



# HeartBeat

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays



PFLAG Olympia, Washington

Issue 73 Jan.-Feb. 2006

## We've come a long way, baby

by Alec Clayton

Here's hoping we have a fabulous new year. As we enter this sixth year of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, I think we can see full freedom and equality just over the horizon. Why heck, just this morning the daily paper carried an article about Elton John getting married to the love of his life, David Furnish. Last week that was not legally possible, and when John and Furnish first fell in love the possibility of them ever getting married was beyond imagination.

Meanwhile, here in Washington state the Supreme Court is still debating the constitutionality of same sex marriage (their long-overdue decision may or may not be announced by the time this article is printed).

The promised land may still be out of sight, but the journey taken in the last few years, when seen in historical perspective, has been fantastic. In my lifetime, it was just yesterday that homosexuality was illegal. Guys got their kicks by rolling queers back in the dark ages of the 1950s and '60s when I was growing up. I can remember some of the star football players at my high school bragging about it. What? You don't know what rolling queers is? That's when you flirt with a gay guy and entice him into following you to a secluded place, and beat the crap out of him and take his money. Back then the victims couldn't report the crime because they would be arrested for being queer. The victims would be thrown in jail where they were likely to be beaten again, and maybe raped. And the jailers would turn their backs. (Some would even join in the raping and beating.)

Back then virtually no one was out and no openly gay, lesbian or transgender person was safe anywhere. I can remember a drag queen who performed in one of Seattle's few gay bars telling me that the police waited outside the club and beat up the queers when they left.

That was not very long ago. And today some of that stuff still goes on. But at least the bigots are not so out in the open and their bigotry is not so acceptable as it was just a few years ago.

Today we celebrate Elton John's marriage to David Furnish. A mere two decades ago there was hardly a single out gay celebrity. Rock Hudson did not admit he was gay until 1985 when he was dying of AIDS. But a sea change in public attitudes began in 1997 when Ellen DeGeneres came out on national television and glbt people all over the world gathered together at coming out parties to watch the episode. Now we have "Queer Eye" and "The L Word" and "Queer As Folk" and "Will and Grace" and "Brokeback Mountain." Being queer is becoming mainstream. Yet sex between consenting adults of the same sex, in the privacy of their own homes, remained illegal until the Supreme Court overturned Texas' sodomy law in November 2003, and same sex unions — marriage or civil union — are legal in only two of the 50 states.

Locally, the Rainbow Center recently held an awards ceremony at the Urban Onion ballroom where scores of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender activists along with their friends and family were awarded for their work on behalf of equal civil rights. Many PFLAG members were there to receive recognition. It was a festive occasion in celebration of freedom and equality and a testament to how far this community has come. It is true: we've come a long way, baby. But — cliché or not — we've still got a long way to go.

To borrow a phrase from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we can see the promised land. We may not reach it today or tomorrow, but it is in sight.



▼ SUNDAY, JAN. 8, 2-4:30 PM

### United Community AIDS Network

Our guest speaker will be Michael Waggener from UCAN - United Community AIDS Network, <http://www.ucan-wa.org> a local organization that provides support services to people living with and at-risk for and HIV/AIDS, as well as education and prevention services. Michael will speak about "My own sordid tales of growing up gay, coming out to family and friends, and living with HIV and AIDS."

SUNDAY, FEB/ 12 , 2-4:30 PM

### Patrick Chapman

Dr. Patrick Chapman, a professor of anthropology at South Puget Sound Community College, will speak on "what the Bible says, and doesn't say, about homosexuality." Chapman's book, *Thou Shalt Not Love*, which deals with the same subject, will be released in the spring of 2006.



### PFLAG-Olympia meeting format

2:00-2:30 p.m.	Introductions
2:30-2:40 p.m.	Announcements
2:40-3:15 p.m.	Support
3:15-3:30 p.m.	Social time/snacks
3:30-4:30 p.m.	Program (see above)

### PFLAG Parents come out in RJO

PFLAG parents Jeff and Betsey Loyer, Gib and Beth Rossing, and Penny Merrell tell their coming out stories in an article compiled and edited by Alec Clayton in the January edition of *Rainbow Journal Olympia*.

RJO is a monthly online magazine sponsored by the Rainbow Center and edited by Anna Schlecht. The magazine carries articles on family, politics, the arts and entertainment from a glbt perspective. To read it, go to the Rainbow Center site at <http://www.rainbowcenteroly.org/> and click on "Rainbow Journal Olympia."

### PFLAG-OLYMPIA GEAR

t-shirts · sweat shirts  
coffee mugs · mouse pads  
BBQ aprons · coasters  
tote bags · boxer shorts



Buy yours now at  
[http://www.cafeshops.com/pflag\\_oly](http://www.cafeshops.com/pflag_oly)

### 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.

### 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  |

New  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.



## PFLAG Olympia, Washington

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

**MEETS** at 2PM on the second Sunday of each month at First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE, 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 the lot at 5th Avenue and Boundary and enter through the glass doors.

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](mailto:info@pflag-olympia.org)

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

*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 10th of even-numbered months. The editors reserve the right to reject or edit material.

**The deadline for the next issue is 2/15/2006**

Mail submissions to:

**HeartBeat  
P.O. Box 12732  
Olympia, WA 98508-2732**

Or email to: [newsletter@pflag-olympia.org](mailto:newsletter@pflag-olympia.org)