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Parents, Families and
Friends of Lesbians
and Gays promotes
the health and well-
being of gay, lesbian,
bisexual, and trans-
gendered 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

March 2012

Action Works!

When Ellen DeGeneres was chosen as the new national JC Penney spokesperson, One Million Moms, an affiliate of the American Family Association, asked their members to boycott the department store and bring it to its knees. They failed. Not only did the CEO emphatically state support for DeGeneres but also such conservatives as Fox's Bill O'Reilly defended her. GLAAD, the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender media advocacy and anti-defamation organization, sponsored a petition asking supporters to thank JC Penney garnering great support.

We hope that Penney's sales will have the same fortune that Covergirl had after DeGeneres became that company's spokesperson. Covergirl's marketing company said, "We quickly built a strong relationship with Ellen's team that enabled the brand to get the most out of the partnership and create a ground breaking campaign that drove a magnitude of sales growth not seen since in previous years."

Thanks, JC, and good luck!

Student Searches for Study Participants

Melissa St. Pierre, a lesbian doctoral student at the University of Windsor (ON, Canada), is looking for lesbians, over the age of 16 in Canada and 18 in the United States, willing to participate in a study about their experiences with health-care professionals. This study has received clearance from the University of Windsor's Research Ethics Board. To find out more, go to: <http://www.uwindsor.ca/lesbianhealthstudy>.

*Marriage Equality throughout
the United States—Page 6*

Love Is Love Party, Fun and Thoughtful



Fun at Love Is Love Party!

Above left: Old and young at Love is Love party.

Above right: PFLAG Mom Kathryn Heater demonstrating how to win more bags!

Left: Delicious desserts donated by five local churches.

Right: Jordan Ostrum, President, Newport HS GSA, reading a poem.



At the Love Is Love party, Kathryn Heater read “A Mother’s Journey,” her story about her daughter, Avery, coming out to the community through her article in the Newport High School newspaper, followed by Matt Love’s article about Avery in *The Oregonian*. Following are excerpts from “Journey”:

“My first and most powerful emotion was fright. I was terrified for her safety. I read the news. No parent wants their child to have a hard life. In some respects, I thought, ‘Why would you choose this path and to fight for the rest of your life?’ I cried a lot in those early days. I also was so incredibly proud of her strength and self-confidence in who she was that she could openly tell people with no other conviction except ‘this is who I am.’ I questioned my own inner confidence and wondered if I would have kept the secret and taken the easy road.

“I remember telling my mom about Avery being gay. I won’t go into details but.... It didn’t go well. Why is it that when you talk with your own mother that you immediately turn into the child no matter what age you are? My mom told me that Avery was loved and would always be loved by her, but her “partner” would never be welcome at her house. My heart broke that day. The term ‘Momma Bear’ comes to mind in my reaction. I said, ‘We are ok with that, your house, your rules. You need to remember though that we are a family who spends a lot of holidays together. It is not Avery’s partner that won’t be invited to the gatherings, Mom. Intolerance does not live at my house, and my family won’t be attending any gatherings where it does.’

“What I have learned on my “Mother’s Journey” is bravery. I have learned that throughout history that those who carry the fight, who speak openly, who question and provoke discussion are the people who change history. It is criminal that some are bullied into unthinkable actions such as cutting and suicide. Some hide, some live their whole lives burying their true feelings over something as simple as ‘Who you Love.’

“We change the world one person at a time, my friends. One person at a time.” [The full essay is available at www.occpflag.org]

Politics on Our Side

Former Vice-President **Dick Cheney** lobbied for same-sex marriage in Maryland, offering to meet with at least one lawmaker, Republican Wade Kach, to discuss his vote on the gay marriage issue.

The Anoka-Hennepin school board in Minnesota voted to remove a policy contributing to the bullying of LGBT students and replace it with one that hopes to foster a respectful learning environment for all students.

U.S. District Court Judge Jeffrey White, appointed to the bench by George W. Bush, ruled

unconstitutional a key part of the Defense of Marriage Act, the federal law which forbids providing federal government benefits to same-sex spouses. White said the stated goals of DOMA, passed in 1996 and signed by President Bill Clinton, could not pass muster under a so-called "heightened scrutiny" test or even a lower "rational basis" threshold. "The imposition of subjective moral beliefs of a majority upon a minority cannot provide a justification for the legislation."

The Department of Justice will not defend laws that block benefits for gay and lesbian military couples because this legislation violates the equal protection clause of the Fifth Amendment. Attorney General Eric Holder wrote, "The legislative record of these provisions contains no rationale for providing veterans' benefits to opposite-sex couples of veterans but not to legally married same-sex spouses of veterans. Neither the Department of Defense nor the Depart-

ment of Veterans Affairs identified any justifications for that distinction that would warrant treating these provisions differently from Section 3 of DOMA."

President Obama's administration has issued new federal regulations forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in housing programs administered or funded by the federal govern-

ment, including programs run by religious institutions that accept federal funds.

U.S. District Judge **C l a u d i a**

Wilken, of Oakland, has ruled that same-sex partners in domestic partnerships may join a lawsuit challenging the part of DOMA (Defense of Marriage Act) preventing long-term health coverage being offered to the same-sex partners of state employees in California. The Obama administration had argued that only same-sex spouses should be allowed to sue for long-term health care coverage. Wilken's ruling was based on the fact that same-sex couples in California have been and are now once again unable to marry and are therefore de facto relegated to domestic partnerships.

Ecuador's health ministry says it will investigate and act forcefully against any clinics that use coercion in trying to get homosexuals to change their sexual orientation. Gay rights activists in the South American country say four clinics that engaged in such practices have been closed down in recent months, but dozens more are in operation.

Same-Sex marriage is sweeping the country. Progress on Page 6.

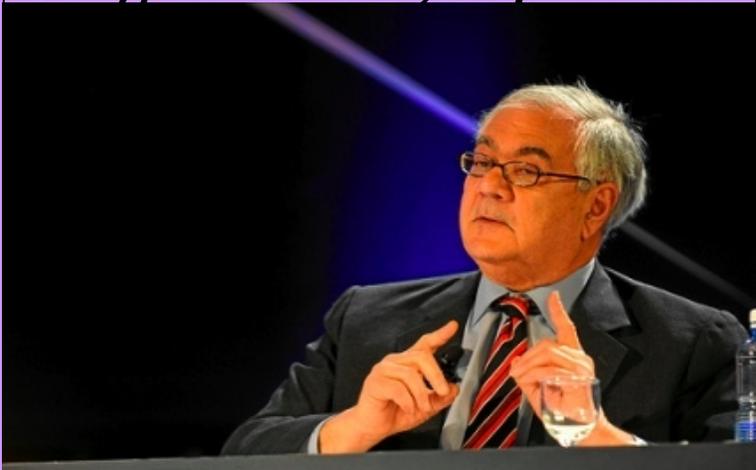
Lucinda Hughes reports from Florence that the first GSA meeting brought in 26 kids, thanks to a young straight dynamo with two moms--and maybe the pizza provided by the local PFLAG. The girl's conversation with a teacher about starting the GSA revealed that the teacher has anti-gay parents but learned that a former student had been bullied in school for being gay. This is the teacher's way of helping kids because she hadn't known about her former student's situation.

A survey of more than 200,000 college freshmen finds **71% in favor of allowing same-sex couples to marry**, up from nearly 65% who said so two years ago.

"A lot of the focus right now is on the Republican debates where you don't necessarily see these particular viewpoints being part of the candidates platforms," said John Pryor, lead author of the survey, which was conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Outserve, an organization representing active duty LGBT armed forces personnel, will host its first summit to advocate for military partners and families. The event, called the OutServe Capital Summit, will take place May 14-15 in D.C. at the Renaissance Hotel. The theme of the event will be "Our Families Matter."
<http://outserve.org/capital-summit/>.

Congratulations, Rep. Frank!



Retiring Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) plans to marry his long-term partner Jim Ready, a small business owner and photographer from Maine. Frank said that he is looking forward to spending time with Ready, declaring, "I'm in love for the first time in my life." Because of federal law, "Jim won't be eligible for any of the benefits that any other spouse would be able to get," said Lee Swislow, executive director of Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, the Boston legal rights organization that brought the case that led to Massachusetts becoming the first state in the country to legalize gay marriage.

Love Is Love Valentine Party

Our Second Annual gay and straight, young and old Valentine Party built on last year's great success! Three PFLAG Moms—Kathryn Heater, Susan Huntington, and Claire Smith—coordinated the planning of this year's delightful event. Five churches donated desserts, decorated the room, and hosted a Valentine-making table. Thanks to Atonement Lutheran, Central Coast Unitarian, St. Luke's & St. Stephen's Episcopal, and Toledo United Methodist. Several of the county's best musicians, poets, and readers entertained. Thanks to Orpha Barry, Brian Hanna, Kathryn Heater, Rhonda Jantzen, Jordan Ostrum, Stephan, Steve Travis, Jessie Treon, Barbara Turrill, and Akia Woods. Sweetheart photos were available—thanks to photographer Clint Ayer. It was great fun to see more young people from high school GSA groups and Job Corps at the party! Thanks again to Oregon Coast Community College for hosting the party—see you there next year!

PFLAG Mom Kathryn Heater's reading, "A Mother's Journey," was a heart-felt and personal look behind the scenes of her family's adjustment to daughter Avery's coming out in high school. Many described her reflection as the high point of the event and a reminder that a child's revelation has long-lasting ripple effects on the whole family system.

People Who Make a Difference

Before Washington state's final vote legalizing same-sex marriage, **Maureen Walsh** broke ranks with her fellow Republicans and gave an impassioned speech in favor of the bill. In her must-see video, she described how she supported the bill because of the importance of an emotional bond with another person. She also hopes to provide a grand wedding for her lesbian daughter! <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/nationnow/2012/02/lonely-old-widow-and-lawmaker-becomes-voice-for-same-sex-marriage.html>



Manvendra Singh Gohil of Rajpipla, India, is one of three royal princes featured in the TCL dating series *Undercover Princes* and was recently interviewed by *The Advocate*. His coming out as gay was influential in decriminalizing gays and lesbians in India. In his interview, he discussed his dedication to the principles of Mahatma Gandhi. "No matter what, whatever you do, if you are true and honest to yourself, then you will always win," Manvendra said. Part of his activism concerns AIDS/HIV. He said, "I was very much concerned about the lack of awareness in the Indian society about homosexuality and about HIV/AIDS because I've been working for HIV/AIDS [causes] since 1995, especially among the gay community, and I was not satisfied by the way people are in their approach to homosexuality or their approach to HIV/AIDS."

Goldman Sachs Group Inc Chief Executive **Lloyd Blankfein** is the first major business leader to join a national media campaign in support of same-sex marriage. HRC has released a video in which he asks viewers to join a "majority of Americans who support marriage equality." The Americans for Marriage Equality campaign so far includes a dozen personalities including Senator Al Franken, Cleveland Browns linebacker Scott Fujita, and Oscar-winning actress Mo'Nique.



Martha Boggs asked Tennessee State Sen. Stacey Campfield to leave her Knoxville restaurant, Bistrot at the Bijou, because he sponsored a bill that would prevent discussion of homosexuality in public schools and recently said that it was virtually impossible for heterosexuals to spread HIV. "I feel like he's gone from being stupid to being dangerous," Boggs said, "and I wanted to stand up to him."



Clergy Protest FRC Head on MSNBC

Businesses Flee Utah

Clergy in Faithful America, whose members include Bishop Gene Robinson (Episcopal Bishop of New Hampshire), have given MSNBC a petition with 20,000 signatures requesting that Family Research Council leader Tony Perkins no longer be used as an on-air analyst on the television

network.

FNC has been designated as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center for making "false claims about the LGBT community based on discredited research and junk science." Faithful America wants Perkins to stop representing the views of people of faith.

Business leaders have said the lack of Utah laws forbidding anti-LGBT discrimination hurts their companies' ability to attract employees to the state. Brandon Pace, general counsel for eBay, said his company may consider expanding elsewhere without laws that protect LGBT rights.

Same-Sex Marriage Possibilities Grow across the Nation

Washington and **New Jersey** legislators have passed bills that legalized marriage for gays and lesbians in their respective states. Gov. Christine Gregoire signed the Washington bill; Gov. Chris Christie vetoed the New Jersey one because he wants people to vote for constitutional civil rights. Just days after Christie vetoed the bill, however, New Jersey Superior Court Judge Linda Feinberg reinstated a federal equal protection claim previously dismissed in a lawsuit challenging the state's ban on gay marriage. Her ruling allows arguments that the state's civil unions law violates the New Jersey and the U.S. constitutions.

Maryland House just passed a marriage equality bill! (It's hard to keep up with all these!)

North Carolina and **Minnesota** have referenda this year on constitutional amendments to ban same-sex marriage; **Maine** will probably have one to legalize it. **Rhode Island** is also considering a marriage equality law, and an **Illinois** lawmaker has proposed upgrading its civil union law to marriage equality.

The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that **California's** Prop 8, which rescinded marriage equality, was unconstitutional because it violates the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Constitution. The ruling is only for California, unique because the state married same-sex couples before refusing to do so. This narrowness of the ruling reduces the chance that the case will go before the Supreme Court, but the ruling has much to say about marriage inequality being unconstitutional.

A civil unions bill escaped the Senate Judiciary Committee in **Colorado** by a 5-2 vote. Civil unions are not equal to marriage, but they give the state supreme court a chance to show that they are discriminatory. Eleven states have either a civil union or domestic partnership law giving same-sex couples the same state rights as married couples. **West Virginia** plans to join these states.

With 42 percent of the people in the nation living in states that either legalize same-sex marriage or give couples the same rights, the **Democratic Party** is moving toward adding a marriage equality plank to their national platform, hopefully a move toward passing The Respect for Marriage Act. Meanwhile, federal courts will hear three DOMA lawsuits in Massachusetts this year.

On the national level, **Attorney General Eric Holder** and the **Justice Department** will not fight the lawsuit seeking military benefits for same-sex military couples because of the position that the Defense of Marriage Act, which prohibits benefits for gay couples, is unconstitutional. According to the DOJ, the 1996 federal law that defines "spouse" as "person of the opposite sex" violates the Fifth Amendment right to equal protection under the law.

LGBT in Native American Cultures

For the second of two meetings focusing on LGBT in Native American communities, the March 14 meeting will feature the second part of the film *Two Spirits*, a documentary about a young trans man on the Navajo reservation in the desert Southwest.

It “interweaves the tragic story of a mother’s loss of her son with a revealing look at a time when the world wasn’t simply divided into male and female and many Native American cultures held places of honor for people of integrated genders.”

Nike Youth Forum

Beaverton’s Nike Campus will host LGBT teens from across Oregon at their annual Youth Forum, a collaboration between Nike and GLSEN Oregon. This event is aimed at helping GSA leadership create positive change in their schools.

The Forum will feature local LGBT leaders, who will talk about their roles as change agents in their organizations. Approximately 30 Gay Straight Alliances will be invited with about 400 young people and their advisors. GSA leaders and their advisors will be asked to take an active roll in the day.

Two of the guest speakers will be Bruce Jenner and "Red Rubber Ball" author Kevin Carroll. PFLAG OCC is assisting local GSA groups with travel expenses for the full-day conference.

PFLAG OCC Lending Library

Co-Chair Brent Burford has organized PFLAG’s DVDs and books to be available for loan to PFLAG and GSA members starting at the March meeting. Thanks, Brent, for helping us get the resources out into the community.

OCC PFLAG Calendar

March 2, 1:00 pm: LGBT Task Force Meeting—LCHHS, Newport

March 6, 1:00 pm: OCCC Triangle Club films (Information from Tara Roberts (541)270-7085)

March 14, 7:00 pm: PFLAG—St. Stephen’s, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

March 31, 7:30 pm: Damsels, Divas and Dames: A Benefit for HIV Alliance—Hult Center for the Performing Arts Soreng Theater, Eugene (www.HultCenter.org; 541-682-5000)

April 3, 1:00 pm: OCCC Triangle Club films (Information from Tara Roberts (541)270-7085)

April 5, 1:00 pm: LGBT Task Force Meeting—LCHHS, Newport

April 11, 7:00 pm: PFLAG—St. Stephen’s, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

April 19: Nike Youth Forum, Beaverton

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.

Gay/Bi men in Coos, Curry and Douglas counties (OR) network and publicize LGBT friendly events: coosdouglasmsmsuscribe@yahoo.com at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coosdouglasmsm/join/>

Join PFLAG!

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

_____ Individual or Household (\$30)
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*Includes membership in National PFLAG with affiliates in over 365 worldwide communities.

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