



San Jose ♦ Peninsula Newsletter

January/February 2011

www.pflagsanjose.org

P.O. Box 2718, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

♥ NEED HELP? ♥ Call the Help/Info Line: (408) 270-8182 ♥

President's Message

I believe I now know how we would have felt had we won the Prop 8 struggle. I think I felt that way the day the Senate voted 65-31 to repeal not only the 17 year DADT, but over half a century of discrimination in our armed forces. This discrimination against GLBT persons spread through all areas of our society both legally and in practice. I kept pinching myself the day of that passage — finding it hard to believe that the Senate had actually voted so overwhelmingly positively. And the signing ceremony, moved to a larger location so a bigger crowd could attend, celebrated the repeal in style. Wow! Hooray! Halleluiah! I was euphoric! Just as banning gays from the military helped to create a nation where gays are discriminated against in most aspects of American life, I am confident that allowing full membership in this highly regarded club will lead eventually to all GLBT people being granted first class citizenship. We may live to see the day!

PFLAG played an important part in this, from our work with education and family support — changing hearts and minds — to the advocacy work of our national group in Washington and PFLAGer's all over the country pushing their congress members and Senators. We can be proud of the difference we continue to make in the world. We are living the change.

I am confident that 2011 will be a banner year for all of PFLAG, our chapter, and the LGBT movement. I know the great leadership and active membership will keep our group going strong — helping new families with your support, educating through the Speakers' Bureau and individual conversations, and advocating for full marriage rights and inclusion in all aspects of society.

Bob and I have been very moved by the outpouring of love we have felt from our PFLAG friends. Our Holiday potluck/gift exchange was jovial as usual and both the December support meetings/parties were very festive with celebrations of our years with you. Frances and John Morse wrote a wonderful song, we had delicious cakes and awards at both meetings, and we have already started to cash in our Home Depot certificates, provided through your generosity. We continue to receive very thoughtful notes and emails, and for all of this, we say thank you.

Thanks for all you do for PFLAG! Keep it up!

Laurie

Editor's note: Many thanks to Laurie for writing one final President's Message — we will miss her wonderful columns!

Meeting Calendar

~ JANUARY/FEBRUARY ~

Jan.10 **Redwood City** Support - 7:30 PM
Feb.14 Sequoia Union H.S. District Offices
480 James Ave., Redwood City
(2nd Monday of the month)

Jan.12 **San Jose** Support - 7:30 PM
Feb.9 First Congregational Church
1980 Hamilton Ave. (at Leigh)
(2nd Wednesday of the month)

Jan.18 **Board Meeting**
Feb.15 UU Church of Palo Alto
505 E. Charleston Rd., Palo Alto
(3rd Tuesday of the month)
ALL ARE WELCOME!

Jan.20 **Straight Spouse** Support - 7:30 PM
Feb.17 Call San Jose Helpline for info.
(3rd Thursday of the month)



GILROY and other locations:
Call the Helpline
for support and information:
(408) 270-8182



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

**March Newsletter Deadline:
Friday, February 18**

Beginner's mind is the open mind, the attitude that includes both doubt and possibility, the ability to see things always as fresh and new.

Shunryu Suzuki

**Best Wishes in the Season of
New Beginnings!**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PFLAG Support Meetings

Redwood City —
January 10 and February 14
(Second Monday of each month)

San Jose —
January 12 and February 9
(Second Wednesday of each month)



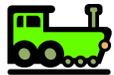
Small group support will be offered at each meeting.
Programs to be announced on the PFLAG website:
www.pflagsanjose.org

Newsletter Changes

We are trying out a new schedule for the newsletter, beginning with this January/February issue. Below are the proposed issues for the rest of this year:

March	August
April/May	September/October
June/July	November/December

This schedule will save us significant postage costs (we still mail nearly 80 newsletters) — and will reduce wear and tear on your faithful (since 1998) newsletter editor. Note: Adjustments may happen!



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, just attend a meeting, or send us your ideas. The next two Board meetings will be held on Tuesday, January 18, and Tuesday, February 15, at the Palo Alto UU Church on Charleston Avenue, just off 101. Take the San Antonio Road exit, then turn right on Charleston.

Creating Change February 2–6, 2011

Friends and neighbors, change agents and organizers—register now for the 2011 Creating Change Conference which takes place in Minneapolis, February 2–6, 2011.

Creating Change dishes up a full menu of trainings, workshops, strategic discussions, and community building. You'll learn how to:

- collaborate with pro-LGBT faith leaders;
- develop your capacity to reach non-LGBT allies;
- build your communications skills;
- hone your ability to craft messages about LGBT equality

And make new friends from around the country who share your passion for social change! Register today at www.CreatingChange.org

Dues are Due!

Each year we all have the privilege of showing our support for PFLAG by financially participating in furthering the important work done by our organization. It is that time of year again, and we want you to know how much we appreciate your help in assisting PFLAG in our mission of support, education and advocacy for transgendered, bisexual, lesbian and gay people, their families and friends.

Renew your membership today! Write your check or donate online at: www.pflagsanjose.org. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Your Finance Committee

San Jose/Peninsula PFLAG Annual Meeting — March 9 Save the date!

Our Annual Meeting will be held during the San Jose support meeting, 7:30 PM, First Congregational Church, 1980 Hamilton Avenue, San Jose. We will vote on new officers, amendments to the bylaws, and present our Annual Report. Don't miss it!

Straight for Equality Gala March 14

Please join us on March 14 as we honor a new set of powerful allies in New York City at the Third Annual Straight for Equality Awards Gala at the Marriott Marquis Times Square. Save the date!
Check <http://community.pflag.org/2011gala> to find out who the 2011 honorees will be!

Making Sense of Federal Income Tax: Changes for Same-Sex Couples January 12

When: Wednesday, January 12, 6:30-8pm
Where: SF LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market St.

In May 2010, the IRS announced major changes to tax returns of same-sex couples, including changes to the rules regarding community property. A panel of experts from The National Center for Lesbian Rights and Our Family Coalition will explain the changes and how they can benefit you — including retroactively, in some cases — and will answer your questions, too. This event is free and open to the public.

RSVP by January 12th to Kris Hermanns at khermanns@nclrights.org (with "Tax Workshop" in the subject line) or phone (415) 365-1302.

Farewell Laurie and Bob



In December our Redwood City and San Jose holiday parties were a wonderful opportunity to renew old friendships, meet newcomers dealing with their newly out family members and friends, and to celebrate the accomplishments of our departing chapter president Laurie and her husband Bob. Laurie and Bob have given so much to PFLAG over the years — although it's sad to say farewell, it was fun to give them a little something in return. Home Depot gift certificates will insure a smooth transition from San Carlos to Ashland, and a pair of rainbow slippers will speed their journey! ▼



DADT Falls at Long Last!

To limit the story of this repeal to the history of DADT is to miss the real significance of this win. DADT was preceded by a policy that said being gay was “incompatible with military service,” a more straightforward ban. That ban, in one form or another, dates from the Second World War. The policy wasn't challenged in any sense until the late 1960s. So this wasn't a 17-year fight; the ban is over 60 years old, and the fight to bring it down has been going on for over 40 years.

We believe of course that the federal courts should have had the courage and foresight to take this ban down the first time it was challenged. But there could be nothing quite as sweet — or politically more powerful — than having the military call for the repeal and having Congress in effect admit its mistake.

If we can accomplish this, then getting rid of DOMA, and getting marriage and nondiscrimination laws nationwide, is just a matter of time and effort.

Matt Coles, ACLU

DADT: Watch History Unfold

Obama's Speech and Signing:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=cS26CciE0VO&feature=player_embedded

Keeping the Promise: In July 2010, Senator Harry Reid promised Lt. Dan Choi that he would lead the Senate to repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Lt. Choi gave Senator Reid his West Point ring with the agreement that it would be returned after Don't Ask, Don't Tell was repealed. Here Senator Harry Reid meets with Lt. Dan Choi in his office to return the ring:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGxhphlJN-I&feature=player_embedded

Prop 8 Trial Update

- Which is more terrible: losing a right or never having it?
- Who has the right to defend a statute when the official defendants don't?
- How could procreation be a justification for Prop 8 when California law gives same-sex couples exactly the same parentage rights as heterosexual couples?

These are among the questions debated in the 9th circuit hearing on December 6th, 2010. This summary was offered by NCLR's Shannon Minter:

Ted Olson was particularly eloquent and urged the Court to reach the broad question of whether same-sex couples have a fundamental right to marry.

Therese Stewart, arguing for the City of San Francisco, did a brilliant job of laying out why Prop 8 is uniquely irrational given that it took away an existing right, that California continues to give same-sex couples all of the substantive rights and benefits of marriage, and that the stated purpose of Prop 8 in the ballot materials was to counter the idea that being gay is “okay.”

Together, Ted Olson and Terry Stewart did a great job of presenting the most powerful arguments for upholding Judge Walker's decision. Olson laid out the big picture and urged the court to issue a far-reaching holding that would apply to all fifty states. Stewart gave them the option of striking down Prop 8 on narrower grounds, based on the unprecedented circumstances of its passage and of California law.

The 9th Circuit continues to debate the issues. There is no telling when their decision may be reached, but it is not expected before spring 2011.

Videos of both sessions are available on AFER's website: www.fer.org/news/9th-circuit-oral-arguments/



