



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

October-November 2004

Newsletter 231

### 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 - 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

October 19, 2004

**R**epresentatives from The Point Foundation, the first group to offer national scholarships for GLBT youth will be speaking, including Joe McCormack, Chairman of its Board of Directors.

For more information on the Foundation please visit their web site at [www.thepointfoundation.org](http://www.thepointfoundation.org)

November 16, 2004

**P**lease visit our website [www.pflagla.org](http://www.pflagla.org) for details on the November speaker.

**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)

**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: November 1  
(December/January issue)

**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](http://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](http://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](http://www.pflag.org)

**PFLAG's Transgender Special Outreach Network  
(TSO):**

Karen Gross (216) 691 HELP / [KittenGr@aol.com](mailto:KittenGr@aol.com)  
Mary Boenke (540) 890 3957 / [maryboenke@aol.com](mailto:maryboenke@aol.com)  
[www.transfamily.org](http://www.transfamily.org)

PFLAG/LA Speakers Bureau / Contact Ron & Andy  
[andynron@adelphia.net](mailto:andynron@adelphia.net)

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## BLACK AND WHITE

As the November election approaches and our country again selects its President for the next four years, I can't recall a time when the issues that each party bases its platform on were so distinct and so different.

I encourage our membership to read the recently drafted platforms so that you can see how, if at all, the GLBT community is looked upon.

The Republican platform reads\* in a section titled Protecting Our Families, "We further believe that legal recognition and the accompanying benefits afforded couples should be preserved for that unique and special union of one man and one woman which has historically been called marriage." The word gay or lesbian does not appear anywhere in this platform. The only mention of the word homosexuality appears in a section describing it as "incompatible with military service." No legal recognition and no accompanying benefits for couples other than one man and one woman. Enough said.

The Democratic platform reads\* in a section titled A Strong American Community, "We support full inclusion of gay and lesbian families in the life of our nation and seek equal responsibilities, benefits, and protections for these families."

I believe strong conclusions can be drawn from these two distinct statements. I'm still amazed by the number of people in the country who just don't vote. Registration is easy and you can register as late as 30 days before the election in most states, and as late as 15 days before the election in California. Go to [www.eac.gov](http://www.eac.gov) and click on Register to Vote on the right hand side. I STRONGLY encourage you to ask your friends and families in other states to vote in this election as well. We saw from the election 4 years ago how a single vote can matter.

George Unger - Co-President PFLAG Los Angeles

\*Sources - [www.gop.com/media/2004platform](http://www.gop.com/media/2004platform), [www.democrats.org/platform](http://www.democrats.org/platform)

## **\$\$ Tributes \$\$**

**Contributions to PFLAG - LA were made in the names of -**

**Liam Newman - Newborn Grandson of Lynette and Larry Sperber**

**and**

**Isaac Simental-Starr - Grandson of Adele and Larry Starr  
on his Bar Mitzvah**

**Thanks to Liz and Chuck Armstrong, Mollie Pier, Peggy and Marty Olson for their generous tributes!!!**

## **LEGISLATIVE CORNER** (By Eve Lubalin, Advocacy Chair)

### **SAN FRANCISCO MARRIAGES VOIDED BUT FIGHT CONTINUES**

#### ***Constitutional Challenge Moving Forward; Marriage Legislation to be Re-Introduced***

On their six month anniversaries, nearly 4000 couples married in San Francisco were involuntarily “divorced” by the California Supreme Court, which ruled that Mayor Gavin Newsom overstepped his authority by permitting same sex marriages to be conducted. While the Court declared the SF same-sex marriage licenses invalid, its decision did not address whether same-sex couples had the right to marry under the California Constitution. That critical issue will be decided in a separate lawsuit pending in SF Superior Court, filed by the City of San Francisco, several LGBT legal groups and same-sex couples who charge that the state’s marriage law is discriminatory and should be overturned. A final resolution of the constitutionality of California’s marriage law will not be reached for a year or more. Meanwhile, families will be denied critical legal and economic protections, along with the dignity and respect they deserve.

The pending San Francisco case is similar to a Massachusetts lawsuit that led to ordering the issuance of marriage licenses to same-sex couples statewide. Oregon and Washington courts have issued similar decisions, which will be reviewed soon by their highest state courts.

While California courts review our marriage laws, a simultaneous effort to change the law is moving forward in Sacramento. The Marriage License Non-Discrimination Act, AB1967, will be re-introduced by SF Assemblyman Mark Leno in December. This time around, the bill will have the critical support of Assembly Speaker Nunez and four statewide officials – Secretary of State Shelley, State Treasurer Angelides, State Controller Westly and Insurance Commissioner Garamendi. ***Governor Schwarzenegger is the missing link! He has not yet taken a formal position on the bill, although he has said he “has no problems” with same-sex marriage if the courts or legislature approve it.***

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#### **AJR 60 / Assembly Joint Resolution 60 in support of the U.S. Permanent Partners Immigration Act Passes State Senate!**

AJR 60 by Assemblymember Sally Lieber (D-Mountain View), also sponsored by EQCA, urges Congress to pass the Federal Permanent Partners Immigration Act in order to allow American citizens and permanent residents to sponsor their same-sex partner to live in the U.S., just as spouses can under the principle of family unification. The resolution passed the Senate by 21-12.

#### **AB 2208 / EQCA's California Insurance Equality Act Passes State Senate!**

The California State Senate passed 23-12 Assembly Bill 2208 that requires that insurance providers treat registered domestic partners and married spouses equally. This bill was authored by Assemblywoman Christine Kehoe (D-San Diego) and officially sponsored by Equality California and Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi, plus supported by a coalition of labor, business, civil rights, and LGBT organizations.

#### **SB 1234 / Comprehensive Hate Crime Bill Passes California Assembly With Bipartisan Support!**

The California State Assembly voted 51-23 in favor of SB 1234 by Senator Sheila Kuehl (D-Santa Monica) and sponsored by Equality California. This vote marks the first time that a bill sponsored by Equality California has received bipartisan support with four republicans voting in favor of the measure. The four Republicans voting in favor of the bill are: Assemblymember Bonnie Garcia (R-Cathedral City), Assemblymember Shirley Horton (R-Chula Vista), Assemblymember Abel Maldonado (R-Santa Maria), and Assemblymember Keith Richman (R-Northridge).

Lexington Herald-Leader (Lexington, Ky.) Aug. 10, 2004

# **Denying marriage rights to gays would be immoral**

BY LARRY DALE KEELING / Knight Ridder Newspapers.

(KRT) - I'm straight. The female of the species sets off my bells and whistles. Being straight, I don't understand the gay and lesbian experience. I can't relate to feeling a physical attraction to someone of my own sex.

But being white, I don't understand the experiences of persons of color, either. I haven't a clue what it's like to be a minority in a nation dominated by another race.

And being male, I don't understand the female experience. Man, do I not understand the female experience.

But even with my lack of understanding, I do know a few things about these folks who are different from me in one way or another. I know that, like me, they didn't choose the pigmentation of their skin. I know that, like me, they didn't choose their sex. (OK, some folks are choosing their sex these days, but not right out of the womb.)

I know that, like me, they didn't choose their sexual orientation. Gays and lesbians can no more change that part of their being than I can change the gene that relocated most of the hair from my head to parts of my body where it's unwelcome.

So, here I am, a straight, white, male American. And all around me are other Americans, many of whom are not male, some of whom are not white and some of whom are not straight. Does that make them less American than me? Does that make them less deserving of the rights, privileges and legal protections that come with the name? Of course not.

There was a time in this country when people of color were denied those rights, privileges and protections. But we, as a society, recognized the wrongness of that situation. We changed our laws and most of our attitudes.

There was also a time in this country when women were denied some of those rights, privileges and protections. But we, as a society, recognized the wrongness of that situation, too. We changed our laws and most of our attitudes. But we, as a society, continue to deny gays and lesbians some of the rights, privileges and protections that come with being Americans.

In Kentucky and most other parts of the country, gay and lesbian couples cannot marry. And even in those few islands of enlightened tolerance where such marriages are being performed, gay and lesbian couples cannot avail themselves of the benefits of marriage under federal law.

According to the General Accounting Office, there are more than 1,100 federal statutory provisions that make marriage a factor in receiving benefits, rights and privileges. All are denied to gay and lesbian couples. Because the federal government and most states don't recognize the marriages of gays and lesbians, they don't enjoy the inheritance rights, insurance benefits, tax advantages and hundreds of other privileges that are virtually automatic for married couples.

We justify this discrimination against our fellow Americans by quoting chapter and verse from the Bible. Perhaps the verse we cite is Leviticus 20:13: "If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them." If we base our laws solely on the words of the Bible, our course is clear. We must kill all gays and lesbians.

But we cannot stop there, because the verses surrounding Leviticus 20:13 tell us that we must also "put to death" many others as well - those who curse their mother or father, those who commit adultery, those who curse or blaspheme the Lord and those guilty of assorted other crimes. Some must be stoned. Some must be burned. We can be creative about how we slay the rest.

If we copied and pasted Leviticus directly into our statutes, our noncapital crimes would include shaving our heads or trimming our beards; marrying a divorced woman; eating pork, shellfish or rabbit; and working on Sunday, presumably even for the clergy.

But while our laws share certain principals with biblical teachings, our laws as a whole are secular. And rightly so, since this is a nation of many religions, not one, a nation that cherishes its religious freedom and diversity. In this land of secular laws, marriage is a legal institution, not a religious one. Churches may sanctify marriages. And they may choose not to sanctify same-sex marriages if they believe homosexuality is a sin. That is their right, and it should never be denied them.

But only government sanctions marriage. You can get married without a church, a minister or any reference to religion. You can't get married and enjoy the legal benefits of marriage without a government-issued license. When you accept the fact that marriage is a legal institution rather than a religious one, all the arguments against same-sex marriage melt away, because all of them ultimately are rooted in religious beliefs.

All that is left, then, is one simple question. It's the question put before Kentucky voters this fall in the form of an amendment that would embed in constitutional concrete the state's existing law prohibiting same-sex marriages.

Should we deprive gays and lesbians of the rights, privileges and protections enjoyed by other Americans?

In "Death in the Afternoon," Ernest Hemingway wrote, "I know only that what is moral is what you feel good after and what is immoral is what you feel bad after."

I know that if I cast a vote for this amendment, I would feel bad afterward. I would feel immoral.

I would feel immoral because the folks who will suffer the consequences of this amendment are our co-workers, friends, family members. I cannot and will not tell any of them they are less deserving than me simply because they were born gay or lesbian while I was born straight.

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## **ABOUT THE WRITER**

Larry Dale Keeling is an editorial writer and columnist for the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader. Reach him by e-mail at [lkeeling@herald-leader.com](mailto:lkeeling@herald-leader.com).



## Washington State & the right to marry

August 4, Seattle:

Gay couples can be married under Washington state law, because denying their right to do so is a violation of their constitutional rights, a judge ruled Wednesday.

"The denial to the plaintiffs of the right to marry constitutes a denial of substantive due process," King County Superior Court Judge William L. Downing said in his ruling.

September 8, Olympia:

Washington's ban on same-sex marriage was struck down Tuesday by a second judge, who ruled that marriage is a fundamental right that should be available to gay men and lesbians.

Thurston County Superior Court Judge Richard Hicks held that Washington's Constitution offers broad guarantees of equality. He said that those guarantees are violated by the state's 1998 Defense of Marriage Act, which defines marriage as the union of a man and a woman and bars same-sex civil marriage. The state "must take care to treat all its citizens in an equal way," he said.

## Portugal's constitution bans discrimination based on sexual orientation

Portugal is the first country in Europe and (after Ecuador, Fiji and South Africa) the fourth worldwide to explicitly ban sexual orientation discrimination by constitutional legislation.

On July 24, 2004, Constitutional Law no. 1/2004, amending (for the sixth time) the Portuguese Constitution, was published ("Diário da República" [official gazette], no. 173, of July 24, 2004). It goes into effect, on the mainland, on July 31, 2004, and on the Azores and Madeira Regions on August 10, 2004. Therefore, article 13 of the Portuguese Constitution now officially states that:

1. All citizens have the same social rank and are equal before the law.
2. No one shall be privileged or favoured, or discriminated against, or deprived of any right or exempted from any duty, by reason of his or her ancestry, sex, race, language, territory of origin, religion, political or ideological convictions, education, economic situation, social circumstances or sexual orientation.

## Republicans Endorse Ban on Gay Marriages

NEW YORK - August 25, Republicans endorsed an uncompromising position against gay unions in a manifesto that contrasts with Vice President Dick Cheney's supportive comments about gay rights and the moderate face the party will show at the national convention.

## "QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"Isn't that the ultimate homeland security - standing up and defending marriage?"

Republican Senator Rick Santorum, Pennsylvania

## "QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"It does not affect your daily life very much if your neighbor marries a box turtle, but that does not mean it is right. Now you must raise your children up in a world where that union of man and box turtle is on the same legal footing as man and wife."

Republican Senator John Cornyn, Texas

## "QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"Why is it that, as a culture, we are more comfortable seeing two men holding guns than holding hands?"

Ernest Gaines, Author

## Chileans support civil unions

Sixty-four percent of people in Chile believe same-sex couples should have access to legal civil unions, according to a *Fundacion Chile 21* poll.

## City of Culver City Fails to Pass Resolution to Oppose Federal Marriage Amendment

[From MarriageEquality CA Los Angeles]

On Monday, July 12, 2004, the city of Culver City failed to pass a resolution to oppose the Federal Marriage Amendment.

After passionate debate from both sides of the issue and with a much larger turnout from the pro same-sex marriage side, the Culver City city council voted against it 3-2.

The no votes were cast by  
Steven Rose, Mayor;

Albert Vera, Vice Mayor (Note: When contacted by phone prior to the council meeting, Vera had stated to L.J. Carusone of the California Freedom to Marry Coalition that he supported the resolution to oppose the Federal Marriage Amendment and that the LGBT community could count on his vote);  
Carol Gross, Councilmember.

## A hearty welcome to the new board!

As of July 1st your PFLAG Los Angeles Board consists of Steve Krantz - Co-President, George Unger - Co-President, Karen Mason - Treasurer, Mariette Sawchuck - Secretary, Mark Beaty - Librarian, Nicky and David Bregman, Joel and Rosemary Hendler, Joan Krantz, Barry Mason, Andrea Rogers, Sandy Sawchuck, and Nancy Zaun.

"As a PFLAG Board Member, I would like to follow the goals of our organization and be instrumental in spreading the message about PFLAG, and what it must accomplish to make sure that all of our GLBT community are treated with the dignity and equality that we all deserve. I would also like to be vigilant in monitoring how our GLBT community is treated, and be proactive in areas where we can make positive changes in the lives of our GLBT friends and loved ones." --Rosemary Hendler

"I want to provide needed support to those who come to PFLAG." --Joan Krantz

"My goal for the organization is to endorse Marriage Equality and other equal rights for GLBT individuals. My personal goal is to wholeheartedly support my daughter and all of the GLBT sons and daughters that I encounter, through personal interaction and political activism. I also wish to effectively support other parents who are embarking on their journey of discovery and growth as they adapt to having a child whose direction differs from the one they'd anticipated." --Andrea Rogers

"As past president, I plan to support George, Steve and the Board in the still-not-finished areas that define PFLAG - support (how well we remember when our son told us he was gay), education (there is still so much to learn) and advocacy (constant threats to progress continue)." --Joel Hendler

"My goal as a member of the PFLAG board is to help others as I was helped when I was struggling to come to terms with the coming out of my son. PFLAG is a wonderful place to learn to normalize the issues surrounding gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. Those of us who consider ourselves liberal, open-minded and accepting, can find that acceptance is much harder than we thought in the context of our own families. PFLAG provides the support and understanding that is still woefully lacking in contemporary society and religions." --Karen Mason

"My personal goal is to contribute something of significant and lasting value to the GLBT community as PFLAG LA Co-President and Board Member." --Steve Krantz

## Thumbs up, Liz Armstrong!

At our meeting July 20, Liz Armstrong was honored with a beautiful plaque that read:

PFLAG-LA, Parents, Families and Friends  
of Lesbians and Gays,  
Gratefully Acknowledges  
LIZ ARMSTRONG  
For Fifteen Years of Outstanding  
Commitment, Support and Activism.

LIZ, We Thank You So Much  
July 20, 2004

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As Bea Bernstein sums it up:

There's a PFLAG Lady named Liz  
On the computer, she is a whiz.  
Is she online in a chat room to chat?  
No - that is not where she is at.  
PFLAG news is the biz of our Liz.

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And here's Liz's message to all of you:

When you no longer need PFLAG,  
PFLAG needs you!

## Our Family, Our Children

### A Day for TransParents and Their Children

In her quest to connect with other TransParents, Lain Beller-Kennedy had the wonderful idea of putting together a family event. *Our Family, Our Children* will be a scheduled day, either a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, where activities will include arts and crafts, games, bonding, stories, food and beverages, and relaxation for TransParents and their children. (As of the print date of this newsletter, no date has been set.)

For more information, please contact Lain at 714-801-3453 or by e-mail at lainsajedi@yahoo.com or page her at 562-621-1827

## Los Angeles City Council Approves PPIA Resolution

August 4, 2004

The Los Angeles City Council unanimously (12-0) approved Councilman Eric Garcetti's resolution endorsing *the Permanent Partners Immigration Act*. This is a huge victory for this cause as it puts America's second largest city on official record as supporting the PPIA, thus supporting binational same-sex couples and their families.