



News & Views

*Parents, Families, Friends, Allies & Members of the
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Gender
Non-conforming Community*

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November/December 2016

Greater Providence PFLAG Chapter Update

There never seems to be a really good time to make changes; and this year is certainly no exception. Our chapter size seems to be fairly consistent now averaging around 60 or so paid members and a general email list of roughly 280 people, most of whom also receive this newsletter. While one of our goals is to reach out to other organizations and communities in Rhode Island to make them aware of our services, as an organization we would love to no longer be needed. But, sadly, that is not the case.

As a result of last month's presidential election, as families with LGBTQ loved ones, we are facing a new political reality that has a lot of us fearful of what could take place legislatively that could impact the rights of our family members and friends in the LGBTQ community. Please know that PFLAG will be there to provide you with support and to educate and advocate for your rights.

But in order to continue to fight this fight, we need people like you to help us. As you know, our chapter is run by an all-volunteer board. We have no actual physical office space. Our mail goes to a post office box and our help-line is a Google phone number connected to a board member's cell phone so that we can respond to calls relatively quickly. Most of our board members and other volunteers work full-time in addition to being involved with our chapter. Right now several have taken on multiple tasks because we don't have enough people to spread out various responsibilities or take on new ones. In addition, several members have been on the board for a number of years, which is not necessarily how an effective board should function, at least not the ones on which I've ever served.

We currently have a 12-member board with two current vacant positions. Sometime between April and October of 2017, we anticipate losing up to four more of these positions, including myself as the current chapter's president as well as our vice-president, Jane Eastman. So it's important that we get more people involved in volunteering for our chapter, and not just for Pride Fest, but also to help out in other ways as well. Those of

us who plan to step down from our roles on the board will not be leaving PFLAG completely. We just feel it is important for others to get more involved in chapter operations and that a board position is not deemed as a "lifetime" commitment nor a position for a chosen few "insiders." Anyone can volunteer to help out and apply to be considered for a board position. That being said, we certainly could make use of individuals with certain skills, such as budgeting, accounting, legal, fundraising, public speaking, writing/editing, computer skills, website/social media, etc.

We recently created a Volunteer Application form which you can access on-line by going to our website: www.pflagprovidence.org and clicking on the "Volunteer/Donate/Join" tab. Once there you can download our Volunteer Application by clicking on the link provided for the form.

So, with all that being said, I also want to announce that this will be our last newsletter for awhile and an abbreviated version at that. It will be going on a hiatus until we can find another individual to edit and publish our newsletter for us. We are hoping to find someone who will volunteer to do this for us. If not, then we will see if there are any affordable alternatives.

As for me, after serving as both chapter president and newsletter editor for the past few years, my life is now leading me in a different direction. Although I plan to continue to be involved and supportive of our PFLAG chapter, I no longer feel I can devote the time required to both lead the chapter and produce a bi-monthly newsletter. I do plan to continue as your chapter president at the very least until the end of April 2017 and perhaps a little longer into the year, if necessary.

It's been an honor and privilege to serve as your chapter president in providing support, education and advocacy on behalf of our loved ones in the LGBTQ community and their families and friends in both Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts.

*Sandra Vincent Richard, President
PFLAG Greater Providence*

IN THIS ISSUE

2 Requesting Submissions for New PFLAG
Greater Providence T-Shirt Design

3 How to Survive the Holidays

4 Member Resources and Membership Form



Parents, Families, Friends and Allies United with LGBT People to Move Equality Forward

Our Mission

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons and their families and friends through:

SUPPORT: To support parents on their journey to understand and accept their gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender children; and to help children, of whatever age, to understand and come out into loving relationships with their families;

EDUCATION: To enlighten an ill-informed public,

ADVOCACY: To end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights.

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

PFLAG is a volunteer grass-roots, tax-exempt, non-profit organization, not affiliated with any political or religious institution.

PFLAG is a welcoming place for parents and friends of all members of the LGBTQ community, but we are much more than that. Those who identify as gay, lesbian bisexual, transgender, or gender non-conforming are also encouraged to attend our meetings., with or without their family members. Parents and friends may come with or without their loved ones who are members of the LGBTQ community.

Confidentiality is assured.

PFLAG/Greater Providence

President: Sandra Richard

Vice-President: Jane Eastman

Treasurer: James Rotondo

Secretary: Dianne Ordog

Members-at-Large: Maureen Britton, Jill Duff, Julie Laffey, Denise Messier-Reynolds, Joe Ordog and Nate Zane

Ex-Officio Past President: Myra Shays

Newsletter Editor: Sandra Richard

Welcome Committee Coordinator: Julie Laffey

Speaker Coordinator: Doreen LePage

**WE'RE
HERE
FOR YOU!**



news from our chapter



More News from our Chapter...

As we look toward the new year, we have been busy with our efforts to reach out to the community at large to let people know who we are and how we can help parents and families who are struggling to understand, accept and affirm their children, whether young or adult, who have come out to them as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender. We have just partnered with Youth Pride, Inc. to meet with parents once a month, the second

Thursday from 6-7 p.m., in a new group called "Parents Talk." A couple of PFLAG member volunteers will be on hand with some of our handouts to talk with any parents about issues affecting their families.

We are also providing a one-hour training for faculty and staff at the Segue Institute in Central Falls on Friday, December 16th, where we will explain who we are and several members will tell their story. Again, we partnered with Youth Pride, Inc. on this, as they are uniquely qualified to provide training where it impacts children and adolescents. They provided a one-hour LGBTQ 101 training session for the Segue Institute in November.

PFLAG Providence wants YOUR ideas for a t-shirt!

PFLAG

Help improve our presence by creating a design for our organization

We would love to have your input, whether you have a whole shirt designed or just a few clever, half-baked ideas.

T-shirts will be printed and available for a donation at PrideFest 2017 in Providence. Winning entry will be announced on our website and the creator will receive a free t-shirt.

Please submit your ideas by March 1 2017 to:

PFLAG Providence
pflagprovidence@example.com
Subject: T-Shirt Contest



How to Survive the Holidays

The holidays can be a stressful time for LGBTQ people or families with LGBTQ members, but there are several strategies that you can use to help reduce stress and create a happy holiday this year.

If you are gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender...

- **Don't assume** you know how somebody will react to news of your sexual orientation or gender identity — you may be surprised.
- **Realize** that your family's reaction to you may **not** be because you are LGBTQ. The hectic holiday pace may cause family members to act differently than they would under less stressful conditions.
- **Remember** that "coming out" is a continuous process. You may have to "come out" many times.
- **Don't wait** for your family's attitude to change to have a special holiday. Recognize that your parents or other family members need time to acknowledge and accept that they have an LGBTQ family member. It took you time to come to terms with who you are; now it is your family's turn.
- **Let your family's judgments** be theirs to work on, as long as they are kind to you.
- If it is too difficult to be with your family, **create your own holiday gathering** with friends and loved ones.
- If you are transgender, **be gentle** with your family's pronoun "slips." Let them know you know how difficult it is.

Join or Renew Membership Today!



When you no longer need PFLAG, PFLAG still needs you. Join or renew your membership today so we can continue to support, educate and advocate for families just like yours.

PFLAG makes the world better, family by family. Become a member of our family. Use the form on the back page to join today or visit our

website at www.pflagprovidence.org to join or donate on-line!



Before the visit...

- **Make a decision** about being "out" to each family member before you visit.
- If you are partnered, **discuss in advance** how you will talk about your relationship, or show affection with one another, if you plan to make the visit together.
- If you bring your partner home, **don't wait until late** into the holiday evening to raise the issue of sleeping arrangements. Make plans in advance.
- **Have alternate plans** if the situation becomes difficult at home.
- **Find out** about local LGBTQ resources
- **If you do plan to "come out"** to your family over the holidays, have support available, including **PFLAG publications** and **the number of a local PFLAG chapter**.



During the visit...

- **Focus** on common interests.
- **Reassure** family members that you are still the same person they have always known.
- If you are partnered, **be sensitive** to your partner's needs as well as your own.
- **Be wary** of the possible desire to shock your family.
- **Remember to affirm yourself.**
- **Realize** that you don't need your family's approval.
- **Connect with someone else who is LGBTQ** — by phone or in person — who understands what you are going through and will affirm you along the way.

Credit: <http://community.pflag.org/LGBTHolidays#sthash.AMMLuMUZ.d8lA3C38.dpuf>

Chapter Meetings

PFLAG/Greater Providence meets the first Wednesday of each month from 6:45 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

The MET School (Unity Building)
325 Public Street
Providence, Rhode Island

Upcoming Meetings

December 7, 2016
January 4, 2017
February 1, 2017
March 1, 2017

Contact Us

PFLAG/Greater Providence
PO Box 41344, Providence, RI 02940
Phone/Text: (401) 307-1802
www.pflagprovidence.org
pflagprovidence@gmail.com



Ideas for Topics/ Speakers?

Do you have a specific topic you would like to have addressed by a speaker or know of anyone whom you would like to recommend as a speaker for our Chapter? If so, please contact us via email at pflagprovidence@gmail.com.

Member Resources

Rhode Island Bi Resource Network

<http://www.ribinetwork.org>
<http://www.facebook.com/TheOtherBWord>

SAGE Rhode Island

235 Promenade Street, Suite 500, Box 18
Providence, RI 02908
401-528-3259
sageriinfo@gmail.com

TGI Network of Rhode Island

PO Box 40365, Providence, RI 02940
info@tginetwork.org
(401) 441-5058 (voicemail)

Youth Pride, Inc.

743 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 421-5626
info@youthprideri.org
<http://www.youthprideri.org>

LGBT Caregiver Support Group

Child & Family Elder Care
Calvary United Methodist Church
200 Turner Road, Middletown, RI 02842
jgrapentine@childandfamilyri.com
(401) 848-4119
1st & 3rd Tuesdays each month from 10:00—
11:00 a.m.

Options Magazine

www.optionsri.org
GLAD (LGBT Legal Advocates)
www.glad.org

Blogs of Interest

Faith Topics

Susan Cottrell

<http://www.FreedHearts.org>

Kathy Baldock

<http://www.canyonwalkerconnections.com>

LGBTQ Issues

Think Progress

<http://thinkprogress.org/lgbt/issue/>

The Huffington Post

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tag/lgbt-blogs>

Parenting a Transgender Child Gender Mom

<http://gendermom.wordpress.com/>

Raising My Rainbow

<http://raisingmyrainbow.com/>

Facebook Groups of Interest

Interweave Channing

Parents of Transgender Children
(Closed Support Group)

The Facebook Transgender Alliance
(Closed Support Group)

Rhode Island Pride



Check us out on Facebook at
www.Facebook.com/PFLAG
Greater Providence, RI



Greater
Providence
Chapter

Membership Application

Yes! I want to be a supporting member of PFLAG.

Please provide the information requested below and make your check payable to: **PFLAG/Greater Providence.** You may bring this form with your payment to the next chapter meeting or mail to: **PFLAG, P. O. Box 41344, Providence, RI 02940.** You can also join or donate on-line by visiting our website at www.pflagprovidence.org.

Household \$40 Individual \$30 Student/Limited Income \$20

Additional Contribution \$ _____ in Honor or Memory of: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone No. _____ E-mail _____

We're doing our part to help save trees. We deliver the newsletter via email. (.pdf format).



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