

Transgender Activists Speak at PFLAG Meeting

Three local activists shared their personal and family experiences of discovery and decision after they became aware that their bodies and brains were at odds. A parent began by describing her family's experience of her daughter "coming out" as her son, after several years of confusion and depression. She described the adjustment process for herself and other family members as well, explaining that the entire family undergoes a transition.

A young woman told about her recent transition during college when she couldn't focus on her studies because of confusion about both her sexual orientation and gender identity. Once she was clear about her gender identity, she was able to begin the transition to living as a woman. She described a painful separation with her mother who has yet to be fully understanding and supportive.

The "elder spokesperson" for the transgender panel is a long-time PFLAG OCC member, having attended the first organizational meeting in mid-2008. Still identifying as a male at that time, she says that PFLAG OCC gave her support and courage to pursue her lifetime desire to live as a woman. Now fully transitioned, she is an activist at the state level, working with the transgender team of Basic Rights Oregon.

We appreciate the courage of each of the panelists to tell their stories so that we can understand more fully the issues that they have faced. We also appreciate Chris Graamans for his gift of time and expertise in videotaping the panel presentation.

PFLAG OCC joined many other human rights organizations in observing Transgender Day of Remembrance on Nov. 20. This day was established to remember and honor those who have been killed, brutalized, or made to suffer abuse or isolation because of the difference in their gender identity. PFLAG OCC plans additional transgender educational events to be scheduled early in 2015.—Jeanne St.John

PFLAG OCC a Partner in 2014-15 Youth Leadership Academy

PFLAG OCC will again partner with PAADA (Partnership Against Alcohol & Drug Abuse) and Lincoln Conflict Resolution Center to offer two one-day workshops for students in Lincoln County high schools and Angell Job Corps. The first session was on November 5 at Hatfield Marine Science Center where the day started with a presentation by new LCSD Superintendent Steve Boynton. Students then rotated through three sessions in which they learned about drug and alcohol abuse prevention, impaired driving, and healthy relationships. Workshops were led by Brittany Kosydar (bottom left), Domestic Violence Prevention Specialist, and Jeanne



St.John, PFLAG OCC Co-chair.

The final session introduced students to the School Based Health Centers and the newly adopted Community Health Improvement Plan which includes drug and alcohol abuse prevention and the Upstander Bully model. This year's theme is Forge a Path, Leave a Trail.

For more information about the Youth Leadership Academy, contact PAADA Director Don McDonald at 541-574-7890. — Jeanne St.John

Politics on Our Side

Philadelphia: The mayor has announced plans for a 50th anniversary commemoration of a LGBT rights protest at Independence Hall. The three-day celebration includes a screening of *Gay Pioneers*, a wreath-laying ceremony, and a festival. The 40 advocates who took part in the first protest grew to 150 four years later after Stonewall riots in New York's Greenwich Village.

Richmond (CA): Jovanka Beckles was one of a slate of four city councilors who defeated Chevron after the company paid \$3 million to elect their own candidates. The progressive team won with just \$50,000 to give the council a potential 6-1 left-leaning majority. Beckles had earlier experienced harassment in city council meetings because she is a lesbian.

Massachusetts: The state has elected its first openly LGBT attorney general, Maura Healy, who ran for the position after AG Martha Coakley ran for the state's governor.

North Carolina: Citing religious views, at least six judges have resigned in the state after marriage equality became legal.

Botswana: A judge has overturned a government ban on a gay rights lobbying group. The Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals of Botswana (LEGABIBO) will be allowed to register and campaign for changes to anti-gay legislation although engaging in homosexual acts is still illegal.

Great Britain: Former MEP Lord Michael Cashman, co-founder of the country's Stonewall organization, has been ennobled as "Baron Cashman" and received a lifetime seat in the House of Lords. He is the Labour Party's global LGBT rights envoy.

Malaysia: A three-judge panel has unanimously ruled that a ban on cross-dressing is discriminatory, overturning a Sharia rule in the Negeri Sembilan state. The court called the law "degrading" and "inhumane."

Marriage Equality across the United States in November

Arkansas/Mississippi: Federal judges have overthrown the states' bans on marriage equality. Mississippi has appealed to the 5th Circuit Court.

Kansas: The state Supreme Court allowed the state's most populated county, Johnson County, to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples but didn't indicate whether the ruling applied to other counties. Over one-fourth of the other counties are also issuing licenses to same-sex couples.

Missouri: U.S. District Court Judge Ortrie D. Smith struck down the state's ban on marriage equality.

Montana: A federal judge who struck down the state's ban on marriage equality made Montana the last state in the 9th Circuit Court to have its ban overturned.

South Carolina: The Supreme Court refused a stay of the state's ruling, continuing its position of staying out of state and circuit court decisions and making South Carolina the 35th state where same-sex couples can be legally married.

6th Circuit Court upheld bans on same-sex marriage in Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee. Four other federal courts of appeals and over two dozen federal trial courts have struck down these bans.

If all 50 states legalized marriage equality, at least \$2.5 billion would be added to local economies.

Michele Josue has produced *Matt Shepard Is a Friend of Mine*, a film due for release in February 2015. Shepard's parents re joining Josue in a five-day trip to showcase the film in Russia, including a gay film festival in St. Petersburg.

Benjy, a healthy pedigree Charolais bull, was scheduled to be slaughtered by his owner in Ireland **because the bull is "gay"** when activists stepped in to save him. The Gay UK and the Animal Rights Action Network has raised over \$6,000 toward its \$8,000 goal and will give any additional money to charities helping the LGBT community.

The Simpsons co-creator Sam Simon, who suffers from terminal cancer, has offered to pay for Benjy's transportation to the Hillside Animal Sanctuary in Norwich.

OutVets, a nonpartisan group for LGBT veterans and their families and supporters, **marched for the first time** in Boston's annual Veterans Day parade. It is the first LGBT veterans' organization to apply to march. The group also hopes to march in Boston Pride and other annual LGBT parades such as the Dorchester Day Parade. It may also apply to march in the St. Patrick's Day parade, which has always banned LGBT groups.

Pope Francis has **removed conservative anti-LGBT U.S. Cardinal Raymond Burke**, 66, from the second most important position in the Vatican to a ceremonial figurehead as Patron of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta which oversees charity to seniors.

Go for 'Pride' at the Movies

Thirty years ago, a group of gay men and lesbians decided to help striking Welsh coal miners because they were both marginalized groups fighting the government. At first reluctant to have anything to do with the queers offering assistance, many miners and their families gradually developed close relationships with the Londoners who dropped into their tiny village, offering them money and support after the government froze all the funds in the miners' union. Most people were not aware of the coalition of miners and LGBT people until writer Steven Beresford pitched the idea to film producer David Livingston. The result was the movie, *Pride*, which received an award in the Cannes Film Festival.

The depiction of the events surrounding the events of 1984-85, powerfully moving from heartbreaking to hilarious, results in a "feel-good" response to the growing communication between two disparate groups once separated by prejudice. Incredible acting makes the personalities come alive as if the viewer is actually a part of the struggle toward acceptance. Skillful, unobtrusive filming and editing also made the movie a great experience.

The Bijou Theater in Lincoln City has provided this must-see film to the central Oregon Coast audience. Check it out: you'll want to stand up and cheer the people behind the film's events.

More information about Pride can be found at <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/aug/31/pride-film-gay-activists-miners-strike-interview>

Methodist Minister Refrocked

Seven years ago United Methodist Rev. Frank Schaefer presided at his gay son's wedding and was subsequently defrocked. Now he has been reinstated as a clergyman in his church. The denomination's top court has upheld last June's decision to return his ministerial credentials after a trial court removed his clerical position.

Schaefer's reinstatement includes back-pay and benefits but doesn't sanction same-sex marriage within his church. Only a vote at the General Conference could take that step.

In response to Schaefer's punishment, some pastors married same-sex couples while progressive bishops refused to participate in trials against Methodist ministers who perform these marriages.

Conservative Misuses Lesbian Wedding To Promote Traditional Relationships



The proliferation of same-sex weddings has resulted in a huge variety of photographs. Jessica Valenti pointed out a huge embarrassment for Fox network when it mistakenly used one of these to support traditional marriage.

In this piece, Susan Venker, niece of conservative anti-gay leader Phyllis Schlafly, used a photograph of two lesbians, Lela Mc Arthur and Stephanie Figarelle of Anchorage (AK), kissing at the top of the Empire State Building after their marriage on Valentine's Day almost three years ago.

At Feministing, Lori Adelman posted Lela's Facebook response.

Venker's article now uses a generic male/female visual instead of the photograph, and Fox has refused to admit it ever used this photograph. Below are links to this story.

Earlier, Fox drew heavy criticism for using a photograph of the comic film Mrs. Doubtfire, in which Robin Williams played a father dressing as an elderly woman to see his children, in an article about California and Oregon blocking insurance companies' discrimination against healthcare for transgender people. That photo was replaced with an image of a stethoscope.

[Ed. Note: The wedding took place in 2012 and the article in 2013, but I just came across it. Love it! More information at following links including details about the wedding.]

<http://equallywed.com/headlines/1113-alaskan-women-become-first-same-sex-couple-to-wed-atop-empire-state-building.html>

<http://feministing.com/2013/02/09/woman-from-fox-news-accidental-same-sex-wedding-picture-speaks-out/>

<http://jessicavalenti.com/post/42612393836/shhhh-no-one-tell-fox-news-that-the-wedding-kiss>

<http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2013/02/05/to-be-happy-must-admit-women-and-men-arent-equal/>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2101001/Lesbian-couple-Alaska-sex-pair-wed-Empire-State-Building.html>

Christians Support the LGBT Community

Bishop Allyson Abrams, 43, has left her husband and the Zion Progress Baptist Church in Detroit because she married another woman, Diana Williams. She said, "I was open to love in whatever way the Lord would bless me." According to Abrams, same-sex marriage is in accord with Christian teachings: "The Bible teaches that ANYONE who believes in Jesus Christ will be accepted into God's realm. You can be a child of God and living in loving committed relationships with persons of the same sex."

Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, has called the concept of "reparative" therapy "severely counterproductive" and said that gay and lesbian people have been treated "really, really badly."

People Who Make a Difference



John Smid, a former foremost leader of “ex-gay” therapy, has married his partner, **Larry McQueen** (left), in Oklahoma. In 2008, Smid resigned as executive director of ex-gay ministry Love in Action. The same year, he divorced his wife. Smid now runs Grace Rivers, a monthly Christian fellowship group for “those who call themselves gay and want to seek a relationship with God in a place where they’re free to do that.”

Ashley Broadway has been elected president of the American Military Partner Association, the nation’s largest organization for the partners, spouses, and families of U.S. LGBT service members and veterans. One of her

past victories was to open Fort Bragg’s (NC) spouses club to LGBT partners, just hours after she was elected Fort Bragg’s 2013 “Spouse of the Year.” Broadway has been with her spouse, **Heather Mack** (right) for 17 years; they have a three-year-old son, Carson. Mack is a lieutenant colonel in the Army.



The Latvian foreign minister, **Edgars Rinkēvičs** (right), has come out as gay and vows to fight for marriage equality. Latvia is one of three Baltic states including Lithuania and Estonia that joined the European Union in 2004 after becoming free from the Soviet Union in 1990-1992.



UK’s Stonewall has chosen **Pepe Julian Onziema** (left), a leading Ugandan activist and transman, as the group’s hero of the year for battling anti-LGBT laws in the African nation. Onziema receives regular death threats and cannot leave home without taking precautions. The country’s Anti-Homosexuality Act, which obliges Ugandans to denounce

LGBT people to the authorities, was overturned on a technicality last summer, but the government has filed an appeal and MPs have signed a petition for a new vote.

World AIDS Day Observance

This year's observance will begin at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, December 2, with pizza at Gallucci's in Lincoln City. Afterwards, attendees will go to St. James to light candles at the AIDS Memorial Tree. All are invited to participate.

Holiday Dessert Potluck

Everyone is invited to celebrate the holidays at the Wednesday, December 10, PFLAG Holiday Dessert Potluck. We'll share great desserts and support for upcoming holiday gatherings which are difficult for some LGBT people.

Mini-Grants Available For Gay/Straight Alliances

What does your GSA need this year to succeed and have more influence in your school? Oregon Safe Schools and Communities Coalition and Portland PFLAG are collaborating again this year to support GSAs by offering mini-grants.

OSSCC will be providing mini-grants to GSAs outside the Portland metropolitan area, and Portland PFLAG will provide mini-grants to GSAs within Portland metro area.

A simple application form must be submitted. Mini-grants of up to \$200 are based on a first-come, first-served basis, until the funds are depleted. GSAs can find application forms on OSSCC website: www.oregonsafeschools.org

SAVE THE DATE

Love Is Love Valentine Party

Sunday, February 8: 2:00-4:00 pm

OCC PFLAG Calendar

December 2, 4:00-5:30 pm: LGBT Happy Hour, Georgie's, Newport

December 2, 7:00 pm: World AIDS Day, Gallucci's, Lincoln City

December 10, 6:00-7:30 pm: PFLAG Meeting, Holiday Dessert Potluck—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

December 11, 8:30 am: PFLAG OCC Board Meeting

December 16, 7:00 pm: CAN Pizza, Abby's, Newport

December 19 & 21, 6:00 pm: *Last Christmas*, a gay musical—Zach's Bistro, Newport [More information at <http://www.oregonbistro.com/broadway/>]

December 21, 11:00 am: Women's Coffee Hour, Café Mundo, Newport

January 14: 6:00-7:30 pm: PFLAG Meeting—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

The Coastal AIDS Network* monthly activities:

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

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

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.

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

HuffPost Gay Voices editors and readers have selected "22 Movies That Changed The Way We Felt About Ourselves As LGBT People."

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/11/10/movies-lgbt-identity-_n_6125126.html

Outcasting, a new series from Media for the Public Good, is produced and created by LGBT and straight high school students that **focuses on issues facing queer youth**. The programs are distributed nationally on the Pacifica Radio Network.

Join PFLAG!

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

_____ Household (\$35)
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*Includes membership in National PFLAG with affiliates in over 365 worldwide communities.

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