## Mark Your Calendar: True Colors XVI Mental and Behavioral Health

Friday, March 13, and Saturday, March 14, 2008 University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut



## The Voice of PFLAG Hartford

# Caring

Volume 18, No. 2 March/April 2009

IN THE PFLAG HARTFORD FAMILY:

<u>CONGRATULATIONS</u> to Becky & John Glezen on the marriage of their daughter, Sharon, to her partner of 20 years, Cara Calvelli. The ceremony took place at the Glezens' home on December 29<sup>th</sup> with the Rev. Gordon S. Bates officiating. Sharon & Cara live in Brighton, NY with their 15-year old daughter and 12-year old son.

**SINCERE CONDOLENCES** to Jo and Paul Nelson, on the passing of their son, Paul, on December 9, 2008. Jo & Paul were active members of PFLAG Hartford, serving on our Board for many years. You may contact the Nelsons at their new home: 2950 State Street, #22, Hamden, CT 06517-1715

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Chrissy and Mitch on their recent engagement to be married. We wish you a long and happy life together.

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 MEETS:** Third Wednesday of 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 Calvin at (860) 633-7184 or Becky & John Glezen at (860) 633-5111.

REFRESHMENT REMINDER:	MEMBERSHIP DUES:	
March 18 - Kerri	Student/Limited Income: \$10	UPCOMING PFLAG HARTFORD
April 15 - Valerie	Household Membership: \$40	BOARD MEETING
May 20 – Le Anne	Individual Membership: \$25	Tuesday, April 21, 7 pm Hosted by Jean C.
June 17 – Scholarship Presentations & Reception	Please make your check payable to <u>PFLAG Hartford</u> and Send it to: Joan Jansen, 12 Colchester Commons, Colchester, CT 06415	

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

• RAINBOWROOM: (a program of the Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective) -- a Welcoming place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and questioning "LGBTQ" teens (13-21 years old). RainbowRoom meets the third Sunday of every month, 3-6 p.m., 1841 Broad Street (Health Collective building), Hartford. For more information please visit our website at http://www.hglhc.org/ or contact lizy@hglhc.org or call 860/278-4163.

- <u>HGLHC TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP</u>: This group is currently not meeting. Updated information will be posted as changes are made. For more information please visit our website at <a href="http://www.hglhc.org/">http://www.hglhc.org/</a> 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 Barnes and Kasha Ho. Contact Kristal u2kristal@yahoo.com (860) 878-5256 or Kasha kho@afsc.org or call (860) 523-1534 for more information.
- THIRD ANNUAL TRANSGENDER LIVES: THE INTERSECTION OF HEALTH AND LAW CONFERENCE is being held on Saturday, April 18, 2009 at the UConn Health Center from 8:00 AM till 5 PM. This all-day conference is geared towards Service Providers, Medical and Legal Professionals, Trans and Gender non-conforming individuals, allies and all interested in the Health and Law issues facing the Trans and gender non-conforming communities. Information at <a href="https://www.TransgenderLives.org">www.TransgenderLives.org</a>
- TRUE COLORS CONFERENCE Our PFLAG Hartford chapter is a proud sponsor of the *True Colors Conference* for youth, to be held at the UConn Storrs campus on March 13 and 14. On those days, we will have a PFLAG booth where we will hand out pamphlets and information. If you attend the conference, please stop by and perhaps volunteer to staff our booth for an hour or two.

## <u>SIGNIFICANT MAJORITY OF CONNECTICUT VOTERS SUPPORTS MARRIAGE EQUALITY</u> New <u>Quinnipiac University poll</u> released 12/17/08.

(Statement of Anne Stanback, Executive Director, Love Makes a Family)

In a second independent statewide poll in a little over two months, a clear majority of Connecticut voters (52%-39%) supports the Connecticut Supreme Court's decision allowing same-sex couples to marry. This should silence opponents who say that the court forced its will on an unwilling public.

Given what occurred in California with the passage of Prop 8, we are particularly pleased that an even larger majority of Connecticut voters (61%-33%) opposes reversing the state Supreme Court decision through a constitutional amendment that would ban marriage between same-sex couples. Nevertheless, we know our opponents have plans to try and undo our marriage win next legislative session, and we will remain visible and vigilant to ensure that does not happen.

We disagree with Quinnipiac University Poll Director Douglas Schwartz's comment that the poll results show "Connecticut voters are not in love with same-sex marriage as a bare majority backs the State Supreme Court decision to allow same-sex couples to wed."

Barack Obama won the presidential election with the same 52% margin and his election results have been interpreted as a clear mandate for change. We view the poll results similarly—Connecticut voters, by a clear majority, support marriage equality for same-sex couples.

Connecticut voters understand that loving, committed same-sex couples want the same thing that everyone wants: the legal protections to keep our families secure and the dignity, respect and clarity that come with being able to marry. For those reasons they support marriage equality, support I have every confidence will continue to grow through the years.

"When I was 13 years old, my beautiful mother and my father moved me from a conservative Mormon home in San Antonio, Texas to California and I heard the story of Harvey Milk. And it gave me hope. It gave me the hope to live my life, it gave me the hope to one day live my life openly as who I am and that maybe even I could fall in love and one day get married." -- Dustin Lance Black, accepting an Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay, February 22

#### **NEW PFLAG BOOKSTORE!**

Due to popular demand, PFLAG National is launching a new publications store! This online shopping experience features new booklets as well as older favorites. You can order publications with ease and have them shipped directly to the address of your choosing. Be sure to get your hands on our new **Safe Schools: Cultivating Respect - The Top 10 Ways to Make Schools Safer... For All Students**. Stay tuned for updated publications that will be appearing soon, such as an upcoming new **Faith in Our Families**; **Our Daughters and Sons**; **Be Yourself** and **Our Trans Children**! Visit our new store online and click "**Are you a new user?**" and enter your chapter information! From there, you can begin shopping! "**Shop PFLAG**" will take you to our publications catalog and our stationary. "**PFLAG Branded Merchandise**" will take you to our Café Press store featuring mugs, T-shirts, and other merchandise. Get started today and visit the new PFLAG Online Bookstore.

## GAY CATHOLICS CHALLENGE VATICAN OPPOSITION TO DECRIMINALIZATION OF HOMOSEXUALITY BY U.N.

Groups Say Vatican's Stance Amounts to Condoning Anti-Gay Violence

<u>Boston, MA</u> - Leaders of the Catholic groups DignityUSA, New Ways Ministry and Call To Action, spoke out today [12/10/08] to condemn the Vatican's opposition to a proposed U.N. declaration that would lessen the discrimination against lesbian, gay and bisexual people worldwide.

The U.N. proposal, which is sponsored by France and backed by 27 European Union nations, seeks to end the practice of criminalizing and punishing people for their sexual orientation.

The leaders of the Catholic advocacy groups said the Church's official statement against the proposal amounts to condoning anti-gay violence. "For too long, there has been a terrible conflict between the official Catholic Church's policies and pastoral practices as they relate to gay people," said Marianne Duddy-Burke, executive director of DignityUSA. "Despite the good work being done in so many parishes, Vatican policies lead to our entire Church being associated with discrimination and anti-gay violence. It has sad, even tragic, consequences for lesbian and gay people and our families."

"We are so disappointed that the leaders of the Catholic Church would object to protecting gay people from the often violent threats they face. Supporting the UN declaration against imprisonment or execution of gay people is exactly what the church should be doing," said Frank Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry. "Our organization is committed to creating dialogue among members of the Catholic Church, and I know from experience that the statements of the Church's leaders do not reflect the views of the majority of Catholics, who favor protecting gay people from life-threatening violence."

Call To Action, a group of 25,000 Catholics who seek to foster peace and justice in the Catholic Church and society, was equally surprised that the church would stand against such a legislation proposal.

"The Vatican should be committed to promoting the social welfare of all people worldwide and this official statement from the church flies in the face of that," said Nicole Sotelo, communications director of Call To Action. "The church should be striving to promote peace, instead of supporting state-sponsored violence against gay people across the globe."

During Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the U.S. in April 2008, DignityUSA held a prayer service outside the United Nations before the Pope's address to the General Assembly. During the service, those gathered asked the Pope to call on all countries to end state-sanctioned violence against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

"There are nearly 70 countries where being gay is still a crime, and a dozen where being gay can result in the death penalty," said Duddy-Burke. "We believe that our Pope, our Church, with its belief in the sanctity of human life, should be leading efforts to end this most egregious form of oppression. Instead, our leader has chosen to stand with countries that continue to name us as criminals."

Mary Ellen & Casey Lopata, Fortunate Families, Inc. PO Box 18082 Rochester, NY 14618-0082



#### BISHOP EUGENE ROBINSON, DELIVERED INVOCATION DURING INAUGURATION WEEK

National Gay & Lesbian Task Force applauds selection of Bishop Gene Robinson to deliver prayer at inauguration's opening ceremony

The Task Force applauded the selection of the Right Rev. V. Gene Robinson, bishop of the New Hampshire diocese of the U.S. Episcopal Church, to deliver the invocation at the inaugural concert at the Lincoln Memorial on Sunday [Jan. 18]. Robinson, the first openly gay man to be named a bishop in the Anglican Communion, received a Task Force Leadership Award in 2004 for his outstanding service to the faith and LGBT communities. He was also a keynote speaker at the 2008 National Conference on LGBT Equality: Creating Change.

"President-elect Obama has made a stellar choice in selecting Bishop Gene Robinson to offer the prayer at the Lincoln Memorial to kick off the inaugural festivities. Bishop Robinson is an inspiration to millions worldwide because he lives out the ideals of courage, humility and truth speaking. This is certainly a good sign that our nation is indeed moving forward." — Task Force Executive Director Rea Carey

#### Following are Bishop Robinson's words.

"Welcome to Washington! The fun is about to begin, but first, please join me in pausing for a moment, to ask God's blessing upon our nation and our next president.

O God of our many understandings, we pray that you will

**Bless us with tears** – for a world in which over a billion people exist on less than a dollar a day, where young women from many lands are beaten and raped for wanting an education, and thousands die daily from malnutrition, malaria, and AIDS.

**Bless us with anger** – at discrimination, at home and abroad, against refugees and immigrants, women, people of color, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

**Bless us with discomfort** – at the easy, simplistic "answers" we've preferred to hear from our politicians, instead of the truth, about ourselves and the world, which we need to face if we are going to rise to the challenges of the future.

**Bless us with patience** – and the knowledge that none of what ails us will be "fixed" anytime soon, and the understanding that our new president is a human being, not a messiah.

**Bless us with humility** – open to understanding that our own needs must always be balanced with those of the world.

**Bless us with freedom from mere tolerance** – replacing it with a genuine respect and warm embrace of our differences, and an understanding that in our diversity, we are stronger.

**Bless us with compassion and generosity** – remembering that every religion's God judges us by the way we care for the most vulnerable in the human community, whether across town or across the world.

And God, we give you thanks for your child Barack, as he assumes the office of President of the United States.

Give him wisdom beyond his years, and inspire him with Lincoln's reconciling leadership style, President Kennedy's ability to enlist our best efforts, and Dr. King's dream of a nation for ALL the people.

Give him a quiet heart, for our Ship of State needs a steady, calm captain in these times.

Give him stirring words, for we will need to be inspired and motivated to make the personal and common sacrifices necessary to facing the challenges ahead.

Make him color-blind, reminding him of his own words that under his leadership, there will be neither red nor blue states, but the United States.

Help him remember his own oppression as a minority, drawing on that experience of discrimination, that he might seek to change the lives of those who are still its victims.

Give him the strength to find family time and privacy, and help him remember that even though he is president, a father only gets one shot at his daughters' childhoods.

And please, God, keep him safe. We know we ask too much of our presidents, and we're asking FAR too much of this one. We know the risk he and his wife are taking for all of us, and we implore you, O good and great God, to keep him safe. Hold him in the palm of your hand – that he might do the work we have called him to do, that he might find joy in this impossible calling, and that in the end, he might lead us as a nation to a place of integrity, prosperity and peace. - AMEN."

#### NATIONAL PFLAG SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE (Submission deadline is March 13, 2009)

This year there will be up to three \$5000, three \$2500 and ten \$1000 scholarships awarded.

Please remember the National PFLAG scholarship is not in competition with local scholarships. Candidates are eligible to win both and we all should encourage students to apply for both your local and the national scholarship.

The application process and eligibility requirements are stated on the application form and on our web site. Application materials can be downloaded from our website, go to <a href="www.pflag.org">www.pflag.org</a> and click on the scholarship icon. Application packets should be mailed to the following address:

Suzanne Greenfield, PFLAG National Scholarships Program, 1726 M Street, NW, #400, Washington, DC 20036 Applicants may apply online but will need to mail in a signed release form, one reference and transcript to complete the application.

<u>PFLAG HARTFORD & TRUE COLORS WILL AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS</u> to LGBTI students or allies. <u>Application forms</u> for the Brill Scholarship will be available at the True Colors Conference, to be held at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, on March 13 & 14, as well as on our PFLAG Hartford website (www.PFLAGHartford.org). The deadline to submit an application is April 15. We will be giving two \$1,000.00 scholarships this year.

#### PLEASE THANK CAMPBELL SOUP COMPANY FOR SUPPORTING PFLAG!

Recently, a LGBT-affirming ad ran in *The Advocate* for Swanson brand broth, which is owned by the Campbell Soup Company. The ad was part of Campbell's *Home for the Holidays* campaign and featured a lesbian couple with their son. Unfortunately the anti-LGBT American Family Association urged its members to contact Campbell's soup and criticize them for showing LGBT families in their advertising.

Please take the time to counter their anti-gay message and *thank* Campbell's for their support of the LGBT and ally community! Let's give kudos to Campbell's for showing that *all* of our families are worthy of respect.

We especially wish to thank Campbell's because they were a corporate sponsor for PFLAG's <u>2009</u> Straight for Equality Awards Gala held February 5, 2009 in Times Square, New York City!

Please be sure to email **Anthony Sanzio**, the Group Director for Corporate and Brand Communications for Campbell Soup Company (<u>anthony sanzio@campbellsoup.com</u>) and follow up with a phone call showing your appreciation as well (**1-800-257-8443**)!

#### **GREAT NEWS FROM LOVE MAKES A FAMILY!**

Yesterday [2/11/09], the Connecticut legislature released the language of the two bills that will be the priorities for *Love Makes a Family* this legislative session.

#### **Marriage Codification Bill**

## SB899: An Act Concerning the Guarantee of Equal Protections under the Constitution of the State for Same-Sex Couples

This bill codifies the Connecticut Supreme Court marriage equality ruling in the *Kerrigan* case into state statute. It also clarifies areas that the court did not address, such as the status of civil unions now that marriage is legal. Under this bill, <u>civil unions will merge into marriages on October 1, 2010</u>. Couples in civil unions can get married at any time, but unless they dissolve or annul their civil union before October 1, 2010, the state will recognize them as married. The date of their marriage will reflect the date of their earlier civil union.

#### **Gender Identity and Expression Bill**

#### **HB6452:** An Act Concerning Discrimination

This bill prohibits discrimination against transgender people in areas such as employment, housing, credit and public accommodations.

If the gender identity and expression bill passes this year, Connecticut will be the only state in the country to have passed all major protections for LGBT citizens!

Once the bills have public hearing dates scheduled, we will be asking YOU to contact your state legislators and ask for their support. Stay tuned!

#### THANK-YOU TO OUR JANUARY MEETING SPEAKERS: John D. Scully & Evelyn Lindenmuth

John Scully lives in West Hartford with his partner of 22 years, David Osella. He grew up in a large Irish Catholic family. He came out in 1981 and remembers marching at the State Capitol in the mid and late '80s in support of the Gay Rights Bill. Each person was given a mask to wear for fear of being recognized. Being recognized could have resulted in the loss of a job or the loss of housing. In many cases there was also the fear of physical harm or of being rejected by family and friends. John struggled with coming out to family and friends. Because of what he was taught through his upbringing, he also struggled with the integration of spirituality into his life. Twenty years later, he and David stood in the sanctuary of Immanuel Congregational Church, surrounded by 150 guests, including parents, siblings, nieces, nephews, relatives, co-workers, neighbors and friends, to celebrate their Civil Union. John is currently the Director of Media for Makiaris Media Services, a small media and marketing company in Middletown, CT. Prior to that he worked at WWYZ-FM radio and WFSB-TV. He and David are both involved at Immanuel Congregational Church and do much of their volunteer work there.

We were also privileged to have **Evelyn Lindenmuth** with us. Evelyn, who writes under the pen name "Just Evelyn," has been an activist for transgender rights since 1994, when her son became her daughter at age 14. She wrote the book "**Mom, I need to be a Girl**" and was founder of TransFamily San Diego. She also founded a coordinated speakers bureau and has spoken at more than 25 college classes each quarter. She now is on the board of Trans Youth Family Allies (TYFA), a national organization working to educate and find safe places for young gender-variant children. She lives in Colorado with her transgender spouse. Evelyn was in the Hartford area for an elementary school in-service training and volunteered to come to our January meeting to lead a discussion on transgender issues during the small discussion group time. (For additional information on TYFA, e-mail <a href="mailto:info@imatyfa.org/parents">info@imatyfa.org/parents</a> or <a href="mailto:info@imatyfa.org/parents">info@imatyfa.org/parents</a> or call 1-888-462-8932.)

#### THANK-YOU TO GERALDINE BURKE, OUR FEBRUARY MEETING SPEAKER

Geraldine Burke is a retired elementary physical education teacher. She taught in East Hartford at the preschool through sixth grade level for most of her career. She has been an activist for LGBT civil rights since 1989, serving on the boards of GLSEN CT; True Colors, Inc.; Stonewall Speakers; and CT Stonewall Foundation, Inc.

Upon her retirement as a public school educator, in 1999, she expanded her passion to be a change agent and became more involved as a Stonewall Speaker and served as State Coordinator of Engagements from June 2001 until February 2006. She recently stepped down from the board of directors after serving for four years and continues to participate as a panelist. Now Geraldine has more time to spend with her identical twin sister, Denny, and her eighty-seven year old father, Arthur; to work out as a member of CT Senior Women's Basketball; and to pursue her love of photography. Geraldine lives her woman-loving self openly and as an equal in the world.

#### MEET OUR MARCH 18th MEETING SPEAKERS!



John Merz and Bill Starkowski, along with their 13 year old daughter, Brittany, and 3 Pomeranian dogs, live the ideal suburban "gay" lifestyle in Simsbury. Since his time at Yale Divinity School ('86), John has been active in AIDS services and was ordained a Presbyterian minister in 1992 for his work in AIDS ministry. Bill has been working in the conservative

world of insurance for the past 20 years. Brittany is a freshman at Simsbury High School and also attends CREC's School for the Performing Arts.

Because of their involvement with Love Makes a Family, John, Bill and Brittany were part of the video "Marriage Makes a Word of Difference", were featured on the cover of Simsbury LIFE (town monthly paper) and a feature article in The Hartford Courant. They were even part of an American lifestyle segment for an Italian TV program similar to "60 Minutes".

John and Bill had a private civil union ceremony in Vermont in July 2003, a large festive ceremonial (non-legal) wedding the following month at their home when living in Hartford, CT, and then a <u>legal</u> wedding on January 7, 2009 at their current home in Simsbury surrounded by a handful of church members.

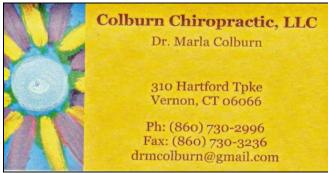
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PROFESSIONAL SERVICES DIRECTORY: If you would like to advertise your business/service in Caring for one year (6 issues), send your business card and a check for \$40 (made payable to PFLAG Hartford) to: Jean Cormier, 156 Randal Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06110. Your Patronage of our advertisers, who help us pay the costs of sending the *Caring* newsletter to you, would be greatly appreciated by them and by us. Please mention that you saw their advertisement in Caring.









### **HGLHC**

Hartford Gay & Lesbian **Health Collective** Be well, Be yourself.

P.O. Box 2094 Hartford, CT 06145-2094 tel 860/278-4163 fax 860/278-5995 www.hglhc.org

ELLEN R. FRANKLIN, MA, LPC **Psychotherapist** 

The Canal House 128 Garden Street Farmington CT

tel 860-678-7206 fax 860-679-9271 ellenfranklin01@aol.com

mail PO Box 1614 Avon CT 06001



#### **Connecticut PFLAG Meetings**

<u>PFLAG HARTFORD</u>: Information on front page or at our website: www.pflaghartford.org

PFLAG NORWALK/SOUTHWESTERN CT

When: First Wednesday of every month, 7:30 pm

Where: Triangle Community Center 16 River Street Norwalk

Help Line: (203) 226-0257 or (203) 438-0530

Email: PFLAGSWCT@yahoo.com

PFLAG NORTHWESTERN CT:

**Contact: Diane (860) 435-2738** 

PFLAG GREATER NEW HAVEN/SHORELINE

166 Lovers Lane, Guilford , CT 06437, (203) 458-0493

Email: greaternewhavenpflag@yahoo.com

Meetings: Church of the Redeemer, 185 Cold Spring

(Corner of Whitney Ave.), New Haven 3rd Tues of the Month @ 7:30 pm Help Line: (203) 907-0518

Shoreline Area Help Line: (203) 453-1395

**Shoreline Area email:** 

davidwinthropknapp@)yahoo.com

PFLAG GROTON (NOANK) /SOUTHEASTERN CT

When: Second Monday of every month, 7:00-8:30 Where: Noank Baptist Church, 18 Cathedral Hgts.

Helpline: (860) 447-0884

Email: robertmarrion@sbcglobal.net

or www.pflagsect.org

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:

Where: Agawam

Contact: (413) 732-3240 or (413) 783-7709

Greenfield, MA

Help Line: 413/625-6636

E-Mail: PFLAGPV@valinet.com

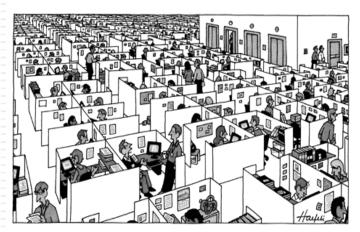
# CARING IS THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF PFLAG HARTFORD

**Editor/Circulation Manager: Jean Cormier** 

*Caring* welcomes articles, letters and other submissions for publication.

<u>**Deadline:**</u> 15<sup>th</sup> of even numbered months. Send articles to: *Jean Cormier*, 156 Randal Avenue, West

Hartford, CT 06110



"Should I come out to everybody at once or one cubicle at a time?"

#### STRAIGHT SPOUSE SUPPORT NETWORK:

In Connecticut and Western Massachusetts Monthly Support Group, Third Sunday, West Hartford, CT.

Contact Jane Harris at (413) 625-6636 or janenrosie48@yahoo.com or at www.straightspouse.org

<u>In Southern Connecticut</u> Call Joan Rolnick at (203) 438-0530) or <u>janenrosie@hotmail.com</u>

#### **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.