



San Jose ♦ Peninsula Newsletter

April 2009

www.pflagsanjose.org

P.O. Box 2718, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Two of the most important things our chapter does involve getting out in the community — speaking to groups and tabling at events.

In March San Jose Peninsula PFLAG had a unique opportunity to reach out to high school students and their parents. Cindy Skelton, drama teacher at Capuchino High School, extended an invitation for PFLAG to have a table in the lobby during the school's production of *The Laramie Project*. With PFLAG materials in tow, Diane and Jim, and Bob and daughter Sarah "peopled" a table each evening. Here are some reflections on their experience.

From Diane:

When I arrived at Capuchino's Theater, I was warmly greeted by many of the Drama Booster parents and staff members who expressed their appreciation that PFLAG was there. Several teachers took brochures including one who was particularly interested in the Spanish language materials. A PFLAG speaker had been at Cap that week, prompting some teens to ask for the "straight allies brochure." Two students wanted to know "how to join PFLAG" and one boy was delighted to learn that we had a meeting in the San Jose area. I promoted the PFLAG business cards because they list the website and the meeting locations. Although not many teens approached the table, they knew we were there as adults who cared.

The Laramie Project production was excellent. The student actors were particularly impressive as they handled multiple roles with real skill. Being in this production has to be a life altering experience for the kids.

From Laramie Project drama teacher, Cindy Skelton:

Thank you so much for bringing PFLAG to Laramie. Many people commented to me about how great it was to have that kind of support and resources.

On closing night, a clergyman from Bethany Presbyterian Church told us he picked up a lot of pamphlets and information from the PFLAG table because the church has decided that they want to be a safe place for gays and lesbians to worship.

So, it may have been just a few people visiting the PFLAG table, but the amount of people who were and will be influenced by your being there is huge! Thanks for the support!

From Bob and Sarah:

On Saturday, the closing night, there were several students who looked interested in the PFLAG literature, but appeared reluctant to take it. They came by several times, and seemed to not want to be seen taking anything by their friends. One student came up a few times before she felt brave enough to make eye contact, but seemed thrilled to have the information and someone to talk to once she did.

MEETING CALENDAR

~ APRIL ~

- Apr. 8 San Jose Meeting - 7:30 PM
First Congregational Church
1980 Hamilton Ave. (at Leigh
(2nd Wednesday of the month)
- Apr. 13 Redwood City Meeting - 7:30 PM
Sequoia Union H.S. District Offices
480 James Ave., Redwood City
(2nd Monday of the month)
- Apr. 15 Board Meeting - 7:30 PM
(3rd Wednesday of the month)
ALL ARE WELCOME!
- Apr. 16 Straight Spouse Support - 7:30 PM
Call San Jose Helpline for info.
(3rd Thursday of the month)
- Gilroy — Call the Helpline for
support and information:
(408) 846-9105
- Apr. 30 — Newsletter Stuffing

2009 Schedule

Last Thursday of Apr, May, July, Oct.
1st Thursday of Sept, Oct.
Last week of Dec.



→ **May Newsletter Deadline:**
Thursday, April 23

We also had several adults thanking us for being there and requesting literature packs. Among them a teacher from another school, an employee of a biotech company, and a member of a local church. These people gave me an opportunity to stress our chapter's excellent Speakers' Bureau, and encourage them to contact our web site and to set a date for a speakers' panel.

It is so rewarding to experience firsthand the meaning and impact of our PFLAG outreach. With heartfelt thanks to all who participate!

Laurie

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PFLAG Support Meetings

San Jose — April 8

Redwood City — April 13

Eileen Ross, Outlet Director, will be our speaker at both support meetings this month. Eileen will describe the important work that Outlet does among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQQ) youth living in the Bay Area. As the Peninsula and South Bay's only organization for LGBTQQ youth ages 13-20, thousands of teens have come to Outlet since 1997. Through its range of support services, leadership training, community education and advocacy, Outlet successfully increases youth confidence, builds personal assets, and creates healthier communities.

Eileen has been working with Outlet since 2003. She began part time with the mentor program and is now Director. Eileen has had a hand in all the programs of Outlet, has extensive experience working with the youth in the program and is now helping Outlet's two newest employees take on direct services. Eileen has also worked side-by-side with the PFLAG Speakers Bureau for the past few years, helping with trainings and doing panels.

For more information, see <http://www.projectoutlet.org/>

Redwood City 4th of July Parade

The PFLAG Redwood City Fourth of July Parade committee is off to a good start on participation this year. The overall theme for the Parade is *All Things Musical*.

One suggestion for the PFLAG contingent that already has a running start and is a natural for our community is *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*. Our PFLAG theme will need all the pizzazz that we can give it — and to accomplish that, we need to hear from you!

If you want to march in the parade with the PFLAG contingent or have ideas for making our contingent stand out and be noticed, contact Laurie.

GAYLA / Queer Youth Advocacy Day 2009

April 17 - 19: GAYLA

April 20: Queer Youth Advocacy Day

Gay-Straight Alliance Network, Equality California (EQCA), BIENESTAR, Transgender Law Center (TLC), The Trevor Project, and National Association of Social Workers - California are sponsoring the 2009 GSA Advocacy & Youth Leadership Academy (GAYLA). GAYLA is a three-day intensive training on the legislative process, policy and administrative advocacy, media activism & other important skills that culminates with Queer Youth Advocacy Day, when students will have an opportunity to talk directly to their legislators about Harvey Milk Day and other issues impacting LGBT youth.

For more info, visit: www.gsanetwork.org/gayla/

From Christopher Street to Main Street:

PFLAG National Convention 2009

October 9-11

Make plans now to join PFLAG National in San Diego this October — as we remember our roots, celebrate our progress and lay the groundwork to seize unprecedented new opportunities to move equality forward. No other organization is so uniquely qualified to take our struggle "From Christopher Street to Main Street," but we can't succeed without you. PFLAG advocates are more critically important than ever before!

Whether you are just getting started — or are a seasoned leader in your community — there is no better way to gain valuable new perspectives, and powerful tools, than to join us for the 2009 PFLAG National Convention.

Learn how to build bridges, organize coalitions, work with straight allies and advocate for change. Be part of PFLAG's effective nationwide effort to take our movement for equality from urban centers to small towns — and everywhere in between.

Information on special early bird registrations and discounts on hotel and airfare can be found at the national PFLAG web-site Convention page at:

<http://community.pflag.org/Page.aspx?pid=1042>

Prayers for Bobby

PFLAG National provided us with one copy of *Prayers for Bobby* (Lifetime movie) on DVD for each of our PFLAG libraries. It is also now available for downloading from iTunes for \$3.99/copy.

If you missed it, be sure to check it out!

Julian Bonds Speaks on Gay Civil Rights

NAACP Board Chair Julian Bond addressed the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Dinner in Los Angeles in March and made one of the clearest and most compelling cases for gay rights ever. This may be the best speech you will ever hear in support of gay rights!

Watch the video at: <http://citizenchris.typepad.com/citizenchris/2009/03/gay-rights-are-civil-rights-and-cafeteria-christians.html>

* Mark your Calendars *

April 17-19 - GAYLA

April 20 - Queer Youth Advocacy Day

April 17 - Queer On Their Feet, Palo Alto

Oct. 9-11 - PFLAG National Convention



Our Annual Meeting was Great Fun!

A great time was had by all who attended the chapter annual meeting on March 7th! There was lots of opportunity to visit with old friends and new while munching appetizers and eating the marvelous dinner prepared and served by Charles, his husband Luis, his sister Deborah and friend Matt. We send a huge thank you to them for all the time, effort, expense and love that went into this dinner.

We raised over \$500 for scholarships in donations and from the silent auction. Thank you to Marti, Starbucks, Blockbuster and Kudayta Tea House at the Great Mall in Milpitas for providing gift baskets and Marti's framed photographs from her wildlife collection. And thank you to everyone who made a donation that evening in lieu of paying for the dinner. This was Charles' suggestion and gift to our chapter.

Along with an overview of all the great things our chapter has done in the last year, board elections were held. The Publicity Chair position is still open — *THIS COULD BE YOU!* — if you enjoy marketing and have knowledge of or an interest in learning about how groups promote themselves in the 21st century.

Howard joined the board last March, and since Fall has been running our meetings using a very efficient model.

Harsha has been taking the minutes at our meetings for the last several months, and Kitty volunteered at the annual meeting to become part of the board.

Pete reported that the PFLAG Speakers Bureau presented 41 panels to 1253 people. Recent training sessions have been very successful.

Thanks also go to Bob, Janet, Pete and the team of readers for taking over our scholarship program. To date, about \$7500 has been raised for the Scholarship Fund. The Board voted to fund a fifth scholarship to a student already in college, from the Hispanic community at Outlet. The scholarship awards will be presented at the San Jose May support meeting.



Welcoming Our Trans Family and Friends

Welcoming Our Trans Family and Friends is a new PFLAG publication designed to better support the parents, families and friends of trans people. It includes insights from parents of trans children, viewpoints of professional experts on gender issues, and information on terminology. It includes a terrific list of resources and unique advice on how to embrace our trans family and friends by helping them feel more comfortable as they strive to live openly, honestly and authentically. Access the pdf at: <https://community.pflag.org/Document.Doc?id=199>

Also watch *Transgender Basics*, an educational film defining gender and transgender concepts, and targeting service providers and others working with the LGBT community. Access the video at: <http://www.gaycenter.org/community/multimedia/transgenderbasics>



New Advocacy Emails

Watch for new advocacy emails from **Deborah, our Advocacy Chair**. Deborah is bringing to our board great new ideas for promoting advocacy! Be looking for her emails and check out the advocacy page on our web site:

<http://www.pflagsanjose.org/advocacy.php>



Significant Spike in New PFLAG Chapters

PFLAG National has reported at least 75 new inquiries — a significant spike in requests to start new chapters since Election Day 2008, following the passage of anti-equality ballot initiatives in California (Proposition 8), Arkansas, Florida and Connecticut. Other influences were the premieres of the films *Milk* and *Prayers for Bobby*, the true story of Mary Griffith, a PFLAG mother's journey from rejecting her gay son to becoming an advocate for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

"If there is a silver lining to the setback that our families experienced on Election Day, it is that our allies in communities across the country have started to mobilize at the local level and work for change," said Jody M. Huckaby, PFLAG's executive director. "Change in our culture, our communities and our country begins with local PFLAG chapters, and our national office is making sure that everyone who wants to bring PFLAG to their community has the resources and support to do so."

PFLAG has received inquiries about starting new chapters in Mississippi, Alabama, Ohio, Florida, Utah, Texas, Indiana, Idaho, Tennessee, Missouri, South Dakota, New York and New Jersey, among others. At least four inquiries have come from California.



Legislation to Watch

Several pieces of important legislation have been proposed that directly impact our families but will face significant obstacles from anti-equality activists in the months ahead. Passing the Uniting American Families Act (UAFA) and repealing the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" ban on lesbian, gay and bisexual service members are two which need our support.

In February, Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Congressman Jerold Nadler (D-NY) re-introduced UAFA, which would up-date U.S. immigration law to treat heterosexual and same-sex families equally.

PFLAG is also working to push for an end to "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." This remains the only law in our country which mandates firing someone simply because of their sexual orientation.

Call your Members of Congress and urge them to support our positions on these critically important bills.



The PFLAG NEWSLETTER

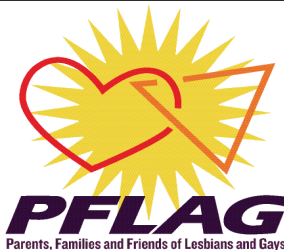
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Peninsula Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays is a tax- exempt, volunteer, community based nonprofit organization.

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 ♥ 2009



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

Redwood City & San Jose:
Eileen Ross, Director of Outlet, the Peninsula and South Bay's only organization for LGBTQQ youth



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:

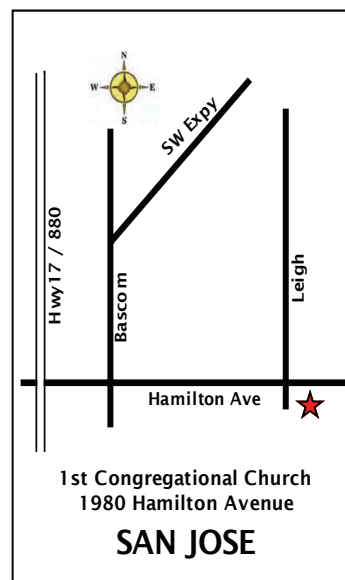
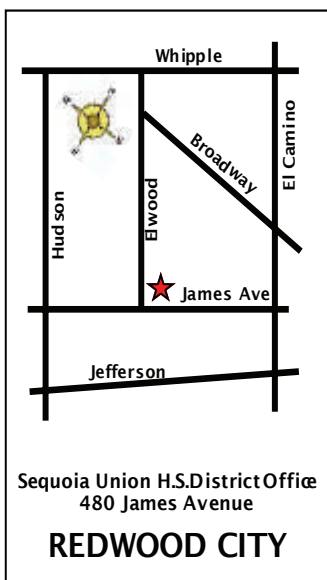
SUPPORT • EDUCATION • ADVOCACY



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!



MEMBERSHIP IN SAN JOSE/PENINSULA PFLAG ~ 2009

Send in this coupon to join, renew, or change your address!

- New
- Renew
- Change Address
- Date _____
- Newsletter PDF via email
- I want to volunteer

- Individual Membership \$30
- Household Membership \$40
- Benefactor \$50
- Angel \$100 and up
- Diva \$1,000 and up
- Student or Newsletter Only \$15
- Gift Newsletter Subscription \$8
(for those who are already members to give to others too far away to come to meetings)
- Donation for Scholarships \$ _____
- Endowment Fund \$ _____

Name _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____

E-mail (required for PDF) _____

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