



THE NEWSLETTER

October 2015 / ISSUE 10 / VOLUME 22

MARRIAGE EQUALITY



Please join us for our general meeting on **Monday, October 26 at 7:00 pm** at Jewish Family Service (JFS), 8788 Balboa Avenue, San Diego (Kearny Mesa). There is

construction; please be careful as the driveway may be difficult to find at night. Apologies for the short notice in cancelling the last general meeting. We were unaware until the last minute that JFS would be closed for a religious holiday.

Our guest speaker is Doc (Skip) Faulkner, III. In June, after the Supreme Court's decision for marriage equality, Doc observed a backlash of sorts directed toward the LGBTQ community. This also happened in France after they legislated towards equality. Doc will share his observations.

With degrees in Theology, Theater, and Depth Psychology, he is drawn to feeling the real world images behind our words to reconnect in kinder ways.

Please join us for our support groups, then our cookie social, followed by Doc's presentation.

2016 IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

PFLAG memberships are for the calendar year, and 2016 is almost here. That means memberships are due once again. Thank you for being part of our continuing effort to provide support, education, and advocacy on behalf of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender community and their families. Thank you for allowing us to continue to provide monthly meetings, speakers, support groups, an info line, newsletters, educational brochures, etc.

Your membership is important to us--it enables us to strengthen our presence in the community and to have our voices heard. We also help support National PFLAG by sending \$15 of your dues to them which provides

you with membership in the national organization. Please don't renew directly with National, as no part of that benefits our San Diego chapter.

The membership application is on page two, as well as our web site (www.pflag.com), where it is quite convenient to renew/join (through Pay Pal). You can also join/renew at any of the meetings or mail a check made payable to: PFLAG San Diego County, P.O. Box 82762, San Diego, CA 92138. All memberships are tax deductible. Donations are welcomed.

If you join now through December 31, 2015, your membership is valid until December 31, 2016.

MAMA SAID THERE'D BE DAYS LIKE THIS



The kickoff for Mama's Kitchen 11th Annual Pie in the Sky Fundraiser is underway. Mama's Pie in the Sky is a bake sale fundraising

program that benefits Mama's Kitchen—San Diego's only free, county-wide home-delivered meals program for individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS or cancer. Each pie sold provides more than seven home-delivered meals to these clients. You can buy pies from **now until November 25**. The pies sell for \$25 each with \$15 being tax-deductible – definitely a win-win. Your choices are: apple, Dutch apple, pecan, and pumpkin. On a diet? Consider buying a "Love-A-Client Pie" (a donated pie) for just \$25.

Purchasing is as simple as pie! You can order directly online: ww.mamaspies.org or call 619-233-6262. On November 25 (the day before Thanksgiving), you can pick up your pie order at locations all over San Diego for your convenience. More details will be in the November newsletter.

IT WAS A GRAND, GRAND OPENING

Congratulations to the Imperial Valley LGBT Resource Center in El Centro on their Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. There were great speeches, fine food, and live music. PFLAG El Centro played a large part in the celebration.



OCTOBER IS
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS
MONTH



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Membership Application

- New Renewal Change of Address
 Please contact me for volunteer opportunities

Confidentiality is respected. Your donation is tax deductible (Tax ID 33-0512868)

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Type of Membership

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or go online www.pflag.com (forms available)

HELP WANTED

If you are interested in serving on the Scholarship Committee, please contact Hillary Flocke at Hillary.flocke@gmail.com. Someone is needed to plan a January fundraiser and two people are needed to assist in scholarship selections and other tasks related to the scholarship program.

Current Events

Through November 25
Mama's Kitchen Pie in the Sky
(see article)

October 19 | Monday
Mi Familia Support Group

October 26 | Monday
San Diego General Meeting
and Support Groups

October 28 | Wednesday
Transgender Awareness
Roundtable
(see article)

October 29-November 29
Diversionary Theatre
(see article)

November 2 | Monday
PFLAG Support Group
North County Coastal

November 7 | Saturday
Asian Film Festival/
PFLAG co-presentation
(see article)

November 9 | Monday
PFLAG Support Group
East County

November 19 | Thursday
PFLAG Support Group
North County Inland

"All young people, regardless of sexual orientation or identity, deserve a safe and supportive environment in which to achieve their full potential."

--Harvey Milk

VISION STATEMENT

PFLAG envisions a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued, and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

MISSION STATEMENT

By meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG realizes its vision through: Support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ; Education for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ; Advocacy in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ.

SUPPORT GROUPS

SD COUNTY GENERAL MEETING & SUPPORT GROUP

Meets every fourth Monday at 7:00 pm, at Jewish Family Service, 8804 Balboa Avenue, San Diego in Kearny Mesa.

**For further information, contact the Info Line:
888-398-0006 or www.pflag.com**

NORTH COUNTY COASTAL

Meets the first Monday, at 7:00 pm, North County LGBTQ Resource Center, 510 North Coast Highway, Suite C, Oceanside.

**Contact northcountycoastal@pflag.com or
Annette Ottone, 760-518-3345.**

NORTH COUNTY INLAND

Meets the third Thursday at 7:00 pm, Windermere Homes & Estates, 16783 Bernardo Center Drive, Rancho Bernardo.

**Contact Kathie Moehlig: 858-382-9156
or northcountyinland@pflag.com**

EAST COUNTY

Meets every second Monday, at 7:00 pm, Summit Unitarian Universalist Church, 8778 Cottonwood Avenue, Santee.

**Contact Bob Dryden: 619-334-8214
or bdryden@pflag.com**

SOUTH BAY

The Support Group is not presently meeting. For a private meeting for support and concerns, you can do so by appointment.

**Contact: Patti Boman, 619-227-6092
or pboman@pflag.com**

MI FAMILIA (Spanish)

Meetings are the third Monday of the month from 6:30pm - 8:00 pm at The Center, 3909 Centre Street, Hillcrest

Contact Patti Boman, 619-227-6092

TRANSGENDER SUPPORT

For more information on the Transgender Support Group

Contact Kathe Dunn, ftm_mom@yahoo.com.

TWO MORE SCHOLARS: ARTURO



Arturo Soriano is the recipient of the **Stephen G. Bowersox Memorial Scholarship**. Family and friends of Donna and Jim Bowersox created this scholarship eight years ago in memory of their beloved son, Stephen. This scholarship is strongly predicated on social justice, demonstrated involvement and high academic achievement,

as well as broad, far-reaching interest and activities. Arturo is a selfless individual who is passionate about helping others. He has natural leadership ability, a good sense of humor, and is academically successful with a 4.1 GPA. He is attending the University of San Francisco – School of Nursing.

“Deceiving whispers would hit my ears left and right. Years of cruelty and trauma, of finger pointing, of ridicule; this largely characterized my life. Not a day went by where society’s favorite finger was not shown to me. The end result? I was scared: scared to be myself.

I was exposed to the word gay as an early child. Being a catholic Mexican, that’s the only word that was used to describe someone homosexual. I was only 12 years old when the subject came up. My parents called me to my room and I was puzzled by their looks. Simply and softly my dad asked, ‘Are you gay?’ I froze, nervously glancing at the ceiling, eyes rolling side to side like a pendulum on a grandfa-



ther clock. I broke out into tears, refusing and pleading that I wasn’t. That simply was the end of that for the next three years to come. Even so, every time I heard those five words my heart would race and pound against my body. ‘Can I ask you something?’ Those were the words I feared most. Deceivably simple words, yet they had the power to torture me, attack me, kill me. Once they were released, I was cornered. Usually it turned out to be a simple question, but my heart would always stop all the same.

As I entered high school I joined my school’s Gay-Straight Alliance, and I felt something completely novel; I felt welcomed. For the first time in my life, I didn’t need to hide my true self. I could show my true colors, and with each club meeting, my colors shined brighter and brighter and radiated further and further. Finally feeling as if I could simply be myself, I gained confidence in every other aspect of my life. I stopped emotionally investing in the opinions of others, and chose to value only that which was important to me and to my growth as an individual. Now as a senior, I work tirelessly to bring this freedom to others.

I no longer care. The words fall off my skin, as I have adapted a protective barrier that will only continue to solidify. The power of the prejudice that was drilled into my head has been slowly unscrewed. I now live life with an open mind. Knowing the power of assumption and judgment, I am slower to judge others, and quicker to accept them as they are. I am humble, grounded, and comfortable in my own skin. Surmounting this obstacle has granted me confidence, shaping me into the leader I once dreamed of, permitting me to surpass even my own expectations.”

WE DONE OURSELVES PROUD

PFLAG San Diego County, as always, supported The LGBT Center’s HIV/AIDS fundraiser (AIDS Walk San Diego). Thank you to all who donated and/or walked: Susan Boyle, Lonnie Brunini, Linda Gohlke, Jane Hardin, Bobbi Harwood, Judy Hyde, JoyLynn Murray, Annette Ottone, Arlene Prater, Taryn Sanders, Irina Segade, Phyllis Van Wanseele, Kevin Van Wanseele, John Van Wanseele, Terrie Vorono, Toddy Yeats, and Sherry Cohen-Richards.



SPEAKING OF NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY

National Coming Out Day was celebrated on October 11. In connection with that, Facebook reported that 800,000 people have come out as gay this year on the social media site.

In addition, not only has the total number of Americans who have come out on Facebook risen dramatically, but so has

the number coming out each day. The number of people on Facebook coming out per day is on track to be three times what it was a year ago.



TWO MORE SCHOLARS: JOHN



John Kenney is the recipient of the **Human Dignity Foundation/Richard P. Geysler Memorial Ethics Scholarship**. John graduated from San Diego High School of International Studies and is a freshman at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He was unable to attend the ceremony, as he was taking an AP exam. However, his

mother, Georgia, happily accepted on his behalf and read part of his essay.

One of his teachers had this to say about John, “In many ways John is the most dynamic and capable individual I have encountered in a long time. His analytic skills, ability to synthesize information, and break down an issue, were so advanced that they required me to delve deeper into my course and modify my lessons to challenge John. This was the student whose attitude and raw intelligence made me want to work harder as an educator. He continually pushed me to think broader about issues.”

And with that, here is John’s essay:

“With the recent victories in the fight for marriage equality, it would be easy to step back and celebrate. However, as a community, we cannot afford to do so when members of our community still face high rates of violence and discrimination. Transphobia, especially transmisogyny, kills. Compounded with racism, trans women of color are at an even greater risk. Even within the LGBT community, cissexism, if not outright transphobia, is rampant. While marriage equality is palatable to a national audience (who doesn’t love a good wedding?), there is nothing appealing about violence against the transgender community. By remaining silent, the murder of transgender people is condoned. We are being killed by violence, by limited access to medical care, and by a society that convinces many transgender people that their only way they can find peace is through suicide.

This is not just a problem of the transgender community. The LGBT community as a whole cannot afford to celebrate, dance, and parade their pride when members of the com-

munity are so at risk of misgendering, erasure, discrimination, and physical violence. When LGBT people are silent on issues of transphobia, they ignore the invaluable contributions of trans people to the LGBT rights movement, from Stonewall to present. There is not time to celebrate when there are still more problems to be faced.

Trans people are not second class to cis people. Our identities and our lives are as valid and worthy of respect as that of anyone else. Currently we cannot find respect, both in and outside of the LGBT community. In the cis gay male community, instances of transphobia are especially common: from use of the slur ‘tranny’ to female impersonators mock the validity of trans women. Cissexism even manifests itself in our language: while cis people have ‘gender,’ trans people have ‘gender identity.’ Cis people have ‘pronouns,’ trans people have ‘preferred pronouns.’ In these subtle and not so subtle ways, trans people are invalidated and marginalized.

Within the transgender community, we can improve to make a space that is more welcoming of minorities. We must be aware and respectful of non-binary people. We should not allow white voices to be heard at the expense of people of color. Trans men and trans masculine people must be aware of the privilege they are coming into, if they are generally perceived as male. We must keep in mind that a trans person’s worth is not based on their ability to ‘pass’ and that everyone’s goals for what they look like is different. We should not put other trans people down to raise ourselves up. The world is working against us as it is, we don’t have room to further hurt each other. Instead, we must focus on supporting one another, making a place for questioning people and helping those who are uneducated.

We cannot simply wait for ‘it to get better.’ It is imperative that the LGBT community work together to make things better now, before any more transgender people die in ways that could have been avoided. Cisgender people need to give us the space to be heard, and then support us and amplify our voices. If we continue to be silenced, nothing will change.”

“No, transgender individuals are not ‘confused;’ but they are exposed to OPD – Other People’s Disorder. Once Other People unconfuse – we can all go on.” --Christine Milrod, PhD, Psychotherapist

ANOTHER TRANS* DEATH

Earlier this month, Zella Ziona was the 21st Trans* person murdered in the U.S. in 2015. Police in suburban Washington, D.C. are investigating who fatally wounded her. The tragedy took place in an alley near a parking lot between two shopping centers. It seemed there was an argument between Ms Ziona and some teenagers and this is how they resolved it.

MOMMIE QUEEREST



As PFLAG San Diego County does every year, we are co-presenting a film at the Asian Film Festival (16th Annual). Actually, this year, the presentation is a collection of short films entitled *Mommie Queerest*. The collection goes from mama drama and a possessed phone to an off-the-rails dinner party. The queer life sometimes veers over the top; you

can see all eight shorts: *Coming Home*; *Sex, Politics & Sticky Rice*; *Family Gathering*; *Talking to my Mother*; *Homophonia*; *When Mom Visits*; *Paper Wrap Fire*; *Operation Marriage*. For a description and to buy tickets, go to festival.sdaff.org.

The shorts are showing on **Saturday, November 7** at 7:35 pm at the UltraStar Mission Valley (Hazard Center on Friars Rd).

There is a limited number of free tickets. If you are interested, please email Bobbi Harwood at bharwood@pflag.com. If you take tickets, please use them. The Festival runs from November 5-14.

BRIGHT HALF LIFE



The West Coast premiere of *Bright Half Life* will be performed at the Diversionary Theatre from **October 29-November 29**. Synopsis: "From an anonymous elevator ride, through a steamy workplace romance, heartburn, children, family, skydiving and ferris wheels, Vicky and Erica's relationship is revealed through snapshot scenes ricocheting back and

forth over a 40 year period. Time collapses, expands, flips and somersaults in this dynamic exploration of what comprises a life with another person."

For ticket info, go to www.diversionary.org. If you use the CODE PFLAG, you will save \$5 per ticket.

The production is being co-sponsored by PFLAG member Anna Curren.

LGBT HISTORY MONTH



LGBT History Month is celebrated every October to recognize the notable achievements of LGBT people throughout time. Every day, a new person is featured. However, since most of October is gone, you can treat yourself by going back to the beginning of the month. To see a list of the 31

icons, go to: www.lgbthistorymonth.com.

KENTUCKY DOPEY CONTINUED

There was a meeting, and the term is used loosely, between Pope Francis and Kim Davis, the Kentucky county clerk who refuses to issue marriage licenses to LGBT couples. There are two versions. According to both Kim Davis (who said she hugged the Pope and was hugged in return) and her lawyer, the Pope met privately with Kim Davis and her husband. However, that was a fantasy and she was caught in a lie, which someone of her moral character should never do, even for political gain (smirk). The reality is that Ms Davis and husband were part of a larger group who met the Pope.

After the announcement of the non-private meeting, the Vatican advised what really took place. They emphasized the meeting was not an endorsement of her bigotry-filled views, especially since there was no conversation (other than the pleasantries that the Pope exchanged with the rest of the group).

Pope Francis is expected to fire the church official who arranged the meeting to include Davis. Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, who also arranged all of the Pope's other meetings in Washington, is expected to be held responsible for blowback resulting from the meeting with Davis. According to the *New York Times*, Viganò is "likely to be removed at the first respectable opportunity" if things don't quiet down from the "meeting."

In actuality, the only one-on-one meeting that Pope Francis had during his time in D.C. was with Yayo Grassi, a gay man and former student of the Pope's. He brought his partner of 19 years, and, as video shows, there were hugs all around (real ones).

On the downside of the above good news is that a priest that came out as gay has been fired by the Vatican. It was ironic that on the eve of a synod of the world's bishops to discuss church outreach to gays, divorcees and more traditional Catholic families, Krzysztof Charamsa, a mid-level official in the Vatican's doctrine office, came out of the closet at a press conference at a restaurant in Rome, accompanied by his lover, saying he was happy and proud to be a gay priest.

A Vatican spokesman (normally, it would be spokesperson, but it was obviously a spokesman) said in a statement, "The decision to make such a pointed statement on the eve of the opening of the synod appears very serious and irresponsible, since it aims to subject the synod assembly to undue media pressure." Very strange that they didn't want it called to the attention of the world when the discussion was about outreach to gays!

AAAA

Several athletes will be honored at this year's Athlete Ally Action Awards (AAAA). Athlete Ally is a nonprofit focused on educating and activating athletes to champion LGBT equality.

One of the awards is being presented to the NFL's first openly gay player, Michael Sam. In 2014, he made history by becoming the first openly gay player to ever be drafted to the NFL. Even though his NFL career was short-lived (for obvious reasons), he forever changed professional sports, and reminded us all of the power sports has to change the world.

Another awardee, basketball legend Grant Hill had spoken in a PSA video in partnership with GLSEN, where he encourages young people to consider that "words have consequences, we're accountable for the things we say, words have meaning."

Last, but certainly, not least, to Dr. Renée Richards, a highly respected tennis champion and highly respected doctor. Her tennis career spans decades, and she successfully changed policies within the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) and the United States Open Committee to make both organizations more transgender-inclusive.

As an addendum to this article about gay athletes, there's more good news. Chris Burns is an assistant coach of a Division 1 college basketball team in Smithfield, R.I., Bryant University, a team where he was once a star player. He is now the first out coach of any men's or women's Division 1 team in college basketball.

Chris told the head coach over a year ago and decided it was the time to stop being either a coach or a gay man. It was time to be both.

TRANSGENDER AWARENESS

On **Wednesday, October 28** from 6:00-8:00 pm, all are welcome to the presentation of Transgender Awareness & Advocacy: A North County Community Roundtable. It will be held at the Encinitas Community Center, 1140 Oakcrest Park Drive in Encinitas. The event is free.

Recently, transgender stories have come to the forefront in our media, but we still have much to learn about the unique experiences of the Trans* community and how to best support them. Join Jewish Family Service, the North County LGBTQ Resource Center, and PFLAG North County Coastal to learn more about creating safe spaces and becoming visible allies. Parents, educators, leaders, and all adults who want to learn more about supporting our LGBTQ youth are encouraged to attend. Included will be the answers to questions people are sometimes afraid to ask: What terms should I use?, When does a child begin to understand their gender identity?, What does it mean to be an ally?, How can I create safe, inclusive spaces?, What's at stake?

The roundtable discussion will be moderated by Jewish Family Service. Our PFLAG family will be well-represented. Max Disposti, Founder of North County LGBTQ Resource Center; Annette Ottone, North County Coastal PFLAG Representative; Maria Al-Shamma, PFLAG member and Director of Project Youth Committee. Others on the panel include Dr. Nicole Kent, Clinical Psychologist specializing in LGBTQ, Our Circle Facilitator; Marc Lim, Director of Gender Advocacy Project; Britt Rubenstein, parent of a transgender teen.

Please RSVP if you wish to attend: www.jfssd.org/transgenderawareness. For questions, contact Carole Yellen at (858) 637-3395 or caroley@jfssd.org.

NORTH COUNTY PRIDE BY THE BEACH A SUCCESS

As always, North County LGBTQ Resource Center rallied the community for *Celebrating the Diversity Within*. Below is the PFLAG North County Coastal Support Group disseminating info and getting to know the community.



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www.gsdba.org

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Ψ

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