



PFLAG

Fort Collins / Northern Colorado

Next Meeting

Date: March 10, 7PM Program, 8PM Support
Place: Plymouth Congregational Church (north room)
Program: *Anyone and Everyone* film and discussion

"Connected by having a son or daughter who is gay, parents across the country discuss their experiences in the documentary *Anyone and Everyone*. In it, filmmaker Susan Polis Schutz depicts families from all walks of life. Individuals from such diverse backgrounds as Japanese, Bolivian, and Cherokee, as well as from various religious denominations such as Mormon, Jewish, Roman Catholic, Hindu, and Southern Baptist, share intimate accounts of how their children revealed their sexual orientation and discuss their responses."

Stewart Anderson will facilitate our discussion of this wonderful film.

PFLAG Annual Meeting and News

PFLAG's annual meeting will be held on April 14 at 7PM.

Agenda:

- Introduction (President, Julie Wilson)
- Treasurers' Report (Treasurer, Beverly Webber)
- Announcements
- Election of Board

The nominating committee proposes the following slate:

- President: Julie Wilson (parent)
- Vice-President: Stewart Anderson
- Secretary: Jean Preslan (parent)
- Treasurer: Beverly Webber (parent)
- At-Large: Don Preslan (parent)
- At-Large: Jim Rath
- At-Large: Diane Kaufman (parent)
- At-Large: Carl Hane (parent)
- At-Large: Nancy Hane (parent)

Maria Swall and Michelle Benzor-Marquez are retiring from the Board but continuing to serve PFLAG in key leadership roles. Our current non-board leadership roles include:

- Safe Schools: Maria Swall
- Trans Coordinator: Michelle Benzor-Marquez
- Webmaster: Kenneth Camp
- Librarian: Mareye Bullock
- Mailings and email: Jon Mendenhall
- Support Facilitator: Bob Calkins
- Interfaith Council Liaison: Nancy Mendenhall

Editor: Julie Wilson

We always welcome additional volunteers. Please consider how you can serve. It does not require a lot of time, and it can add so much to the group and to your own life. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED in volunteering in PFLAG, please let me know.

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
- Grant writing—help PFLAG extend its outreach in the community through special projects that require additional funding

News of Local Interest

PFLAG member **Melaina Marquez** is featured in an article about her transition from male to female as an eighth grader. The article does an excellent job of providing a well-balanced, positive look at a transgender teen's experience. [[Rocky Mountain News](#), Mar 1]

Melaina's decision to tell her story was triggered by a recent story about an 8-year-old Douglas County transgender student. Kim Pearson, Executive Director of TransYouth Family Allies, was interviewed by CNN to help tell that story. [[YouTube](#), Feb 12]

Note: *If you have a copy of the article about Melaina, please bring it to the March 10 PFLAG meeting.*

Events of Regional Interest

A church in Denver invites you to attend a film series on faith and sexual identity issues. All screenings will be at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 915 East Ninth Avenue (at Emerson), in Denver beginning at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free. The remaining scheduled films are:

Mar 8: For The Bible Tells Me So

Mar 15: Anyone and Everyone

Mar 29: The Saint of 9/11

Our Savior's Lutheran Church and Imago Dei Catholic Community present this program jointly. Imago Dei is a member of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion and ministers primarily to gay and lesbian Catholics. Imago Dei gathers for Liturgy at Our Savior's, noon Sundays.

News of National / Global Interest

Under Attorney General Mukasey, the U.S. Department of Justice has a new air of inclusiveness. In a statement to DOJ Pride, Mukasey said the department will "foster an environment in which diversity is valued, understood and sought" and maintain "an environment that's free of discrimination." [[Washington Post](#), Feb 5]

The estate of Ric Weiland, a high school classmate of Microsoft Corp. founders Bill Gates and Paul Allen and one of the first five people to work at the software giant, has left \$65 million to gay rights and HIV/AIDS organizations (including PFLAG). [[CNN](#), Feb 24]

The film *Freeheld: The Laurel Hester Story* by Cynthia Wade won an Academy Award for "Best Documentary Short Subject." Synopsis: Facing death from cancer, Detective Lieutenant Laurel Hester of the New Jersey Police Department spends the final year of her life fighting a policy that will not allow her to transfer her pension to her domestic partner, Stacie Andree. [[NY Times](#), Feb 25; <http://www.freeheld.com/>]

2008 Election Reminder

The IRS is investigating the United Church of Christ over a speech Senator Barack Obama gave at its national meeting last year after he became a candidate for president. This case emphasizes the importance of all PFLAG members following the 501(c)3 guidelines of not supporting (or opposing) any candidate. PFLAG (and other non-profit organizations) can take a stand on issues but not candidates. For more information, see PFLAG's [501\(c\)3: Non-Profit Election Year Do's and Don'ts](#).

Safe Schools

In response to a request for resources for middle-school aged children and their parents, a PFLAG leader in Washington provided the following suggestions:

- ❖ Scott Bidstrup has a list of [Books for Parents, Supporters and Caregivers of Sexual Minority Youth](#).

- ❖ The Safe Schools Coalition website in Washington provides links to [book information for all ages](#), as well as resources on [spiritual issues](#).
- ❖ *It's Elementary* is an excellent 1996 film by [Groundspark](#) for talking to elementary-age children. They just came out with a new film *It's STILL Elementary* that follows up on the young people and schoolteachers now.
- ❖ PFLAG's "[Safe and Inclusive Schools](#)" web site provides information, as well as links to other resources and web sites.

A recent article, "Scared not to be straight" features research by GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network). In addition to compelling statistics on the challenges LGBT students face, research shows that actions such as specifically mentioning sexual orientation in a state's anti-bullying policies reduces the incidence of harassment against LGBT students by 25%. [[Edutopia](#), Feb/Mar 2008]

On Feb 12th, a fellow student at E.O. Green Junior High School in Oxnard, California, shot 15-year-old Lawrence "Larry" King in the computer lab of his school. Larry died three days later. Larry was killed because he was gay. Days before he was killed, Larry asked his killer to be his valentine. [[Ellen DeGeneres on YouTube](#), Feb 28]

Transgender Advocacy

Upcoming national events related to transgender issues include:

- [International Foundation for Gender Education](#) Conference, Tucson, AZ, April 1-5
- [Transforming Faith Conference](#), Portland, OR, April 3-6
- [Philadelphia Trans-Health Conference](#), May 29-31

Reading/Viewing Corner

- ◆ "Transgender teens: Doctors refine hormone, other therapies", a story about medical alternatives for transgender teens [[Fosters.com](#), Jan 27]
- ◆ *Regret* by Brad Windhauser: a murder mystery, involving a religious group that decides that God's "ways" are working too slowly in "curing" gays, so they decide to take matters into their own hands. [<http://www.bradwindhauser.com/>]

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
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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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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.

Proud Grandparents Share Poem

Our granddaughter, Sarah McLaughlin is a 9th grader, and she wrote a winning poem in the 2008 Student MLK, Jr. Poetry and Essay Contest. She read her poem and was recognized at the MLK program in Fort Collins on January 21. The theme this year was "Why We Can't Wait". We share this poem with you.

Larry and Bev Webber

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to
justice everywhere"
Said the wise Martin Luther King Jr.
And he was right.
And we can't wait.

People are still killing and dying in Rwanda
Long after the Tatus and Hutu Civil War ended.

They cannot wait.

In 2005, 7,263 hate crimes were committed
55% were motivated by the color of skin.

You cannot wait.

She doesn't have the rights you do,
Because she prefers women,
And he can't marry the man he love.
Forty states refuse to accept same sex marriage...
So far.

I cannot wait.

In our city, in my school, the mascot is
Depicted numerous times
Only one time is it a female
And it's hidden over the girls locker room door.

Fort Collins cannot wait.

And people say things are getting better.
But the people are sadly mistaken.
We can't wait.
The time to make a difference is now.
Before it's too late.