



January 2009

The PFLAG Link

MIDLAND, BAY CITY & SAGINAW CHAPTER
P.O. BOX 834, BAY CITY, MI 48707
989-941-1458

www.pflag-mbs.org

This Month's Meeting:

Sunday, January 25, 2 p.m.
Unitarian/Universalist Fellowship,
6220 Jefferson at Wackerly, Midland

Speaker: Josh Marshall, a Midland High School student who is working to establish a GSA.

Next Month's Meeting:

Sunday, February. 22 2 p.m.

PFLAG Michigan 2009 Statewide Meeting April 8, sponsored by Genesee PFLAG

Know someone who is unsure about LGBT issues? Bring them to the **Debate About Gay Marriage** featuring **John Corvino** and **Glenn Stanton**. Philosophy professor Corvino teaches at Wayne State; Stanton follows family issues for Focus on the Family. February 3 at Saginaw Valley State University.

PFLAG and its affiliate chapters are committed to diversity and to encouraging changes in our laws and society which promote equality. Our meetings are open to all regardless of political, social or religious beliefs. While we meet at the **Midland Unitarian/Universalist Church**, we have no affiliation with any church or political party. **All are welcome.**

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 and get the **LINK** up to two days earlier than the postal version. Our email list is confidential and is never shared.

It Takes Vision

High School: We never really leave it behind. No wonder the pressure placed on LGBT youth can be overwhelming. This month, **Josh Marshall**, is a

Midland High School student who is working to build a bridge of support: a Gay-Straight Alliance. These student-built,

peer-led groups are crucial for creating understanding and tolerance for this generation, and the next.

Move Over, Rick Warren: Gene Goes First

As reported in The Advocate's online edition on January 14, The Right Reverend **Gene Robinson**, the first openly gay person to be ordained a bishop in the Episcopal Church, was asked to deliver the invocation at the Inauguration's opening ceremony Sunday, January 18. Robinson told New Hampshire's *Concord Monitor* that his inclusion would be incredibly affirming to gay people. "It's important for any minority to

see themselves represented in some way," Robinson said. A spokesman for the inaugural committee told the *Monitor* that Robinson was given the opportunity to participate in the opening ceremony because of his contribution to the religious community and his efforts on behalf of Obama during the campaign. Robinson's endorsement prior to New Hampshire primary was

considered a big coup for the campaign. Robinson also revealed recently that **President-elect Obama** sought out his counsel and reflections on what it was like to be "a first." While the events in the two days before the Inauguration were covered by HBO, technical problems and the schedule prevented Rev. Robinson's invocation from being broadcast.

Pepsi Co Targeted by AFA for its Pro-LGBT Policies, says PFLAG

The **American Family Association** launched a boycott of PepsiCo based on the PepsiCo Foundation's support of [PFLAG](#) and [HRC](#). In a January 8th Action Alert, AFA members are told that the soft drink conglomerate gave \$1 million to "help promote homosexuality in the workplace." AFA continues by

saying Pepsi "forces" its employees to attend sexual orientation and gender-identity diversity training "where they are taught to accept homosexuality." You can call PepsiCo's customer relations line at **800-433-2652** and tell the operator that you want to thank Pepsi for its support of your family and will purchase

Pepsi products whenever possible to show your support for the company's welcoming policies. PepsiCo brands include Mountain Dew, Mug Root Beer, Quaker, Gatorade, Tropicana, Frito Lay, Lipton ready-to-drink beverages, Dole juices, Ocean Spray juices, SoBe and Aquafina.

CMU Instructors Study Family and Work Issues (and you can help)

Dr. Brad van Eeden-Moorefield and **Dr. Tara Saathoff-Wells**, faculty in Human Development and Family Studies at Central Michigan University, ask for your help in a research project that examines how work influences family life and vice versa. They think it is extremely important for GLBT individuals to be represented in

research and are trying, specifically, to recruit couples who are in current romantic relationships of at least 3 months to participate in this study. They are asking people to complete an anonymous survey on the Internet. For completing the survey, participants will select one of three national charities

(National AIDS Foundation, Special Olympics, or The American Cancer Society) and a donation of \$2 will be made on their behalf. Additionally, they will be entered into a drawing for 1 of 36 online gift cards to Target™ in the amount of \$50. For more, see <http://www.perceptionssv.org/Couples+Careers.pdf>

Saginaw Valley State University GSA Charity Drag Show

Wednesday, March 4th - Charity Drag Show 8:00 pm until midnight. The **Gay-Straight Alliance** at SVSU presents its Second Annual Charity Drag Show to benefit AIDS Walk Michigan. Wed. March 4 at 8 PM at the Richard Thompson Student Activities Room, Saginaw Valley State University, 7400 Bay Rd., University Center, MI 48710. Admission \$2 at the door. Bring your dollar bills to "vote" for your favorite performer.

Special Screening of Prayers for Bobby, Saturday, January 24

Royal Oak, MI – PFLAG Detroit and Pronto! are hosting a special screening of Prayers for Bobby, filmed in Royal Oak starring **Sigourney Weaver**. Set in the 70s, a mother struggles to accept her gay teenage son Bobby. Bobby's tragic fate causes her to question her faith. Ultimately, this mother changes her views in ways that she never could have imagined. Come and watch the film with family and friends. There will be raffles and prizes awarded throughout the evening.

Saturday, January 24, 2009
4:00p.m. to 11:00pm (The drama premieres on *Lifetime* that evening at 9 PM ET.)

Pronto! Restaurant
608 Washington St.
Royal Oak, MI 48067

"**Sigourney Weaver** won't be with us, but several people, including **Claire White**, who played Sheila, will be in attendance along with several extras in the film," said **Larry Jack**, Co-president of PFLAG Detroit.

Out 'N' About" Founder Dies

Joann Downing fought for the rights of the LGBT community and all people's rights -- also including women and people of various racial backgrounds -- and did so insistently and without regard for herself. Downing, 53, died January 7th at McLaren Medical Center after more than a decade battle with cancer. **Jim Larkin** reports for *Between the Lines*.

<http://www.pridesource.com/article.shtml?article=33610>

Transgender Group on Yahoo Now Open to All

An online group for transgendered people has been opened to include interested persons other than those who can attend the group's meetings in person. The **Perceptions of Saginaw Valley Transgender**

Yahoo Group began as a way of continuing the conversation from the monthly meetings. Now the group is open to anyone who wishes to join, whether transgender, friend,

family, ally, or simply those who desire to learn more about transgender issues. See <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PSVTG/join> for more.

State Department Rules Due for Review by Senator Clinton

Senator **Hillary Clinton** said Tuesday during her confirmation hearing for Secretary of State that she intended to review the department's policy of not extending benefits to partners of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender foreign service officers. But Clinton stopped short of giving a specific commitment to make partner benefits available, saying she needed more information on the existing policies.

Beyond being deprived of health care benefits, same-sex partners of foreign service personnel are currently unable to access other services available

to heterosexual spouses, such as subsidized relocation, language training, employment opportunities, on-site medical treatment, and evacuation aid in emergency situations.

Democratic senator **Russ Feingold** of Wisconsin posed the question to Clinton after he noted that addressing these inequities was a natural outgrowth of the need to build a more robust diplomatic corps.

"Will you support changes to existing personnel policy in order to ensure that LGBT staff at State and [the U.S. Agency for International Development] receive equal benefits and

support?" he asked.

Clinton responded: "Senator, this issue was brought to my attention during the transition. I've asked to have more briefing on it because I think that we should take a hard look at the existing policy. As I understand it, but don't hold me to it because I don't have the full briefing material, but my understanding is other nations have moved to extend that partnership benefit. And we will come back to you to inform you of decisions we make going forward."

(Reported in *The Advocate* online January 14)

17th Annual Midwest LGBT Ally College Conference

The **Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Ally College Conference** (MBLGTACC) will hold its 17th annual conference Feb. 13-15, 2009 at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana.

Bloomington, home of the world-renowned **Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction**, was recently ranked by *The Advocate* as the nation's No. 1 gay-friendly small town vacation destination. Indiana University was included in *The Advocate's* top 20 list of schools for LGBT students while the Campus Climate Index rated IU 3.5 out of 5 in a recent survey.

MBLGTACC keynote speakers are "The L Word" Writer/Director/Producer **Rose**

Troche, out ESPN sports columnist **LZ Granderson**, and ISU Professor **Kand McQueen**.

Conference entertainment will be provided by dragapella beautyshop quartet **The Kinsey Sicks** and OUTmedia's Queer Riot! featuring comedians **Julie Goldman, Marga Gomez, Vidur Kapur, and Jason Stuart**. Additional entertainment by local musicians and performers is also scheduled.

MBLGTACC hosts workshops led by students, faculty, and professionals to educate and motivate students to action. Participants will attend five sessions from a list of nearly 100 workshops concerning topics such as safe sex, activism basics, creating

change on your campus, and ally community building.

Featured presenters are Hiding in Hip Hop author **Terrance Dean**, GLAAD President **Neil Guiliano**, and Mommy Queerest filmmaker **Beverly Seckinger**.

Registration is \$60 for all and can be completed online via the conference website until FRIDAY, FEB. 6. Onsite registration will be available for \$75.

<http://www.mblgtacc.org>. Contact: **Solomon Hursey** or **Julia Napolitano**, MBLGTACC Executive Co-Chairs, at mblgta09@indiana.edu or call 812-855-4252.