



Heart Beat

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays



PFLAG Olympia, Washington

Issue 60 Nov.-Dec.. 2003

Fears of holiday season

by Casey Kilduff

With the holidays approaching and the year coming to an end, I am overwhelmed by the same fear and anxiety that I feel every year around this time. It's ironic, most of this country gets excited and happy about the holiday season. Radio, television, magazines, and street corners are littered with ads about sales and must-haves. Kids write up gift lists, meals are cooked all day long, strangers smile at you on the street, yet for some of us, the holidays mean "family-time".

For me, being queer means that I get to identify my "family-of-choice." It also means that I leave my family-of-choice at home when I visit my blood relatives. When I came into this world, my parents loved me unconditionally. They still do, for the most part; although, they really don't know much about me. My mother told me, when I came out to her, that I was not to tell my father. That was almost five years ago. I haven't said a word since. Every year, I visit my parents for the winter holidays, and every year since I came out to my mother, I have had to hide my intimate relationships when visiting.

What is it that tells us to hide, rather

than risk pain, shame, embarrassment, or isolation? Why is it easier to believe that we will not be met with love and kindness? I believe in love, don't get me wrong. My family-of-choice consists of four cats, a dog and a partner. We do not have children, we do not live in the same home, but we love each other. What is it about love that some people do not understand, or refuse to believe in? Or fear?

I am lucky that I have friends who care about me, who cherish my life, and who challenge me to be proud of who I am. Someday I hope to cross that bridge with my family. I know that I will not be whole until I do. I guess it's the fear of the unknown or the fear that they will hate or disown me that prevents me from showing them who I truly am.

This holiday season, while we are celebrating, with family, relatives, nobody, whomever, I hope that we will cherish what we have, wherever we have love. It is something that each of us wants and needs and often do not have. So while my outlook on the holiday season may be a little cynical, I still value the places where I do find support, love, and safety.



▼ SUNDAY, NOV. 9, 2-4:30 PM

Annual Meeting — Elections & Super Support

The November meeting is our annual business meeting. We will elect new board members and get an update from the board on the newly amended by-laws. We will use any other time for our Super Support open discussion time.

▼ SUNDAY, DEC. 14, 2-4:30 PM

Points of Light

This powerful and moving celebration was begun three years ago and has since become our holiday season tradition. A table is filled with candles. As we are moved to do so, we can light a candle and share something about a person or event we are honoring that has been point of light in our lives over the past year.

In the beginning

Very few current members know how and when PFLAG-Olympia started. Our "founding father" was an Evergreen student named Bryan Kirkpatrick. His parents had been PFLAG members on the East Coast. At Coming Out Day in Sylvester Park, in October 1992, Bryan circulated a sign-up sheet for people who would be interested in starting a local chapter. Only two people signed it: Evonne Hedgepeth, a sexuality educator, and her husband, Andrew McMillan, an ecology activist.

An exploratory meeting was held, and longtime co-presidents Paul and Betty Beeman assumed the leadership of the fledgling group. The first general meeting was held on Valentine's Day 1993.

Buy PFLAG-Olympia Gear

with the "Been Out Lately" graphic from our billboard campaign

t-shirts ~ sweat shirts
coffee mugs ~ mouse pads
BBQ aprons ~ tile coasters
canvas tote bags ~ boxer shorts



Buy yours now on the web at

http://www.cafeshops.com/pflag_oly



PFLAG

Olympia, Washington

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

MEETS at 2PM on the second Sunday of each month in The Gathering Place parlor of First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE, at Boundary Street, Olympia. It is handicap-accessible.

DIRECTIONS: From Sylvester Park on Capitol Way and Legion Way, go 12 blocks east on Legion Way to Boundary Street. Turn left around the church. Park in side lot at 5th Avenue and Boundary, and enter upper front door. Meeting place is across the lobby.

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Letters, articles and requests for literature are welcome.

Mailing address:

PO Box 12732; Olympia, WA 98508-2732

*For information or to discuss personal matters with an understanding parent and experienced PFLAG member, CALL the PFLAG-Olympia HELPLINE:
(360) 866-0511*

Email: info@pflag-olympia.org
Website: <http://www.pflag-olympia.org>

News from the board by Alec Clayton

It's November and time for our annual business meeting and the election of new board members who will take office at the first board meeting in January.

Board members are limited to two, two-year terms. Gabi Clayton and Shirley Pearson have served their terms and will be stepping down. Myra Barker has had to step down due to conflicts with her job. We want to thank them for their service to the chapter.

A nominating committee made up of Alec Clayton, Mike Walsh, Teri Yount and Tina Roose has selected a new slate of board members. They are: Mandy Simmons, Steve Jorgenson, Jay Michael Becker, Julianne Wasilausky, Virgil Clarkson and Brianne Pearson.

Current board members who will continue to serve out their terms are: Alec Clayton, David Walddon, Bekah Cardwell, Evelyn Hinken, Jeff Loyer, Casey Kilduff and Barb Klein.

Over the past three months, the board has been working on revised by-laws, which were voted on and unanimously approved at the last board meeting. Major changes include provisions on who may serve on the board — specifically, doing away with provisions regarding sexual orientation and the requirement that the president be a parent. Changes will be summarized and discussed at the November meeting, and a copy of the by-laws will be available for those who want to see it.

NEW or RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP

Please check the membership types you prefer:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Educator \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/Student/Low Income \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal |

Active (attend when I can) or Supporting (seldom attend)

Membership \$ _____

Add this amount as my tax-exempt gift \$ _____

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AND GIFT \$ _____

I want Olympia's bi-monthly newsletter *HeartBeat* (which is mailed in an envelope with no identified return address).

I want the national quarterly *PFLAGpole* newspaper (which is not mailed in an envelope).

DATE: _____ PHONE: _____

Signed _____

PRINT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PFLAG Olympia, P O Box 12732; Olympia, WA 98508-2732

PFLAG is a tax-exempt non-profit 501(c)(3) organization not affiliated with any political or religious institution.

The PFLAG Mission

To promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered 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.

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

HeartBeat is a free publication of the PFLAG chapter in Olympia, Washington, published six times a year. The editors are Alec & Gabi Clayton.

Unsolicited articles are welcome and are due by the 15th of even-numbered months. The editors reserve the right to reject or edit material.

The deadline for the next issue is 12/15/2003

Mail submissions to:
HeartBeat
P.O. Box 12732
Olympia, WA 98508-2732

Or email to: newsletter@pflag-olympia.org