

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Pride-full

"It's happier now. People are happier," said one member of the crowd watching the 2014 Pride Parade. Everybody in the PFLAG Los Angeles contingent noticed the special spirit of celebration this year. Nancy Zaun, a 92-year-old PFLAG Mom and board member emeritus, rode down the parade route in her wheelchair like royalty, getting waves and hugs along the route. PFLAG Mom Betty DeGeneres marched, waved and graciously posed for pictures. "There must be a picture of me on every refrigerator in West Hollywood," she laughed. PFLAG Santa Clarita and PFLAG Bakersfield marched with us, renewing friendships and ties of support.

A special contingent of Johnson & Johnson volunteers enthusiastically worked the crowd promoting J & J's Care with Pride campaign. This year's theme "Caring for All Families" was especially appropriate, given the large number of families with children marching and watching the parade. The beautiful J & J and PFLAG Los Angeles festival booths attracted many visitors with the message of acceptance and inclusion.

Thanks to all PFLAGers who made the parade and festival such a wonderful event. We're grateful to the booth workers, marchers, Johnson & Johnson volunteers and particularly our behind-the-scenes organizers who made sure everything went off without a hitch: Carol Duden and Laura Kraus of Johnson & Johnson, Stuart Huggins, Karen and Barry Mason, Sandy Sawchuk, and especially York Knowlton, our coordinator in chief, who designed and set up our booth, interfaced with the Johnson & Johnson volunteers, and worked with the Pride organization. You make us all full of PRIDE.



Models of Pride

The Pride parade and festival is a chance for all of us to celebrate. But there's a very particular segment of the LGBT community that deserves our special attention and support. On October 11 at the USC campus, the free Models of Pride youth conference will offer LGBTQ youth the opportunity to meet each other, learn from the hundreds of workshops available, and have fun. The atmosphere is electric as some 1500 youth take advantage of the opportunity to be themselves in an environment where they are the majority.

At the same time, PFLAG chapters throughout Southern California will be helping to present a series of workshops for parents and guardians of LGBTQ youth as well as other straight allies. Free workshops will be offered both in English and Spanish, and there will be special tracks for family members of transgender youth and for allies working with youth in Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) and other school or community organizations.

Put Saturday, October 11 on your calendar, and check out the Models of Pride website at www.modelsofpride.org for more information and registration forms. All programs are free, but registration is required for planning purposes. — Mariette

Our Stories Interview with Mollie Pier

[Mollie's son Nathaniel Pier was one of the first physicians in private practice in New York City who treated people with HIV/AIDS. He died at age 37 in 1989.]

When Nathaniel was in the 4th grade I was thinking he's not like the others. He didn't want to join Little League, he didn't like to play ball in the streets. I said to my husband, "You think maybe he's...?" He said, "Well..." And at that time, if somebody was gay, they thought it was a psychiatric condition. We asked the principal of the school if she would have him tested. She said, "What for? He's one of our best students." I said, "Well I don't know...he's different from the other kids." And she said, "So what?"

Nathaniel went off to Berkeley. In his third year he had an opportunity to go to Israel where my husband and I visited him. We took him and his roommate out for dinner one night and I said to him, "Well, did you find any girlfriends?" He said, "Mom, what if I were to tell you that Joshua and I are lovers?"

I didn't want to believe what I heard because there was still a huge stigma. But I said, "Well, if you are, you are." And then we were invited to dinner by a host family who had an 18-year-old daughter who was making eyes at my son and he was kind of friendly. So I thought, "Aah, he's not."

After he graduated from Berkeley and got into medical school I was taking him to the airport and said to him, like any Jewish mother, "Maybe in New York you'll meet a nice Jewish girl." And he said, "You can expect that of your other two sons but not of me." My heart gave a pound and I said to myself, "This is it." I went home and talked to my husband and all he said was, "Oh, we don't really know."

After Nathaniel graduated from Albert Einstein and finished his residency he went off to England. When he was ready to come back we were meeting in Florida. My older sister was there with family. "Aunt Mollie, you know he's gay," said my nephew. *(continued inside)*



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PFLAG Los Angeles is an all volunteer, non-profit 501(c)3 charitable organization run by parents, family members, LGBT persons and their friends. Each of us came for help, found support, and joined the organization to assist others on their journey to acceptance. Our chapter, together with a group in New York City, founded the national PFLAG organization, which provides assistance to over 350 independent chapters nationwide.

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Legislative Corner

From the editor: There are more victories for same-sex couples in their fight to enter into civil marriage: A U.S. District Judge ruled Virginia's ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional. Florida's Monroe County Chief Circuit Judge issued a summary judgment that allows same-sex couples in his jurisdiction to get married. Another Florida Circuit Judge overturned the state's ban on same-sex marriage in a ruling that applies to Miami-Dade County. A U.S. Magistrate Judge struck down Idaho's ban on gay marriage citing that the ban relegated same-sex couples to a second-class status in violation of constitutional guarantees of equal protection under the law. And an Adams County District Court Judge declared Colorado's ban on same-sex marriage unconstitutional, pointing out that the voter-approved ban "bears no rational relationship to any conceivable government interest."

Message to the other side: Stop bogging down court systems with these lawsuits to prevent committed same-sex couples and their families from having the same rights and protections that you enjoy that only come with full access to legal marriage. Nothing religious about it. Even atheists can get married. Same-sex marriage is here to stay. And so is opposite-sex marriage. *Read more about the marriage cases at www.freedomtomarry.org*

We're also making progress on other issues:

Governor Brown Signs Senate Bill 1306: Authored by Senator Mark Leno and co-sponsored by Attorney General Kamala D. Harris, Equality California, and the National Center for Lesbian Rights, SB 1306 brings California statutory law into line with the U.S. Supreme Court's 2013 decision restoring the freedom to marry in our state. While both the California and U.S. Supreme Courts have affirmed the right for same-sex couples to marry, current state laws in many cases do not reflect that change. SB 1306 ensures that references to "husband" and "wife" will be replaced with gender-neutral language such as "spouse" to recognize all married couples throughout the California Code. SB 1306 officially becomes law on January 1, 2015. [www.eqca.org]

Victory For LGBT Kids In California! The U.S. Supreme Court declined to review the legal challenge to Senate Bill 1172, the 2012 California law that protects lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender children from unethical counselors and therapists engaging in dangerous practices to try to change their sexual orientation or gender expression. The Supreme Court's decision means that this law—signed by Gov. Jerry Brown in September 2012 and the first of its kind in the nation—can now be fully enforced, protecting LGBT children from the dangers of "conversion therapy." Unethical therapists can no longer mislead families and children into thinking that they can change LGBT kids' sexual orientation or gender expression. [www.eqca.org]

Spreading the Word in the community through our Speakers Bureau engagements/ education, activism & advocacy

Marta Castillo, Gizella Czene, Chris Angel Murphy, and Ulandsey Peterson were invited to talk to students and parents at Animo Watts College Preparatory Academy.

Shervin Michaels, Liz Mullen, and Chris Angel Murphy participated in the LGBT-IMPAQ Equity & Equality Student Organization speakers series at LA Southwest College.

Gizella Czene, Maurie Davidson, Terrie Duba, Amy Ehrlichman, Steve Krantz, Shervin Michaels, Chris Angel Murphy, and Cara O'Donnell talked to 11th graders at Cleveland Humanities Magnet Charter High School.

Maurie Davidson & Stephanie Muscato spoke at a Raytheon's luncheon organized by their GLBTA Employee Resource Group.

Sylvia Weisenberg staffed a table at the LGBT Resource Fair at Santa Monica College.

Barry Mason spoke at a Pride Month celebration organized by Toyota Financial Services' Spectrum, the company's LGBT Business Partnering Group.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR WORK!

Renew your membership, make a special gift, or join us for the first time TODAY.

As an all-volunteer organization, our work is made possible only with the generous contributions of our members and donors. Your contributions support our monthly meetings, website, helplines, Speakers Bureau, and outreach to ethnic and faith communities. PFLAG Los Angeles is a 501(c)3 charitable organization and 100% of your donation supports our programs.

Please Note: When you pay dues to PFLAG Los Angeles, a portion of your dues (\$15) goes to PFLAG National and makes you a member of both PFLAG Los Angeles and PFLAG National. However, if you pay dues or make donations directly to PFLAG National, 100% of your dues/donation stays with PFLAG National making you only a PFLAG National member.

Use the envelope provided or donate online at www.pflagLA.org/Join-Donate.

We all have a PFLAG story to share. Some are a testimony of growth and understanding, others are painful and heart-breaking. These stories of real peoples' lives can be major teaching moments to some and life-savers to others.

We Need YOUR Stories!

We encourage you to share YOUR story with us. There will be at least one person out there who will benefit from what you have to share.

The focus should be on your personal story as it relates to the coming-out of an LGBT family member/loved one. Maximum number of characters with spaces is 4,300. If you prefer, we can interview you over the phone and write the story for you!

All stories are welcome and submissions are subject to editing. By submitting your story you give PFLAG permission to publish it in our newsletter, on our website or other media to promote PFLAG. If requested, your name will not be published.

Please e-mail your story
or request to be interviewed to
NewsletterEditor@pflagLA.org.

(Our Stories: continued from cover) I said, "Yes I do. But he hasn't come out and said it to me." So he said, "He's afraid. He graduated with a number of students whose parents had thrown them out."

My son came back and took me out for dinner and said, "Mom, maybe you should see a psychologist." I said, "Why? Because I know you're gay? I don't have to see a psychologist. That's OK with me. Whatever makes you happy will make me happy." My response was a little hard for him to take.

Around that time I accompanied a family member to see his psychologist who was gay and he asked, "How do you feel about having a gay son?" I said, "I feel fine." He recommended a very well-known book, something about accepting a gay child. I bought the book, read it, and made an appointment with a psychologist. After two sessions she said, "You're not having a problem. Your son's having a problem. He doesn't know how to accept your acceptance."

And then my son opened a practice in New York. I visited him several times and this is how I met Michael who immediately took to me. Michael was thrown out by his family. His father was an Irish Catholic. When he told me this I said, "What about your mother, how could she reject you?" "Well, my mother just does anything my father tells her to."

Michael met my son through a colleague of my son's. That was when the AIDS crisis was rampant. They went out for coffee one night and fell in love. Nathaniel moved in with Michael whose father would call in the

middle of the night and make very obscene statements and accuse my son of making his son gay. Michael saw how supportive I was of both of them and was very glad when I joined PFLAG. I used to bring baked goods to meetings in Los Angeles.

Then one time I was in Washington DC and they came down from New York. It was then when I knew that my son had AIDS. And just before Christmas he called me in Los Angeles to tell me that he's in the hospital. I booked a flight and went directly to the hospital. Michael took a leave from his job and slept on the floor of this hospital every night and the only time he went home to take a shower and change clothes was when I came.

One night they were going to exchange rings and all the other doctors and nurses came into the room and they had a little ceremony between them. And when they did that, my eyes filled up with tears and I said, "There's no rabbi, there's no priest, there's no minister in the world that can tell me that this kind of love is sinful."

A few days later my son went into a coma. I heard Michael scream, "No, don't pull the plug!" But the doctor explained and I said, "Michael, we have to let him go." It was sort of like a period when I was in a daze. It was very rough.

The greatest gratification I have is that I've lived long enough to see gay marriage being legal. People who love each other - it has such compensations. I asked, "Geez, is this really happening?" I remember the struggles and the secrecy and the stigma...it's like a whole turn-around. How wonderful.

Quote - Unquote

"This court is aware that the majority of voters oppose same-sex marriage, but it is our country's proud history to protect the rights of the individual, the rights of the unpopular and the rights of the powerless, even at the cost of offending the majority."

— Chief Circuit Judge Luis Garcia in his ruling legalizing same-sex marriage in Monroe County, Florida

SUPPORT

MEETINGS CONTACTS ORGANIZATIONS

PFLAG LOS ANGELES MEETINGS

WESTWOOD*

Westwood United Methodist Church
10497 Wilshire Bl. LA 90024

3rd Wednesday of each month
7:30 - 10:00 pm / Free Parking

*Visit our website for upcoming speakers
www.pflagLA.org

SILVER LAKE

Metropolitan Community Church
4607 Prospect Avenue, LA 90027

2nd Thursday of each month
7:30 - 9:00 pm / Street Parking

CONTACTS

PFLAG Los Angeles Speakers Bureau
Contact Liz Mullen at
SpeakersBureau@pflagla.org

HELPLINES

PFLAG Los Angeles & Pasadena
1.888.PFLAG 88 (1.888.735.2488)
English and Spanish

Transgender Support
818.985.9319 (Chris)

The TREVOR PROJECT
24-hour suicide prevention line
866.488.7386
www.thetrevorproject.org

ORGANIZATIONS

PFLAG National
202.467.8180
www.pflag.org

REMEMBER

When you no longer need PFLAG that's when PFLAG NEEDS YOU!

www.pflagLA.org



P.O. Box 24565
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Parents, Families, and Friends
of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)
promotes the health and well-being
of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and
Transgender 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.

SUMMER 2014

TransAction

Laverne Cox Nominated For Emmy

July 10 marked a historical moment for transgender people when Laverne Cox became the first transgender Emmy nominee for her role of Sophia Burset, an incarcerated African-American transgender woman, in the Netflix series "Orange is The New Black." She already made history as the first trans woman of color to have a leading role on a mainstream scripted television show. Emmy winners will be announced on August 25, 2014 at 5pm on NBC. *Read more at www.emmys.com/bios/laverne-cox.*

AB 1121: It's The Law!

Great news: the final piece of AB 1121 went into effect July 1, 2014. AB 1121 was a 2013 California bill sponsored by Transgender Law Center and Equality California, and authored by Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins (D-San Diego). It was signed into law by Governor Brown in October 2013.

The first phase of the law, which went into effect January 1, made it easier for transgender people born in California to obtain an accurate birth certificate by removing the requirement that they present a court-ordered gender change in order to amend a gender marker on a birth certificate. Instead, they now have the option to just submit a form and a doctor's letter directly to the state Department of Public Health along with a \$23 fee.

Under the second part of the law, which became effective July 1, those seeking a name change to better match their gender identity are no longer required to publish the change in a local newspaper. Also, those seeking to obtain a name change for purposes of gender transition will no longer be required to attend an in-person court hearing unless another person challenges the name change request. These new protections were created to improve the safety and privacy needs of transgender people seeking to obtain accurate and consistent identity documents. [www.transgenderlawcenter.org]

NCTE Welcomes Review of Outdated Military Regulations

The National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) welcomes U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel's statement on ABC's "This Morning" that the Department of Defense should review the military's policies that prohibit open transgender military service. "We look forward to working with the Pentagon to end these outdated rules that harm our military," said NCTE Executive Director Mara Keisling.

Transgender service members serve in all branches of the military, hiding who they are to not lose their careers. Currently, military medical regulations disqualify transgender recruits and require the discharge of service members found to be transgender. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel told ABC News that he believes the ban should be reviewed. "I do think it continually should be reviewed," he said. "I'm open to that. I'm open to those assessments, because - again, I go back to the bottom line - every qualified American who wants to serve our country should have an opportunity if they fit the qualifications and can do it." [www.transequality.org]