



February 2012

News & Views

Celebrating Real Family Values

PFLAG Modesto • P.O. Box 4311, Modesto, CA 95352-4311

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This issue of *News & Views* is underwritten by

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FEBRUARY 2012 at PFLAG MODESTO:

All public meetings are at Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Avenue, Modesto
see map on page 4.

February 7th - First Tuesday: Support

- ◆ 5 – 6:30pm: Aging LGBT Group
 - ◆ Open to all LGBT people 50+ and their caregivers.
 - ◆ Hosted by Karen Reid from Stanislaus County BHRS.
- ◆ 7 – 9pm: Healthy TRANSitions
 - ◆ First Tuesday HTS meetings are open to all Trans persons and people in transition or considering transition ONLY, to create a safe space for expression.
- ◆ 7 – 9pm: First Tuesday Support
 - ◆ At this meeting, we welcome **Vanessa Czopek**, Director of the Stanislaus County Library.
Libraries are a vital part of a civilized—and civil—community. Yet they're often the first victims in the war to cut spending. Ms Czopek will discuss the library and its services, as well as the "Save Stanislaus Libraries" campaign.

February 15th - Board of Directors Meeting, 6:30pm

- ◆ To attend, email Marilyn (sec@pflagmodesto.org) for location.
To place something on the agenda or to make a presentation for the board, email Bill (pres@pflagmodesto.org) BEFORE FEBRUARY 7th.

February 21st - Third Tuesday: Social

- ◆ 7 – 9pm: Healthy TRANSitions
 - ◆ Third Tuesday HTS meetings are open to all Trans persons and people in transition or considering transition, as well as their friends, families, and supporters.
- ◆ 7 – 9pm: BINGO
 - ◆ Bingo is free and open to all! Children old enough to play bingo are invited and welcomed.
 - ◆ Win prizes!
 - ◆ Refreshments are served.

PFLAG Mission Statement: PFLAG promotes the health and well being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons 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.

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TOM LAMBERT, CTEC CERTIFIED

209-574-0414

tomlambert_ca@yahoo.com

Fees range from \$50 to \$100 per return based on complexity

Hablo español y estoy listo para servir mis clientes que hablan español para todas sus necesidades, incluyendo la forma W-7 para obtener numeros ITIN

FREE ELECTRONIC FILING

BOARD BRIEFS

The following are a few of the actions taken by the PFLAG Modesto Board of Directors at our January meeting:

- ◆ We have developed a working budget for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.
- ◆ Directors will be developing a standard curriculum for outreach opportunities, to better represent PFLAG and LGBT community interests in the community at large.
- ◆ In an effort to control spending, we will be cancelling our helpline service through AT&T and going to Skype for calls. **This will require a change in our telephone number.** Details will be emailed to all members when the change takes place.
- ◆ We approved an updated membership services brochure.

We will be launching an online fundraising auction through eBay. The first items will be **tickets to the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon**, and **tickets to the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee**. Details and links to the website will be announced soon.

February Involvement Opportunities

Each month of 2012 we will put before readers ways that you can get involved with PFLAG Modesto.

These opportunities will be a mix of one-time, hands-on help, longer-term positions, and (for those who are more comfortable writing a check) ways to help fund PFLAG Modesto.

Here are the ways you can help PFLAG Modesto in February:

Plan potlucks and social events. We like to have quarterly social events. These have, in the past, been potlucks. We love potlucks, but we're also open to new ideas! The next event should be Tuesday, March 20th, so now would be a great time for social-minded people to help plan our next big gathering! Email Marilyn (sec@pflagmodesto.org) if you're interested.

MoFest!7, our film festival celebrating Modesto's LGBT community, is scheduled for May 19th. We need your help to pull this off!

Planning teams handle the many aspects of organizing a film festival. Email Bill (pres@pflagmodesto.org) if you're interested in being on the planning team for MoFest!7.

Donations from our supporters help provide the initial collateral for any MoFest!, which is our single biggest fundraiser of the year. Solicitations will be going out soon, but if you'd like to get a jump on donating (and save us the postage), mail a check, marked MOFEST!7 in the memo line, to PFLAG Modesto PO Box 4311, Modesto CA 95352-4311.

Our online auction fundraisers will be starting soon. We're looking for supporters with quality items they're willing to donate for use in an auction-style fundraiser in the future. These could be restaurant gift certificates, movie or Gallo Center tickets, use of a timeshare, antiques, jewelry—anything of value (that can be easily shipped). Email Michael (treas@pflagmodesto.org) with your items and he will contact you for more information.

Special thanks to Gowans Printing for assistance in publishing PFLAG Modesto *News & Views*.



The question I've been asked the most during my time working with PFLAG Modesto (aside from "P-huh?", which is the most-asked) is about our work in the community. People want to know what PFLAG does, what it's all about—and why we exist at all.

It's a good, reasonable question. But I've always gotten tied up in the answer. We do a lot of things; it's hard to distill them all into a bite-sized conversation piece that keeps the person who asked around long enough to hear the answer.

It's also hard for the organization to maintain a focus with so many components to what we do. Things fall by the wayside. Hopes, dreams, visions, and plans fall through the cracks. Ideas, good ideas that could bring good things to good people, never get launched. And that's a shame, because people don't get the help they desperately need in times like these.

Part of the issue is a lack of member involvement. Sometimes I want to scream "If you're an ally, START ALLY-ING!"

But really, that's our fault too. People come to us, willing to start ally-ing. And even though there are always a million things we'd like to do or have started or have dropped along the way but shouldn't have... we've been unable to direct our allies toward some substantive way to help us out.

"Join the board" or "Join a fledgling operations team" is too vague, too big, too scary for most people who are busy and have lives but still want to give a little bit of time back to PFLAG Modesto.

I see that now, just as I've come to see the flaws in our approach as an organization. We need to make it simple. Our mandate, our decision-making, our engagement of our allies and supporters—all of it needs to be made (and kept) simple.

We need to rebrand PFLAG Modesto.

We need to change the way we do things. We need to change the community's perception of the organization.

We need to make it easier to do our work, for people to understand and to join us.

So as we begin 2012, I offer the rebranding of PFLAG Modesto. Our mission, our work, our decision-making, our multi-faceted branching out into all different directions, distilled into three words:

Support. Advocacy. Love.

As we go through the year, at each of our planning sessions, the board of directors will make sure that these three words inform everything we do. From opening our doors to support people of different ages (LGBT Aging Group) and identities (Healthy TRANSitions), to advocating for LGBTQ rights and acceptance in Stanislaus County through wider outreach opportunities, we will continually ask ourselves "How can we better support and advocate for the LGBTQ community in the Central Valley?" and make our decisions accordingly.

Support and advocacy are natural extensions of love. PFLAG Modesto exists because of—and was founded on—that love. Parents who love their children enough to want to support and advocate for them. Families who love their family members enough to step out and step up for them, often alone and at odds with the rest of their family members. People who love their L, G, B, T, or Q friends enough to stand with them as allies. *These* are the heart of PFLAG. These are the reason this organization continues—and even expands, in tough economic and social times.

How will you support, advocate, and love in 2012? Every month of this year *News & Views* will bring you opportunities to help us with that mission. Become our fan on Facebook, and you'll see up-to-the-minute ways you can help. How ever big or small your role in the future of PFLAG is, I urge you to search your heart and get involved.

The community needs people like you, now more than ever.

Consider Bill your suggestion box. If you have a suggestion, comment, or ways PFLAG Modesto can Support, Advocate, and/or Love better, send an email: pres@pflagmodesto.org.

2011 for Trans persons: A year in review

Janiece Eaton, Board member at-large

As Trans persons become more accepted and part of our country's community fabric, laws are being passed that end decades of institutional prejudice. Important legislation was passed in California in 2011.

Gender identity and expression now has its own protected category in public accommodations, housing, employment and education, under the Gender Nondiscrimination Act.

Trans persons will have a much easier time changing the gender on their birth certificates, as the Vital Statistics Modernization Act simplifies the requirements for court-ordered gender changes and birth certificate alterations.

Seth's Law deals with bullying and mandates better educator and administration training, and clear, consistent policies in schools.

Also signed by Governor Brown is a bill to amend anti-discrimination policies in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, requiring that California state universities and community colleges allow students to identify their sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression in the annually collected demographic data.

Let us hope that, as time has proven so often, the changes in our state become a model for the nation.

Open and Affirming Area Religious Institutions

- **College Avenue Congregational Church**, 1341 College Ave., Modesto, www.cacc-ucc.org/
- **First United Methodist Church**, 850 16th St., Modesto, www.firstumcmodesto.org
- **Unitarian Universalist Church**, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto, www.stanuu.org
- **Unity Church of Modesto**, 2467 Veneman Ave., Modesto, www.unitychurchofmodesto.com
- **St. Paul's Episcopal Church**, 1528 Oakdale Rd., Modesto, www.stpaulsmodesto.diosanjoaquin.org
- **First Congregational Church**, 100 North Acacia Ave., Ripon, www.riponcongregational.org

Birdcage - February 12th

Is an informal, monthly social gathering for LGBTs, allies, and friends. Join the group at

Tresetti's ~ 927 11th St. ~ 5 - 9pm

Contact Patrick Pokorny at 404-0538 or
ndskills@sbcglobal.net

"The PLACE", a GLBTQ Youth Group, ages 14-19, holds meetings the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month at 1341 College Ave. 7-9pm.

Contact: Ed 683-8203 or Elizabeth 818-2378

Yes, there IS a PFLAG in OAKDALE!

February 15 7 - 8:30 pm



Golden Oaks Conference Room
1425 West "H", Oakdale

For more info contact Michael at
oakdale@pflagmodesto.org

Note: this is a new e-address!

Need to promote your business or corporation?

Are you a private individual who believes in PFLAG Modesto's work and wants to see it distributed to a wider audience? Underwrite our printing costs!

For a \$200 contribution, tax deductible where allowed by law, you can pay for an issue of **News & Views** to be printed and distributed at venues around Stanislaus County! You will get front page, above-the-fold mention of your contribution to the newsletter, and a quarter-page ad for your business or corporation elsewhere in the publication.

Proclaim your support for PFLAG Modesto, and drive our supporters into your business! Email Marilyn (sec@pflagmodesto.org) for more information.

Location Map:

