The Life and Death of Fred Phelps

Fred Phelps died on March 19 at age 84. He was relatively unknown until the brutal death of Matthew Shepherd when he and his Westboro Church picketed Matthew’s funeral and proclaimed that the young victim would burn in hell. From then on, he used funerals of LGBTs and fallen service people, Gay Pride events, plays depicting the Matthew Shepherd tragedy and other GLBT themes — and every other possible opportunity, no matter how tenuous the connection — to promote his message of hate and eternal damnation.

Since his death there have been many articles in print and online media telling us why we should not celebrate this man’s death, or return the malice he spread in the world. Many of them reflect the sentiments of this post at Salon: “He made homophobic bigotry all too vividly real. Phelps was a monster the rest of the country could unite against. He did more damage to his cause than gay activists ever could.” Read more: www.salon.com/2014/03/21/bye_fred_phelps_thanks_for_everything/

Phelps did indeed bring the ugliness of anti-gay prejudice to the forefront of our American consciousness, and made it easy for millions of people to see how wrong it is. He motivated people who had been sitting on the sidelines to take a stand on the side of love against such hatred.

George Takei posted on Facebook: “I take no solace or joy in this man’s passing. We will not dance upon his grave, nor stand vigil at his funeral holding ‘God Hates Freds’ signs, tempting as it may be. He was a tormented soul, who tormented so many. Hate never wins out in the end. It instead goes always to its lonely, dusty end.”

Dr. Martin Luther King said that only love has the power to overcome hate. Thomas Witt, executive director of Equality Kansas, expressed this so well: “This is our moment as a community to rise above the sorrow, anger, and strife he sowed, and to show the world we are caring and compassionate people who respect the privacy and dignity of all.”

Here are links to more articles:

www.boxturtlebulletin.com/2014/03/21/63419
www.dailykos.com/story/2014/03/20/1286209/-How-I-chose-to-remember-Fred-Phelps?detail=email
www.lgbtnation.com/2014/03/a-requiem-on-the-death-of-fred-phelps/
www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/fred-phelps-preached-hate-but-his-death-is-no-reason-to-celebrate/2014/03/20/0fd06408-b050-11e3-95e8-39be8e9a48b_story.html
www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/21/fred-phelps-westboro-baptist-church-dead-forgive-forget
PFLAG Support Meetings
San Jose, April 9 — 7:30 pm
San Jose, May 14 — 7:30 pm

Programs to be announced—please check our website for updates: www.pflagsanjose.org

Redwood City— NO April Meeting!
The High School District Office where we meet is closed.

Redwood City, May 12 — 7:00 pm
San Jose/Peninsula PFLAG Scholarship Awards

Small group support is offered at all meetings. ▼

PFLAG Board Meetings via Teleconference

Our PFLAG Chapter Board meets monthly via telephone conference call. We welcome new, creative ideas for helping families, getting our message out, raising money for scholarships, and just having fun together. We’d love to have you become part of the Board, attend a tele-meeting, or send us your ideas. For more information, email Ken Klucsor: kenklucsor@yahoo.com ▼

2014 Gender Spectrum Conference
July 26 - 27

Gender Spectrum is excited to announce that the 2014 Gender Spectrum Conference will take place July 26 and 27, at Saint Mary’s College of California in Moraga, CA. The theme for this year’s event is Expanding Understandings of Gender.

The conference will feature a broad array of workshops and supportive spaces for parents; separate programming for teens, tweens, and kids; various community-building opportunities; and numerous resources to help attendees delve into the important subject of gender. We will also have a number of optional activities planned on the evening of July 25 for families and youth arriving early.

Register online at: https://genderspectrum.org/
For more information, Email: info@genderspectrum.org;
Phone: (510) 788-4412. ▼

State Department’s Human Rights Report

On February 27th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued the 38th edition of the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, itemizing by country the state of human rights for 2013. Mandated by Congress to be issued annually, the report historically cited LGBT human rights concerns six times. Read the full report at www.state.gov or at www.humanrights.gov ▼

2014 PFLAG Membership — Time to Renew!

Membership dues are now due! So far we’ve only received just over half of our usual number of renewals by this time of year. Please take a moment now to start or renew your membership for 2014.

If you can, please consider the Benefactor, Angel, or Diva level. Donations to our Scholarship Fund are deeply appreciated. Many employers offer matching programs that could double your contribution. If you ask your employer to make a matching gift, you will need to give them our EIN (Employer ID Number): 7702544991. Other ways to support PFLAG can be found in The Gift of Giving brochure on our website.

Mail your contribution with the form on the last page of this newsletter, or renew online at: www.pflagsanjose.org.

On behalf of our chapter, we thank you for your commitment to the mission of PFLAG and all you do to help us achieve our goals of support, education and advocacy.

Sincerely,
Your Finance Committee ▼

Our Family Coalition Night Out
April 10

On April 10 Our Family Coalition will host its annual Night Out at the elegant InterContinental San Francisco. Night Out brings together approximately 400 attendees, including elected officials, corporate sponsors, community partners and major donors, many of whom are LGBT people with children. The event offers all a fabulous Night Out and an opportunity to celebrate our families. It is a truly an inspirational evening not to be missed, where we reflect on our past successes and prepare for an exciting future. Now in its 6th year, Night Out, has established itself as the only event exclusively supporting LGBT families with children in the Bay Area.

Buy tickets now: www.z2systems.com/np/clients/ourfamily/eventRegistration.jsp?event=16214 ▼

Mark Your Calendar ▼

Apr. 10 — Our Family Coalition Night Out
May 2 — Outlet’s Out to Meet
May 12 — PFLAG Scholarship Awards Night
June 14 — San Mateo County Pride Festival
June 28-29 — SF Pride Festival and Parade
July 4 — Redwood City Parade
July 26-27 — Gender Spectrum Conference
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**PFLAG Scholarship Awards Night**

May 12

Four to five talented student activists from San Mateo and Santa Clara counties will receive scholarship awards and share their stories at our Awards Ceremony on May 12 at 7 PM during the Redwood City meeting. Don’t miss this wonderfully inspiring event! ▼

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**An Unexpected Encounter**

by Sue Null, Rural Western North Carolina PFLAG

I was working as a volunteer at our local soup kitchen when one of the men present looked at my t-shirt which I frequently wear, "gay? fine by me." He remembered that on previous occasions, he had heard me mention that I had a lesbian daughter and gay son.

"Does your gay son ever dress like a woman?" this 60-ish man asked.

"No," I replied. "Most gay men are not interested in that. Those that are may dress up occasionally as drag queens. Then there are also transgender people who feel that their physical body does not match their inner sense of who they are, and they may dress like the opposite sex."

"Oh," he said. "I've always wanted to dress like a woman. Ever since I was five years old, I've wanted to dress in women's clothes. I haven't told anyone except my wife, and she doesn't want to hear about it. I thought maybe I could talk to you. But don't tell anyone I said this." By this time, he sounded choked up, on the edge of tears.

"Of course, you can talk to me. Would you also like to talk to someone who's been in a similar situation as you? There is a transgender woman in the community who would personally understand your feelings very well. She goes to our church and is loved by everyone."

"Your church?" he responded in astonishment. [It's a Unitarian Universalist church]. "Yes, I would like to talk to her."

"I'll give you her phone number."

I telephoned my TG friend and told her that someone might be calling her. Who would have guessed that wearing a gay-supportive t-shirt would have led to this anguished man's coming out to a relative stranger about an aspect of himself that he had been trying to bury for most of his life? I hope he can come to some peace with himself.

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**PFLAG National Straight For Equality Gala**

April 10

PFLAG’s Straight for Equality Gala honors and celebrates our amazing straight allies. At this year’s Gala, PFLAG National will present the Straight for Equality in the Workplace award to Johnson & Johnson; the Straight for Equality in Faith Communities award to Ruth Messinger, President of the American Jewish World Service; and the Straight for Equality in Entertainment Award to actress Ally Sheedy.

The event, to be held in New York City at the Marriott Marquis Hotel, will once again be hosted by comedian/writer/producer Lizz Winstead, co-creator of *The Daily Show* and co-founder of *Air America* radio.

In a year that has seen huge strides forward in equality for LGBT people, these award winners have been at the forefront in their respective areas of expertise. Their selfless support of the LGBT community truly embodies the spirit of Straight for Equality and PFLAG. Our work could not continue without them.


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**IRS Video for Same-Sex Married Couples**

The IRS launched a new video to help same-sex married couples manage their federal tax benefits and obligations following last summer's Supreme Court decision invalidating Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Available in English and Spanish, the videos let same-sex married couples know what is required since SCOTUS ruled that those same-sex couples, legally married in jurisdictions that recognize their marriages, are now treated as married for federal tax purposes. The ruling applies to all federal tax provisions where marriage is a factor, including filing status, claiming personal and dependency exemptions, taking the standard deduction, employee benefits, contributing to an IRA and claiming the earned income tax credit or child tax credit.

To view the videos, click on the preferred link:

English: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1pAihAyKuA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1pAihAyKuA)

Spanish: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzkojkYAveg&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzkojkYAveg&feature=youtu.be) ▼

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**Pride, Parades & Festivals — Save these dates!**

San Mateo County Pride Festival, Central Park — June 14
San Francisco Gay Pride Parade — June 29
Redwood City 4th of July Parade and Picnic
San Jose Pride — TBA

Put these dates on your calendar now — and join us!

We need a coordinator for the July 4th parade — a very easy job! For more information contact Ken Klucsor: kenklucsor@yahoo.com ▼

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**There are risks and costs to action. But they are far less than the long-range risks of comfortable inaction.**

John F. Kennedy
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

Meeting Topics ▼ 2014

San Jose Meetings are from 7:30—9:30 PM
Redwood City Meetings are from 7:00—9:00 PM

Redwood City (May): Scholarship Awards Night
San Jose: TBA

Small group support is offered at all meetings.

Membership in San Jose / Peninsula PFLAG ~ 2014

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

- New
- Renew
- Change Address
- I want to volunteer!

Name
Address
City State Zip
Phone
E-mail*

- 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 $____

*Required for PDF Newsletter. Send PDF? YES NO (circle one)

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

A program of ACS for LGBTQQ youth ages 13-25
Gay Bisexual Lesbian Transgender Queer Questioning

Free, drop-in, confidential groups
Tenemos grupos en español

MOUNTAIN VIEW
590 W. El Camino Real,
Mountain View, CA 94040

Monday Night Group
Youth ages 13-18
Meets every Monday @ 6-8pm

Grown Folks
Youth ages 18-25
Meets: 1st-3rd Tuesday @ 6-8pm

De Ambiente -grupo en español
Youth ages 13-25
Meets: 2nd-4th Friday @ 6-9pm

SAN MATEO
101 South “B” Street
San Mateo, CA 94401

Outlet San Mateo Group
Youth ages 13-18
Meets: 2nd-4th Thursday @ 6:30-8pm

De Ambiente II-grupo en español
Youth ages 13-25
Meets: 2nd-4th Tuesday @ 6:30-9pm

PALO ALTO
1717 Embarcadero Rd, Suite 4000
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Thursday Night Group
Youth ages 13-18
Meets every Thursday @ 6-7:30pm

For more information/para más información
Contact us / Contáctanos
info@projectoutlet.org
650-965-2020 x122
650-424-0852 x 109
www.projectoutlet.org