



The Flagpole

*The Newsletter of Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
of the Metropolitan Washington DC Area*

On the web at www.pflagdc.org or www.stayclose.org

March 2006

The Metro DC PFLAG Gala : Peace! Love! Groovy! Spectacular!



*Honoree
Thea Gill*

The Metro DC PFLAG 9th Annual Honors Gala and Silent Auction will be held March 11th, 2006 at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill.

There is something for every member of the family: a silent auction, VIP reception, dinner, and the annual awards presentation. Honorees this year include actor Thea Gill of "Queer as Folk," Kimpton Hotel and Restaurant Group, and DC area Reverends John Mack and Barbara Gerlach.

You can register online at www.boxofficetickets.com and at the end of the registration you will select your host table assignment. If you do not have a table host please select one of the PFLAG DC tables for seating.

If you are not able to attend the dinner, please remember to visit the online auction for one-of-a-kind, cool and hip items at www.metrodcpflag.cmarket.com.

The online auction includes a signed Brokeback Mountain poster, Cyndi Lauper outfit, other celebrity items, a gay wedding planner package from GayWeddings.com, video iPod from Verizon, Redskins and Nationals tickets, trips, art, and lots more.

The online auction ends March 6 at 12 noon.

Gala attendees please note: the zip code on the return address was wrong. The correct zip code is 97204-2405. Please call the office if you've already mailed your check so that we can be sure we have your reservations. ▼

Safe Schools Update: New Connections, New Opportunities

By Jillyene Harris

Recently, Metro DC PFLAG and SMYAL (Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League) met with representatives from the Association for the Study and Development of Community who have given us a Building Community Amidst Diversity grant for our Safe Schools Program. We set benchmarks to track our steps, including opening up a dialogue between Metro DC PFLAG and DCPS administration to reinforce the need to address GLBT students, setting up workshops for teachers and administrators to increase their awareness and sensitivity of GLBT students, and holding information sessions for students, teachers, and parents.

Following the meeting with ASDC, I met with Kathryn Braeman, our Safe Schools Chair to work on our strategies

for building community in the schools. She brought Bernice Resnick Sandler and Harriett M. Stonehill, who are the authors of the book "Student to Student Sexual Harassment K-12: Strategies and Solutions for Educators to Use in the Classroom, School and Community" to the meeting. We talked extensively on the state of the schools and determined that the main barrier GLBT youth face is that they are constantly bullied and harassed for being who they are. They offered help to design separate student and teacher workshops that are aimed at putting a stop to bullying and harassment in DCPS, one school at a time.

In addition to this, the support group at H.D. Woodson continues, I was able to show the film "All God's Children" which responds to homophobia from an African-American perspective and

includes strong support from African-American religious and political leaders. This film helped communicate to students that they had support not only from each other but in high places.

We also had a vibrant speaker from Covenant House, Khadijah Tribble. She gave a talk about coming out issues. In addition to her work with Covenant House, she also on the board for Equality Maryland and is a wonderful role model and resource for the students.

Work on the coalition between Metro DC PFLAG and SMYAL has also begun. We've met with Dr. Olga Acosta Price, Deputy Director of the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools at the Department of Mental Health, and associate research professor at the

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MD Lobby Day Held Feb. 13 – What’s Next?

By Janet Fox

As a PFLAG mom new to both the Metro DC area and Metro DC PFLAG, my husband and I attended our first Lobby Day in Annapolis on Monday, February 13. The region had a very heavy snowfall on Sunday morning. By Monday, however, the roads were clear but the temperatures were still frigid. Nevertheless, Lobby Day got started at 5 p.m. with an outdoor rally in the Thurgood Marshall courtyard at the state Capitol. There, a large crowd stood outside for well over an hour to hear some very inspirational speeches before we headed off to legislator meetings that Equality Maryland had coordinated.

From Equality Maryland’s event report, “... well over 100 appointments with legislators were held. It was thrilling to see the halls of the Senate and House buildings filled with “no discrimination in the Constitution” stickers and throngs of LGBT Marylanders, families, friends, and clergy. Thank you all for braving the cold temperatures and long lines through security. We made a TREMENDOUS difference in showing legislators the faces of those who oppose legislating discrimination.”

The legislative meeting I attended had over 25 people meeting with my 3 delegates and one senator. We had some great dialog and learned about how the legislative process works. Afterward, I shared my personal story of having both gay and non-gay children with my legislators – an experience that was very empowering as I was able to speak up for equality on behalf of both of my children. I’m looking forward to continuing dialog with my elected representatives as time goes on.

So, what comes next and how can YOU make a difference? Volunteer with Metro DC PFLAG and Equality Maryland! You can learn more by visiting www.pflagdc.org and www.equalitymaryland.org for up-to-date information and local and state opportunities for further advocacy for equality for our GLBT loved ones. ▼

News and Notes...

Stay Close Gets Recognized!

The editors at US Ad Review (www.usadreview.com) have sent a letter of congratulations to Metro DC PFLAG. They have selected two of our Stay Close ads – one featuring Cyndi Lauper and her sister Elen and another spotlighting Dick and Jane Gephardt and their daughter, Chrissy - as among the best in its category for nonprofit/public interest creations. The ads will be showcased in issue 52 of US Ad Review.

PFLAG Intern’s Story: Emma Morehouse

I worked as an intern at the Metro DC PFLAG office as a part of my Field Work Term. Two months – January and February - are considered part of our education and contribute to our “plan” (or major) at Bennington College, which each student designs for her or himself. I study modern dance at Bennington but also have a strong interest in human rights, specifically equality for GLBT people. In the long run, I’m trying to find an effective link between teaching acceptance and the arts.

I hoped to gain knowledge about the workings of a non-profit organization and also to learn about how the GLBT community in the DC area takes action for change. I chose to work at PFLAG because I think you are starting at the right place. If people outside of the GLBT community learn to understand and support equality, it will create a standard of acceptance which will make GLBT members and everyone more comfortable with all sexual orientations and gender identities. This could eventually affect enough people to change the way the government views LGBT rights and would lead to all-inclusive legislation.

For my project, I was challenged to find a way to combine my interest in dance with Metro DC PFLAG’s work. So I investigated setting up a table at local performance spaces with PFLAG pamphlets and Stay Close materials.

I’m pleased to report that three spaces agreed to have some involvement in this project. While many of the local performance spaces were familiar with PFLAG and embraced its mission, their theatre lobby size was too small to accommodate us. The Washington Stage Guild and Dance Place also agreed to have Stay Close postcards and other PFLAG literature on community boards and tables. However, Arena Stage agreed to let Metro DC PFLAG have a table with posters and pamphlets at the reception of their “Out at Arena” night on Friday, Feb. 24. This evening – held in their Black Box Theater following a performance of *Awake and Sing* – was specifically for the GLBT community and included a post-show reception with refreshments and a talk with the cast.

Attention all members and donors.

The National PFLAG mailing house has recently sent renewal confirmation letters. The letter has been sent to some PFLAG DC members stating that they are no longer members of a local chapter. Please contact the PFLAG DC office if you have received this notice. We are working to resolve this for our local members and donors. Please contact us at (202) 638-3852 or e-mail info@pflagdc.org if you have any questions. ▼

Metro DC PFLAG Donors and Members

Thanks to our donors and members for their generosity to Metro DC PFLAG. Your support helps to make our important work possible. (Names listed are from Dec. 2005 Newsletter through Feb. 22, 2006.)

Safe Schools and General Operating Grants and Gifts

Assoc for the Study & Development of Community \$15,000
 Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation \$10,000
 Brother, Help Thyself, Inc. \$7,100
 Morey Bernstein Memorial Foundation \$5,000
 Sam & Sue Pennington

Life Time (\$1,000 and above)

Patricia & Paul Bonavia
 Bernice Melow
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Flagwaver (\$500 - \$999)

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Donations in Honor of the Commitment Ceremony of Tom Buerger

& Ralph Segar-Buerger

Total: \$2,825 to date

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Safe Schools, continued from p. 1

School of Public Health and Health Services, at the George Washington University. She has allowed us to speak with her staff to give them information about PFLAG and distribute reading materials for the schools they are working in.

Liz Sessoms, the Director of Counseling Services for the DCPS, invited us to give a workshop for the DCPS counselors at an upcoming staff meeting. We are making great strides within the DC schools, and continue looking forward to working with the DCPS officials in the future to further make the schools a safer place for all students. ▼



Support Group Schedule

Everyone is welcome! Trained facilitators lead our support groups and confidentiality is maintained. Our goal is to help families heal and stay together. For additional information about any Metro DC PFLAG support group, call (301) 439-FLAG (3524) or (202) 638-3852.

Washington, DC: Mar. 5, 7:00 p.m.
 Galludet University
 Hall Memorial Building
 (First Monday of the month)

Reston, VA: Mar. 7, 7:00 p.m.
 Washington Plaza Baptist Church
 1615 Washington Plaza
 Lake Anne Village Center
 (First Tuesday of the month - note new start time.)

Alexandria, VA: Mar. 14, 8:00 p.m.
 Beverley Hills Community United Methodist Church
 3512 Old Dominion Blvd. (near West Glebe Road)
 (Second Tuesday of the month)

Annandale, VA: Mar. 19, 4:30 p.m.
 Little River UCC
 8410 Little River Turnpike
 (Third Sunday of the month)

Bethesda, MD: Mar. 19, 2:00 p.m.
 Cedar Lane Unitarian Church
 9601 Cedar Lane
 (Third Sunday of the month)

Trans-people and their families
 (Concurrent with the monthly Bethesda support group)

Manassas, VA: Mar. 27, 7:00 p.m.
 Bull Run Unitarian Universalist Church
 9350 Main St.
 (Fourth Monday of the month)

**REMEMBER:
 YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

