



San Jose ♦ Peninsula Newsletter

June/July 2008

www.pflagsanjose.org

P.O. Box 2718, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

♥ NEED HELP? ♥ Call the Help/Info Lines:

♥ (408) 270-8182 ♥ Gilroy: (408) 846-9105

Vice-President's Message

PFLAG Regional Conference in Merced

On Saturday, May 17, 40+ PFLAGers from Northern California and one lone soul from Nevada gathered in Merced for the bi-annual Regional Conference. Planned by PFLAG Merced, the Conference proved to be a great experience for someone like me - relatively little PFLAG experience, a lot of enthusiasm, and not quite sure what I can do to help most.

Laurie and I drove to Merced early Saturday morning, providing us with a great chance to plan and talk about the next steps for our chapter. When we arrived at the United Methodist Church in Merced, we were both thankful to find that the church was air conditioned - it was 102° outside!

Highlights:

- An opening address by Jody Huckaby, Executive Director of PFLAG National, centered on our recent marriage victory here in California. (While we're on the subject, let's take a moment to give three cheers for the State Supreme Court! Yay! Yay! Woohoo!) Jody asked us not to let the November election overshadow the real joy we should feel about the ruling, but at the same time, not to forget that the battle has just begun.
- A great brainstorm of ideas with thoughts shared by every chapter. Anyone want to table at a farmer's market?
- Ray Allen, from the Sacramento chapter, shared issues faced by gays in the military. Ray is the National Vice President of American Veterans for Equal Rights (AVER). He painted a much clearer picture of some of the pitfalls faced by LGBT servicepeople, and shared ideas for supporting the loved ones of LGBT servicepeople. A small step would be simply identifying members of our chapters who are veterans.
- A presentation by Jody and Kim Jones, the Field and Policy Coordinator at National for the West, about *Straight for Equality*. Jody and Kim did a great job clarifying the goals of *Straight for Equality*, how it differs from what we normally do, and how to get ourselves started. I came out of that workshop energized and brimming with ideas to implement! We will (keep your fingers crossed) be ready to mobilize at the July support meetings, so plan to be there!

Being at the conference was inspiring. It also raised new questions for me about how PFLAG can grow. How is it that most of the chapter leadership is older parents, but PFLAG National is staffed by young LGBT folks? How can the vision expand to encompass more straight allies - those without family or close friends who are LGBT? How can we grow so that I will no longer be the sole representative of an ethnic minority at a conference for a region with such a large diverse population?

As we look forward to November, I hope that all of us can work towards making *Straight for Equality* a true PFLAG success and handily defeat the anti-marriage initiative!

Howard

MEETING CALENDAR JUNE/JULY

- June 8 Redwood City Meeting - 7:30 PM
Sequoia Union H.S. District Offices
480 James Ave., Redwood City
(2nd Monday of the month)
- June 11 San Jose Meeting - 7:30 PM
First Congregational Church
1980 Hamilton Ave. (at Leigh)
(2nd Wednesday of the month)
- June 12 Straight Spouse Support - 7:30 PM
Call San Jose Helpline for info.
(2nd Thursday of the month)
- June 18 Board Meeting - 7:30 PM
at Mike Raymond's office
(3rd Wednesday of the month)
ALL ARE WELCOME!
- July 9 San Jose Meeting - 7:30 PM
First Congregational Church
1980 Hamilton Ave. (at Leigh)
(2nd Wednesday of the month)
- July 10 Straight Spouse Support - 7:30 PM
Call San Jose Helpline for info.
(2nd Thursday of the month)
- July 14 Redwood City Meeting - 7:30 PM
Sequoia Union H.S. District Offices
480 James Ave., Redwood City
(2nd Monday of the month)
- Gilroy — Call the Helpline for
support and information:
(408) 846-9105
- July 31 — Newsletter Stuffing
2008 Schedule
1st Thursday of Oct;
Last Thursday of July, Aug, Oct.



→ August Newsletter Deadline:
Thursday, July 24



**CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT'S
HISTORIC MARRIAGE RULING!**
May 15, 2008

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PFLAG Support Meetings—June

You are invited to learn more about being an ally to people with LGBTQ parents at a presentation with Bethany Lockhart, COLAGE Program Coordinator and Heliana Ramirez, COLAGE Board of Directors Member, at the support meetings in **Redwood City on Monday, June 9th** and **San Jose on Wednesday, June 11th**.

COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere) is a national movement of children, youth, and adults with one or more lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer parents. COLAGE builds community and work toward social justice through youth empowerment, leadership development, education, and advocacy.

COLAGE envisions a world in which children, youth and adults of LGBT families are connected to a broad community of peers and mentors, are recognized as the authority of our experiences, belong to respected and valued family structures, and have the tools and support to create and maintain a just society. COLAGE supports a national network of chapters across the country, Just for Us and Net News publications, a Pen Pal program, online communities, scholarship and internship programs, community education trainings and panels, and legislative advocacy. For more information, visit www.colage.org/



PFLAG Support Meetings—July

On **July 9th in San Jose** and **July 14th in Redwood City** we will meet to share our Pride month experiences and to learn about PFLAG's new ***Straight for Equality*** campaign. *Straight for Equality* helps us to learn how to help straight allies who have no personal connection with the GLBT community and are unsure if and how they can take action. With the anti-gay marriage initiative looming in November, we need to learn all we can about how to cultivate more allies and activists! Come join us!

Marriage Rights Workshop June 13

At 7:00 PM on Friday, June 13, Rev. Mike Ellard will lead a workshop on "How to Talk about Marriage Rights." This free event will be held at the First Congregational Church of San Jose, 1980 Hamilton Avenue in San Jose.

A constitutional amendment opposing equal marriage rights is expected on the November 2008 ballot, and it is crucial for all people of faith to learn how to talk about equal marriage rights if we want to keep same-sex marriage legal in California. This workshop is for you, whether you're a pastor, a church leader, or just someone who is interested in equal rights for all Californians.

For more information, contact Rev. Mike Ellard via e-mail: RevMikeEllard@mccsj.org — or phone him at (408) 279-2711 ext.2.

Celebration In Spirit Keeping Our Marriage Rights June 14

At 10:30 AM on Saturday, June 14, the Council of Churches of Santa Clara County will present this year's Celebration In Spirit, an ecumenical Christian worship service. This year's service will focus on "Keeping our Marriage Rights!" Rev. Penny Nixon will preach. The service will also feature an informal blessing of relationships for those who are interested.

Clergy and lay persons from Santa Clara County churches are needed to help lead the service. If you are interested, please contact Rev. Mike Ellard via e-mail at (evMikeEllard@mccsj.org) — or phone him at (408) 279-2711 ext.2.

**Discriminatory laws cannot be justified
simply because such constitutional
violation has become traditional.
California Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer**

A Message from the PFLAG Finance Committee

You can make a contribution to San Jose/Peninsula PFLAG at any time of the year. Just write a check and send it to PFLAG, PO Box 2718, Sunnyvale CA 94087 or do it online using our website www.pflagsanjose.org

You can designate your contribution to any of three funds: Operating, Scholarship or Endowment. Check with your employer concerning matching gifts. You may designate PFLAG for your United Way gifts.

Gifts to PFLAG, including membership dues, are tax deductible to the full extent provided by law.

For more information on ways to give to PFLAG, go to www.pflagsanjose.org/gift_of_giving.html

Thank you!

* Mark your Calendars *

June 13 - Marriage Rights Workshop

June 14 - Celebration In Spirit

June 14/15 - San Jose Pride Festival/Parade

June 29 - SF Pride Parade

July 4 - Redwood City 4th of July Parade

Aug. 30-Sept. 1 - Tapestry Arts Festival

Sept. 19 - BAYMEC Annual Dinner

Here Come the Parades!

Don't miss out on these great opportunities to show your support for our GLBT family members and friends - and don't miss out on the fun! Remember to bring water, sunscreen, and a sun visor or hat.

San Jose Pride Parade & Festival June 14-15



Join us at the San Jose Pride Festival and Parade on Saturday and Sunday, June 14-15. We will share a booth with Outlet again this year and will march in the parade on Sunday morning. The Parade starts at 10:30 AM. Gather in the Victory parking lot at 64 N. Market Street (at the corner of St. John) at 9:30 AM to check in and line up. The parade is very short - about 30-45 minutes. The PFLAG booth is open on Saturday noon to 4 PM, Sunday noon to 4 or 4:30 PM, depending on the foot traffic. Entrance to the Festival on Woz Way is free Saturday, but not on Sunday. For more information, check the web site at www.sanjosepride.com

San Francisco Pride Parade June 29



A contingent of PFLAGers will march in the San Francisco Pride Parade. A "gay"-ly decorated bus will be provided again this year for those who prefer not to walk. We are asking for a donation of \$25, but no one will be turned away. All are welcome!

We don't know the exact location or start time as yet, but as soon as we're notified, we'll post the information on our website and send it to the pflag-news e-mail list.

We need help with decorating the bus! Wheel Monitors are needed to walk beside the wheels of the bus. Contact pflag-info@pflagsanjose.org if you can come a little early to help, if you want to reserve a seat on the bus, or if you want to be notified of the monitor training schedule when it is made available.



Redwood City 4th of July Parade

The theme for this year's Redwood City 4th of July Parade is "70 Years of Pageantry" and PFLAG will be there in all its finery! It's probably the most rewarding thing we do, to march through the streets of Redwood City with over 50,000 people reading our banner, seeing our smiles and waves, knowing we're part of their neighborhood, and seeing that we're proud of and love our gay kids.

PFLAG is accustomed to marching in Pride parades but you haven't lived until you've marched in the Independence Day parade! The crowd, needless to say, is entirely different! July 4th - morning (time and place TBA) we walk about a mile through the cheering crowds. The rest of the year - we feel good about what we've done. ▼

Marriage Equality for All: The Historic CA Supreme Court Decision



On May 15, 2008, the California Supreme Court ruled that barring same-sex couples from marriage is unconstitutional. Possibly as early as June 16, same-sex couples will be able to marry in California.

Here a few excerpts from the NCLR/EQCA/ACLU/Lambda Legal newly updated Marriage FAQ.

For the entire document, go to: www.nclrights.org/site/DocServer/Marriage_FAQ_Final_5.15.08.pdf?docID=3041 - or visit NCLR's website (www.nclrights.org) to read the latest revision.

Getting Married In California—What I need to Know

Can the court's decision be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court?

No. The decision was based on the California Constitution, and the California Supreme Court has the final say in cases brought under the California Constitution.

Will couples who are registered domestic partners in California automatically become married?

No. Couples who are registered domestic partners are free to decide whether or not they wish to marry. Those who do wish to marry must go through the formal legal steps required for any couples in California to legally marry.

Will California domestic partnerships continue to exist?

Yes. Domestic partnerships still exist under current California law.

In 2004, many couples were married in San Francisco, and the California Supreme Court subsequently held that those marriages were invalid. Does the court's new decision mean that those marriages will now be legally recognized?

No. Those marriages remain invalid, and those couples would have to remarry.

If my partner and I were legally married in Massachusetts or Canada, will our marriage now be recognized in California?

Yes. When the court's ruling goes into effect, couples who legally married in another jurisdiction will be recognized as married in California as well.

If we're already in a registered domestic partnership in California, do we have to dissolve our domestic partnership before we can marry?

No. The California domestic partnership statutes permit an individual to be both married and in a registered domestic partnership, so long as it is to the same person.

What can we do to help preserve the freedom to marry we have just won?

Get involved today! Right-wing groups are trying to amend our state Constitution to nullify this decision via an initiative on the November 2008 ballot. For more information about how you can help, please contact **Equality For All** at www.EqualityForAll.com. All people who value families and fairness have a stake in preserving the freedom to marry for lesbian and gay couples. We cannot afford to wait - please act now. ▼

The PFLAG NEWSLETTER

Published monthly by San Jose/Peninsula Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, P.O. Box 2718, Sunnyvale, CA 94087, Phone: (408) 270-8182.

Peninsula Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays is a tax- exempt, volunteer, community based nonprofit organization.

The San Jose/Peninsula chapter is a member of National PFLAG which is headquartered in Washington, D.C..

Your contribution is tax-deductible to the full extent provided by law.

**Would you like to volunteer?
Call the information lines.
We need your help — Call today!**



MEETING TOPICS ♥ 2008



Meetings are held from 7:30—9:00 PM
Small groups for support are held at all meetings.

JUNE — *Redwood City & San Jose:* **COLAGE**
JULY — *Redwood City & San Jose:* **Straight for Equality**



Please bring a food donation for AIDS services providers.

PFLAG'S MISSION

We provide love and support for all family members and friends. We work to create an environment of understanding so that our gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender loved ones can live with dignity and respect. These are our goals:

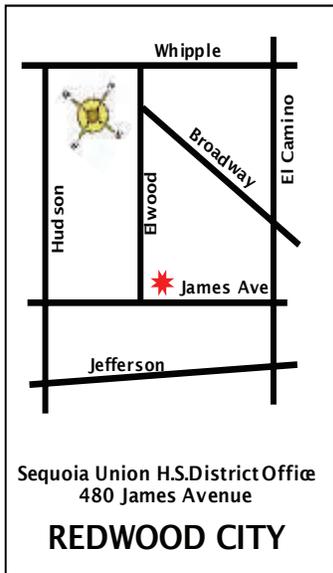
SUPPORT · EDUCATION · ADVOCACY



WHAT IS PFLAG?

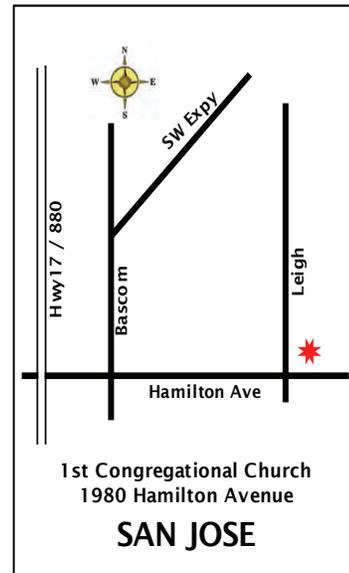
"PFLAG" is Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays. We are a national support, education and advocacy organization for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people, their families, friends and allies. With 200,000 members and supporters, and local affiliates in more than 500 communities across the U.S. and abroad, PFLAG is the largest grassroots-based family organization of its kind. PFLAG is a non-profit organization and is not affiliated with any religious or political institutions.

Your financial support makes PFLAG's work possible. As a chapter member you can also become engaged in the vital work of providing support, education and advocacy in your community. Even if you're not sure that you need PFLAG, remember that PFLAG NEEDS YOU!



Sequoia Union H.S. District Office
480 James Avenue

REDWOOD CITY



1st Congregational Church
1980 Hamilton Avenue

SAN JOSE



MEMBERSHIP IN SAN JOSE/PENINSULA PFLAG ~ 2008

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Make checks payable and mail to: PFLAG · PO Box 2718, Sunnyvale, CA 94087. Your donations & membership are tax deductible.