



THE NEWSLETTER

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THE PLAY'S THE THING



Please join us for our general meeting on **Monday, July 22** at 7:00 pm at Jewish Family Service (JFS), 8788 Balboa Avenue, San Diego. **PLEASE NOTE, WE MEET ON THE 4TH MONDAY OF THE MONTH, NOT JULY 29.**

Our guest speaker is Anthony Methvin from the Diversionary Theatre. The history of how the Diversionary came to be is very interesting and he will share that, education programs they offer, and the upcoming season.

Please join us for support groups, then the cookie social, followed by Anthony's presentation

EXPLORING GENDER. TOGETHER.

Exploring Gender. Together. is the theme of the Gender Odyssey conference being held in San Diego **August 1-4.**



Gender Odyssey is an international conference focused on the needs and interests of transgender and gender diverse children of all ages, their families and supporters, and the professionals who serve them.

The conference is packed with thought-provoking workshops, including medical information and consultation opportunities, professional education, discussion groups, networking, children and youth programming, and social events. This one-of-a-kind annual gathering attracts people from all over the world for an uplifting weekend of connection, support, and community.

Thanks in part to Executive Director, Kathie Moehlig of TransFamily Support Services (TFSS), San Diego will host this year's Gender Odyssey and serve as the on-the-ground team and co-producer. Kathie is also a PFLAG San Diego County Board member. As always, TFSS will be instrumental in networking with San Diego professionals, families, and youth; manifesting the people power needed for an event like this; and leading the outreach and accessibility efforts that are so crucial to Gender Odyssey's success. **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!** Dozens of folks are needed to pitch in to make the conference a success. Volunteers can sign up to be a session host, kids' camp, event set up/break down, registration and information to name a few. You can sign up at <https://bit.ly/2Jlq1HQ>. If you can serve conference volunteers lunch, you can sign up directly at <https://bit.ly/2LbEpEW>.

In addition to the volunteer opportunities listed above, host homes are needed for families traveling to San Diego. You can sign up on the website: <https://bit.ly/2YJjTyt>. Also, on the website, you can register for the event and check out all the programs that are happening throughout the conference. There are also some scholarships available. Youth and young adults from ages 13-22 do not have to pay a registration fee. When signing up, use code:TFSSyouth.

"DEAR ABBY, A GAY COUPLE IS MOVING IN ACROSS THE STREET. WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD?"

ABBY'S ANSWER WAS, 'YOU COULD MOVE!'"

BELLS OF THE BALL

That is not an understatement! The June 21 reception of the groundbreaking exhibition, LGBTQ+ San Diego: Stories of Struggles + Triumphs at the San Diego History Center shined the spotlight on the performance art of drag. This new exhibit is entitled, "Legendary Drag Queens of San Diego!" The highlight of the evening was the grand staircase entrance of the fabulous drag queens. **The exhibit will remain there through September 8.** The History Center is in Balboa Park at 1649 El Prado, cattycorner from The National History Museum.



POWAY PRIDE A SUCCESS

People came from all over – not just Poway and North County to celebrate the 2nd Annual Pride Resource Fair at the Poway Branch Library. There was something for everyone: entertainment, an open mic session, art exhibition, and an all-ages craft. Thanks to TransFamily Support Services, PFLAG San Diego County, North County LGBTQ Resource Center, Lambda Archive, Stonewall Citizens' Patrol, and Kaiser Medicare.



Kate Molloy Budd, Stephanie York and Miko Uluru

STEP ON UP!



Evan Hilliard is the recipient of the **John Bessemer Memorial Scholarship**. He is presently a student at San Diego Mesa College, majoring in Health Information Technology. His ultimate goal is to become a licensed clinical social worker and advocate for the trans community. Evan is the

epitome of a role model who has vastly overcome many odds against him. As stated in his letter of recommendation, Evan “is highly motivated and has a strong work ethic...he exemplifies professionalism and compassion.”

“I am a 29-year-old transgender man who is diagnosed with drug addiction, schizoaffective disorder, and PTSD. In many ways, my life can be described by just reading the DSM 5

(Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders), just not 100% accurately. I can be easily labeled and profiled as a misfit or eccentric by my symptoms or otherness, but they don't really tell the whole story. What cannot be easily seen to those who only dig shallowly is how many times life has knocked me down and how many times I have made the choice to get back up. No one forced me to live my truth when I came out as trans. I made that choice. No one forced me into recovery when I hit bottom. I made that choice. No one forced me to see a therapist or psychiatrist when life became complicated due to hallucinations and panic attacks.

I made that choice. I have had an amazing life by accepting the beauty that is derived from personal freedom.

But I have not gotten to where I am in a vacuum. I have had many role models to guide me. I had a very special sponsor in AA who always reminded me when I was down that by getting through my hardships, I can help others get through theirs. He would tell me my suffering would never be in vain. He told me I would be in tune with others' suffering and be able to help lead them out of it. I knew it was true because that's what he was doing for me. He always knew what to say because he had been where I was.

This past year I have gotten the chance to volunteer at the Live and Let Live Alano Club. This LGBTQ+ nonprofit recovery club has served the recovery community since 1984. Over 40,000 people attend the club annually. They host 12-step and other recovery meetings 365 days a year. They have a full-service coffee bar that has a very similar feel to a pub, but one that doesn't serve alcohol. Leave it to a peer-run organization, mostly full of recovering alcoholics, to give their safe space a pub-like feel.

I am a volunteer barista there every Sunday from 8 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. My basic duties include serving coffee, foaming lattes, blending iced mochas, cleaning bathrooms, taking out the trash, and answering the phone. But my favorite part of the job is meeting new members who may be trying to get sober for the first time. They tell me how they lost the faith of their friends and family because of their drinking and how they can't imagine their life without drinking. I tell them how I ruined the trust of my friends and family and how I have it back now because I am sober. They tell me they have a mental diagnosis and how it makes life too hard to even fathom not drinking. I tell them I have two mental diagnoses and how not drinking and using drugs has helped to keep my mind more stable. They tell me they are transgender and how society has treated them. I tell them I am transgender and they are not alone.



Not every conversation has an easy solution and some just involve me listening more than talking, but they all play a powerful role in my life. I see time and time again that my suffering has never gone to waste, nor have my successes. They make up my wisdom and empathy. By sharing my time, I am someone else's guide for a small part of their journey. Recovering drug addicts and alcoholics are often ostracized and shamed. This is true for people with mental illnesses, too. Others often make assumptions that we can't function in society. This is a lie. I am proof this is a lie. My 3.8 GPA is proof this is a lie. My professors' respect is proof this is a lie. The love of my family and friends is proof this is a lie. Facing every challenge I have been given with some semblance of grace is proof this is a lie. My future is proof this is a lie as well.

I see myself changing the world in the future, by not only achieving my career and educational goals as a trans, black, mentally ill, recovering man, but also by achieving my spiritual goals. Being a member of society when society shut the door on me is the easy part. The hard part is not becoming jaded from constantly being told what my limits are. The hard part is lifting the heavy veil of doubt off others, so they can see they are limitless, too. It comes down to personal choice again. Do I feed the bad wolf or the good wolf? For the sake of someone who may need to identify with what I have suffered from, I choose the good wolf today. I am a misfit and the most radical thing I have ever done with my life is be the best me I can be, and encourage others to do the same. This is the world I want to see. I want to be surrounded by people choosing their light as well as passing it on to the next unlit wick. I will continue to change the world, one person at a time.”

QUEER SUMMER SCHOOL

Camp Lightbulb is offering a week of summer school in Los Angeles for queer teens ages 16-18, **July 29-August 3**. "Classes" include gender neutral make up, themed parties, beach boxing self-defense, gay history, cookout, bonfire, and happiness workshop. This is the first year the organization is offering this. Camp Lightbulb was founded in 2011 as one of the very first summer camps for LGBTQ youth anywhere, celebrating the campers in a happy and safe environment. Their campers come from across the U.S. and identify along the full LGBTQ spectrum. The fee is on a sliding scale. To register: camlightbulb.org

WHAT DID ARTHUR EVER DO TO YOU?

A Republican member of Congress is trying to de-fund PBS for airing an episode of "Arthur" that featured a same-sex wedding. The long-running children's cartoon started its 22nd season in May with an episode that showed the characters' teacher, Mr. Ratburn, marrying another man.

Representative Doug Lamborn (R-CO) introduced legislation to end funding for PBS and National Public Radio (NPR), citing the "Arthur" episode of evidence that PBS is "offensive to many conservatives and religious taxpayers. Enough is enough. PBS has offended many conservative and religious taxpayers who do not want the children inculcated with liberal viewpoints on sensitive topics."

Alabama's public television network also decided not to run the same episode of Arthur. The show normally aired on PBS-affiliate Alabama Public Television, but they decided the audience was too young to know that gay people exist so they ran another program that must not have offended anyone.

And, One Million Moms had to get into the act by introducing a petition immediately saying viewers are "outraged" by the "offensive" cartoon that "would glorify the homosexual lifestyle. PBS Kids should not introduce this to young children. Just because an issue may be legal or because some are choosing a lifestyle doesn't make it morally correct. PBS Kids should stick to entertaining and providing family-friendly programming, instead of pushing an agenda."



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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, Pilgrim UCC, 2020 Chestnut Avenue, Carlsbad.

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

NORTH COUNTY INLAND

Meets 2nd & 4th Tuesdays from 6:30-8:30 pm
St. Bart's Church, 16275 Pomerado Road, Poway.

Jill/Dan: 760-855-9424 | RBPowaypflagsdc@pflag.com

EAST COUNTY

Meets the 3rd Tuesday from 6:00-7:30 pm, El Cajon Library, 201 E. Douglas Avenue, El Cajon.

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

SOUTH BAY

Meets 3rd Monday from 7:00-8:00 pm, South Bay Youth Center, 1180 Third Avenue, Suite C1, Chula Vista.

Patti: 619-227-6092 | pboman@pflag.com

RAMONA

FOR JULY ONLY: Meets the 3rd Tuesday (July 16),

St. Mary's in the Valley, 1010 12th Street, Ramona.

Carlee: 757-448-5640 | Ramonapflagsdc@pflag.com

POWAY LGBTQ YOUTH SUPPORT/HIGH SCHOOL

Meets 2nd & 4th Tuesdays from 6:30-8:30 pm
St. Bart's Church, 16275 Pomerado Road, Poway.

Al: 858-382-2262 | al@transfamilysos.org

OUR SPACE-POWAY--LGBTQIA/MIDDLE SCHOOL

Meets 2nd & 4th Tuesdays from 6:30-8:30 pm, St. Bart's Church, 16275 Pomerado Road, Poway. Facilitated by youth.

Al: 858-382-2262 | al@transfamilysos.org

MI FAMILIA (Spanish) NEW LOCATION

Meets 2nd Monday from 6:00-7:30 pm, South Bay Youth Center, 1180 Third Avenue, Suite C1, Chula Vista.

Patti: 619-227-6092 | pboman@pflag.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

THEY'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!

Cracker Barrel restaurant has had their share of discriminatory practices revealed, but seems to have gotten their house in order. They will not host a church event put on by Grayson Fritts, a Tennessee preacher for All Scripture Baptist Church. Fritts is an ex-Knox County sheriff's detective. In his sermon two weeks before Pride, he told his congregation he believes federal, state and county governments should arrest, try, convict and "speedily" execute people within the LGBTQ community.

The Tennessee-based eatery tweeted that they are not affiliated with the church and they "disagree strongly with their hate and divisiveness. We serve everyone who walks through our doors with genuine hospitality, not hate, and require all guests to do the same." said the statement.

CUTER THAN CUTE

Ellie Harwood, granddaughter of long-time PFLAG member, Bobbi Harwood, was all decked out for the Pride Parade in Philadelphia. This is cute and activism all rolled into one!



THE MUSIC OF CHER

Get ready for the most fun show of the summer! San Diego Gay Men's Chorus presents the fabulous music of Cher. There are two shows: **Saturday, July 27** at 8:00 pm and **Sunday, July 28** at 3:00 pm.

The chorus will be singing a nothing-held-back Cher show featuring her iconic hits belted to the high heavens in tribute to the legendary diva. From the early days of "I Got You Babe" to "If I Could Turn Back Time," capped with her scene-stealing "Fernando" from Mamma Mia 2!

The concerts are at the Balboa Theatre, 868 Fourth Avenue, downtown San Diego. For tickets, go to www.sdgmc.org.

THANK YOU

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