San Jose◇Peninsula Newsletter

March 2009

www.pflagsanjose.org

P.O. Box 2718, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

♥ NEED HELP? ♥ Call the Help/Info Lines: ♥ (408) 270-8182 ♥ Gilroy: (408) 846-9105

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Speaking to People Unlike Ourselves is the title of two workshops presented recently by the Peninsula Marriage Equality Coalition. Katherine Forrest, who presented at the first gathering, talked about the stages of change, the steps people go through when changing habits or political beliefs. What this said to me, in terms of speaking to people with differing views, is that we need to pay attention to where the other person is when choosing what to say. Katherine also stressed that arguing, unlike conversation, is never helpful.

- The first stage is one of unreadiness to hear anything different from firmly held beliefs. Questioning, listening, showing respect and planting seeds with a bit of your story are the best approach at this stage.
- From there, people experience a time of cognitive dissonance where they start to see that parts of reality don't match what they believe to be true. This is a good time to get them talking and they may be more receptive to hearing your stories.
- As people change and start to experiment with expressing new ideas and beliefs, it's a good time to offer encouragement and help with trying out the new ideas.
- In the next stage, people begin to take positive action on the issues.
- Finally, they are changed for good, and wouldn't consider going back to old behavior or beliefs.

A couple of weeks ago *Prayers for Bobby* was shown on TV. The changes that Bobby's mother Mary went through illustrated these stages perfectly. Shortly after she discovered Bobby was gay she said, "In order for all of us to be together in the kingdom of heaven, we cannot stray, we can't sin like that. I will not risk my family not being together in the next life." She was totally not ready to hear anything beyond the possibility of curing him through prayer.

Then, after Bobby killed himself, cracks appeared in her defenses. She read Bobby's diary and went to talk to the pastor of the MCC Church who showed her different Bible quotes from the ones she had been focusing on. Contacting a PFLAG mother and attending a meeting opened Mary's eyes further. And finally she took action and spoke out at a televised City Council meeting.

People can and do change. We all have stories that prove this. Sometimes we get frustrated by slowness or by a loved one who just won't move at all. I hope we can find the patience to meet people where they are, try to understand them through really listening, and then use our power to keep nudging them along, trying to keep in mind that arguments and lectures don't change minds.

We will be showing portions of *Prayers for Bobby* at both our March monthly meetings. Join us for some good discussion.

Laurie

MEETING CALENDAR
~ MARCH ~

Mar. 7 Annual Dinner & Meeting - 6 PM
Belmont Congregational Church
751 Alameda de las Pulgas

Mar. 9 Redwood City Meeting - 7:30 PM
Sequoia Union H.S. District Offices
480 James Ave., Redwood City
(2nd Monday of the month)

Mar. 11 San Jose Meeting - 7:30 PM
First Congregational Church
1980 Hamilton Ave. (at Leigh
(2nd Wednesday of the month)

NO BOARD MEETING THIS MONTH!

Mar. 19 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

Mar. 26 — Newsletter Stuffing
Call the helpline for the location

2009 Schedule
Last Thursday of Apr, May, July, Oct.
1st Thursday of Apr, Sept, Oct.
Last week of Dec.

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→ **April Newsletter Deadline:**
Thursday, March 26

SAN JOSE/PENINSULA PFLAG ANNUAL DINNER MEETING & Board Elections

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Saturday, March 7 ◇ 6 PM

Fabulous Fun, Food & Friends!

PFLAG Support Meetings

Redwood City — March 9
San Jose — March 11

Prayers For Bobby: We will show excerpts from this excellent film at both support meetings.

Academy Award nominee and Golden Globe winner Sigourney Weaver stars in this emotional true story about Mary Griffith, a devoutly religious mother who struggles to accept her son, Bobby, when he comes out as a young gay man. What happens to Bobby is tragic and causes Mary to question her faith. Ultimately this mom changes her views in ways that she never could have imagined. Mary begins an incredible journey toward embracing the gay community . . . with a little help from PFLAG along the way.

Laurie will lead our discussion after we watch scenes from about half of the movie. For those of you who missed it on television and would like to see the entire 1 1/2 hour movie, the DVD will be made available to loan after it has been shown at both sites.

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Redwood City 4th of July Parade

The theme chosen this year by the Redwood City Parade Committee is ***All Things Musical***. Do you want to march in the parade with the PFLAG contingent? Do you have ideas for making our contingent stand out and be noticed?

One suggestion that already has a running start and is a natural for our community is "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." The PFLAG contingent will need all of the pizazz we can give it, so let's hear your ideas!

To get involved in this exciting project, or for more information, contact Laurie.

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QPLAY - San Mateo County
Queer Parents for the Love and Advocacy for our Youth
March 22

QPLAY is:

- A social and support group for LGBTQ within the San Mateo County area,
- An opportunity for children to meet other children growing up with LGBTQ families,
- A chance for parents to share concerns, offer and receive support, and exchange parenting tips —
- And most of all, a place to HAVE FUN!

Sunday, March 22 — 12 noon: Potluck, games and fun!
Washington Park, 850 Burlingame Ave. in Burlingame.
Meet at the playground.

To RSVP or for the alternative location if it rains, contact:
Joy at (408) 391-6576, *jtcaneda@yahoo.com* — or:
Stacey at (650) 255-4068, *stacey1974@aol.com* — or:
Virni at (650) 438-4283, *virnawsantos@gmail.com*

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March Forth on March Fourth
Eve of Justice Statewide Candlelight Vigils

Wednesday, March 4 is the day before the California Supreme Court hears oral arguments on the validity of Proposition 8. That evening, we'll stand together and send a unified message to our fellow Californians, including the Supreme Court Justices, that individual liberties like the right to marry are guaranteed by the Constitution to everyone and cannot be stripped away at the ballot box by a bare majority. Just as important, we will give our love and support to all the families headed by same-sex couples who are threatened by the recent electoral outcome, as well as to those couples whose hopes and dreams of marriage and family have been frustrated by enactment of Proposition 8.

Bring your friends and some candles to participate in a silent vigil. There will be no speeches, no anger, no rallying cries — just a whole lot of people illuminated by candlelight, letting everyone know that we are still waiting for equal treatment under the law. Signs are welcome, especially those reinforcing positive messages of love and of our families.

San Francisco — Gather at Market and Castro from 5-6pm for pre-march rally, step off at 6pm, arrive at CA Supreme Court (Civic Center) at 6:30pm for short program.

San Mateo — Corner of Hillsdale Blvd & El Camino Real – 6-7:30 pm – Join Alan Canas, *(alan@pmec.info)* Sponsored by Peninsula Equality Network & Peninsula Marriage Equality Coalition.

Palo Alto — Corner of Embarcadero & El Camino Real – 6-7:30pm – Join Larry Lanoue, *(larry@pmec.info)* Peninsula Marriage Equality Coalition.

San Jose — Gather at the intersection of Winchester and Stevens Creek Boulevards, at Santana Row and Valley Fair shopping centers from 6:30 - 8:30 pm for a short program.

For more information and additional vigil locations go to ***www.eveofjustice.com*** or ***www.marriageequality.org*** ▼

* Mark your Calendars *

Mar. 4 – Candlelight March for Justice

Mar. 5 – Supreme Court Oral Argument Hearing; SJ-SF Freedom Train

Mar. 6 & 8 – Ready? OK! At Cinequest

Mar. 7 – PFLAG Annual Meeting & Dinner

Mar. 7,8 – Pam Walton film at Cinequest

Mar. 22 – QPLAY San Mateo County

SAN JOSE/PENINSULA PFLAG ANNUAL DINNER & MEETING

Saturday, March 7
6:00 PM

Congregational Church,
751 Alameda de las Pulgas, Belmont 94002

PFLAG Chapter Annual Dinner

The PFLAG Annual Dinner will include delicious food, a fabulous Silent Auction, and fun entertainment! Charles Evans, new PFLAG member and Dinner Organizer Extraordinaire, has put a lot of effort into making this a memorable evening. Proceeds from the Silent Auction will benefit our Scholarship Fund.

Our wonderful dinner is donated by the Evans family, hoping that in lieu of an admission charge, attendees will make a donation to the PFLAG scholarship fund. Bring your favorite topping to share for the "do it yourself" sundae dessert.

Don't miss out! Bring a friend — member or not!

PFLAG Board Election

It's that time of year again! As a 501c3 organization, our PFLAG chapter is required to elect officers and hold an annual chapter-wide meeting and election. This election will take place at our Annual Meeting on March 7th.

Board Positions to be filled:

- Vice President
- Secretary
- Advocacy Chair
- Finance Chair
- Membership Chair
- Publicity Chair
- Member at Large (2)

Board meetings take place about 9 times a year. We are looking for people who are enthusiastic about PFLAG and want to see our chapter accomplish its mission of Education, Support and Advocacy. Please let Laurie know if you think you'd like to be part of this group, and together we'll see that you fit into areas where your interests lie.

SAN JOSE PENINSULA PFLAG SCHOLARSHIP INSTRUCTIONS AND APPLICATION FORMS ARE NOW AVAILABLE ON OUR WEB SITE!
www.pflagsanjose.org

PFLAG Scholarships are Available

Support the students in your community — encourage them to apply for the PFLAG Scholarship Program.

San Jose/Peninsula PFLAG scholarships provide financial support for high school seniors who will be attending an accredited two- or four-year college, university, or business/ technical school in Fall 2009. These scholarships will be given to individuals whose educational history, personal plans and activities demonstrate support for justice and equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons. The funds are specifically to offset the costs of tuition, books, or required fees. **Applications must be postmarked by Saturday, March 28, 2009!**

Read all about the PFLAG National Scholarship Program including eligibility requirements and examples of past winners: ***https://community.pflag.orgPage.aspx?pid=375***. Students are eligible to receive scholarships from both their local chapter and from the national office, so encourage students you know to apply for both.

California Supreme Court Oral Argument Hearing & Freedom Train

March 5th • 9 am to noon

On March 5th, the California Supreme Court will hear oral arguments for and against the repeal of Proposition 8. Arguments will begin at the Supreme Court building at 350 McAllister Street at 9:00 am, and will go to 12:00 noon. Within 90 days thereafter, they will proclaim their decision — under the watchful eyes of the entire world.

Freedom Train

CalTrain's Baby Bullet train #319, will depart downtown San Jose at 7:03 am, making stops in Sunnyvale, Palo Alto, Redwood City, San Mateo and Millbrae, where we hope to pick up more supporters from the Peninsula and build momentum as the train pulls into San Francisco. We will proceed via MUNI to the courthouse. Bring your signs with positive messages and personal stories.

For more information about this event, please go to: ***www.marriageequalitysiliconvalley.org/equality_train.html***

Legal briefs: To read the parties' filings and the dozens of amicus 'friend of the court' briefs filed on behalf of civil rights organizations, bar associations, academics, women's groups, faith and religious groups, and many others go to: ***hwww.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/supreme/highprofile/prop8.htm***

Online viewing: ***www.courtinfo.ca.gov/courts/supreme/highprofile/prop8viewing.htm***

Local Public viewings: a list of cable channels that will carry the California Supreme Court hearing on Prop 8 can be found at ***www.calchannel.com/channel/schedule***

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!

PFLAG
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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:
***Prayers for Bobby** (excerpt)*

Please bring a food donation for AIDS services providers.

PFLAG'S MISSION

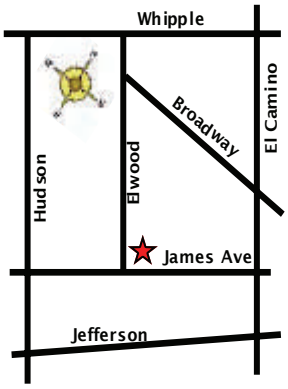
We provide love and support for all family members and friends. We work to create an environment of understanding so that our gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender loved ones can live with dignity and respect. These are our goals:

SUPPORT · EDUCATION · ADVOCACY

WHAT IS PFLAG?

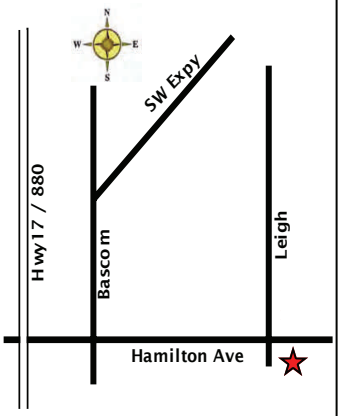
"PFLAG" is Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays. We are a national support, education and advocacy organization for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people, their families, friends and allies. With 200,000 members and supporters, and local affiliates in more than 500 communities 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

PFLAG
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

MEMBERSHIP IN SAN JOSE/PENINSULA PFLAG ~ 2009

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- ◯ 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 $ _____

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