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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

December 2012

Take Action!

Thanks to UPS and Intel for living up to their non-discrimination policies by refusing to give money to the Boy Scouts. Because of their actions, the Boy Scouts will have to get the \$150,000 from UPS and the \$180,000 from Intel from other organizations. To thank them, Google the companies, Boy Scouts, and petition.

For the 11th year, HRC has released its corporate equality index showing advances for LGBT people. For the first time in history, a majority of the Fortune 500 offers both sexual orientation and gender identity protections. This year, 252 businesses received 100% in "Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality," up from 189 last year. Fifty-four additional businesses completed the survey, bringing the total to 688. The surveys show a progressive trend of businesses endorsing pro-equality legislation. Details are at <http://www.hrc.org/blog/entry/hrc-releases-11th-edition-of-the-corporate-equality-index>

New York's Ali Forney Center, the country's largest and most comprehensive organization providing services and shelter to homeless lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth, was ravaged by Hurricane Sandy and made uninhabitable. The Center has since relocated but badly needs help. More information at <http://www.aliforneycenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=cms.page&id=1009>

Basic Rights Oregon is traveling to communities across Oregon to celebrate recent victories for marriage equality and engage communities in a plan to win the freedom to marry in Oregon! The Marriage Equality Tour will stop in Lincoln County on Tuesday, December 4, 6:00-8:00pm, St. Stephen's, SW 9th & Hurbert.

This Election Year Turned the Tide

The year that brought Barack Obama back for his second term may be the tipping point for LGBTQ rights. For the past decade, we have mourned the votes in the states that made marriage equality illegal and celebrated the few openly-LGBTQ candidates elected to office. This year turned the tide.

Three states—**Maine, Maryland, and Washington**—approved marriage equality, the first time with a popular vote, while a fourth state, **Minnesota**, refused to create a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage. Contests for LGBTQ candidates covered 37 states, including North Dakota and Virginia; they won seven of eight federal races, 71 of 94 state offices, and 40 of 50 local offices. This 77-percent win exceeded the 65 percent in 2010. The number of state legislatures with no openly-LGBTQ members also shrank from 17 to 10.

Tammy Baldin (D-WI) became the first openly-LGBTQ person ever elected to the U.S. Senate. Six other LGBTQ candidates were also elected to the House. Teacher **Mark Takano** became the first openly-gay person of color in the House when he was elected in conservative Riverside (CA). **Mark Pocan** will replace Baldwin in her former House district, and **Sean Patrick Maloney** will represent a New York district. Reps. **Jared Polis** (CO) and **David Cicilino** (RI) were re-elected.



Tina Kotek (above right) became the first openly lesbian to lead a statehouse (Oregon) when she joined four gays who will lead houses in other states. **Mark Ferrandino's** (left) leadership of Colorado's House is particularly ironic because his predecessor, Republican Speaker Frank McNulty, killed a civil union bill poised for passage by sending it back to committee last May after it had enough votes to pass. Washington state House chose openly gay state Senator **Ed Murray** to lead them, and two incumbent gay speakers will hold onto their positions: Rhode Island's **Gordon Fox** (right) and California's **John A. Perez**.



If openly-gay Colorado state Sen. **Pat Steadman** becomes president of the Colorado Senate, the state will be the first one to have gay leaders for both chambers of a state legislature. **Stacie Laughton** (NH) is the first trans person elected to a state legislature, and **Krysten Sinema** is the first bisexual to be elected the U.S. House. She's also a "non-theist"—and from Arizona, of all places. In Texas, **Mary Gonzalez**, self-identified as a pansexual, ran unopposed in the general election to represent El Paso in the state legislature.



Bisexual **Kate Brown** (left) won re-election as Oregon's secretary of state, despite a well-funded Republican challenge and opposition by 14 state newspapers, including the somewhat progressive *Register-Guard* in Eugene. All the elected officials named above are Democrats: the only openly-LGBTQ Republican running for Congress, **Richard Tisei**, lost his Massachusetts race to Rep. John Tierney.

More good election news is available at <http://nclsnewday.wordpress.com/2012/11/17/good-lgbtq-news/>

Politics on Our Side

San Francisco will now cover the cost of gender reassignment surgeries for its uninsured transgender residents. Health commissioner Cecilia Chung, a trans woman, said that people who feel as if their inner selves don't match their bodies' gender are more likely to suffer serious diseases including heart disease, HIV and hepatitis. Surgeries will be contracted out to private doctors until the health department recruits its own surgeons.

Although Arizona seems an unlikely place to allow marriage equality, a group called Arizona Advocates for Marriage Equality is pursuing that right in the red state. A May polling found that 77 percent

of Arizonans support either marriage or civil unions, including 63 percent of Republicans and 79 percent of Hispanics. And the majority of federal representatives—five of nine—are Democrats.

More than 50,000 people joined in Chile's pride fest, "Open Mind Fest," in early November at the same time that thousands celebrated in Argentina's gay pride march in Buenos Aires. After a gay man was beaten to death earlier this year in Chile, the president signed an anti-discrimination law approved in Congress after being stuck there for seven years. Lawmakers in Chile are also preparing to debate a civil union law to give inheritance and other rights to same-sex couples.

President Takes Time to Reassure Girl with Two Dads

A month before the election, 10-year-old Sophia Bailey Klugh wrote this letter to the president: "I am so glad that you agree two men can love each other because I have two dads and they love each other, but at school kids think that it's gross and weird, but it really hurts my heart and feelings.... If you were me and you had two dads that loved each other and kids at school teased you about it, what would you do?"

During the turmoil of the election campaign, the president took time to answer Sophia:

Dear Sophia,

Thank you for writing me such a thoughtful letter about your family. Reading it made me proud to be your president and even more hopeful about the future of our nation.

In America, no two families look the same. We celebrate this diversity. And we recognize that whether you have two dads or one mom what matters above all is the love we show one another. You are very fortunate to have two parents who care deeply for you. They are lucky to have such an exceptional daughter in you.

Our differences unite us. You and I are blessed to live in a country where we are born equal no matter what we look like on the outside, where we grow up, or who our parents are. A good rule is to treat others the way you hope they will treat you. Remind your friends at school about this rule if they say something that hurts your feelings.

Thanks again for taking the time to write me. I'm honored to have your support and inspired by your compassion. I'm sorry I couldn't make it to dinner, but I'll be sure to tell Sasha and Malia you say hello.

Sincerely,
Barack Obama

Dan Savage, creator of the "It Gets Better" campaign, has launched a new **website to thank straight allies** who supported marriage equality. The photo site, <http://straightupthanks.tumblr.com/>, is a space for photos of the many non-LGBT people who helped gays and lesbians win marriage equality.

The ACLU of Utah is suing the Davis School District (Utah) because officials ordered its elementary schools to remove the children's book, *In Our Mother's House*, from their libraries. The picture book tells the story of children being raised by a lesbian couple. Utah has a state law barring homosexual advocacy in the school curriculum. At this time the book must be kept behind the circulation desk instead of on the shelves.

Spain's Constitutional Court has **upheld the legality of the country's marriage equality** law, denying an appeal that marriage means only the union of a man and woman.

Lacking any rational medical reason, the Federal Aviation Administration has **eliminated unnecessary psychological testing once required for transgender pilots**.

Ryan James Yezak's seven-minute **history of U.S. attitudes toward LGBT people** during the last half century is well-worth viewing. As Ellen DeGeneres said, "It's okay to be gay!" http://www.alternet.org/newsandviews/article/764529/the_history_of_gay_rights%2C_in_seven_minutes/

Local PFLAG October Activities

Gay 101 Workshop Presented to Newport High Staff

Newport High GSA president Jordan Ostrum and Jeanne St.John led a workshop for Newport High School staff members titled "Gay 101." Based on the bully prevention research conducted by GLSEN, the materials include data on the effects of bullying on LGBT students including mental and physical health issues, school dropout rates, and rates of suicide compared to other students.

They also received the Genderbread graphic that explains gender identity, gender expression, biological sex, and sexual orientation. A fact sheet provided definitions and basic information about the number of species exhibiting homosexual behavior (1500+) and the number that exhibit homophobia (1) as well as the approximate percentage of LGBT persons in every culture. Other high schools will be offered the same workshop in coming months.

PFLAG OCC, Welcoming Churches Work Together

The success of our PFLAG chapter in recruiting churches to become welcoming and affirming and their engaging with PFLAG to support the LGBT community has been documented in the December 2012 issue of *Interweave Connect*. This national publication of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship focuses on the LGBT community, and this issue features PFLAG chapters, including PFLAG OCC.

Following a brief history of PFLAG OCC five years ago founded because of the tragic suicide of a gay teen on the Oregon Coast, the article describes the organization's development and activities. Because the teen's mother believed the church pastor who told her that the boy would burn in hell because of his "lifestyle," it was important that PFLAG work with religious groups to establish churches welcoming to the LGBTQ community.

"Because fundamentalist churches often predominate in rural areas, negative attitudes toward the gay community were strong, even in this relatively liberal and arts-oriented area. There was only one Welcoming Congregation on the Oregon Coast in 2008. PFLAG set out to recruit more support from mainstream churches," according to the article.

Photos of community events supplement the information. The article, one of six in the issue, is on pages 6-8 of the December 2012 issue: <http://interweaveuu.org/index.php/whatsnew/pressreleases>

People Who Make a Difference



Katie Hill, 18, (right) spent the first 15 years of her life as Luke, son of a Marine colonel, while **Arin Andrews**, 16, was born a girl called Emerald who excelled at ballet dancing and won beauty contests. Both struggled with their sexuality all through their childhoods and were teased and bullied, but their lives changed when they both began hormone therapy and later met at a trans support group in Tulsa (OK), instantly falling in love. Arin undergoes testosterone shots, and Katie has finished her female hormone course to develop natural breasts with no silicone implants. She said, “Even from age three, I knew deep down I wanted to be a girl. All I wanted was to play with dolls. I hated my boy body and never felt right in it. More about Katie and Arin at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2230658/The-sex-change-sweethearts-How-pageant-princess-colonels-son-fell-love-BOTH-transgender-treatment.html#ixzz2DB9a9l7V>

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Kyrsten Sinema (right), Arizona’s new House representative, is the first openly-bisexual person to be elected to Congress. She represents a large part of northern metropolitan Phoenix including Paradise Valley. Although voter registration favored Republicans, more people registered as independents than Democrats or Republicans. Sinema represents another first in Congress: she has declared herself as a “non-theist.” A social worker in the Washington Elementary School District before becoming a criminal defense lawyer, Sinema is one of seven LGBT candidates elected to Congress in the most recent election.



In the hour-long fantasy, *S/He is Nancy Joe*, **Mirenko Cechova**, a Czech native, brought her solo docu-dance accompanied by animation and rough-drawn visuals and inspired by her brother who transitioned into her sister for one night only in Washington, D.C. To prepare for her performance, she talked with other trans people for two years. An excerpt of the performance, is at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28TKHASBxxc>

Featherweight **Orlando Cruz**, a 2000 Puerto Rican Olympian and a fringe contender as a professional fighter, has declared himself “a proud gay man.” U.S. Virgin Islander Emile Griffin is the only other professional boxer who came out as having sex with men, and that was long after he ended his 18-year career.



Portland Organization Works to Pass Aid for LGBT Elders

Gay and Grey, a Portland (OR) social service program that provides resources and educates people about the elderly LGBT population, is working for the passage of the LGBT Elder Americans Act of 2012. Introduced by Sen. Michael Bennett (D-CO) and co-sponsored by Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR), this act would amend the Older Americans Act (OAA) of 1965 to provide equal treatment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) older individuals. OAA provides more than \$2 billion annually in nutrition and social services to older people nationwide. If passed, the LGBT Elder Americans Act of 2012 would:

- *Include LGBT individuals in the categorization of vulnerable population with the greatest economic and social need.

- *Permanently establish the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging, the country's first and only technical assistance resource center aimed at improving the quality of services and supports offered to LGBT adults.

- *Prioritize research and development grants for organizations working to improve services for LGBT older adults.

- *Require long-term data collection and analysis relating to the needs of LGBT older adults, program effectiveness and discrimination against LGBT older adults in long-term care settings.

Why Marriage Equality?

- Our country is on a journey of understanding. As more and more people talk to gay and lesbian friends and family about why marriage matters, they understand that this is not a political issue. This is about love, commitment and family.
- Every day, more Oregonians are coming to realize that treating others as you wish to be treated includes opening marriage for gay and lesbian couples.

Repeal of DOMA May Go to Supreme Court in Spring

After victories for marriage equality in three of the nine federal circuit courts, the U.S. Supreme Court will decide on November 30 whether to hear any of the appeals from five different cases that ruled against the 1996 federal Defense of Marriage Act barring federal benefits to same-sex couples. The federal trial courts that heard the cases all ruled the act violates the civil rights of legally married gays and lesbians. If SCOTUS takes one of the cases, the question is how far it will go. The end result could be legalizing marriage equality across the nation, banning it, and retaining the state-by-state legislative and judicial decisions about whether gays and lesbians can marry.

Without a Supreme Court ruling, it is unconstitutional to withhold federal recognition on the more than 1,100 references to marriage in federal laws, codes and regulations to same-sex couples married in the Northeast states covered by the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the 1st and 2nd circuits. These decisions don't apply to same-sex marriages in Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Washington, and the District of Columbia. About 15 percent of Americans now live in states that allow gay marriage, and the number would double if the right were reinstated in California.

Economic and social consequences for gay, lesbian and bisexual couples include Social Security survivor benefits, joint income taxes, inheritance of a deceased spouse's pension, and family health insurance.

PFLAG OCC Receives Foundation Grant

Hard work has paid off again! Thanks to Lisa Bonacci, PFLAG OCC volunteer grantwriter (now living back on the East Coast) we will receive funds from the Pride Foundation to support the LGBT Teen Lunch program at Newport High and to help with expenses for the Youth Leadership Conference and the GSA Spring Conference. Thanks to Lisa—and to PRIDE Foundation for their ongoing support of our work with LGBT teens.

Homeless Teens Focus Of November Meeting

Some statistics show that up to 40% of homeless teens are gay. The November 14 PFLAG program included a DVD from *In the Life* about the plight of these teens, and several participants shared their experiences of being gay teens who were no longer welcome in their own homes. Residential training and education programs like Job Corps have been life-savers for many youth who also expressed deep gratitude for PFLAG and their school and Job Corps GSA clubs.

GSA Officers Co-Present at Youth Leadership Conference

Among teen leaders who attended the November 3 Lincoln County Leadership Conference were Jordan Ostrum and Sabina Botbol, president and vice-president of Newport High GSA, who were co-presenters with Jeanne St. John in the LGBT Issues strand. Follow-up sessions in spring 2013 will be part of the new Youth Leadership Academy. A separate GSA conference is also scheduled then to strengthen the growing number of GSA clubs at local high schools and the Job Corps.

OCC PFLAG Calendar

December 1: World AIDS Day

December 4, 6:00 pm: BRO Marriage Equality Tour—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert

December 6: First day that gays and lesbians can be legally married in Washington!

December 10: Human Rights Day

December 11, 9:00 am: OUT Lesbian Coffee—Coffee House, Newport Bayfront

December 18, 9:00 am: OUT on the Oregon Coast for Lesbians--Green Salmon, Yachats

January 8, 9:00 am: OUT Lesbian Coffee—Coffee House, Newport Bayfront

January 9, 7:00 pm: PFLAG Meeting—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

January 22, 9:00 am: OUT on the Oregon Coast for Lesbians--Green Salmon, Yachats

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 except for "Men's Pot Luck." Occasionally we bend that rule for special events.

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

Social LGBT Oregon Coast Group:
www.outoregoncoast.com
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Out-Oregon-Coast/194768480642314>

Join PFLAG!

YES! I support the mission of PFLAG. Enclosed is my annual 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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