



ISSUE VOLUME

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JUNE 2011
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2011 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS (CONT. PAGE 5)

Please join us for our 13th Annual San Diego Chapter Scholarship Awards presentation on **Monday, June 27** at 7:00 pm at the First United Methodist Church, 2231 Camino del Rio South in Mission Valley. Doors open at 6:45 pm. After the presentation, please join us for refreshments, provided by Raytheon Company. This includes sparkling cider to toast our winners. Support groups will follow.

We are most pleased to announce that we are awarding seven scholarships this year, ranging from \$1,000-2000 to LGBT college or college bound students:

Eleventh year: the Mary Wagner Memorial Scholarship. This was established for Mary Wagner by her partner, Sharon Murphy, and friends

Marilyn and Art Carpenter. Mary was an elementary school teacher.

Tenth year: the John Bessemer Memorial Scholarship. The memory of John Bessemer is honored with the PFLAG-funded scholarship. John was a dedicated PFLAG dad and husband of past president Linda Bessemer.

Sixth year: the Rob Benzon Memorial Scholarship. This is being presented by the Rob Benzon Foundation in memory of Rob, who died in a tragic swimming accident at age 31.

Fourth year: the Stephen G. Bowersox Memorial Scholarship. Stephen's parents chose to honor Stephen with a scholarship in his memory. Stephen was a past PFLAG scholarship recipient and gay rights activist.



PRIDE AROUND THE WORLD (CONT. PAGE 4)

Although Pride Weekend isn't until **July 15-17**, we wanted to give you the scoop early because it may be a close call getting the newsletter to you on time.

This year marks the 37th Annual Pride Celebration; San Diego has the fifth largest Pride Parade in the nation.

The festivities start out on Friday evening, **July 15**, with the Spirit of Stonewall Awards and Rally from 6:00-8:00 pm. This takes place on the main stage at the festival site in Balboa Park at 6th and Juniper. This free event features inspirational

speakers and honors recipients of the 2011 Spirit of Stonewall Awards, which awards non-LGBT persons and organizations that have made a significant, positive impact on San Diego's LGBT community.

Next up is the pièce de résistance:

The Pride Parade! This takes place on Saturday, **July 16**, beginning at 11:00 am. The route is 1.5 miles. If you have never marched in San Diego's parade, you are in for a real treat. Besides all the excitement of the event, the crowd goes crazy when PFLAG passes by. There are upwards of 150,000 spectators. And

speaking of walking 1.5 miles, if you cannot walk that distance and want to ride in the parade, please contact Karen Thompson immediately. There are a limited number of cars/spots; space is limited. Karen can be reached at 858-842-7005 or kthompson64@cox.net.

After the Parade, and continuing on Sunday, is the Pride Festival which includes multiple stages of entertainment, more than 80 musicians, bands, comedy and dance performers, 300 participating vendor booths, an art exhibit, cultural presentations, and great food!

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Membership forms available at www.pflag.com

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Current Events

June 20

Monday

Mi Familia Support Group

June 25

Saturday

Frida Kahlo Birthday
Celebration (see article)

June 27

Monday

San Diego PFLAG General
Meeting & Support Groups

June 27

Monday

Mi Familia Support Group

July 11

Monday

PFLAG Support Group
North County Coastal

July 11

Monday

Mi Familia Support Group

July 14

Thursday

North County Inland

July 14

Thursday

**PFLAG Support
Group**

North County Inland

July 15-17

Friday-Sunday

Pride Weekend
festivities (see article)

SUPPORT GROUPS

SD COUNTY GENERAL MEETING AND SUPPORT GROUP

Meets every fourth Monday at 7:00 pm, at the First United Methodist Church, 2231 Camino del Rio South in Mission Valley.

NORTH COUNTY COASTAL

Meets the first Monday, at 7:00 pm, First Presbyterian Church, 2001 El Camino Real, Oceanside (in the choir room, located on the SE corner of the campus). The church is located 1 mile north of the 78 on the corner of Fire Mountain (Skyline Drive) and El Camino Real, across the street from the Eternal Hills Cemetery.

Contact Larry Gerling, (760) 224-2178.

NORTH COUNTY INLAND

Meets every second Thursday, at 7:00 pm, Temple Adat Shalom, 15905 Pomerado Road, Room #9, Poway (Rancho Bernardo). The entrance to parking is directly across the street from the entrance to Henry's Market Center. Drive to the end of the building and bear right around it, to the first doors on your right (double doors).

Contact Sue Fine, (858) 673-4560 or
pflag4sdnocnty@san.rr.com.

EAST COUNTY

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

Contact Ron Goetz, (619) 588-2342 or
whytestonne@hotmail.com.

MI FAMILIA (Spanish)

Meetings are every Monday from 6:00pm - 8:00 pm at The Center.

Contact Carolina, (619) 692-2077 Ext. 116.

TRANSGENDER SUPPORT

For more information on the Transgender Support Group

Contact Kathe Dunn, ftm_mom@yahoo.com.

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

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.

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



Equality is the soul of liberty,
there is, in fact, no liberty
without it.

Frances Wright

LONG BEACH PRIDE



Mark Thompson and Phyllis Van Wanseele are dedicated PFLAGers. They woke up at dawn to drive to Long Beach for their Pride Parade. As pictured, they marched with South Orange County PFLAG. Their parade is similar to San Diego's with the number of floats; however, San Diego's crowds are larger!

2011 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Fourth year: The San Diego Human Dignity Foundation is providing the scholarship from the John McCusker Memorial Fund. John was active in the gay community who died suddenly at age 31 of congestive heart failure.

Third year: the Mac McWhorter Memorial Scholarship. Mac was a PFLAG dad.

His wife, our own Louise McWhorter, honors his memory with the scholarship.

First year: the San Diego Chapter of Raytheon GLBTA Scholarship. This will be awarded to an LGBT student pursuing the STEM field (science, technology, engineering or math).

PRIDE AROUND THE WORLD (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

There is also a Farmers Market, Beer Garden, Cool Zone for the 55+ gang, Youth Zone, Children's Garden, and most important is our PFLAG booth located on the main drag. The festival is located at Marston Point at 6th and Juniper. Saturday evening ends at 10:00 pm and Sunday runs from 11:00 am-8:00 pm. **Admission for the festival is \$15 for one day and \$25 for a two day pass if you purchase your tix online before June 30** (go to www.sdpride.org to purchase). They can be purchased at the festival for \$20 (one day) or \$30 (two day).

Here comes the lecture part. For the Pride Parade on Saturday, read this BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME! These are suggestions that have stood the rest of time:

1) get to the shuttle buses early; there are free shuttle buses from the old Balboa Naval Hospital located on Park Blvd. across from President's Way. If you

usually are a last minute Lucy, don't be, as the buses back up and you'll be waiting in line forever and a day,
2) wear comfortable shoes,
3) put lots of sun block on,
4) wear a hat,
5) bring a camera,
6) make PFLAG signs and bring them,
7) wear as much PFLAG clothing and paraphernalia as you own.

Most likely we will not know the location of our contingency until a week before the parade. Ditto for knowing what number we are in the parade. We will be sending out an email as soon as we know. If you do not have email, when you get off the bus, you can ask at the information booth located at University Avenue and Normal Street.

Hope to see your decorated selves and signs at the Parade!

SHAME ON TRACY MORGAN (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

At one of his comic routines on a Nashville stage, in Tracy Morgan's homophobic repertoire, he called gay people "mistakes," said lesbians just hate men and don't have real attraction to women, and advised gays to "quit being pussies" and stop whining about bullying in schools. Morgan also said he would "pull out a knife and stab" his own son for being gay, that being gay is a choice, and that it is something that kids learn from the media. He did apologize for the remarks, saying,

"While I am an equal opportunity jokester, and my friends know what is in my heart, even in a comedy club this clearly went too far and was not funny in any context." However, his apology hasn't satisfied the gay rights groups that demanded an explanation, and his coworkers are lining up in rebuke.

Tina Fey, producer and costar on Morgan's sitcom 30 Rock has released a statement to TMZ. "The violent imagery of



A FEELING OF PRIDE AND HOPE

The Harvey Milk Diversity Breakfast was an uplifting and exhilarating event attended by many PFLAGers: Barbara Bodine, Patti Boman, Karen and Mark Thompson, Phyllis Van Wanseele, Terrie Vorono, Kim Martinez, and Sherry Cohen-Richards. There were over 1000 LGBT and LGBT supporters in attendance. Once again, San Diego was graced with the presence of Stuart Milk, Harvey's nephew who established The Harvey B. Milk Foundation. Several awards were presented. The Equality Award went to author Cheryl Kilodavis, whose book, *My Princess Boy*, was written as a message of acceptance to her son's teachers and classmates since son, Dyson, liked to wear frilly dresses and ballet tutus. Ms. Kilodavis was featured in our February newsletter. The Leadership Award was presented to the San Diego Unified School District for implementing a Safe Schools

Task Force and for voting unanimously in support of a Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation Prohibition. As we asked you to support the creation of a Harvey Milk stamp. The Imperial Court Council and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force created a letter writing campaign to lobby the U.S. Postal Service to honor Harvey Milk with a commemorative national stamp. This stamp would serve to further remind Americans that by honoring Harvey Milk, you honor a true American hero and champion of civil rights for all people. Write to: Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, c/o Stamp Development, U.S. Postal Service, 1735 North Lynn St., Suite 5013, Arlington, VA 22209-6432. For additional information and a sample letter, please email harveymilkstampdir@cox.net.

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

"NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2011 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month. I call upon the people of the United States to eliminate prejudice everywhere it exists, and to celebrate the great diversity of the American people."

SHAME ON TRACY MORGAN (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

Tracy's rant was disturbing to me at a time when homophobic hate crimes continue to be a life-threatening issue for the GLBT Community," Fey said.

NBC Chairman Bob Greenblatt claims the network has already warned Morgan about the outburst, saying, "Tracy's comments reflect negatively on both 30 Rock and NBC – two very all-inclusive and diverse organizations – and we have made it clear to him that this kind of behavior will not be tolerated."

The Human Rights Campaign issued a statement saying the 30 Rock star "did the right thing by apologizing," but "that's just not enough." On its blog, Truth Wins Out said, "We are glad that he recognizes that he hurt and offended people. However, questions remain." PFLAG Executive Director Jody Huckaby called for "meaningful action to prove the sincerity of that apology" and condemned Morgan for joking about violence "when kids are being assaulted, are dying."

PFLAG PERSPECTIVE: TRAINS, BRIDGES AND SUICIDE (CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

by Mark Thompson

Note: Mark is past co-president and is currently the treasurer of our San Diego PFLAG chapter. This article first appeared [Jess – trying to find this out](#)

I was riding the train north recently, when we pulled to a stop in the middle of nowhere. We found out the train had hit someone. A passenger went forward to talk to a conductor and came back with the story.

A young woman had been up ahead, too close to the tracks. The engineer lay on the whistle, but the train was too big and too fast to stop. As the train neared, the woman walked back and forth across the tracks, as if trying to decide. At the last moment, she jumped.

We try to understand suicide, but mostly from the outside looking in. Studies and websites abound that lay out the statistics, explore motivations, define for us the warning signs. Always the question comes down to: what can we do?

As someone who has suffered from depression for years, I can attest to the dark spiral that can lead to hopelessness and thoughts of suicide.

We all can recognize the irrevocable nature of suicide from the outside; but from the inside, in the grip of despair, it's not our thoughts -- but a force -- that can push us toward escape, relief, and resolution.

Amazingly, moments after a depression lifts, we say, "Wow, what a crazy idea. I'm so grateful I didn't act on that." In that instant of turning away from the irrevocable, a whole future -- a life -- is saved.

That's why it is important to recognize when someone may be contemplating suicide, and how we can help. We may be building a bridge for that person, to the rest of their life.

LGBT kids have extraordinary challenges

in this regard, which came into focus last year after a number of tragic losses were made public. Among them Justin Aaberg, the target of anti-gay bullying; Billy Lucas, the target of a "sustained campaign of bullying"; Seth Walsh, who hung himself after years of bullying; Tyler Clementi of Rutgers, after a callous outing on the web.

The statistics about suicide and our youth are daunting. Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for 10-14-year-olds and the 3rd for the 15-19 age groups in San Diego County. Over one-in-ten San Diego City Schools students (13.9%) recently reported they seriously considered suicide.

For LGBT kids the numbers are even higher. I found three widely-cited studies that found LGBT youth more likely to consider suicide.

One study found that perceived discrimination accounted for increased symptoms of depression among LGBT males and females and accounted for an elevated risk of self-harm.

A Journal of Pediatrics study (cited on CNN Health's "The Chat" by Jennifer Bixler), found LGB youth living in unsupportive areas are 20% more likely to commit suicide than those living in supportive environments.

The San Diego City Schools program has identified a number of risk factors that can increase the likelihood of suicide. These include personal loss, depression, discrimination, rejection due to gender identity, bullying, school performance, family and relationship issues.

We can all relate to the difficulties of growing up and the tragedies that can overturn our lives. But the LGBT community understands well the added pressures of discrimination, rejection, and bullying.

A GLSEN study last summer indicated nine-of-ten LGBT youth experienced

PFLAG PERSPECTIVE: TRAINS, BRIDGES AND SUICIDE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

by Mark Thompson

harassment. Bullying was the common thread running through the suicides of last year.

A response has taken shape here locally.

The school board for San Diego City Schools approved an historic anti-bullying policy on April 12 which will be rolled out in the next school year. At the same time they endorsed Seth's Law (AB9) which requires all California schools to adopt bully-prevention policies.

There are also good programs that include 24/7 help lines. These include the San Diego City Schools program crisis line (1-800-479-3339).

The Trevor Project also provides life-saving and life-affirming resources including a nationwide crisis intervention lifeline, and digital community and advocacy/educational programs that create a safe environment. Their 24/7 toll free number is 866-488-7386. Chat and referrals to local resources are available at thetrevorproject.org.

Dan Savage and his partner Terry Miller recently started the "It Gets Better Project," (itgetsbetter.org) with video clips from scores of people, famous and anonymous, talking about life after high school, and how it gets better.

But what do we do as individuals? What about a moment that crystallizes, where you realize someone you know may be contemplating suicide? I felt helpless on a train, but there are a couple things I took away with me that I hope help me be ready to hand in the future.

One is to be aware of warning signs. These include a person talking about killing him/herself; seeking lethal means; acting recklessly; depression; talking/writing/artwork about suicide or death; neglect in personal appearance; dramatic mood changes; personality changes; withdrawal; anxiety, agitation, anger; or giving away possessions.

Two is to reach out. Take the person seriously. Stay with the person. Listen. Call a program number right away so trained helpers can take over.

This may involve a change of pace in this busy life of ours. We can be too much like the train, going too fast to stop. When someone comes up with the warning signs of suicide, it's time to stop before it is too late.

IT DOES GET BETTER

In Mark Thompson article PFLAG Perspective: Trains, Bridges, and Suicide, he mentioned the "It Gets Better Project." The San Francisco Giants became the first major league sports team to become part of this project when they recorded a video in support of LGBT youth. Many hoped the video would spur other Major League Baseball teams into action; and now, those hopes have come to fruition.

After the Giants' participation, came the Cubs, Red Sox and the Seattle Mariners. While the National Basketball

Association is not a part of this project, they have produced supportive commercials and showed them during the basketball play-offs. One of the first teams to do so were the Phoenix Suns. It's possible that the commercial inspired Rick Welts, president and CEO of the Phoenix Suns, to come out publicly.

There are very few athletes who come out while they are playing their sport. Hopefully, the pro-gay commercials will help them to come out of the closet.



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