



The PFLAG Link

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

March 2008

A Pair of Aces

This month's speakers bring a unique spiritual partnership

The **Rev. Wayne Nicholson** and his partner **Harry Kelley** will be our guests at this month's Tri-Cities PFLAG meeting. Rector at St. John's Episcopal Church in Mount Pleasant, Wayne, who prefers the use of his first name over "Father" or "Reverend," leads a congregation of 130, who happily called as their pastor a priest who happens to be gay. Built more than a century ago in the heart of the Mount Pleasant community, St. John's defines itself as a family in the broadest sense, reaching out enthusiastically to include all. Wayne describes his post as "Joyful!... St. John's and the Episcopal Church in general has an identity that is thoughtful and progressive," or what Wayne describes as a true alternative to what he senses as the usual character of modern Christianity. Wayne's partner Harry was a sheep farmer who made sheep cheese for ten years. For ten years before that he worked for Young & Rubicam as a senior Vice President in creative services, as well as enjoying theatre directing, acting and composing. "I am a lifetime member of the Lehmen Engel Musical Theatre Workshop. I have a long history of actively working in the church as a gay Christian--going back to the Stonewall Era."

March Meeting Date Moved

Wondering why the newsletter seems early this month? The next **PFLAG Tri-Cities** Meeting will be March 16. The meeting has been moved up to avoid conflicts with members' celebrations of the Easter holiday

Making Schools Safe for All

This is the month to be heard! Join lobbying efforts for "Matt's Law"

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. On Wednesday, 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 "Matt's Law," important legislation designed to make our schools safer. 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>.

A Message from our Chapter President

*From **Bob Malosh**, Tri-Cities PFLAG Chapter President*

I am pleased to announce that PFLAG Tri-Cities will be hosting the Michigan PFLAG state conference to be held September 20th at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Midland. We will have 4 or 5 workshops, with 2 or 3 workshops to be presented by national PFLAG staff. Please save this date. We are hoping to have good attendance from our chapter. With decent attendance from other chapters, we could develop contacts with other chapters and our PFLAG National representatives and gain new insight to issues important to PFLAG and our loved ones. We will be needing volunteers to help with setup, welcoming attendees, serving lunch, moving chairs, etc. Let me know if you would be willing to help. I hope to see many of you there.

This Month's Meeting:

Sunday, March 16, 2 p.m.
Unitarian/Universalist Fellowship,
6220 Jefferson at Wackerly, Midland

Refreshments:

March: **Ed Hutchison**
April: **Ruth Baker**
May: **Leo Romo**
June: **Pat Buerkel**

Calendar:

Next Meeting: **Sunday, April 27**

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

Silky... Smooth... Darkly Appealing...

Indulge and give generously: Annual Chocolate Party in Saginaw on March 29

No, we're not talking "sensual" in the prurient sense, but merely in the creamy, melty, flavorful sense. 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.

Lawrence King: A Tragic Victim of Junior High School Homophobia?

After Killing, Legislator Works to Improve Diversity Training; One Thousand Turn Out for Vigil

As reported by The Advocate.com on February 21, based on reporting in the LA Times, a California state legislator is responding to the murder of 15-year-old **Lawrence King** by introducing a bill expanding diversity education in California schools. King, a gay student in Oxnard, California, was fatally shot in a classroom in what prosecutors allege was a hate crime. Quoted in both the LA Times and Advocate.com stories, Democratic assemblyman **Mike Eng** hopes to "focus on prevention... We already have bills on the books about proper punishment; mine will focus on dealing with hatred in a school setting." According to reports, "Eng said his bill would help develop a procedure for teachers and administrators to notify counselors or law enforcement when they learn of student harassment that suggests a potential hate crime." Two days earlier, the Times reported that a vigil, hastily organized by two Oxnard high school sophomores who expected perhaps 100-200 people to turn out, resulted in a diverse crowd of one thousand people who assembled to pay tribute to King and express their grief and dismay over his killing. According to the Times' website LATimes.com on February 17, "King... had revealed he was gay this school year. In recent weeks, he had begun accessorizing his school uniform with feminine items and was often teased by other students, several of his classmates said. 'What he did was really brave - to wear makeup and high-heeled boots,' said **Erin Mings**, 12, who hung out with King at E.O. Green [Junior High School]... Mings said King stood his ground, and was an outgoing and funny boy." "When people came up and started punking him, he just stood up for himself," the Time quoted Mings as saying. According to the Times, "Authorities allege that **Brandon McInerney**, 14, shot King in the head in a classroom full of students early Tuesday... Prosecutors have refused to discuss a possible motive for the shooting. But several students said King and a group of boys, including McInerney, had a verbal confrontation concerning King's sexual orientation a day before the killing."

True Colors Tour Coming to Clarkston in June

The following was announced on the PFLAG National website: "We're hitting the road this summer with **Cyndi Lauper** for the second annual True Colors Tour in support of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) equality. The tour will feature five hours of non-stop music and entertainment by headliners **Cyndi Lauper**, **The B-52s**, and exciting special guests in select cities including **Rosie O'Donnell**, **Wanda Sykes**, **Indigo Girls**, **Tegan and Sara**, **Regina Spektor**, **Joan Jett and the Blackhearts**, **Joan Armatrading**, **Nona Hendryx**, **Deborah Cox**, **The Cliks**, and many more. Hosted by Queer Eye "Fab Five" member **Carson Kressley**, the tour will visit 24 cities across the United States and Canada from May 31st to July 5th. The True Colors Tour was conceived by Cyndi Lauper stemming from her desire to give back to the LGBT community for the love and support they have given her throughout her career. The True Colors Tour is a celebration of the basic values and freedoms that should be shared by all Americans regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression. Attendees will experience these values through the music of both legendary icons and the newest and coolest acts this generation has to offer. Tickets for select cities will go on sale beginning March 15th and will be available at www.ticketmaster.com. Tour dates near our area include Toronto on June 4, Chicago on June 10, and the DTE Energy Music Theatre in Clarkston, Michigan on June 11. For more official tour & ticket information please visit: www.truecolorstour.com.