



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

August-September 2004

Newsletter 230

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 7:15 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

August 17, 2004

Gabrielle Michel, C.H.T., an inspirational singer and speaker will be our speaker in August. An ordained New Thought minister, she received her ministerial training at the Albert Grier Ministerial School, and is currently an associate minister at The Church of Truth in Pasadena, California. She is a distinguished speaker, drawing large crowds for her inspiring concerts and talks. She is on the board of directors of G.L.I.D.E. (Gays and Lesbians Initiating Dialogue for Equality) and is a member of both the International New Thought Alliance and The Association of Global New Thought.

September 21, 2004

To be announced - please check our web site for details - www.pflagla.org

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 (Joyce)

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

Colton: 825 8368 (Norma)

Redlands Chapter: 335 2005 (Kathy)

Area Code 949

South Orange County: 459 2834 (Karyl)

OTHER HELPLINES / RESOURCES

African American:

(323) 270 5493 (Glynis)

(323) 731 0888 (Shirley)

Asian Pacific Islander:

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

Spanish Speaking:

(818) 243 5306 (Leonor)

LA Gay & Lesbian Center:

(323) 993 7400

Straight Spouses:

(626) 449 3267 (Onnolee)

The TREVOR PROJECT

24-hour nationwide suicide prevention line for GLBT and Questioning youth.

(866) 4 U TREVOR

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.

(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
andynron@adelphia.net

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

If there is anything you would like to see in the newsletter, please e-mail me at haichi_ca@earthlink.net, call me at (818) 985-9319, or just drop me a note at our PFLAG meetings! Regards, Chris Haiss

Deadline for submissions: September 1
(October/November issue)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our son Paul happens to be gay. I suspected for several years. It was his lack of interest in girls. When a beautiful girl walked by and I looked, Paul would not. I would ask his mother and she would say "No, he is not gay. He is just not as interested as you are in sex." One evening, Paul took me aside and told me that he was gay. I cried a little and then hugged him. He was only the second gay person I had ever met in my life - or so I thought at the time.

His mother and I have loved Paul every day of his life. His coming out wasn't a big surprise to me and mattered only a little. He was still the beautiful, wonderful boy that we loved. After Paul came out at home, things were much better. Later that year, Paul and I traveled to Atlanta to the GLSEN National Conference. For Paul, it was "the best time of my life." For me, it was expanding my circle of gay acquaintances from three to hundreds! I stood at one evening's reception, in a room filled with gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender individuals, and felt completely fine. They were just so darn ordinary. Most, the vast majority, were plain boring just like me. Just regular people who want to live and let live, who want to work and enjoy the fruits of their labor in our great country without fear of job loss and abuse. I realized then that I had met many gay and lesbian people throughout my life, but just never knew it.

Along the way, our family came to PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays). At the beginning we came for education, but we soon graduated to a fierce advocacy - the advocacy dedicated to confront all those who seek to deny equal rights to GLBT people.

Last year, I was fortunate enough to see our son Paul graduate college. I know the challenges he faced in his University - tough exams and tough professors were the least of it. But he survived. He is now trying to break into the world of work with all the challenges that that brings. He is a good citizen and wants to live and enjoy the fruits of his labors in our wonderful country. He also wants to find a life partner, just like any other young person. When he finds his life partner, he should be able to enjoy the same benefits as any other person, gay or straight. This includes marriage with all the rights thereto. Those intent on denying my son of this right do so out of convictions that I do not share. My position is that marriage is a basic right that all persons share, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Despite a Federal push for constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage, more and more of the fair minded citizens of our country now accept basic rights for gay and lesbian citizens, with a majority supporting civil union. How enthralling it is to see this monumental shift in public attitude.

Same-sex marriage is now legal in Massachusetts - something unimaginable only months ago. Despite the agitation of the homophobic community, I strongly believe that this trend will sweep the country over time, but not without all of our efforts. Now is the time for us, as parents, friends and family of the GLBT community, to lock our arms and work together to ensure this future for our children.

I am honored to serve as your Co-President and look forward to locking arms with each of you.

Steve Krantz - Co-President PFLAG Los Angeles

LEGISLATIVE CORNER (By Eve Lubalin, Advocacy Chair)

California Legislators Put Equal Marriage Rights On Hold ***But Assembly Speaker Indicates Support in 2005 and State Officials Endorse Bill***

After the historic approval by the California Assembly Judiciary Committee of AB 1967, the Marriage License Non-Discrimination Act -- which would make state marriage laws gender neutral -- the bill was held by the Assembly Appropriations Committee past its deadline for approval, denying supporters a vote on the measure in the Assembly this year. While the bill fell victim to budget and election year politics, members opposed to legislative action argued that consideration should be deferred until state courts rule on equal marriage rights cases pending in state courts.

- California's Supreme Court will soon rule on whether Mayor Newsom exceeded his authority in having the County of San Francisco conduct same-sex marriages and, if so, whether the marriages conducted shall be nullified.
- Later this year, the California Superior Court in San Francisco will rule on state constitutional issues: Does the California Constitution provide for equal marriage rights for all Californians?

In announcing the decision to pass over the bill this year, Assembly Speaker Nunez (D- L.A.) committed to co-authoring it next year, signaling his intention to move forward on marriage legislation. On the eve of Committee action, four major statewide elected officials -- Secretary of State Shelley, State Treasurer Angelides, State Controller Westly and Insurance Commissioner Garamendi -- also endorsed AB 1967, further boosting chances for action next year.

One key player is missing in action: Governor Schwarzenegger! Despite telling *Jay Leno* that he was "fine" with same-sex marriage if the people, state legislature or state courts were for it, the Governor has neglected to tell *Assemblymember Mark Leno* that he supports the bill!

ACTION ALERT!

Opponents of equal marriage rights are bombarding the Governor's office with messages opposing the bill. **Contact Governor Schwarzenegger and tell him you support AB 1967 -- and equal marriage rights for all California couples.** A letter to the Governor does not have to be long or complicated! Just tell him how you feel and that it is a top priority for you, your family, and your friends. Governor Schwarzenegger can be reached at State Capitol Building, Sacramento, CA 95814 Phone: 916-445-2841 Fax: 916-445-4633 governor@governor.ca.gov

AB 2900 / Employment Non-Discrimination Bill Passes Assembly!

The Assembly voted 48-32 in favor of AB 2900 (John Laird, D-Santa Cruz). AB 2900, the Omnibus Labor and Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2004, will standardize over 30 labor and employment non-discrimination provisions to make them consistent with the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA). The bill now moves to the State Senate.

AB 2208 / EQCA's California Insurance Equality Act Passes Assembly!

On Thursday, May 20, the California State Assembly passed AB 2208, EQCA's California Insurance Equality Act, by Assemblymember Christine Kehoe (San Diego), on a 45 to 31 vote. This bill, sponsored by Equality California and Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi, will amend the Insurance and the Health & Safety Codes to prohibit insurance providers from issuing policies or plans - including health, life, auto, renters and homeowners insurance, among others - that discriminate against registered domestic partners. The bill now moves on to the Senate.

SB 1234 / Comprehensive Hate Crime Bill Passes California State Senate!

The Senate voted 22-10 in favor of SB 1234 by Senator Sheila Kuehl (D-Santa Monica) and sponsored by Equality California. SB 1234, the Omnibus Hate Crimes Act of 2004, will create a uniform definition of a hate crime, clarify the law, and provide tools designed to reduce such crimes. The bill now moves to the state Assembly for further consideration.

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

- Maurie Davidson, Jenn Kennedy, Bill Mochon, Marty Olson and George Unger spoke at Granada Hills High School in Granada Hills.

Parade Day Success

By Liz Armstrong

What a day!!! Chuck, Bea Bernstein and I rode in the PFLAG GRAND MARSHALL car. A beautiful silver Mercedes convertible driven by a super nice and thoughtful young man.

We were number 19 in the parade with our Los Angeles members plus Santa Clarita and other chapters being led by our banner and followed by our PFLAGGERS in their red shirts with thought provoking signs right behind the car. As always we were cheered and thanked the entire length of the parade route. It was a comfortably cool day and a very cool parade. The Episcopalians had a huge group marching and a large group of supportive churches were on the opposite side of the street from the hateful religious group and the "good guys" drowned out the "bad guys".

Mark Beaty took good care of our group in George Unger's absence and he and Steve Krantz were car walkers escorting our car. Harold Kameya brought us professional signs for the car and for those who had not brought their own. Sharon Fane wore a fantastic rendition of our red shirt with crystals added and fringed sleeves. Norma Bowles acted as our voice by repeatedly shouting "We Love All Our Children" with her powerful voice. Our hard working Nancy Zaun, with her great smile was with us and a strong early supporter, Joe, whose last name I can't recall, marched too. There were fresh new faces and experienced familiar faces. We had the thrill of bringing a young lesbian, Nyema, to her first parade and watching her soar.

I'm sorry that I'm unable to name everyone but it was fantastic to have all of them celebrating with us. Different T-shirts from our past parades brought back fond memories and made me smile at how much bolder we have all become.

Chuck and I feel it was a perfect way to celebrate our GLBT friends and family members, Father's Day and our 56th wedding anniversary.

Thanks for the ride!

Cheers and Love to all,
Liz

Marriage as a Ceremony or Contract

The act, formality, or ceremony by which the marriage union is created, has differed widely at different times and among different peoples. One of the earliest and most frequent customs associated with the entrance into marriage was the capture of the woman by her intended husband.

Mixed Marriage

(Latin Matrimonia mixta)

Technically, mixed marriages are those between Catholics and non-Catholics, when the latter have been baptized in some Christian sect. The term is also frequently employed to designate unions between Catholics and infidels. From the very beginning of its existence the Church of Christ has been opposed to such unions.

Civil Divorce and the Church

The Church does not recognize the civil dissolution of a marriage.

Letter to the editor / Lesbian News:

Dear Editor,

Some of our elected officials say they want to protect the sanctity of marriage. Sanctity - the sacred - is not within the legitimate scope of the government. What part of "make no laws regarding an establishment of religion" do they not understand? It is illegal for the government to regulate the sacred.

One person's sanctity is another person's blasphemy. How long before what someone else thinks is sacred conflicts with your idea of sacred?

Should the government protect the sanctity of the cow, which the Hindus believe hold the spirits of their ancestors? Should the government close all the roads on Saturday to protect the sanctity of the Jewish Sabbath?

The sanctity of marriage under God should be left up to individual houses of worships. The right of marriage under the state is none of the business of you or your church. That is a civil, secular concern between two people who love each other, and the state bound by social contract to protect them.

How dare anyone suggest that "The People" have a right to vote on the rights of another group of people? Majority rule isn't American democracy. Majority rule is mob rule. The judiciary is supposed to protect the minority from the tyranny of the majority. It is precisely the job of the court to protect minorities and unpopular groups of people from being persecuted.

Homosexuals are not a racial minority, but they still deserve equal protection under the law. You don't need to be a race to be a minority, and you don't need to be a minority to deserve equal rights and equal protection. Equal protection is for everyone, whether it is a choice or not, and separate is never equal.

In this state, Baptists are a minority. Yet, nobody has called for a referendum on the rights of Baptists to marry other Baptists. Don't Baptists deserve equal rights and equal protection under the law even though they are not a racial minority and they have chosen their particular lifestyle? Do "The People" have the right to put the value of that lifestyle to a popular vote?

Rev. Ian Brumberger

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"If we move down the road to legalizing marriage for unnatural homosexual couples, it will lead to an explosion of intentionally motherless or fatherless households."

Dave Smith, Indiana Family Institute

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"Never mind that the Bible also advises that people who work on the Sabbath should be stoned to death (Numbers 15:35) and condones the beating of slaves 'since the slave is the owner's property' (Exodus 21:21). Somehow it's only the anti-gay bits that seem engraved in stone."

Nicholas D. Kristof, Writer

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"The End of Civilization has proven to be the biggest, most overhyped disappointment since the Y2K bug. No rapture, no floods, no earthquakes, no locusts. (Cicadas do not count.) The firstborn of every family did not die, nor did God strike Massachusetts off the map with an almighty thunderbolt. The weather, from what I could gather, seemed unseasonably pleasant all the way to Provincetown, as thousands of gay and lesbian couples wed across the Bay State."

Michelangelo Signorile, Syndicated gay columnist

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"Christian right leader, Randall Terry, has a troubled gay son. Dick Cheney has an untroubled gay daughter. [The late] anti-gay crusader Pete Knight has a gay son. Charles Socarides, the chief proponent of reparative therapy for homosexuals, has a gay son. Phyllis Schlafly has a gay son. When will these people begin to understand that being gay is not a choice; it is a fact of human nature?"

Andrew Sullivan, Journalist

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"It is time to bring to an end, once and for all, the intolerable discrimination still suffered by many Spaniards exclusively by virtue of their sexual preferences. Homosexuals and transsexuals deserve the same public consideration as heterosexuals and have the right to live freely the life that they themselves have chosen. We will recognize, on an equal basis, their right to marriage, with the consequent effects on labor rights, inheritance and social security protection."

Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, Prime Minister, Spain

Permanent Partners Immigration Act

Assembly Joint Resolution 60, a measure by Assemblymember Sally Lieber in support of the federal Permanent Partners Immigration Act (PPIA) received committee approval, moving it one step closer to final passage in the California Assembly.

This is the first step in a process that hopefully will make California the first state in the nation to go on record in support of the federal bill.

Did you know that current immigration law prohibits U.S. citizens to sponsor their same-sex foreign partner for residency here in the United States? These couples/families have three options: Break up; emigrate to another country that has humane policies in place and allows same-sex binational couples/families to stay together; or, live in constant fear of deportation once the foreign partner's visa has expired.

GAY HISTORY with LISA DIGUARDI

August 6, 1994:

The Japanese American Citizens League voted 50-38 at its meeting in San Francisco in favor of supporting same-sex marriage.

Connecticut adds transgender hate crime law

By Jen Christensen, PlanetOut Network

Connecticut joined seven other states that protect transgender people in hate crime laws when Republican Gov. John Rowland signed the legislation last Friday.

The state Senate unanimously passed the inclusive hate crimes bill in April, after the House had passed the bill 139-4. Many of the legislators who signed onto the bill, including the co-chair of the joint Senate and House Judiciary Committee, Sen. Andrew J. McDonald, said they supported it because of moving testimony from members of the transgender community.

The new provision to Connecticut's hate crimes law goes into effect Oct. 1. The other states to include transgender people in their hate crimes statutes include California, Hawaii, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania and Vermont.

GAY HISTORY with LISA DIGUARDI

August 10, 1970:

Rita Hauser, Republican US representative to the United Nations, spoke to the American Bar Association in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage, saying laws against it were based on the mistaken notion that the purpose of marriage must be procreation.

LAW & ORDER

"Conscientious Objector Policy Act"

On April 21, the Michigan House of Representatives passed legislation that would allow doctors and other health care providers to refuse services to anyone on moral, ethical or religious grounds. The providers could not be disciplined or sued for such refusals.

Sex change for soccer star

Lagos - A top Nigerian female football star, Iyabo Abade, is set to undergo a sex change operation in the United States.

According to The Saturday Punch newspaper the one-time free-scoring striker in the Nigerian women's league is to undergo the operation at the Midway Hospital in Beverly Hills, California, after American doctors discovered she had more male hormones than female.

The newspaper reported that lack of funds has forced the date for the operation, initially fixed for May 18, to be moved.

Switzerland adopts civil unions

On June 10, the Swiss parliament cleared the final hurdle for a new law allowing same-sex couples to register their partnerships: a bill that provides for inheritance rights and the rights of foreign partners.

Doris Leuthard, the interim president of the Christian Democratic Party, which has a constituency that is primarily Catholic and known for its stance on traditional family values, described the bill as "a major improvement".

"Registration gives rights that are comparable to the rights of marriage, even if it does not allow for marriage like in some European countries," said Leuthard.

DID YOU KNOW?

It was not until the end of the 70s that the Catholic marriage laws were changed, thereby allowing men who could copulate, but not procreate, to marry.