



PFLAG-LA

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

P. O. Box 24565 Los Angeles, CA 90024 (888) PFLAG88 <http://www.pflagla.org>

2012 / Newsletter # 261

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 **Wednesday** 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 7:00 pm; general meeting begins at 7:30 pm.

Our meetings typically include rap groups where individuals can share their concerns, questions, and understanding about the gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered person(s) in their families, and invited guest speakers on topics pertinent to our families. There is a short refreshment break between the rap session and the speaker(s).

For Upcoming Speakers,
Please Check Our Website At
www.pflagla.org !

Support meeting in Silverlake!
Please see page 2 for details.

Two upcoming events you do not want to miss!

May 9 (Wednesday)

It's **Bingo Night at Hamburger Mary's**, benefitting PFLAG Los Angeles!

Arrive by 6:30 for the 7:00pm games at 8288 Santa Monica Bl (at Sweetzer) in West Hollywood.

Read more at www.pflagla.org/Bingo_2012.html

June 10 (Sunday)

It's marching time! Please join us for the annual **LA PRIDE Parade in West Hollywood**.

Marching with us down Santa Monica Boulevard in support of our LGBT family members is a one-of-a-kind experience you'll never forget! Wear a red T-shirt if you can.

Lineup is at Crescent Heights and Santa Monica Blvd at 10am. Parade steps off sharply at 11am.

HELPLINES, CHAPTERS & CONTACTS 9AM-9PM

1-888-PFLAG88 or 1-888-735-2488 www.pflagla.org

- West LA: 310-454-6681 (Liz)
LIZARM@aol.com
- Pasadena: 626-797-1732 (Patti)
ploitz@earthlink.net
- San Fernando Valley: Lynette
lynettesperber@yahoo.com
- South Bay: 310-831-2967
(Joyce and Jerry)
- Hablamos español!
<http://www.pflagla.org/Home-Espanol.html>
Leonor 818-956-7533
- Transgender: 818-985-9319 (Chris)
- PFLAG National: 202-467-8180
www.pflag.org
- PFLAG/LA Speakers Bureau:
Ron & Andy, andynron@gmail.com
- Asian Pacific Islander:
- Harold Kameya, HKameya@gmail.com,
818-368-2008
- Bev Toyama, btoyama@ca.rr.com
- Straight Spouses:
510-525-0200 (Amity)
- The TREVOR PROJECT
24-hour nationwide suicide prevention line for
GLBT and Questioning youth.
866-4 U TREVOR / 866-488-7386
www.thetrevorproject.org
- Transgender Youth Clinic
(323) 361-2153
<http://www.transyouthla.com>
- LA Gay & Lesbian Center:
323-993-7400
www.lagaycenter.org

* Need to get in touch with the editor? Send an email to NewsletterEditor@pflagLA.org *

Officers:

President: Mariette Sawchuk
Vice President: Stuart Huggins
Treasurer: York Knowlton
Secretary: Karen Mason

Board Members:

Andy Birnbaum Carol Cox
Gizella Czene Maurie Davidson
Ron Elecciri Chris Haiss
Barry Mason Alexander Sawchuk

Regional Director:

Steve Krantz

**When you don't need
PFLAG any more
that is when PFLAG
needs YOU!**

Silverlake Meeting!

When: 2nd Thursday of each month
from 7:30pm to 9pm
Where: Metropolitan Community Church
4953 Franklin Ave
Los Angeles 90027
Contact: Dawn at
silverlake@pflagLA.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SPRING FEVER

It must be spring because of all the exciting things going on at PFLAG Los Angeles. There are many opportunities for you to help spread PFLAG's mission of support, education and advocacy, and lots of ways to have fun, too. If you find something you're interested in, you can contact us through the website, and someone will get back to you with specific information. I hope you'll join us in one or more of these activities!

Fund Raising Event at Hamburger Mary's on May 9th at 7 pm

Mark your calendars, and plan on joining in the fun. Here are some highlights!

- **Bloomingdale's discount cards** (15% off – any day you choose) to the first 80 people who pay the suggested donation.
- **Bingo with exceptional prizes for the winners—basketball tickets, theater passes and many more goodies.**
- **Live Auction**
 - **GLAMOUR PACKAGE from Bloomingdales** featuring cosmetic makeovers and pampering from your choice of their marvelous brands for you and five friends (\$1000 value)
 - **DISNEYLAND PARK HOPPER TICKETS**
4 One day passes to Disneyland and California Adventures park (\$410 value)
 - **LESSONS on Photoshop**

Visit our website for a more complete list of auction items. You can pay the suggested donation of \$20 at the website. We will also accept donations at the door the night of the event.

PRIDE PARADE June 10: Gather at 10:00, Step off at 11:00 am

Exciting things are in the works for this year's PRIDE PARADE! As the newsletter goes to press, details are being worked out for both local and national partnerships that will raise PFLAG's profile in Los Angeles and across the country. It all revolves around PRIDE, the iconic LGBT community event. Check our website for the latest information, and find out how you can participate!

Please join us as we march for the 34th consecutive year in the Christopher Street West Gay Pride parade. We need your presence more than ever. PFLAG was born during the 1972 Gay Pride Parade in New York City, when Jeanne Manford marched with her son Morty and came up with the idea of forming a parents' support group. That makes every Pride Parade a birthday celebration for the whole organization!

Details about where and when to meet can be found on our website: www.pflagla.org.

Outreach to the Latino Community

Our newest board member, Gizella Czene, has taken on the challenge of bringing PFLAG to underserved Latino Communities. She and another volunteer from PFLAG Pasadena will be running a Spanish language PFLAG meeting concurrently with the monthly Pasadena meetings. They will be carrying on the work of Lenor Holmstrom, who is coping with illness. In addition, Gizella is working with parents in the city of Bell and a Latino youth service organization in Van Nuys to start PFLAG en Espanol in the San Fernando Valley. PFLAG Los Angeles will provide support, training, and materials for these start-ups.

PFLAG Chapters Safe Schools Initiative

At the Southern Pacific PFLAG Regional Meeting, a group of chapters, including PFLAG Los Angeles, formed a coalition committed to safe schools work. Some of the projects planned include visiting district school superintendents, adopting a school or Gay Straight Alliance, and working on curricula related to LGBT history to help schools comply with the Fair Education Act. Anyone interested in helping with the initiative can contact us through the website, and we'll get you involved.

Mariette Sawchuk
msawchuk-pflag@earthlink.net

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

Justice prevailed!

Federal Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit rules Prop 8 unconstitutional

NCLR Applauds Appeals Court Decision in Federal Challenge to Proposition 8 Statement by NCLR Executive Director Kate Kendell

(San Francisco, CA, February 7, 2012)—Today, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the August 2010 decision of the U.S. District Court in San Francisco striking down Proposition 8, the 2008 measure that stripped same-sex couples of the right to marry in California. The Court affirmed the ruling of former Chief U.S. District Judge Vaughn R. Walker that Prop 8 discriminates against same-sex couples in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution. The court also rejected Prop 8 supporters' offensive argument that Judge Walker should have refused to preside over the case because he is gay and in a relationship with a man.

The court ruled that Proposition 8 violates the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution because it "serves no purpose, and has no effect, other than to lessen the status and human dignity of gays and lesbians in California, and to officially reclassify their relationships and families as inferior to those of opposite-sex couples."

The supporters of Prop 8 have 15 days to ask the Ninth Circuit panel to reconsider its decision or to ask for reconsideration by a larger panel of judges on that court. Alternatively, they have 90 days to request that the Supreme Court of the United States review the case.

NCLR, Lambda Legal, ACLU of Northern California, and Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders filed an amicus brief urging the court to affirm Judge Walker's decision.

Statement by NCLR Executive Director Kate Kendell, Esq.:

"It is a unique and honored position to be an eyewitness to history. The Ninth Circuit's ruling finding that Proposition 8 violates the Constitution of this nation marks the first time a federal appellate court has held that a law excluding same-sex couples from the right to marry runs counter to our highest ideals of equality and fairness. With today's ruling we are a giant step closer to the day when the promise of our Constitution squares with the lived reality of LGBT people."

<http://www.nclrights.org> / National Center for Lesbian Rights

Our fight for justice continues for LGBT individuals and families. Good to know – Equality California is on our side.

For their 2012 legislative agenda, they identified two key areas:

Protecting LGBT youth, and strengthening LGBT families, which includes the following bills:

AB 1505 - Supporting LGBT Veterans and Military Families:

Under Don't Ask, Don't Tell, LGB service members and their families made tremendous sacrifices, but without the support and recognition afforded to the families of other service members. AB 1505 (Pan) will guarantee that all California service members who were discharged from the military for no reason other than their sexual orientation are eligible for all state benefits for veterans and their families such as home loans, college tuition fee waivers and preference for civil service examinations.

AB 1700 - Keeping LGBT People in Their Homes:

The death of a lifelong partner is traumatic. But under current law, that trauma can be worsened by property tax penalties that apply unequally to same-sex partners, especially impacting LGBT seniors. AB 1700 (Butler) will ensure that no LGBT person is put at risk of losing the home that he or she has built over a lifetime with a loved one.

AB 2356 - Removing Barriers to Family-Building:

For many loving, committed couples, having a child and building a family is one of the most important and fundamental keys to happiness. Unfortunately, same-sex couples face many barriers in forming families—including unequal access to fertility health care. AB 2356 (Skinner) will ensure that women in same-sex relationships can access fertility services on the same terms as women in opposite-sex relationships.

SB 1140 - Protect Religious Freedom in Marriage:

As we continue our efforts to achieve full equality, we must remove every possible barrier to securing the freedom to marry, including the false claim made by anti-equality advocates in California and elsewhere that allowing loving same-sex couples to marry will force clergy or places of worship to compromise their religious beliefs. As we anticipate the restoration of the freedom to marry in our state, SB 1140 (Leno) reaffirms the principles of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution with respect to the freedom of clergy to make faith-based decisions regarding which marriages they solemnize.

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

through speaking engagements/education, activism & advocacy:

- Barry Mason, Liz Mullen, Shervin Khorrman, Tim Ky, Ulandsey Peterson, Jessica Sackman, and Sylvia Weisenberg spoke at Maya Wolfson's Health Classes at East Valley High School.
- Gizella Czene, Ulandsey Peterson, Aye Robin, and Marla Weiss spoke to health classes at Beverly Hills High School.
- Gizella Czene, Ulandsey Peterson, Aye Robin, and Marla Weiss were invited back to talk to health classes at Beverly Hills High School.

We can't make it without your support!

PFLAG Los Angeles is an all-volunteer organization, receiving no money from PFLAG National, so every penny of your donation is vital and goes directly to our work on behalf of LGBT persons and their families.

Please renew your membership, make a special gift, or join us for the first time today.

Our donation page is easily accessible at www.pflagla.org. Just click on the **JOIN/DONATE** tab at the top of the page and follow the simple steps for either online donations or regular mailing.

We CAN make a change for our families in this country. But the magic word is WE.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

(Donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowable by law.)

Another young life lost to suicide

Kenny Wolf, a freshman at Olde Mill High School in Maryland, killed himself on April 5. Kenny had been constantly bullied for being an LGBT teen.

Where are the voices of the 'pro life' enthusiasts when it comes to the lives of our LGBT children?

It DOES matter who sets the tone and has the power to pass legislation in this country when it comes to rights and protections for our LGBT children and loved ones.

Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing! Don't let their words fool you! Their actions speak louder than words. Check their records. Ask the question: "Are you with our families or against us?"

**If you are an LGBTQ youth in crisis or thinking about suicide you deserve immediate support.
Please call The Trevor Lifeline at 1-866-488-7386 (toll-free).**

T r a n s A c t i o n

Victory!

AB887 and AB433 have become law as of January 1, 2012!

Last year, Governor Brown signed AB887 and AB433. AB887 was sponsored by the Transgender Law Center, Equality California, and the Gay-Straight Alliance Network. AB 433 was sponsored by the Transgender Law Center and Equality California.

What do these new laws mean for the trans community?

AB 887, the Gender Nondiscrimination Act, authored by Assemblymember Toni Atkins, strongly clarifies the existing employment, housing and other civil rights protections for all Californians. The law makes it clear that discrimination is not legal in California.

While California anti-discrimination laws already define "gender" to include a person's gender identity and gender expression, the Gender Nondiscrimination Act provides clarity to those who are victims of unlawful discrimination as well as for business owners, employers and other entities required to comply with the anti-discrimination protections by explicitly enumerating gender identity and expression as protected categories in a number of state codes.

"The rights of transgender Californians are coming out of the closet," said Masen Davis, Executive Director of the Transgender Law Center. "Thanks to the fair-minded legislature and Governor Brown, employment posters and student handbooks will finally inform transgender people of their rights, and educate employers and schools about their responsibilities."

AB433, the Vital Statistics Modernization Act, authored by Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal, streamlines the process for Californians to obtain and update birth certificates.

The Vital Statistics Modernization Act brings California law that governs changes to birth certificates and other identification documents in line with standards set by the United States Department of State for gender changes on passports, alleviating the confusion, anxiety and even danger transgender people often face when seeking changes to identity documents. The law simplifies the current process transgender people must follow to obtain a new birth certificate to reflect their gender, requiring only that transgender individuals receive medical certification from an attending physician that they have undergone "clinically appropriate treatment."

"The Vital Statistics Modernization Act eliminates outdated and onerous barriers that transgender people face when trying to update their IDs," said Masen Davis, Executive Director of the Transgender Law Center. "Having identity documents that match who we truly are is critical to our ability to work, travel, and thrive. We applaud Governor Brown and our lawmakers for prioritizing the health and safety of transgender Californians."

Information provided by the Transgender Law Center / <http://transgenderlawcenter.org>

"WAKE THE TOWN AND TELL THE PEOPLE"

Remember the **Gallup poll** from a year ago?

For the first time in Gallup's tracking of the issue, a majority of Americans (53%) believed same-sex marriage should be recognized by the law as valid, with the same rights as traditional marriage.

Medill Reports Chicago, Donesha Aldridge, March 1, 2012:

States that allow same-sex marriage have some of the lowest divorce rates in the country. Same-sex couples took their vows for the first time May 17, 2004, as Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage. The divorce rate for every 1,000 people in the total population was about 2.2 in Massachusetts in 2004; in 2010 the divorce rate was 2.5, **the second lowest rate in the country behind Iowa, another state that allows same-sex marriage.**

Mayors for the Freedom to Marry:

To date, 199 Mayors have signed a statement in support of same-sex marriage. This broad-based and nonpartisan group of mayors believes that all people should be able to share in the love and commitment of marriage. They all share one important value: a common commitment to fairness.

Check if your mayor has signed on: <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/pages/mayors-for-the-freedom-to-marry>

April 4, 2012:

Cybill Shepherd, award-winning actress, joins HRC's "Americans for Marriage Equality", a campaign about love, honor, and commitment, a campaign about fairness and equality.

<http://www.hrc.org/americansformarriageequality>

As more and more people and businesses support equality and fairness, there is one nonprofit organization out there whose mission is "to promote the importance of, and advocate for, marriage between one man and one woman in law and society." I guess you know who it is. It's Maggie Gallagher's *National Organization for Marriage* (NOM).

One of Maggie's newest attack campaigns is "Dump Starbucks" in which NOM is "urging customers across the globe to 'Dump Starbucks' because it has taken a corporate-wide position that the definition of marriage between one man and one woman should be eliminated and that same-sex marriage should become equally 'normal'. As such, Starbucks has deeply offended at least half its US customers, and the vast majority of its international customers."

NOM received 29,565 pledges via their online petition feature.

To combat this bigotry and nonsense of NOM, SumOfUs, a movement of consumers, workers and shareholders who seek to make the world a better place for all, initiated the online **"Thank you, Starbucks" campaign which received 643,341 signed e-cards.**

Maggie, oh Maggie, your threats of boycotting fair-minded and thoughtful businesses who want equality and justice for all and not just for people who are exactly like them seemed to have failed in this case.

(BTW, what research/survey tools have you used to come to your conclusion about Starbucks' domestic and international customers? Or is it just one of your wild prejudiced guesses that lacks data backup?)

San Gabriel Valley API PFLAG

A satellite of Pasadena PFLAG

San Gabriel Valley
Asian-Pacific Islander
Parents Families & Friends
of Lesbians and Gays

Email: sgvapipflag@gmail.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/sgvapipflag
Tumblr: sgvapipflag.tumblr.com/
Twitter: [@sgvapipflag](https://twitter.com/sgvapipflag)

ARE YOU an Asian-Pacific Islander LGBT -

- Who is hesitant to come out to your parents?
- Whose parents might not know anything about homosexuality and other sexual orientations?
- Who might have difficulty discussing sensitive issues because of limited language skills?
- Who has parents who might have fundamentalist religious views on sexual orientation?
- Who would like to find supportive and affirming religious organizations or clergy?

Consider attending our San Gabriel Valley API PFLAG meetings. We meet monthly on the 4th Sunday of the month at 3 PM in Monterey Park. Come to our first meeting.

What: First SGV API PFLAG Meeting
When: Sunday, April 22, 2012 at 3:00pm
Where: Ting's Building,
701 S. Atlantic Blvd., Suite 298,
Monterey Park, CA 91754

You will meet other Asian-Pacific Islander LGBTs as well as supportive API parents. If you wish, please bring your parents to the meetings. If they are reluctant to do so, an informal bi-monthly tea is available where relaxed discussions are held in Mandarin, Cantonese, Shanghainese, Korean, Vietnamese and English.

Please contact Andre Ting for further information about the *Afternoon Tea for Asian Parents (ATAP)*.



For further information, contact:

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