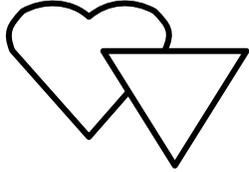


PRIDE MATTERS

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL AT THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY PRIDE
CELEBRATION IN HARTFORD, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9,
4 P.M. TO 10 P.M. IN THE FRONT OF CITY HALL ON MAIN STREET.

The Voice of PFLAG



Hartford Caring

Volume 15, No. 5

September/October 2006

FAMILY CELEBRATION/PICTURE SHARING NIGHT! Please make a special effort (particularly those of you who haven't been coming to monthly PFLAG meetings for a while) to attend the September meeting on Wednesday, September 20. Bring a picture or two of your g/l/b/t loved one so that we can renew old friendships and celebrate together the special kind of diversity that makes us all care about PFLAG.

We have invited Beth Bye, an "out" candidate for the General Assembly for West Hartford, Avon and Farmington, to share her family's story.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER: Dues for the fiscal year October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2007 are now payable. An envelope, addressed to our Treasurer, is enclosed for mailing your payment for the 2007 dues. Thank-you for your prompt attention.

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 & Bob at (860) 633-7184 or Becky & John at (860) 633-5111.

REFRESHMENT REMINDER:

September 20 – Scott L.

October 18 – Joan J.

November 15 – Charlotte & Glen

December 20 – Robin & Cai

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Student/Limited Income: \$10

Household Membership: \$40

Individual Membership: \$25

Please make your check payable to **PFLAG Hartford** and Send it to:
PFLAG Treasurer, 12 Colchester Commons, Colchester, CT 06415
For any questions concerning dues, e-mail treasurer@pflaghartford.org.

**UPCOMING PFLAG HARTFORD
BOARD MEETING
October 10, 7:00 p.m.
Hosted by Donna S.**

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.
- **Trans SOFFA Support Group in Connecticut:** This is a group specifically for Significant Others, Family, Friends and Allies of Transgendered, Transsexual and Gender Variant people (SOFFAs). Trans people who are SOFFAs are welcome. Meetings will be held on the second Sunday of each month and are facilitated by Kristal and Kasha. Contact Kristal - u2kristal@yahoo.com (860) 878-5256 or Kasha - kho@afsc.org (860) 523-1534 for more information.
- **HGLHC Transgender Support Groups:** This professionally facilitated group offers an affirming non-judgmental environment for Transgender folk to explore issues and concerns that matter to them, and to give and take support. Each participant decides what to do with emotions and personal life-choices or body image, sexuality, relationships, HIV issues and anything else of concern. As with all other HGLHC Support groups, all participants must register in advance to determine whether this group is right for you. Location: Hartford; Contact HGLHC at (860) 278-4163 X21 or e-mail lizy@hglhc.org
- **PRIDE CELEBRATION** Saturday, September 9, 4-10 p.m., Main Street, Hartford (Front of City Hall). PFLAG Hartford will once again have an information booth and we need volunteers to help staff the booth for 1-2 hour intervals. Please see Becky or John to sign up and help.
- **5TH ANNUAL CT AIDS BIKE TOUR** This year’s CT AIDS Bike Tour will take place September 13–17. The purpose of the tour is to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and raise funds for CT organizations that provide supportive services and housing to people with HIV/AIDS. E-mail chelsea@bettygallo.com to find out how to become involved as either a rider or volunteer.
- **IMAGES OF HOPE: NEW PASTORAL & SPIRITUAL APPROACHES** A workshop retreat for lesbian/gay Catholics, parents and pastoral ministries, September 29 to October 1, at the Franciscan Spiritual Center, 609 Convent Road, Aston, PA. \$165 registration fee includes accommodations and food. Call Mary (529-8755) for information.
- **TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES AND NORTHEAST REGIONAL PFLAG CONFERENCE**

October 27-29, 2006, Worcester, MA

Transcending Boundaries will hold its fifth conference for bisexual/pansexual, trans/gender, queer and intersex people and our allies at the DCU Center in Worcester, MA (formerly known as the Worcester Centrum).

We are pleased to announce that this year's conference will be held in conjunction with the PFLAG Northeast Regional Conference for family, friends, and allies from across the region. We'll take over their conference center to foster community, educate ourselves, and overcome societal sex, gender, and sexuality boundaries!

We are very excited to announce the keynote speaker line-up:

Jenny Finney Boylan, M-to-F author of *She's Not There* <http://www.colby.edu/personal/j/jfboylan/>

Lani Ka'ahumanu, bi-activist/ editor of *Bi Any Other Name* <http://www.lanikaahumanu.com>

Sam Thoron, national president of PFLAG

Matt Kailey, F-to-M, author of Just Add Hormones <http://www.mattkailey.com/>

REGISTRATION ONLINE: <http://www.transcendingboundaries.org> (\$60 by 9/15 & \$70 after that date.)

Courtesy of PFLAG, one free registration is available. See Becky or John if interested.

For hotel accommodations, reserve a room at the brand new Hilton Garden (508-753-5700) located across the street from the DCU Center. Let them know you're with Transcending Boundaries for a group rate of \$121.

For more information e-mail: transcendingboundaries@gmail.com

TBC: Colleen 508-579-2012

PFLAG: Roberta 603-352-6854

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

There's been much talk this week about language. We've heard about Mel Gibson's anti-Semitic tirade after a long evening of drinking. We've seen Ann Coulter's appalling interview with Chris Matthews in which she refers to former Vice President Al Gore as a "fag." We read about Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney's reference to the troublesome Boston tunnel construction project as a "tar baby." And last week, a reporter called PFLAG for comment about the less than tasteful gay-related remarks that Lance Armstrong made as the emcee of the ESPY Awards on ESPN.

So what's up with some of the movie stars, politicians, political pundits and mega-athletes these days? And is it really just those who live in the limelight that we should be concerned about?

...

Those of us who have GLBT loved ones or are gay ourselves know all too well how scary it can be when we hear hate language

There's a growing amount of research about what moves people from benign and blissful kindergartners to instigators capable of vicious hate-motivated crimes. I won't recite any research findings here, but we know that as humans, we learn quickly from the examples of those around us—we can be greatly influenced by the images, the actions and the language to which we are exposed.

I wonder if... attackers... have heard movie stars, politicians, political pundits and mega-athletes use racist, sexist, anti-gay remarks and other disparaging language in their jokes. I wonder if they caught the broadcast of the ESPY Awards earlier this month and laughed along with Lance Armstrong when he peppered his monologue with jokes where homosexuals were the punch line. Maybe they've seen Ann Coulter caustically refer to Al Gore as a "fag" and Bill Clinton as "homosexual" while onlookers laugh hysterically at what she calls a "joke."

I think it's a good thing that the media has been vigilant in covering the story on Mel Gibson this week, including dissecting his two rounds of attempts at an apology. Because of all the coverage, more people are talking this week about language - what is acceptable? What should (and should not) be tolerated? How does one ever really "take back" what they say? How do we respond when we hear those words that we know hurt the people who we love?

The words in PFLAG's vision statement are clear. It reads in part that ***"Only with respect, dignity and equality for all will we reach our full potential as human beings, individually and collectively."*** Let's all make a special effort this weekend and next week to pay attention to the language we use and the language we hear around us. We must let people know how hate-filled and bigoted language truly offends and hurts. Part of moving equality forward includes stopping bigotry and discrimination, both in word and deed, in language and in action.

Let's all keep moving equality in the right direction! *Jody*

**CT MARRIAGE CASE LOSES FIRST ROUND**

In an extremely disappointing decision late yesterday, [7/12/06] Judge Patty Jenkins Pittman of the New Haven Superior Court ruled against the eight plaintiff couples seeking the right to marry in Connecticut in *Kerrigan vs. Department of Public Health*.

Judge Pittman ruled that because of the passage of the civil union law in 2005, the lack of access to marriage by same-sex couples presents no "legal harm" and is therefore not unconstitutional. Judge Pittman got it wrong in a different way from the New York Court of Appeals who said that marriage is about procreation and that heterosexual couples make better parents...but she got it wrong nonetheless. And what is most galling is that she uses the passage of the civil union law against us!

We can be heartened that the language of this decision is sympathetic to our community and clearly acknowledges that same-sex couples are deserving of the same legal benefits and protections that married heterosexual couples receive. But Judge Pittman makes the mistake of implying that marriage is nothing more than a bundle of rights:

"Until now, there has been no equivalent institution that conveys to its participants the rights, benefits, and responsibilities of marriage. And it is surely these underlying rights, benefits and responsibilities with which substantive constitutional law is concerned, rather than with the nomenclature that is used to define those rights."

She also makes the mistake of downplaying the power and significance of marriage as an institution:

“Being married no longer carries the cultural or social weight, for good or ill, that it did in decades past.”

“The plaintiffs nonetheless argue that because of the historic and continuing cultural significance of marriage to most people, this court must recognize their right to be admitted to that institution, and that institution alone. Nostalgia for past traditions ought not be an impediment to the current acknowledgment of basic civil rights.”

Try telling any heterosexual couple who has just gotten engaged or is planning their summer wedding that being married no longer carries “cultural or social weight.” Try telling them that their excitement is merely “nostalgia for past traditions.” Try asking a heterosexual married couple if they would be willing to trade their marriage for something called a civil union. Or try imagining where we would be in this country if the U.S. Supreme Court, in striking down interracial marriage in 1967, had designated another “nomenclature” other than marriage for interracial couples.

And, of course, try telling same-sex couples who are on the outside looking in, that exclusion is not a “legal harm.”

Anne Stanback, Executive Director, Love Makes A Family

SOME TIPS FROM OUR PFLAG LIBRARIAN

I am willing to mail items to those who request them via e-mail. Please leave me an e-mail message with your telephone number and mailing address, along with your request. 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.

Good news! A **BIG** thank-you to everyone who made anonymous donations, which allowed me to purchase the two books listed on our Wish List in last month's *Caring*. Our PFLAG Board paid for the DVD, which was #3 on the Wish List. Also, anonymous donations allowed me to purchase the following:

- Straight Parents, Gay Children: Keeping Families Together by Robert A. Bernstein, with foreword by Betty DeGeneres and introduction by Robert MacNeil.
- Families Like Mine: Children of Gay Parents Tell It Like It Is, by Abigail Garner
- In Good Conscience: Sister Jeannine Gramick's Journey of Faith, a film (DVD) by Barbara Rick

LIBRARY WISH LIST:

Here are seven more books that we would like to add to our library. If you would like to donate a copy you already own, or if you would be willing to purchase one for our library, PFLAG Hartford would greatly appreciate your generosity. All books are paperback. Prices are from Barnes & Noble

1. Bisexual and Gay Husbands: Their Stories, Their Words, by Fred Klein & Thomas Schwartz (Editors). \$29.95
2. Letter to Our Children: Lesbian and Gay Adults Speak to the Next Generation, by Larry Dane Brimmer. \$9.95
3. For Lesbian Parents: Your Guide to Helping Your Family Grow Up Happy, Healthy and Proud by Suzanne M. Johnson, Elizabeth O'Connor. \$16.95
4. Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin by John D'Emilio. \$20.00
5. Positively Gay: New Approaches to Gay and Lesbian Life, by Betty Berzon (Editor), Foreword by Barney Frank. \$14.95
6. School Experiences of Gay and Lesbian Youth: The Invisible Minority, by Mary B. Harris (Editor), Foreword by Eric E. Rofes, Preface by Mary B. Harris. \$14.95
7. Changing Bodies, Changing Lives: A Book for Teens on Sex and Relationships, by Ruth Bell Alexander. \$24.95

A **Library Wish List** will be published as requests are made. Prior to the purchase of a selection from our **Wish List**, please e-mail me to make certain that no one has already donated that item to the library.

This op ed article appeared in the July 11 issue of the Hartford Courant. We wanted to make certain that you saw it because it very effectively puts the lie to one of the primary bases of the majority opinion's faulty reasoning in the NY Court of Appeals case upholding the discriminatory ban against marriage for same-sex couples - namely, that the welfare of children may be advanced when marriage is restricted to opposite sex couples. It is a false argument that our opponents in CT are pushing very hard. We can only wish that the NY Court had had the benefit of Dr. Zavoski's disclosure of the truth concerning this important aspect of the debate about marriage equality. Presumably, the courts and legislature in CT will have that benefit. Becky and John

RIGHTS DENIED SAME-SEX COUPLES

ROBERT ZAVOSKI, M.D. - July 11, 2006

Dear PFLAGers and friends:

Last week's unfortunate decision by the New York Court of Appeals to deny marriage rights to same-sex couples is based on outdated and unsupported ideas about child-rearing. The court found that it is rational to conclude that children benefit when marriage is restricted to opposite-sex couples. Mainstream research says exactly the opposite. We must ensure that Connecticut's courts and General Assembly do not follow New York's mistaken lead. Just this week, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a report surveying the country's marriage laws and their impact on same-sex couples and their families. The conclusion? "Simply put, same-gender civil marriage harms no one, whereas prohibiting civil marriage for gays and lesbians harms these couples and their children."

There is a striking consensus among child health professionals about the well-being of children of same-sex couples: these children score equally as well on measures of health and mental health as do children of heterosexual couples. Few areas of clinical research demonstrate findings as consistently, yet some conservative activists continue to claim that it is their concern about children that leads them to oppose equal marriage rights for gays and lesbians. Concern about children's health is precisely the reason that they should reconsider their opposition. As a pediatrician and as president of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, I must keep up with current research on children's health. Although legislators and other public officials are not able to do the same, I urge them nonetheless to ensure that child welfare policies are driven by solid information and not shaky ideology.

So let's look at the science. From small, pioneering studies in the 1970s, to today's larger scale investigations, researchers consistently find that it is the quality of children's relationships to their parents that matter most in raising children. Good parents can be gay or straight, as can bad parents, but in the end, these studies all demonstrate that children's psychological, social, emotional and academic development cannot be tied to a parent's sexual orientation or gender. These studies have been conducted by academics at institutions such as the University of Pennsylvania, Tufts University and the University of Virginia, and have been published in peer-reviewed journals. Many medical, psychological and child welfare organizations have extensively reviewed this research, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists, and the American Psychological Association. Experts at these organizations have meticulously examined 30 years of scholarship, and have reached a degree of consensus rare in science. These professionals are uniquely qualified to assess the research findings and methodology in their field. As a result, each of these organizations adopted official policies acknowledging that children of same-sex parents are as healthy, happy and well-adjusted as their peers.

Opponents cannot point to a single legitimate study (i.e., studies not sponsored by ideological think-tanks) that supports their view that being raised by same-sex parents harms children. Instead, they either assert that all children must have a mother and a father to become well-adjusted adults, or they cite flawed and biased research, such as studies that look at differences between heterosexual two-parent families and single-parent families, usually following divorce. These studies don't address parental gender or sexual orientation, but look at the lesser economic and educational resources that a single parent may offer a child, and the psychological fallout of divorce. Using specious arguments about children to deny marriage to same-sex couples is not an expression of caring for children; it is quite the opposite. It's a reality that gay men and lesbians have children - they adopt, give birth and provide foster care to children. Their children are part of our world. The question remains: What's best for those children? Prejudice harms children, whether it is socially enacted or enshrined in law. Ending discrimination in marriage laws will endow the children of same-sex couples the same civil rights and protections as their peers. If a stable childhood based upon a loving marriage between two parents is good for children, isn't it good for all children? Dr. Robert Zavoski of Simsbury is a pediatrician in Hartford and president of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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<<http://www.courant.com/>>Courant

CANDIDATE IS MILESTONE FOR TRANSGENDER AMERICANS

Dr. Dana has a prescription for you.

The 54-year-old former eye surgeon believes the glut of lawyers in state legislatures leads to too many chest-thumping confrontations and too little teamwork on such critical things as expanding access to health care, creating incentives for driving environment-friendly cars, boosting the minimum wage and ensuring equality for all. Teachers, engineers, architects and, yes, doctors are what's needed to air out chambers filled with stale ideas, she says.

And so, when her local delegate in Chevy Chase, MD, announced he was running instead for state Senate, "Dr. Dana," as she introduces herself to voters, jumped into a crowded field.

The contest for one Maryland House seat normally wouldn't attract national attention. But this seat is special: It's being vacated by Richard Madaleno, the first openly gay non-incumbent elected to the Maryland House.

Heavily favored to win in November, Madaleno's poised to become the state's first openly gay state senator. And if Dana Beyer wins, she'll be the first transgender lawmaker in any state legislature.

"When I transitioned three years ago, I found myself, my voice and my cause. I have an opportunity to give back to the people who have laid the groundwork for me," the progressive Democrat explains of her leap into politics.

While transgender Americans are increasingly being welcomed in workplaces, faith communities and social circles, politics is still relatively new territory. New Zealand and Italy each have a transgender member of parliament. In our country, Michelle Bruce, who sits on the Riverdale, Ga., city council, and Jessica Orsini, on the Board of Aldermen in Centralia, Mo., are among the groundbreaking transgender politicians.

This November's elections will feature a slew of races important to the gay community. One of the most exciting is in Alabama: Democrat Patricia Todd, who won her state House primary on July 18 and has no Republican opponent, will become the first openly gay lawmaker at any level in her state.

But while openly gay officials -- now numbering 350 -- can fight for rights of transgender citizens, they can't speak with the trans perspective of someone like Dr. Dana.

For example, two of her priorities are pushing for an amendment to the Maryland Constitution to prohibit health care providers from denying treatment based on their personal or religious beliefs. Beyer recalls a notorious incident in Washington, D.C., when a transgender woman in a car accident died after a paramedic reportedly temporarily interrupted treatment.

And Dr. Dana wants to push for in-depth research into how certain drugs and environmental toxins are affecting humans, leading to such things as dramatic drops in sperm counts.

Competing in a progressive district already comfortable with a gay lawmaker, Beyer is testing new political waters: A credible candidate who happens to be both a doctor and transgender is a milestone on transgender Americans' road to full acceptance.

Despite feeling she was always female, Beyer didn't make the transition through hormones and surgery until after September 11. She decided life is too short for her body not to match her heart. As she puts it, "I flew out to San Francisco as a guy, and flew back as a woman, and I never looked back." Her mother's biggest shock, she says, is how much more she smiles.

Dana Beyer literally embodies what we need more of in politics: The courage to change.

"Most people have somebody gay in their families. I don't know one person that doesn't. So why aren't we all standing up like families, like we are taught? Blood is thicker than water. Where I come from, we stand up with them and say, 'You have to count me too, pal.' If you count all of us, we are no longer a minority – if you count everybody that really truly does have a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person within their community. And the good thing is there are organizations like the Human Rights Campaign and PFLAG. This is a family issue."

Cyndi Lauper in an interview with her lesbian sister, Elen. Equality Magazine, Summer 2006 issue

Also, in the Summer 2006 issue of Equality is a quote from Judge Judy Sheindlin, the epitome of common sense. Judge Judy said the following on the Larry King Live television show:

"I think any two people that are in a committed relationship, and are making a home and making a responsible family together... if they want to get married... I am in favor of that."







Music of Main Street, U.S.A



A BENEFIT CONCERT FOR LOVE MAKES A FAMILY


Emerson Brass will be joined by organist Donald Funk
 Sunday, October 22, 2006 at 4 pm.


Trumpets: Stephen Owens and Julia Caruk




Trombones: Topher Logan and John Currie



Tuba: Alan Douglass


 The concert venue is our PFLAG home base


 Immanuel Congregational Church


 Corner of Farmington Avenue & Woodland Street, Hartford, CT
 [www.iccucc.org].

The concert theme is **Music of Main Street, USA**, and will be full of popular American music ranging from The Pink Panther; selections from West Side Story and Porgy and Bess; Glenn Miller, Stephen Foster, Sousa March, Tiger Rag, spirituals and New Orleans jazz to an organ transcription of Barber's moving Adagio for Strings.






**A free will offering will be received for Love Makes a Family [www.lmfct.org].
 Come join us for a grand event and great cause--marriage equality in Connecticut
 for same-sex couples.**


Connecticut PFLAG Meetings

PFLAG HARTFORD: Information on front page or at www.pflaghartford.org

PFLAG NORWALK/SOUTHWESTERN CT

When: First Wednesday of every month, 7:30 pm
Where: Triangle Cmnty. Center, 16 River St. Norwalk
Help Line: (203) 226-0257 or (203) 438-0530
Email: PFLAGSWCT@yahoo.com

PFLAG NORTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT:

Contact: Diane (860) 435-2738

PFLAG MADISON/SHORELINE

No Meetings
Email: davidwinthropknapp@yahoo.com
Help Line: (203) 453-1395

PFLAG GROTON (NOANK) /SOUTHEASTERN CT

When: Second Monday of every month
5:30-6:30 Potluck Dinner
6:30-8:00 Meeting
Where: Noank Baptist Church, 18 Cathedral Heights
(Childcare is available)
For Information call Mike (860) 447-0884

PFLAG DANBURY

When: Second Monday of every month, 7 pm
Where: St. James Episcopal Church
25 West Street, Danbury
Help Line: (203) 797-4743

PFLAG GREATER NEW HAVEN

When: Third Tuesday of every month, 7:30 pm
Where: Church of the Redeemer
Corner: Whitney Ave./Cold Spring St., NH
Help Line: (203) 907-0518
Email: greaternewhavenpflag@yahoo.com

Central and Western Massachusetts

Williamstown Area:

When: Second Sunday of every month, 2 pm
Where: First Congregational Church, Williamstown
Contact: (413) 243-2382

Springfield Area:

When: Last Wednesdays, every month, 7 pm
Where: South Congregational Church
45 Maple Street, Springfield
Contact: (413) 732-3240 or (413) 783-7709

Greenfield, MA

Help Line: 413/625-6636
E-Mail: PFLAGPV@valinet.com

CARING IS THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF PFLAG HARTFORD

Caring welcomes articles, letters and other submissions for publication.

Deadline: 15th of even numbered months. Send articles to PFLAG EDITOR, 156 Randal Avenue West Hartford, CT 06110 or via e-mail editor@pflaghartford.org.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING
PFLAG
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HARTFORD COMMUNITY CENTER
(860) 724-5542

Antonia Laconte, President

1841 BROAD STREET
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

PFLAG'S STRAIGHT SPOUSE SUPPORT NETWORK:

*In Central Connecticut and Central Mass.,
Contact Jane Harris at (413) 625-6636 or
janenrosie@hotmail.com*

*In Southern Connecticut, Call Joan Rolnick at
(203) 438-0530*

FOR OTHER PFLAG LOCATIONS

*Contact a Hartford Chapter Board Member or call
the National PFLAG office at (202)638-4200.
You may also sign onto PFLAG's Home Page at
www.pflag.org.*