



News & Views

Celebrating Real Family Values

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This issue of *News & Views* is underwritten by

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On November 8th, Modesto voters will go to the polls and choose a new mayor. One of these four men—Armando Arreola, Brad Hawn, Garrad Marsh, and Bill Zoslocki—will get the job. But where does each of them stand on issues that are important to the LGBTQ community? What will each of them do to support the LGBTQ community if elected?

We have our chance to ask questions and find out on October 18th, as PFLAG Modesto hosts its first-ever Mayoral Candidates Q&A. During this two-hour formal and structured session, each of the four candidates will have the opportunity to answer questions and rebut their opponents' answers.

All four candidates have committed to attending this event.

The evening will start with a three minute statement from each candidate, with the order chosen by draw prior to the start of the session. Our moderator, board president Bill Dotinga, will then ask each of the candidates an opening question.

Subsequent questions will be asked by the moderator, drawn from questions previously submitted by our supporters and the audience. The candidates will have two minutes to answer these questions, followed by one minute rebuttals from the remaining candidates. This is where you can influence the evening: **If you have a question for a specific candidate, please submit it by email to pres@pflagmodesto.org by October 16.** We will choose the questions that best represent our mission statement and allow for us to hear from all the candidates as equally as possible in the two hours we have for this session.

Voting is one of the most important rights and responsibilities we have as citizens, and with all the problems facing Modesto and the LGBTQ community, it is imperative that we educate ourselves on the issues and the candidates. Please attend this important event and invite others to attend as well.

On behalf of the entire organization, we thank Mr Arreola, Mr Hawn, Mr Marsh, and Mr Zoslocki for graciously agreeing to our request. We think we can promise everyone a lively, entertaining, and informative evening!

PFLAG Modesto's First-Ever Mayoral Candidate Q&A

Tuesday October 18th, 2011 7-9pm
Emanuel Lutheran Church

Formal, structured question and answer session with all four
mayoral candidates—
Armando Arreola, Brad Hawn, Garrad Marsh, and Bill Zoslocki.

Submit questions for A SPECIFIC CANDIDATE on issues important to
the LGBTQ community by email: pres@pflagmodesto.org

PFLAG Modesto Meeting Schedule

- * **First Tuesday meeting - October 4, 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 October 12. Contact info@pflagmodesto.org or pres@pflagmodesto.org for details.
- * **Third Tuesday meeting - October 18, held from 7 to 9pm** at the Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto. **This month - Mayoral Debate!**



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I see therapy as a natural response to life's pressures and inevitable challenges. We all gain by learning more about ourselves, and those close to us - our partners, children, family, friends and co-workers - also benefit from these efforts.

Many people have concerns, doubts and upsets. I help create a comfortable and trusting relationship where sensitive issues can be safely explored and understood.

We all possess wisdom, experience compassion. By focusing on these strengths, and offering insights, my intention is to support the change you wish to create.

If you have questions or would like to set up an initial phone consultation or appointment, please contact me by phone at 209-765-2029

Your Dues and Donations at work

PFLAG Modesto began dues season for 2012 on September 1st. THANK YOU to those who have already submitted dues payments through the mail, in person, or by using our convenient online payment option. Paying on time saves us work and future hassle.

If you haven't paid your dues yet, or have never been a member of PFLAG Modesto before and wonder why you should become a member, allow us to explain how your dollars help the organization and the LGBTQ community in Stanislaus County.

The first \$15 of every membership goes to PFLAG National directly. PFLAG National provides support to each chapter. It prints the literature that we make available at meetings and outreach events. It has a lobbying wing in Washington DC that influences and affects pro-LGBTQ legislation. And it provides the local chapters with training opportunities and oversees programs like "Straight for Equality," "Safe Schools Project," and "The Diversity Network."

Every dollar we receive in dues beyond the first \$15 is kept in our local chapter. In addition to paying rent to Emanuel Lutheran to keep our doors open, here are a few ways we've spent the money you've generously provided in 2011:

- **Our monthly newsletter**, now printed out-of-house to save time and other resources
- **Literature and library** for people who come seeking answers and support
- **STOP BULLIES NOW!**, a community roundtable on April 9th aimed to spread respect and stop bullies in our schools through dialogue and brainstorming
- **SPREAD RESPECT—STOP BULLIES** posters for local schools and faculty areas, taking our message and logo directly to the students and educators
- **Healthy TRANSitions**, our pilot program to bring much-needed care to the area's Transgender and Transitioning people
- **Enhanced community presence and involvement**, by sponsoring Modesto Pride Festival's first "Teen Zone," outreach projects at Pride and the Social Justice Youth Conference, developing LGBT sensitivity/awareness curriculum for outside agencies, and an improved "new media" presence with Facebook and website
- **Refreshments** at our social events and potlucks

Every person who has given PFLAG Modesto even a dollar has helped in our work to provide support, advocacy, and love to Stanislaus County's LGBTQ community—and have helped us take the message of tolerance and acceptance to places we've never been before!

We desperately need your help to continue this important work in 2012. Please renew your membership with PFLAG Modesto today—or consider joining the organization for the first time this year. Fill out and return the attached pdf form, or pay using a credit or debit card through Paypal on our website: <http://pflagmodesto.org/giveback.html>, selecting the appropriate membership that fits you or your family.

On behalf of the PFLAG Modesto Board of Directors, we thank you in advance for your support in 2012, and we look forward to working with you to provide services and support to the entire LGBTQ community.

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



As I write this, it's heading toward late September. Autumn is in three days. It's 96 degrees. I'm hot. I'm tired of summer. I'm also aware that, come March, I'll be tired of being cold all the time.

I'm tired of a lot of things.

There is a malaise that hangs like a warm, stifling blanket around here. I walk into my "real" job, and the malaise is palpable; the people standing in line, the clerks behind the windows, the guards at the metal detector. Walking on the streets downtown, or in supermarket aisles, you can see the quiet desperation in people's eyes. If our eyes happen to meet, the look says it all:

"Save me from life. Get me out of here."

Bad news—it's been falling on us like sheets in a torrent since 2008. The economy, stories of human misery and suffering, mismanagement and criminal behavior at all levels of government, poverty and starvation in the Land of the Free...how can any of us be anything BUT tired?

Soon it will be Thanksgiving. I love Thanksgiving. I love that someone once upon a time in this nation's history felt compelled to set aside one day out of 365 to step away from the challenges and problems that comes with living and reflect on all that is good about life instead.

One day to refrain from idle complaints. One day to think the best—about ourselves, our lives, our work, and our world.

While networking at the Modesto Pride Festival, I heard disturbing things from too many people about things that are being said about PFLAG Modesto as an organization. These comments were so similar from one person to another that it was clear that I was hearing a carefully scripted, orchestrated smear campaign against the organization I have come to love, believe in, and work very hard for. It borders on, and perhaps crosses over into, slander.

Today though, rather than complaining about the smallness of others and thinking the worst about them or PFLAG, I am choosing to revel in our accomplishments. I choose to think the best.

We are learning to do with less. And not just the same with less—we're doing MORE with less.

We have made and continue to make great inroads to end bullying in our schools. We have been and will continue to be the area's only vocal advocate for the Trans community.

We believe and always will that our own stories, our own journeys, and our own experiences are worth a million hours of training and fancy diplomas—and those stories, journeys, and experiences are as relevant today as they were five, fifteen, and twenty years ago.

We continue to open our doors and our arms to all, regardless of socio-economic status, political ideology, religious affiliation, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any of the other labels that divide and conquer society.

We are sought out by people who want to learn and understand the important things of human struggle and civil behavior: Tolerance, acceptance, and love.

So today, I reject my own propensity for idle complaining as a waste of time and energy. All of it won't change a thing. I will let people think what they will, say what they will. The truth will come out in the end. It always does.

Instead, I will be thankful for the Modesto chapter of PFLAG. I will bask in the good this organization has brought to the lives of many, and the good work it does across the county. I will think the best.

And I will be better for it.

OUR FALL FUND DRIVE, in addition to collecting dues, is a great way to ensure adequate funding for projects for the rest of 2011 and into 2012. There are two opportunities to help PFLAG Modesto raise money:

We have launched another **Flower Power** fundraiser after the success of a similar program last spring. This time, bulbs one would plant in the fall for spring blooming, like tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths, are featured. **50% of every dollar spent is given back to PFLAG Modesto and will help us achieve our goal of \$1500!** Visit the page we've created—<http://www.flowerpowerfundraising.com/i/t/224366/G80M5oK7s8gV>—and place your order today. Share this link with family and friends and encourage them to order and help us meet our goal, too! This campaign runs from 9/25 through 10/28.

The folks at **Merchants Insurance and Financial Services** have made their support of PFLAG Modesto public by initiating a donation program at their office! Merchants will donate \$25 per household for every policy they bind. They specialize in home, auto, life, and health insurance plans, as well as business risk management. For a free quote, call (209) 681-5160 or stop in their office, 4660 Spyres Way in Modesto. Be sure to mention PFLAG Modesto when inquiring.

Our thanks to Flower Power, Merchants Insurance, and all of you for your continued financial support of PFLAG Modesto!

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.

After taking a break in 2011, MoFest!7—our film festival celebrating Stanislaus County's LGBT community—will return to the State Theatre on May 19, 2012.

Our first steps in planning the film festival rolled out last month: a page on our website, and the addition there of an entry form for local filmmakers to submit their work for consideration. If you are a local filmmaker or know one who's made a film that would appeal to the LGBT community, please fill out the form found at <http://pflagmodesto.org/events/mofest7.html> and return it by October 15th.

Soon we will assemble a committee to work on MoFest!7. We want new, fresh ideas to make this seventh film festival an amazing experience. If you'd like to be on the committee and haven't yet spoken to us about it, email Bill (pres@pflagmodesto.org) to be added to the list. And if you've seen a good film that would fit into an LGBT film festival, pass on the title to the email address above.

In the next month we will also be sending out letters soliciting donations to help fund the film festival. Look for them to begin appearing in your mailboxes by November 1st. On behalf of everyone PFLAG Modesto represents and serves, we thank you in advance for your generosity in making MoFest!7 a reality!

A new TRANSGENDER and TRANSITIONING SUPPORT GROUP has been added to our first Tuesday Support Nights beginning the October 4th meeting. This is the area's first support group specifically geared toward the Trans community in over two years.

This peer-led group, part of our Healthy TRANSitions program and commitment to serve the Trans community better, will meet once per month and is the brainchild of two PFLAG Modesto supporters, **Janiece Eaton** and **Clayton Eli**.

If you would benefit from this service, plan on attending. If you know someone who needs this support group, please pass the word along.

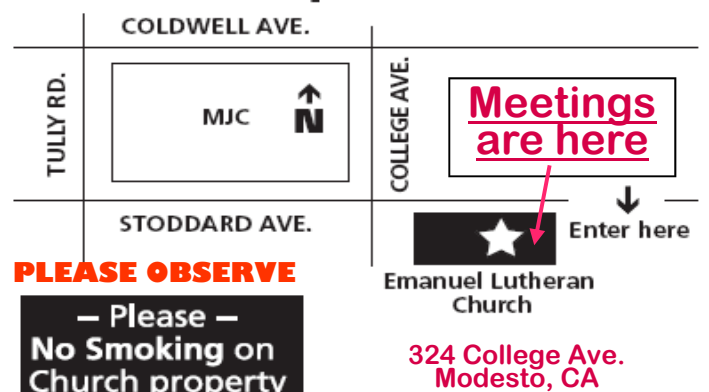
Trans Support will meet in conjunction with PFLAG Modesto's Support Night on the first Tuesday of every month, from 7-9pm at Emanuel Lutheran Church—324 College Avenue.

Birdcage - October 9

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 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.