

Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians And Gays

Volume 26

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A MONTHLY PUBLICATION

www.pflagdetroit.org

PFLAG Detroit

Sunday

December 4, 2011

Advocacy
Support Education



Help us Celebrate the Joy of the Season
with our Annual Holiday Potluck



Our meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m on **Dec 4, 2011**. Following our support groups, at 3:30, we will gather together for our Holiday potluck dinner. PFLAG will provide beverages and the main entrée, but you are welcome to bring a meatless entrée if you choose. For the potluck, we are asking everyone to bring a dish to pass (dessert or side dish). For our listening pleasure, Ray Kell will be at the piano, playing songs of the holiday season.

In the spirit of the season, we will have a special guest from the Ruth Ellis Center, "Jay Wilson". Jay will do a "Meet and Greet" from 3:30p until 5:00p. He will have literature and will be available to answer any questions you have about the Ruth Ellis Center.

The Ruth Ellis Center provides daily meals, along with counseling for homeless LGBTQ youth 16-21. The Transitional Living Program is an 18-month independent living residential program designed to meet the needs of each LGBTQ young person. If you would like to make a donation for the Ruth Ellis Center, you may mail to:

Please send tax deductible contributions to:

PFLAG Detroit (designated for Ruth Ellis Center)
POB 1169
Royal Oak, MI 48068-1169

or bring your donations to our December meeting and Jay will take them back to the Center.

PFLAG Mission

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

Support of Families – working to keep families in loving relationships by helping them understand and affirm their gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered family members.

Education of the Public – seeking to dispel the myths and misinformation by working with educators, community and religious groups, the media, and the general public

Advocacy for Equality – calling for equal human and civil rights

When you no longer need PFLAG

PFLAG needs you



P.O. Box 1169
Royal Oak, MI 48068-1169

248-656-2875

Info@pflagdetroit.org

www.pflagdetroit.org

Monthly Meetings

Every 2nd Sunday of the month
2p – 5p

Facilitated Support Groups
Refreshments
Program (usually a speaker)

Lutheran Church of the Master
3333 Coolidge Highway
Troy, Michigan

Directions:

North of Big Beaver (16 Mile)
on the west side of Coolidge
just northwest of the Somerset
Collection Mall

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any religious or political group.

All donations are tax-exempt

From the Editor's Corner

by Marci Williams

“When I Grow Up, I Want to Be...”

What do you want to be when you grow up? Many of us were asked this question when we were children. The expected response was for us to name a career path we wanted to follow such as doctor, lawyer, singer, pilot, nurse astronaut, etc.



If we had the ability to take a step back in time, with the benefit of our life experience now, our answer may have been, “I want to grow up and be free to make choices on who I will love or how I will identify. I want to go to school without fear of being bullied. I want to live my life freely and openly without fear of ridicule or bodily harm. I want to love who I love without having to hide my feelings because someone who doesn't know me may not approve. I want to be free to use a public bathroom without fear that someone will call “911” and report me for being in the “wrong” bathroom. I want to be free to hold hands with someone in public without having others glare at me or make snide remarks. Society defines me as a boy because I have “male parts” but I feel like a girl inside. I want to wear dresses and make-up and be true to my own nature. I am biologically a girl, but I want to wear boy's clothes and play sports like football and soccer. I want to learn auto mechanics and build things with tools. I don't want to be punished for being “different”.

If I am free to be who I am and pursue my own dreams, who is harmed? Is my relative, a neighbor or someone in the next state unable to find housing or work because of who I am or how I present myself? No, but I am. I often have problems finding work or housing because of how I dress, walk or behave. I have no protection in the State of Michigan from being fired from a job if someone in authority even suspects I may be gay or transgendered.

I want to be able to pursue my own happiness without someone telling me I am wrong and I must change who I am to conform to their rigid category. I have my own “nature” and it is pure and warm and wonderful, just as yours, IF you will allow me to grow into the wonderful human being I can be. I want to be the highest expression of myself as possible and in order to do that, I must be free to be ME.

We love to hear from our readers. Please respond with comments or ideas to
NewsEditor@pflagdetroit.com

Of Special Interest...

Matt's Safe School Law – a Shame and Disgrace

With the recent passing of “Matt's Safe School Law” in the Michigan Senate, bullies can now be excused by making lives miserable if they have a moral or religious reason for doing so. Below is a partial response of a speech given by Democrat Senator Gretchen Whitmer (23rd District – East Lansing)...

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mobileweb/2011/11/03/gretchen-whitmer-michigan-senator-bullying-bill_n_1073928.html

MI House Republicans back away from 'license to bully' bill

<http://www.pridesource.com/article.html?article=50154>

Our kids need our support now. We cannot turn a blind eye to what our Senators have done and we need to let them hear our voices in unison...
PROTECT OUR CHILDREN!

PFLAG Profiles

an Inside View of Me... *~Mike Knight~*

What age were you when you realized you were gay?

I realized my attraction to men when I was thirteen, but could never admit to myself that I was gay until I was 19. Coming out for me, as for many, is a process, one that really cannot end without self-acceptance. It took me some time to both allow myself to give into these feelings and ultimately accept myself.

If you could trade places with someone else for a day, who would it be and why?

I would love to trade places with Hilary Clinton (Secretary of State) for a day. I think being able to do her job for a day and interact with so many diplomats and leaders of other countries would be an unforgettable and challenging experience.

What is something you hate most in life? (Not a person – an action, i.e., “war” or a feeling, i.e., “fear” or something painful, i.e., death of a loved one).

The thing I hate most in life is the lack of willingness to accept differences or change in people and society. I really wish it was something that more people were more open to. In all aspects of life (i.e. political, social, and personal) people are made uneasy by change or differences which ultimately makes allowing for them very difficult.

If you could, how would you change this thing you hate most in life?

The only way we as a society will be able to make any headway on this problem will be to continue to both educate and show how these differences or potential changes affect us all. Some may come and some may not, but because the journey may be long or the battle difficult should not keep us as a society from trying to make them accepted or a reality. Can we make society more open . . . I would like to believe so!

When you are out with friends, what is your most favorite thing to do? What is your least favorite thing to do, but something you will go along with in order to be part of the group?

My favorite thing to do when I am out with my friends is going out to dinner. I really love being out with my partner Ben or friends and enjoying food and fun conversation at some fun restaurant. It is a great way to unwind for me and it always brings a ton of laughs. I really cannot answer the second part of this because I really cannot think of anything we have done as a group that I did not enjoy.

What is your most favorite thing to do when you are alone?

When I am alone I love watching different shows on Netflix and relaxing on the couch . . . as long as I do not have homework to do!

What was the most terrifying event or moment in your life?

The most terrifying moment in my life was when I was in third grade and my father was involved in an accident at work. He ended up having a lot of his body severely burned and was in a coma for a month, while his partner who was working with him in the same room when the steam pipe blew, ended up dying. Not knowing if my dad was going to live or not really scared me.

Who has influenced you most in life and how?

As you might have already guessed my father has been the biggest influence on my life. He is one of the hardest working and least selfish individuals I have ever known. He always seems to be putting someone else ahead of himself and not letting anything get in the way of him achieving some goal. He really is someone whom I strive to be like every day.

Everyone has problems. What problems do you think are common among all people regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, gender or orientation?

Accepting differences is something common to all people regardless of their characteristics. It seems that any little thing can make someone pass judgment on a person. Even though so many of us are marginalized for many different reasons we still seem to be able to pass judgment on those who may be different.

Do you have a bucket list? (Things you want to do before you die). If so, what is on your list?

Before this question I did not have a list, but in thinking about it, my list would contain things like visiting different places such as the Caribbean, South America, New Zealand, and Australia, driving from coast to coast with my partner Ben and taking tons of pictures on our voyage, and also going parasailing.

What is something you eat that would cause your dinner guest to exclaim, “ewww are you really going to eat that?!”

Three things I have had that people might think are weird would be alligator, raw oysters, or Kim chi (fermented cabbage).

If you were independently wealthy and did not have to work, what would you do?

If I no longer had to work, I think I would travel with my partner, eat exotic food at many different restaurants, buy different clothes for our dogs, and take up photography.

Editor’s Note: Thank you Mike for allowing us a peek into your thoughts. (fermented cabbage – seriously? ewwww) <wink>



PFLAG... Please Share Your Experience

Dear PFLAG,
I met my partner on a dating site. We are now in a serious relationship and when people ask us how we met, we are embarrassed to tell them the truth. What would be a good response?
Signed...Serious Cyber Couple

Dear Cyber Couple:

Be honest. Meeting people on the internet is really not so uncommon any more. Is that worse than meeting in a bar? If you lie about it you may hurt future relationships with friends when they eventually find out the truth. Tell them what happened and then focus on your relationship!

Signed... PFLAG Member

Have a question for us? Send your question to: NewsEditor@pflagdetroit.org

My T-Room

“I Have a Target on My Back” - By Michelle Fox-Phillips

I am quite visible in the community, and society in general, and there are times when I feel as though someone may take a shot at me. There is so much hate in this world, mostly due to ignorance, that anything can and does happen. I live with this fear, but nothing will force me to stop fighting for the right to be who I am.

In November the Transgender Community held a candlelight vigil to honor transgender individuals who have been murdered for simply being who they are. The Transgender Day of Remembrance began in 1998 when Bay Area reporter, Gwendolyn Smith, started a website remembering those who were murdered <http://www.gender.org/remember/#>. Over the years, this candlelight vigil has grown to an international event.

As you read about the current victims you will notice that many of them are people of color. Some of the murders are done brutally, causing the maximum amount of fear and pain to the victim and also in order to send a message to others – as a warning. Many transgender people are kicked out of their house at an early age, and are not able to finish school. Imagine being a child of 16 or 17, forced out of your home, living on the streets. What are the options? Many turn to sexual activities and substance abuse just to survive.

We have a long hard battle ahead of us and we need your help. I hope you will join together with the Transgender Community to remember those whose lives have been cut short because of hatred – those who have been murdered simply because someone thought they should not be who they are. We need your voice as an ally to stop the madness.

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GIRL SCOUTS OF COLORADO RELEASED STATEMENT WELCOMING TRANSGENDER YOUTH

Wednesday, October 26, 2011 - 1:12pm by [Danny Heffernan](#), GLAAD's Advertising & Campaigns Fellow



Girl Scouts. Yesterday, the Girl Scouts of Colorado spoke out in support of transgender children. Following the story of a child who was denied enrollment in a local Girl Scout troop despite identifying as a girl, the Girl Scouts of Colorado released a statement saying that the associate responsible for that troop was unaware of the organization’s policy. “Girl Scouts is an inclusive organization and we accept all girls in Kindergarten through 12th grade as members,” the statement says. “If a child identifies as a girl and the child's family presents her as a girl, Girl Scouts of Colorado welcomes her as a Girl Scout.” Girl Scouts of Colorado also asserted that it is reaching out to the family of the excluded child and will be altering its training programs so that all girls are supported.

Corey Barrett of the [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender \(GLBT\) Community Center of Colorado](#) commented on the matter, saying that as children explore their gender identity and expression, “I think it's all about providing a healthy environment for them for that to happen. Everyone needs to be prepared or at least have an idea from a policy and procedure stand point how they're going to address that.” According to their statement, Girl Scouts of Colorado is committed to providing that environment. “Our requests for support of transgender kids have grown, and Girl Scouts of Colorado is working to best support these children, their families and the volunteers who serve them.”

Vegan Potato and Corn Chowder ala Roberta

Ingredients:

1 (32oz) container of Vegetable Broth *with no oil in it* (read labels)
2 cups water
2 full tsp. “Better Than Bouillon” paste (the Vegetable one)
8-10 Idaho potatoes, unpeeled and cubed (small cubes)
2 large onions, chopped
2 large carrots, chopped small
3 celery stalks, chopped
½ green pepper, chopped
½ tsp. to 1 tsp. cracked Rosemary (not powdered) (start with the ½ tsp)
½ tsp to 1 tsp Dill Weed (start with the ½ tsp first)



Cook this mixture for awhile until potatoes and vegetables are almost cooked to your desired softness.
Add 1 (32 oz) package of frozen corn to the potato mixture
Add 2 cups almond milk or light soy milk
Freshly ground pepper
Stir 3 T. Arrowroot into about ½ cup liquid from the pot, stir well to dissolve.
Add mixture to the pot and stir well. (Arrowroot will help to thicken the broth).
Heat, but **do not boil**, until the corn is hot and broth is somewhat thickened.

I don't add salt, but when I dish up a bowl of this Cowder, I like to season it with a few shakes of a new Seasoning Spice I found recently called, “Tajin” Clasico Seasoning. It contains: Chili peppers, Salt and dehydrated Lime Juice. It is not hot at all but has such a terrific flavor! I use it on a lot of things. It says on the label that it's “The Ultimate Fruit and Vegetable Booster”. YUM!!

From: ~ Roberta Coulter~ “I hope you enjoy this”!



Christmas Potluck

12/25/11 1p – 4p

Join us for good food, fun and
games on Christmas Day!

Where: Affirmations
290 W 9 Mile
Ferndale, MI 48020



Bring a dish to pass (or a nonalcoholic drink to share)

RSVP to 248-981-4227 or 248-514-2688

or **Email:** msfjp@sbcglobal.net

Do you have an announcement you would like published? Have you read a good book or seen a movie you would like to recommend? A recipe to share? What about an opinion or a question or a good ol “Shout Out”?

Send to NewsEditor@pflagdetroit.org

Christmas

REBOOTED



Detroit Together Men's Chorus

Brian Londrow- Artistic Director

Saturday December 17th, 2011

7:30 pm

Lamphere High School Auditorium
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248.544.3872 dtmc.org



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www.dtmc.org

For additional info please call 248-544-3872

(248) 399-7741
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A Faith Community for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgendered Individuals, their Friends and Families



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Royal Oak MI
48068-1169

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