



Parents, Families & Friends
of Lesbians And Gays

PFLAG WEAVER

Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians And Gays/Dallas

February, 2003

Our Mission

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, their families and friends, through *support*, to cope with an adverse society; *education*, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and *advocacy*, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.



PFLAG provides the opportunity for confidential dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.



NATIONAL WEB SITE
www.pflag.org



DALLAS WEB SITE
www.pflagdallas.org



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Newsletter Deadline:

February 13, 2003
by mail, fax or e-mail

Next Meeting

February 13, 2003
Second Thursday, 7-9:30 p.m.
Midway Hills Christian Church
11001 Midway Road, Dallas

Homeowners' insurance doesn't cover partner State Farm Ohio says it has to see a marriage license

by Anthony Glassman
Gay People's Chronicle

Lakewood, Ohio – When David Wallace and his partner Dan Reilly's home was burglarized last December, they thought their homeowners' insurance would cover their losses. They were half right.

The policy, under Wallace's name, covers spouses, dependents under 21, students under 24 and visitors to the house. It does not cover unmarried partners of either sex.

Reilly could be covered by renters' insurance, but it would require a separate policy with additional premiums and deductible.

That is standard for such policies, according to State Farm, Wallace's insurer. He purchased the home and policy in 1998, and Reilly moved in with him in 2000. The two share bank accounts and credit cards, but without a marriage certificate, State Farm will not grant joint coverage.

Wallace insists that such a policy is discriminatory, since heterosexual couples have the option to marry while no state has legalized gay marriage.

"He's as much a relative as my mom," Wallace told *Florida Today* of Melbourne, Fla., where he lived for 18 years. "The only reason we are not married is because the state of Ohio doesn't allow us to be married. The freedom isn't there."

Insurance officials said that domestic partners do not have a financial stake in the home itself, only their personal belongings in it, so coverage under a homeowners' policy would not be appropriate. Wallace counters that relatives and dependents covered under the policy would not have a financial interest in the house either.

Wallace also told the *Gay People's Chronicle*, "My agent has informed me that he's found a way to include Dan on my policy.

"I think it has something to do with the fact that the house bills are paid out of our joint account, proving that Dan has a financial interest," Wallace said.

Some insurance agents are careful to make

sure that both partners are covered. In renters' insurance, most agents will put the name of the partner who buys it on the insurance policy, while more gay-friendly agents will put both partners' names on policies.



A Cleveland insurance agent noted that insurance companies adhere very closely to the terms of the contract. The people listed on insurance policies will be covered, while those not specifically mentioned will not.

He suggested making sure both partners were listed on homeowners' policies; having the home titled in both names aids in that. Failing that, he noted that the easiest way to get a domestic partner covered was to get additional renters insurance, with premiums usually running \$25-\$35 a month.

The agent asked that his name not be used. He was concerned that his insurance carrier would subject his policies to greater scrutiny if they saw his name here, although including domestic partners is not against regulations.

"A lot of companies are fairly homophobic," he said. It's that homophobia that is at the heart of the matter. With a heterosexual married couple, all individual possessions would be covered under one plan, unlike if Reilly had taken out a renters' insurance policy.

"Because the option to marry is not there, they could be thoughtful enough not to double the deductible," Wallace noted. "If a married couple's house gets broken into, they pay one deductible. If Dan had renters' insurance, we would have to pay two deductibles."

"There were things that Dan brought into the relationship that were shared, and these were covered," he continued. "The ironic thing is, since we have joint accounts, the things that weren't covered will be replaced from those accounts, with my money.

"I do believe there is a way to take the written policy and interpret it to cover that stuff, but they chose not to," he concluded.

Brian Maze, a spokesperson for State Farm insurance's regional office in Newark, Ohio,

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Frist a gain for gays

by Hasting Wymans
Texas Triangle

The shake-up in the Senate Republican leadership has replaced a Deep South conservative who once compared gay people to alcoholics and kleptomaniacs with a Tennessean who has hobnobbed with gay Republicans.

The incoming majority leader, Sen. Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) is no supporter of the gay agenda – his Human Rights Campaign legislative record was a mere 14 percent in the 106th Congress and a flat zero in the 107th. While most of his low score stems from co-sponsorship decisions rather than actual votes, Frist's HRC voting record has nevertheless been no more gay-friendly than Sen. Trent Lott's (R-Miss.).

Frist does have a good record on AIDS funding. A member of the Public Health subcommittee of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, he was a key supporter of re-authorizing funding for the Ryan White CARE Act.

More significantly, Frist has a different temperament regarding gay people that may eventually make him more amenable to gay concerns. A cardiovascular surgeon – Harvard Medical School – whose family made its fortune in the hospital business, Frist came later to politics and was not a part of the Civil Rights resistance that characterized much of Southern Republicanism in the 1960s and '70s. And as a Tennessean, he has not had to depend as heavily as Lott on those in the religious right and on other antigay ideologues who are strong in Mississippi.

Frist isn't a stranger to gay Republicans. Last spring, he spoke to the gay Log Cabin Republicans' national convention in Washington. And in mid-2001, I interviewed Frist at a Washington function of the Republican Unity Coalition (RUC), the gay and gay-friendly GOP alliance founded by Charles Francis, a friend of President Bush. I pointed out to Frist that it was unusual to see Southern Republican members of Congress at gay political gatherings. Frist responded, with a grin, "Trent Lott wouldn't be here." Then, after thinking it over, he told me, "Maybe it's my medical background," which suggests he views homosexuality as a natural phenomenon, rather than as a moral or political question. "It's just not an issue with me," Frist concluded.

It was notable that Frist didn't just stop by the RUC event. But after making a brief talk, he stayed until the gathering was over, chatting with guests and helping make up for the absence of the guest of honor, newly appointed AIDS czar Scott Evertz, who had a last-minute White House meeting and could not attend.

A year or so later, in the middle of the 2002 campaign, RUC co-chairs Francis and Don Capoccia met with Frist in his capacity as chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, the fundraising arm for GOP senators, and presented him with a check for \$50,000. While taking money from a group isn't exactly a big favor, it was only seven years ago that presidential candidate Bob Dole returned a contribution from the gay Log Cabin Republicans. Moreover, after somebody presents you with a check that large, you return their phone calls.

Francis says that he and Capoccia "had a very substantive and cordial conversation" with Frist. "He impressed us with his support for reaching out to nontraditional Republicans; that means everybody – it's women, it's gays, it's African-Americans."

Much like North Carolina's switch from Sen. Jesse Helms (R) to Sen. Elizabeth Dole (R), the change from Lott to Frist may be most noticeable in what Frist has to say, not in the policies he pursues. It's far from clear whether Frist as Senate Majority Leader will mean brighter prospects for job rights, hate crimes laws, or other issues important to gay people.

At a minimum, however, Frist at the Senate GOP helm will be a major public relations improvement.

Lottery cash funds gay recorded archives

PA News for Gay.com UK

A lottery-funded project to record the experiences of older gays, lesbians, and transsexuals is due to start this spring.

In a series of videotaped interviews, homosexuals as well as transvestites and drag queens will discuss what their lives were like in the 1960s and earlier. The project, called "Before Stonewall," takes its name from the riots of 1969 in New York against police harassment which led to the concept of a gay "community."

Gay and Lesbian Arts and Media (GLAM), the group behind the project, was given £49,500 by the Heritage Lottery Fund last June to conduct its work.

Volunteers across the country are expected to interview 250 people aged 55 and above. GLAM say the tapes will then be archived for use by future generations.

Joan Beveridge, the project director at the Brighton-based GLAM, said: "The fact that the Lottery Heritage Fund is supporting this project shows just how far we have come. I'm very excited that this project will allow us to describe our rich and valuable life experiences in our own words for posterity."

The first interviews are due to start this spring and are expected to be completed by the autumn.

Insurance

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said that the issue was with Ohio's definition of "family," but that people should notify their agents when there is a change in their life.

"I think it's very important when there is a change in the relationship, if someone moves in, notify the insurance agent to get the partner covered, either by getting additional insurance or adding them to the policy if their company allows it," Maze said.

[Editor's note: As alluded to above, each state's laws are different (wouldn't that be a nice thing for our new Congress to change?) and policyholders should contact their insurers to be certain that both partners' belongings are covered. If not, shop around until you find a more amenable company.]

[In Texas, I learned (after the fact, of course) that my homeowners' policy did not cover my housemate's belongings. We had been friends for 10 years, but the company feared he would steal my stuff and run, leaving the company liable.]

[However, if I had married some creep I'd only known for a couple of months, the company would have welcomed him with open arms. Hmmm...]

[Please pass this information along to your friends who are domestic partners. It could save them big bucks.]

Our ad contracts have expired. Suggest to friends in retail or services that we're a good buy!

Flash! Cummings' ideal partner

by Robert Kahn

A star of the "Lord of the Rings" series and a former "Seinfeld" cast member top Alan Cumming's list of ideal co-stars in ABC-TV's forthcoming gay take on "Hart to Hart."

Cumming is attached to star in the gumshoe dramedy "Mr. and Mr. Nash," an hour-long TV pilot from Steve Martin's production company about a gay couple who solve mysteries ... while not redecorating San Francisco mansions.

Cumming's partner in crime-solving – and life – has yet to be cast.

"I would love someone who's older and physically different from me," Cumming said the other night at the Algonquin, where he was taping an episode of IFC's "Dinner for Five." "I'd really love it if we steered away from the archetypal muscle-y gay couple. I think I'm probably enough of that. We should get someone bigger, older and possibly chubbier."

Cumming said he's already bounced the idea off Ian McKellen ("Rings" Gandalf) and also can see Jason Alexander in the part.

"That would confound people's expectations of what a gay couple is," Cumming said. "It should be 'Mr. and Mr. Normal.'"

Cumming says plans include ending each episode of "Nash" in much the same way broadcasts of the 1979-'84 Robert Wagner/Stefanie Powers series ended: with the couple canoodling in bed.

"You can't deny that they're a couple," Cumming said. "You have to show that they're in love."



NBC picks up DeGeneres talk show

by A Bendersky, Gay.com/PlanetOut.com Network

While the US lost one lesbian daytime talk show host in 2002, television viewers can look forward to another taking her place this year.

NBC announces it has picked up "The Ellen DeGeneres Show," an hourlong syndicated talk show that will air five days a week, in all 14 NBC-owned and -operated stations in 30 percent of the country. The show, set to debut this fall, has DeGeneres interviewing celebrities and pop culture newsmakers, as well as stirring things up with her piercing wit.

"What's great about Ellen hosting is that she's being Ellen DeGeneres. She's not a character like Ellen Morgan (on 'Ellen'), which is going to lead to a big success," said Scott Seomin, entertainment media director for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD). "She's best in front of a microphone being Ellen and giving her skewed rambling observations on life and relationships."

Premiering this autumn, "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" will hit major cities including New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Miami. Other smaller markets that will air Ellen's new show include Columbus, Ohio; Birmingham, Ala.; and Raleigh, N.C.

(What? No Dallas airing? What a rip-off!)



Sirius setting up gay radio outlet

by Paul Bond, Backstage.com

LAS VEGAS – The nation's first 24-hour gay radio channel is in the works.

Sirius Satellite Radio announced at the Consumer Electronics Show here that it is developing a channel to launch in about 90

days that will feature news and talk explicitly directed at the nation's gay population.

Sirius, which competes with XM Satellite Radio, will host a news event today to unveil several new channels in its effort to distinguish itself from its better-established rival.

No name has been determined for the gay channel. So far, the only host aboard is John McMullen, who will move from his current post as a left-wing political talk show host for Sirius. McMullen is a founder of GAYBC Radio Network, a defunct Internet radio company that targeted the gay community.

"This is a big idea. Nobody has done this," said Larry Rebich, vp programming and marketing development at Sirius. "It's estimated that there's 20 million gay people in the United States, and they're not served well on radio."

Sirius charges \$12.95 per month for 100 radio channels beamed to car stereos via satellite, while rival XM does similarly for \$9.99 per month. Sirius has more commercial-free channels, though the gay channel is expected to carry ads.

Rebich said famous gays and lesbians from film, TV and music are expected to participate. "We'll be talking to a broad range of celebrities," he said. "Those who don't end up as hosts, I'm sure will be guests."



Canadian gay TV channel pinkslips staff

by Tamsen Tillson, Reuters/Variety

PrideVision, Canada's gay lifestyle channel, is on the block, and its owner has slashed staff by half as it struggles to keep the troubled digital network afloat.

Headline Media Group has reportedly pinkslipped about 20 people, primarily in non-programming areas.

"This restructuring presented an opportunity to realign company resources and reduce operating expenses while still being able to deliver its unique programming to its customers," said a Headline Media release.

The channel's performance has been "below corporate expectations as a result of slower than anticipated growth in the number of subscribers." The company is also looking for investors or a buyer for the channel.

Although it launched alongside about 50 other specialty webs in September 2001, PrideVision's position as "the world's first 24/7 television network for the gay and lesbian community" created some business challenges that the others don't face. Some distributors, including cable operator Shaw Communications and satellite service provider Star Choice (both controlled by the Shaw family), refused to carry PrideVision during the free-view period. And unlike the other new digital networks, most of which are bundled according to themes, Pride is offered on a stand-alone basis only, resulting in a higher per-capita cost for subscribers.

Headline Media owns Score Television Network and a sports marketing and specialty publishing division, St. Clair Group, but, as a small company, lacks resources to support operating losses that a larger parent, such as Alliance Atlantis Communications (which used to hold a small interest in PrideVision), can sustain.

"Despite this challenge, Headline continues to believe in the viability of this one-of-a-kind network, both in Canada and abroad," said Headline Media chairman and CEO John Levy.

The company said it has reached an affiliation agreement with an unnamed U.S. cable operator, which will allow the negotiation of carriage agreements for Pride with its affiliates.

February speakers

It's Valentine time! Come hear from long-time companions on keeping the romance in your life.

Page Four

Dallas bars provide holiday cheer for pupils at Sam Houston Elementary School

*by Tom Grego, Staff Reporter
Dallas Voice*

From your president

Hey, Puddin's,
Happy Valentine's Day!

Speaking of things one loves ... let's talk about volunteering. Yep, I volunteer for things that I truly care about. That makes giving my time more fun and interesting. I've done everything from making pizzas in a school cafeteria to singing and playing guitar at a food kitchen at Thanksgiving to radio interviews to marching in parades. When I think about all I've done, I need a nap!

But those volunteer activities were over a long period of time. I didn't have to put all of my time into the event, just a few hours here and there. Just when I'd think that helping out was a waste of time, someone would tell me how wonderful the event was, what it meant to them, and thank me for my help!

At our first GAYla Prom, one woman was so overcome with emotion that she started crying. She was so happy to see her son having fun in a safe environment. She couldn't help but cry. Wow, the event meant that much to her. And I helped make it possible. Everyone who gave their time helped her. And now that very woman is in a major leadership position with National PFLAG!



I found out that even though some of the volunteer activities felt too much like work, it was always satisfying to be a part of something bigger than myself.

I volunteer for myself. Through volunteering I meet people I wouldn't otherwise meet. I connect with people that I wouldn't otherwise connect with. I get to be a part of a wonderful energy that only volunteers know about. It's an energy that's bigger than me. And it can really be fun.

Of course, some people can get over-involved. Like Sandy, our vice president. She had gone to several events in one week as a PFLAG representative. We went together on her final engagement of the very busy week. After the event, she and I were in the church parking lot discussing several topics of interest with a few people from other organizations. As the conversation wound down, Sandy looked up dreamily and said, "Look at that ... isn't it gorgeous?!" I looked up and couldn't see what she was talking about. "What's gorgeous, Sandy?" "The moon ... isn't it just beautiful?" "Where? I can't see it. Where is the moon, Sandy?" "There ... up through the tree branches. Isn't it just awesome?" I looked where she was pointing and I saw it. I exclaimed, "Sandy, that's not the moon ... that's a streetlight!"



My point is, some of us volunteer to the point of hallucinating the moon. It usually stems from the fact that there aren't enough people to help. So there are a few people doing many things. We have volunteers that do everything from folding and mailing our newsletters to attending national conventions.

We need volunteers. We are a big chapter doing big things. You can give your time to PFLAG any way you want. Maybe it's a phone call, or a letter, or going to an event to represent PFLAG. Anyone from our chapter can go to an event. You can also come to our board meetings and share your thoughts. We desperately need help setting up our meetings. A few hours every once in a blue moon is all you need to give. We have a huge national meeting this October, and we need volunteers for that. PFLAG leaders from all over the country will be coming to Dallas. Don't worry, you won't be envisioning moons everywhere you go. But you will connect to wonderful energy. I promise you, it's time well spent.

Pat Smith

Almost 400 Oak Lawn children enjoyed a huge Christmas party last year, thanks to a relationship that has sprung up over the years between one of Dallas' poorest schools and the owners of local gay businesses.

A partnership between Caven Enterprises and Sam Houston Elementary began very quietly over 15 years ago with a spaghetti dinner held for the PTA. It grew to include holiday events for the children through out the school year, supplies and equipment for the school, secured parking for teachers and even a tutoring program for students.

School principal Almo Galindo said the gifts, food and hours donated annually to the school are worth between \$30,000 and \$50,000.

Dallas City Councilman Ed Oakley, a general contractor for Caven who was at that first dinner, said the relationship began with several hundred toys for children. "I never in my wildest imagination ever thought we could get it to this point," Oakley said.

Caven purchasing manager Donald Solomon said when JR.'s Bar and Grill remodeled in 1997, employees without families asked to adopt a classroom in the school. "From there it's just sort of grown to where we have the whole school," he said.

Solomon said adoption of the school by the businesses has outgrown Caven Enterprises. "We've gotten the whole community involved."



Galindo said 85 percent of the students' families live below the poverty level defined by the federal government. "Most of the parents can not afford adequate gifts for them," the principal said.

For its efforts Caven Enterprises won the corporate sponsor of the year award last year from the Dallas Independent School District.

"The bottom line is, they've learned and we've learned at the same time that it's a partnership that works," said Rick Espallat, media director of Caven Enterprises. "They don't prejudice us and we don't prejudice them."

"These kids don't care, they haven't been taught to hate, they haven't been taught to prejudice anybody as long as they are with people that care about them," Solomon said.

While alcohol-selling establishments often conflict with nearby schools, Oakley, who was on the Dallas Plan Commission, said the relationship works because it's been kept on a professional level. "There is never anything that is tobacco- or alcohol-related that enters that school, [not] even a box that says Coors on it."

Solomon says there is an agreement that anyone going to the school, even if they work for a liquor company, that they do not wear clothing that shows a liquor emblem on it. "Unless you know them you wouldn't know their affiliation."

Galindo said there are other schools being adopted by neighborhood businesses but he has never seen another that received the level of support provided to Sam Houston.

"They give bicycles at the end of the year to students with perfect attendance," and monetary gifts to teachers who don't miss a day.

"We're very happy with the relationship. They've been good neighbors and we try to reciprocate," Galindo added.