



March 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, March 22, 2 p.m.
Unitarian/Universalist Fellowship,
6220 Jefferson at Wackerly, Midland
Speaker: Terri Jackson

**Meetings: 2:00-3:00 Support
Groups; 3-3:30 Break; 3:30-4:30
Speaker**

Next Month's Meeting:

Sunday, April 26 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.

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.

**PFLAG Michigan 2009 Statewide
Meeting** April 4, sponsored by
Genesee PFLAG. For a day of
education on advocacy in schools,
including our efforts to pass anti-
bullying legislation. To contact
Genesee County PFLAG, call
810-766-3267 or see pflagflint.org.

Not Just Different, but Different even from Different

It's a choice faced at some
point, to some degree, by most
GLBT people: to be accepted,
or to be openly true to one's
inmost self. This month our
speaker will talk - from personal
experience - about the most
extreme side of that problem:
being openly transgender.
"Early in my life I knew I was

not what everyone else thought I
was...Male," says **Terri
Jackson**, a male-to-female
transsexual. "I spent the
majority of my life living a
lie...wearing a mask...not being
myself, but someone I created to
be acceptable to others. By the
time I decided to be myself, I

had a family, children, and
grandchildren. Becoming a
member of group of people that
is a minority in the extremest
sense, was unnerving to put it
mildly." Terri will be our guest
speaker at Sunday's meeting,
which starts with breakout
sessions at 2 PM.

Point Man for the Promise: President Faces Issue of Coverage for Gay Feds

As a candidate and a Senator,
President Obama demonstrated
support for GLBT rights. Now,
according to **Robert Pear**,
writing March 13 in *The New
York Times*, he must confront
"one of the most sensitive
social and political issues of the
day: ...whether the government
must provide health insurance
benefits to same-sex partners of
federal employees." Two
federal appeals court judges in
California have said that em-
ployees of their court were
entitled to health benefits for
their same-sex partners under
the program that insures mil-
lions of federal workers. But
the federal Office of Personnel
Management, citing the 1996
Defense of Marriage Act, has
instructed otherwise, saying
"the word 'spouse' refers only
to a person of the opposite sex
who is a husband or a wife."
Orders confirming partners'

benefits in California were
issued by the chief judge of the
appeals court, **Alex Kozinski**,
and Judge **Stephen Reinhardt**,
not in a ruling but in their role
as employers resolving
employee grievances.

"A bare desire to harm a
politically unpopular group
cannot provide a rational basis
for governmental discrimina-
tion," Judge Reinhardt wrote.
According to the *Times*, "In
adopting the Defense of
Marriage Act, Congress said
the government had a legitimate
interest in 'defending and nur-
turing the institution of tradi-
tional heterosexual marriage.'
But Judge Reinhardt said the
denial of benefits to same-sex
spouses would not encourage
gay men and lesbians to marry
members of the opposite sex or
discourage same-sex marriages.
'So the denial cannot be said to
nurture or defend the institution

of heterosexual marriage,' the
judge wrote." The **Obama ad-
ministration** "is weighing how
to respond" to this and to a
Boston lawsuit filed against the
Federal Government by "eight
same-sex couples." The *Times*
also quotes **Gary L. Bauer**,
president of American Values,
warning that "Mr. Obama
would 'provoke a furious
grass-roots reaction, reinvi-
gorate the conservative coa-
lition and undermine his efforts
to portray himself as a moder-
ate on social issues.' In the
meantime, Senator **Joseph I.
Lieberman**, Independent of
CT, and Rep. **Tammy Bald-
win**, Democrat of WI, plan to
introduce bills that would
provide benefits to same-sex
partners of federal employees.
Similar bills died in the past.
But "the new administration
will have a new view," Ms.
Baldwin said.

Fundraiser Succeeds at Everything (Except Perhaps Diets)

The Chocolate Party
fundraiser, held Saturday
March 14 in Saginaw, was a
"shamelessly rich" success
(pun intended, of course.)
Held in **Wolfarth House**, a
magnificent Victorian home
equipped with authentic

gaslights, courtesy of hosts
Kevin and Bill, the home was
filled with conversation and
friendship, aided by a liberal
amount of "confectionary
perfection." The proceeds of
more than \$1200 will fund the
equality efforts of **PFLAG**

TriCities and Perceptions.
Thanks to Kevin and Bill, as
well as members of both
groups who planned and
contributed chocolate delights,
and to the many who attended
and helped us all enjoy them!
(See photos on Page 2.)

Transgender Empowerment Conference

A mini conference for transgender individuals and their allies, families, and significant others. Presenters from local and statewide agencies will cover transgender safety, legal issues, health trends, and activism. Hosted by **Transgender Detroit** and co-sponsored by **Affirmations, Triangle, TransGender Michigan, and PFLAG Detroit**. Saturday, April 25th from 7:00pm-8:30pm at Affirmations, 290 W. 9 Mile Road, Ferndale, Michigan; call 248-398-7105

Transgender Camp

Nick Teich, founder and president of Camp Aranutiq announces a weeklong summer camp for transgender and gender-variant youth in the New England area. "Our program will begin in summer 2010, but we would like to get the word out now to agencies or other entities that deal with transgender and gender-variant individuals. Our age range is 8 through 15. We are on the web at: www.camparanutiq.org and we are on Facebook as a group: "Camp Aranutiq." Please pass along this information to anyone you'd like. It is a 100%-volunteer run organization. Our aim is not to have the camp be cost-prohibitive for anyone. Exact dates for the 2010 summer will be available in March. Call Nick at (617) 467-5830.



This is not even half the party's spread of delectable treats



Gaslights add a fascinating touch of history

New Chapters Bring New Hopes

PFLAG National reported March 9 that it has received at least 75 inquiries about starting new chapters since Election Day 2008. The significant spike in requests follows passage of anti-equality ballot initiatives in California, Arkansas, Florida and Connecticut and the premiere of the films *Milk* and *Prayers for Bobby*. "If there is a silver lining to the set-back our families experienced on Election Day, it is that our allies in communities across the country have started to mobilize at the local level and work for change," said **Jody M. Huckaby**, PFLAG's executive director. "From coast to coast,

families have been inspired to organize because of issues like Proposition 8, and empowered by the example of heroes and heroines like **Harvey Milk** and **Mary Griffith** [who changed from rejecting her gay son to becoming an advocate after his suicide, portrayed in *Prayers for Bobby*.] New PFLAG chapters are forming in critically important districts and existing PFLAG chapters in many communities are reporting an increase in their membership. Today, our families, allies and loved ones are organizing and pressing for change as they never have before."

PFLAG says it has received inquiries about starting new chapters in states such as Mississippi, Alabama, Ohio, Florida, California, Utah, Texas and Idaho, among others. The national office has also heard from organizers in Tennessee, Missouri, South Dakota, New York and New Jersey. Huckaby says the new chapters underscore the fact that, even today, PFLAG is a critical part of communities across the country. "...Our national office is working hard to make sure that everyone who wants to bring PFLAG to their community has the resources and support to do so."

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.