



# PFLAG BOULDER COUNTY

**PFLAG**  
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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August 2009

## How Safe Are Our LGBTQ Students in Boulder County?

PFLAG Program  
Thursday, August 20th, 7pm

This is our Back-To-School program which will help us to understand how our schools are meeting the needs of LGBT students. Andre Lanier, Executive Director for Institutional Equity for the Boulder Valley Schools, will talk to us about current staff trainings and progress made to integrate transgender students into comfortable school settings. He will be joined by Maria Delmonico, Longmont High School and OASOS; Brad Anderson, OASOS and Metro State; Sarah Demmel, GSA sponsor Niwot High School, and Harriet Doyle, Boulder High School GSA leader. They will share their personal experiences in dealing with LGBTQ issues in their respective school settings.

Did you know that one student from Niwot High School, Marley Hamrick, when she realized that there was no inclusion of sexual orientation and gender expression/identity in the St. Vrain School District's non-discrimination policy revised their policy and got it approved by the Board of Education last year? Marley, Linda Beeler (former OASOS director and St. Vrain interventionist and counselor), and our new PFLAG youth board member, Maria Delmonico, want to start a St. Vrain Safe Schools Coalition this summer. They are looking for parents, teachers, LGBT persons who live in that school district to join them in effecting much needed change in school climate. Contact [mariadelmonico@msn.com](mailto:mariadelmonico@msn.com) or [doclmb@comcast.net](mailto:doclmb@comcast.net) if you are interested in attending a preliminary meeting to support this much needed effort.

## Rooting Out Violence: What Follows the Angie Zapata Verdict?

PFLAG Program Preview  
Thursday, September 17th, 7pm

Representatives from the Colorado Anti-Violence Project will report on the level of violence against LGBT persons in Colorado, how they were involved in the Angie Zapata murder prosecution, and what they think needs to happen as prevention to root out the seeds of violence.

### Meetings

PFLAG Boulder County  
First United Methodist Church  
1421 Spruce Street  
14th & Spruce - 303.444.8164

**7:00 PM - Program**  
**8:30 PM - Support & Advocacy Groups Meet**

The public is always welcome to the main program at 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of each month, held in the Parlor.

At 8:30 p.m. a support group, especially intended for newcomers and others dealing with personal LGBT-related issues, meets in the library as long as needed. Confidentiality is promised.

**August 20th, 7pm**  
PFLAG Program:  
How Safe Are Our LGBTQ Students in Boulder County?

**September 17th, 7pm**  
PFLAG Program:  
Rooting Out Violence

### Please Note!

On their Annual Retreat, the PFLAG Board approved a time change for Programs (7pm) and Support/Advocacy (8:30)

## **Ambitious PFLAG Agenda Set for 2009 - 2010**

*By Jean Hodges*

You shoulda been there! Eight dedicated Board members met on June 11<sup>th</sup> to set goals and plan for what this 2009-2010 year would look like. After five hours and time out for lunch and laughter, the following goals were set:

### **Outreach to LGBTQ youth and their parents**

We will invite OASOS parents to a brunch in October. We will collaborate with various community groups to invite a nationally known speaker to present research about what difference accepting parents can make for an LGBTQ child. We will visit GSA groups in high schools county-wide to advertise the Kathie Braun Leadership Development Scholarships and PFLAG meetings and resources.

### **Outreach to Longmont and East County**

Pending Open Door funding we will advertise PFLAG meetings in Longmont and the East County and plan at least two events in Longmont. We recruited one youth board member from Longmont in July.

### **Provide support for LGBTQ students in St. Vrain School District**

We will work with students, teachers, counselors, allies, and parents from the district to form a St. Vrain Safe Schools Coalition to work to make the schools safer for LGBTQ students. We will use the new national resource, *Cultivating Respect* and BVSSC's *Everyone Counts*.

### **Educate to increase understanding of Transgender persons**

We will collaborate with a variety of trans persons and families to create a short training video for police and educators on Transgender issues.

### **Outreach to Faith Communities for LGBT inclusion and understanding**

Our new board member, Rev. Ken Thurow, an Evangelical Lutheran of America pastor, will offer a seminar for clergy based on his book, *A Place at the Table*. We will work to train a team of speakers to use *Straight for Equality* materials and their own stories to present to faith communities.

**Cooperate with Access Counseling** to advertise a pilot program of support for Straight Spouses to meet with a trained facilitator once a month or no or low cost.

### **Increase attendance at our monthly meetings.**

We depend on you all to make that happen. We moved the program to 7:00 p.m., out by 8:30, to encourage those who are employed to attend. We need your presence as well as your dues!

Obviously we can't do this alone or without funding beyond our dues, so we have requested a \$4600 grant from the Open Door Fund and will depend as well on the usual generosity of our PFLAG members to donate their time, talents, skills and money to make this happen. We hope you share our excitement for the upcoming year. Where do you want to fit in? Let us hear from you.

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## 2009 National Conference Cancelled

The biannual PFLAG National Convention, scheduled for October 2009 in San Diego, has been cancelled, largely due to the economy, i.e. too many potential attendees were simply unable or unwilling to commit to the expense.

PFLAG's Executive Director Jody Huckaby writes: "We ... heard from many of you that a good use of our time and funds would be to focus on local issues, conferences and networking opportunities. Last year alone, 13 state and regional chapter leadership conferences and meetings were held to facilitate greater local and regional coordination of PFLAG's important work in support, education and advocacy.

"As we've seen so vividly in recent months, issues important to our families are gaining traction, and momentum, at the local and state level. And at the national level in this new administration, some of PFLAG's strongest work has been within local congressional districts on hate crimes, employment nondiscrimination, and repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell. As good stewards of PFLAG's funds, we want to maximize all funding in those places, and on these issues, that are a priority for our families right now. Therefore, we have decided to cancel the planned convention for 2009.

"In lieu of the convention, we are establishing a fund to assist local chapters, as well as state coordinators and regional directors, to hold statewide conferences and networking events ... Based on feedback from our members, we believe this is the smart way to move forward and still create educational and networking opportunities for our chapters ... We know that those opportunities are important in the work you do every day, and the PFLAG National office remains committed to helping move those efforts forward as best we can."

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WHEN A FAMILY MEMBER OR LOVED ONE COMES OUT, YOU MIGHT FEEL CONFUSED, SCARED, OR JUST IN NEED OF MORE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT. I OFFER COMPASSIONATE, ACCEPTING AND PRACTICAL COUNSELING FOR FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS; AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH LGBTQ YOUTH, ADOLESCENTS & ADULTS, AND THOSE WHO CARE ABOUT THEM.

## Trans Project Revived

After languishing for two years for lack of funding and leadership, the PFLAG Board has voted to produce a short film, 10 – 15 minutes in length, on the subject of transgender identities. The film is intended to be used as a training aid for law enforcement, teachers and administrators and for wider PFLAG distribution for non-trans persons who want to increase their understanding. Professional leadership has emerged in the persons of Carol Christensen of Video Bravo and Gus Spheeris of JSP Advisory who will co-direct the film.

Two different Boulder County focus groups are planned: one of trans persons to assess what content they want to see included and the second will be for straight persons to share what questions or concerns they would like to see addressed in the film.

Our PFLAG goal is to raise \$10,000 to support this project, starting with \$2500 from our 2006 Open Door Fund grant. We need three more grants of \$2500 to make this project a reality. Or 100 people giving \$25 would do it. Contact [JeanInBldr@comcast.net](mailto:JeanInBldr@comcast.net) with donations or [cmspheeris@gmail.com](mailto:cmspheeris@gmail.com) to participate in a focus group.

## What Can I Say to My Kids?

By Carol Grever

*Excerpted from Carol's blog.*

*To read more go to: [www.straightspouseconnection.com](http://www.straightspouseconnection.com)*

How about your children? When do you tell them that one of their parents is gay? How much should they know about it, and how soon? How can kids understand such a complex issue? Their age, maturity, and general stability all affect the answers to these and related questions.

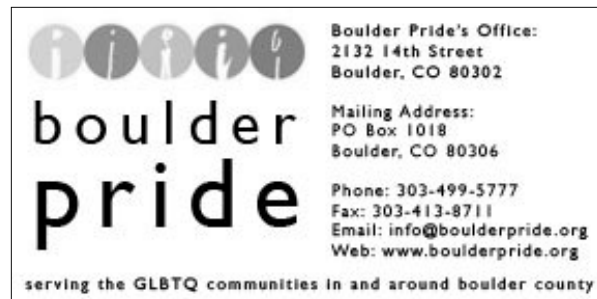
Experts suggest explaining the situation in stages, not overwhelming the youngster with too much information at once. Answer their questions honestly, but don't try to cover every detail of the situation in one sitting. Children sense that something is wrong and they need sufficient information to allay fears that the trouble is their fault.

It is also important to use language the young person can understand, being scrupulously careful not to malign the gay partner. Divisive behavior and hateful words inevitably wound the child even further and damage future family relationships. Above all, don't try to make your child an ally by demonizing his other parent. Measure your words carefully. This is a real test of your own maturity and self-control.

Use an appropriate language level for small children and reinforce assurance that they still have two loving parents and that imminent changes are not threat to them. Children may feel they are to blame for family disruption. Reassure them that they are not at fault. These points are important to make, regardless of the age of the child.

Explaining to older children presents a different challenge. Waiting until the heat of the discovery has cooled is a good idea. Give yourself time to recover from your own shock, work through immediate personal issues, and prepare yourself to support your children through their time of recovery. Straight talk to older children is important. Telling the truth is better than holding back, unless there is some compelling reason to do so. If possible, face-to-face disclosure with both parents present is best.

It would be nice to have sure-fire step-by-step instructions for telling the children about a gay parent. Unfortunately, every family has to invent its own best method. Keep in mind these principles to ease the way: Tell as much of the truth as you can, as soon as you can, in language that is understandable and kind. Give ample assurance that your love endures for your children, regardless of other changes in the family. Give yourself the gift of liberating truth.



## Share the News. Save the Date.

*Boulder County's Gay History Colloquium, Sept 26*

Boulder's 150-year history holds stories of many groups, some well known and some relatively hidden from view. It will make the hidden more visible when gay history in Boulder County is discussed at a colloquium on the CU-Boulder campus.

Tim Fuller--a closeted gay city councilman who was recalled in 1974 in an angry election reacting to the council's granting protections for gay, lesbian and bisexual citizens--will keynote the event. The Saturday afternoon colloquium will feature Fuller and a panel of close observers of Boulder County's gay that includes the city, the University, the school district and state. Q&As will be encouraged.

The free event will be Sept. 26 at Old Main, followed by a reception at the Koenig Alumni Center. The colloquium and reception are sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender chapter of the CU-Boulder Alumni Association with the support of a grant from The Open Door Fund and assistance from IBM Boulder and the CU-Boulder Office of Counseling and Psychological Services.



## Awakening

*By Pat Stone, www.booksurge.com*

AWAKENING is Pat's personal story of her transition from a wife of 35 years and mother of two to her coming out as lesbian and its effect on her subsequent life. She tells how her journey through leadership positions in PFLAG Dallas and as PFLAG Southern Regional Director following her daughter's coming out as a lesbian at 25 led to her own realization of her true sexual orientation.

The strength of this story is in Pat's writing of her feelings as she works through her disclosure to her husband, family, and friends. She writes of concerns that her disclosure may impact PFLAG Dallas – and it does. Her close relationship with her husband causes her to anticipate that he will understand, accept, and remain her friend – but he doesn't. Pat reveals her emotions as she experiences her first crush on a woman, her sense of rejection when that interest is not returned, and eventually finding a life partner. Even that relationship has its stresses – don't they all?

She continues her account well past the coming out story, thus demonstrating that gays and lesbians have many of the same interests – and struggles – as the general population. She grapples with finances and weight issues, and spends a number of years dealing with her mother's care as her mother disappears into Alzheimer's.

Pat's story is serious, light, informative, and sometimes humorous. For example: "I let him know that a woman of a certain age and size did not like hearing herself and the word "bikini" in the same sentence." It is well written, enjoyable, and informative. I recommend it.

*Reviewed by Dave Parker*





**PFLAG Boulder County**  
 PO Box 19696  
 Boulder, CO 80308  
**303.444.8164**  
[www.pflagboulder.org](http://www.pflagboulder.org)

PFLAG Boulder meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at First United Methodist Church, 14th and Spruce, Boulder, Colorado. Program starts at 7:00 pm, sharing time begins at 8:30 pm.

**REMEMBER**, our confidentiality pledge must not be broken.

Newsletter is published monthly. A subscription is included with each membership to PFLAG. Material related to PFLAG is welcome from any source. Deadline is the twentieth of each month. The editor reserves the right to accept, reject, or edit any material submitted.

**Membership Categories**

- \$25.00 Individual
- \$35.00 Family
- \$10.00 Student
- \$10.00 Newsletter Only
- \$50.00 Supporting
- \$100.00+ Sustaining

Membership dues are renewed on October 1st of each year. Send address changes and membership information to PFLAG, P.O. Box 19696, Boulder, CO 80308.

**Advertising**

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**OUR MISSION**

*PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gays, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons, their families and friends through:*

- SUPPORT**, to cope with an adverse society;
- EDUCATION**, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and
- ADVOCACY**, to end discrimination and to secure civil rights.

*PFLAG provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRIDE Block Party**

On Sat., Sept. 12, PFLAG will have a booth on the Pearl St. Mall near the Courthouse as part of the annual PRIDE Block Party. Volunteers are needed for two hour slots to help staff the booth between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Contact [rollie@safefhousealliance.org](mailto:rollie@safefhousealliance.org) if you can help.

**Know Your New Laws!**

Colorado now has five laws that protect and enrich the lives of LGBT people: housing and public accommodation non-discrimination, employment non-discrimination, hate crimes, second parent adoption and designated beneficiaries. Learn more about these laws by visiting the Rights 5 site by going to: [www.TheRights5.com](http://www.TheRights5.com)

**Volunteers Needed!**

Volunteers Needed to Staff PFLAG Booth at Farmer's Market on Aug. 22 and Sept. 5. Can you take a two-hour shift? Contact [kmcain@q.com](mailto:kmcain@q.com).

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