

P-FOX? ... P-HOOEY

Just as the trial of one of Matthew Shepard's murderers was beginning in Wyoming, Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays (P-FOX) President Anthony Falzarano was ending his third annual conference in Washington, DC. He referred to Matthew in his closing address, saying "...that poor unfortunate boy in, where was it? South Dakota? That man was a predator to heterosexual men." Thus ended a weekend filled with lies, misleading promises to families and friends and outright bigotry toward gays and lesbians.

P-FOX was started in 1996 by Religious Right activists. The goal is to support "parents, friends and family of loved ones struggling with homosexuality." The organization was meant to oppose PFLAG. They like to think of themselves as the "Al-Anon" of the ex-gay movement.

Falzarano announced that P-FOX is planning to reach out to a younger audience by introducing ex-gay teens, in order to prevent gay kids from ever growing up to be gay adults. He is currently combing the country for parents of gays who have died of AIDS, in preparation for a class-action lawsuit he plans to file on their behalf against the American Psychiatric Association, holding the the APA accountable for the deaths of their children!

Attendees heard from Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons from the National Association for the Research and Treatment of Homosexuality. NARTH is the most prominent association promoting reparative therapy for homosexuals. It still believes homosexuality is a mental illness and tries to "cure" them. Dr. Fitzgibbons stated that it is curable, and normally stems from poor body image, sexual abuse, a poor relationship with the father, and poor eye-hand coordination [!!]

He also said that many women become lesbians in their 30s because they either never married and have "given up on finding the right man" or because they have been through a divorce and are now distrustful of men. He described obstacles faced by parents trying to cure their children, the most common being the notion that homosexuality is not actually mental illness. This widespread myth persists, he says, because it is easier to accept homosexuality than to deal with its painful causes.

HATE IS NOT  
A FAMILY VALUE

PFLAG'S POLICY STATEMENT  
ON REPARATIVE THERAPY  
Adopted by National Board of Directors January 17, 2000

PFLAG opposes and deplores efforts by professional and religious groups that propose to change or repair anyone's sexual orientation. We believe such attempts originate from cultural bias based on myth, misperception and misunderstanding. We encourage all professional, educational and religious organizations to work towards changing cultural biases rather than embarking on futile and damaging efforts to change sexual orientation.

A GAY MAN'S MESSAGE TO  
PFLAG NATIONAL

As I saw PFLAG in the Millennium March on Washington April 30 I whispered to my friend "I would give everything I have in this world to have my parents march in support of me like this." But my parents are convinced that my sexuality and my choice to be honest about it have doomed me to spend eternity in hell. They will not provide any of the emotional and familial support that makes one whole.

Just then a mother and father emerged from the crowd of PFLAG parents, hugged me and said "We love you." For that one moment, encircled in a protective embrace and hearing those beautiful words, I felt safe and loved. I don't know who those parents were, but I just want to thank them and PFLAG for making me feel for one moment the unconditional love of parents. Thank you for helping other parents to know their children better. Thank you for repairing families who felt hopeless.

#### NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

##### New York

Twenty-three New York City Council members last month introduced legislation to add "gender identity or expression" to the city's anti-discrimination law, thus protecting the transgendered. If passed, it would make New York one of 27 cities across the country with similar laws. Transgender advocates, including a transsexual woman who moved to New York after being evicted from her Providence apartment because of her change of gender, have been speaking before community groups to build support.

##### Providence

The unions representing Providence police, firefighters, teachers, and laborers have signed contracts with the city stipulating that their members are entitled to benefits for their gay or heterosexual unmarried domestic partners. These benefits include health coverage and bereavement leave. Fitzgerald Himmelsbach, the Mayor's Liaison to the Gay and Lesbian Community, said the city is also trying to recruit gay firefighters and police officers.

Page 4

AS A MEMBER OF PFLAG --  
HERE'S WHAT YOU ARE

Few people realize that PFLAG is nearly three decades old. Before Harvey Milk, before Anita Bryant, before "Ellen", parents began to organize. And today we're the most organized grassroots presence in the nation for supporters of g/l/b/t people. In 1972 a fourth-grade schoolteacher from Flushing, New York, marched with her gay son in New York's Pride Parade. She was overwhelmed by the crowds of people who stopped her on the parade route to hug her, cry, and talk to her about their own families. After the parade, her phone rang almost non-stop. Within months, parents of gay people gathered for a support group meeting in a church basement.

Within a few years, similar groups sprang up nationwide, and parents were beginning to take to the airwaves in support of their loved ones.

Support groups grew and flourished, and families began pioneering their unique brand of advocacy for equal civil rights. By simply telling their stories, ordinary Americans began changing hearts, minds and policies.

As we've grown, our work has expanded. But, as is often the case, the more things change, the more they stay the same. Our focus has never wavered from providing support, education and advocacy, and keeping families together.

Excerpt from an address by Kirsten Kingdon, PFLAG

Executive Director

GEICO Dumps Schlessinger!!

GEICO Insurance joined a growing list of major corporations that have distanced themselves from Dr. Laura Schlessinger future syndicated tv program, including Procter & Gamble, United Airlines, American Express, Xerox, Toys R Us, More.com, BoxLot, and Amica Insurance. This is a direct result of the nationwide protests.  
Richard Forbes of R1stopdrlauracom@AOL.COM

A DAD'S LETTER TO THE HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN

Rep Bob McDermott's letter asked whether we would let our fifteen-year-old son or grandson share a tent with a gay scoutmaster. Why not? Gay scoutmasters are not pedophiles. Studies show that around 90 percent of pedophiles are heterosexual, so I should be more worried if a straight scoutmaster asked a fifteen-year-old to share his tent.

McDermott alludes to "the practice of homosexual behavior," as if it were a religion. Is it part of the Scout code to murder someone who is gay, like the former Scout who killed Matthew Shepard? When I was a Scout leader, it was part of the code to treat everyone with dignity. Young men join scouting for its educational programs, to build character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop personal fitness - not to come up with some hate-filled agenda like that of Rep. McDermott.

Mike Golojuch, Lt. Col., USAF (Ret.)

News from Boulder, CO

Last February the City Council unanimously approved an amendment to the city's Human Rights Ordinance to protect transgendered residents. Under the amendment, "gender variants" are those who have a "persistent sense that a person's gender identity is incongruent with the person's biological sex." Officials say about 400 people in Boulder are in this new protected class.

###END###