



PFLAG

Fort Collins / Northern Colorado

Next Meeting

Date: February 12, 7 p.m. dessert and discussion

Place: Foothills Unitarian Church

Program: PFLAG is eager to understand the issues important to GLBT youth and their families by hearing from our local and regional Gay-Straight Alliances, GLBT youth groups and campus organizations, as well as teachers and counselors. Please come talk with us!

Important Note: Our annual dessert and discussion with youth takes place in a different location—**Foothills Unitarian Church**, 1815 Yorktown Avenue, Fort Collins (on Drake between Shields and Taft Hill).

PFLAG Thanks CGRA!

PFLAG wants to thank the Colorado Gay Rodeo Association for naming us one of their charity partners in 2006. We especially thank CGRA for its generous \$1000 donation to PFLAG Fort Collins. We love you guys! We look forward to using the donation to help us better fulfill our goals in 2007.

PFLAG Scholarships

Pass the word to high school seniors! National PFLAG offers over [20 scholarships](#) ranging from \$1000 to \$2500 to graduating seniors who are GLBT or strong allies. In 2006 they awarded some \$38,500 to 28 applicants out of 280 applicants. For applications and details, go to www.pflag.org. The deadline is Feb 14 and winners are notified by April 15.

Local PFLAG News

Our theme for 2007 is “Family Voices for Equality” because we want to strengthen our voice in the community on all three PFLAG focus areas—support, education, and equality.

Our goals for next year include:

1. Increased outreach to schools, colleges, faith groups, service groups, and the general public
2. Work with Greeley to explore establishing a new PFLAG chapter
3. Work with our local schools to build safer schools for GLBT youth
4. Enhance support for those who come to PFLAG or contact PFLAG for help
5. Establish a speaker's bureau

6. Increase the volunteer base and the dues-paying membership

PFLAG Volunteers Needed

We need for **at least one new board member** who is gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. If you are willing to be a member of the PFLAG board of directors, please contact Julie Wilson, jw6804@aol.com, (970) 667-5236.

Other volunteer opportunities include:

- ◆ Publicity—notify local newspapers and radio stations about upcoming PFLAG events
- ◆ Hospitality—organize PFLAG members to bring goodies to PFLAG meetings
- ◆ Greeters—help new attendees feel welcome and comfortable; follow up with them after the meeting
- ◆ Speaker's bureau—willingness to represent PFLAG and GLBT concerns at various speaking opportunities and community events
- ◆ Membership—track PFLAG members and send membership renewal requests

News of Local Interest

Feb 11: The Vagina Monologues

You're invited to Divas & Desserts to help celebrate women and envision a world without violence! The event will be held at the Lincoln Center, Fort Collins. It begins with a pre-show reception with hors d'oeuvres and cash bar at 2:00. The performance of *The Vagina Monologues* begins at 3:00, followed by live music by Liz Barnez, silent auction, and dessert at 5:00. There will be a competition featuring desserts from local restaurants including Melting Pot, Bissetti's, Rainbow, Starry Night, and many more.

The event benefits the Sexual Assault Victim Advocate (SAVA) Center. Tickets are \$25 per person and provide entry into the entire event. You can purchase tickets at the Lincoln Center Box office at 221-6730, or you can get them from Jen Lowe, jenniferlowe@gmail.com. For more information, please contact SAVA at 970.472.4204 or e-mail office@savacenter.org.

Feb 21: Older GLBT dinner, 5:30 PM

Katie Steiber from the Lambda Center reports that the February dinner site has changed! The new location is Avocado's Number, 605 S Mason St, Fort Collins.

Mar 3: Freedom to Marry Day

The Freedom to Marry Rally and Celebration will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2007 in Old Town Square, Fort Collins beginning at 12:30. The rally is followed by a wedding celebration at Avogadro's Number.

The organizers are looking for a child/youth/young adult of a committed GLBT couple to speak at this year's rally. If you are such a person or know of someone, please forward contact information to Craig Chapin at reikicraig@hotmail.com.

Answer FortPride.org Questions

Gary Rechnitz would like some feedback about FortPride.org from PFLAG parents. Gary asks:

- 1) If you have high school age kids in town, do you encourage them to visit FortPride.org to know that there's an active community surrounding them, or not?
- 2) If so, is there anything we can put online that they'd like to see?

If you have feedback for Gary, please contact him at grechnitz@fortpride.org.

News of Regional Interest

On Feb 3, the Colorado Coalition of PFLAG Chapters met in Boulder. The meeting included some excellent information on build a safe schools coalition.

Mar 26: Annual Equal Rights Colorado Lobby Day will take place at The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center of Colorado, 1050 Broadway, Denver (free metered parking on the Presidents Day holiday) from 8:00-1:30. Cost is \$10 per person and includes a continental breakfast. Learn about LGBT issues in this year's Colorado General Assembly session and how to effectively lobby your representatives in the legislature. Tour the capitol and contact your legislators. RSVP to Michael Brewer, mbrewer@glbtcolorado.org, 303-733-7743 x105.

National PFLAG News

National PFLAG's January edition of [PFLAG FYI](#) features the three cornerstones of PFLAG: support, education, and advocacy and how they relate to employment discrimination. Learn how you can share your stories about employment discrimination and help move equality forward.

Where will you be **Oct 10-14, 2007**? PFLAG invites you to the national PFLAG National Convention to be held near Washington, D.C. Mark your calendars now!

News of National/Global Interest

In a New York Times story on January 16, 2007, Sam Roberts reported that an analysis of census results shows that "for the first time, more American women are living without a husband than with one. In 2005, 51

percent of women said they were living without a spouse, up from 35% in 1950 and 49% in 2000.

"This is yet another of the inexorable signs that there is no going back to a world where we can assume that marriage is the main institution that organizes people's lives," said professor Stephanie Coontz, director of public education for the Council on Contemporary Families, a nonprofit research group. "Most of these women will marry or have married. But, on average, Americans now spend half their adult lives outside marriage....Although we can help people "do" marriage better, it is simply delusional to construct social policy or make personal life decisions on the basis that you can count on people spending most of their adult lives in marriage'...."

Same-Sex Parenting

In response to the announcement of Mary Cheney's pregnancy, Time magazine published a viewpoint article by Dr. James Dobson entitled "[Two Mommies Is One Too Many](#)". Dobson's views on lesbian and gay parenting do not reflect the mainstream of American professional organizations concerned with researching and promoting children's well being.

Jennifer Chrisler, the Executive Director of Family Pride, responded to Dobson's article with "[Two Mommies or Two Daddies Will Do Fine, Thanks](#)". She wrote, "These are the facts. According to the 2000 census, the vast majority—more than 75%—of American households differs in structure from two married, heterosexual parents and their biological children. We are a nation of blended and multi-generational families, adoptive and foster families, and families headed by single parents, divorced parents, unmarried parents, same-sex couples and more." When asked about Dr. Dobson's use of research by Dr. Gilligan, she stated emphatically that its inclusion constitutes "a complete distortion of my work" and went on to say that there is nothing in her research that would support Dobson's stated conclusions.

In a 2004 policy statement, the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy reported "no evidence that same-sex couples or family units vary significantly from heterosexual couples or family units in terms of aspirations, hopes and goals, or in outcomes for children."

According to Dr. Christopher R. Martell, President of the American Psychological Association's Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues, "Over and over again the data show that a loving and safe home environment is important, not the gender of the parents." The mainstream research is so clear on this matter that the American Psychological Association's resolution on Sexual Orientation, Parents, and Children, which was adopted by the APA Council of Representatives in July, 2004, states: "the APA supports the protection of parent-child relationships through the legalization of joint adoptions and second parent

adoptions of children being reared by same-sex couples."

Dr. Martell continues, "The American Psychological Association, one of the world's largest mental health organizations, would not have supported the protection of legalized adoption by gay and lesbian parents if the data had suggested that children were at risk in such households."

GLBT Workplace Rights

Last June the gay rights movement quietly achieved a milestone. For the first time, more than half of Fortune 500 companies—263, to be precise—offered health benefits for domestic partners, according to the Human Rights Campaign. Ten years ago only 28 did. Along with health benefits for their families, many workers also get bereavement leave when their same-sex partner dies, adoption assistance or paid leave if they have children and relocation assistance for their partners if they are transferred. Put another way, gay marriage—an idea that has been banned by all but one of 27 states that have voted on it—has become a fact of life inside many big companies. [[Fortune, Nov 30, 2006](#)]

No big company wants to get caught in the culture wars. But staying on the sidelines isn't easy when it comes to gay rights. As Wal-Mart, the world's largest retailer, has become more gay-friendly, it has provoked a backlash from Christian conservative groups. In the Corporate Equality Index published by the Human Rights Campaign, Wal-Mart scores a 65—up from 14 in 2002, but well shy of the 100 percent score notched by more than 100 big companies. [[Fortune, Nov 30, 2006](#)]

If GLBT workplace issues interests you, check out [GLBTworkplace.com](#). The goal of this web site is to provide the knowledge, support and tools to enable a world where gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people can work openly and safely in a workplace that is welcoming and free of harassment and discrimination, regardless of occupation.

Building Safer Schools

Educators may want to know about a new website found this month—Trans Youth Family Advocates. TYFA is a coalition of parents, family, friends and caring adults dedicated to educating and raising public awareness about the medical and cultural challenges faced by children with gender variant and gender questioning

identities and the families who love them. See their web site at <http://www.imatyfa.org/Imatyfa/Imatyfa.html>. You might want to start by viewing the introductory video.

Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland approved a gay-inclusive sex-ed curriculum. [[Washington Blade](#), Jan 10]

Religion and Homosexuality

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has made headlines with a recent case where a pastor has been accused of violating church rules by remaining in a relationship with another man. He faces a trial for his professional life. The pastor has been very successful in ministering to his congregation, as show by a converted critic who was featured in an article entitled "Gay pastor who could be expelled supported by former opponent." [[Atlanta Journal Constitution](#), Jan 17]

For the Bible Tells Me So, a new movie directed by Daniel Karlake, was featured at the Sundance Film Festival. The movie explores the way religious conservatives have systematically misled the public into believing that the Bible forbids homosexuality and how this campaign of misinterpretation continues to stigmatize the gay community and threaten America's rapidly diminishing separation of church and state. [[Sundance, film site](#)]

The Reading/Viewing Corner

- ◆ "My freedom linked to others—including gays" by Leonard Pitts Jr. [[Miami Herald, Dec 15](#)]
- ◆ "Homophobia's Suspect Motives" by Nicholas F. Benton [[Falls Church News-Press Online, Jan 4](#)]
- ◆ Families of Value: Personal Profiles of Pioneering Lesbian and Gay Parents by Robert Bernstein [[Amazon](#)]
- ◆ "2006 Welcoming Church Survey" [[gaychurch.org](#)]
- ◆ Fortunate Families, an organization of Catholic families advocating respect and justice for their gay and lesbian children, sent a letter to each active U.S. diocesan bishop and selected retired bishops. [[Bishop Letter](#)]
- ◆ Churches have always faced difficult moral issues and they have muddled through, but with homosexuality things are different. Why? [[A pink reformation](#) from Guardian Unlimited, Feb 5]

MEETINGS:

2nd Monday each month, 6:45 pm
Plymouth Congregational Church
916 W. Prospect Rd.
Fort Collins, Colorado

CONTACTS:

Local chapter: 970.407.0300
Julie 970.667.5236
Bev 970.484.0031
Don 970.278.0261

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Web site: www.pflagftc.org
Email: info@pflagftc.org
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Fort Collins, CO 80521

In addition to parents, families, friends, and GLBT people, we welcome anyone involved in the coming-out process.

We welcome anyone who supports the PFLAG mission of **SUPPORT, EDUCATION** and **ADVOCACY** for GLBT people.