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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

August 2011

Take Action!

The Wildflower Inn (Lyndonville, VT) was all too happy to host Kate & Ming's wedding reception—until they found out that the reception would be for two brides! Despite the fact that the resort's web site claims they are the "Four Seasons for Everyone," apparently "everyone" does not include same-sex couples. By refusing to host Kate and Ming's wedding reception, the Wildflower Inn is violating the Vermont Fair Housing and Public Accommodations Act that has prohibited public accommodations from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation for nearly 20 years.

https://secure.aclu.org/site/SPageServer?s_subsrc=110719_wildflower&pagename=Wildflower

PFLAG Table at Iris Pride Festival

September 17

Mark your calendar for this date! OCC PFLAG will again have a table at the third annual Iris Pride Festival on 51st St. at the south end of Lincoln City—in that open area near Mo's. We have requested really good weather to compensate for being rained out and blown away last year! Come to the street fair and stop at our table—we've got a whole new selection of rainbow dog scarves!

President Barack Obama formally signed off on ending the ban on gays serving openly in the military. As of September 21, lesbians and gays are permitted to openly remain in the military; those cast out may rejoin.

PFLAG Members Celebrate Marriage Equality Ad

OCC PFLAG celebrated with a Dessert Potluck on June 29 when the 400 signatures in support of Marriage Equality were published in the July 1 issue of Oregon Coast Today. We watched “Edie & Thea: A Long Engagement”, the story of that couple’s 40-year engagement before they were married in Toronto. PFLAG members worked hard for many months collecting signatures at Saturday Markets and at meetings and

workplaces throughout the county. Thanks to Oregon Coast Today for their support and encouragement—and for turning the ad into great-looking posters that we’re displaying around the county in coming months. We’ve already had to run another batch of posters. More will be available at the August 10 PFLAG meeting! Help us spread (and display) the word that Lincoln County supports Marriage Equality!



Mildred Loving Believes in Same-Sex Loving—and Marriage

On June 12, the first successful defense of marriage in the United States had its 40th anniversary when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Loving v. Virginia* that a man and a woman, no matter their race, should be legally allowed to marry. On this anniversary of her 1967 ruling, Mildred Loving supports same-sex marriage when she said, “I believe all Americans, no matter their sex, no matter their sexual orientation, should have that same freedom to marry. I am proud that Richard’s and my name is on a court case that can help reinforce the love, the commitment, the fairness, and the family that so many people, black or white, young or old, gay or straight, seek in life. I support the freedom to marry for all. That’s what Loving, and loving, are all about.”

Thank you, Ms. Loving.

Politics on Our Side

California became the first U.S. state to require that public school textbooks include the accomplishments of gay, lesbian and transgender Americans as Governor Jerry Brown signed the mandate into law. It's unsure how this will play out because of the conservative backlash and the fact that budget cuts have postponed updating the books until the 2015-16 school year.

Cambridge (MA) will compensate its employees for the federal tax charged on health benefits for same-sex spouses. City employees annually pay an additional \$1,500 to \$3,000 in taxes. None of the thousands of legally married gay and lesbian couples in Massachusetts can receive the federal benefits offered to heterosexual married couples because the federal government doesn't recognize same-sex marriages. Those benefits include Social Security survivors' benefits, immigration rights, family leave and the ability to file joint tax returns.

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley will give "administration priority" in January to pass a gay marriage bill in the next legislative session.

Utah Democrats have elected openly-gay Jim Dabakis as state party chairman by a wide margin. In a closer race, delegates at the Democratic State Convention elected small-business owner Brian Doughty, who is also openly gay, to fill the Salt Lake City House seat vacated by former Rep. Jackie Biskupski.

Connecticut has become the 15th state with clear legal protections designated for its transgender residents in its new legislation that bars discrimination based on gender identity or expression.

Rhode Island has legalized same-sex civil unions providing marriage-like rights.

The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, has hosted the country's first LGBT Pride celebration. Though the country's laws are hostile to LGBT citizens, an embassy official said the U.S. intends to stand by LGBT Pakistanis "every step of the way."

The deportation order of Henry Velandia, who married U.S. citizen Josh Vandiver in Connecticut, has been canceled. A Newark immigration judge had put Velandia's deportation on hold in May.

A majority of nine judges in Colombia's Constitutional Court has mandated the legal recognition of gay couples and given Congress two years to legislate on gay unions. "If by the 20th of July, 2013 Congress has not acted, gay couples can go to a notary and with the same solemnity of a heterosexual marriage enter a union similar to one between a heterosexual couple," said Judge Juan Carlos Henao, the court's president.

The United Nations has endorsed the rights of LGBT people for the first time, passing a resolution that expressed "grave concern at acts of violence and discrimination in all regions of the world, committed against individuals because of their sexual orientation and gender identity." The U.N. also established a formal process to document human rights abuses against gays, called for a panel discussion next spring, and commissioned a global report on discrimination against gays.

Rep. Jared Polis (D-CO) and his long-time partner, Martin Reis, say they're expecting to be parents in September.

AARP's new online site www.aarp.org/pride serves older LGBT people and their family and friends. The site features articles on news, personal finance, relationships, travel and other topics of concern to its audience.

The Oregonian's article about three same-sex couples and their wish to be married is available at http://www.oregonlive.com/O/index.ssf/2011/07/same_sex_couples_who_find_marr.html

After the Log Cabin Republicans announced that R. Clarke Cooper, the gay group's executive director, was appointed to the fundraising arm of the Republican National Committee, ultra-conservatives got riled, and the RNC gave out a different story. RNC Secretary Demetra DeMonte said, "Mr. Cooper is one of 150 volunteers that signed up and agreed to raise money for the RNC. The committee is not exclusive."

Negative publicity may have led the Roman Catholic Diocese in San Diego to allow a funeral mass for John Sanfilippo at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church where Sanfilippo had attended for decades. Earlier, his long-time partner and family had been notified that the church would not hold the funeral because he was gay.

NY Mayor Bloomberg Performs Marriage In the City's Beautiful Gracie Mansion



Bentley Meeker coordinated the lighting at the elegant Gracie Mansion where New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg officiated the John Feinblatt and Jonathan Mintz wedding. Sixty-year-old Feinblatt, Bloomberg's chief policy adviser, and 47-year-old Mintz, the city's commissioner of consumer affairs, have two daughters, ages six and eight.

Colorado Student Seeks to Overturn Law Banning Same-Sex Marriage in the State

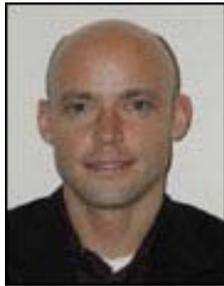
Mark Olmstead, a Colorado college student, has set out to overturn the state's "2006 ballot measure that defined marriage in Colorado as between a man and a woman" with a ballot initiative of his own. If the state's title board approves the language of the ballot-initiative proposal, he will set out to get 86,000 signatures so that people can vote on the initiative in the 2012 election. "I think the attitudes in Colorado toward gay marriage have shifted since 2006," said Olmstead, who is gay.

Map Shows Anti-Discrimination Laws

States that ban discrimination against sexual orientation and gender identity/expression are shown on a map at http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/issue_maps/non_discrimination_6_11_color.pdf. It's always interesting to see what areas believe that discrimination is a good thing.

People Who Make a Difference

Sean Sala, a former sailor, organized a military contingent—both gay and straight—to lead San Diego’s Gay Pride March, a first in the country, on July 16. Sala said it’s time for the gay and lesbian community to stop hiding in fear. “This is not in any way a violation of military policy and it’s time for the country to move on—plain and simple.” Marine Corps officials said service members who are not in uniform are within their rights to participate in a gay pride parade.



J. Paul Oetken is the first openly-gay federal judge to be confirmed. The vote was 80 to 13 with social conservatives like Sens. Tom Coburn, John Cornyn, Jeff Sessions, and Jon Kyl voting for him. Out lesbian Judge Deborah Batts was confirmed in 1994. The Senate Judiciary Committee has also approved by a vote of 14-4 the nomination of Alison Nathan, an out lesbian whom Obama also selected to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. Other openly gay judicial nominees, Edward DuMont and Michael W. Fitzgerald, have been nominated for positions as federal judges.



Brenda “Sue” Fulton, openly lesbian co-founder of Knights Out, has been named to the Board of Visitors of the United States Military Academy which advises President Barack Obama on the West Point military academy. The 52-year-old Army veteran heavily lobbied for repeal of “Don't Ask, Don't Tell,” the 1993 law that had barred gay and bisexual troops from serving openly. In addition to serving as the executive director of Knights Out, LGBT West Point graduates and allies, she is also a founding board members of OutServe, the nascent group dedicated to LGBT people serving in the military. She graduated from West Point in 1980 and currently lives in New Jersey.

Twenty years ago, closeted **John Byrne**, 56, taught English. Always frightened, he decided to make a statement. "I decided to march in the St. Patrick's Day parade," he said. "Because they refused to let the gays march, I thought, 'I've got to take a stand.' I just wanted to be myself. So I went and marched with them." The day after the parade, Byrne's 10th-grade students wanted to know how he had spent the day. Teasing their teacher, they accused him of going out and getting drunk. He told them, "I was marching.' And I said, 'With the Irish Gay and Lesbian Organization.' And they said, 'Well, why were you marching with them?' and I said, 'Because I'm gay!'" He added, "And they were so kind." Two years later the class asked him to be the graduation speaker. [Right: Byrne with former student Samantha Liebman]



Minnesota Students Sue School District Whose Policy Permits Bullying, Harassment

Five current and former students who identify as gay, bisexual, or straight are suing Minnesota's largest school district because its policy requiring staff to remain neutral when sexual orientation is discussed in the classroom keeps teachers from protecting kids from bullying.

The students want the court to block the policy, order effective protections including better training, and award them unspecified damages. Six students in the district committed suicide in less than two years. A parent of one of those students says her son was bullied for being gay.

Archie's Kevin Keller Gets His Own Series

The first gay character in the Archie Comics universe introduced last year, will get his own monthly comic book in 2012.

In a four-issue miniseries, Kevin Keller will be the class president, dealing with adversity. In other Archie series, Keller will be married in early 2012.

Congress Holds Hearings to Repeal Defense of Marriage Act

After 15 years of federal law stating that marriage is only "between a man and a woman," the U.S. Senate is holding hearings to repeal the "Defense of Marriage" Act through the Respect for Marriage Act (SB 598). The testimony makes for good reading.

Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA), ranking minority member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, came with all but one of his witnesses. According to Grassley, the missing witness was afraid of being harassed. (Welcome to the LGBT world!)

Grassley's chief witness Thomas Minnery, an official with the fundamentalist religious group Focus on Family, claimed that children raised by a male-female couple were happier than those raised in other families. When Sen. Al Franken said that the federal study said "nuclear" family, not heterosexual family, Minnery said that he understood "nuclear" to equal "heterosexual." Franken said, "It doesn't. It says 'two parents who are married to one another and are the adopted or biological' parents of their children. I don't know how we can trust the rest of your testimony if you are reading studies these ways."

Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), a legendary civil rights activist, began the hearing by comparing DOMA to laws half a century ago that required separate water fountains and restrooms for "whites" and "coloreds." "I find it unbelievable in the year 2011," said Lewis, "that there is still a need to hold hearings and debates about whether a human being should be able to marry the person they love."

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) said he called the hearing to "assess the impact" of the law on American families. He explained that the 1996 law "goes well beyond the harm to a family's dignity," harming it economically, health-wise, and in other ways. One of his seven witness was Ron Wallen, a 77-year-old man from Indio (CA) who described how his life was thrown into "financial chaos" after his life partner for 58 years died. Because Wallen could not get his same-sex spouse's Social Security benefits and pension, his household income dropped from \$3,050 to \$900 per month.

President Obama's current support for the Respect for Marriage Act has evolved since his Department of Justice vigorously defended DOMA in courts, arguing, "DOMA does not discriminate against homosexuals in the provision of federal benefits." (One would think that the DOJ would be aware of the 1000-plus discriminatory laws against unmarried same-sex couples.) In a reversal six months ago, Attorney General Eric Holder said that he and President Obama believe DOMA is unconstitutional and that laws "disfavoring" LGBT people should have to pass the strictest form of judicial scrutiny.

September 10 PFLAG Table, Newport Farmer's Market

We will again be the featured non-profit at the Saturday Market in Newport. It's a great way to meet friends, drink good coffee, buy all your fresh produce and bakery goods, and support OCC PFLAG. Stop by and say hello—and take some Marriage Equality materials to share with friends.

Aug. 10 PFLAG Meeting

David Weekley has been an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church since 1984. He is also a transgender man. He quietly served his congregations for twenty-eight years before sharing his story and spiritual journey with his congregation, denomination, and the world—the story of a Christian, an ordained minister, a loving husband, and father.

His book, *In From The Wilderness*, challenges Christians and all spiritual seekers to consider the truth of gender identity and sexual orientation as God given-gifts to be celebrated and embraced among all other gifts.

Aug. 21 PFLAG Potluck Family Picnic

The third annual PFLAG Family Picnic will again bring "The Family" together from 1-4 pm at Big Creek Park in Newport. Old and young, gay and straight, families and friends will share great food and lots of outdoor fun on a sunny August afternoon—at least that's what we've requested for the weather! Hope to see you there!

To the Newsletter:

What a beautiful job... the ad [for marriage equality] is fantastic and the newsletter rocks!

Kathy Reim , PNW Regional Director

OCC PFLAG Calendar

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

August 15, Noon: LGBT Task Force Meeting—Centro de Ayuda, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

August 21, 1:00-4:00 pm: Third Annual PFLAG Family Picnic, Big Creek Park, Newport

September 10: PFLAG Table at Saturday Market (Newport)

September 14, 7:00 pm: PFLAG—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport [LCSD Anti-Bullying Program]

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

September 19, Noon: LGBT Task Force Meeting—Centro de Ayuda, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

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.

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:

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