



Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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

February-March 2006

Newsletter 239

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 the 405 Freeway to the Wilshire Bl. East exit. Continue 1.5 miles. The entry on Warner has an elevator; another entry is through the sanctuary to the corridor, then upstairs to the Fellowship Hall - 3rd floor. There is also easy access from the north driveway. Doors open at 6:30 pm; general meeting begins at 7:15 pm.

PFLAG starts each meeting with one or two rap groups where individuals can share their concerns, questions, and understanding about and with the gay person or persons in their families. Additionally, if there is sufficient interest, an advocacy group will meet simultaneously and discuss how to effectively influence change in GLBT civil rights. After these sessions, there is a short refreshment break followed by a speaker or panel of speakers whose topic includes subjects pertinent to the families, gays and lesbians.

OUR NEXT SPEAKERS

February 21, 2006

To be announced; check with our website www.pflagla.org for details.

March 21, 2006

To be announced; check with our website www.pflagla.org for details.

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: 546-2721 (Dick)

Area Code 562

Long Beach Chapter: 403 1234

Area Code 626

Pasadena Chapter: 914 1241 (Denny)
450-9279 (meeting info)

Area Code 661

Santa Clarita Chapter: 254 2177 (Peggy)

Area Code 714

Orange County Chapter: 997 8047

Area Code 805

Ventura Chapter: 647-0558
498 4964 (Rita or Steve)

Area Code 818

San Fernando Valley: 788 8678 (Lynette)
Lynette114@aol.com

SF Valley Chapter: 342 3769 (Amber)

Woodland Hills: 340 8945 (Irene)

Area Code 909

Redlands Chapter: 335 2005 (Kathy)

Colton: 825 8368 (Norma)

Area Code 949

South Orange County: 459 2834 (Karyl)

OTHER HELPLINES / RESOURCES

Asian Pacific Islander:
(818) 368 2008 (Ellen) HKameya@juno.com

LA Gay & Lesbian Center:
(323) 993 7400

Straight Spouses:
(510) 525 0200 (Amity Pierce Buxton)

The TREVOR PROJECT
24-hour nationwide suicide prevention line for
GLBT and Questioning youth.
(866) 4 U TREVOR / (866) 488 7386
www.thetrevorproject.org

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.
(562) 435 8184 www.nccjla.org

PFLAG National
(202) 467 8180 www.pflag.org

PFLAG's Transgender Special Outreach Network
(TSON):

Karen Gross (216) 691 HELP / KittenGr@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: March 1
(April/May issue)

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What an up and down year for GLBT rights in California! A regular roller coaster ride.....

The Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Rights Protection Act (AB19) failed in the California Legislature (boo) in June, but its revival as AB849 passed (BIG YAY) in September, which the Governor then vetoed (BOO), but our side swore to be back (yay). We all need to realize that the passage of AB849 represents a FIRST in our nation - no other state legislature has ever supported equal marriage rights before. I suspect that our side, including esteemed Assemblymember Mark Leno, will wait tactically until a new Governor is elected before pursuing this again.

On the judicial side, California Superior Court Judge Kramer's decision in March to support marriage as a fundamental right for ALL couples was great (BIG YAY), but, of course, our opponents are appealing (boo) - we should know more next year, but we should be optimistic (YAY). Winning means equal marriage rights for our families (just like in Massachusetts), but a Constitutional Amendment, via a ballot initiative, will trump this decision.

So, two rightwing extremist organizations put out two ballot initiatives for signature to permanently take away our families' rights to marriage or domestic partnership (boo), both failed to qualify for the June 2006 ballot (YAY), but supporters vowed to keep trying for November (boo). This means that we need to keep talking, talking, talking to our friends, neighbors and work colleagues about the need for EQUAL MARRIAGE RIGHTS. Come to the next PFLAG meeting (3rd Tuesday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Westwood United Methodist Church at 10497 Wilshire) to pick up some handout cards to address the issue and discuss at our activists rap group.

Happily, 2005 has ended on a high for us. Witness Ang Lee's new film, Brokeback Mountain, opening in December to rave reviews. My family and I just saw it and loved every minute of it. Simply put - it tells the truth about what it means to be gay. It is set in the American West in the 1970s where no one could be "out". We hope that everyone in America sees it and reflects on the powerful story of two men who deeply loved each other, but were thwarted by society's misperceptions and homophobia. Please see it and spread the word.....

Finally, let's be optimistic and active in 2006 for equal rights for our children.
Together we can heal the world!

Steve Krantz, Co-President - PFLAG LA

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

Just send an e-mail to sjcgeo@rocketmail.com,
list name and address under which you currently
receive our newsletter by snail mail so that we
can delete that address from our mailing list,
and we'll make sure that you'll receive the next
newsletter by e-mail.

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

Tony Blair, British Prime Minister
December 15, 2005:

"This landmark measure [new civil partnership law]
ends the situation where same-sex relationships
were invisible in the eyes of the law, denied any
recognition of their commitment.

The new civil partnership law makes Britain a more
modern, fairer and better place to live."

LEGISLATIVE CORNER (By Eve Lubalin, Advocacy Chair)**Landmark legislation sponsored by Equality California gives LGBT Californians greater rights**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Californians are beginning the new year with more rights than they had in 2005. New laws, including the nation's first law prohibiting discrimination against transgender individuals in health coverage, were sponsored by Equality California (EQCA), California's LGBT civil rights and advocacy organization.

"The rights LGBT Californians will enjoy in 2006 are stronger than they have ever been," said Geoffrey Kors, EQCA Executive Director. "As a result of these new laws, millions of LGBT people in California will now have legal protections that they lacked in the past, making California stronger as a result."

The new laws that went into effect in California on Jan. 1, 2006, include:

Civil Rights Act of 2005 (AB 1400, Laird, D-Santa Cruz)

The Civil Rights Act of 2005, which amends the Unruh Civil Rights Act, adds sexual orientation, gender and marital status to California's public accommodation non-discrimination laws. Businesses subject to this law include, but are not limited to, shopping centers, mobile home parks, bars and restaurants, schools, medical and dental offices, hotels and motels, and condominium homeowners' associations.

Insurance Gender Non-Discrimination Act (AB 1586, Koretz, D-West Hollywood)

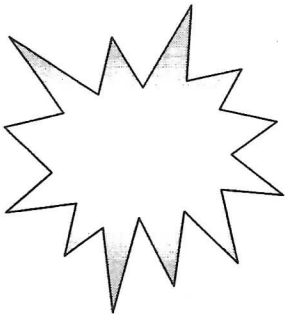
The Insurance Gender Non-Discrimination Act, which prohibits insurance companies and health-care service plans from discriminating on the basis of gender in the creation or maintenance of service contracts, or the provision of benefits or coverage, establishes California as the first state in the nation to enact these protections for transgender individuals.

Death Benefits Rights for Retired Public Employees Act (SB 973, Kuehl, D-Santa Monica)

The Death Benefits Rights for Retired Public Employees Act allows domestic partners of public employees who retired prior to Jan. 1, 2005, when California's comprehensive domestic partnership law (AB 205) went into effect, to receive death benefits if the retiree dies before their partner.

Property Tax Reappraisal Exclusion: Domestic Partners (SB 565, Migden, D-San Francisco)

This law provides that a change in the title of property between domestic partners will be treated the same way a change in title of property between spouses is treated for property tax purposes. As a result, domestic partners will no longer face potentially enormous increases in their property taxes when their partner dies.



PFLAG LA BENEFIT

at the Zephyr Theatre in Hollywood!!!

Del Shores'
SORDID LIVES
 written, directed and produced by
 Del Shores

Starring
 (from the film)
 Havel Alexander
 Rosemary Alexander
 Earl Bullock
 Nick Carter
 Dale Dickey
 Sarah Hurley
 Mary Margaret Lewis
 Ann Walker
 and
 Leslie Jordan

also appearing
 Terry Brannon
 Patricia Darte
 Dela Derrigerry
 Jason Dettley
 Susan Leslie
 Scott Presley
 Arget Rose

Opens January 27th
Limited Engagement

Reserved and
General Admission Tickets
800.595.4TIX
www.SeasonofShores.com

Zephyr Theatre
 6200 Hollywood Blvd.
 Hollywood, CA 90028

You DON'T wanna miss
 this one!

Tuesday
March 28th 8PM

"SORDID LIVES"

Acclaimed playwright
 and producer
 Del Shores
 has graciously offered
 this performance
 as a benefit
 to PFLAG LA.

All General Seating @
 \$50.00 each.

Purchases can be made
 by calling
 800-595-4TIX.

Come join us!!!

(7458 Melrose, LA 90046)

TRANSACTION

In this new column you will find various information and news pertaining to transgender issues. Now what does 'transgender' mean, might some of you ask. Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differ from conventional expectations for their assigned sex at birth.

Be aware that one's gender identity (psychological sense of self; male/female/neither/both) is not the same as one's sexual orientation (to whom we are sexually attracted to).

The more you read about this sometimes still unfamiliar issue, the more you'll learn. (Did you see "Transamerica"?)

A great resource is PFLAG's own publication "Our Trans Children" which addresses a variety of questions, and lists transgender organizations, websites/listservs, as well as reading material. Another excellent publication is "Transgender Americans: A Handbook for Understanding" which can be downloaded at www.hrc.org

Now to the GOOD NEWS!

California has Most Transgender Friendly Laws in U.S.

AB 1400 and AB 1586 add to strong set of existing anti-discrimination laws

San Francisco, CA --On January 1, 2006 two new laws solidified California's leadership role as the most protective state for transgender rights in the nation. The laws, sponsored by Equality California (EQCA), were AB 1400 (the Civil Rights Act of 2005) and AB 1586 (the Insurance Gender Non-Discrimination Act). AB 1400, authored by Santa Cruz Assemblyman John Laird, amended California's public accommodation law to make clear that transgender people are protected. AB 1586, authored by Assemblyman Paul Koretz, prohibits discrimination against transgender people by the insurance industry, including healthcare insurers.

"By protecting transgender people and our families in education, employment, housing, foster care, insurance, and public accommodation, the legislature is saying very clearly that California supports diversity and inclusion," said Danny Kirchoff, EQCA's Transgender Equality California Project

Manager. "Across the state, employers, schools, businesses, and government agencies are taking common-sense steps to create non-discriminatory environments."

After decades in which transgender people had little protection against even the most flagrant acts of discrimination, these laws establish that California embraces transgender people equally and provides effective remedies for discrimination. A 2003 report released by the Transgender Law Center (TLC) and the National Center for Lesbian Rights, *Trans Realities*, documented the high rates of discrimination experienced by transgender people. Survey respondents reported discrimination in employment (49%), public accommodation (38%), housing (32%), and health care (31%).

"Even today, transgender people face discrimination in virtually every institution in the state, but these laws provide incredibly powerful tools for creating lasting social change," said Christopher Daley, Director of TLC. "While it will take some time for the effects of these laws to be fully felt in individuals' lives, California's elected officials are to be commended for once again leading the nation on fairness and equality."

California Transgender Leadership Summit

A gathering of transgender persons and allies

February 17-19th, 2006

University of Southern California / Norman Topping Student Activities Center

Join with transgender community members, families, and allies for this, first of its kind, two-day event.

The California Transgender Leadership Summit is open to individuals of all skill levels involved or interested in advancing civil rights for Transgender people in California. The Summit will offer a unique opportunity to strategize, connect with individuals from across the state and learn or improve important advocacy and activist skills in a variety of areas.

For more information go to www.eqca.org/tg or contact Danny Kirchoff, Coalition Coordinator, Equality California, at 415.581.0005 #7 or danny@eqca.org

Note from the editor:

The hysteria of the ill-informed in regard to preventing same-sex couples from getting married is unfortunately continuing. One of our readers, a concerned mother, legitimately raised the question after reading a Focus on the Family column "Then, why are they not supporting same-sex marriage if marriage is for the sake of society and its citizens?!" I agree with her. I always said that groups such as Focus on the Family should be the FIRST ONES to support same-sex FAMILIES, thus, giving ALL children safety and security. When will people see through this charade and understand that the ONLY reason for excluding same-sex families from the same protections everybody else enjoys is prejudice? You're "pro life", but don't care about gays/lesbians getting killed for who they are?! How do you claim "sanctity" (something considered sacred) for the legal benefits that come along with marriage?! I don't even want to go into how some straight people conduct their marriages and the divorce rate. You claim "sanctity" for marriages performed on stage as the big prize of a game show?! Please! Everybody with half a brain must see how ludicrous this claim is! But decide for yourself.

Question:

A colleague of mine believes strongly in civil unions, saying they are no different than marriage. How should I respond?

Answer from Glenn Stanton (Senior research analyst on marriage and sexuality, Focus on the Family):

Unfortunately, there is a growing trend toward this type of thinking. But a wealth of published research suggests marriage is of greater social value than other domestic relationships. Research over the past 50 years shows that married couples benefit from substantially elevated levels of personal well-being, including increased physical and mental health, higher levels of overall happiness, greater productivity in the workplace, higher levels of earnings and savings, increased sexual satisfaction, avoidance of serious disease as well as addictive and destructive behaviors, greater educational attainment and college attendance. Similarly, children of stable, intact marriages have better outcomes than their counterparts from unmarried families.

Research does not indicate that those in nonmarried relationships do as well in these measures. Nonmarried relationships cannot be viewed as equal institutions to marriage when the rich societal benefits of marriage are not present.

PFLAG would like to thank the below listed persons and businesses for their donations and support

which enabled us to conduct our Speaker's Bureau training in December. PFLAG encourages its members and their friends to support these businesses, and to take the time to PERSONALLY let these individuals and the businesses know that you are a supporter of PFLAG when you are in their stores.

For his INCREDIBLE community outreach and commitment to diversity, which enabled us to provide food for our training, PFLAG encourages its members to write, call or visit the below individual/business:

- **WES FORAN** Power Zone 8576 Santa Monica Blvd. W. Hollywood 90069 310-289-1125

Also, please write, call or visit these businesses and individuals to thank them for their OUTSTANDING support:

- **MICHAEL DARGIN** Vert Brasserie 6801 Hollywood Blvd. Hollywood 90028 323-491-1300
- **CHRIS HOLLER** Office Depot 1240 Vine Street Hollywood 90038 323-957-1274

For their EXCELLENT donation and support of PFLAG's mission of providing outreach to teach respect for human diversity:

- **RAY** (Manager) The ABBEY 692 N. Robertson Blvd. 90069 W. Hollywood 310-289-8410
- **JOSE CRUZ** Trader Joe's 8611 Santa Monica Blvd. West Hollywood 90069 310-657-0152
- **HOVIK** Domino's Pizza 902 N. La Cienega Blvd. Los Angeles 310-855-1899
- **KEVIN KAWAHARA** Pizza Hut 8613 Santa Monica Blvd. WeHo 90069 310-289-6555

The following also contributed donations which enabled us to feed the volunteers at our training:

- **Wolfgang Puck Catering** 6801 Hollywood Blvd. Hollywood 90028 323-491-1300
- **CANDY** (Manager) Pavilion's Market Santa Monica Blvd. West Hollywood 310-273-0977
- **BRUCE SENESAC** Capitol Drugs 8578 Santa Monica Blvd. WeHo 90069 310-289-1125
- **JOSE CHAVEZ** Koo Koo Roo 8250 Santa Monica Blvd. WeHo 90069 310-657-3300
- **DINO** (Marketing) Whole Foods Santa Monica Blvd. West Hollywood 323-848-4200
- **JULIO RIVERA** Smart & Final 1041 Fuller Ave. West Hollywood 90046 323-876-0421
- **ROD FRANCE** Starbucks Santa Monica Blvd. West Hollywood 90069 310-659-1856
- **HECTOR** at West Hills Trader Joe's
- **WINSTON** at Sherman Oaks Ralph's