



THE NEWSLETTER

October 2017 / ISSUE 10 / VOLUME 24



SAFE PLACE FOR YOUTH

Please join us for our general meeting on **Monday, October 23** at 7:00 pm at Jewish Family Service, 8788 Balboa Avenue, San Diego. **PLEASE NOTE, THE MEETING IS THE 4TH MONDAY OF THE MONTH, NOT OCTOBER 30.**

Our speaker is Leah Aguirre, the Program Manager for Our Safe Place. This program is specifically for LGBTQ youth ages 12-21. One of the components is a drop-in center that provides supervision and guidance to youth/Service Partners that are accessing services in the drop-in center. The center creates a safe and supportive environment. The staff interacts with youth as a role model.

Please join us for support groups, followed by the cookie social, and Leah's presentation.

YAY – WE DID IT AGAIN



PFLAG San Diego County is proud to have supported The Center's HIV/AIDS fundraiser: AIDS Walk San Diego. It was a huge success in terms of walkers and amount raised. Thank you to all who donated and/or walked: Vanessa Allen, Lonnie Brunini, Bill Brzenski, Joanie Brzenski, Donna Gray-Bowersox, Bobbi Harwood, Becki Luna, Bill Luna, Vicki Luna, Jennifer Malley, Kathie Moehlig, Jen Rickerd, Kevin Van Wanseele, Phyllis Van Wanseele, Terrie Vorono, Toddy Yeats, and Sherry Cohen-Richards

18TH ANNUAL ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL

As PFLAG San Diego County does every year at the Asian Film Festival, we are co-presenting a group of short films called *Queer as us. Not sad!* While most of the eight short films are from the U.S., ones from Japan, China, and Tonga are also included. It is showing **Saturday, November 11** at 6:20 pm at the UltraStar Mission Valley (Hazard Center on Friars Road).

There is a limited number of free tickets. If you are interested, please email Bobbi Harwood at bharwood@pflag.com. If you take tickets, please use them.

In addition to the shorts we are co-presenting, there are many other films, including four films that are LGBT focused. For info for all the movies and to buy tickets, visit www.pacarts.org/sdaff.

MAMA MIA: IT'S PIE SEASON



Mama's Kitchen kicked off their 13th Annual Pie in the Sky Fundraiser and will continue until **November 19.** 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, cancer, and other critical illnesses. Each pie sold provides eight home-delivered meals to the clients. Pies sell for \$25 each with \$15 being tax-deductible – you can't go wrong! The choices are: apple, Dutch apple, pecan, and pumpkin. On a diet? Consider buying a "Love-A-Client Pie" (a donated pie) for just \$25 or make a donation.

Purchasing is as simple as pie! You can order directly online: www.mamaspies.org or call 619-233-6262. On November 22 (the day before Thanksgiving), you can pick up your pie order at locations all over San Diego County for your convenience. More details will be in the November newsletter.

THANK YOU TO PATTI BOMAN FOR WEARING SO MANY HATS FOR PFLAG. SHE IS THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF SOUTH BAY, FACILITATES BOTH THE SOUTH BAY SUPPORT GROUP AND MI FAMILIA, AND KEEPS OUR PFLAG FACEBOOK PAGE UPDATED.

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(202) 647-8180, www.pflag.org

Membership Application

- New Renewal Change of Address
 Please contact me for volunteer opportunities

Confidentiality is respected. Your donation is tax deductible (Tax ID 33-0512868)

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or go online www.pflag.com (forms available)

VISION STATEMENT

PFLAG envisions a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued, and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

MISSION STATEMENT

By meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG realizes its vision through: Support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ; Education for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ; Advocacy in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ.

Current Events

October 19 | Thursday
PFLAG Support Group
North County Inland

October 23 | Monday
San Diego Metro General
Meeting and Support Group

October 24 | Tuesday
Our Space-Poway/ High School

November 6 | Monday
PFLAG Support Group
North County Coastal

November 6 | Monday
Our Space-Poway/Middle
School

November 9-December 10
The Moors
Diversionary Theatre

November 11 | Saturday
Asian Film Festival
Co-presentation

November 11 & 12
Saturday and Sunday
San Diego Women's
Chorus concert

November 13 | Monday
PFLAG Support Group
East County

November 13 | Monday
Mi Familia

November 14 | Tuesday
Our Space-Poway/ High
School

November 16 | Monday
PFLAG Support Group
North County Inland

**Now through
November 19**
Mama's Kitchen
Pie in the Sky

November 20 | Monday
Transgender Day of
Remembrance
(see article)

2018 IS AROUND THE CORNER

PFLAG memberships are for the calendar year, and 2018 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, and questioning 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. Donations are welcomed.

If you join now through December 31, 2017, your membership is valid through December 31, 2018.

SUPPORT GROUPS

SD METRO GENERAL MEETING & SUPPORT GROUP
Meets every 4th Monday at 7:00 pm, at Jewish Family Service, 8788 Balboa Ave, San Diego in Kearny Mesa.

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

NORTH COUNTY COASTAL
Meets the 1st Monday @ 6:30 pm, Pilgrim UCC, 2020 Chestnut Avenue, Carlsbad. .

Annette: 760-518-3345 | northcountycoastal@pflag.com

NORTH COUNTY INLAND
Meets the 3rd Thursday @ 7:00 pm, St. Bart's Church, 16275 Pomerado Road, Poway. New Location

Kathie: 858-382-9156 | northcountyinland@pflag.com

EAST COUNTY
Meets the 2nd Monday at 7:00 pm, Summit Unitarian Universalist Church, 8778 Cottonwood Avenue, Santee.

Raegan: 858-531-5426 | eastcountysdc@pflag.com

SOUTH BAY
Meets 3rd Monday at 6:00 pm. For meeting info, contact:

Patti: 619-227-6092 | bomanpatti@gmail.com

POWAY LGBTQ YOUTH SUPPORT/HIGH SCHOOL
Meets 2nd & 4th Tuesdays from 5:00-6:30 pm, St. Bart's Church, 16275 Pomerado Rd, Poway. Facilitated by youth.

Kathie: 858-382-9156 | info@transfamilysos.org

OUR SPACE-POWAY--LGBTQIA/MIDDLE SCHOOL
For Middle School only. Meets 1st and 3rd Mondays from 5:30-7 pm, St. Bart's Church, 16275 Pomerado Rd, Poway.

Kathie: 858-382-9156 | info@transfamilysos.org

MI FAMILIA (Spanish)
Meets 2nd Monday at 6pm. For meeting info, contact:

Patti: 619-227-6092 | bomanpatti@gmail.com

TRANSFAMILY SUPPORT GROUP
Support groups held separately for children, teens, & adults to explore topics around gender identity and expressions.

Kathie: 858-382-9156 | info@transfamilysos.org

PLEASED TO PRESENT...



Suhaila Devidasi is one of the recipients of the **Rob Benzon Memorial Scholarships**. Suhaila can attest to the success of the Sunburst Youth Housing Project, San Diego's only LGBT youth Shelter. While there, she became an activist and

an advocate for the trans community, as well as the LGB community. Suhaila organized fundraisers, donation drives and events in support of the various LGBT groups and homeless population, including the Youth Housing Project.

While experiencing some frustrations with traditional Western medicine, she did research into homeopathic and holistic treatments. She is currently a student at the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine.

"My name is Suhaila A. Devidasi, I'm a young trans activist in San Diego and have been involved in grassroots activism for years. I have striven to do all I can for those within the LGBT community, especially homeless youth. I myself have struggled with disownment and homelessness and have dedicated much of my time and energy to helping others that have been rejected by their families and communities.

This past February I organized an event for homeless youth, an LGBT Valentine's Day party. This was a designated safe space for queer identifying youth who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. At the party, the youth had access to resources regarding LGBT health and clinics, HIV and STD testing, and everyone who attended received a care package of toiletries and other essentials. I also organized for a case manager from Sunburst Youth Housing Project, (San Diego's only LGBT youth shelter) to be present and available to answer any questions and to assist any youth interested in applying for the program.

My goal was to reach this underserved and underrepresented part of our community and do as much as possible for them. Besides resources we also had music, games, prizes, a photo booth, pizza and plenty of candy! I wanted this event to be as fun as possible and to facilitate a positive space that would be both welcoming and empowering. By the end of the evening, everyone had had a wonderful time and each youth got to leave with a surprise gift basket and prizes that had been collected for them. We served about a dozen youth at the party and had the two dozen or so extra care packages donated to three different homeless youth shelters in San Diego.

The care packages, prizes and gift cards the youth left with were collected by the University Christian Church congregation, a local LGBT affirming church in Hillcrest. They also graciously donated the community space we used for the event as well. I had worked with this congregation

before and they were very excited to help me realize my plans for this project. In the past, we had collaborated to collect needed items for the youth at the Sunburst Youth Housing Project. They were very excited to help once again and contribute whatever was needed for the Valentine's Day project.

This was the biggest event I had ever organized and with all of the people and contacts involved it was quite difficult. It was most definitely worth it, however, and I am so blessed and grateful I was able to create a safe space and time for my LGBT family. I remember what it was like to experience homelessness so it was beautiful to see youth that could even for a short while forget about the difficult realities of homelessness and simply enjoy themselves.



Now and in the future, I intend to continue on with my activist endeavors and facilitate change and transformation wherever I am and in whatever way I can. I currently have plans for future

actions, events, and fundraisers all for the benefit of the LGBT community. It is my goal to change as many hearts and minds as possible.

As a current student at San Diego City College, it is my goal and intention to create a Gay Straight Alliance or LGBT club at my school. As of now, there are no safe spaces on campus and many of the staff and faculty are in need of LGBT sensitivity trainings and workshops. I have already been in contact with various case managers, organizers and fellow activists from different San Diego non-profits to ensure that we can create the changes that are needed on this campus. I have reached out to our student government and also found a teacher that supports us and will be our club sponsor. I will do all I can to create that safe space and to serve LGBT youth and allies through my school. I also plan on creating a program that caters to LGBT homeless youth and that gives them access to our school showers and resources.

As long as I live here in San Diego I will do whatever I can to help my community. For long term and future endeavors, I plan on leaving the country and working with an NGO in India. Once I have my degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine I plan on offering free medical care to those in need in Vrindavana, India. I still plan on helping the LGBT community there as well. I will open my own clinic and employ and serve those in the Hijra or third gender community. My main goal for now and the future is to help other trans people live fearless lives of integrity with dignity and respect. My motto has always been to help the helpless and to defend the defenseless. Those guiding values will help me make the world a better place."

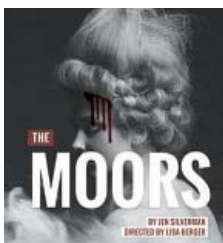
DURING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

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: www.lgbthistorymonth.com. Do you know which one of the U.S. presidents was gay?



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.

COMING SOON AT THE DIVERSIONARY



The Diversionary Theatre presents *The Moors* from **November 9- December 10**. Synopsis: Among the bleakest of moors, two spinster sisters dwell in their aggressively gloomy mansion with their brother, their mastiff and their maid-in-waiting. When a governess arrives, her presence threatens to unleash lethal secrets and raging desires in a home held together by lies and etiquette. A radical riff on 19th century romantic novels and the sisters who conceived them, *The Moors* is a riotous and wild comedy pulsating with vivid, macabre glee that has more in common with the present than the period.

The theatre is located at 4545 Park Blvd., in San Diego. For times and ticket info, visit diversionary.org or call 619-220-0097. Use Promo Code PFLAG for \$5 off.

NORTH COUNTY PRIDE BY THE BEACH



As always, this event was successful! Pictured are Mikayla Morris and Rylee Wilson

MOORE NEWS

In early 2016, anti-gay Alabama's chief justice, Roy Moore, ordered his state's probate judges to deny marriage licenses to same-sex couples because he did not believe that the Supreme Court's Obergefell v. Hodges decision applied to Alabama. A few months later, he finally gave up his fight, even though he still believed the Supreme Court made an error in that Alabama's marriage ban remained legitimate. In ending his interference, he threw out all challenges to marriage equality in Alabama, while at the same time making clear his displeasure with Obergefell, calling it a "lawless act" and same-sex relationships "immoral."

For his defiance, in late September, 2016, Moore was suspended from the bench, without pay, until his term ends in 2019. It seemed Moore had big plans in mind. He resigned in April, 2017 to pursue the vacant Alabama senate seat left by Attorney General Jeff Sessions. Although he didn't win the election outright (neither candidate received more than 50 percent of the votes), there was a runoff election and Moore won. Defeating his opponent entitles him to seek the senate seat against the Democratic candidate, Doug Jones and Independent candidate, Mac McBride. The general election is December 12. Fingers crossed.

YOU'LL BE IN YOUR ELEMENT

SAN DIEGO



WOMEN'S
CHORUS

The San Diego Women's Chorus invites you to join them as they wrap up their 30th anniversary season with *Elements*, an exploration of the interplay between nature and humanity. As they explain, earth, air, fire and water: we are bound to each of these in a multitude of ways as they influence us and we them, both literally and figuratively. These elements

make us who we are-- our fiery passions, our grounded strength, the flow of life's current, and the winds of change. From tranquil to turbulent, the eternal ebb and flow of the power of the elements is embodied in each and every life.

You will recognize familiar pop songs, choral compositions, and new works exploring the *Elements* theme. Song selections include "Come Sail Away" by Styx, "Dust in the Wind" by Kansas, Adele's "Skyfall," a mash-up of "I Love You" and "What a Wonderful World," and a Paul Cauldwell and Sean Ivory piece entitled "Lay Earth's Burden Down."

The performances are **Saturday, November 11** at 7:00 pm and **Sunday November 12** at 4:00 pm. You can purchase tickets at www.sdw.org for a mere \$25. The event is at University Christian Church, 3900 Cleveland Avenue, San Diego.

A HEARTFELT LETTER



Annette Ottone, PFLAG North County Coastal Regional Director, was one of the guest speakers at the County of San Diego Employees Resource Group's participation in National Coming Out Day. Annette read the following letter written by Olivia Ottone. She is the daughter of Annette and Remos and the 2012 recipient of the Raytheon STEM scholarship.

"Hi, Mom,

I think you know by now, but when the 17 year old version of myself came out to you and Dad, it had absolutely nothing to do with you. It was about me. I did it for me. I needed you to know, so that I could feel comfortable in my own skin and start being honest. My coming out was selfish and unapologetic, in a way that left little room for you to explore the information I dropped at your feet. I can never understand how you felt as a parent hearing your child admit the words, 'I'm gay.' All I know is what followed.

For a few months, I watched and felt us struggle as you tried to understand what I had wrestled with for the last three or so years. However, what I am so fortunate to be able to say is that it was always clear that the difficulty was in understanding – never in accepting. And we got past it. After I came out, you sought resources when your teenager didn't want to talk about my queerness and was less than forthcoming with information about how to be an ally. You did what I wish so many parents could do. You embraced your child's truth and took it upon yourself to be the thing that makes the world a more accepting place.

While I've been in Indiana, I've admired from afar how PFLAG has been woven into our family's and our friends' lives. You tell me stories about the conversations you have with other parents and students, and I see how wholly being an ally to the queer community has become a part of your identity; and, I wonder how I get to be the one who is so lucky. When you and Dad send pictures from San Diego Pride, or you tell me about new terminology you learned, or when I see you wearing rainbow earrings, I don't feel like an 'other' because somehow you out gay me. This is ridiculously cool.

But you know this. I think, at some point, you realized that your induction into the queer community as my mother was about more than my coming out to you because you have a voice and a platform inaccessible to me. The way I see it, straight allies have the opportunity to do something no one within the community can do. You have the ability to empathize with the straight and cis friends and family members of those within the LGBTQ+ community.

More importantly, you have your straight superpower. Your voice. Your perceived credibility. When you support the community people cannot dismiss you as simply being an advocate within the community sticking up for yourself. When you are a vocal, unapologetic ally, you demonstrate the ability of a straight person to embrace a cause, without necessarily reaping the direct benefits of your support. When you proudly declare yourself a PFLAG parent and offer yourself as an example and resource to those still trying to understand, you speak up for those who feel silenced.

This is so valuable. When I came out to you and Dad, I made arrangements to sleep elsewhere, just in case things didn't go well. Thank you for not making me default to my contingency plan. Thank you for actively working to morph our heteronormative culture into one in which people who don't match the standard don't have to be fearful. Thank you for being an ally, not just to me, but to the entire queer community. I know you sometimes say you're just being a "mama bear," but you know as well as I do that this is more than that.

Thank you. I have one more thing to say – because I know you are reading this to an audience. Everyone, take a page out of my mom's book. You don't have to be perfect or well informed to be a great ally; you just have to be committed to educating yourself and supporting the queer people in your life. Use your superpower, damn it.

Mom, I love you. I cannot thank you enough for all you do.

Over & Out,

Olivia"

TRANSGENDER AWARENESS WEEK & DAY OF REMEMBRANCE



From **November 14–20**, individuals and organizations around the country will participate in Transgender Awareness Week to help raise the visibility of transgender and gender non-conforming people, and address the issues the trans community faces. The final day of Transgender Awareness Week is the Transgender Day of Remembrance, an annual observance on **November 20** that honors the memory of those whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence. People who were perceived to be transgender or who are gender variant are among those being remembered. Please join the San Diego LGBT Center in remembering these individuals at a march that begins at The Center (3909 Centre Street in Hillcrest) at 6:00 pm. A program will follow at 7:00 pm at The Center.

AND THE BEAT GOES ON...

The latest “directive” from Attorney General Sessions goes like this: “The government must do as much as possible to accommodate those who claim their religious freedoms are being violated.” Never mind that it undercuts federal protections for LGBT people.

Trump pledged to his evangelical supporters that he would protect religious liberties, effectively lifting a burden from religious objectors to prove that their beliefs about marriage or other topics are sincerely held. Under the new policy, a claim of a violation of religious freedom would be enough to override many anti-discrimination protections for LGBT people, women and others. This is a signal to the rest of these agencies to rethink the protections they have put in place on sexual orientation and gender identity. The DOJ made it clear that this direction tilted the balance very far in favor of people of faith who do not want to recognize same-sex marriage. The small nugget on this is that experts on religious liberty are calling these sweeping changes a legal powder-keg that could prompt wide-ranging lawsuits against the government.

Claim Sessions, “Except in the narrowest circumstances, no one should be forced to choose between living out his or her faith and complying with the law. To the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law, religious observance and practice should be reasonably accommodated in all government activity.” Not only does the administration want to give federal agencies a license to discriminate, but this lays the groundwork for legal positions that the Trump administration intends to take in future religious freedom cases, envisioning sweeping protections for faith-based beliefs and practices in private workplaces, at government jobs and even in prisons. That the government is already exacerbating the fact that more than 50 percent of Americans live in an area of the U.S. where LGBTQ people are at risk being fired, evicted, or denied services because of who they are — and two-thirds of LGBTQ people report having faced such discrimination in their lives. Now they get to make it worse.

Here is part of what this directive will do: A Social Security Administration employee could refuse to accept or process spousal or survivor benefits paperwork for a surviving same-sex spouse; A federal contractor could refuse to provide services to LGBTQ people, including in emergencies, without risk of losing federal contracts; Agencies receiving federal funding, and even their individual staff members, could refuse to provide services to LGBTQ children in crisis, or to place adoptive or foster children with a same-sex couple or transgender couple simply because of who they are.

USA IS AGAINST G.A.Y.

Just when you think the “government” can’t be any more anti-LGBTQ, they strike again. Remember when candidate Trump promised to defend LGBTQ rights?

The United Nations Human Rights Council’s motion was entitled “The Question of the Death Penalty.” Isn’t putting “Human Rights Council” and Death Penalty together a bit of an oxymoron? The motion called for countries where the death penalty is legal to ensure it is not imposed in a manner that is “arbitrarily or in a discriminatory manner” or for forms of conduct such as apostasy, blasphemy, adultery and consensual homosexual relations.

Shamefully, the United States was one of 13 nations, including some of the most repressive nations on Earth, to vote against the resolution which condemned the death penalty. The other opposing nations were Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Qatar, Japan, the United Arab Emirates, Bangladesh, China, India, Egypt, Ethiopia, Qatar, Botswana, and Burundi. There were 27 countries for the motion and seven abstentions.

The excuses for the vote were not only lame, some of them were untruth that were put out by the UN Ambassador, Nikki Haley.

Director of HRC Global, Ty Cobb, put out this statement, “Ambassador Haley has failed the LGBTQ community by not standing up against the barbaric use of the death penalty to punish individuals in same-sex relationships. While the U.N. Human Rights Council took this crucially important step, the Trump/Pence administration failed to show leadership on the world stage by not championing this critical measure. This administration’s blatant disregard for human rights and LGBTQ lives around the world is beyond disgraceful.”

MORE SHENANIGANS

Attorney General Jeff Sessions has formally determined that a 1964 federal civil rights law does not protect transgender workers from employment discrimination. The basis for this argument is, “Title VII’s prohibition on sex discrimination encompasses discrimination between men and women but does not encompass discrimination based on gender identity per se, including transgender status.” While he says this is not a policy, but a conclusion of the law, he said the DOJ will take this new position in all pending and future matters. Anti-LGBT employers could basically put a ‘Transgender Need Not Apply’ sign in their window.

Sessions stance is the opposite of reality. The National Center for Transgender Equality put out , a statement saying “Courts have repeatedly ruled that transgender people are protected by sex discrimination laws in employment, education, housing and healthcare. We’ll see him in court.”

LGBTQ LIBRARY NEWS

Below are events that are taking place in San Diego County libraries:

Vista Library • GSA (Genders & Sexualities Alliance, formerly known as Gay-Straight Alliance). Meets 1st Saturday of each month • 10 a.m. This is an opportunity to meet other LGBTQ youth and allies for fun, snacks, conversation, and a safe space. Ages 11-14. Info (760) 643-5100

Vista Library • LGBTQ Book Club meets the 4th Saturday of each month • 10:30 a.m. Join the group for lively talk and refreshments exploring books by, for, and about LGBTQIA people and communities. Bring your favorite titles to share. Info (760) 643-5100

Encinitas Library • Our Space meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month • 6-7:30 p.m. This is a chance to meet other LGBTQ and ally youth in a safe and friendly atmosphere to hang out, chat, and have some fun. Age range 13-18 years old. Just drop in! Info (760) 753-7376

San Marcos Library • Our Space meets the 2nd Saturday of each month • 9:30-11 a.m. You can join this support group for LGBTQIA middle schoolers. Info: (760) 891-3000

Alpine Library • Our Space meets the 2nd Friday of each month • 4-5 p.m. You're invited to this LGBTQ social hour, where you can meet new friends and hang out in a safe space. Info (619) 445-4221

Imperial Beach Library GSA (Genders & Sexualities Alliance, formerly known as Gay-Straight Alliance). Meets every Friday • 2:35 p.m. A safe, fun, open, accepting place to chat, hang out, and be yourself! Info (619) 424-6981



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