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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 2013

Take Action!

Students, teachers, and community leaders in Sullivan (IN) are developing a “traditional” prom that would exclude openly LGBTQ people. One of the teachers is Diane Medley, who said that being gay is a choice and that gay people don’t have a purpose in life. Thanks for a change.org petition, Medley has been placed on administrative leave.

After the rumor that the Boy Scouts of America might soon allow troops to include LGBT leaders and members, the leadership postponed its decision until May. Its policies still read that the organization will not employ “atheists, agnostics, known or avowed homosexuals, or others.” Being convicted of a crime, however, “is not an automatic bar to employment” in the Boy Scouts. Following is one of the petitions regarding the BSA bigotry: <http://www.change.org/petitions/boy-scouts-don-t-let-your-anti-gay-policy-deny-my-son-his-eagle-award>

After Aaron and Melissa Klein of Sweet Cakes by Melissa in Gresham (OR) refused to prepare a wedding cake for a lesbian couple, a number of letters responded to the news articles about their action. The best one may have been that the bakery should have posted their policies—including their bigotry—so that everyone who goes into the business would know who could be served there. Although the Kleins are willing to sell any other baked goods to LGBT couples, they claim that the wedding cake violated their religion.

We mourn the loss of high school sophomore Jadin Bell, who died after trying to hang himself in his home town of La Grande. Family friend Bud Hill said that 15-year-old Jadin had been the victim of intense bullying both in person and on the Internet because he was gay.

Marriage Equality Coming to Oregon

Basic Rights Oregon made the decision to move forward with putting marriage equality on the ballot in 2014, and on Valentine's Day, they held meetings in 14 communities from Pendleton to Medford and Astoria to Grants Pass, including Newport and Lincoln City. According to BRO Executive Director Jeana Frazzini, "We held 14 events across the state, mobilized hundreds of volunteers, and in one day we met our initial goal of 1,000 sponsorship signatures to advance the measure that will make it legal for gay and lesbian couples to marry in Oregon. Thousands of Oregonians stood up for basic freedom. For love. For families. For the freedom to marry for gay and lesbian couples in Oregon."

At PFLAG's regular meeting on February 13, held at the Newport Library, Mike Grigsby, BRO Field Organizer, talked about plans for the upcoming campaign and gathered initial signatures to qualify the measure. On February 14, PFLAG hosted the BRO signature gathering effort at the Eventuary in Lincoln City with help from Taft High's Gay/Straight Alliance Club.

PFLAG OCC will host another Marriage Equality gathering at its regular meeting on June 12. Plans will be made for signature gathering and support in Lincoln County.—
Jeanne St.John

Oregon Marriage Campaign Joined by Other States

If BRO is successful in its attempt to change the state constitution, Oregon could be the first state to overturn a constitutional ban on gay marriage, which voters approved by over 13 points in 2004. The landscape has changed dramatically over the last decade. A recent PPP poll shows Oregonians now approving of marriage equality by 54 to 40 percent.

Because the legislature can't change the constitution, the vote lies with the people. With a simple majority vote in 2014, the discriminatory amendment could be removed from the constitution, leaving the state free to determine whether to accept marriage equality.

The work will be spearheaded by Oregon United for Marriage, a coalition of individuals and organizations that will campaign for marriage equality in the state. Within five days of BRO's announcement to put the amendment on the 2014 ballot, the organization turned in 2,000 petition signatures, twice the necessary number to start the ballot title process. The total number of valid signatures to get the initiative on the ballot is 116,284—8 percent of the votes cast for the governor in 2010.

In Minnesota a vote on the issue in the legislature has grown more likely, possibly occurring in the spring. The Illinois Senate passed a marriage equality bill on Valentine's Day and sent it to the state House. A marriage equality bill that passed in the Rhode Island House last month now waits for a Senate vote. Delaware, Hawaii, and New Jersey may be next in voting on same-sex marriage although Hawaiians think that marriage equality will be tabled for this session.

Republicans are cautious about voting in favor of marriage equality because 21 of the 47 GOP members in the eight states approving marriage equality are no longer in office. Yet public opinion is rapidly shifting. The 60-percent opposition to same-sex marriage has changed to only 43 percent in 2013. At the same time, a plurality of people in the United States, 48 percent, supports marriage equality, up from under one-third in 2004, the year that anti-marriage equality amendments and referenda appeared on the ballots of 11 states.

In an op-ed piece for *The American Conservative*, GOP presidential candidate Jon Huntsman called marriage equality "the right thing to do."

Politics on Our Side

After passage of a state law last July barring discrimination of transgender students in public schools, Massachusetts public school officials report that they are ready to implement guidelines that **allow transgender students** to use bathrooms and play on sports teams designated for their preferred genders, among other provisions.

Minnesota State Senator Branden Petersen is expected to sign on as the **first Republican co-sponsor of a gay marriage bill**. In the past he voted in favor of a constitutional amendment limiting marriage to heterosexual couples.

The Senate has passed the Violence against Women Act that includes **protections for LGBT victims**. The bill now moves to the House for a vote.

Led by Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR), 37 Senators sent a letter to President Obama urging him to issue an executive order **barring federal contractors from hiring discrimination** on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. This discrimination is still legal in 34 states. Because federal contractors employ more than 20 percent of the country's workforce, this executive order would extend equal workplace rights to more than 16 million workers.

Following the Pentagon's decision to extend benefits to same-sex military families,

Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA) introduced the **Military Spouses Equal Treatment Act** to change the definition of "spouse" in parts of the U.S. code related to recognition, support, and benefits for married service members and veterans. To grant full benefits to lesbian and gay service members and their families, Sens. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) have introduced the Charlie Morgan Military Spouses Equal Treatment Act, named after the 48-year-old New Hampshire National Guard Chief Warrant Officer Charlie Morgan who died of breast cancer on February 10, 2013.

When the Mexican Supreme Court ruled against an unconstitutional Oaxacan law that bans same-sex marriage, it **cited two U.S. Supreme Court cases** that address race-based discrimination and segregation: *Loving v. Virginia* found state bans on interracial marriages unconstitutional, and *Brown v. Board of Education* struck down laws that allowed separate public schools for black and white students.

Germany's Federal Constitutional Court has ruled that one member of a same-sex civil partnership **can adopt the partner's** stepchild or adopted child. Until now, they could only adopt a partner's biological child. The court ordered the government to draw up new legislation by next June. It said the German constitution doesn't justify ruling out one partner adopting the other's adopted child.

Before the U.S. Supreme Court decides two marriage-equality cases this spring, the justices must determine whether LGBT people constitute a vulnerable group and needs help in asserting equal rights. The question is whether banning marriage equality violates the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of equal protection under the law, whether LGBT people merit the same protections as some other groups that have experienced discrimination. That finding determines what standard the court will adopt in reviewing the law in question. If it deems that a particular group merits protection, the justices will look at the statute with a more skeptical eye and are more likely to strike it down. Court rulings in the past have held that, in the face of discrimination, classifications based on race, national origin and gender all require closer "scrutiny," the term the court invokes in discrimination cases. Determination of "heightened scrutiny" in LGBT cases would open up states to a number of lawsuits for LGBT rights because all the states might have to use the same definition.

Things ended badly for five teenagers who lured 24-year-old gay Adam Salnardi to a park in Gresham (OR) to bash and rob him. Armed with guns, the youths kicked and punched Salnardi before taking his wallet, cellphone, and other valuables. Police arrested two of the perpetrators, and a SWAT team was sent after the other three who ran into a nearby apartment and then surrendered.

Brown University has become the 36th college to cover sex-change surgery as part of its student health plan. Another 25 colleges that do not cover surgery to provide related hormone therapy, and an addition 20 universities have plans to cover some or all sex-change treatments for employees. Almost 25 percent of the Fortune 500 companies cover sex-change surgery.

When hate-group Westboro Baptist Church led by Fred Phelps decided to protest Vassar because of its liberal positions, the school decided to make money off the event. Raising \$100 for each minute that the protesters are present at the school on February 28, they have made almost \$100,000 already. The funds will go to The Trevor Project, a suicide prevention organization that focuses on LGBT youth.

One of the first companies to join the Human Rights Campaign coalition of major companies calling for DOMA's repeal is Marriott, founded by devout Mormon, John Willard Marriott. Former GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney is a member of the Marriott board.

Burial Permitted for Spouse

After Nancy Lynchild (left) died, retired Air Force Lt. Col. Linda Campbell, 66, wanted her ashes to be buried at the Wilamette National Cemetery so that she could have her own ashes mixed with those of her spouse when Campbell died. The ban on federal marriage equality prevented this—or so Campbell thought.



Thanks to the support of Oregon's Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian and Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR), however, Campbell's wishes have come true. A month after Lynchild died of breast cancer three days before Christmas, Eric Schinseki, the secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, personally approved a waiver of VA policy to permit the burial of the 64-year-old woman. The decision applies only to Campbell and does not signal a formal change of policy.

In the same cemetery Campbell's father, a World War II veteran, and her mother have their ashes under a stone that states "Together forever."

Times Changing for Birth Certificates

Because of a judgment in a Miami-Dade court (FL), a 22-month-old girl will have three parents on her birth certificate. Married couple, Maria Italiano and Cher Filippazzo, asked Massimiliano Gerino to provide sperm. He did and the couple had a daughter, but there was no legal agreement. Before the birth, Gerina decided he wanted to be considered a parent, not merely a sperm donor.

The ruling stated that all three will be listed as parents on the birth certificate, but only the two women will have parental rights. Gerina, who is not required to pay child support, will have visitation.

New Republican Position on LGBT Rights?

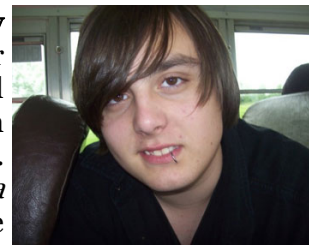
From potential 2016 presidential candidate, Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL): He opposes an amendment banning same-sex marriage and renews his support for defining marriage as only between one man and one woman. He is "against discriminating against people" but has no opinion on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) or LGBT protections in immigration law.

People Who Make a Difference



Robbie Rogers (right), a former U.S. international playing in England this season, says he is gay and "could not be happier" about his decision to go public with his disclosure. His website post read, "Life is only complete when your loved ones know you. ... Try explaining to your loved ones after 25 years you are gay." Several major individual-sport athletes have come out as LGBT, but no professional athlete in any of the four major North American team sports did so until after he was finished playing.

Denied the right to take his boyfriend to his school prom, **Stacy Dawson** has obtained the help of the Southern Poverty Law Center who is threatening to sue the school unless they revise the school dance policy. The school handbook of Scott County Central High School states that the prom is limited to "traditional" couples. A federal court ruling in the Mississippi case, *McMillen v. Itawamba County School District*, that a same-sex date "is protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution."



Sean Karson, MIT junior, is the baseball team's starting third baseman, founder of a technology start-up called Sponge Systems, and openly gay as of early February. Inspired by Brendan Burke, of the "You Can Play" project, and James Nutter, former University of Southern Maine baseball player, he came out to his team. Only a few teammates held back, but they emailed him to say how much they respected him. Karson marveled at how easy it was and thinks that there will be an active male athlete in professional team sports coming out soon, maybe within the next month.

Openly lesbian Jools and Lynda Topp are the folk singing and activist sister comedy duo, **Topp Twins**, of New Zealand. Known for their country-music-influenced style, live shows, and television performances, they also have two children's books. Much beloved and respected in their home country, they also tour, appearing in Everett (WA) this past month. Information is at <http://topptwins.com/> and a documentary about them is available on Hulu.



LGBT in the School Curriculum

“If you can’t see it, you can’t be it.” That’s how Jordan Ostrum, president of Newport High School’s GSA (Gay/Straight Alliance), describes the effect of the absence of LGBT role models and curriculum references in school materials.

According to the 2011 GLSEN Research on Bullying of LGBT Teens, in schools with a curriculum that affirmed LGBT people and history, there were fewer homophobic remarks, and teens were less likely to feel unsafe and LGBT teens reported that their peers were accepting of them.

Currently California is the only state that requires schools to incorporate LGBT people and issues into the school instructional program. While materials are slowly becoming available, they are specific to California standards and requirements.

PFLAG OCC hopes to improve the situation for Lincoln County students with its LGBT Curriculum Inclusion Project developed by Jordan Ostrum. This project, “Incorporating LGBT Themes into Secondary School Curricula,” includes a list of ways that LGBT individuals, ideas, and events can be meaningfully introduced into the curriculum of numerous secondary school subjects. Ideas for projects and relation to Oregon common core standards are also included.

Subjects included in the project are English, Math, Science, Social Sciences, Spanish/Foreign Language, Health, Physical Education, and Fine Arts. The curriculum inclusion suggestions are linked to State of Oregon standards for assessment.

This is an impressive piece of work—even more amazing because it was completed by a high school student! Thanks, Jordan, for making a major contribution to this school district and students for years to come!—Jeanne St.John



Youth Leadership Academy Includes GSA Reps

GSA groups were well represented among the teen leaders who attended the January 26 Lincoln County Youth Leadership Academy day-long workshop at Oregon Coast Community College. PFLAG members Terri Woodd and Jeanne St.John led a session called, “I’m an Upstander,” using the bully circle from the Olweus Bully Prevention curriculum. They demonstrated the effects of bullying and “slut-shaming” on teen girls and encouraged the teen leaders to actively stand up against violence against girls and women.

LCYL Academy will offer one more day-long workshop this school year for teen leaders with a focus on communication, team leadership, bully prevention, and drug and alcohol abuse prevention. PFLAG is a partner with PAADA (Partnership Against Alcohol, & Drug Abuse) and Lincoln Community Dispute Resolution in planning and presenting these conferences.



On Valentine’s Day one billion people (representing the number of girls and women who are physically or sexually abused every year) organized to rise up, strike, and dance in nearly 200 countries around the world. At the Newport Recreation Center over 60 people danced, sang, and spoke the truth that women everywhere share the same struggles. Thanks to Terri Woodd (far left) for organizing and hosting this dynamic event; to Akia Woods for her beautiful and soulful rendition of the theme song; to Shawn Brateng for his powerful reading of the “Man Prayer;” and to Lisa Gray (left) for collecting signatures for Marriage Equality. PFLAG joined NOW (National Organization for Women) and My Sister’s Place in planning and sponsoring this event.—Jeanne St.John

March 13 PFLAG Meeting

Representatives from Siletz Tribes will talk about the role of LGBT persons in current and historical tribal life at the regular March PFLAG meeting on March 13.

The Queer Chavurah of Temple Beth Israel, Eugene invites all lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/queer people and their allies to join them March 10, 4:00-6:30 to **honor Rabbi Yitz Husbands-Hankin** and his dedicated work on behalf of diversity in the community. Jewish GLBTQ people who want to know more about the Queer Chavurah at TBI, please contact Enid Lefton at enidleft@comcast.net.

Declaring 2012 the **“gayest year ever,”** Towleroad blog listed 150 “game-changing wins” last year. Read about this “quantum leap for LGBT rights in the U.S.” at <http://www.towleroad.com/2012/12/gay-surge-150-game-changing-wins-2012-gayest-year-ever.html>

The Associated Press has decided to use the terms **“husband” and “wife” for same-sex couples** after originally refusing to do so. The entry for these terms will appear in the AP StylebookOnline as well as the print edition and Stylebook Mobile.

Soon to be released documentary *Breaking Through* explores the powerful personal stories of elected officials who ran as openly LGBT and won. The film includes interviews with U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin and other out lawmakers who overcame seemingly impossible barriers to winning election. Tax-deductible donations to the non-profit Victory Fund made this film by Cindi Abel possible.

OCC PFLAG Calendar

March 5, 9:00 am: OUT Lesbian Coffee—Coffee House, Newport Bayfront

March 10, 4:00-6:30: Honoring Rabbi Yitz Husbands-Hankin—Temple Beth Israel, 1175 E. 29th Avenue, Eugene.

March 13, 7:00 pm: PFLAG Meeting, Native Americans and LGBT—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

March 19, 9:00 am: OUT on the Oregon Coast for Lesbians--Green Salmon, Yachats

April 6, 7:30 pm: Damsels Divas & Dames 2013: I Will Survive--A Benefit for HIV Alliance—Hult Center, Eugene

April 3, 9:00 am: OUT Lesbian Coffee—Coffee House, Newport Bayfront

April 11, 7:00 pm: PFLAG Meeting, LCDS Bully Prevention Update—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

April 17, 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 coastalaidsnetwork@gmail.com for information)

We also try to have pizza in Tillamook or Pacific City. Email Dan, coastalaidsnetwork@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.

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

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