



# The PFLAG Link

MIDLAND, BAY CITY & SAGINAW CHAPTER  
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[www.pflag-mbs.org](http://www.pflag-mbs.org)

February 2009

## This Month's Meeting:

Sunday, February 22, 2 p.m.  
Unitarian/Universalist Fellowship,  
6220 Jefferson at Wackerly, Midland

**Speaker: Paula Turner**

**Meetings: 2:00-3:00 Support**

**Groups; 3-3:30 Break; 3:30-4:30**

**Speaker**

## Next Month's Meeting:

Sunday, March 22 at 2 p.m.

**Enclosed with this Link: YOUR Membership Form!** If you're not already a member, you can support our work for equality and support equality. Clip and mail the form with your membership fee; see next page.

**PFLAG Michigan 2009 Statewide Meeting** April 4, sponsored by Genesee PFLAG

**It's February. We all need comfort.** For most of us, chocolate is the primary comfort food, but its restorative virtue doubles in the presence of friends. That's why you'll enjoy this year's PFLAG and Perceptions Annual Chocolate Party, held Saturday March 14 from 6 to 9 PM. Held this year at the historic Wolfarth House, an 1893 Queen Anne Victorian located at 1000 Hoyt Ave., Saginaw. Your hosts: Kevin and Bill. See [wolfarthhouse.org](http://wolfarthhouse.org).

**Need help? PFLAG is here.** PFLAG TriCities supports families with GLBT children at all ages and all stages of life. We can help with

- ▶ Bullying or harassment problems
- ▶ Family Support
- ▶ Issues Awareness and Education

Each monthly meeting has room to address all three. Join us Sunday at 2 p.m. For help anytime, call 941-1458. Calls and meetings are always confidential.

**"LINK up" early!** Send your email address to the [Editor](mailto:Editor@lineweaver1080@charter.net) at [lineweaver1080@charter.net](mailto:lineweaver1080@charter.net) and get the *LINK* up to two days earlier than the postal version. Our email list is confidential

## A Pioneering Heritage: Present Company Accepted

At this month's meeting, we'll hear from a granddaughter of a pioneer of equality. Award-winning photojournalist **Paula Turner** will describe her varied career in photography and teaching. With experience in multiple disciplines including

portraiture, environmental photography and event planning, her pictures and writing have been published in several magazines and newspapers. Today she teaches a variety of workshops and classes, including the largest

high school photojournalism workshop in the country. She will also talk about her grandfather, **J. Max Turner**, an actor, author and playwright who was among the first openly - and proudly - gay public figures in the area.

## OPINION: Lawsuit Against Coach & CMU: Teachable Moment or Misdirection?

In our adversarial legal system, each side presents not the simple truth, but its best possible depiction of events and motives. Thus, lawsuits can include impressive efforts to color facts. Members of the public must then form their opinions from access that is limited by the news media. The recently publicized lawsuit against Central Michigan University and its women's basketball coach is an example. The suit claims the coach harrassed a student "because of her... refusal to adopt a homosexual preference" - an idea that should seem as ridiculous to the community at large as it does to the gay community - and one that

would be wholly offensive, if it were true.

The student newspaper [CM Life](#) published its own investigation about the coach's employment history, while the Mount Pleasant [Morning Sun](#) wrote its story based solely on the allegations stated in the lawsuit and a brief statement from CMU, which said the suit was "without merit" and would be "vigorously defended."

At this point it's not even clear that the coach is gay - something CMU's own policies prevent it from knowing or asking. So that particular point should only have relevance if allegations are proven in court. However, the [Morning Sun](#) actually pulled readers'

comments from its online version of the story because, as reporter Mark Ranzenburger wrote, "they included hate speech." Thus we see that this odd case brings a serious potential for backlash against efforts to promote understanding and equality - because some members of the public feel only too able to judge the situation. But would they also object if a male coach tried to inspire his male players by accusing them of being gay? In this case, the CMU coach's sexual orientation should not be the issue, but court cases are steered by public opinion, hateful or not. Funny how that is. Sad, too.

## Engage Enjoy Yourself...

Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 14th for Perceptions & PFLAG's Annual Chocolate Party. This year's venue is the historic Wolfarth House, 1000 Hoyt St., Saginaw. Our hosts, **Kevin & Bill**, will welcome visitors to this beautifully restored 1893 Queen Anne

Victorian home from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Mingle with friends and enjoy a selection of chocolate treats. Free will donation benefits the programs of both Perceptions and PFLAG Tri-Cities. (Photo courtesy [wolfarthhouse.org](http://wolfarthhouse.org))



## We Only LOSE when we GIVE UP

Join PFLAG, **Triangle Foundation** and others in Lansing on Mar. 25<sup>th</sup> to ask your representative - yet again - to support Matt's Law. Introduced as Senate Bill 159 by **Sen. Glenn Anderson**, this law to protect school-children from bullying must start over after its opponents refused to allow it out on the floor on Dec. 18.

## Courage Campaign Fights Forced Divorce of Same Sex Couples Under California Prop 8

**Ken Starr**, best known as the former Special Prosecutor who investigated **President Bill Clinton**, filed a legal S brief last month on behalf of the "Yes on 8" campaign that would forcibly divorce 18,000 same-sex couples who were married in California last year before the passage of Prop 8. The California Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in this case on March 5, with a decision expected within 90 days. A video can be viewed at [couragecampaign.org/page/s/divorce](http://couragecampaign.org/page/s/divorce).

## Mel White and Son on National TV show

Last Sunday at 8 PM Eastern, CBS broadcast its season premiere of "The Amazing Race." Featured among its participants was **Mel White**, author of "Stranger at the Gate," racing with his son **Mike**. Take a look at the [CBS web profile](#) of Mel and Mike, and note CBS' statement: "Mel is now married to his life partner of 27 years, **Gary Nixon**."

## Help for Conversations in Church: Equality, Sexuality & Transgender

**Freedom to Marry Week** (Feb. 8-14) is barely over, but the effort goes on, and it's not too late to promote marriage equality - just by having a simple conversation with friends. The [Institute for Welcoming Resources](#) provides information and inspiration for people who want to improve the conversation in their home churches regarding sexuality and equality. Their "7 Conversations in 7 Days" campaign encouraged LGBT

people and supporters to build support. "We have to break the silence with friends, neighbors, and others around us -- not just assuming they get it, but actually having the conversations about who gay people are, why marriage matters, and how we need them to speak up against second-class citizenship," said **Evan Wolfson**, executive director of Freedom to Marry and author of *Why Marriage Matters*:

America, Equality and Gay People's Right to Marry. Also, on Feb. 13 came the release of "transACTION," a new curriculum designed for churches and religious institutions to help congregants and members understand and welcome transgender persons into their congregations and faith settings. Information is available at [welcomingresources.org](http://welcomingresources.org).

## GR TV Station Pulls Hate-filled Show... Learns Lesson?

The citizens of Grand Rapids missed a chance to hear the "other side" of the "gay agenda" on Saturday after local TV station WOOD changed its mind. The self-sponsored program "Speechless: Silencing Christians," stridently promoted by the American Family Association and airing regularly on **INSP The Inspiration Network**, was originally scheduled for Monday Feb. 9 at 7 PM, shortly before **Pres. Obama's** first live press conference. When the station received protests from the **Human Rights Campaign** and others, the near-prime-time slot was withdrawn; the show's

producers failed to respond to the station's offer of 2 PM the following Saturday. Station General Manager **Diane Kniewski** said "Our station is being bombarded with calls and messages, and we find ourselves in the middle of someone else's fight. Ours was a fair offer and we are removing ourselves from this matter." Claiming the messages received were roughly half in favor and half against, the station's decision was praised by **Colette Beighley**, former Communications Director for Triangle Foundation. In its original "Action Alert" about

the program, the Human Rights Campaign stated, "The AFA program is hosted by controversial talk show host **Janet Parshall**, who in 2006, suggested **Matthew Shepard's** lifestyle was responsible for his murder and called gay adoption "state-sanctioned child abuse." (CNN's Larry King Live, Jan. 17, 2006.)" "Make no mistake," said HRC President **Joe Salmonese**, "This is the opening salvo in a campaign designed to denigrate LGBT Americans and deny us our basic rights." "...the AFA unleashes 60 minutes of lies and distortions to scare voters."

### **PFLAG Tri-Cities Membership Form**

Your PFLAG membership helps promote equality and provides help for area families and individuals dealing with discrimination and misunderstanding about sexual identity and orientation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (cell) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please send newsletter via:  email  US mail

To join, clip and send this form with your check for \$40, made out to PFLAG TriCities, PO Box 834, Bay City Michigan, 48707.