bedroom in their home. -- FEELS THE SAME IN WASHINGTON

DEAR FEELS THE SAME: From that, I infer you and your husband are now welcome to share accommodations in your parents' home because you are married. Until unions among committed gay couples are formally recognized, the son and his partner are as close as they can get to being "married." To discriminate against people for something they're not legally permitted is wrong. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Thank you for saying that people are born gay and don't choose to be that way. As the mother of a gay child, I know it's true. It's frustrating to continually hear that my child should be "deprogrammed" to be heterosexual or that somehow being gay was a personal choice. Nothing could be further from the truth. --SHARON IN LEXINGTON, KY.

DEAR SHARON: Over the decades during which my mother wrote this column, she never once told me she had received a letter from -- or encountered -- anyone who told her he or she had "chosen" to be a homosexual. During the many years that I worked with my mother, neither did I. As an honorary consultant to the Group for Advancement of Psychiatry, I once asked this question at a meeting, "Is homosexuality a choice?" Not one physician said a patient had related that his or her sexual orientation was chosen. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: Thanks for plugging PFLAG. Hopefully, that mother will learn she didn't lose a son; she just lost precious time with him she can never reclaim.

As the sibling of a gay person, I'm bewildered that people think someone would "choose a lifestyle" that is reviled, assaulted, denied civil rights, and otherwise abused by the rest of the population. -- BOB IN ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.

DEAR BOB: You make a valid point. What I find particularly worrisome is that gay teenagers are among those at highest

risk for alcoholism, drug abuse and suicide because of discrimination at a time when they are most vulnerable.

DEAR ABBY: That mother should be happy her son is honest about his gay orientation. My husband isn't. When I find him sending nude photos back and forth to guys from gay chat rooms, he lies and says he's only "curious." He also claims he's just chatting online -- and then I find he is meeting them. I ask, "Are you having safe sex?" and can't get an answer because he won't admit he's having sex.

He lies to himself, Abby, which makes it easy to lie to me, his family and his macho friends. I'm trying to find counseling for both of us and the marriage, but funds are limited. My husband refuses to admit there's a problem! -- ALONE AND ANGRY IN CINCINNATI

DEAR ALONE: Go to your computer and type in: www.ssnetwk.org. It's the site of the Straight Spouse Network. You'll find it provides a bonanza of information, including peer support, a reading list and the locations of support groups worldwide. (A new one has just been started in Cincinnati!) You may be justifiably angry, but you are NOT alone in this problem, as you will soon discover. I wish you the best of luck.

A Historic Moment

Oct. 3, 2002 JERUSALEM -- A retired army colonel turned college professor is poised to become the first openly gay lawmaker in Israel's parliament.

The announcement that Uzi Even, a 62-year-old expert on nuclear weapons technology, would take the seat when parliament reconvenes next month has gone largely unnoticed by Israeli media, though some Orthodox lawmakers have raised objections.

Even, a veteran gay rights activist who was an outspoken critic of discrimination against gays in the armed forces, replaces the retiring legislator Amnon Rubinstein for the dovish, secular Meretz party.

World AIDS Day has a special place in the history of the AIDS pandemic. Since 1988 December 1st has been a day for bringing messages of compassion, hope, solidarity and understanding about AIDS to every country in the world, North and South, East and West. Wear the Red Ribbon!

Worldwide Statistics

People newly infected with HIV in 2001: 5 million
AIDS deaths in 2001: 3 million...that's over 8,000 deaths per day
Estimated number of people living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2001: 40 million
Total of AIDS deaths at the end of 2000: 21.8 million
Total number of AIDS orphans: 13.2 million

My son Keith was born December 1...

"My son Keith, born December 1, 1963, was in the Navy. After about one and a half year someone found out that he had gone to a gay bar. A nightmare began. At one point his shipmates threw him overboard. Keith couldn't take the harassment any longer and AWOLed. All he wanted to do is serve his country. Why would his sexual orientation even matter?

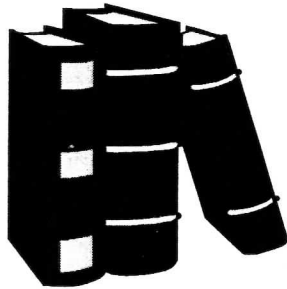
On a friend's suggestion, Keith turned himself in. To his surprise the commander wanted to send Keith back to the same ship! How would he ever have been able to do this? My son's navy career ended with a dishonorable discharge and a destroyed dream.

Keith stayed in Oakland. His nightmare was not over yet. He went in to donate blood. It turned out that he was HIV positive. At the beginning of the 80s this was a death penalty. Keith suffered. It was also an emotional suffering. People didn't want to shake his hands. He was basically treated like a leper. It got so far that he even didn't want to hug me, his own mom, because he was afraid to contaminate me. That was the time when Lyndon La Rouche wanted all AIDS victims be quarantined. Having AIDS at that time was like a death sentence. Keith was being ostracized like so many young men then. At one point he said to me "Mom, I just want to let you know that whatever happens I love you." - Keith took his own life at the age of 25.

It broke my heart that he was hurt so much. If he would have had cancer there would have been support. But all his life he had to hide the fact that he was gay and HIV positive. I am a very religious person. That kept me going. For some people it seems like a contradiction that I am religious AND cared about my son. For me it isn't, it never was. I never asked any of my other children who they slept with, why would I have asked Keith? Everybody should have the right to be with whomever they want to be sexually. A soul is a soul. Society puts much too much unnecessary pain on people. Not only for being gay, for all kinds of other reasons too (being overweight, skin color, etc.). Sexual orientation shouldn't matter at all unless you're in a relationship with someone. December 1 is World AIDS Day; it's also Keith's birthday."

Thank you, Diane, for sharing your story with me and the readers. I'll light a candle for Keith on World AIDS Day and I hope that many of you who read this newsletter will do the same for someone they lost to AIDS - or for Keith.

OFF THE BOOK-RACK



"surviving madness"

A Therapist's Own Story

Betty Berzon

250 pages, hardcover, ISBN 0-299-17620-7

The University Of Wisconsin Press

"A compelling story, beautifully told. It held me throughout. What a life Betty Berzon has lived!"

--Betty DeGeneres

Indeed, what a life! In this book Betty Berzon, who has published several books on gays & lesbians, writes about her own life and her ups and downs before she was able to be true to herself. This is the personal story of Betty Berzon, born in 1928, and her struggle with being lesbian. The life of Betty is so rich that writing a few paragraphs does not come close to her many accomplishments. I guess you have to get the book!

"On May 4, 1980, I stood before a packed ballroom and explained to the psychoanalysts gathered there that the only experience of 'arrested development' I had suffered was the result of being encouraged by my therapists to live a lie for most of my adult life. I told of the despair I felt for being so flawed, the suicide attempts, the repression of feelings of affection toward women and how it had done irreparable damage to my ability to love and trust women even though I was now free to do so."

Childhood asthma...dating boys at age 14...dealing with mom's misdirected anger by daydreaming about women...trip to the library to look up "homosexuality": "The books I took off the shelf told me that homosexuals were perverted, diseased, social outcasts, and pitiful creatures. That certainly was not me and never would be."

Interviewing Eleanor Roosevelt for her high school paper...dating young men, many men...first kiss with a woman...coming out as bisexual...seeing a psychiatrist...opening a bookstore in Hollywood...feeling depressed and suicidal...her time in the psychiatric hospital...the turning point: becoming a psychiatric aide.

UCLA...Dr. Evelyn Hooker...Oak Knoll Naval Hospital...starting a jazz club...rejecting marriage proposals...first employee of the Western Behavioral Science Institute...becoming a therapist...her relentless heterosexual social life...getting pregnant & having an abortion (which, back in 1963 was a crime)...leading the "Quest for Love" workshops...and then in 1963 Betty finally is able to acknowledge "I know I am homosexual. I can no longer hide it."

Founding of the Los Angeles' Gay Community Services Center...first openly gay panel ever to present for the California State Psychological Association annual meeting...parties at her home...losing friends to AIDS...meeting her partner Terry in 1973: "One thing was clear - having Terry in my life meant that being gay was no longer an abstraction. In my mid-forties the fact of being a lesbian was inescapable."

Note from the editor: I'd like to acknowledge that Betty Berzon is also a breast cancer survivor.

Here are two web sites for lesbians dealing with cancer: <http://www.mautnerproject.org> and <http://www.lccp.org>