



San Jose ♦ Peninsula Newsletter

March 2010

www.pflagsanjose.org

P.O. Box 2718, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This is the month when we anxiously await the outcome of the recent San Francisco trial on the constitutionality of Prop 8. Friday, February 12th, Freedom to Marry Day, was celebrated throughout the country, with local rallies in Redwood City and San Jose. I was happy to be one of the speakers in Redwood City. Here is the transcript of my speech:

I'm representing PFLAG: parents, families, and friends of lesbians and gays — also bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and questioning persons.

For those of us who have been involved in Prop. 8 since years before it had that label, it's hard to know where to begin a 3-5 minute talk. So I'll just do what PFLAG parents do best and tell our PFLAG story.

In 1991, I was on the committee working to help our congregation at the Congregational Church of Belmont go through the process of becoming an open and affirming church. I was just finding out what it meant to be gay. That spring, our daughter came home from her freshman year at UC Santa Cruz with some "good news" for us: she was an out lesbian. Suddenly I was not only promoting a cause I felt was just, I was protecting my child.

PFLAG's story started over 35 years ago when a mother wanted to protect and support her gay child and to help other parents do the same.

When I spoke here 4 or 5 years ago my story was about a daughter living in England because she and her British partner could not have the sanctioned marriage which would have allowed her immigration rights.

Our story has grown to encompass so much more over the last few years. Our family and PFLAG, and I'm sure all of you, are no longer just fighting for a list of rights. The time has come when our children — indeed all persons regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity — must be included and welcomed into the full life of our communities. Allowing equal employment and housing rights, creating anti-bullying laws and hate crimes legislation — all of this is vitally important. But real inclusion will only happen when all committed relationships are recognized equally by the state, and honored with the same respect. Only when all our families are treated equally in every way will the walls that divide us be broken down.

The time has come for everyone in our nation to have the freedom to marry the person of their choice. It's time to live up to our pledge of liberty and justice for all.

Amen.

Laurie Carter

MEETING CALENDAR

- MARCH -

- Mar. 8 Redwood City Meeting - 7:30 PM
Sequoia Union H.S. District Offices
480 James Ave., Redwood City
(2nd Monday of the month)
- Mar. 10 San Jose Meeting - 7:30 PM
First Congregational Church
1980 Hamilton Ave. (at Leigh)
(2nd Wednesday of the month)
- Mar. 18 Straight Spouse Support - 7:30 PM
Call San Jose Helpline for info.
(3rd Thursday of the month)
- Mar. 20 ANNUAL DINNER and ELECTION
6-9 PM
Belmont Congregational Church
Gilroy — Call the Helpline for support and information: (408) 270-8182



*Newsletter Stuffing in San Mateo
Contact the editor for more info*

→ April Newsletter Deadline:
Friday, Mar. 26



Save the Date! All are Invited!

**Saturday, March 20
6:00 - 9:00 PM**

PFLAG Chapter Annual Dinner

Congregational Church of Belmont
751 Alameda, Belmont 94002

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence

Catered Dinner

FREE Admission

*An optional donation to our Scholarship Fund will
be deeply appreciated*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PFLAG Support Meetings

Redwood City – March 8

Daniel Yost will speak on marriage equality, being openly gay at work and in his community, and on being a gay parent of two young kids.

He and his husband Paul tried to marry each other three times. Two were domestic partnership registrations (the extra one because the first certificate arrived with a typo, proudly proclaiming that Paul had partnered with someone else!) and finally in September, 2008 — after the State Supreme Court decision recognizing the right of gays and lesbians to marry in California — a legal marriage.

Daniel grew up partly on the San Francisco Peninsula and partly in Washington DC. He graduated from UC Santa Cruz, was a Fulbright Scholar at Oxford, England, and received his law degree from UC Berkeley. Daniel is an attorney at Orrick's Silicon Valley office. He has been very active in the community, and serves as Congresswoman Anna Eshoo's representative to the San Mateo County Democratic Party. Daniel and Paul live in Woodside with their two children.

San Jose – March 10

Dr. Jerome Goldstein will discuss "The Neurobiology of Sexual Orientation." Since homosexuality was removed from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders as a disease category in 1973, it has been mentioned as an illness only in the context of worsening anxiety states. The much debated issue is whether homosexuality is a choice, or whether it is a neurobiologic entity significantly determined prior to birth and modified minimally after birth. Recent imaging, and genetic and endocrinologic studies verify the latter.

The neurobiology of sexual orientation and the gay brain has far-reaching consequences beyond sexual orientation. Dr. Goldstein, a gay man, is a board certified neurologist and fellow in the American Academy of Neurology. He is the director of the San Francisco Clinical Research Center, the San Francisco Headache Clinic, and the San Francisco Alzheimer's and Dementia Clinic. With the recognition that headache and Alzheimer's Disease have neurobiological bases, he expanded his interest in neurobiology to research sexual orientation.

Racism and Homophobia Workshop

March 14

UU Fellowship of Redwood City, 2124 Brewster Avenue
7-9 pm

We'll look at the common roots of these two forms of oppression, and the similarities and differences in how they are expressed and experienced today. We'll also consider the special difficulties faced by people of color who are bisexual, gay, lesbian, or transgendered.

Sponsored by the Unitarian Universalists of Palo Alto, Redwood City and San Mateo.

Register by email to: eventsignup@uucpa.org

PFLAG National Scholarships

Deadline: March 12

PFLAG National awards thousands of dollars in scholarships each year to lesbian, gay, bi and transgender students and allies. Access the 2010 scholarship program and application at: www.pflag.org/scholarships

New Address for PFLAG National

As of February 22, PFLAG's new address is:

1828 L Street, NW, Suite 660

Washington, DC 20036

All phone numbers and e-mail addresses will remain the same.



GAYLA/QYAD

April 23-26

The GSA Advocacy & Youth Leadership Academy (GAYLA) is a weekend of intensive training on the legislative process, policy and administrative advocacy, media activism and other important skills that culminates with Queer Youth Advocacy Day (QYAD) in Sacramento. Students will have an opportunity to talk directly to their legislators about being LGBT and other issues impacting LGBT youth at Queer Youth Advocacy Day on Monday, April 26.

People of color, low-income folks, and transgender and gender non-conforming individuals are strongly encouraged to apply.

Adult allies are needed to sponsor a youth:

<https://gsanetwork.org/civCRM/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=1>

For more info, visit: www.gsanetwork.org/gayla or contact: Alexander Tran, Advocacy Program Associate at (415) 552-4229 or alex@gsanetwork.org.

All on Board!



Our Chapter PFLAG Board is always looking for new, creative ideas for helping families, getting our word out, raising money for scholarships, and just having fun together. We'd love to have you become part of the Board, or just attend a meeting, or send us ideas. Contact Laurie.

Mark your Calendar

Mar. 14 – Racism & Homophobia class

Mar. 20 – PFLAG Annual Dinner

Mar. 27 – Scholarship Application Deadline

Apr. 23-26 – GAYLA/QYAD
in Sacramento

May 10 – PFLAG Scholarship Award
Ceremony — Redwood City



PFLAG Annual Scholarship Awards

Our annual PFLAG Scholarship Awards Night will be held at the Redwood City support meeting on Monday, May 10 - mark your calendars now!

This year four \$2000 San Jose/Peninsula PFLAG Scholarships and one \$2000 scholarship in honor of Joyce Palmer Fulton will 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 2010. Awardees will be individuals whose educational history, personal plans, and activities demonstrate support for justice and equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons. The awards are provided with understanding that the funds will be used to offset the costs of tuition, books, or required fees.

Scholarship Application Deadline: March 27

If you know any high school seniors who might qualify for our scholarships, please let them know!

Applications for the 2010 scholarships must be post-marked by March 27th. Go to the San Jose/Peninsula PFLAG website for the complete criteria and to download an application: www.pflagsanjose.org



Freedom to Marry Day – Letter to the Editor

Some of our PFLAG members wrote letters to the editor in support of marriage equality for same-gender couples. The letter below appeared in the San Jose Mercury News on February 10.

August 30, 2008 was the day when my son and his partner Ray were legally married after twenty-three years together. We had considered Ray part of our family. But tears of joy sprang up when Ray turned to me and called me "Mom." I hadn't realized how I had missed it. He finally saw himself as a full member of our family. While the debate about Proposition 8 continues in the courts, I am grateful for the few months when this wedding was possible, and we could celebrate with 85 of our family and friends this joyful event. National Freedom to Marry Day is February 12, and Valentines Day is February 14. Let us stop legislating love and celebrate it instead.



Hot Links

A great idea for local papers! Couple announces plans to marry as soon as it's legal following 23-year engagement. www.advocate.com/News/Daily_News/2010/02/24/Gay_Couple_Engagement_Initiative_Launched/

Opening hearts and minds: SF Gay Men's Chorus Freedom Tour into the heart of Proposition 8 territory. www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2010/01/31/MND31BQG14.DTL&type=gaylesbian#ixzz0eR2tOxz5

Transgender kids with amazing parents on the Dr. Oz show — two great video clips. www.queerty.com/dr-oz-introduces-daytime-audiences-to-blossoming-confident-transgender-kids-20100222/



PFLAG Speakers Bureau Proves that Education is the Best Rx for Ignorance

Along with the monthly meetings, support line and various outreach programs, the PFLAG Speakers Bureau (PSB) is one of the most important outreach services offered by PFLAG. It is often one of the largest single groups of volunteers within a chapter and, with sometimes several panels per week during the school semester, it is a very busy group of folks. Despite this, some folks have never sat on a panel. So what's it all about?

The PSB was founded on the principle that only education can overcome the prejudice and bigotry that is born of ignorance. Schools provide us with an opportunity to educate students about the nature of sexual orientation and provide an antidote to the stereotypes, misinformation and negative attitudes so prevalent in our society. While helpline and chapter meetings help people who have difficulty dealing with LGBT issues, the PSB looks to "get ahead of the game" and help prevent the formation of negative attitudes towards LGBT people and their families in the first place.

Many people may think "I don't know any gay people," but we know this is rarely the case: they've often met many LGBT people and simply don't realize it. In the absence of personal experience, many people fall back on tired and false stereotypes, what they hear in the playground, or see in the media. The PSB addresses this lack of knowledge by presenting students and adults with men and women who are open, honest, and willing to talk about their lives. This puts a face on the issue and presents it in real, human terms.

Panels begin with someone introducing PFLAG, its history and local chapters. Then each panelist tells his/her own story for a few minutes each. The remainder of the time is devoted to answering questions from the audience. Questions can range from the political and religious to the intensely personal, and panelists don't need to answer if they're uncomfortable. Most questions though are thoughtful, with the answers usually spawning more questions, often leaving people wondering where the time went when the session ends. Audience reactions vary: some challenge the panelists on religious grounds; some seek advice on how to deal with friends they think might be gay; some want to know if parents feel guilty when they learn they have a LGBT child; some want to know what they should do if their children grow up to be LGBT.

There is nothing more powerful than personal experience. No one who sees a PSB panel can ever say they've never met a LGBT person. Every time they see an anti-gay news report or TV show, they'll be reminded of the day when they met openly LGBT people and their family members who told them about our lives. They'll have to think about that negative remark or program in the light of what they've seen and heard with their own eyes and ears. Perhaps the day when there'll be no need for PFLAG, the day when people won't have to experience pain or isolation when discovering they're gay or their child is gay, needn't be so far away.

For more information about our San Jose/Peninsula PFLAG Speakers Bureau, please visit: www.pflagsanjose.org/psb/



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 ♥ 2010



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

Redwood City: Daniel Yost, speaker
San Jose: Dr. Jerome Goldstein speaks on
The Neurobiology of Sexual Orientation



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:

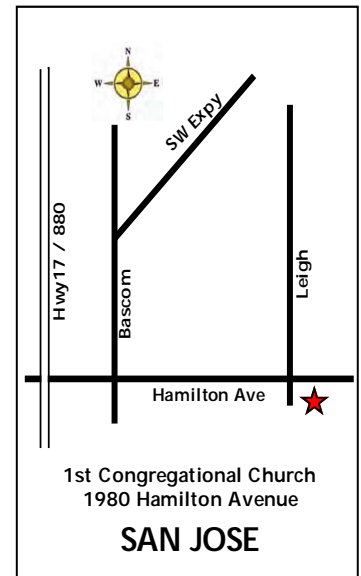
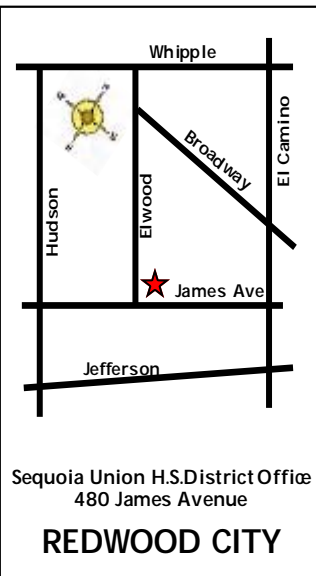
SUPPORT • EDUCATION • ADVOCACY



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 ~ 2010

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