



PFLAG-LA

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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

2009 / Newsletter # 254

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 !

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

HELPLINES, CHAPTERS & CONTACTS 9 am to 9 pm**Area Code 310**

West LA: 454 6681 (Liz)
 LI ZARM@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: 798 3794 (Brian)
 linus_blanket_2001@yahoo.com

Area Code 661

Santa Clarita Chapter: 254 2177 (Dave)

Area Code 714

Orange County Chapter: 997 8047

Area Code 805

Ventura Chapter: www.pflagventura.org
 647 0588
 Thousand Oaks 498 4964 (Rita & Steve)
 Ventura / Ojai: 646 5318 (Tom & Nanette)

Area Code 818

San Fernando Valley: 788 8678 (Lynette)
 lynettesperber@yahoo.com
 Woodland Hills: 340 8945 (Irene)

Area Code 909

Redlands Chapter: 335 2005 (Kathy)

Area Code 949

South Orange County: 459 2834 (Karyl)
 Costa Mesa: 276 6997 (Norma)

Area Code 951

Riverside: 500 6904 (Jo Ann)

OTHER HELPLINES / RESOURCES

PFLAG/LA Speakers Bureau / Contact Ron & Andy
 andynron@gmail.com

Asian Pacific Islander:
 Harold Kameya, HKameya@gmail.com, (818) 368 2008
 Bev Toyama, btoyama@ca.rr.com

Transgender: (818) 985 9319 (Chris)

PFLAG's Transgender Special Outreach Network
 (TSON):
 Karen Gross (216) 691 HELP / KittenGr@aol.com
 www.transfamily.org

LA Gay & Lesbian Center:
 (323) 993 7400

Straight Spouses:
 (510) 595 1005 (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

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

Hablamos español!

Leonor 818 243 5306 (home)
 818 378 6406 (cell)
 Julio 310 500 8645
 espanol@pflagpasadena.org

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

If there is anything you would like to see in the
 newsletter, please e-mail me at haichi87@sbcglobal.net,
 call me at (818) 985-9319, or just drop me a note at our
 PFLAG meetings!

Regards, Chris Haiss

**Find more resources on our website at
 www.pflagla.org**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happiness in the New Year

As we look forward with hope to a new administration and a new year, our excitement is dimmed by the passage of Proposition 8 and the horrible economic situation. Like everyone else, we worry about our jobs, our houses, our 401Ks, our businesses, the hiring freezes at work, rising food prices and empty stores. We look forward to a long and bitter fight for marriage equality. Does the effort and the money we have put into the fight for LGBT civil rights really matter?

At PFLAG LA, we think the answer is yes. In the cold and busy days before Christmas, more than 20 people, eight of them new to PFLAG, walked up the steps to our December meeting. They were there to learn the truth about the LGBT community, to learn how to deal with their children's sexual orientation, to learn how to support their family members. Their pain, confusion, and misinformation was just as sharp as ours was eight years ago. Their need for PFLAG just as compelling. Minds and hearts began to change and new straight allies were born.

So even in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, we are asking you to become a PFLAG member or renew your membership. If you can give a little more than the basic membership, please do. We have room rent to pay, phone bills for the helplines, and expenses associated with the website.

But if you can't renew your membership in these difficult times, you can still help PFLAG's work. Come to one of our monthly meetings. Bring a friend. You are the person who has the words someone needs to hear. At my third meeting, a young man spoke about what a gift his gay sexual orientation had been for him. I've never seen him again, but I treasure the hope he gave me. Be the voice of hope, of comfort, of support to a struggling parent or LGBT person. That's a gift beyond measure.

See you at a PFLAG meeting this year!

Mariette Sawchuk
msawchuk-pflag@earthlink.net

A TV movie you don't want to miss!

PFLAG plays a central role in *Prayers for Bobby*, a new movie premiering on the Lifetime Channel at 9 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24. Based on a true story, the film chronicles the struggle of a devoutly religious mother as she confronts her beloved son's homosexuality. The story is as relevant today as it was in August, 1983, when Bobby committed suicide. Mary Griffith, played by Sigourney Weaver, finds strength, understanding and courage through the transformational support of PFLAG. A religion, which preaches hostility and hate, is exposed in this movie as misguided morality.

PFLAG Los Angeles encourages you to see and support this important film. Its message needs to be repeated so people know that true love and belief in God, no matter what form it takes, encompass the diversity which makes every person special and part of the Divine plan.

LEGISLATIVE CORNER

New Filing in Prop 8 Legal Challenge Reply brief reiterates that Prop 8 should be struck down

San Francisco — On January 5, the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and Lambda Legal filed a reply brief in the California Supreme Court, the next step in the lawsuit seeking to overturn Proposition 8, which passed by a mere 52 percent on November 4.

The brief argues that Proposition 8 is invalid because it seeks to eliminate a fundamental right only for a targeted minority, which cannot be done through the initiative process. The brief also agrees with California Attorney General Jerry Brown that certain fundamental rights, including the right to marry, are inalienable and can not be put up for a popular vote. The brief also argues —again in agreement with the Attorney General — that Proposition 8 cannot be applied to invalidate existing marriages because new laws and amendments are presumed to apply only on a prospective basis.

"If Prop 8 is permitted to stand, it would be the first time an initiative has successfully been used to change the California Constitution to take away an existing right only from a historically targeted minority group," said NCLR Legal Director Shannon Minter. "Such a change would defeat the very purpose of a constitution and fundamentally alter the role of the courts in protecting minority rights."

Elizabeth Gill, a staff attorney with the ACLU, added "Prop 8 is a radical and unprecedented change to the California Constitution that puts all Californians at risk. It actually mandates government discrimination against a minority."

"Prop 8 is not valid and never has been," said Jennifer Pizer, Lambda Legal National Marriage Project Director. "California's Equal Protection clause was not written in sand, to be erased by shifting political tides. It's a solid guarantee that we all have the same rights and it's the foundation of our government. Exceptions can't be carved by simple majority vote or the equality guarantee becomes a discrimination guarantee. No initiative can cause such a profound change in our legal system."

(from: www.eqca.org)

From the editor:

*People seem to have forgotten that, had it been up to the majority,
we would have neither interracial marriage nor desegregation.*

EQCA invites to its 2009 Marriage Lobby Day!

When: Tuesday, February 17, 2009
Where: Sacramento, CA

Join activists from across the state for a day
at the California State Capitol.

For more information go to www.eqca.org

How Did Your Representatives Score On LGBT Issues?

Download EQCA's 2008 Legislative
Scorecard!

Go to www.eqca.org,
enter

score card 2008

in the search field

SPREADING THE WORD IN THE COMMUNITY

through speaking engagements/education, activism & advocacy:

- Dee Cappelli and Steve Krantz spoke at KPMG in Los Angeles.
- Ron Elecciri, Steve Krantz, and Sylvia Weisenberg spoke to students at Mission College in Sylmar in a class called "A Child in a Diverse Society."

Please support PFLAG!

We are enclosing an envelope for your TAX-DEDUCTIBLE annual dues and/or a TAX-DEDUCTIBLE donation to PFLAG.

Your continued support is greatly appreciated. We are all in this struggle together, and every little bit you give goes a long way.

Thanking you in advance!
Your PFLAG LA Board

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"[T]here is a gay and secular fascism in this country that wants to impose its will on the rest of us, is prepared to use violence, to use harassment."

Newt Gingrich, Former U.S. Rep. and Speaker of the House (R-GA)

GAY HISTORY with LISA DIGUARDI

January 20, 1981:

James Dronenberg testified on his own behalf at a hearing before a Navy Administrative Discharge Board. The Board voted unanimously to discharge him due to homosexual acts. He appealed on Constitutional grounds, but lost.

"QUOTE - UNQUOTE"

"If a bullet should enter my brain, let that bullet destroy every closet door."

Harvey Milk, San Francisco City Supervisor

Have you seen M I L K yet?

Starring Sean Penn in the leading role, director Gus Van Sant made a great movie about the life of Harvey Milk, the first openly gay San Francisco Supervisor, who, along with San Francisco Mayor George Moscone, was killed on November 27, 1978, in City Hall.

Synopsis:

After moving to San Francisco, the middle-aged New Yorker, Harvey Milk, became a Gay Rights activist and city politician. On his third attempt, he was elected to San Francisco's Board of Supervisors in 1977, making him the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in the USA. The following year, both he and the city's mayor, George Moscone, were shot to death by former city supervisor, Dan White, who blamed his former colleagues for denying White's attempt to rescind his resignation from the board.

Mr. Milk had been the subject of several books and the Academy Award-winning documentary feature, *The Times of Harvey Milk* (1984); but *Milk* (2008) is the first fictional feature to explore private aspects of the man's personal life and career.

Milk was filmed on location in San Francisco. Many of Mr. Milk's real-life surviving friends and former associates participated in the making of this film, several appearing on camera.

T r a n s A c t i o n

Support Group for Parents of Transgender and Gender-Variant Children & Youth

When: Sunday, January 25, 1:30-3pm

Where: The Village
The L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center
1125 N. McCadden Place
Los Angeles, CA 90038
Room: TBA

**Look for signs directing you towards the meeting room/location or ask the front desk.

This free, confidential group is for parents, guardians and other caregivers (grandmothers, foster parents) whose children identify as transgender or gender-questioning, or who just express their gender in ways you have trouble with.

Come to share your story and find support among other adults whose children are exploring and struggling with the difficult issue of gender identity.

Please do not bring your children with you; this is a group for parents, caregivers and family only. This group will be held at least monthly, depending on demand and participation.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Jen Durham at 314-323-4775 (cell) or at durham.jen@gmail.com

Refreshments will be provided!

Save the date!

4th Annual Transgender Leadership Summit in San Diego Friday, March 27 - Sunday, March 29

Contact Alexis Rivera, Community Advocate, for more information.

Transgender Law Center
Phone: (415) 513-5166
arivera@transgenderlawcenter.org

Contact Rabbi Levi Alter to submit a workshop proposal.
transpirituality@yahoo.com

Trans Town Hall 2: Improving Access and Quality of Educational Experiences for Trans Communities

When: Monday, March 30, 6-9:30 pm

Where: The Village
The L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center
1125 N. McCadden Place
Los Angeles, CA 90038
[1 block east of Highland Ave., 1/2 block north of Santa Monica Blvd.]

Discussion followed by a free reception.

This event is co-presented by Center for Sex and Gender Research at California State University, Northridge; Center for the Study of Genders and Sexualities at California State University Los Angeles; LGBT Specialization in Clinical Psychology at Antioch University; Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Center.

Still need a calendar? Why not get the 2009 Trans Calendar in support of the trans clinic at Children's Hospital?!

The sale of "Angels of Change" raises funds for CHLA's transgender clinic to continue to provide medical and hormonal treatment to transgender youth who don't have insurance or means to pay for their services.

The calendar is only \$10, shipping included.

For order information, please contact:

Bamby Salcedo
Transgender Harm Reduction
Project Coordinator
Children's Hospital Los Angeles
Ph. (323) 361-5983
Fax. (323) 913-3614
bsalcedo@chla.usc.edu

Nepal Supreme Court approves same-sex marriage

msn.com

Tuesday, November 18, 2008

Kathmandu: Close on the heels of an international furore over the state of California's decision to ban same-sex marriages, the apex court of nascent Himalayan republic Nepal has given its nod to such unions.

"My eyes were filled with tears when I read the Supreme Court decision," said Sunil Babu Pant, Nepal's first publicly gay lawmaker and a gay rights icon in South Asia.

Pant's exultation came after the Supreme Court Monday delivered full judgement regarding a ground-breaking verdict it had announced last year, recognizing sexual minorities, who were among the most oppressed in conservative, patriarchal Nepali society, as being born such and entitled to all the rights and remedies all other Nepali citizens enjoyed.

Join the Courage Campaign's Photo Project
"Please don't divorce..."
or just click through the pictures!

www.couragecampaign.org/page/content/dontdivorce

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

Just send an e-mail to Barrybarrym@yahoo.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.

We'd like to ask for your
email address
to ensure that if we ever have an
event on short notice
YOU WILL hear about it.

Please email your email address to
info@pflagla.org or to karenhmason@yahoo.com

THANK YOU!



Majority of Californians voted for Prop 8

From our PFLAG moms Mariette Sawchuk and Karen Mason in response to the passing of California's Prop 8:

Dear PFLAG Family,

Today is a sad day for all of us and our families. It is also a sad day for the state of California, which now has a discriminatory definition of marriage written into its constitution. Clearly, 52% of California voters heard and believed the lies and misinformation put out by our opponents. Never was PFLAG's mission of education more important.

Our friends and family members who have married and those who were looking forward to that opportunity, need our support more than ever. Our voices must still be raised in protest against discrimination and injustice through our advocacy work. History shows us that the struggle for civil rights is often long, hard, and heartbreaking, with many lost battles along the way. But, as the election of Barack Obama proves, victory is possible if we, as individuals, as organizations, and as a community, don't give up.

In many ways this campaign has strengthened the LGBT community. We have built strong bonds among many organizations and gained many allies—both prominent men and women and ordinary citizens. Now it is time to take stock of our assets, plan, and begin to move forward again.

We'll be talking about this at the November PFLAG (November 19) meeting, where Adam Fingerhut, professor of psychology at Loyola Marymount University, will help us make sense of minority/majority interactions and suggest ways we can move forward both personally and politically.

In December (December 17) our guest speaker is Marc Adams of HeartStrong, Inc., which supports LGBT persons attending religious schools. He will help us to figure out how to combat religious bigotry.

Now more than ever, we invite you to come to a PFLAG meeting. Whether you're sad, hurt, angry, or more motivated than ever, you have a home at PFLAG.

Religious and Civil Rights Groups, Legislators, Bar Associations, Labor, Businesses, and Legal Scholars Urge Court to Overturn Prop 8

Google, California Council of Churches, California NAACP, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Asian Pacific American Legal Center, and California Rural Legal Assistance among groups submitting friend-of-the-court briefs

(San Francisco, CA, January 15, 2009)—Today, hundreds of religious organizations, civil rights groups, and labor unions, along with numerous California municipal governments, bar associations, and leading legal scholars collectively urged the California Supreme Court to strike down Proposition 8. Dozens of amicus curiae or “friend of the court” briefs argue that Proposition 8 drastically alters the equal protection guarantee in California’s Constitution, and that the rights of a minority cannot be eliminated by a simple majority vote.

Major California businesses, including Google, as well as Levi Strauss & Co. and the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, submitted a brief arguing that writing inequality into the constitution is bad for business.

Professors from the most prominent universities and law schools in California and the country authored briefs urging invalidation of Proposition 8, including scholars from Harvard University, Stanford University, Yale University, University of California (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Hastings, Davis, Irvine), University of Southern California, University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers University, University of San Francisco, Loyola Law School, Santa Clara Law School, Chapman University, and Pepperdine University.

A coalition of more than 50 California labor organizations, including United Healthcare Workers (UHW) and the California Labor Federation, filed an amicus brief on January 13, 2009 urging the Court to invalidate Proposition 8. The labor organizations represent more than two million working men and women in California. The brief defends the rights of all Californians to equal treatment under the constitution, and argues that union members’ rights could be in jeopardy if Proposition 8 were held to be valid.

Leading African American, Latino, and Asian American civil rights groups filed a brief arguing that Proposition 8 prevents the courts from exercising their essential constitutional role of enforcing the equal protection rights of minorities.

“We would be making a grave mistake to view Proposition 8 as just affecting the LGBT community,” said Eva Paterson, president of the Equal Justice Society. “If the Supreme Court allows Proposition 8 to take effect, it would represent a threat to the rights of people of color and all minorities.”

In a brief filed on January 14, 2009, the California Council of Churches and other religious leaders and faith organizations representing millions of members discussed the harm Proposition 8 poses to religious minorities.

“Proposition 8 poses a grave threat to religious freedom,” said Rev. Rick Schlosser, Executive Director of the California Council of Churches. “If the Court permits same-sex couples to be deprived of equal protection by a simple majority vote, religious minorities could be denied equal protection as well—a terrible injustice in a nation founded by people who emigrated to escape religious persecution. If the Court permits Proposition 8 to take effect, religious discrimination similarly could be written into California’s Constitution.”

Also on January 14, leading local, state and national women’s rights organizations submitted a brief asking the Court to invalidate Proposition 8 because of its disastrous implications for women and other groups that face discrimination.

Other briefs supporting the legal challenge were filed on behalf of 66 current and former California legislators; the California League of Women Voters; dozens of bar associations, civil rights, and legal aid organizations; a number of California cities; and numerous children’s advocacy organizations and LGBT civil rights organizations, including the National Center for Youth Law, Legal Services for Children, the National Black Justice Coalition, and Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

[Excerpt from www.nclrights.org/ / National Center for Lesbian Rights]