



Parents, Families & Friends
of Lesbians And Gays

PFLAG WAVE

Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians And Gays/Dallas

October, 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.



WEB SITES

NATIONAL – www.pflag.org



DALLAS – www.pflagdallas.org



PFLAG/Dallas

(Newsletter and all correspondence)
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Newsletter Deadline:

October 9, 2003

by mail, fax or e-mail

Next Meeting

October 9, 2003

Second Thursday, 7-9:30 p.m.

Midway Hills Christian Church

11001 Midway Road, Dallas

Our Fabulous Family Flamingo Fling was fantastic!

by Pat Smith

Our very first 2003 fund raiser was a big success! We couldn't be more pleased! People stepped up to help us create this event. Some aren't even PFLAG/Dallas members, but they believe in our cause for tolerance ... they believe in what we're all about. Everyone worked hard, from handing out flyers all over the city, to getting a bowling team to participate.

Bowling is great fun! The beauty of the sport, is that you don't have to be a good bowler to have fun! It's a social event, almost as much fun to watch as to participate. And when you top it off with such an enchanting hostess as Edna Jean, you can't go wrong!

Edna Jean, our emcee, was stunning in her multi-colored bowling shoes, the bowlers were psyched, and the silent auction items went flying off the counters! Dave Gleason booked Edna Jean for us. Thanks, Dave!



On behalf of the Board, I thank everyone who helped with our Fling, everyone who worked so hard to make it happen. Donna Akin stepped up to chair it. Her organizational skills kept us on track. She and her husband Rick were also our photographers.

Jeffery Weber worked hard to get us 2,000 flyers printed and then went and put them out in the GLBT community! He also took the photo of flamingos for his design of the flyers and posters, to which Ladye Sparks added her Irish wit in a pithy limerick. Jan LaMasters went to retail stores and got the posters put up! She also helped at the registration table.

Sandy Brouillette put up posters in the GLBT community. She helped set up at the bowling alley, and kept me awake with coffee! She was also one of our photographers. These were just the Board members!

People from the National Coming Out Project helped – Gregory Pynes came up with the Flamingo Fling name. He explained bowling tournament logistics. PFLAG/Dallas member Raffaele Mautone also helped. David Price and Cornell Kinderknecht headed our registration table. David is our webmaster, keeping everything up to date on the Web site. Erin Moore

set up the PDF file for our flyers and posters. Ben and Robert Sullivan-Coat advised us on sponsorship and marketing. Jenna Brouillette worked the Flamingo Fling crowd for raffle tickets and boy, can she sell ... she was quite fetching in her pink wig.

KC along with Kyle Perkins went all over the GLBT community acquiring silent auction items. KC's fame spread near and far for his tenacity in getting auction items. One person who couldn't donate an item donated money! Way to go, KC! And Kyle, what can I say about Kyle? he's a real champ. He was in charge of the silent auction. That is where we made most of our profit. The silent auction was his idea. His fund-raising skills are incredible!

Thanks to Susan George, Yariy Bakalova and Trey, who helped set up our info table. Lee Nicora worked the table. Alex Barnish of the *Dallas Voice* helped us with ads, and reporter Daniel Kusner wrote a nice promotional article.

Joyce Gleason decorated the bowling pins that became the official Flamingo Fling Awards. She painted each pin and cleverly decorated them with scarves, hats, puff-balls ... you name it. They were unique, and each had its own distinct personality and name! Joyce even won one back ... an angel. She promptly gave it to Edna Jean as a thank-you. Okay, Joyce got the award for the worst bowling score, but she's a winner in our book! Thanks, Joyce!



Jim Welch of Don Carter's West Bowling Center tallied up the scores, let us know who had the highest, lowest, best team, worst team, etc. He was all over it! We couldn't've done it without him! His expertise was invaluable to our planning of the event. He also donated the bowling pins that became awards.

The staff at Don Carter's was friendly and very helpful. They even helped hang papier mache flamingos from the ceiling. And a big thanks to all the bowlers. Everyone had a great time, even when Edna Jean pressured them to make a strike for a fabulous prize!

See Fling on page 3

Policies reflect change – more Louisiana companies ban bias against gays

by Chris Gautreau,
Advocate business writer
cgautreau@theadvocate.com

A Baton Rouge gay-rights support group has released a survey that shows 29 of the area's 50 largest employers have adopted written policies banning discrimination based on sexual orientation. Some of the companies that indicated they have not adopted such specific language, however, said their existing policies already provide protections against all types of discrimination.

According to the latest results from Capital City Alliance, 29 companies, or 60 percent of the top 50 who responded have adopted protections for gays and lesbians, up from 38 percent in a survey a year ago. Eighteen companies, or 38 percent, said they do not include language specifically protecting gays and lesbians. One company did not respond.

Joe Traigle, chairman of Capital City Alliance, praised the results of the latest survey as proof companies in the Baton Rouge area are more open and tolerant toward gay and lesbian workers.

Traigle also said the local economy benefits from employers who adopt such rules. "It helps organizations in recruitment," he said. "As cities become more tolerant and open, what comes after is money, investment and jobs."

Capital City Alliance began three years ago to "promote an understanding of the value of its gay and lesbian residents," according to its self-stated mission. The group, which now claims a membership of more than 650, made headlines in July when it garnered an agreement from Mayor Bobby Simpson to include gays in the anti-discrimination policy for city-parish workers.

The organization said it interviewed candidates in the 2000 mayoral race and raised \$36,000 for mayoral candidates who voiced support for its cause.

The survey released Monday lists 50 of the area's largest employers that Traigle said were asked whether their corporate anti-discrimination policies specifically mention sexual orientation.

Traigle said the latest survey, with a gain of 22 percentage points, showed many companies had moved toward adopting gay-specific anti-discrimination policies since the last survey, including Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center, Turner Industries and Capital City Press, publisher of *The Advocate*.

Many of the companies surveyed have broad anti-discrimination policies, though they don't necessarily mention sexual orientation specifically. Betsy Baker Miller, a spokeswoman for Exxon-Mobil's local plant, said the company's policies do not include gay and lesbian-specific language. "We don't discriminate against anyone," she said. "We don't discriminate for hair color, eye color, language spoken, anything."

Terri McNorton, a spokeswoman for Baton Rouge General Medical Center, said her company also has similar policies that are written to cover any type of discriminatory treatment. "We keep them all inclusive, rather than begin adding categories."

Traigle acknowledged most companies have policies that comply with federal law in prohibiting discrimination based on race, sex, religion and other factors: his group simply asks that local companies spell out sexual orientation in their policy as well.

"There are some companies who say 'No' on that list that do have a culture of discrimination and have no intention of changing," he said of the survey. "Most who said 'No' are not in that category. They just have a reluctance to put it in their policy, and that's totally their decision."

Traigle said the alliance would continue meeting with the companies without gay-specific language in their policies. He said such measures are needed in Louisiana, because state law does not guarantee gay workers won't be fired solely because of their sexual preference.

"In Baton Rouge and in Louisiana, a person can be fired because they're gay. That's the law and there's nothing anybody can do," Traigle said. "What you have in this survey is companies stepping forward in a positive way and putting it in a nondiscrimination policy, because it's the right thing to do."



Fling from page 1

Thanks to all of the individuals and businesses that donated silent auction items! We made a profit, thanks to you.

Last but not least, to Edna Jean, Drag Queen Extraordinaire, Goddess of RV parks and member in good standing of the Good Sam Club, our sincerest thanks. We couldn't have had a better mistress of ceremonies! She covered all the lanes, and without a microphone! She's a joy to work with (I was her assistant), and a good friend of PFLAG. Not to mention, she can bow! Her bowling ball whipped down the lane like a Scud missile with laser-locked points! But then she does work out.

A lot of fun was had by all. We are more than thrilled that this was a big success! We thank all of the volunteers who helped, and everyone who did e-mail blasts for us including Courtney Aberle and the SMU Allies Group. If I forgot anyone, I apologize. I feel like it's Oscar night and there are so many people to thank!

Join us for our Spring Flamingo Fling. Let's have the whole bowling center full of Flamingo Flingers! With the money we get from the Flings, we're putting up billboards against intolerance and hate. By volunteering, bowling, or buying a silent auction item or raffle ticket, you will help put those billboards up. You'll help make the world a better place. You'll help make a difference.

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Love, not gender, anchors a marriage

Family values aren't limited to heterosexuals

by Linda Majer-Davis
Philadelphia Inquirer

Recently I was invited to an annual picnic at a friend's house. Having attended this event for more than 10 years, I was struck by the fact that this year there were more children than ever before. One mother cuddled her 10-week-old baby while friends gathered around adoringly. A father splashed with his young daughter and her best friend in the pool. A grandmother fretted over getting her flock to eat something healthy before bingeing on picnic snacks. One guest even held the hostess' beloved lap dog in her arms and snuggled it. It was such a nurturing and cozy scene that it could have been a cover photo for *Catholic Digest*.

I noted this to the hostess, who was raised Catholic, and we smiled. You see, the hostess is a lesbian. She and her partner have been in a committed, solid, loving relationship for more than 20 years. Their home has been a source of warmth, comfort and security to friends, family and strangers for just as long. Their life-style has nurtured the same family values as mine, a product of a heterosexual relationship. Although they do not have children, both have large extended families and they regularly welcome children of family members, friends and business partners for visits and vacations in their home. As their picnic showed, strong and moral family values are the basic core of their committed union.

So for the life of me, I can't understand how religious authorities and President Bush can insist that "marriage is between a man and a woman." Marriage is the consent to form a bonded union between two people. The married entity is then recognized as a "family," which may or may not include children. You couldn't get much more "family-oriented" than this picnic was.

I remember myself at the same gathering eight years ago, an overtired mother of twin infants. I guiltily emerged from a quick dip in the pool only to find my babies slumbering cozily in the arms of a father of teenagers. He waved me away, saying how much he missed the warmth of a dozing infant snuggled against his chest. I returned to the pool gratefully and swam my tension away. His teenagers played volleyball in the yard, as totally unconscious of their father's contentment as teenagers can be.

This year, guests played volleyball with my own teenager and his brothers. Some were gay, some were not, some were old, and some were young. Guests were of black, white, Hispanic and Asian backgrounds. Some were male, some were female, some were married, others single. Where is the absence of God's family values in this group? How were we blaspheming what was taught in the Ten Commandments or the golden rule?

For the life of me, I cannot figure out why family must consist of a man and woman. As a mother of all boys, I understand the need for a boy to have a father figure, as often it is only the quack of the daddy duck that gets a boy's attention. Plus all boys need to talk man-to-man sometimes, just like all girls need to talk woman-to-woman. I believe that the absence in the household of a parent of the same sex as a child causes difficulties. This is true not only for children of homosexual unions, but also for children of divorce, those who experience the death of a parent, and heterosexual couples in which one partner is a deadbeat parent.

Tell me, then, why is a committed, loving, caring parent of the same sex defiled by society more than a deadbeat parent, the man who has multiple illegitimate children or the woman who has multiple children with different fathers? Where is the logic in that? Did God say that above all things we should value love, or that above all things we should value gender?

My hostess is no longer Catholic, and although her partner has long desired the commitment of marriage, the Catholic upbringing of my hostess prevents her from feeling comfortable acknowledging their love in a church. This has brought many tears to both their eyes. When did our loving God dictate heartache? He didn't. Humankind's interpretation of his word did.

I truly believe that God was with us that day, and every day I am in their home. Did I mention that the mother of the 10-week-old was a lesbian in a committed relationship? Did I mention that the baby was held all day and cherished by heterosexual and homosexual adults alike and that as we kissed her downy head and snuggled her warmly to our chests, each of us, male or female, gay or straight, promised that little girl that we would allow no harm to come to her and love her forever?

Gender has nothing to do with marriage and rearing children. Love and commitment do. Since God is love, same-sex committed marriages do truly embody his will. Amen.

Linda Majer-Davis is a freelance writer who lives in the Lehigh Valley.



GOP leader calls gays 'intolerant bigots'

Advocate.com

The National Stonewall Democrats have denounced Republican National Committee chairman Ed Gillespie for referring to gay Americans as intolerant bigots. On Tuesday, Gillespie told *The Washington Times*, "I think when people say, 'Well, no, that's not enough that you accept me for who I am, you have to agree with — and condone — my choice,' that to me is religious bigotry, and I believe that's intolerant. I think they are the ones who are crossing a line here." Gillespie also said that the RNC will move to oppose civil recognition of same-sex marriage in its 2004 platform.

"Gillespie is the one displaying his bigotry, not gay Americans," said Dave Noble, NSD's executive director. "Suggesting that someone is a bigot because they want the legal right to visit a dying partner in the hospital is wrong and, frankly, disgusting."

Gillespie said that while a decision hinges on the outcome of a potential marriage ruling in Massachusetts, the RNC appears to be ready to support a U.S. constitutional amendment outlawing recognition of same-sex relationships. The RNC chairman noted that he sees no difference between civil unions and same-sex marriages.

Log Cabin Republicans executive director Patrick Guerriero took issue with Gillespie's support of the proposed constitutional amendment. "We should not marginalize gay families," Guerriero said. "And to be true to our conservative roots, we should not tinker with the sacred United States Constitution to score temporary political points."

"We win elections by addition, not subtraction," Guerriero continued. "With the electorate evenly divided, a small number of fair-minded swing voters who embrace tolerance and inclusion will decide this election. They want our party to focus on jump-starting the American economy and winning the war on terror, not igniting the failed cultural wars of the past."



Is your name in the paper?

You can check it out Friday, Oct. 10 in the *Dallas Morning News*' special section on the National Coming Out Project.

That's a proud place for your name ... and mine ... to be. It shows we support our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered loved ones. I'm there. Are you?



Page Four

Hey, Puddin's,

Happy Halloween and Happy Diversity Month!

A few weeks ago, the planet Mars was the closest it's been to Earth in 60,000 years. To get a closer look, I went to a local viewing. I got to look through many different telescopes. It was incredible! That little bitty star in the sky became a beautiful little planet. I could see the polar ice cap, and the mountains and valleys in clear view, but only with the help of a good telescope. The astronomers explained that those telescopes you can buy at the store are really cheap little versions of good telescopes. They don't give you the best view. All you really see is a blob instead of a detailed planet.

If you want to stargaze, you need to get a good telescope. Each telescope was a little different, but they all gave a great view of Mars. From the little squatty telescope to the big one that had its own stepladder for viewing, each had a good view. Some had the image inverted, some were a little fuzzy ... there's a lot of atmosphere between Earth and Mars. Some were crystal clear.

It reminded me of PFLAG. We are the telescope for parents, families, and friends struggling with gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender issues. It depends on the telescope one uses. If someone wants to believe the neo-puritan rhetoric, then – just like with those cheap telescopes – they're not getting the real picture. They're only seeing a fuzzy blob of who their GLBT loved one is. But look through a good telescope, and suddenly the detail comes out. The whole person is seen, not just their sexuality.

Just as Mars is so much more than a shiny blob in the night sky, we are so much more than our sexuality. Take a closer look, and you see the details that aren't apparent. You see the person for who they are. There are 500 PFLAG chapters all over the country. Just like telescopes, some are big and some are small. PFLAG is a quality organization, not some cheap version.



PFLAG/Texas is sponsoring the national PFLAG board meetings here in Dallas Oct. 16-19 at the Loews Anatole Hotel. You PFLAG members can meet your national board members and staff. Saturday, Oct. 18 is a reception with Judy Shepard. Her son Matthew was murdered for being gay. This is your chance to talk to Judy. She is a woman of great strength and courage who will inspire you.

Also featured is the "Artbook Exhibit," a compilation of photos depicting the effect of suicide and hate crimes on GLBT people, their families and friends. The biggest fear people have for their GLBT loved ones is of hate crimes. The pioneers of PFLAG chapters in Texas will also be honored; brave Texans who took a stand against intolerance.

And to top it off, this is the celebration of National PFLAG's 30th birthday! Did you know that PFLAG was started in New York City by parents who were tired of their GLBT children being treated unfairly? They got mad, fired up, and started what was to become a huge national organization! Happy birthday, PFLAG!

Sunday, Oct. 19, PFLAG is giving the "Voice of Freedom" award to comedienne Margaret Cho. Margaret is a good friend of the GLBT community. In her act, she speaks against racism, sexism, and homophobia. Through humor she sends a very serious message of tolerance for people who are "different." She told PFLAG she should be giving us an award! Margaret is flying in between East Coast gigs to be with us. The evening will culminate with a performance by the all-male 200-member Turtle Creek Chorale. They are awesome! Details for tickets are on our Web

site. See you there!

Finally, thanks to National PFLAG Communications Director Alice Leeds for getting me an interview with *Girlfriends Magazine*. I'm in the September Music issue in an article about female stagehands and the challenges we face in our non-traditional work. You can read it at www.girlfriendsmag.com, but you'll have to buy a hard copy to see two pictures of me in action. Check it out!

Pat Smith

Co-president, PFLAG/Dallas



Church group protests 'Gay Day'

by Mark Agee and Trae Thompson
Fort Worth Star Telegram

ARLINGTON – About 100 members of an East Texas church traveled to The Ballpark in Arlington on Sunday to protest what they say is the Rangers' acceptance of homosexuality.

Gay and lesbian groups were hoping to sell 1,000 tickets for what they called "Gay Day." Participants planned to sit in a roped-off section and create a rainbow in the stands with the colors of their T-shirts.

Rangers officials said about 200 tickets were sold for Sunday night's game to the Resource Center of Dallas, a non-profit group established by the Dallas Gay and Lesbian Alliance.

The Rev. W.N. Otwell, pastor of Heritage Baptist Church in Mount Enterprise, traveled with his group for more than 180 miles to protest the sale. Some carried signs that said "Repent or perish," and "AIDS is God's punishment."

"I believe it's a shame that the Texas Rangers baseball team should support this," Otwell said.

Team President Michael Cramer said that the Rangers sell tickets in bulk to many groups, including church groups. The sales do not mean an endorsement.

"This ballpark will always be open to anyone who wants to buy tickets," Cramer said. "There will not be a sign on this ballpark, figuratively or literally, that says only certain people need ask to buy tickets."



Turning a purple trailer into a parade float!

Driver David Harmon attaches our banners to the crosspiece of the Pride Parade float. Sandy Brouillette supervises. For more shots of the crowd from the trailer, see www.pflagdallas.org.