

# THE NEWSLETTER

October 2014 ISSUE 10 VOLUME 21

# SISTER ACT

Please join us for our General Meeting on **Monday, October 27** at 7:00 pm at Jewish Family Service, 8804 Balboa Avenue. Doors open at 6:45.

Our guest speakers are Sisters Yeshe Did and Sister Ida Know from The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. The Sisters started as an impromptu group in San Francisco 35 years ago and



quickly found their place in providing support, outreach and visibility for the early victims of the AIDS crisis (before anyone even knew what it was). Over the years, they have been known for activism, fundraising, and support for all their



flock in the LGBTQ community. The Sisters span the world, with around a thousand Sisters worldwide in more than 25 countries on four different continents. Impressive!

Please join us for support groups, then the cookie social, followed by our guest speakers.

# PLEASE VOTE IN MID-TERM ELECTIONS

Please mail in your ballots early for mid-term elections to save time or go to the polls to **VOTE** on **November 4**. If the entire ballot looks overwhelming, at the very least, we hope you will vote for equality candidates and issues. HRC (Human Rights Campaign) can offer some guidance (www.hrc.org).

As always, volunteers are needed to help get out the vote. If interested, contact Rebekah Hook at the LGBT Center (rhook@thecentersd.org) to volunteer. There will be a phone bank at The Center to call Equality

Voters and remind them to mail in their ballots or get to the polls for the November 4 election. You do not need to be an experienced phone solicitor. The Center will provide training, call scripts, and all info the volunteers need. The following are dates that people are needed: Oct. 22, 5-8pm, Oct. 23, 5-8pm, Oct. 25, 11-3pm (Sat.), Oct. 26, 11-3pm (Sun.), Oct. 27, 5-8pm, Oct. 28, 5-8pm, Oct. 29, 5-8pm, Oct. 30, 5-8pm, Nov. 1, 11-3pm (Sat.), Nov. 2, 11-3pm (Sun.), Nov. 4, any 3 hours shift between 10-4pm.

# THIS N' THAT IN OCTOBER

LGBT History Month: This is celebrated every October to recognize the notable achievements of LGBT people throughout time. To see a list of the 31 icons, go to: wwwlgbthistorymonth.com. Some of the names may surprise you (i.e., Tallulah Bankhead!).

**Breast Cancer Awareness Month:** As part of The Women's Resource

Center at The LGBT Center, The Imperial Court de San Diego and The Center established The Toni

Atkins Lesbian Health Fund. The purpose is to assist low-income and uninsured lesbian, bisexual and transgender women access necessary health care resources, with a major emphasis on free mammograms.

# LISTEN TO MAMA



The kickoff for Mama's Kitchen 10th Annual Pie in the Sky Fundraiser is underway. Mama's Pie in the Sky is a bake sale fundraising program

that benefits Mama's Kitchen—San Diego's only free, county-wide home-delivered meals program for individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS or cancer. Each pie sold provides more than

eight home-delivered meals to these clients. You can buy pies from now until November 23. The pies sell for \$25 each with \$15 being tax-deductible – definitely a win-win. Your choices are: apple, Dutch apple, pecan, and pumpkin.



Purchasing is as simple as pie! You can order directly online: www.mamaspies. org or call 619-233-6262. On November 26 (the day before Thanksgiving), there are pick up locations all over San Diego for your convenience. More details will be in the November newsletter.

And speaking of Mama's Kitchen, congratulations to PFLAG Board Member, Ina Price, for receiving a Volunteer of the Year Award from Mama's Kitchen. Pictured with Ina is Bill Patten, Director of Programs, and also a member of PFLAG.

# **THANK YOU**



Several board members are taking a leave of absence: Wayne Walker, Courtney Ware, and Beverly Lavallee. Good luck for now and see you again on the Board at a later time!

# OFFICERS, COMMITTEES & VOLUNTEERS

#### President

**Terrie Vorono** 619-997-6139 tvorono@pflag.com

## Past Co-President

Patti Boman pboman@pflag.com

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**Sherry Cohen-Richards** 858-349-6269 scohenrichards@pflag.com :

#### Recording Secretary

Linda Espinoza lespinoza@pflag.com

#### Treasurer

JoyLynn Murray 760-525-8256 ilmurray@pflag.com

## Greeter

**Lonnie Brunini** Ibrunini@pflag.com

## Membership

**Bobbi Harwood** 858-453-3249 bharwood@pflag.com

#### Info Line

Support/Outreach 888-398-0006

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#### Newsletter

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#### **Programs**

The Board

## Scholarship

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## Spanish Interpreters

Maria Cortinas 760-758-3294

Patti Boman 619-227-6092

## Speakers Bureau

# Transgender Coordinator

Courtney Ware cware@pflag.com

#### Refreshments

Ina Price

## Website

Lisa Smith lisa@belladiadesign.com

# **Board Members**

Sherry Cohen-Richards, Bob Dryden, Mary Dryden, Linda Espinoza, Kim Martinez, JoyLynn Murray, Ina Price, Terrie Vorono

National PFLAG, Washington, DC (202) 647-8180, www.pflag.org

# **Membership Application**

<ul> <li>□ New □ Renewal □ Change of Address</li> <li>□ Please contact me for volunteer opportunities</li> </ul>
Confidentiality is respected. Your donation is tax deductible (Tax ID 33-0512868)
Make checks payable to:
PFLAG San Diego PO Box 82762
San Diego, CA 92138
Type of Membership
□ Individual\$30 □ Household\$40
☐ Business\$50 ☐ Supporting\$60
□ Contributing \$125 □ Lifetime\$1000 □ Other\$
□ Accept my donation, please do not list.
Please fill out, clip and mail this form
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# **MISSION STATEMENT**

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender 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.

or go online www.pflag.com

Membership forms available at www.pflag.com

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

# **Current Events**

October 20 | Monday Mi Familia Support Group

October 27 | Monday San Diego PFLAG General Meeting and Support Groups

Through October 31
She-Rantulas from Outer Spacein 3D!
Diversionary Theatre (see

November 3 | Monday PFLAG Support Group North County Coastal

article)

November 3 | Monday Mi Familia Support Group

November 4 | Tuesday **VOTE!** 

November 9 | Sunday PFLAG Support Group South Bay November 10 | Monday PFLAG Support Group East County

November 10 | Monday Mi Familia Support Group

November 17 | Monday Mi Familia Support Group

November 20 | Thursday Transgender Day of Remembrance (details in November newsletter)

Through November 23 Mama's Kitchen Pie in the Sky fundraiser (see article)

# WE VALUE YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Please renew your membership for 2015. Pay your dues before you're caught in the holiday shuffle.

# NEW: THE BIRTH OF SOUTH BAY SUPPORT GROUP

We are excited to announce that there will be a PFLAG support group in the South Bay. The group will meet the second Sunday of each month. The first meeting is **Sunday**, **November 9** from 4:00-5:00 pm at the First United Methodist Church of Chula Vista, 1200 East H Street, Chula Vista. Patti Boman, past chapter co-president, will be the facilitator. If you need more information or have questions, please call or email Patti: 619-27-6092 or pboman@pflag.com.

# **SUPPORT GROUPS**

#### **SD COUNTY GENERAL MEETING & SUPPORT GROUP**

Meets every fourth Monday at 7:00 pm, at Jewish Family Service, 8804 Balboa Avenue, San Diego in Kearny Mesa.

For further information, contact the Info Line: 888-398-0006 or www.pflag.com

# NORTH COUNTY COASTAL

Meets the first Monday, at 7:00 pm, North County LGBTQ Resource Center, 510 North Coast Highway, Suite C, Oceanside.

Contact northcountycoastal@pflag.com or Annette Ottone, 760-518-3345.

#### **NORTH COUNTY INLAND**

Support Groups have been temporarily discontinued

#### **EAST COUNTY**

Meets every second Monday, at 7:00 pm, Summit Unitarian Universalist Church, 8778 Cottonwood Avenue, Santee.

Contact Bob Dryden: 619-334-8214 or bdryden@pflag.com

#### **SOUTH BAY**

Meets every second Sunday from 4:00-5:00 pm, First United Methodist Church of Chula Vista, 1200 East H Street, Chula Vista.

Contact: Patti Boman, 619-27-6092 or pboman@pflag.com

#### MI FAMILIA (Spanish)

Meetings are the first and third Mondays of the month from 6:30pm - 8:00 pm at The Center, 3909 Centre Street, Hillcrest

Contact Patti Boman, 619-227-6092

#### TRANSGENDER SUPPORT

For more information on the Transgender Support Group Contact Kathe Dunn, ftm\_mom@yahoo.com.

# WITH GREAT HONOR...



We are pleased to present Bobbi Harwood, our jack-of-all trades former board member, who, like the Energizer Bunny,

keeps on going and going and going.

"Although I am no longer a board member, I was asked to introduce myself because of my behind-thescenes work with PFLAG. My name is Bobbi Harwood and I attended my first meeting five days after my daughter, Dana, came out as a lesbian. It's hard to believe that was 22 years ago and I still attend meetings. Most of you know me by my emails to you, letting you know when our latest newsletter is online and also telling you that it's time to renew your membership.

When Dana came out, it was a total surprise to me and I didn't know where to turn. I knew I loved her as I always had, but I hardly knew any gay people and had no one to talk to about it. By chance, a couple of days later, I saw a tiny notice in a local magazine about a group called PFLAG. I couldn't believe there was a group created just for me (with a name I couldn't pronounce). When I mentioned this to Dana, she said that she knew about PFLAG and that I should definitely go to the meeting. I think she thought it might help me stop crying (at least for an hour or so, anyway). She offered to come with me, but I said no, I'd rather go myself for the first time.

There I was at my first meeting, thinking all through the support group and program that I wouldn't return.

Even though everyone I met was very nice, I didn't feel I had anything in common with them and I couldn't relate to them. Most of them seemed comfortable with having a gay child. I, on the other hand, was not and didn't know if I ever would be. As I said my goodbyes, a member assured me about the confidentiality of the group and told me I needn't worry if we ran into each other on the street--she would pretend she didn't know me. Whew--that was a relief!!!

I don't think I was even in my car five minutes while driving home from that meeting that I came to the realization that these people were like me and that we do have a lot in common. And I couldn't wait until 30 days went by so I could attend my next PFLAG meeting. Month after month, I looked forward to the meetings and gradually, I, too, became comfortable having a gay child

After a while, I began attending some of the Board Meeting and joined the Board in 1994, first serving as Corresponding Secretary, then Treasurer, followed by President. After a brief hiatus, I, again, became president-- from 2002-2006. During much of that time, I was also Helpline/ Outreach Chairperson. I am currently the Membership Chairperson, Support Group Facilitator and, for the past 10 vears, have managed the PFLAG Booth at the Pride Festival. As an aside. Dana and I have marched with PFLAG in 21 San Diego Pride Parades.

Throughout the years I have been a supporter of Scouting for All, as well as our LGBT Youth. I have

given presentations to high school GSA's and college classes. I have written letters to the editors of local newspapers and magazines offering my opinions as a non-gay individual in support of LGBT persons. I wrote letters to legislators and participated in events supporting same-sex marriage. I personally met with then San Diego Assessor/Recorder/County County Clerk, Gregory Smith, whose office issues marriage licenses and performs marriage ceremonies. In July of 2008, I was a proud and happy mother, as I stood watching Mr. Smith perform the marriage ceremony of my daughter, Dana, and her partner, Alicia.

One of my greatest thrills was receiving the Spirit of Stonewall Friend of Pride Award in 2006. The award, given by San Diego LGBT Pride, recognizes individuals who do not identify as LGBT and who have contributed significantly to the LGBT community.

Along with my daughter and daughter-in-law living close-by in San Diego, I have a son, daughter-in-law and 2 grandchildren who live in New York City.

Besides my work with PFLAG. volunteer for several other organizations. have been volunteering for Mama's Kitchen and the Travelers Aid Airport Ambassador Program (at the San International Airport) for the past 16 years. I have also been a volunteer tutor since 2000 at Monarch School, a school for homeless and other at risk vouth."

"To me, the most important thing is to let them know that you love them. These kids need that kind of support. They don't want to be ostracized, especially at home with their own families...so it was important for us to make sure that he knew...that we loved him and we supported him 100%."

-- Cookie Johnson, wife of Magic Johnson, regarding their gay son E.J.

# IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN; PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIPS

PFLAG memberships are for the calendar year, and 2015 is almost here. That means memberships are due once again. Thank you for being part of our continuing effort to provide support, education, and advocacy on behalf of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender community and their families. Thank you for allowing us to continue to provide monthly meetings, speakers, support groups, an info line, newsletters, educational brochures, etc.

Your membership is important to us--it enables us to strengthen our presence in the community and to have our voices heard. We also help support National PFLAG by sending \$15 of your dues to them which provides you with membership in the national organization. Please don't renew directly with National, as no part of that benefits our San Diego chapter.

The membership application is on page two, as well as our web site (www.pflag.com), where it is quite convenient to renew/join (through Pay Pal). You can also join/renew at any of the meetings or mail a check made payable to: PFLAG San Diego County, P.O. Box 82762, San Diego, CA 92138. All memberships are tax deductible. The types of memberships available are: Individual, \$30; Household, \$40; Business, \$50; Supporting, \$60; Contributing, \$125; Lifetime: \$1000. All donations are welcomed.

# YAY SCOTUS AND THE LOWER COURTS

The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS), on October 6, cleared the way for legal same-sex marriages in Indiana, Oklahoma, Utah, Virginia and Wisconsin. The court refused to hear cases from those states as they were seeking to keep their same-sex marriage bans in place

Other states recently added to the plus side are: West Virginia, North Carolina, Idaho, Alaska, Colorado, Nevada, Arizona, and Wyoming. That makes 32 states and the District of Columbia where same-sex marriage is legal. Slowly, but surely, we are getting there.

Of course, now that Pope Francis is basically asking the



world Catholics (and the world) to accept all without regard to sexual orientation, there eventually may be a blessing from the Pope on same-sex marriage!!

# LGBT RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD

On Sept. 26, the United Nations (UN Human Rights Council) passed a landmark resolution condemning violence and discrimination directed toward the LGBT community throughout the world.

Samantha Power, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, said, "I am very pleased that the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution today to combat discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons. This is only the second time in its history the Human Rights Council has adopted a resolution on LGBT rights, and the first time it has done so with a majority of its members. This resolution mandates a much-needed U.N. report that will investigate and bring to the world's attention the violence and discrimination faced by individuals around the world simply because of their sexual orientation and gender identity."

National Security Advisor, Susan E. Rice, added that there will be a report issued on preventing LGBT abuses. The sponsors of the report are Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Uruguay. Ms Rice thanked them for their leadership and noted again that LGBT rights are human rights.

# LET'S HEAR IT FOR US

PFLAG San Diego County is proud to have supported The Center's HIV/AIDS fundraiser (AIDS Walk San Diego). Thank you to all who donated and/or walked: Jeff Ballinger, Susan Boyle, Lonnie Brunini, Louie Chavez, Clive Dorman, Olivia Dorman, Alfred Espinoza, Linda Espinoza, Gail Folkman, Bobbi Harwood, Linda Miles, Arlene Prater, Karen Thompson, Mark Thompson, Phyllis Van Wanseele, Kevin Van Wanseele, Darren Van Wanseele, Terrie Vorono, Wayne Walker, Stephen White, Toddy Yeats, and Sherry Cohen-Richards. We also received an anonymous donation of \$100 – thank you whoever you are!!

For many of us, it felt like old home week, as many of our past board members joined us; it was nice reminiscing.

We raised \$1425. Let's pat ourselves on the back!



# TWO MORE SCHOLARS: AMBER



Amber J.
Escobar is the recipient of the John McCusker M e m o r i a l Scholarship — San Diego Human Dignity

Foundation/John McCusker Memorial Fund. Amber is a freshman at Mills College in Oakland, CA. In her Letter of Recommendation, it was stressed that Amber was quiet and shy and has become a "vibrant, passionate, outspoken young woman." Amber is continually educating and advocating for the transgender community. Her powerful story relays how important it is for everyone to be able to live honestly and openly.

"As a transgender individual, justice, fairness, and equality are three very important values to me. My quest of fighting for transgender individuals' rights dates back to the tenth grade while working on a research project entitled, 'Psycharnival.' In this project, I studied gender stereotypes by considering how simple changes in physical appearance, such as the shirt color, may create or influence people's perceptions of gender and sexual orientation. My research supported that societal norms affect how we perceive gender and sexual orientation--results revealed the male subject wearing pink was consistently described as feminine and

'gay.' My research, which explored elements of the interaction between biology and sociology, sparked my intellectual curiosity and demonstrated to me one of the biggest issues of the 21st century--LGBT prejudice.

This project enabled me to look back to my own journey. It was then and there, after dipping my foot in the harsh reality of so many other transgender individuals, like me, that I was faced with a decision to make live my life as a 'normal' woman without any connection to being transgender or to be an advocate for the transcommunity. The answer was simple--I have a social responsibility to share my story. Instead of taking the safe route, I present at various universities, conduct televised interviews, and I am featured in a documentary. My triumphant story, which is one that has traversed geography, navigated poverty, challenged social norms. overcome legal battles, prejudice, and

discrimination, m o t i v a t e s struggling trans teens to cope and 'come out.'



One of the Drew Jack, President of the unlikely, yet San Diego Human Dignity yet Foundation, presenting the highly rewarding, scholarship certificate to Amber. aspects of my transition has been my exposure to the medical field. From 2008 to present, I've met with

various doctors, learned about the

physiological aspects of Estrogen therapy and Testosterone blockers, and learned how to navigate through the maze of private insurance. While this journey has been eyeopening, I have also learned about the sociological and psychological aspects of being transgender. I have encountered stereotypes and others' views regarding socially constructed 'moral codes'-how boys and girls should behave and feel. For example, although the recent release of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (the DSM) removed the term 'Gender Identity Disorder,' it replaced it with the term, 'Gender Dysphoria.' This new term has labeled the 'condition' to be associated with clinically significant distress. I, and many others like me, do not feel 'distressed.' Terms like this have a stigmatizing effect, yet without an identifiable diagnosis, it would jeopardize access to mental and physical health care.

My higher education and this scholarship will lead me on a heroic path to educate and advocate for the entire transgender community, as well as for others who are disenfranchised, marginalized, and excluded. My unique experiences and cultural sensitivity will directly serve low-income, immigrant, and underserved communities. I am honored to be in a position to affect change, and have the spirit and diligence to succeed."

# SHE-RANTULAS FROM OUTER SPACE-IN 3D! 15TH ANNUAL ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL

Now playing **through October 31** at the Diversionary Theatre, *She-Rantulas...*"is a hilarious send-up of the femme fatales and B-movie horror stories of the 1950s. When a horror-horde of monster-mutants invades Small Town U.S.A., one All-American Mother must face the truth about her little Suzie and destroy her evil Web of Terror. The Management requests that you PLEASE not reveal the SHOCKING final scene to friends or family members, and guarantee to BURY YOU without charge if you die of FRIGHT during *She-Rantulas from Outer Space-in 3D!*"

As PFLAG San Diego does every year at the Asian Film Festival, we are co-presenting a film. This year, it is one that is very close to PFLAG's heart, Eat With Me, about a mother who's getting to know her gay son who is a chef (thus, the title). This film was made in consultation with one of the PFLAGs in LA. It is showing **Friday, November 7** at 6:35 pm at the UltraStar Mission Valley (Hazard Center on Friars Road).

The Festival runs from **November 6-15**. To purchase tickets or learn about other films being presented, go to: www.sandiego.org/events/film/asian-film-festival-san-diego.aspx

# TWO MORE SCHOLARS: CHLOE



C h I o e Schornick Kavanaugh is the recipient of the College Planning Source Scholarship.

Chloe is in her first year of graduate

school at Drexel University. You've heard of Star Trek's "Where no man has gone before." Chloe's motto should be "Where practically no woman has gone before." She is getting her Master's degree in Construction Management. That is not surprising. Her former employer, a dentist, said Chloe's work ethic

was unparalleled in his 15 years of private practice. He feels she was responsible for their record production and collection. Chloe is motivated, self-disciplined, a leader, and team player. All of these skills will enable her to succeed in her chosen field.

# **CHLOE'S ESSAY**

"There was a time that I considered my mother to be my best friend. She was a free spirit, an amazing woman and loving mother. She challenged me to be the best person that I could be and supported me in all of my decisions.

Later in her life she remarried and became an Evangelical Christian. She poured all of her passion and time into her newfound faith. She was unable to reconcile her faith with having a gay child. Instead of working through her conflict, she chose to completely avoid it.

I was convinced that the woman who raised me was not lost forever, that if she just met the woman that I loved that she would love her just as much as I did. I was sure that I could find the unconditional love that was raised with, but I was mistaken. Our conversations became mundane, and she avoided any conversation that had anything to do with me being a lesbian.

In August of 2010, Kristen and I became engaged. I made a conscious decision to plead my case with my mother. I wrote her a letter explaining why I love Kristen and why she is such an amazing person. Like most girls, I wanted my mom to help me choose a dress and to help me plan one of the most important days of my life. She declined to participate.

I didn't hear from her for months until she sent me a message on Facebook. She explained that it was her duty as a Christian to point out the error of my ways, and she didn't 'want my blood on her hands when she meets her Lord.' She also told me she was only telling me because she loved me and that until I changed, she could not be present in my life. Needless to say, all communications ceased at that moment.

Since the experience with my mother, I have learned the value of true acceptance. My father and stepmother are amazing. Their support before this and after has never wavered. My father walked me down the aisle and my stepmother immediately assumed the role of my mother. They are wonderful examples of accepting people who were able to reconcile their religious beliefs with the realities of our family. While I feel like I lost a parent, I am grateful for the love and support that I receive from my father and stepmother.

This experience has taught me the power and importance of acceptance. I am beyond excited about being admitted into the Master's in Construction Management Program at Drexel University. Even though I won't be able to share this experience with my mother, I am fully aware that I have a family that supports me 100% and I wouldn't have gotten this far without them.

The construction industry is very masculine and not known for accepting the merits of gays and lesbians. I want to be a voice within the industry for the LGBT community. I want to be a role model and set a positive example for the next generation. I also want to use the skills I learn in sustainable and green building to improve the infrastructure in our community and create a sustainable way of living that our children can enjoy for years to come."

Luan D. Andrews, M.A.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST MFC 19321

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# **THANKS!**

**General Fund Donation**Charles J. Wibbelsman, M.D.

**Providing Refreshments for Our Meeting** 

Carol McAllister Mike Minnick







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