



News & Views

Celebrating Real Family Values

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July 2011



This month's issue of *News & Views* is underwritten by
Modesto Junk Company • Recycling Center
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What's going on with the Stanislaus PRIDE Center?" "I hear the PRIDE Center is closed—is that true?"
"What happened to LGBTQ support in Stanislaus County, outside of PFLAG?"

These are questions we've been asked a lot in the last year. We haven't had all the answers, which is why we're pleased to welcome **Manuel Alvarado** of the **GLEE Foundation** to our support meeting on July 5th to address our group and answer all of your questions.

July Support Meeting

"Stanislaus PRIDE Center Q&A"

*Manuel Alvarado, President of
The GLEE Foundation*

Tuesday, **July 5th** 7-9pm
Emanuel Lutheran Church
Everyone is welcome!

The GLEE Foundation is the parent organization of the Stanislaus PRIDE Center. At a meeting with the PFLAG Modesto board in May, Alvarado explained some of the goals of the foundation and spoke of the future of the PRIDE Center, and GLEE's role in the support of the LGBTQ community—not just in Stanislaus County, but in California as a whole.

The PFLAG Modesto board believes that our community is best served when our members can ask questions and get responses firsthand from the source. We appreciate Mr. Alvarado's presence at our board meeting in May, and we look forward to giving him and the GLEE Foundation the opportunity to present themselves in our group meeting.

As always, we will also offer traditional, small-group support that evening, to anyone who needs it. We have people who have walked the different paths of coming out: as parents of LGBT children, as friends and family members of LGBT children, and as Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgender persons. Everyone is always welcome at all of our gatherings!

PFLAG Modesto Meeting Schedule

- ✱ **First Tuesday meeting - July 5, held from 7 to 9 pm** at the Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto. See meeting location map inside. Information about meeting above.
- ✱ **Board and Operations meeting** - usually held the Wednesday following the second Tuesday. There will be no meeting in July 2011. Contact info@pflagmodesto.org or pres@pflagmodesto.org for details.
- ✱ **Third Tuesday meeting - July 19, held from 7 to 9pm** at the Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto. This month - **Movie night** - information inside.



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"Modesto Pride".

OPEN M - F 8am - 4:30pm Sat 9am - 3pm

The PFLAG Modesto board received, with regret, the resignation of **Cathy Jennison** as at-large board member.

Cathy has served PFLAG and the LGBT community for many years and is an outspoken friend and ally. Prior to her service as at-large board member, she was PFLAG Modesto's treasurer and was instrumental in securing our official status as a 501(c)(3) organization with the Internal Revenue Service.

While she will no longer be on the board of directors, we're fortunate that Cathy will be serving PFLAG Modesto in other capacities, by coordinating our hospitality and social events.

We wish Cathy the best of everything in her "retirement," safe travels with husband Dean, and many thanks for so many years of hard work for equality and acceptance!

Yes, there IS a PFLAG in OAKDALE!

July 20 7 to 8:30pm



Golden Oaks Conference Room
1425 West "H", Oakdale
pflagoakdale@dishmail.net

Healthy TRANSitions

Over forty people from across our community spectrum joined us for the inaugural Healthy TRANSitions meeting on June 7th. Healthy TRANSitions is PFLAG Modesto's pilot program to bring low- and no-cost medical and emotional care to the area's Transgender and Transitioning people.

Dr. Cecily Cosby of Samuel Merritt University joined us and impressed us all with her compassion and knowledge, fielding a variety of questions and offering her services and expertise. Thank you, Cecily—for making the journey to Modesto and for your enthusiasm about your work with the Trans community!

Details about the Healthy TRANSitions program and its future meetings are still being worked out, but we'll communicate them as soon as they become available. If you missed the meeting, or didn't sign in and would like to be added to the Healthy TRANSitions database to receive future notifications, please email Marilyn at sec@pflagmodesto.org. Include "Healthy TRANSitions database" in the subject line.

Information and other leaflets from Dr. Cosby regarding Transgender care can be found on our website in pdf form: <http://pflagmodesto.org/events/healthytransitions.html>.

4th of July Parade News

PFLAG Modesto will once again be appearing at Modesto Kiwanis' 137th Annual Independence Day Parade!

We need you! Supporters, allies, the LGBTQ community, young, elderly—let's show Modesto that we are here, proud, and celebrate REAL family values!

Details regarding staging on the morning of July 4th will be sent via email, posted on our Facebook wall, and sent via Twitter. Since Facebook and Twitter are the most immediate means of communication with our membership (and are linked together), join us in those media now if you haven't already done so.

"Like" us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter; our username is PFLAG Modesto.

Thank you for your support and willingness to march in the parade with PFLAG Modesto. See all of you at the parade!



The path to civility, it seems, is a bit repetitive...at least from the standpoint of a writer.

Each aspect of SCOE's CHOOSE CIVILITY campaign that I've written about so far is either inextricably connected to the others or overlaps them to the point of redundancy. The same is true of this month's focus, Acknowledge Others. It conjures up feelings of Respecting Others' Opinions (June), Give and Accept Praise (May), Respect Others' Time (March), and Listen (February).

While staring out the window and taking in sumptuous vistas of the foothills and Sierras during our Long-Range Planning retreat some days ago, I considered this month's topic. Truth be told, I've been dreading it since last month. While I certainly don't mind climbing up on my soapbox on a monthly basis, I'd like a little variety to the pretext of my ranting. So I stared out the window as we discussed our future plans for the anti-bullying campaign and wracked my brains: How in the world would I turn Acknowledge Others into a call for action that didn't sound like June, May, March, and February? The words came like light from heaven:

Support...or do no harm.

These five words are the beginnings of PFLAG Modesto's new mantra in dealing with an adverse society. What it means to me is this: We spend a lot of valuable time spinning our wheels in the effort to spread tolerance, improve acceptance, and end the threats of violence and the realities of bullying against the LGBTQ community. We have tried to "convert" people, to change their minds. The trouble is, changing minds means changing hearts, and unwilling hearts cannot be changed, no matter how (or what) we try.

In other words, we've been wasting our time on efforts in futility. And our focus must become more realistic, to keep from burning up our spinning wheels. We do this by acknowledging others, their rights to have differing opinions from (and about) us, as long as those opinions do not result in our physical, emotional, social, or political harm.

"Acknowledging others by watering down the message," some might say. To which I ask: Does choosing civility involve cramming our own agenda down the throats of the unwilling, any more than having other views forced upon us is civil, enjoyable, or right?

We acknowledge others by acknowledging that each person has the right to believe whatever he or she wishes to believe, no matter how ridiculous or misguided we think the beliefs are. We acknowledge others by embracing the right of all people to decide

what to champion and whom or what to disapprove. We acknowledge others by giving the same courtesies we demand. We cannot expect from others what we're not willing to give.

It is impractical, and more than a little self-defeating, to command support for the LGBTQ community from everyone. The issues between (and inside) all of us are too intricate to hope for that. Perhaps in time such support will be commonplace in our world. Maybe someday we (or more likely those who come after us) will know only acceptance and tolerance. We're not there yet, not by a long shot.

But we are *justified* in expecting the latter half of our new mantra—"or do no harm"—from our communities, from our elected officials, from the person in line with us at the grocery store or sitting across the aisle from us at church. We are right to expect to be acknowledged *by others*, as vital, contributing members of the society which we all share.

As human beings, just like every other person on this earth.

Support, or do no harm. Acknowledge others. Spread respect. Choose civility.

Amen.

You can acknowledge this column, or anything else PFLAG Modesto does, by emailing Bill, pres@pflagmodesto.org. He will endeavor to acknowledge YOU by replying (when he remembers to check the mailbox!).

News & Views Distribution

Thanks to the work of some new volunteers, PFLAG Modesto's newsletter *News & Views* is reaching a broader audience in the Modesto area. Currently, you can find *News & Views* at the following locations:

- Stanislaus Public Library
- SCAP office
- College Avenue Congregational Church office
- Queen Bean
- Modesto Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Modesto Junior College Library
- Second Chance Consignment and Costume Corner
- Cornucopia Health Foods

If you know a location, retail establishment, church, or other business that would welcome distributing *News & Views* to its patrons, please email Marilyn Mettler with that information, sec@pflagmodesto.org. Thanks for your help in making our newsletter a success.

Summer “Potnic”

Our summer potluck was held picnic-style at Graceada Park on June 21st.

Coincidentally, June 21st was also the hottest day of 2011, so far. We were very fortunate to have about sixty friends, allies, and supporters join us for this first-ever potluck in a public park.

PFLAG Modesto wishes to thank The Chicken Barn, Frito-Lay, and Starbucks (McHenry at Briggsmore) for their gracious donations, and a big thank you to everyone who came out early to help set up, and stayed later in the heat to help clean up. And thanks to Cathy and Dean Jennison, who always make every social event come off magically.

Do you have extra party supplies taking up space and you know you'll never use them all—or don't want them anymore? Pass them on to PFLAG Modesto! Much of our potluck cost comes from plates, napkins, flatware, and cups, and your donation of these items will help bring the cost down to almost nothing! Bring them to any meeting or, if you know where Cathy lives, drop them by her house.

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

“The PLACE”, a GLBTQ Youth Group, ages 14 - 19, holds meetings the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month (July 14 & 28th) at 1341 College Ave. 7-9pm. Contact: Ed 683-8203 or Elizabeth 818-2378

3rd Tuesday meeting - Movie Night

Our next social event is **Movie Night** on **July 19th**, where we will screen **Meet Me in St. Louis**, starring the incomparable and fabulous Miss Judy Garland. Bring blankets, pillows, bean bags, comfy chairs (since we're meeting in the nice, air-conditioned church)—we'll have popcorn, drinks, and a film that will make you laugh and cry! This is a family-friendly event, and everyone is welcome!

Birdcage - July 10

Is an informal, monthly social gathering for LGBTs, allies, and friends. Join the group at **Jax, 1016 “H” St., 5 - 9pm**
Contact Patrick Pokorny at 404-0538 or ndskills@sbcglobal.net

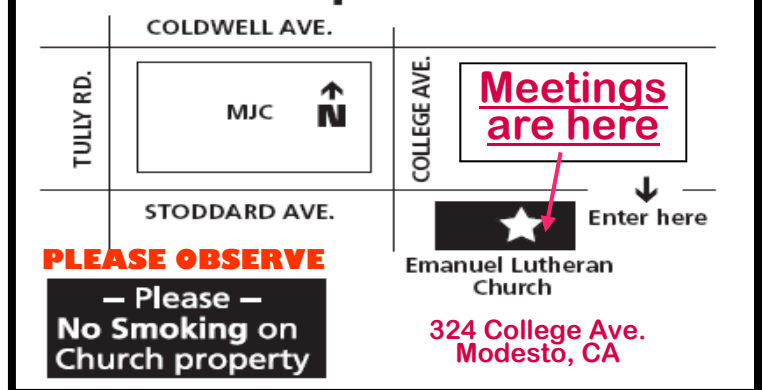
Need to promote your business or corporation?

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:



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.