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Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons, their families, and their friends through SUPPORT to cope with an adverse society

EDUCATION to enlighten an ill-informed public

ADVOCACY to end discrimination and secure equal civil rights.

Oregon Central Coast Chapter

July 2011

Take Action!

To commemorate Banned Books Week during the last week of September, Stephan Przybylowicz, a University of Arizona MA Student and president of the UA Progressive Librarians Guild, is heading up "ReadOUT, ACTout: LGBTQ Childrens Book Theatre!" a theatrical performance based on five commonly challenged children's books that feature alternative families and gender expressions. This production will not only draw attention to Banned Books Week (the last week of September) and the right to read but also serve to educate the University of Arizona campus about LGBTQ issues and help prevent bullying of those who are different.

It's a great idea, one that could also work other places.

OCC PFLAG Website Updates

Recent updates to our extensive website includes all the 2010 and 2011 OCC PFLAG newsletters—now you can find our back issues online at www.occpflag.org. You can also pay your PFLAG dues or make a one time or recurring donation to keep our PFLAG group supplied with handouts, booklets, and other necessities. A gift of only \$5/month means a lot to our little band of hard-working PFLAGers—check this out!

With the state of New York legalizing same-sex marriages, 10 percent of the people in the United States now live in a place that allows loving same-sex couples to marry!

New York State Approves Same-Sex Marriage

County Dems Pass Resolution

June Pride Month 2011 was an amazing time for LGBT supporters in Lincoln County. At its June 22 meeting, The Lincoln County Democratic Central Committee unanimously passed the following resolution:

“Whereas “marriage” is a legal contractual relationship that is recognized by the State of Oregon and

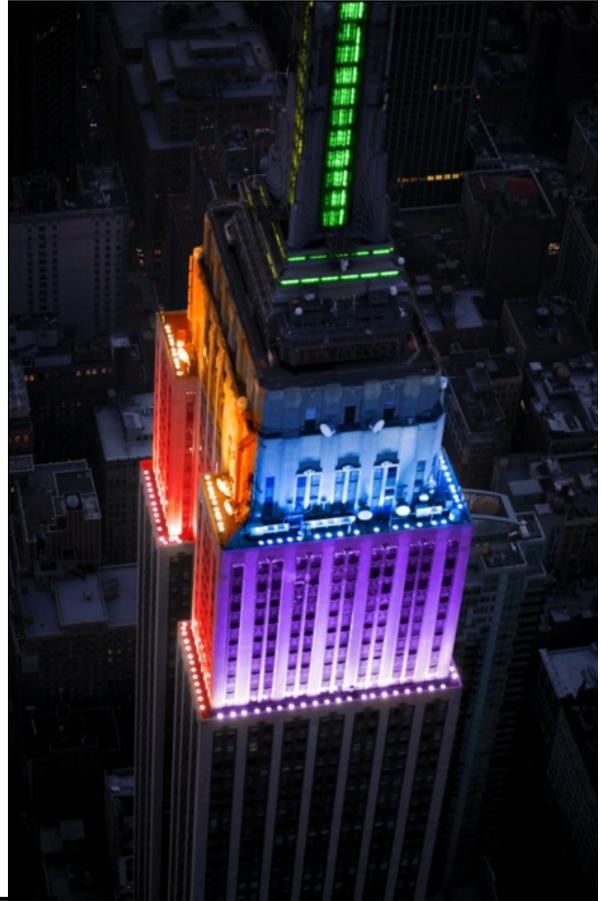
Whereas numerous rights are conveyed to opposite sex couples by the State thru marriage and

Whereas same sex couples have access to only a select portion of these rights thru domestic partnerships and

Whereas there is no social benefit to denying same sex couples access to marriage,

We the Lincoln County Democratic Central Committee support marriage equality for same sex couples.”

Many thanks to Dan Beck, LCDCC Chair, and all those who supported the resolution.



June 24, four days before the 42nd anniversary of the Stonewall Revolution in New York City, the state of New York legalized same-sex marriage, joining five other states, the District of Columbia, and the Coquilles Tribe in Southern Oregon. Groundbreaking because a Republican legislature passed this law, New York’s process differs from other states that allow same-sex marriage because of court requirements or a Democratic legislature vote. One of the celebrations was the rainbow lighting on the Empire State Building (above). Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed the bill into law in less than two hours. Marriages can begin in 30 days.

Speaking at a LGBT fundraiser two days before the final vote, President Barack Obama said, “I believe that gay couples deserve the same legal rights as every other couple in this country.” He said nothing about same-sex marriage.

States close to legalizing same-sex marriage are looking to the victory in New York to make changes in their own areas. For example, in Florida many LGBT couples either moved to the state from New York, have second homes in New York, or have close friends and family there. According to Equality Florida, 6.7 million people in the state live in communities that recognize our families with domestic partnership benefits.

Information about the status of same-sex marriages, civil unions, and domestic partnership during the week before New York passed its law is available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2011/0622/Will-New-York-allow-gay-marriage-Seven-ways-states-differ-on-the-issue/States-that-issue-marriage-licenses-to-same-sex-couples>

Politics on Our Side

Dane County Circuit Judge Daniel Moeser (WI) has **ruled against Gov. Scott Walker after he tried to remove the state's domestic registry**. Moeser said that the 2009 law does not violate the constitutional ban against marriage passed by voters in 2006 because it does not create a legal status for partners that is identical or substantially similar to that of marriage. The conservative group Wisconsin Family Action plans to appeal the decision.

The city of Portland has passed an **ordinance to provide trans-inclusive health care benefits** to its transgender city workers. The law now entitles transgender city employees access to hormone therapy, counseling and surgical services, which was previously excluded from the former insurance provided. The inclusive health care bill is in addition to The Oregon Family Fairness Act, passed in 2008, that allows for domestic partnership benefits statewide.

President Obama declared June "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month" and the **Federal Reserve Bank** in Richmond (VA) joined the celebration.



Fourteen openly LGBT government and non-profit leaders from Hawaii to Georgia are attending Harvard's *Senior Executives in State and Local Government* program in June and July, thanks to the Gay and Lesbian Leadership Institute. The program helps **officials meet the changing needs of their constituents and communities**.

President Barack Obama and the White House Office of Public Engagement followed up on the president's official proclamation of 2011 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month with the launch of *Winning the Future: President Obama and LGBT Americans*, a new landing page at WhiteHouse.gov specifically **addressing the Obama Administration's work "to advance Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender equality and strengthen LGBT families and communities."** <http://www.whitehouse.gov/lgbt>

The first **Illinois** same-sex couples got their licenses for civil unions on June 1. **New York** will follow with marriage licenses on July 24 (if that's 30 days from June 24). **Delaware** is next with civil union licenses available on January 1, 2012—unless another state dives in with an earlier date.

Almost half the states in the country **ban discrimination** based on sexual orientation. Check out this map to see where they are. (Hint: Oregon is one of them!)

http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/issue_maps/non_discrimination_6_11_color.pdf

Also check out this map of the world showing where **fluid gender is accepted**: <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/two-spirits/map.html#.TgEz7jcTuP4;email>

Rev. Albert Mohler, the president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Phoenix, claims that the **Baptists need to repent for a "form of homophobia"** that condemns homosexuals. "We have said to people that homosexuality is just a choice. Well, it's clear that it's more than a choice," he said. "That doesn't mean it's any less sinful, but it does mean it's not something that people can just turn on and turn off." Rev. Mohler seems to be on the path to understanding that homosexuality is not a sin.

Thanks!

Oregon North Coast PFLAG hosted Jeanne and Kae at their June meeting where they met leaders of their newly formed group and shared information and materials from our first three years.

Drew Herzig is doing a great job of keeping people informed in this new chapter that meets in Astoria on the third Thursday of the month. Starting in July they will meet at the First Lutheran Church which is welcoming them warmly.

Astoria has a monthly event that we could adopt—Q-Night at the Bridgewater Bistro, a waterfront restaurant with live entertainment which welcomes the LGBT community from 8:30-10:30 pm following the PFLAG meetings. Complimentary appetizers are served and the mike and music are turned over to LGBT performers. It was delightful to be there for this innovative event.

Oregon Coast Today did a great job with the layout of our Marriage Equality ad—and made PFLAG and Marriage Equality welcome in their county-wide paper a very reasonable non-profit rate! We appreciate their willingness to publish our statement—and to add their own signatures to the 400 signatures from Lincoln County folks that we have already collected.

GSAs Legally Required on School Grounds, Says Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has released a letter telling public schools of their obligation to let Gay/Straight Alliances and other LGBT clubs meet as long as at least one other club is meeting at school. “By encouraging dialogue and providing supportive resources,” he says, LGBT groups “can help make schools safe and affirming environments for everyone.”

His letter begins:

Harassment and bullying are serious problems in our schools, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students are the targets of disproportionate shares of these problems.

Thirty-two percent of students aged 12-18 experienced verbal or physical bullying during the 2007-2008 school year; and, according to a recent survey, more than 90 percent of LGBT students in grades 6 through 12 reported being verbally harassed — and almost half reported being physically harassed — during the 2008-2009 school year.

High levels of harassment and bullying correlate with poorer educational outcomes, lower future aspirations, frequent school absenteeism, and lower grade-point averages. Recent tragedies involving LGBT students and students perceived to be LGBT only underscore the need for safer schools.

[He goes on to discuss how GSAs have been unlawfully excluded from schools and explains the laws that require schools to provide access to them and that the Dept. of Education Counsel is providing legal guidelines.]

The full letter is available at <http://www.365gay.com/news/arne-duncan-to-public-schools-support-gsas/>

More Thanks to Basic Rights Oregon for their support, materials, and consultation with OCC PFLAG's Marriage Equality campaign in Lincoln County--and for sharing the cost of our ad in *Oregon Coast Today*.

And to Gray's Web Design for designing and setting up our great OCCPFLAG.org webpage, for tutoring in webpage maintenance, and for a major contribution toward the Marriage Equality ad in *Oregon Coast Today*.

Regrets: Although *The News-Times* promised a non-profit rate, the publication changed this amount to a political rate more than three times that cost with no notification. We hope that in the future they will return to their non-profit rate for all 501(c)(3) organizations.

People Who Make a Difference

Ken Mehlman, 44, who announced last year that he was gay, worked with conservative donors to bring New Yorkers a victory for same-sex marriage. Mehlman managed President George W. Bush's 2004 re-election drive when he promised to constitutionally ban same-sex marriage. Mehlman's arguments that gay marriage is a family value and that religious groups would not be forced to provide same-sex marriages led to four Republican Senators voting in favor. Only one Democrat voted against the same-sex marriage bill, Sen. Ruben Diaz.



In Ontario (Canada), the Catholic School Board of St. Joseph Catholic Secondary School told a **group of students** that they could not form a gay-straight alliance or have any public display of rainbows at a student-organized anti-homophobia event. Students decided to lobby the school board for permission to form student groups that focus on LGBT issues. They also sold cupcakes with rainbow-dyed batter, raised \$200 for charity, and plan to bring their fight to this year's Pride parade in Toronto.

Caleb Laieski left Arizona to spend the month of June to lobby Congress and the administration to pass the Student Non-Discrimination Act, introduced by Rep. Jared Polis (D-Colo.) and Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.). The bill is modeled after Title IX to prohibit sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination in education. No organization sent him. He did online fundraising and got Phoenix restaurants and others to donate money for his trip.

After he was bullied and threatened with death by classmates, he dropped out of school and got his GED. One of his close friends committed suicide. Because of his efforts, more than five members have signed onto the bill including one senator, Kay Hagan (D-NC). What Laieski is doing seems even more amazing because he is only 16.



Number of Adoptions by Same-Sex Couples Continues to Rise Despite State Hurdles

Only Utah and Mississippi prevent same-sex couples from adopting children, but other states are putting legal hurdles in the way of potential adopting couples, usually because they cannot legally marry.

Despite these problems, the number of same-sex parents with adopted children

keeps rising. About 19 percent of same-sex couples raising children reported having an adopted child in the house in 2009, up from just eight percent in 2000.

About 65,000 adopted children live in homes with a gay head of the household, about four percent of the adopted population.

Brazil Legalizes First Same-Sex Marriage

Sao Paulo state Judge Fernando Henrique Pinto has ruled that two gay men may convert their civil union to a marriage, clearing the way for Brazil's first gay nuptials. Pinto based the decision on Brazil's constitution, which outlines how a civil union can be converted into a legal marriage.

Three Web-Filtering Software Companies Respond to ACLU Complaints

After discovering that web-filtering software has blocked student access to websites supportive of LGBTQ issues, ACLU wrote letters of complaint to schools. Three companies responded quickly, each with a different excuse and a promise to stop if it is their fault.

Six filtering companies were identified: Lightspeed Systems, Blue Coat Systems, M86 Solutions, Fortiguard, Websense, and URL Blacklist. Lightspeed removed its filter which blocked educational LGBT-related information and said that it would put these sites into another category that didn't classify them according to their "political or moral viewpoint."

Fortiguard said it had no idea that this would happen and would change the software to filter out explicit content but leave educational content in. It will also remove the filter's category of "homosexuality."

Websense said it wasn't their fault. They think "that some public school system administrators override the default setting and block LGBT sites under the mistaken impression that they need to do so in order to block adult content." They are working on training but will also retain the "gay or lesbian or bisexual interest" category, stating, "Certain private organizations have a right to allow or prohibit access according to their own determination. Websense supports private organizations' rights to determine their own web usage policies."

The remaining three filter systems have yet to respond to ACLU's request that they stop filtering educational and supportive LGBTQ content in schools.

Mental Issues Become Serious Issues in States Banning Same-Sex Marriage

In 16 U.S. states gays and lesbians suffered steep increases in depression, anxiety, and addictions between 2001-05. The identified states were Arkansas, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, and Utah. There was no increase in these indications of mental distress and disorder among heterosexuals during this time period in these 16 states.

The commonality for gays and lesbians, according to new research by Mark L. Hatzenbuehler, Katie A. McLaughlin, Katherine M. Keyes, and Deborah S. Hasin, is that all 16 states banned same-sex marriage through state constitutional amendments.

Despite questions about cause and effect, the researchers said, "Creating constitutional amendments banning gay marriage reinforced the marginalized and socially devalued status of lesbian, gay and transgendered individuals. Moreover, the negative political campaigns against gays and lesbians by proponents of these amendments, which were well-circulated in the media, further promulgated the stigma associated with homosexuality."

Dessert Potluck & Marriage Equality

After PFLAG members collected 400 signatures of support which will be published in the July 1 issue of *Oregon Coast Today*, they gathered to share great desserts and watch *Edie & Thea: A Long Engagement*, the story of the couple's 40-year engagement before they married in Toronto. After the June 24 vote approving Marriage Equality in New York, Edie & Thea could have been married in their home state!

Newport Saturday Market Table

Sign up for a shift at the information table staffed by PFLAG members and volunteers from Lincoln County's Welcoming Churches. Or come by to visit and cheer us on!

Transgender Faces & Facets

Beginning our community information and discussion about the least common and most misunderstood aspect of gender identity, we will show a film produced by the Boulder PFLAG Chapter. Help us make transgender people more welcome and understood in Lincoln County.

Transgender Speaker

The Rev. David Weekley, Methodist minister from Portland, will be guest speaker as we continue our community education effort regarding the issues facing transgender people. Bring your questions and help us make Rev. Weekley feel welcome in Lincoln County.

Third Annual Family Picnic

PFLAG's THIRD ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC will be at Big Creek Park in Newport for food and fun in the sun—and shade! Join everyone from toddlers to seniors, representing the whole range of PFLAG—parents, families, and friends and LGBT folks.

OCC PFLAG Calendar

July 9: PFLAG Table at Saturday Market (Newport)

July 13, 7:00 pm: PFLAG—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport [Transgender Faces & Facets]

July 14-17: Latino Gay Pride iCelebrAccion! 2011 (Portland)

August 6, 10:00 am-5:00 pm: Salem Pride Festival 2011 (Cascades Gateway Park, 2100 Turner Road SE)

August 10, 7:00 pm: PFLAG—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport [Transgender Speaker]

August 13: PFLAG Table at Saturday Market (Newport)

August 13, Noon-7:00 pm: Eugene-Springfield Pride Festival 2011 (Alton Baker Park)

August 17, Noon: LGBT Task Force Meeting—Centro de Ayuda, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

August 21: Third Annual PFLAG Family Picnic, Big Creek Park, Newport

September 16-18: Oregon Coast Iris Pride Festival 2011 (Lincoln City)

September 24-October 1: Banned Books Week

September 30-October 2: Southern Oregon Pride Festival 2011 (Main Street, Ashland)

The Coastal AIDS Network* monthly activities:

Second Tuesday, 7:00 pm: "Activity Night" (call for information (541)994-5597)

Third Tuesday, 7:00 pm: "Pizza Night" (Newport Abbey's Pizza)

Fourth Tuesday, 7:00 pm: "Men's Pot Luck" (Locations vary! Call (541)994-5597 or email coastalaidnetwork@gmail.com for information)

We also try to have pizza in Tillamook or Pacific City. Email Dan, coastalaidnetwork@gmail.com or leave a message for him at (541)994-5597.

*CAN activities are open to everyone, regardless of HIV status or sexual orientation. The only event limited to men is the potluck night, but occasionally we bend that rule for special events.

For **Eugene Gay Men's Social Network (EGMSN)** activities contact alan@rainbowsafaribengals.com.

CLASS Women's Potlucks: Jeannette at 867-6993.

Join PFLAG!

YES! I support the mission of PFLAG. Enclosed is my membership fee.*

_____ Individual or Household (\$30)
_____ Student/Limited Income (\$20)
_____ Contribution \$ _____

*Includes membership in National PFLAG with affiliates in over 365 worldwide communities.

Make check payable and mail to:

Oregon Central Coast PFLAG
PO Box 2172
Newport, OR 97365

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

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