



The PFLAG Link

MIDLAND—BAY CITY—SAGINAW CHAPTER
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<http://www.pflag-mbs.org>

February 2008

Special Film Presentation at December Meeting

Coming Out brings emotional changes for families

PFLAG Tri-Cities will view the movie “**Anyone & Everyone**” at our February 24 meeting. “Anyone & Everyone” discusses the experiences of parents of a gay son or daughter. Filmmaker **Susan Polis Schutz** has brought out the deepest feelings of surprise and dismay felt by several families whose children came out to them. The moving honesty and truthfulness in these coming-out stories carries forward into the subjects’ ultimate decisions whether to let go of their preconceptions about sexuality in favor of ongoing acceptance of their gay loved ones. Parents talk about the painful struggles their sons and daughters have dealt with, such as not being accepted by their relatives and/or friends, and being ostracized by religious congregations. Schutz depicts families from such diverse backgrounds as Japanese, Bolivian, and Cherokee, as well as from various religious denominations such as Mormon, Jewish, Catholic and Hindu. These parents share intimate accounts of how their children revealed their sexual orientation and discuss their responses. “**Anyone & Everyone**” was screened at the National PFLAG Conference and is a must-see for all PFLAGers and their gay friends. To allow time for discussion after the film, the schedule for the February meeting has changed. The film will be screened after announcements, and the discussion and support groups will follow afterward.

March Meeting Date Moved

The next **PFLAG Tri-Cities** Meeting will be March 16. The meeting has been moved up so members can observe Easter Sunday and not miss the meeting.

Making Schools Safe for All

Join lobbying efforts for “Matt’s Law”

On March 28, 2007, Michigan’s House passed **Matt’s Safe Schools Law**. This coming March 26, you will have the chance to ask your State Senator to join with the State House, **Governor Granholm**, more than a dozen organizations across Michigan and you in support of this important legislation to make our schools safer. Bullying isn’t just a childhood rite of passage. It is harrowing, it is damaging, and it leads to consequences including suicide and depression as well as skipping and dropping out of school. The bill is named for **Matt Epling**, who killed himself at age 14 after being bullied. Matt isn’t the only young person in Michigan who couldn’t face another day in school. At Triangle Foundation’s web site, read about **Kristina Calco** and **Chrystal Ann Eaton** – two girls who also committed suicide because they were bullied one time too many. For more, and to register to participate, see <http://www.tri.org/ssld.html>.

Chocolate: Food of Love? You Decide

Annual Decadent Fundraiser scheduled for March 29

It was **William Shakespeare** who said, “If Chocolate be the food of Love... Chew On!” Okay, he was actually referring to music, but the principle’s the same. Reserve March 29 for the PFLAG/Perceptions Chocolate Party. Come see a beautiful Victorian home, enjoy the sensuous pleasure of the magic of the cacao bean and its diverse products, and help provide operating funds for both Tri-Cities PFLAG and Saginaw Valley Perceptions. Friends are welcome! Donations will be collected at the door, or you can mail them to PFLAG Tri-Cities, c/o Jim Doane, 44 Bretton Place, Saginaw, MI 48602, designated for Chocolate Party. For more, see www.perceptionssv.org.

This Month’s Meeting:

Sunday, Feb. 24, 2 p.m.
Unitarian/Universalist Fellowship,
6220 Jefferson at Wackerly, Midland

Refreshments:

February: **Jim & Linda Doane**
March: **Ed Hutchison**
April: **Ruth Baker**
May: **Leo Romo**
June: **Pat Buerkel**

Calendar:

Next Meeting: **Sunday, March 16** (One week earlier than usual)

Michigan Lesbian & Gay ComedyFest

Sunday, March 8 at 6 and 9:30 PM
Ford Community & Performing Arts
Center, Dearborn
(See www.comedyfest.org)

PFLAG/Perceptions Chocolate Party

Saturday, March 29
Location and Start Time TBA

To make comments regarding
The PFLAG Link,
contact **Brian Baker** at (989) 772-5393 or
lineweaver1080@charter.net

Not Going Solo in the Hinterlands

PFLAG National begins new effort for coordination and communication

Responding to requests, **PFLAG National** has instituted a new online community resource for leaders and members of rural chapters: a Yahoo! group called **PFLAGinruralAmerica**. It will promote contact and communication among members like us - whose efforts are affected by the challenges that come from working in communities with lower populations and, often, more conservative views. Questions will be posed for group discussion each month. To join, send an e-mail to Brooke Smith at bsmith@pflag.org. Please include your name, e-mail address and chapter.

Laugh to Lighten the Load

Triangle Foundation Holds Two-Show Comedy Night

Come and laugh with four of the funniest comics and musicians! The Lesbian and Gay Comedyfest will be on Saturday, March 8, with two shows, 6 and 9:30 PM. The show features comedians **Vickie Shaw, Richard Ryder, Dana Austin**, and comic/musician **Roxanne Ward**. A special hotel rate is available at the Doubletree Hotel - Detroit for the nights of March 7 & 8. Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door (as available.) Information and bios of the comics are available online at www.comedyfest.org.

The Positive Power of Not Showing Up

Local LGBT Rights Groups respond pro-actively to extremists' threat

The **Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka**, famous for protesting funerals of victims of AIDS and soldiers fallen in the Iraq War, has announced plans to target Kalamazoo. With the planned **Kalamazoo Central High School** production of "**The Laramie Project**," a play depicting an investigation into the events surrounding the murder of **Matthew Shepard** in Laramie, Wyoming, the church announced plans to mount a protest. Gay rights organizations are mobilizing a strategy designed to counter the church's objectives without polarizing the community and sparking an even stronger reaction. Instead of protesting, supporters of GLBT rights are asked to purchase tickets for the play, make donations to the High School's theatre department, and attend a rally supporting the formation of Gay-Straight Alliances in high schools. The rally will be on Saturday, March 8. Information will be available at www.kglrc.org. In Michigan, the church's demonstrations at soldiers' memorials eventually resulted in passage of laws preventing protests at military funerals.

Rove Rage?

High School Student Bests "Bush's Brain"

On Monday, February 11, former White House aide **Karl Rove** appeared on the campus of Choate Rosemary Hall, a private boarding school for grades 9 -12 in New Haven, CT. The following was reported in the Hartford Courant by staff writer Arielle Levin Becker (www.courant.com, Feb 12, 2008): "Then there was **Marla Spivak**. Spivak, a senior from Hamden, was one of the students invited to have lunch earlier with Rove. That left her somewhat emboldened as she stood before the crowd and asked Rove to explain how giving gay people the right to marry would endanger other people. Rove took issue with the way the first gay marriages came about, through the Massachusetts Supreme Court. An issue as important as the definition of marriage should be resolved by a legislature or a referendum, not a court, he said. Gay couples could gain the legal rights of married couples through legislation without actually getting married, he said. But wouldn't creating a separate body of legislation for gay people be creating a separate but equal system, a step back?, Spivak asked. Rove replied with an answer about Mormons changing their views on marriage to conform with the nation's laws. Spivak kept pressing. "You never actually answered, how does it threaten anyone?" she asked. Rove asked, what's the compelling reason to throw out 5,000 years of understanding the institution of marriage as between a man and a woman? What, Spivak countered, was the compelling reason for society to allow interracial relationships when they had once been outlawed. Then Rove invoked the Declaration of Independence before Spivak interjected that its reference to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" seemed to support her claims. Their verbal pingpong match tapered off after Rove brought up polygamy and Spivak acknowledged that she did not know enough about polygamy to answer. Rove later asked when she planned to run for political office.