



OCTOBER 11, 2015
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 24, No. 5

September/October 2015

IN THE PFLAG HARTFORD FAMILY:

NOTE: We will hold a brief **ANNUAL MEETING** of our membership at the beginning of our September 16th 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, 2015 to September 30, 2016. The schedule of dues is listed below. Thank-you for your prompt membership renewal or enrollment.

PFLAG is much more than a welcoming place for parents and friends of lesbians & gays. Lesbian, Gay, bisexual, transgender people and allies are also encouraged to attend our meetings. LGBT people come with or without their family members, and parents and friends come with or without their LGBT 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 Hartford. First Tuesday of each month, 6:30 p.m., at 63 Linden Street, Manchester. For more information, please call Donna at 860/505-7346 or Lori at 860/305-2743.

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Household Membership: \$40
Individual Membership: \$25
Student/Limited Income: \$15



MONTHLY MEETING REMINDER

Tuesday, Sept 1 – 6:30 pm Manchester
Wednesday, Sept 16 – 7:30 pm Hartford
Tuesday, October 6 – 6:30 pm Manchester
Wednesday, October 21- 7:30 pm Hartford

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

Pay by check to **PFLAG Hartford** : PFLAG Hartford, P.O. Box 260733, Hartford, CT 06126-0733

Or pay online at: <http://www.pflaghartford.org/membership.html> , or pay at meeting with credit card

PFLAG Hartford promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning 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

- **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.
- **CONNECTICUT OUTREACH SOCIETY.** Support meetings twice a month for trans folks and allies in West Hartford. For information go to <http://www.ctoutreach.org/>
- **WE ARE THE CHANGE – 2015 PFLAG NATIONAL CONVENTION - October 16-18, Nashville, TN**
2015 NATIONAL CONVENTION UPDATE: Have you registered yet for the 2015 PFLAG National Convention? There's no time to lose! We're filling up fast with chapter leaders and members from across the country, looking to take advantage of two full days and nights in Nashville, Tennessee. With plenaries, special events, and 50 exciting learning sessions to choose from, this is the ultimate in PFLAG opportunities!
Information: pflag.org/2015convention.

CEA MEMBERS EXPLORE GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION

May-June 2015 CEA ADVISOR

Although Bruce Jenner, now known as Caitlyn, has put the term "Transgender" in the forefront of the news lately, educators across Connecticut have been working with transgender students for a number of years. But, many educators cite the lack of information and resources as a hurdle to providing the kind of support that students need and deserve. In response, CEA's Human and Civil Rights Commission hosted a workshop last month titled, "Translating Gender Identity and Expression" to help members from across the state learn more about what they could do to better serve the increasing number of transgender and gender non-conforming students in their classes.

Speaker Lori Davison of PFLAG Hartford (an organization of parents, families and allies united with LGBTQ people for support, education, and advocacy) used a "Genderbread" person to illustrate that a student's self-identity or label can be understood better through four factors: outward expression, internal gender identity, sexual attraction and biological sex. Rather than assuming that any student neatly falls into a female versus male category, Davison stressed that, instead, everyone falls on a spectrum with some feeling female in certain of those factors while perhaps feeling masculine in others. Davison also shared personal stories of parents who, when joined with other families of transgender children, evolve from feeling frightened and anxious for their child's future to realizing that their child's safety and well-being require acceptance and support.

Speaker Robin McHaelen, the founder of True Colors, a nationally recognized organization in Connecticut that is dedicated to addressing the needs of sexual and gender minority youth, discussed the key risk factors facing transgender youth such as family rejection, truancy, homelessness, and suicide. McHaelen explained that being accepted by family, peers, and the larger community, along with having access to LGBTQ support and services, are key protective factors for these children. McHaelen then outlined how Connecticut law provides clear guidance on what schools are required to do for transgender students and concluded by sharing four simple steps that teachers can take to better support their transgender students: (1) when you hear mean, intervene, (2) use inclusive language rather than traditional gender-conforming terms, (3) stop dividing students by gender when organizing class activities, and (4) integrate accomplishments of LGBTQ historical figures such as George Washington Carver and Bayrd Rustin into the curriculum.



OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR LGBT PROTECTIONS

In a mere two weeks since the introduction of the historic Equality Act in Congress, there has been a groundswell of support for comprehensive federal LGBT non-discrimination protections – from major corporations, an overwhelming majority of Americans, and *an impressive 209 members of Congress*.

Shortly before the bill was introduced on July 23, HRC President Chad Griffin spoke on air with MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell about the need for full federal equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Americans, stating:

"It's time we bring the explicit and comprehensive non-discrimination protections to all LGBT people in this country, regardless of where one lives."

I couldn't agree more – and neither could HRC members and supporters like you who sent over 54,000 messages through HRC to their legislators asking for their support of the Equality Act, resulting in 169 U.S. representatives and 40 senators signing on as original co-sponsors.

...

Because you took action, there has been an unprecedented amount of support, not only in Congress, but also among leading businesses. Within a week of the introduction of the Equality Act, major American corporations publicly announced support for the bill – including American Airlines, Apple, Dow Chemical, Facebook, General Mills, Google, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Levi Strauss & Co., Microsoft, Nike, Oracle, Orbitz, and Symantec.

Never before has the United States seen such overwhelming support for comprehensive non-discrimination protections for LGBT people on the federal level. Seventy percent of Americans have voiced their support for federal LGBT non-discrimination protections, and the Equality Act would provide just that – in areas such as employment, housing, services, public spaces, education, credit, jury service, and federal funding. And, thanks to co-sponsors in both the House and Senate, including representation from your district, we are one step closer to obtaining these protections.

We know the campaign for full federal equality will likely be long and arduous, but the strong, early support for the Equality Act is incredibly promising. It's time to make the dream of full federal equality a reality – and the support of more than 200 members of Congress, major corporations, and a majority of Americans is an excellent start.

Sincerely,

David Stacy, Director, Government Relations



EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS RULES IN FAVOR OF RESPECT FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES

By Lily Hiott-Millis, Jul 21, 2015

Today, Tuesday, July 21, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that international law requires legal protection for same-sex couples in all countries across the continent that have signed on to the European Convention on Human Rights.

Evan Wolfson, president of Freedom to Marry, stressed the importance of this ruling:

Today's ruling affirms that gay people may not be denied the basic human right to form families and requires that all signatories to the European Convention on Human Rights treat their committed relationships with respect and protection under the law. It immediately raises the bar in countries that currently provide no legal recognition for same-sex partners, and also brings Europe another big step closer to the freedom to marry continent-wide. By talking neighbor to neighbor about who gay people are and why marriage matters, as we did here and our counterparts have done across Europe, from the Netherlands in 2001 to Ireland in May, we will see a critical mass of European states with the freedom to marry and the realization of full equality for hundreds of millions.

Twenty-four of the 47 countries in the Council of Europe currently have civil union or marriage for same-sex couples.

Freedom to Marry applauds this ruling, and looks forward to the day that all countries in Europe -- and the world -- welcome marriage for same-sex couples.

1ST CIRCUIT RULES PUERTO RICO MARRIAGE BAN UNCONSTITUTIONAL

A three-judge panel with the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on July 8, 2015, ruled Puerto Rico's same-sex marriage ban is unconstitutional.

U.S. Circuit Court Judges Juan Torruella, Ojetta Rogerlee Thompson and William Kayatta, Jr., issued their ruling less than two weeks after the U.S. Supreme Court released their decision that extended marriage rights to same-sex couples throughout the country.

Ada Conde Vidal and Ivonne Álvarez Vélez of San Juan in March 2014 filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in order to force the U.S. commonwealth to recognize their Massachusetts marriage. Four additional same-sex couples and Puerto Rico Para Tod@s, a Puerto Rican LGBT advocacy group, joined the case a few months later.

U.S. District Judge Juan Pérez-Giménez last October dismissed the case, but the plaintiffs appealed it to the 1st Circuit that includes the island within its jurisdiction. Puerto Rico Gov. Alejandro García Padilla's administration announced earlier this year that it will no longer defend the U.S. commonwealth's same-sex marriage ban.

Same-sex marriages are expected to begin in Puerto Rico on July 15.

BOY SCOUTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY VOTES TO END GAY LEADERSHIP BAN

Originally posted on Jul. 13, 2015. Updated on Jul. 28, 2015, Chris Geidner, BuzzFeed News Reporter

WASHINGTON — A key leadership panel of the Boy Scouts of America voted unanimously last week to end the ban on gay leaders in scouting, the organization told local leaders on Monday.

The move — raised as a necessary step by the organization's head in May — came from the executive committee of the Boy Scouts on July 10. A vote of the full executive board is scheduled for July 27, at which point the change is immediately effective.

The resolution passed by the committee does not require councils or troops to allow out gay leaders, but lifts the prior ban on such leaders. Specifically, the resolution "affirms the right of each chartering organization to reach its own religious and moral conclusions about the specific meaning and application of" the organization's values.

At the Boy Scouts national annual meeting in May, the group's president, former Defense Secretary Robert Gates, took on the issue directly and at length. "I must speak as plainly and bluntly to you as I spoke to presidents when I was director of the CIA and secretary of defense," he said in part. "We must deal with the world as it is, not as we might wish it to be. The status quo in our movement's membership standards cannot be sustained."

In a statement, Zach Wahls, the executive director of Scouts for Equality, said, "Today's announcement hopefully marks the beginning of the end of the Boy Scouts of America's decades-old ban on gay leaders and parents like my two moms."

He continued: "For decades, the Boy Scouts of America's ban on gay adults has stood as a towering example of explicit, institutional homophobia in one of America's most important and recognizable civic organizations. While this policy change is not perfect—BSA's religious chartering partners will be allowed to continue to discriminate against gay adults—it is difficult to overstate the importance of today's announcement."

In the resolution, the Boy Scouts national organization specifically states that it will "defend and indemnify to the fullest extent allowed by law" any chartered group that is a religious group and is challenged in court for making a "good faith refusal to select a unit leader based upon the religious principles of the chartered organization."

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ANNOUNCES FULL MARRIAGE BENEFITS FOR SAME-SEX COUPLES

The Obama administration is set to afford the full benefits of marriage to same-sex married couples — including Social Security and veterans spousal benefits — following the U.S. Supreme Court decision in favor of same-sex nuptials nationwide, U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch announced on July 9th.

THANK-YOU to our fabulous, and famous, August guest speaker, Tony Ferraiolo. Seventy-Four PFLAG folks braved the heat to hear him speak! Tony was engaging and inspiring. His passion and compassion were evident as he relayed his life story and reminded us that when a trans person transitions, the FAMILY is transitioning as well. Every person's journey is their own and you should not let past pain control you. Don't let the fear of the future impede you from living in the present and embracing the power to "Create Yourself."

SINCERE CONDOLENCES go out to the friends and family of Anja Schaedler

Following is a memorial to Anja, written by our own Carole MacKenzie

Who could ever forget Anja Schaedler? I vividly remember the first time I met her; it was at a PFLAG meeting years ago. There were only about four of us in the trans group then, unlike today when there are at least 20 trans folks, not counting their parents and loved ones. I knew Jerimarie, of course. In she walked, tall and gracious, with a tiny pixie named Anja. She was shy and quiet at first, yet as she got more comfortable, she began to tell us about her untenable custody fight. Her children had been taken from her and her ex by DCF, and she was only allowed to visit them infrequently. I can't recall seeing a sadder person, or a fiercer mother, determined to get them back. She was deeply wounded and felt utterly betrayed.

As anyone who has dealt with the DCF system knows, it is not easy to navigate; in Anja's case it was nearly impossible because of serious misunderstandings and false accusations. And it goes without saying that it was a bureaucratic nightmare. I thought how unfair it was, how courageous of her to share it, and how her passionate resolve was to right a great wrong. I wasn't a hugger then, but I was so moved by her humanity, I hugged her. I think she was as surprised as I was, but she hugged me back. That did it; I was her fan from then on.

Over time we met at many trans events, even presented together at Transgender Lives. I always looked forward to seeing her, with her radiant energy and full-person smile. And, yes, her whole being, not only her face, smiled. She always kept me up to date on her progress, and the impossible hoops DCF had her jump through. I particularly remember one of the more absurd was that she and Jerimarie had to be in couple treatment. As a therapist, (not their therapist) I've seen a lot of couples that couldn't stand each other, couldn't talk, sat with their backs to one another on opposite ends of the sofa, and couldn't agree on anything. Jerimarie and Anja were emphatically NOT one of them. But jump through the hoops they did. Then, six years ago at the Trans Day of Remembrance, I saw Anja beaming and full of joy. We hugged hello, and beaming, she pointed across the room at a little Anja-look-alike. It was her beloved daughter Tasha; she got her back!

I just meant to write a short note to say how very sad I am that we don't have that brave, determined, bright and shiny, magical person with us on this side of the veil of tears. I feel honored and better for having known her. By moving imagination into my heart, I can only just imagine how hard it will be for Jerimarie and Tasha without her. I am so, so sorry.

SIGNING OFF

It has been my pleasure to be the editor of our Hartford PFLAG *Caring* newsletter for the past nineteen years, but the time has come for me to hand over the reins to someone with more energy and a more up-to-date view of the times as they are changing in our LGBTQ community. Phil Wessler, who now lives in California, was the creator of *Caring*. When I took over the newsletter duties from Bob Calvin, our former chapter president, I felt that it was important for me to honor the work done in the past, and to publish an informative and easy to read paper. At that time, we were the only Connecticut PFLAG chapter to produce a newsletter, and we are still the only one to do so, something for which we can all be very proud! I know our new editor, Tracy Martinez, will keep the tradition alive and perhaps bring a whole new look to both our e-mail and hard copy versions.

Thank-you for reading *Caring*. I hope it has been a good resource to help you keep up with the many wonderful and sometimes difficult changes that have taken place over the past nineteen years. I am amazed at how far our grass-roots efforts have taken us.

Did you know that Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) in New Britain has every copy of our newsletter in its archives? Our PFLAG National Office in Washington, D.C. also receives a copy of every issue.

I'll be seeing you at our regular monthly meetings and at special events.

Jean Cormier

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PFLAG Hartford has been available as a resource for support to families and friends of LGBTQ 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 LGBTQ 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 \$50 (made payable to PFLAG Hartford) to: PFLAG Hartford, PO Box 260733 • Hartford, CT 06126-0733. 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*.

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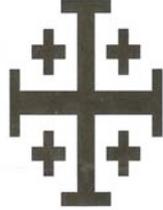


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 GraceHartford@sbcglobal.net

Absolutely everyone is welcome at this parish where we hope you will find a community of faith to support and encourage you.

We worship God through a traditional liturgy, celebrated with open minds and generous hearts.



Sunday - 8:00 A.M. Low Mass
 10:30 A.M. Sung Mass or Solemn High Mass
 Tuesday - 5:30 P.M. Low Mass or Healing Mass
 Wednesday - 7:15 A.M. Low Mass
 Thursday - 5:30 P.M. Low Mass

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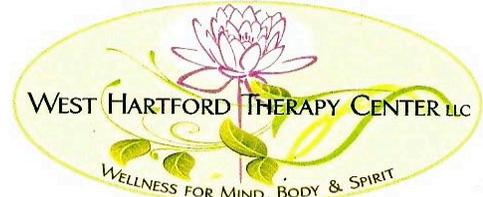
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CARING IS THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF PFLAG HARTFORD

Editor as of 10/1/15: Tracy Martinez

Caring welcomes articles, letters and other submissions for publication.

Deadline: 15th of even numbered months.

Connecticut PFLAG Meetings

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

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Contacts: (860) 505-7346 or (860) 305-2743

PFLAG SOUTHWESTERN CT

Hot Line: (203) 874-7365

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

Contact: David Knapp 203/453-1395

Email: davidwinthropknapp@yahoo.com

PFLAG/MANCHESTER YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU

When: First Tuesday of every month, 6:30-8:00pm.

Where: 63 Linden Street, Manchester

Contacts: Youth Group, Kellie Sheridan (860) 647-5263

Parent Group, Lori Davison pflaghartford@gmail.com

NORWALK

Support Group for PARENTS of trans/gender creative children of all ages, and of all our LGBTQ children!

When: 2nd Sunday of every month, 3:00-5:00 pm

Where: Triangle Community Center

618 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06850

Central and Western Massachusetts

Franklin - Northampton

When: Second Tuesday of every month from 6-8 pm

Where: Northampton at Northampton Crossing

325 King St. (conf. rm. Pioneer Valley Family Medicine)

Contacts: 413-625-6636 or jcmalinski48@gmail.com

The Berkshires:

Contact: (413) 243-2382 or mssemnn29@gmail.com

Springfield Area:

Where: Agawam

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

Greenfield, MA

Help Line: 413/625-6636

E-Mail: PFLAGPV@valinet.com



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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.