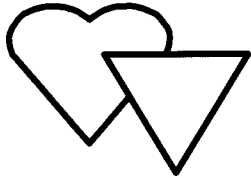


CHECK IT OUT! PFLAG HARTFORD IS ON THE INTERNET AT



www.pflaghartford.org

The Voice of PFLAG



Hartford Caring

Volume 15, No. 1

January/February 2006

IN THE PFLAG HARTFORD FAMILY:

A HUGE THANK-YOU to Judith (Jude) Russell of Powerlines Media Services for her help in creating our new PFLAG Website. The site is still under construction, but there is already plenty of news, info. and links to other sites.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER: If you haven't paid your dues, please send a check payable to PFLAG Hartford to PFLAG Treasurer, 2261 New London Turnpike, South Glastonbury, CT 06073.

TRUE COLORS CONFERENCE PFLAG Hartford will once again sponsor and participate in this conference for LGBT youth. We need volunteers to staff our booth, and there will be sign-up sheets available at our regular monthly meetings. (See Upcoming/Ongoing Events on page 2 for more information.)

SINCERE SYMPATHY to our Treasurer, Joan Jansen, and her family on the recent passing of her father.

PFLAG is a welcoming place for parents and friends of lesbians & gays, but we are much more than that. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex people are also encouraged to attend our meetings. GLBTI people come with or without their family members, and parents and friends come with or without their GLBTI loved ones. PFLAG is for YOU!

PFLAG HARTFORD MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS: Third Wednesday each month, 7:30 p.m., Immanuel Congregational Church House, 10 Woodland Street (Just North of Farmington Ave.), Hartford. For more information, please call Marie or Bob at (860) 633-7184 or Becky & John at (860) 633-5111 or E-mail: info@pflaghartford.org.

REFRESHMENT REMINDER:

January 18 - Jane L.
February 15 - Zandra
March 15 - Carole M.
April 19 - Maryanne

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Student/Limited Income: \$10
Household Membership: \$40
Individual Membership: \$25

UPCOMING PFLAG HARTFORD BOARD MEETING

7:00 pm, Wednesday, January 11
Hosted by Rose & Larry

*Please make your check payable to **PFLAG Hartford** and Send it to: PFLAG Treasurer, 2261 New London Turnpike, South Glastonbury, CT 06073. For any questions concerning dues, e-mail treasurer@pflaghartford.org*

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and their families and friends through:

- Support**, to cope with an adverse society
- Education**, to enlighten an ill-informed public
- Advocacy**, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity and expression, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

UPCOMING /ONGOING EVENTS

RAINBOW ROOM (a program of the **Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective**) A welcoming place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and questioning "LGBTQ" teens and young adults (up to 21 years old). Sundays, 3-6 p.m., 1841 Broad Street (the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective building). For more information please visit our website at www.hglhc.org or contact us at sensae@aol.com or call 860/278-4163.

CONNECTICUT SOFFA SUPPORT MEETINGS, for *Significant Others, Friends and Family of Transgendered, Transsexual and Gender Variant people* (these meetings are specifically for Significant Others, Friends and Family – Trans people who are SOFFAs are welcome.) If you are interested in attending, contact Kristal at uu2kristal@yahoo.com 860.573.6917 or Kasha at kho@afsc.org. Call 860.523.1534 for more information.

TRUE COLORS XIII, National Conference on Sexual & Gender Minority Youth, Friday, March 24 & Saturday, March 25. For information and to register on-line, go to www.ourtruecolors.org. PFLAG Hartford will once again host an information booth. We need people to staff our booth for both days. If you can help for an hour or two either day, sign-up sheets will be available at our regular PFLAG monthly meeting.

CT DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR STATE POSITIONS ON MARRIAGE

On Sunday, December 4, Democratic Gubernatorial candidates John DeStefano and Dan Malloy appeared on the public affairs television show, *Face the State*, and made public statements in support of marriage equality for same-sex couples. This important development in the campaign for the governor's office is a watershed moment for our movement. With both Democratic candidates supporting marriage equality, they have effectively made it a non-issue in their primary race. We anticipate their strong stand on the issue to transcend party lines and have more far-reaching effects within the legislature.

Here is a transcript of their interview on *Face the State*:

Question: Would you be in favor of legalizing gay marriage?

DeStefano: Yes, absolutely. Because in Connecticut our laws convey legal rights that are not otherwise available unless you are married. And it seems to me that you shouldn't deny rights to our citizens based on their gender, sexual preference, race, or anything else.

Malloy: I said this long ago, that we need to treat all of our citizens equally and fairly... First step, civil unions. Ultimately allowing people to express themselves through marriage, if and when that passes the legislature. Let me assure you I will sign that legislation. I believe this is a civil rights movement. I believe that this state leads the rest of the nation in moving in that direction... I have fought side by side with advocates, I will continue to do that and I look forward to signing this bill.

A WONDERFUL LETTER, WELL SAID AND WELL-WORTH READING.

November 11, 2005

Department of the Navy
Office of Admissions
United States Naval Academy
Attn: Capt. K.D. Frye

Re: United States Naval Academy Admissions Information Forum

Capt. Frye:

Our daughter, Molly Faulkner, received your kind letter inviting her to attend the above referenced Forum. Both of us have had the honor of serving in the Navy, one for twenty years, the other for eight. Molly's sister recently transitioned from active duty to reserve service with the US Air Force after serving deployments in both Qatar and Baghdad. We have attempted to instill in each of our children a shared belief in the debt of service we owe our Country and have been pleased to see each of them stand willing to take her turn as they reach the age to do so. Although the source of our bias is reasonably clear, from even an objective standpoint Molly is an exceptional young woman. An avid athlete, she plays golf, basketball and softball for Highland Park High School, but has placed her emphasis on her golf game and works year-round with a private coach. Also an excellent student, Molly consistently shoulders a heavy course load including several honors level classes and receives marks earning no less than "high honors" in any given marking period. She is studying both French and Italian and has absorbed

some modicum of understanding in Hebrew through several years of attendance at our synagogue Hebrew school. She is involved in several clubs and is active in our synagogue youth group participating in numerous events involving community service. She is respected among her peers as a steady friend and valued by her adult teachers and mentors for her quick mind, giving spirit and willing hands. In short, she is all that you would consider worthy in a candidate seeking admission to the Brigade of Midshipmen.

Unfortunately, we are certain that you will withdraw your current invitation and will not extend another due not to either her abilities or the content of her character, but for reasons beyond her control. However, we would like it to be perfectly clear that when you delete Molly's name from your database, it will be at your behest and not at ours and based upon policy now so outmoded as to appear ridiculous even to the casual observer. As may be expected, given her maturity and good sense, Molly has long recognized an intrinsic truth about herself. Molly is a lesbian. To her credit, and hopefully in small measure to that of her family and friends, she has been in a position to be honest and forthright regarding this fundamental truth and has found acceptance at every turn with no diminishment of either regard or affection. Neither she, nor we, see any cause for dissembling on this point, her father and I because it is against our inclination, and Molly because her sense of honor and self-worth forbid it. We would not even broach the subject were it not for the knowledge that the very sense of integrity and dignity which would make her an excellent midshipman and officer also render her incapable of adhering to a policy which would require her to commit the offense of lying by omission.

It is, again, with great pleasure that we acknowledge your kind invitation and, were it in her power, you would certainly see Molly in enthusiastic attendance at the Forum. We regret, on your behalf, the loss of the contribution she and so many others like her could and would willingly make towards securing our common goals and doing so in a manner that would bring credit to the traditions of the service.

Please don't hesitate to inform us if the policies, which we believe bar you from including Molly in the appointment process, have been rightfully amended to allow the open and unfettered acceptance of those members of our society who have so much to offer in service to their Country.

Very Respectfully,

Larry D. Faulkner, USN (Ret.) & Pamela W. Faulkner

CORPORATE AMERICA'S SUPPORT OF L/G/B/T/I EQUALITY: HATS OFF TO WELLS FARGO

Responding to threats from far-right conservative groups for their support of the gay community, two major corporate entities, Ford Motor Co. and Wells Fargo, took opposite action within the last week, with Ford acceding to one groups' demands and Wells Fargo telling another it can, in effect, take their business elsewhere.

The ultra-conservative Christian group Focus on the Family announced it has closed its Wells Fargo accounts because the bank contributed to a gay rights group that promised to use the funds to "fight the anti-gay industry." "Focus on the Family has elected to end its banking relationship with Wells Fargo, motivated primarily by the bank's ongoing efforts to advance the radical homosexual agenda. These efforts are in direct opposition to the underlying principles and purpose of Focus, and thus a decision of conscience had to be made, and a stand taken," said a statement on the Focus Web site.

The group's anger stems, in part, from a fundraising plea the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation made on the Internet five months ago that showed the Wells Fargo and GLAAD logos side by side above a large headline: "Double your impact in the fight against the anti-gay industry." GLAAD asserted in the ad that Wells Fargo would match any contribution to the organization dollar-for-dollar until July 2. However, the claims in the ad were untrue. While Wells Fargo did make a \$50,000 contribution to GLAAD, it was not a matching gift, and Wells Fargo never agreed to allow GLAAD to use the donation in a fundraising campaign. Still, the bank made it clear it stood behind its support of the group and other gay-related donations.

"We absolutely made a \$50,000 grant to GLAAD, and we're absolutely proud of our support for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community," Chris Hammond, spokesman for the banking giant, told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Hammond noted the bank gives about \$2 million a year to gay and lesbian organizations. "That being said, we do support many communities, and we're proud to be a diverse organization," Hammond added. A Focus on the Family official would not disclose how much money the organization kept with Wells Fargo, its primary bank, but said the nonprofit group's income was \$146 million last year.

FORD MOTOR CAPITULATES TO CONSERVATIVE'S DEMANDS

In June, the American Family Association threatened a boycott of Ford Motor Co. "for supporting the homosexual agenda, including homosexual 'marriage'" through its advertising and corporate promotion of gay events.

After months of negotiating with the carmaker, AFA claimed a victory late last week when the carmaker said it will not advertise its Jaguar and Land Rover brands in gay publications. Ford spokesman Mike Moran told the Advocate.com the move was strictly a "business decision." AFA, the far-right nonprofit run by the Rev. Donald Wildmon, criticized Ford in June for offering to give up to \$1,000 to GLAAD for every Jaguar and Land Rover it sells to a member of GLAAD. The group also complained that Ford sponsored gay pride celebrations and advertised in gay-oriented publications.

In response, AFA created a Website, BoycottFord.com, promoting a petition urging Ford to let the carmaker know they "will not be buying a Ford product until they stop their promotion of the homosexual movement and homosexual marriage." The petition also admonished Ford to stop its diversity training, sponsorship of gay events and organizations, and stop providing benefits to the partners of its gay employees, because that was akin to "redefining the definition of the family to include homosexual marriage."

Last week, AFA announced the threatened boycott would be canceled altogether. "They've heard our concerns; they are acting on our concerns. We are pleased with where we are," said Wildmon, AFA's chairman, in a statement. "Therefore the boycott that had been suspended [is] now officially ended." Ford spokesman Mike Moran confirmed last week that the company would no longer advertise Jaguar and Land Rover products in the gay media, saying that the decision was strictly "business." Specific terms of any formal agreement between the AFA and Ford, however, are unknown, but said the decision came after a "constructive dialogue" with the Christian group. *[Wait! See below.]*

A MESSAGE FROM PFLAG'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JODY M. HUCKABY:

I am very proud to report that PFLAG has taken strong positions this week in the fight for GLBT equality. I joined six of our national coalition leaders in a meeting with senior executives of Ford Motor Company to express our frustration over reports that Ford had met with the extremist **American Family Association (AFA)** and made a deal to reduce Ford's advertising in GLBT publications.

It is well known that the AFA espouses a litany of bigoted and hate-filled beliefs. One need not dig too deeply on their website to determine that their contempt for gay people is at the core of their activism that they try to package in the cloak of "Christianity." They unsuccessfully targeted Disney for years, and now the White House holiday card, Target and Wal-Mart are among their latest battles. So while it was *not* big news that the AFA was targeting Ford, it *was* serious news that Ford would meet with them and perhaps even follow their lead into striking a deal with the AFA against GLBT people.

The response from PFLAG members to this report was phenomenal as many contacted Ford immediately and sent a strong message that such a deal was completely unacceptable. Here in Washington, members of GLBT organizations joined with other civil rights groups to send the same message to Ford – and our collective efforts changed Ford's decision.

I am extremely pleased with Ford's reassertion of its commitment to diversity, nondiscrimination and inclusiveness within its corporation, its appreciation for the effectiveness of targeted marketing to GLBT people, its support for GLBT events and nonprofit advocacy groups, and its decision to advertise all eight Ford vehicle brands in GLBT publications. This is clearly a victory. And this leaves the AFA looking dishonest at best.

Consider taking some time now to write to Ford and thank them for meeting with me and my colleagues and for restating their support for GLBT equality. (The contact information is: WFord@ford.com, crcredir@ford.com and fordir@ford.com.)



SOME TIPS FROM OUR LIBRARIAN I am willing to mail items to those who request them via e-mail. Please leave a message, telephone number and mailing address, along with your request. Also, if you don't have an

updated bibliography, please ask for one at our next monthly meeting. You can reach me at librarian@pflaghartford.org.

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE SEA

December 5, 2005

Lesbian and gay couples who braved the cold winter weather across the U.K. Monday morning have become the first people to take advantage of the Civil Partnership Act. Hundreds of couples queued at register offices to state their intention to have a civil partnership, which gives the same rights and responsibilities as heterosexual marriage.

The new laws came into force at midnight and were celebrated by the majority of same-sex couples as one of the most important legal changes affecting lesbian and gay people.

The moment was marked by a large projection of two grooms on the side of the House of Parliament. The image, sponsored by Gay.com, also featured the words "I Do." After registering their partnerships, couples must wait at least 15 days before holding a ceremony. The first ceremonies will take place in Brighton and Hove at 8 a.m., the earliest time the register office can open for use.

The city, which has a long reputation as the country's official gay capital, has seen the bulk of pre-registrations, with nearly 500 couples planning to have a ceremony in the near future. Large boroughs across London have also seen a high number of applicants -- including Kensington and Islington -- as has Manchester and Glasgow. However, less obvious locations are also marking the introduction of the new laws. In Croydon, the rainbow flag will fly above the council buildings while registrars in places as diverse as Scunthorpe and Leicester will be welcoming couples in to their offices to start the legal recognition process.

The new laws have been broadly welcomed by gay activists, who say the changes will transform the lives of many same-sex couples. However, many say this is only the start of a ball rolling that will result in equality for lesbian and gay people. Writing in *The Observer* on Sunday, Stonewall chief executive Ben Summerskill said the new laws sent a strong message to the government about how far it can push social reform.

"Perhaps one happy outcome of Stonewall's campaign for civil partnership has been the message it's given to a government all too often over-anxious about social reform," he said. "The roof has not fallen in, politically or socially. And it won't fall in tomorrow morning either."



CT CIVIL UNION LICENSES LAG BEHIND MASSACHUSETTS MARRIAGE NUMBERS

Data Suggest No Stampede Toward Civil Union

In contrast to neighboring Massachusetts where over 3,000 gay couples sought marriage licenses in the first six weeks of legal same-sex marriages, only 539 couples sought civil union licenses during the first six weeks that civil unions were available to gay couples in Connecticut. While Massachusetts' population is roughly double that of Connecticut, nearly six times as many gay couples were married there than entered civil unions in Connecticut in the first six weeks.

According to a town-by-town survey conducted by the *Human Rights Campaign* and *Loves Makes a Family*, at least 463 gay couples entered into civil unions between October 1 and November 11, 2005 in Connecticut. Couples have 65 days from the day the license is issued to have a civil union ceremony. During this time, 76 couples have obtained licenses, but not recorded completed civil unions.

The city of Hartford had the most civil union licenses issued on the first day (26). The cities of Hartford and Norwalk reported the most licenses issued during this six-week period (39).

By contrast, in the first two weeks of marriage equality, 1474 couples received their marriage certificates in Massachusetts. In that neighboring state, the Supreme Judicial Court granted full marriage rights in November of 2003, setting the date of the first licenses to be issued for May 17, 2004. In the month of June, another 1625 same-sex couples received their marriage certificates. To date, more than 6500 gay and lesbian couples have been legally married in Massachusetts.

"While there was an early flurry, it is clear that the community has mixed feelings about the new law," said Anne Stanback, the President of *Loves Makes a Family*. "For most gay couples, like every other couple, marriage is more than just a list of legal and economic protections, important as these are to families. The low numbers suggest that gay couples in Connecticut need and want the full security, dignity, and commitment of marriage, not a parallel, separate status that continues to leave them vulnerable and unequal."

“Marriage means true equality for same-sex couples and their families,” said *Human Rights Campaign* President Joe Solmonese. “It is important that hundreds of couples now have the ability to provide some protections for their families, but it only takes a short drive north for Connecticut’s citizens to be reminded that everyone can and should have the same rights and protections.”

BOOK REVIEWS:

Don't Shoot! I'm Coming Out, (How to "Man-Up" and Set Heterosexuals "Straight"), PageTurner Publishing, by Benn Setfrey, Available in most major bookstores in February 2006.

“No longer will homosexuals be target practice for heterosexual predators. Gay men will not have to duck anymore when Christians throw their Bibles.” There’s a new book in town, and that’s the only weapon they will need. I cannot wait to read it!

“Armed with data on the homophobic Black community and the church, Setfrey turns the tables and is putting the Black Community ‘on notice’ for the sinful, often fatal atrocities that are perpetuated against homosexuals.”

“Homosexuality is the topic people LOVE or hate. Finally, the church and the Black community will no longer have the freedom to oppress homosexuals without backlash. Once gay men make a paradigm shift and gain autonomy their souls will be emancipated. Homosexuals are indeed men and it is time for them to get in touch with their masculine side. Now is the time to man-up and be counted.”

Find out how gay men can go from invisible to invincible.

Benn Setfrey is a graduate of Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI. He devoted over ten years in Chicago and Milwaukee Public School systems as a teacher and disciplinarian. His prowess in the classroom landed him on the local news affiliates of both NBC and CBS. Currently, Benn’s a professional development specialist for educators and a national voice over artist. Benn and his companion have been together for nearly ten years. His “Rules of Engagement” will be ground breaking.

Bi Men Coming Out Every Which Way, Edited by Ron Jackson Suresha, author of *Bears on Bears & Peter A. Chvany, PhD, Activist, Bisexual Resource Center*, Co-published as a double issue of *Haworth Press Journal of Bisexuality* 5: 2/3, October 1, 2005. Softcover \$19.95; Hardcover \$34.95 ISBN-10. More information is available on the web at www.HaworthPress.com.

“In today’s sexual world, both straight and gay and lesbian communities still often refuse to accept the reality of bisexuality. *Bi Men: Coming Out Every Which Way* confronts head-on the limiting views that bisexuality is a transitional phase of sexual evolution or a simple refusal to accept being either homosexual or straight. This pioneering collection of [35] moving essays of bisexual men and those who love them explores what it means to be bisexual in today’s mono-sexually oriented society.”

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES DIRECTORY: ATTENTION YEARLY ADVERTISERS, AND OTHERS

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