



# PFLAG BOULDER COUNTY

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

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Dec 2009 / Jan 2010

## Annual Holiday Festive Feast

Thursday, December 17th, 6:30pm

For an evening of fabulous food, fun and fellowship, plan to attend our semi-annual potluck in Mead Hall downstairs in First United Methodist Church. 6:30 is the time. The PFLAG Board will provide a roasted turkey, a vegetarian main dish, table settings, beverages and rolls. Feel free to invite family and friends to join us, but please bring enough food to share---a side-dish, salad, or dessert. The treat of the evening will follow dinner: *Somethin' About Lulu*, our favorite lesbian trio, who will have their new CD available for purchase, will entertain us with some original songs and humor to guarantee laughter. Toe-tappin' fun and some sing-along tunes will fill you with joy!

## Queer People of Color: Crossing Cultures

PFLAG Program - Thursday, January 21st, 7pm

Tanya Greathouse, Director of the Center for Multicultural Affairs at the University of Colorado, will lead a discussion about issues of concern to GLBTQ persons of color. Dr. Greathouse has provided psychotherapy services to children, adolescents and adults for 27 years. She has worked at the University of Colorado at Boulder since 1994 and most recently in the Chancellor's Leadership Program and Sociology Department at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Her curricula covered multicultural awareness in mental health issues, the intersections of race, class and gender in criminology, and multicultural leadership qualities. Also joining Dr. Greathouse is Kevin Correa, Assistant Director of CU's GLBT Resource Center, and students from CU's QPOC (Queer People of Color).

## PFLAG Fundraiser

SAVE THE DATE - Saturday, March 13th, 7pm

On Saturday, March 13, at 7:00 p.m. there will be an evening of music that will include Resonance Women's Chorus among other favorite performing groups to raise funds for the transgender education film being produced by PFLAG. A trailer for the film will be shown followed by delicious dessert provided by area pastry cooks. Cost is \$20. Place: First United Methodist Church sanctuary. Volunteers are needed to help with this project. Contact JeanInBldr@comcast.net or LynneHoward@comcast.net.

## 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.

First PFLAG meeting?  
Need directions or more info?

E-mail **Melissa Druckman** at:  
mellowhellow@googlemail.com

Or contact her at her cellphone number: (720) 299-1453.

**December 17th**  
PFLAG Holiday Feast

**January 21st**  
PFLAG Program:  
Queer People of Color -  
Crossing Cultures

**March 13th**  
PFLAG Fundraiser



## Help Support This Special PFLAG Project

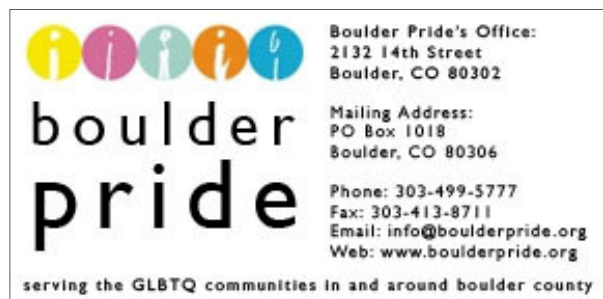
Weaving together a tapestry of transgender perspectives to create awareness and allay stereotypes and discomfort about gender variance is the goal of a new film being co-directed by Gus Spheeris and Carol Christenson and produced by PFLAG Boulder County this year.

Three years ago Elizabeth Bethea and Jean Hodges began this project by meeting with law enforcement leaders from Boulder County to talk about doing a training about transgender issues with police and sheriff's officers. Their response was to agree that they needed more training, but they couldn't afford to pay for staff time to have an in-person training. Would we consider doing a video that could be used with more flexibility instead? We shifted our thinking and investigated what creating a film would mean. We applied for grants and received \$2500 from the Open Door Fund, but other grant applications were denied and the \$20,000 price tag seemed beyond our reach. Then Elizabeth moved to Hawaii. The project was shelved until this past June when the idea was revived at our annual Board Retreat. The need for trans education was still relevant.

If only we could only find professionals willing to create the film!

Two conversations later found our co-directors, Carol Christenson, videographer and owner of Bravo Films who filmed "Project Visibility" for the Boulder County Aging Services, and Gus Spheeris, best known as the head of Bent Lens Cinema and script writer for the Creating Change Conference film that welcomed NGLTF folks to Denver last January. They were both excited about making such a much-needed film that could be viewed by the general public, not just law enforcement, to change attitudes and open minds to be more accepting of transgender persons. It could be distributed to PFLAG chapters across Colorado, even across the country! It could be used on Capitol Hill to help pass the inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act! Its uses seem boundless.

The estimated cost for this 10 to 15 minute film is the bargain price of \$10,000. The Colorado Coalition of PFLAG Chapters has donated \$2500, PFLAG Denver another \$1500. In fact, so far we have pledges of \$6700 so we only need to raise another \$3300. Inquiries to foundations have been discouraged because of weakened portfolios during the economic downturn. As part of your end-of-year giving, would you consider giving \$25, \$50 or \$100 or more to help us meet our goal so that the film can be completed by June, 2010? Send your donation, made out to PFLAG Boulder to Jack Hodges, 4475 Laguna Pl. #207, Boulder, CO 80303. Also plan to attend the benefit evening on March 13th for a fun way to help. (See the Save the Date notice on page one.)



## "Call Me ..... Little Bridget"

**T shirts that are fashionable with a slice of GLBTQ advocacy.**  
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## Choose the Best: Nine Qualities of Effective Counselors

Carol Grever, MA

The importance of seeking effective guidance from a professional, competent counselor is a recurring theme in my books and articles. Talking through painful life challenges is immensely useful in regaining equilibrium and healing emotional wounds. Whether you decide to work with a clinical psychologist, licensed social worker, or pastor, it's important to choose a person who is professionally competent, credentialed, and compatible with your personality and needs. It also saves time if your counselor has experience with the specific problems you face.

What should you look for when selecting a therapist? Gathered from interviews with people who have experienced counseling, here are nine qualities shared by the best professionals.

1. **Flexible.** Rather than applying a single, rigid formula or pushing "right answers," the counselor first listens deeply to assess individual symptoms and needs. There is no one-size-fits-all attitude.

2. **Unbiased.** Effective therapists do not bring prejudice into their work. They feel no intolerance toward homosexuality and they do not encourage gay-bashing in conversations with family members. They maintain an open, unbiased mind.

3. **Takes a broad view.** Though the focus is on your personal challenge, a good counselor also brings up related practical issues like your safety, housing, and health care. Consideration is given towards your children's needs, as well as stresses from religion, extended family and your social network. Are there serious underlying personal issues that need attention, like fear, guilt, shame or anger? All of this is examined.

4. **Explores other resources.** An effective therapist calls attention to sources of help already at hand. Whom can you trust and talk with in your family or your circle of friends? Finding a confidant or keeping a journal as you work through decisions can be extremely useful as you chart a new course. How can you be proactive to help yourself?

5. **Caring and trustworthy.** Effective counselors demonstrate empathy, patience, and genuine concern for clients. Listening carefully and without judgment, they remember what you've told them in previous conversations and put it into context. They offer you a safe space to say what you haven't said or couldn't say before. Trust grows from this fertile ground.

6. **Qualified and experienced.** Your best therapist will be professionally educated and experienced with similar cases. Such counselors help clients process each stage of straight spouse recovery and they know when to back off and when to nudge clients onward.

7. **Realistic.** It will take time to achieve complete personal stability and healing. Don't expect immediate miracles or a magic pill to bring instant results. Look for a therapist who is judicious in prescribing medication that simply dulls emotional pain. Be wary of one who rushes to a preconceived solution. You should be aware that even after successful therapy, it is normal for grief or anger to be triggered occasionally--even years afterward. That is to be expected.

8. **Encourages wellness.** Each session ends with genuine encouragement and hope. Good counselors know their clients are fragile and they bolster them with comforting assurance. Believing that you'll survive and thrive has a positive influence on outcome.

9. **Celebrates healing.** Ethical therapists work themselves out of the job, urging clients in positive ways to get past their obstacles and to move on to greater happiness. The most trusted and successful counselors celebrate their own success and that of their clients.

*continued on page 4..*

No one has a perfect life; everyone has some burden to bear. One of the great gifts of working with competent counselors is their assurance that *you are not alone* and that your emotional challenge is not unique. Whether you choose to work with a professional counselor or therapist is up to you. But people who make that decision discover valuable tools and guidance to nourish and integrate body, mind, and spirit and to regain contentment.

### Thoughts after Election 2009

Post Nov. 4 election messages from Roberta (Bobbie) Barry, Regional Director for the Northeastern U.S., from GLAAD and from Rea Carey, NGLTF's Executive Director, provide a context for thinking about the meaning we make out of wins and losses for LGBT equality. From GLAAD: "Maine's same-sex couples - and our allies and friends all over the country - are experiencing a world of hurt and pain. Mainers have been denied full equality and full citizenship in their state. We have been told to remain outsiders. Gay and lesbian couples must explain this vote to their children. And at some point soon, we will all have to pick ourselves up and fight again.

"I can say unequivocally that we should be proud of our community and the fight we waged. This campaign was run smartly, strategically, with heart and with broad and generous support from across the country. Social justice movements are hard, and they require planning, patience, and persistence. We've got all of that, as well as passion."

Bobbie added: "It appears there is much more education needed to win the hearts of people about our families. When I hear some say that PFLAG isn't really needed these days because our culture has become more accepting of different sexual orientation and gender differences, I have to disagree. This popular vote tells us that we have to continue working to bring justice and equality for our loved ones. Bring a friend to your PFLAG meetings!"

And from Rea: "I am on the plane headed back from Maine. Tuesday's elections resulted in a mixed bag for LGBT people. We won in Kalamazoo, lost in Maine, and as I write, we are awaiting results in Washington....many people came up to me Tuesday night to tell me very specific stories about how our organizers have changed their lives. How they helped them to find a passion they didn't know they had; how they came to our training years ago and haven't stopped knocking on doors since; how they've seen the best of the best at work and they'll never forget the lessons they learned....As my plane starts to descend, across the aisle from me, a college student who took the semester off to volunteer for No on 1 and an older straight woman, married over 20 years, talk about the vote, about marriage and about her conflicting feelings about same-sex marriage. He is doing a great job of talking with her and maybe she'll come around. Across this country, the conversation continues. Minds continue to be changed. Tuesday, we both won and lost. As we continue, there will certainly be some losses but there will be many wins."

As Amendment 2 in Colorado taught us, a short-term loss may kindle a long-term gain. It motivated us to start our PFLAG chapter in 1993! Across the country we are each needed to continue the one-to-one conversations to move equality forward.



## Book Review: Transforming Families

By Connie Coleman, edited by Mary Boenke

I chose to read this book for a very personal reason. I was looking for a book that might help someone to understand what it is to have a transgendered child. I was looking for a book that could explain what it is to be transgendered and how to accept this in your heart and mind, especially when it is your own child.

My daughter's boyfriend is transgendered. My soon to be son-in-law has many family members who are understanding and supportive. Unfortunately not all of his family members are able to understand and to accept him as a man. His mother is suffering from a very debilitating illness, she doesn't feel she has the physical or emotional energy to spare to try to understand her child's need to become a man. He worries that something will happen to his mom before they have reached an understanding.

I hoped I could find a way to help him by helping his mother. I have been looking into and gathering information she might read or someone in the family might read to her. This book "Transforming Families", is the best book I have read about the families of transgendered people.

The book is a collection of many true reports by parents of transgendered children. It also contains personal experiences of transgendered persons in relationships with their families. It is about the struggle parents go through to understand what is going on with their child. It is also about how these parents come to realize they must fight to help the children they love through this transformation. A recurring theme is how these parents find PFLAG and other parents of transgendered children. It is how they support and help each other to learn to navigate this uncharted territory. The book tells the stories of how they find people to share experiences and feelings of hopes and dreams lost and found, for themselves and their children.

As a PFLAG parent, for many years I have had the privilege to know many transgendered persons. I have learned a lot as a representative of PFLAG. I respect the courage it takes to become the person someone feels they are inside. I learned a lot about the experience of parenting a transgendered child from this book. I enjoyed the stories, poems and quotes in this book. I have enormous respect for these family members who accepted their children and work hard to help them to grow with love.

I can only hope the mother of my soon to be son-in-law will read this book and it will help her to understand her child a little better.

## "Golden Girls" Star Bea Arthur's Generosity Lives On

The actress, who died in April, included a \$300,000 donation to New York's Ali Forney Center, an organization supporting homeless LGBT youth, in her will, leaving center Executive Director Carl Siciliano overwhelmed by her kindness. The organization assists more than 1,000 people each year, providing shelter for those who had to leave home for being who they are. For months, the Center was struggling to make ends meet, but now with this generous donation, the Center can continue its mission and has plans to use part of the donation to pay for a residence that can house 12, which will be named after Arthur.

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 PO Box 19696  
 Boulder, CO 80308  
**303.444.8164**  
 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**

Business card size: \$15 monthly / \$130 annually. Please send scans / digital images to info@pflagboulder.org . If special arrangements need to be made feel free to send an email.

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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.*

**Boulder Valley Safe Schools Coalition Needs Your Help!**

The Boulder Valley Safe Schools Coalition (BVSSC) has been working for over a decade to make Boulder Valley schools safe and welcoming for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and questioning (LGBTIQ) students, faculty, staff, and parents. During that time, the place of LGBTIQ people in the society has changed, and the schools have come a long way in becoming more supportive and affirming. Against this background, BVSSC has decided to engage in a process of self-assessment, trying to understand what various people who are affected by our work want and need for us to be doing. To begin this self-assessment, we want to invite students, parents, faculty and staff to share their ideas with us. To this end, we have developed a simple (10-15 minute) questionnaire that can be completed online. If you are involved with Boulder Valley Schools, we invite you to go to the BVSSC website at [www.bouldersafeschools.org](http://www.bouldersafeschools.org) and click on "Survey" to complete the questionnaire. All responses will be anonymous, although you will be invited to provide contact information if (and only if) you would like to participate in focus groups or interviews later on. If you would prefer to complete a paper version of the survey, please contact us at [bouldersafeschools@yahoo.com](mailto:bouldersafeschools@yahoo.com) and we will send one to you.

Thanks for taking the time to help us do the best work we can. The more input we have from the many people who are interested in this issue, the more successful we will be in our efforts to help make Boulder Valley Schools LGBTIQ friendly and affirming!

**Colorado Coalition to Meet In Boulder**

On Sat. January 9, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. our Boulder chapter will take their turn to host the Colorado Coalition of PFLAG Chapters for their winter meeting. Any local members are invited to attend to see what is going on state-wide for PFLAG. Help is needed to serve lunch. Volunteer with Melissa at [mellowhollow@googlemail.com](mailto:mellowhollow@googlemail.com)

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