



HeartBeat

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays



PFLAG Olympia, Washington

Issue 79 Jan.-Feb. 2007

Another Generation Speaks!!

Earlier this year, near Pride day, I was asked about my son who just happens to be gay. At that same time I was asked if he would be able to speak at our celebration of Pride Day. My son resides in Seattle and was able to attend this year's celebration.

Each year elected officials are asked to speak a few words during Pride Celebration Day and this year I chose to say a few words. I chose to speak in regards to my son Chad. He spoke also and he was well received as he had something to say, and he said it very well. I have the responsibility as board member to write an article for this month's newsletter, and I felt this may be a good time to ask him to participate once again. I hope you will read with appreciation what he is communicating.

Thank You, Virgil S. Clarkson

Progress takes Time, Patience, and Action

by Chad Clarkson

The issues of gay and lesbian individuals are also those of the community. Because an individual is gay, it doesn't erase the other characteristics that determine who they are, and how they're perceived. The acceptance of all people in the community will determine its opportunity for growth and respect throughout our society. Progress within the community takes time, patience, and action.

Many gay and lesbian individuals from smaller communities often move to the larger cities where there is an established gay community. There are outreach programs for youth and adults. A couple of examples are focus groups established for people of color, as well as for people living with HIV and/or AIDS. These services could be available anywhere. It doesn't matter if it's small town or big city as long as there's courage, desire, and action. In a community where a person can feel relatively safe and respected, why would anyone want to live, work, and support anyplace else that can't provide the basic fundamental needs of a human being? Let's not forget, "MONEY TALKS"!

It talks in terms of taxes and business, which turns into growth. The Broadway District some of the most expensive property in Seattle, was most importantly able to accept the gay and lesbian community as a part of its own.

This is also true for gay and lesbian related focus groups. They are now often open to heterosexual individuals. Issues of racism, disease, and your gay and lesbian loved ones affect everybody. Until communities can prepare to focus on the needs for all people, gay and straight, they will lose the opportunities, advantages, and respect an open, well supported, and diverse community provides.



▼ SUNDAY, JAN. 14, 2-4:30 PM

We are pleased to welcome a speakers panel from Stonewall Youth to our January meeting. Stonewall Youth is a local support group for area GLBTQ youth. We can expect to hear personal stories from youth members and an update of the activities of the organization.

<http://www.stonewallyouth.org>

▼ SUNDAY, FEB. 11, 2-4:30 PM

Our guest speakers will be from Equal Rights Washington. They will bring us up to speed on National Freedom to Marry Day, Feb. 12, and the Equality Day Rally planned for Feb. 26. This should be an enlightening and stimulating program, so please be there.

<http://www.equalrightswashington.org>

PFLAG-Olympia Alert

PFLAG-Olympia Alert is an email service of PFLAG-Olympia designed to inform members of upcoming events, programs, and more. Email updates are sent out prior to each of our the regular second Sunday meetings and whenever something comes up that we think our members and friends need to know about. You can subscribe to the alert by sending an email to our newsletter editor at newsletter@pflag-olympia.org — put "Subscribe PLAG-Olympia Alert" in the subject line.

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)

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 2/15/2007

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

Or email to: newsletter@pflag-olympia.org

COLORS IN THE RAINBOW:

RACE, CULTURE, AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION ~ PART 2 OF A 6 PART SERIES: LATIN/HISPANIC CULTURE

BY STEPHEN M. WHITE, PSY.D.

Hispanic individuals come from many different countries and cultural backgrounds, making generalizations difficult. Despite these differences, the majority of Hispanic cultures regard homosexuality as unacceptable, particularly for men. This apprehension derives from different sources, including the cultural concept of *machismo* and the role the Roman Catholic church plays in the lives of Latinos.

Cultural issues strongly influence Latino views on homosexuality, especially male homosexuality. The concept of *machismo* dictates that men serve as a provider and protector of their family and act as the head of the household. Latino families also generally maintain traditional sex roles, with clear delineations of what is proper for men and women. For gay men, the adoption of what is seen as a submissive role is a serious violation of *machismo*

and expectations of male behavior. Anyone who commits such a violation is subject to sanctions that range from disapproval to physical violence.

The conservative views on sexuality held by the Roman Catholic church are well known, and the Vatican continues to express disapproval of homosexuality. There is some variation in how much of a problem this conflict poses in different Hispanic countries. Despite the large number of Roman Catholics, homosexuality is more tolerated in Spanish culture than in many other Hispanic countries, as evidenced by the recent legalization of gay marriage in Spain.

Some Latino men avoid the stigma of homosexuality by denial: they do not identify as gay despite same-sex activity. The major disadvantage of this strategy is risky sexual behavior. In his book *Latino Gay Men and HIV*, author Rafael M. Diaz discusses the impact that the

attitudes in Latino culture toward homosexuality has on the behavior of gay men, including decreased safer-sex practices. Fortunately for the future of the gay Latino community, the denial of homosexuality in Latino culture is not universal. As

more gay men and women come out in the broader culture, gay Latinos are also beginning to come out over time. Although they risk condemnation from traditionalists, brave figures in politics, film, and literature are beginning to acknowledge that they are gay.

Gay politicians are rare to begin with, much less openly gay Latino politicians. The small number of gay Latino elected officials have included Cuban-American Jarrett Barrios in the Massachusetts state Senate, Puerto Rican Margarita Lopez on the New York City Council, Louis Escobar, President of the City Council in Toledo, and Joe Santiago on the Cleveland City Council.

Gay Latinos in film have come a long way from George Hamilton's campy portrayal of *Zorro the Gay Blade* in 1981. Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodovar has long been at the forefront of gay cinema, directing Antonio Banderas in *Labyrinth of Passion* and *Law of Desire* prior to Banderas' most visible portrayal of a gay man in the landmark film *Philadelphia*. Almodovar has made a number of other films of interest to LGBT audiences including *High Heels*, *Kika*, and *All About My Mother*.

In addition to Almodovar, acclaimed Mexican director Jaime Humberto Hermosillo has made over 20 films, and is best-known to U.S.

(Continued on page 3)

NEW or RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP

Please check the membership types you prefer:

- Individual \$35
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- New Renewal

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Add this amount as my tax-exempt gift (thank you!) \$ _____

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

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

I want to be added to the PFLAG-Olympia email alert/announcement list (include your email address.)

DATE: ____/____/____ PHONE: (____)____-____

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Mail with your check to: 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.

Women "coming out" after 30 a peer-facilitated support group

for women over the age of 30 who are "coming out" or have previously come out as queer, lesbian or bisexual, or who are questioning their orientation.

**Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month
from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm
Unity Church of Olympia; 1335 Fern Street SW**

For more information, please contact Carmen
360-870-8585 ~ carmen333@comcast.net

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audiences for his 1985 film *Doña Herlinda and Her Son*.

Gay Latino actors include Wilson Cruz of *My So-Called Life* and *Party of Five*, and the film *All Over Me* and bisexual actor Gabriel Romero on the Telemundo sitcom *Los Beltran*. Prominent gay Latino characters have also appeared in *Strawberry and Chocolate* (Cuba), and *A Year Without Love* (Argentina). Documentaries include *Paris Is Burning*, portraying New York's Black and Latino drag queen community, and *De Colores*, depicting the struggle of Latino culture to come to terms with homosexuality.

The literary world has also seen many important works by gay Latino authors. Among the most influential works of fiction are John Rechy's 1960s novels *City of Night* and *Numbers*, Arturo Islas' *The Rain God* and *Migrant Souls*, and Jaime Manrique's *Latin Moon in Manhattan*, as well as Michael Nava's mystery novels featuring a gay attorney.

Works by Latina authors include *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, edited by Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga containing essays by many influential women of

color. Also by Anzaldúa is *La Frontera/Borderlands*, a collection of essays and poems that examine race, Latin and Anglo culture, and sexual orientation.

Non-fiction books examining gay and lesbian Latino experiences include *Unrequited Love and Gay Latino Culture: What Have You Done to My Heart* by Daniel T. Contreras, and *Reading and Writing the Ambiente: Queer Sexualities in Latino, Latin American and Spanish Culture*, edited by Susana Chavez-Silverman and Librada Hernandez.

A book for parents of gay children is *Conversaciones: Relatos Por Padres y Madres de Hijas Lesbianas y Hijos Gay*, edited by Mariana Romo-Carmona, featuring essays by parents about their child's coming out. Latino parents in the United States can face language barriers that may intensify isolation and limit the information and support available. PFLAG offers some resources through their "Families of Color Network" at www.pflag.org.

This is a time of change for Latino communities in the United States. The growth of Latino families is translating into growing political force, and members of multi-generational families are dealing with the tension of different levels of acculturation to the

larger society. While gay men and women have always been a part of Hispanic cultures, until recently they have been largely invisible. More and more, Latinos are learning that it is possible to be gay, Latino, and proud, all at the same time.

Organizations

- **Chicago:** ALMA (Association of Latino Men for Action) www.almachicago.org, and Amigas Latinas, www.amigaslatinas.org
- **Los Angeles:** GLLU (Gay and Lesbian Latinos Unidos) (213) 660-9681
- **Austin, Texas:** ALLGO (Austin Latino/Latina Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Organization) www.allgo.org
- **New York:** LLANY (Latinas and Latinos de Ambiente/New York) members.aol.com/arcoirisny
- **San Diego:** Gay and Lesbian Latinos con Orgullo (619) 692-1967

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Stephen M. White is a clinical psychologist in San Diego, and facilitates a PFLAG meeting in Carlsbad. He is completing a book to help parents adjust when they learn they have a gay child. He can be reached at swhite@the-rainbow-connection.org

*If you're not a member, please join.
If you are a member, please renew.
PFLAG-Olympia needs you!*

You may have already received our annual membership letter. We repeat it here as a much needed reminder.

Dear PFLAG friends and family:

This is not a joke: There is good news and there is bad news. The good news is that over the past two years PFLAG has received two large, anonymous donations that have provided us with a much needed monetary cushion. The bad news is that without that cushion we would not have enough money to keep going. Our regular expenses are larger than our expected income. As a result, we need to increase membership fees and beg for donations.

We know that you share PFLAG's commitment to support, education and advocacy for our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community and loved ones; so please join or renew your membership now. Your membership dues help pay for our monthly meeting space, printing and distribution of our newsletter, stipends for guest speakers, maintenance of our telephone Help Line and other services to the glbtq community.

Although we have made strides in our struggle for full inclusion, we have also seen a tremendous backlash. Hate crimes against our glbtq friends and family members are on the rise and the far right is more determined than ever to erase our hard-won gains. Your support is needed now more than ever, so we ask you to please fill out the membership form (see page 2) and return it with your check to: PFLAG, PO Box 12732, Olympia, WA 98508-2732.

*Thank you,
the board of PFLAG-Olympia*

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.



We welcome new board members and officers

The Olympia chapter of PFLAG welcomes new board members and officers who will take office beginning in January 2007.

Jeff Loyer will take over as the new president of the board.

Current board members Julianne Wasilauski and Richelle Lanning will assume the duties of secretary and treasurer, respectively.

New to the board this year are Kristin Stewart and Marsha Weaver.

Returning board members are: Julianne, Richelle, Bev Schouviller and Virgil Clarkson.

“Homophobia is like racism and anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry in that it seeks to dehumanize a large group of people, to deny their humanity, their dignity and personhood. This sets the stage for further repression and violence that spread all too easily to victimize the next minority group.” ~ Coretta Scott King



PFLAG

Olympia, Washington

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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MEETS at 2PM on the second Sunday of each month at First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE, Olympia (except in August when we have our annual picnic at a local park.) 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
Website: <http://www.pflag-olympia.org>

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