



OCTOBER 11, 2012
NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY

While this day is set aside for those now comfortable with their homosexuality to “come out,” it is also an opportunity for PFLAG parents to “come out” to their friends and family.)



The Voice of PFLAG Hartford

Caring

Volume 21, No. 5

September/October 2012

IN THE PFLAG HARTFORD FAMILY:

NOTE: We will hold a brief ANNUAL MEETING of our membership at the beginning of our September 19th regular monthly meeting. The principal business is election of the Board for the coming year.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

It's that time of the year, and membership dues are now due and payable for fiscal year October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013. For your convenience, a membership envelope was enclosed with our mailed copies. A separate letter will be sent to those members who receive Caring via e-mail. The schedule of dues is listed below. Thank-you in advance for your prompt membership renewal or enrollment.

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

REFRESHMENT REMINDER:

- September 19 - Lori & Kalie D.
- October 17 - Bonnie & Zachary
- November 21 - Eric & Jason
- December 19 - Megan R.

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

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



(Paid membership includes a one-year subscription to Caring & the National PFLAG newsletter.)

Please make your check payable to **PFLAG Hartford** 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 every Sunday from 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.
- **STONEWALL SPEAKERS** is an all volunteer speakers' bureau composed of LGBT people and allies dedicated to reducing violence and bias while promoting equality for all. We speak to thousands of Connecticut students and adults annually. Listeners will meet LGBT people and their allies in person; hear candid accounts of their lives; and receive honest, informed answers to any questions they have. Let your high school, college, business, religious group or community group know we are available. For more information please contact coordinator@stonewallspeakers.org.
- **XX CLUB "Twenty Club"** – The Transsexual Support Group of New England meets the 2nd & 4th Saturday of every month from 2-5 p.m. at The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT www.twentyclub.net
- **LIVING SOULFULLY** (Men Loving Men In Community) meets the 4th Wednesday of every month, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT. 860/278-4163.
- **Mpower CT** – Social gathering for gay and bisexual men ages 18-35 meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month from 7-9 p.m. at The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective, 1841 Broad Street, Hartford, CT. 860/278-4163.
- **THE 10TH ONE BIG EVENT:** The Hartford Gay & Lesbian Health Collective is well known as an important force in the LGBT and HIV/AIDS communities in the greater Hartford area. But did you know they throw a mean party? It's true! To find out for yourself, mark your calendar now for the 10th One Big Event (OBE) on Saturday, Nov. 17th. It will be here before you know it. For information, or to get involved, please contact OBE Coordinator, Dan Millett at (860)278-4163, Ext. 18
- **CONNECTICUT P.R.I.D.E. CELEBRATION** – Unfortunately, there will not be a PRIDE Celebration in Hartford this year. Plans are being made for the 2013 event.



HHS CLARIFIES THAT THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION BASED ON GENDER IDENTITY

Transgender people now have protections from health care discrimination all across the country.

Have you ever been discriminated against in our health care system? The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently confirmed that the Affordable Care Act's (you know, Obamacare) ban on sex-based discrimination includes discrimination based on gender identity. This confirms the Task Force's longstanding position that federal civil rights statutes that prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex include protections against discrimination on the basis of gender identity. **This means that no one can be discriminated against because of their gender identity or because of a healthcare provider's stereotype about sex — what a man or a woman "ought to look like."**

Back in June, the Task Force and our New Beginning Initiative coalition partners sent HHS a letter asking for exactly this clarification. We're thrilled they agree with us and numerous federal courts that have issued similar opinions clarifying that sex-based discrimination protections also address gender identity.

We encourage anyone who feels they have been discriminated against because of their gender identity to file a complaint with the HHS Office of Civil Rights, so your complaint can be investigated and appropriately handled. File a complaint at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/complaints/index.html>



HRC is spreading a beacon of hope and a symbol of equality.

Last month, the Boy Scouts of America sent a message by announcing that they would uphold their ban on "open or avowed homosexuals."

You are less deserving. You are second class.

It's the same message right-wing groups are trying to send in their coordinated anti-marriage equality efforts in states like Maryland and Washington, and it's the same message we hear from one side of the presidential campaign trail.

I made the Human Rights Campaign a part of my life to spread hope and to shut down discrimination. Our logo itself is a symbol of the better world we strive to create through pro-equality work in schools, companies, hospitals, Congress, and even out on the campaign trail.

...

How do we send a signal that the time for discrimination is long over – that the days of second class citizenship have come to an end? **We do it by spreading symbols of equality around the country** – and not just HRC's equality logo.

We shine a media light on hate-filled behavior like Chick-fil-A CEO Dan Cathy's contributions to extremist anti-LGBT groups. We rally with LGBT and straight supporters alike to send a message that every voice matters in this movement. And we go into schools to collaborate with educators on curriculums that make classrooms the safe spaces they're meant to be.

This fall, we're facing more threats at once than we have since 2004. We're prepared to do everything in our power to win historic marriage battles in states across the country and elect pro-equality candidates. But right-wing extremists are putting millions into campaigns to undo decades of work around marriage equality. ...

For so many people, this fight is a matter of being able to live life supported and respected. We have no choice but to push now more than ever – there are so many people depending on us.

...

Chad Griffin, President



BREAKING NEWS: RESPECT GOES FOR GOLD

August 2012

Today is a day of huge moments at the Olympics for several friends of GLSEN on Team USA. Right now, the women's basketball team is on the court for a semi-final match up with rival Australia. At 2:30 ET, the US women's soccer team will face Japan for the gold in one of the most highly anticipated rematches in the history of the women's game.

These Olympic high points feature great role models who have openly stated their support for a K-12 sports world free of anti-LGBT bias and violence, as well as some world-class athletes who are out as lesbian, gay or bi. Basketball standouts Diana Taurasi and Tamika Catchings, among other Olympians, appear on GLSEN's Changing the Game website as WNBA players who have taken our "Team Respect Challenge." Same for Seimone Augustus, WNBA league MVP in 2011, who happens to be out. And breakout Olympic soccer star Megan Rapinoe, who came out just before the London games, has spoken in support of GLSEN and Changing the Game, citing the "freedom to be herself" as one of the sources of her game-changing creativity on the pitch.

All of these great athletes are tremendous role models for young people everywhere but there are athletes who serve as role models in local schools and communities as well and GLSEN's Changing the Game Advisory Board Member Jeff Sheng is helping to share their stories in image and word. Over the last nine years, Jeff has been photographing "out" high school athletes as part of his "Fearless" Project. This powerful work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally and this year the project has been a feature at the London Olympics Pride House.

"I am proud to be part of GLSEN's Changing the Game initiative because together we are focusing on making our schools safer for our LGBT high school student athletes." Jeff describes the students he has photographed as some of "the bravest individuals" he has ever met - students who even though they face the prospect of being bullied, harassed or beaten up by their fellow teammates, have had the courage to instead say, "I'm going to be who I am." Changing the Game is helping to create climates in K-12 sports and athletics where students do not have to face the kind of anti-LGBT bias that sidelines so many and where all LGBT students can participate as fully as possible in an environment of respect and inclusiveness.

Eliza Byard, GLSEN Executive Director



GAY & LESBIAN ADVOCATES & DEFENDERS
Making History, Changing Lives.

July 4, 2012

GLAD has spearheaded the fight to end federal marriage discrimination for nearly a decade - now we are headed for the United States Supreme Court.

Leaders in the House of Representatives, through the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group (BLAG), have asked the nation's highest court to review our latest victory against the Defense of Marriage Act and make a final determination about DOMA's constitutionality.

We have been preparing for this since May 17, 2004 - the day marriage first became a reality for same-sex couples in the United States, the result of our landmark Massachusetts case *Goodridge v. DPH*. Right then, we began crafting our multi-faceted legal challenge to DOMA.

We have developed a winning strategy, assembled the best possible legal team, brought together an inspiring and committed group of plaintiffs, and built the right case at the right time.

Our plaintiffs have shared the details of their lives and their relationships with judges, with the media, and with total strangers. They've waited patiently and courageously.

It's time they were treated the same as their married friends and neighbors.

Every day that goes by is a day that 82-year-old plaintiff Herb Burtis has to struggle without the Social Security safety net that he and his late husband and partner of 60 years, John Farris, paid into, and that other surviving spouses can count on - just because DOMA keeps the federal government from recognizing their marriage.

Two federal courts - the Massachusetts District Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit - have already agreed with us that our plaintiffs, and couples and families like them across the country, deserve to be treated equally under the law and have their marriages respected by their government.

This is the defining moment.

The First Circuit called Supreme Court review of GLAD's DOMA case "highly likely" in its unanimous ruling against the law. The Court will decide by the first day of October whether it will hear our *Gill* case or let our victory stand.

We're ready.

...

Lee Swislow
 Executive Director, GLAD



MORE AMAZING NEWS FROM GLAD!

Yet another federal judge has ruled DOMA unconstitutional.

July 31, 2012

Today in Connecticut, U.S. District Court Judge Vanessa L. Bryant was the latest to agree that the so-called Defense of Marriage Act defends nothing and serves only to harm loving, committed couples.

Judge Bryant's ruling in our challenge *Pedersen v. Office of Personnel Management* comes on the heels of our victory against DOMA in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit - in *Gill v. OPM*.

Judge after judge is coming to the conclusion that you and I have known all along: **all married couples and surviving spouses deserve the same opportunities to care and provide for one another and their families.**

We are not at the end, but momentum is clearly building in our favor. ... we are going to take this fight all the way to the Supreme Court and see that DOMA is overturned once and for all.

...

Lee Swislow
 Executive Director, GLAD



August 2, 2012

The vote was unanimous.

This past weekend, the 15 members of the Democratic Party platform drafting committee included a freedom to marry plank in the draft platform. Not only that, they also included language opposing the so-called Defense of Marriage Act.

We're so proud that the Democratic Party is moving forward with strong language supporting marriage for loving and committed same-sex couples and their families.

The Democratic Party will finalize the platform language when the full platform committee meets in August and the final platform will be voted on at the Democratic National Convention in September. This would make the Democratic Party the first major political party in the United States to be on record supporting the freedom to marry. This huge step forward follows President Obama's historic announcement that he believes that same-sex couples should be able to marry.

THE HEALTH COLLECTIVE WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBER JOSH ROZOVSKY

Congratulations to PFLAG member, Josh Rozovsky, on becoming a HGLHC staff member. Josh has been volunteering at the Health Collective as an HIV Counselor and helping with Thursday night clinics for several years. He has been a member of the Mpowerment Project since its start in 2008 and continues to enjoy all the friendships he's made through the Collective and Mpowerment. Josh has a Masters in National Security and Public Safety from the University of New Haven and previously has worked in protecting the privacy of health information and advising healthcare organizations on social media. He has a strong interest in public health, technology, and LGBT rights. In his free time, Josh serves as an EMT with Bloomfield Volunteer Ambulance and is currently a student pilot learning to fly gliders.

MASSACHUSETTS COURT: Civil Union "Equivalent" to Marriage

Massachusetts' top court ruled on Thursday that a Vermont civil union will be recognized as the "equivalent of marriage" in the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court's unanimous opinion is being hailed as a victory by same-sex marriage advocates, who say the decision underscores that spouses in civil unions should be treated no differently than spouses in marriages. The court issued its opinion after considering whether a Vermont civil union must be dissolved before either party in that union can enter into a marriage in Massachusetts, the opinion said.

In the case at hand, Todd Elia-Warnken and Richard Elia, a same-sex couple, were married in Massachusetts in 2005, according to the opinion. In April, 2009, Mr. Elia-Warnken filed for divorce. Almost a year later, Mr. Elia claimed that their Massachusetts marriage should be void after he discovered that Mr. Elia-Warnken was part of an undissolved civil union in Vermont.

The Massachusetts court, in an opinion written by chief justice Roderick Ireland, found that a Vermont civil union is the "equivalent of marriage" in Massachusetts and allowing a person to be in a civil-union and a marriage at the same time would violate the state's polygamy statutes. Justice Ireland wrote, "If we do not recognize [Mr. Elia-Warnken's] civil union, he would have two legal spouses, each of whom could expect virtually the same obligations from him, such as spousal or child support, inheritance, and healthcare coverage."

Ben Klein, a senior attorney with the Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, which represented Mr. Elia, said it was "an important decision because we have some states with marriage and some states with equivalents for same-sex couples." "This makes clear they should be treated the same for practical purposes of applying the law in other states," he said.

Mr. Elia-Warnken's lawyers had argued the Massachusetts marriage should not be voided because civil unions in Vermont are not the same as marriages and that Massachusetts' polygamy statutes only apply to "husband" or "wife," the opinion said. Russell Schwartz, a lawyer for Mr. Elia-Warnken, said: "Although we are disappointed with the decision, we respect the court's decision." He added, "We are pleased at the role Massachusetts has played in the debate" over same-sex marriage.

GODSPEED, SALLY RIDE

July 24, 2012, blog by Allyson Robinson

When I was in middle school I kept a picture of Sally Ride pinned to the bulletin board above the desk where I did my homework. It was a cartoon, penned the week she made her famous flight on Space Shuttle Challenger in 1983 to become America’s first woman in space. On it, a young person about my age gazed admiringly at a poster of a woman in a spacesuit. (It was clearly intended to be Sally, though the woman on the poster expressed her gender in a far more feminine way, even in baggy NASA coveralls, than the real-life Dr. Ride ever did.) I identified with the young person in the picture because, like many of my generation, I shared his admiration of this strong, courageous, incredibly accomplished woman.

Even more than that, though, I felt as though I understood what drove Sally to break so many barriers and take her place in the history books. At that point in my life, an astronaut was all I'd ever wanted to be – and by the time Dr. Ride flew for the second time in 1984 I was making serious plans to join her and her comrades in the space program. I went to Space Camp three times, took college courses in astronomy and computer science each summer and started applying to West Point. When I got accepted, I majored in physics just like she had at Stanford. Even after I surrendered my dream of flying in space to chase other callings her example still inspired me.

I think that's why in the midst of my shock at hearing the news of her death yesterday I found a reason to admire her even more. Only upon reading her obituary did I learn she had spent the last 27 years of her life with her female partner, Tam O'Shaughnessy. Like many of her pioneering colleagues, the experience of being "first" led Dr. Ride to value her privacy dearly, and I would certainly never fault her for it. I feel blessed to know that my hero and I shared a little more in common than I knew. I just wish I'd known sooner.

It reminds me again of that cartoon on my bulletin board back in 1983. One evening while working on my algebra homework, perhaps a year after I pinned it there, I realized the young person gazing with such admiration at Dr. Ride in the picture was not a boy but a girl – her pony-tail had blended into the background of the pen-and-ink drawing just enough to obscure her true identity. The discovery only strengthened my sense of identifying with her, though it would be two decades before I could share that hidden aspect of my own identity with the world and come out as transgender.

Today I feel an even closer bond with Dr. Ride knowing she was family all along, and I’m grateful that I can tell my own children that this pioneering heroine lived with the integrity to be true to herself and to those she loved. Godspeed, Sally – may your example inspire a new generation of women, and men, with the courage to be themselves in the face of the unknown.

I WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT THE GOOD WORKS OF PFLAG HARTFORD WITH A TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF:

\$ _____ My name: _____

Please cut out this coupon and mail it with your check (made payable to PFLAG Hartford) to our Treasurer, Joan Jansen, 12 Colchester Commons, Colchester, CT 06415.

PFLAG Hartford has been available as a resource for support to families and friends of GLBTI people in Greater Hartford, and beyond, for over 20 years. We are staffed solely by volunteers, and depend heavily on contributions to enable us to continue to educate and advocate for an end to discrimination and to make this a safer world for our GLBTI loved ones. Your help is greatly appreciated.

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*.

Healing begins within the heart...



Elliott M. Strick, M.A.
 Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
(860) 231-8459

2446 Albany Ave., Suite 304
 West Hartford, CT 06117
 www.elliottstrick.com

Couples, Individuals & Families
 AAMFT Clinical Member



MARY BETH MURPHY, AAI

SHIMKUS, MURPHY & LEMKUIL, INC.
 REAL ESTATE - INSURANCE
 380 New Britain Ave. - Hartford, CT 06106

Office: (860) 249-1396 Ext. 125
 Fax: (860) 246-0512
 Email: shimkus1@mindspring.com
 www.shimkuscompanies.com

Since 1934



NOW HIRING:
 Class A CDL Drivers
 Sales Managers &
 Other openings

Apply online:
usfoods.com/careers

Become a valued member of our diverse and talented team

ELLEN R. FRANKLIN, MA, LPC
 Psychotherapist



The Canal House
 128 Garden Street
 Farmington CT

tel 860-985-7205
 Fax 860-679-9271
 ellenfranklin01@gmail.com

mail PO Box 1614
 Avon CT 06001

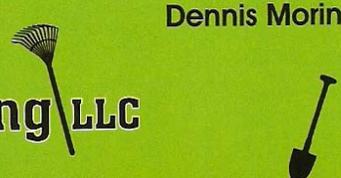
Gary S. Gianini, LCSW
 Individuals, Couples & Families

Psychotherapy & Counseling
 674 Prospect Avenue
 Hartford, CT 06105

860-655-1562
 ggianini@comcast.net

strengthening the spirit, healing the heart

Morin Landscaping LLC



Dennis Morin

FLOWER BED GROOMING • SMALL GARDEN PROJECTS

860.967.8023
 morin39@cox.net

75 Schoolhouse Crossing
 Wethersfield, CT 06109

Connecticut PFLAG Meetings

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

Helpline: (860) 633-7184

Phone: (860) 633-5111

Transgender Issues: (860) 231-8582

PFLAG SOUTHWESTERN CT

When: 7:30 pm, 1st Wednesday (bi-monthly)

Jan./Mar./May/July/Sept./Nov.

Where: Triangle Community Center
16 River Street (lower level) Norwalk

Help Line: (203) 226-0257 - Westport

(203) 322-5380 - Stamford

(203) 925-0445- Shelton

(203) 847-9183 - Norwalk

Email: PFLAGSWCT@yahoo.com

PFLAG SECT (SOUTHEASTERN CT)

When: Second Monday of every month,

Potluck at 6:00 pm; Meeting at 7:00 pm

Where: Noank Baptist Church,
18 Cathedral Heights, Noank (Groton)

Helpline: (860) 447-0884

Email: bjalthen@sbcglobal.net

Web site: www.pflagsect.org

PFLAG GREATER NEW HAVEN

166 Lovers Lane, Guilford, CT 06437

Meeting: 3rd Tuesday of the Month, 7:30 pm

Church of the Redeemer

185 Cold Spring Street, New Haven

(Corner of Whitney Avenue)

Phone/Help Line (203) 458-0493

Email: greaternewhavenpflag@yahoo.com

Central and Western Massachusetts

PFLAG FRANKLIN-HAMPSHIRE CHAPTER

Northampton

When: Second Tuesday of every month

Where: Highland Valley Elder Services,
Cutlery Building, 320 Riverside Drive

Helpline: 413/625-6636

Email: jcmalinski48@gmail.com

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.

Deadline: 15th of even numbered months. Send articles to: *Jean Cormier*

156 Randal Avenue,

West Hartford, CT 06110

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

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
jcmalinski48@gmail.com

or at www.straightspouse.org

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.