



News & Views

Celebrating Real Family Values

Helpline 209.527.0776

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www.pflagmodesto.org info@pflagmodesto.org

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Dates to Remember

Meeting days

1st & 3rd Tuesdays every month, 7-9 pm

1st Tuesday Meeting

March 1, 7-9 pm

- We offer our usual, traditional PFLAG support, led by members who have been on both sides of the coming-out process.
- For those who don't need support, join us for a presentation from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) titled "In Our Own Voice". See page 3 for details.

March 13

Birdcage

is an informal, monthly social gathering for GLBTs, allies and friends. Join the group at

Jax

1016 "H" St. 5-9 PM

Contact Patrick Pokorny at 404-0538 or ndskills1@sbcglobal.net

GLBTQ YOUTH GROUP

"the PLACE" ages 14-19

March 10 & 24 7-9 pm

1341 College Ave

Ed 683-8203 Elizabeth 818-2378

PFLAG in OAKDALE! MARCH

16 7-8:30

Golden Oaks Conference Room

1425 West "H", Oakdale

pflagoakdale@dishmail.net

3rd Tuesday Meeting, 7-9 pm

Spring Potluck March 15

Spring Pot Luck



Tuesday, March 15

From 5 to 9 pm

Emanuel Lutheran Church
Luther Hall, 324 College Ave.

Please bring your favorite homemade recipe to share!

Suggested categories:

If your last name begins with:

A to G, bring a main meat dish/casserole

H to L, bring rice, pasta, or a potato dish

M to S, bring a vegetable, fruit or green salad

T to Z, bring cookies, brownies, or pie

Buddy's/Appetex in Roseburg Square and Starbucks on 10th will be adding to the feast!

Table service, soft drinks and coffee will be provided

Questions?
Call Cathy 527.3528
or Marilyn 527.0205
HELPLINE 527.0776



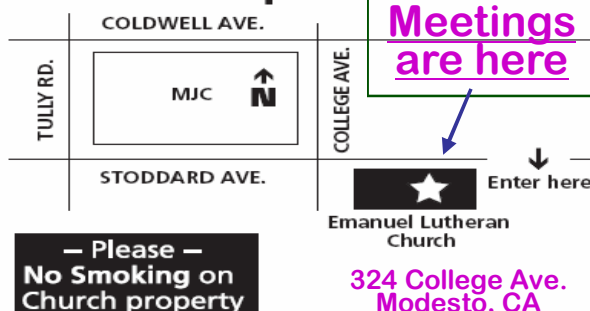
Modesto Chapter

www.pflagmodesto.org
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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.

Have news to share or an item of interest? Want to receive the PFLAG Modesto newsletter electronically? Contact Marilyn Mettler at sec@pflagmodesto.org, leave a message on the helpline at 527-0776 or drop a line to P.O. Box 4311, Modesto, 95352

Location Map:





A little-known fact about me: I *hate* wasting my time.

As I get older, I am more painfully aware that time is a finite object. My mother died four years ago, when she was just fifty-nine. Every day I wake up and think *What if I only have nineteen more years left? What if it's less? Even if I'm halfway through my life, what more do I want to do with my life? What more can I do with my life?* And so an already-present aversion to time wasted is magnified tenfold before I've even gotten out of bed.

Worse than wasting my own time—because let's face it, it's *my* time to waste—is having my time wasted by other people. I was at the DMV today and left with none of the things I went there for in the first place. If I factor in my driving time, the time spent on the internet collecting what I thought I needed for the appointment, the minutes spent sitting in the chair waiting for my number to be called, and the seconds at the counter being told “I don't know” and “I just work here, I can't be expected to have any answers to any of your questions,” at least three hours of my life that I'll never get back have gone into the great cosmic toilet bowl.

This month's Choose Civility principle is Respect Other People's Time. It is a concept that is lost on the California Department of Motor Vehicles. It's also, I believe, a dying quality in our society, which is not surprising. Last month, I wrote about the first principle—listening—and I realize that the things that keep us from listening to each other also keep us from respecting each other's time. We are a preoccupied, distracted people. We're also self-absorbed. We are me-me-me. We don't listen. Why should we respect, let alone care about, the time of others?

Because it's the civil thing to do.

As a community, we demand to be treated with fairness and equality, which are fruits of civility. We are quick to point out when behavior toward us is less than civil, equal, or fair...and we're right to do so. Uncivil behavior *should* be pointed out. The seeds of change are planted when we cultivate the ground by calling out injustice. We cannot expect change to come if we sit silently. We cannot expect fairness and equality if we do nothing to make them happen.

Nor should we sit on the sidelines and allow other people to make these things happen for us. I did this for way too long—most of my life, in fact. I was content to live my life, do what I wanted, and allow someone else to give up his or her valuable time to make the world a better place to live. I'm ashamed of this, of my selfishness and my disrespect for the time of other people. Getting involved with PFLAG is my own beginning to amend the inaction of my first forty years.

I've come to understand that respecting the time of others means giving up some of my own, in support of a cause greater than my self. I believe that respecting other people's time might mean helping to plan a potluck, not just attending it. Or sitting on the PFLAG Modesto board or operations team, and not just playing bingo, going to a meeting once a while, paying dues, or attending a film festival. I suppose it could also mean volunteering with and doing something good for another organization...but as the president of PFLAG Modesto's board, I'm biased about the work we're doing and would like to do!

And so, again I use this column as a call to get involved in the work of PFLAG Modesto. We have an open board position—Vice President—that we are desperate to have filled. We would like to get an operations team built and running to facilitate and assist the board in future projects. We have an anti-bullying campaign that is on-going and we'd love to have our educator friends carry that message into their schools for us. An anti-bullying forum is in the works which will require the help of many to be successful.

And then, of course, the on-going mission of PFLAG Modesto, to provide love, advocacy, and support to all LGBT people—and their families and friends—in greater Stanislaus County. It only takes giving up some of our time to achieve all of this; a worthy sacrifice for the cause of civility and tolerance in our community.

Now if the DMV would just live by the same principle...

Bill Dotinga will respect the time of others by trying not to bang the “Volunteer for PFLAG” drum so often in the future. Should volunteering for PFLAG suit you, however, he can be reached at pres@pflagmodesto.org.

March 1 program - "In Our Own Voice"

The Stanislaus Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (N.A.M.I.) is coming to PFLAG Modesto again on March 1. NAMI is a dynamic force working to bring needed changes in treatment, research, and improved quality of life to persons and families living with mental illness. One of the educational aspects of this force is a program called, "In Our Own Voice". This is a presentation which demonstrates how individuals with severe mental illness experience recovery. Each program presenter has been through training to translate the story of his or her own struggles and successes. This is a powerful anti-stigma tool to change hearts, minds and attitudes about mental illness. Both speakers present their heartfelt story within an hour with time for discussion and a short evaluation. Last year, this program was a huge success - don't miss it!

Visit our new website!

We're pleased to announce a brand new website for PFLAG Modesto!

In an effort to be more 21st century in both look and content, we've completely redesigned pflagmodesto.org.

Among the cool additions you'll find (as well as sleek, stylish design):

- Our Facebook feed, right on the homepage;
- A full, interactive calendar with all of our events and meetings;
- Lots more photos and videos;
- Ability to pay for dues and make a donation online, with your credit or debit card;
- A blog, board agendas and minutes, and email addresses for every member of the board,

And so much more! Check it out at www.pflagmodesto.org and let us know what you think!

Open and Affirming Area Churches and Religious Institutions

- **College Avenue Congregational Church**, 1341 College Ave., Modesto, www.cacc-ucc.org/
- **First United Methodist Church**, 850 16th St., Modesto, www.firstumcmoesto.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

At our February 1st meeting, we hosted a discussion with representatives from **California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA)**, a non-profit law firm which serves low-income people in rural communities throughout California. In addition to the topic of **Proposition 8**, the lawyers from **CRLA** also discussed **Gender Identity discrimination, sexual-orientation discrimination, sexual harassment and fair housing for LGBT people**. Since so few people attended the meeting, we think it's important to highlight the excellent work **CRLA** does in our region and for the LGBT community.

California Rural Legal Assistance fights for justice--and not just inside the courtroom. **CRLA** offers community outreach and education; investigation and monitoring of conditions in housing, schools, fields, hospitals, and clinics; and legal advocacy for qualified clients. In its twenty-two offices throughout the state, **CRLA** provides free legal services for eligible clients in the areas of labor rights, housing, education, family security, and civil rights. **CRLA** also provides free referrals when it is unable to take a case.

PFLAG Modesto thanks Dan and Jessica from **CRLA** for their time in coming to our meeting, making their presentation, and moderating an informative and spirited discussion. We also thank them for their efforts for the LGBT community in our region. We look forward to hosting another meeting with **CRLA** soon! *Jessica Jewell can be reached at (209) 577-3811x31 or jjewell@crla.org, Dan Torres at (209) 946-0605 x320 or dtorres@crla.org*

Flower Power

Spring Fund Drive

Just in time for your Spring and Summer planting needs...

PFLAG Modesto is teaming with Flower Power Fundraising for our Spring Fund Drive

Our goal is to raise \$3000

between 1/30 and 3/27,

and it's easy for you to help!

Log onto our Flower Power webpage at www.flowerpowerfundraising.com/campaign?campaign_id=4399.

Browse the selections featured on the page, and place an order.

50% of every sale goes to PFLAG Modesto to help fund our important work in the community!