



November 2011

# News & Views

Celebrating Real Family Values

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This issue of *News & Views* has been generously underwritten by Peter Janopaul and Jay Alton

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**This is the last** of the friendly reminders that dues season is here, and it's time to renew your PFLAG Modesto membership (or join for the first time). But why should one become a dues-paying member of PFLAG Modesto, when all the services we offer are free to everyone?

**For exactly that reason—to help us continue to provide free services for EVERYONE.**

Here are a few of the things PFLAG Modesto has done with dues and donations this year:

- Purchased and distributed over 250 pieces of literature, on topics ranging from helping young people with the coming-out process and parents with the acceptance process, support and encouragement of Transfolks and their loved ones, two titles in Spanish
- The STOP BULLIES NOW! community roundtable forum in April
- 200 SPREAD RESPECT—STOP BULLIES posters for area schools and faculty lounges which include our logo and contact information (*Educators: These are still available—contact [gsasupport@pflagmodesto.org](mailto:gsasupport@pflagmodesto.org) to receive some for your school*)
- Sponsored a Rainbow Prom for area Gay-Straight Alliances and a booth at the Pride Festival, and sponsored the first-ever Teen Garden
- Maintained a helpline for people in crisis
- “Healthy TRANSitions” and the start of a Trans support group, soon to begin meeting TWICE per month
- Our first-ever Mayoral Candidates Q&A, allowing our supporters and allies to have their voices and our issues heard
- Our monthly newsletter, which is printed, distributed, and mailed to locations and mailboxes all over the county
- A redesigned website and email system

We have to pay for postage, copy toner and paper, business cards, refreshments at meetings, and all the little things that go into running PFLAG Modesto, and by year's end, over \$700 in facility rental charges to Emanuel Lutheran to open our doors twice a month.

Our goal is to be here, bigger and better, in 2012. We aim to be THE VOICE for the LGBTQ community next year, and to carry our message of support, advocacy, and love in a greater way throughout the county. **Please help us continue this work by paying your dues or becoming a PFLAG Modesto member today.**

If paying by check, fill out the form found in this newsletter and send them by mail. To pay online using your debit or credit card through Paypal, visit <http://pflagmodesto.org/giveback.html>, select the membership level that's appropriate for you, and make your payment. It's that easy!

Thanks to those who have already renewed or become members of PFLAG Modesto. If you haven't—DO SO TODAY!

## PFLAG Modesto Meeting Schedule

- **First Tuesday meeting - November 1, held from 7 to 9 pm** at the Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto. See meeting location map inside. Support is always available.
- **Board and Operations meeting** - usually held the Wednesday following the second Tuesday. Next Board meeting November 9. Contact [info@pflagmodesto.org](mailto:info@pflagmodesto.org) or [pres@pflagmodesto.org](mailto:pres@pflagmodesto.org) for details.
- **Third Tuesday meeting - November 15, held from 7 to 9pm** at the Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto. **This month - BINGO**

**It is election** season at PFLAG Modesto, too—our annual board elections will be held at the start of the November board meeting on Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm, at the home of Marilyn Mettler.

We will be nominating and electing all board positions: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and one at-large board member.

The PFLAG Modesto board is a “working board,” meaning that each board member is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization. In addition to attending support and social meetings and a board meeting a month, each member of the board has the assigned duties of his or her office, plus whatever tasks are given or volunteered for at board meetings.

The time commitment for a PFLAG Modesto board member varies; at the minimum one should expect to spend 10-15 hours a month on PFLAG-related duties. Sometimes, it’s much more.

**All members who have paid current dues are welcome to attend the elections meeting and cast votes for each of the offices.**

Members are also welcome to make nominations for each of the offices, either by attending the elections meeting or in advance by email. You may send your nominations to the current board president by email: [pres@pflagmodesto.org](mailto:pres@pflagmodesto.org).

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**The first Healthy TRANSitions** support group in October was a success—more people in that room than in the big room! Thanks to **Janiece Eaton** for her work in facilitating the group and planning for success.

In light of the group’s success and at the request of the attendees, the PFLAG Modesto board unanimously approved the request to offer a **second support** for spouses, family members, significant others, and friends—to interact and talk with their loved ones who are Trans, transitioning, or considering transitioning and to learn from the journeys of others.

**This second support group will run during our 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday social nights. More details will be shared at the November 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, from 7-9pm.**

The continued success of this group means getting the word out to everyone who needs this service. **Please help us spread the word!**

### 2012 PFLAG Modesto Dues

- \_\_\_ Student/Low Income Membership \$15
- \_\_\_ Single Membership (non-partnered/non-married, and without children) \$25
- \_\_\_ Household Membership (partnered/married and households with children) \$35
- \_\_\_ Yes, I would like to make an additional charitable contribution to PFLAG Modesto (enter additional amount here\_\_\_\_\_)

Make checks payable to PFLAG Modesto and mail to



PO Box 4311  
Modesto, CA  
95352-4311

**To pay dues online** using a credit or debit card, visit <http://pflagmodesto.org/giveback.html> and select the appropriate membership level. **PFLAG Modesto is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Your membership includes annual membership in local and national PFLAG chapters, monthly local newsletter (circle your preference: electronic OR USPS mail) and two semi-annual national newsletters.

### **Yes, there IS a PFLAG in OAKDALE!**

November 16 7 to 8:30pm

**Golden Oaks Conference Room  
1425 West “H”, Oakdale**

**For more info contact Michael at**

**[oakdale@pflagmodesto.org](mailto:oakdale@pflagmodesto.org)**

**Note: this is a new e-address!**





I've learned a lot this month. Some of the lessons learned I wish didn't have to be learned at all. I may be a better person for having learned them in the end, but that's not much of a consolation now.

As I've mulled over how to write this, the last CHOOSE CIVILITY column, and pondered over what to say, I've found it ironic that the last two focuses—"Accept and receive constructive criticism" and "Don't speak ill of anyone" couldn't be more appropriate for the situation I find myself and PFLAG Modesto in right now. Ironic, or perhaps serendipitous, since prior to the events surrounding our Mayoral Candidates Q&A I wondered how I would link these two seemingly disparate concepts together in one column.

As you know if you read the emails we send you, I took a question submitted by one of our members for candidate Bill Zoslocki and asked it at our session with the candidates last week. My first mistake was in asking the question at all, since the impetus of the question was about statements the candidate's wife—not Mr Zoslocki himself—made in a public meeting fourteen years ago. Compounding the mistakes made by me that night, the question itself was flawed: a case of mistaken identity, you might say.

In twenty seconds, I put words into Cathy Zoslocki's mouth that were never uttered by her in the first place—words that translate into thoughts and beliefs and actions that are not her own, have never been her own, and do not represent the kind of people she and Mr Zoslocki are.

In short: I spoke ill of Mrs Zoslocki. Publicly.

I'm grateful that Mr and Mrs Zoslocki are forgiving, loving people. Better people than I am, I know that. They may not always see eye to eye with me, or with PFLAG as an organization, but even after I publicly and wrongly maligned his wife, Bill Zoslocki is the only one of the candidates who offered to meet with our group again, so that he can better understand us—and hopefully we him.

That's class right there. And grace.

Lessons learned, both from the event—and from the people I injured.

I wish I could say that I learned the other CHOOSE CIVILITY lesson this month, to "accept and receive constructive criticism." Unfortunately, there wasn't much constructive about the criticism I received in the aftermath of my public apology.

Which would be fine, since I deserve to be called out for my errors in judgment—except that, with one exception, the hypercritical emails received by this organization were from people who weren't even in attendance at the Q&A. Their judgments about me, about PFLAG Modesto as a whole, were made based on an apology statement—not from having been in the building at all.

And so, the cycle of deconstructive criticism that began with an emailed question for a candidate... which continued when I asked the question despite reservations in my heart up to the moment it came spilling out of my mouth...came full circle, in the form of judgmental criticism from our "supporters."

Judgmental criticisms based on hearsay, or foggy memories, or mistaking one person for another. Deconstructive criticism. Speaking ill of others.

It all ties together magically now.

I wish it didn't. Words can't be unspoken. As one of the emails put it, "Some bells can't be un-rung." I can only vow to better practice the principles of civility that have been explored in these columns every month in the future, wherever the roads I'm on take me.

And hope that all of us find within ourselves, instead of conclusion-jumping indignance and blind disparaging, the grace of two people whom I wounded...but still found forgiveness in their hearts.

That's what I call choosing civility.

*You may email Bill with comments and questions, constructive or destructive : [pres@pflagmodesto.org](mailto:pres@pflagmodesto.org).*

**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](mailto:sec@pflagmodesto.org)) for more information.

#### Open and Affirming Area Religious Institutions

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

**The GSA Network's Leadership Summit comes to Modesto on Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup>** from 8:30 am to 4 pm. PFLAG Modesto is pleased to be sponsoring the pre-game breakfast for our young LGBTQ friends and allies!

The summit's morning session will include a parents' panel on ways to keep your children safe in school. We encourage our adult supporters and allies to attend this session.

**The GSA Leadership Summit** will be held at College Avenue Congregational Church. For more information, email Michael at [gsasupport@pflagmodesto.org](mailto:gsasupport@pflagmodesto.org).

**Our December 6<sup>th</sup>** meeting, which is our last one of the year, is the annual **Holiday Potluck**, from 5-8:30pm at Emanuel Lutheran Church. Mark your calendars for a special evening of joy and holiday cheer with old friends and new.

We will use the same meal suggestions as our June gathering, so if your last name begins with please bring...

- A to G** - main meat dish/casserole
- H to L** - rice, pasta, or potato dish
- M to S** - vegetable, fruit or green salad
- T to Z** - cookies, brownies, or pie

Don't just "pop" by—plan to attend; we're planning some things to make the last event of 2011 something great! More information will be coming to our Facebook, webpage, and the December issue of *News & Views*, so stay tuned!

## Birdcage - November 13

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

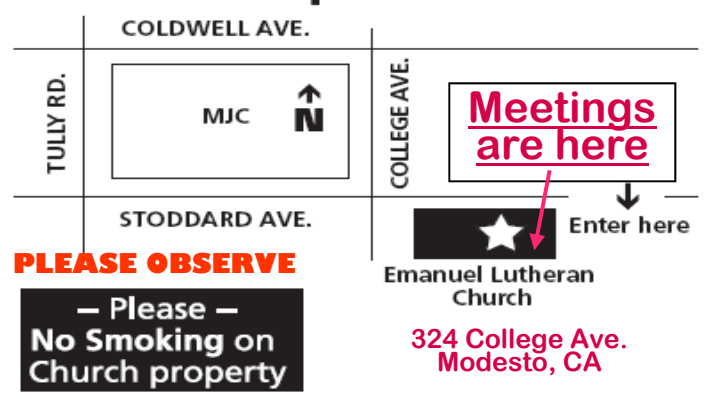
**Tresetti's ~ 927 11th St. ~ 5 - 9pm**

Contact Patrick Pokorny at 404-0538 or [ndskills@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ndskills@sbcglobal.net)

**"The PLACE",** a GLBTQ Youth Group, ages 12 - 20, holds meetings the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month at 1341 College Ave. 7-9pm.

Contact: Ed 683-8203 or Elizabeth 818-2378

### 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.