At our August 6th support meeting, Joanne MacDonald, President of the GLBT Helpline of RI, presented a generous donation of $1,500 to Myra Shays for the Greater Providence Chapter of PFLAG in recognition of her many years of service as a dedicated volunteer for the GLBT Helpline.

The GLBT Helpline served the LGBTQ community for 38 years by providing resources, referrals, and for many of those years, a sympathetic listening ear to the many people who called its helpline. It was an all-volunteer resources and referral service providing assistance to members, loved ones, and supporters of the LGBTQ community.

The helpline, originally known as the “Gay Helpline”, was founded in 1976 by members of the Metropolitan Community Church. At first the helpline was a telephone number individuals could call to speak with someone regarding problems or concerns. As time passed, the line went from being a friendly ear to an information and referral source.

In 1987 the helpline changed its name to the “Gay and Lesbian Helpline” in an attempt to reflect the diversity of its membership and in 2000, the name changed once more to the “GLBT Helpline” to include the bisexual and transgender community it also served.

In 2007 the agency noticed a marked decline in calls and, through a grant, the GLBT Helpline stopped the phone service and became solely an Internet service. However, over time, the number of hits on their website started slowing down. With so many other ways for people to obtain needed information today, the GLBT Helpline made the bittersweet decision to cease its operations as of June 2014.

Their by-laws and IRS Code require them to disperse their remaining funds to like-minded non-profit organizations.

Our PFLAG Chapter was chosen to receive some of those funds for two reasons. First, PFLAG has a similar mission: to enrich, enlighten, and educate the public about the LGBTQ community and thus promote better understanding and acceptance.

Second, Myra Shays, the founder of the PFLAG Greater Providence Chapter, was also a long-time volunteer for the Helpline and freely gave of her time and skills to promote the work that the GLBT Helpline accomplished.

Myra Shays gratefully accepted the donation on behalf of our PFLAG chapter. Both she and current chapter president Sandra Richard assured Ms. MacDonald that PFLAG would put their donation to good use to further our shared mission of support, education and advocacy in our community.
Exactly What Does the Bible Say About Homosexuality?

As it turns out, very little according to Professor Ray Collins, who spoke about both the Old and New Testament teachings on homosexuality at our September 3rd meeting. In his presentation, Professor Collins stressed that homosexuality is referenced very infrequently in the Bible, in fact only twice. He went on to explain that attempts by others to use passages from the Bible as a basis to denounce homosexuality is really a misinterpretation of the nuances of the original language and culture in which the passages were written.

Professor Collins identified three main issues of which we need to be cognizant when interpreting biblical passages: 1. translation, 2. literary context, and 3. social context. He went on to provide several examples of how different words in biblical passages were mistranslated due to the subtleties of both language and context which changes from culture to culture and over time. His engaging presentation left us wanting to hear more; so we are working on securing a list of Professor Collins books related to this topic for our members.

Professor Collins is a New Testament scholar who earned his Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from the University of Leuven (Belgium) in 1962. He is the author or editor of 20 books, among which is Behavior and Belief: Sexual Ethics and the New Testament and Divorce in the New Testament. He has also published several articles on human sexuality and the Bible. Professor Collins taught at the University of Leuven for 24 years and at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC for 13 years. Since his retirement in 2006, he has been a visiting scholar in the Department of Religious Studies at Brown University in Providence, RI.

PFLAG Greater Providence
Board Members Attend 2014 Northeastern Region PFLAG Conference on Cape Cod

Chapter President Sandra Richard and Board members Dianne and Joe Ordog were among the many attendees at the September 20th Northeastern Region PFLAG Conference held in West Barnstable, MA on Cape Cod.

Regional Director Amy Mesirow and her team of volunteers pulled off a great event. We were able to put faces to the names of our National PFLAG staffers, Jamie Curtis and Beth Kohm, as well as meet some terrific PFLAGers from all around New England!

We kicked off the weekend with a fabulous bonfire and s’mores at Sandy Neck Beach in West Barnstable complete with amazingly beautiful sky lanterns (think of Disney’s film Tangled/Rapunzel) courtesy of Joe and Dianne Ordog, our fellow Providence PFLAG Board members.

The conference topics were right on target — updating our vision/mission/logo to be more inclusive and streamlined, using technology, getting our PFLAG brand out there, getting involved in our community (education/advocacy), how to better support and understand families and members of the transgender community, facilitating support meetings and building a strong PFLAG leadership base.

We ended the weekend with a lovely trip to Provincetown on a beautiful Sunday afternoon for shopping, lunch and camaraderie! (Check our Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/PFLAG Greater Providence for more 2014 NE Region Conference photos.)
Options Magazine Recipient of 2014 Spirit of Pride Award

RI Pride hosted their annual Honors night on Sunday, September 7, 2014 at the Marriott’s pool-side venue, Aqua. Among the many individuals honored that evening, Options Magazine and its staff of volunteers received the Spirit of Pride Award.

Want to get involved with RI Pride? Consider attending their monthly Events Committee meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of each month where you will learn more specifics about various events and have the opportunity to participate in meaningful ways!

The RI Pride Center is located at Hope Artiste Village, 1005 Main street, Unit #1105, Pawtucket RI 02860.

For more information email info@prideri.com or call 401-467-2130.

Job Opportunities

AIDS Care Ocean State is currently seeking a full-time Program Nurse to provide clinical nursing services to residents at its Sunrise House assisted living facility.

Overview:

- Provide clinical nursing support to residents of a 10-bed assisted living facility (Sunrise House).
- Support clients in a 5-bed sober house environment (New Transitions).
- Oversee all medication-related activities, including documentation, ordering and quality assurance.
- Perform monthly client assessments.
- Participate in the client admissions/assessment process.
- Assist in client care coordination – including interacting with outside medical professionals.
- Educate clients and staff.
- Oversee CMT staff and perform quarterly staff assessments.
- Provide support to HIV/HCV clinic as required.

Qualifications:

- Registered Nurse with active RI license required.
- Experience with the treatment of HIV/HCV, substance abuse and mental illness preferred.
- Must have a valid driver’s license and reliable transportation and be able to lift adult patients.
- Team player with solid communications and organizational skills.

AIDS Care Ocean State is also seeking a regular full-time Case Manager to provide individualized care planning, advocacy, practical support, education, and collaboration with other providers to an assigned group of clients living with HIV/AIDS.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor’s degree preferred.
- Two years relevant work experience in the social services arena.
- Direct service to the homeless community and/or those in recovery for substance addiction is preferred.
- Proven interpersonal skills and strong verbal/written communication skills.
- Organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Valid driver’s license/insured vehicle required for transporting clients as necessary.
- Bilingual (English/Spanish) strongly preferred.

Please send resume and salary requirements to Karen Wimmer at jobs@aidscareos.org
Don’t Miss Out on Youth Pride Inc.’s  
**ALL NEW 2014 Annual Event**  
**CABARET!**  
Friday October 17, 2014  
Crowne Plaza, Warwick  
5:30 to 11:00 p.m.  

Hosted by Jacqueline DiMera!

This is a brand new Annual Event featuring live music and entertainment as well as dinner, dancing and a silent auction. Youth Pride, Inc. will be presenting three awards recognizing individuals and organizations for their support of Youth Pride Inc. and the LGBTQQ community.

All of the proceeds of this event support YPI. The Youth Pride Inc. Annual Event is a fantastic opportunity to enjoy a fun night on the town while supporting YPI’s mission to meet the social and emotional needs of youth and young adults impacted by sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. This is their largest fundraiser of the year, so please consider attending!

Go to the Youth Pride website: [http://www.youthprideri.org/](http://www.youthprideri.org/) to purchase tickets and get more information about this fun event.

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**WOULD YOU LIKE TO RESPOND TO THIS SURVEY?**

We have heard from a licensed social worker who is pursuing a doctoral degree. As part of her research, she would like to interview parents of gay, lesbian, and bisexual children aged 18 -- 25, but ONLY if the child came out before the age of 18. The research has been approved by the University of Tennessee’s Review Board.

This survey asks about the benefits and challenges of having an LG or B child. What were your reactions to your child’s coming out? Were you surprised? What were your concerns? Have you or the child experienced discrimination? What were the effects on the extended family? This doctoral student hopes that publishing her results will help families in the future.

If you would like to participate, please write to Alyson Skok at this address: [askok@utk.edu](mailto:askok@utk.edu).

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**Become a Foster Parent in the Family Service of RI Treatment Foster Care Program!**

All across Rhode Island there are children who need foster homes. Whether due to physical abuse, mental health problems or a family emergency, at times foster care is necessary. Can you help?

Foster parents receive the support of a team of clinicians and case managers, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They respond to any phone call within 10 minutes.

Foster parents receive tax-free dollars to support the placement, plus free medical coverage for the child and a clothing allowance.

Many of the children ready for placement are school age. Occasionally there are younger children.

Becoming a foster parent is a good first step toward adoption; however, one can become a foster parent even if adoption is not part of the plan.

If you would consider becoming a foster parent, please call Greg Wright at (401) 331-1350 ext. 3305 or email Greg at wrightgr@familyserviceri.org.

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Email Sandie at svrichard@cox.net to sign up to receive the PFLAG newsletter by email only and help us save a tree (and postage too!)
Louisiana State Judge Rules Louisiana’s Gay Marriage Ban Unconstitutional

On Monday, September 22, 2014 a Louisiana state judge ruled the state law prohibiting same-sex marriage unconstitutional, according to KLFY News.

Judge Edward Rubin of the 15th Judicial District Court in Louisiana ruled that state law prohibiting same-sex marriage is unconstitutional, violating the due process and equal protection clauses of 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as well as the full faith and credit clause.

Photo of the Day: Two women in their 90s get hitched after 72 years together

Vivian Boyack, age 91, and Alice “Nonie” Dubes, age 90, have been together for 72 years, and on the weekend of September 6th they finally tied the knot. As the reverend who performed the ceremony in Davenport, Iowa said, “This is a celebration of something that should have happened a very long time ago.” What does it take to sustain a relationship since circa the middle of World War II? A lot of love and work, according to Boyack. “We’ve had a good time,” Dubes says.

Credit: Maya, Feministing, 9/8/14

United Nations Human Rights Council Votes for LGBT Rights

On Friday, September 26, 2014, the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva -- the UN’s top human rights watchdog -- approved a resolution condemning and expressing “grave concern” about discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

The countries of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Uruguay reportedly took leading roles in pushing for the resolution’s passage.

The International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission applauded the move in a press release:

"The Human Rights Council has taken a fundamental step forward by reaffirming one of the United Nations’ key principles --that everyone is equal in dignity and rights," said Jessica Stern, Executive Director of IGLHRC. "This resolution puts the UN on a trajectory to address the discrimination and violence LGBT persons suffer daily across the world."

"The council is confirming that LGBT people have universal human rights," said Stern. "We know, of course, that the struggle is long, and that we will need the Council to focus on the violations we suffer for many years to come. But for now, we celebrate that the majority of States stood with us to declare, unequivocally, that human rights are for everyone, everywhere."

Here’s the text of the resolution, via ThinkProgress:

Expressing grave concern at acts of violence and discrimination, in all regions of the world, committed against individuals because of their sexual orientation and gender identity...

The IGLHRC adds that opponents of the resolution tried a variety of different procedural tricks to sabotage the measure, proposing seven amendments "that would have eliminated all reference to sexual orientation and gender identity from the text, and made it applicable only to countries who proactively declare support for sexual diversity and rights."

Those amendments all failed.

The resolution passed on a vote of 25-14, with 7 abstentions. The votes largely broke down along geographic and religious lines, with most South American, European, and North American nations voting in favor and most African and Middle Eastern countries -- including U.S. allies like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia -- voting against.

(Continued on Page 6.)
UN HRC Votes for LGBT Rights. (Continued from Page 5.)

Want to know which countries voted for and against basic LGBT human rights, and which were too spineless to take a stand? The vote breakdown is as follows:

In Favor
Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Macedonia, Mexico, Montenegro, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea (South Korea), Romania, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

Against
Algeria, Botswana, Cote d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Maldives, Morocco, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Abstained
Burkina Faso, China, Congo, India, Kazakhstan, Namibia, and Sierra Leone.

Here's the full list of nations that co-sponsored the LGBT rights resolution, via Human Rights Watch:

Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

United States National Security Advisor and former United Nations ambassador Susan E. Rice reacts in a statement: “The United States applauds today’s adoption by the UN Human Rights Council of a resolution in support of the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons. The second such resolution to be passed by the UN Human Rights Council, today’s resolution reiterates that LGBT persons are entitled to the human rights and fundamental freedoms that are the birthright of all humankind, express grave concern regarding acts of violence and discrimination against LGBT persons, and requests the preparation of an important new report on preventing such abuses. We thank sponsors Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Uruguay for their leadership, and commend the Council for taking another historic step to reinforce the unassailable principle that LGBT rights are human rights.”

Credit: John M. Becker, The Bilerico Project, 9/26/14

In 'Transparent', Transgender Issues Are A Family Affair

This fall, one of the more interesting and bold TV shows you'll see isn't being released by a major network — instead, it's coming out of Amazon Studios.

Transparent is a comedy-drama that centers on a family and their lives following the discovery that their father, whom they'd known as Mort (played by Jeffrey Tambor of Arrested Development fame) is a transgender woman named Maura.

"Are you saying you're going to start dressing up like a lady all of the time?" asks daughter Sarah (Amy Landecker).

"No, honey. All my life, my whole life, I've been dressing up like a man," Maura replies. "This is me."

The show's creator, Jill Soloway, has a long history as a TV producer, including the shows Six Feet Under and The United States of Tara, as well as plenty of other side projects examining gender and gender issues.

Her own father came out as transgender several years ago, but Soloway tells NPR's Arun Rath that she started thinking and writing about these issues long before that revelation.

"For me to find out that after probably three decades, if not four decades, of struggling with questions about gender, it was actually kind of exciting and kind of freeing to know that I had this legacy of gender queerness in my family," Soloway says.

Doing a show that addresses transgender issues and people leads to a lot of scrutiny. Soloway says she is thankful for the very vocal trans activist presence on the Internet and the feedback they provided. The production team also hired transgender consultants and other trans people to work on the show.

"The world knows so little about being trans, and I know very little about being trans — I just know what it's like to be the child of a trans person. But there's so little trans representation [and] so few trans people who are creating content, so we really depend on the trans community to help us get it right," she says. "We're happy to be corrected."

Soloway says she always had Jeffrey Tambor in mind for the lead role because he reminded her of her own parent, but she received some pushback for not taking the opportunity to cast a transgender person in the role. She says the casting opened her eyes to the problem of lack of trans representation on television.

"There are just so few trans people playing trans people," she says. "It's really a shame that there wasn't that trans actress that I could have cast in the role in that moment."

Soloway notes that the show cast trans actors in over a dozen or speaking parts, but she says she understands why casting Tambor was criticized: "I really did become educated and become politicized to the problem of what it means to cast a cis male in a trans woman role."

"I'm learning every day," Soloway says.

You can watch the pilot episode of Transparent now on Amazon Prime, along with all remaining episodes (10 in all) that were released on September 26th.

Story Credit: NPR STAFF, September 21, 2014
Photo credit: Richard Shotwell/Invision/AP
Transgender Day of Remembrance

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is an annual observance on November 20 that honors the memory of those whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence. During the week of November 17-23, 2014 individuals and organizations around the country participate in Transgender Awareness Week to help raise the visibility of transgender and gender non-conforming people and address the issues these communities face.

What is the Transgender Day of Remembrance?
The Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) was started by transgender advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith as a vigil to honor the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was killed in 1998. The vigil commemorated all the transgender people lost to violence that year and began an important memorial that has become the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance.

"The Transgender Day of Remembrance seeks to highlight the losses we face due to anti-transgender bigotry and violence. I am no stranger to the need to fight for our rights, and the right to simply exist is first and foremost. With so many seeking to erase transgender people -- sometimes in the most brutal ways possible -- it is vitally important that those we lose are remembered, and that we continue to fight for justice."
- Transgender Day of Remembrance founder Gwendolyn Ann Smith

How can I participate in the Transgender Day of Remembrance?
Participate in the Transgender Day of Remembrance by attending or organizing a vigil on November 20 to honor all those whose lives were lost to anti-transgender violence that year. Vigils are typically hosted by local transgender advocates or LGBT organizations, and held at community centers, parks, places of worship and other venues. The vigil often involves reading a list of the names of those who died that year.

The University of Rhode Island will hold Trans Awareness Week from November 17 through 21, 2014 at their Kingston, RI campus with a week-long celebration of trans and gender related issues relevant to students, faculty, and staff. There will be a highlighted speaker or event and recognition of the National Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR), which is at the end of November each year. On November 20th, there will be a screening of the short documentary, TransJourney at 7:00 p.m. at Swan Auditorium on the URI Campus. The documentary is produced and co-directed by RI filmmaker Alexia Kosmider and Blue Wade. The film chronicles the journeys and interrelationships of Sandra Richard, the current president of the Greater Providence Chapter of PFLAG, her transgender daughter Annabelle and their mutual friend Shannon, an older transgender woman, both of whom live in Seattle, WA. They will also have a vigil to commemorate the Trans Day of Remembrance.

Plans are also underway for TDOR events in the Providence area, including another screening of TransJourney at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in November. Check the PFLAG Greater Providence, RI Facebook Page for updated information once it becomes available.

Everyone who shares PFLAG's vision is welcome to join us in our work by becoming a member of the PFLAG Greater Providence Chapter. Your financial support makes the PFLAG chapter's work possible. As a chapter member you can also become engaged in the vital work of providing support, education and advocacy in Rhode Island by volunteering your assistance as we plan various events and/or programs.

When you come to a PFLAG meeting, you are greeted by other parents, friends, allies and member of the LGBTQ community who started attending meetings just like you did—full of questions and concern for your gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender or gender non-conforming/gender questioning loved one. We’ve all been there, at one stage or another; and we attend the support meetings so that we can help you navigate what is a somewhat fearful and confusing time in your life.

We do not attend meetings as professionals serving the LGBTQ community. We are not professional social workers, counselors, psychologists, therapists, nor physicians. Rather, we are simply PARENTS, FRIENDS, ALLIES and some of us are GAY, LESBIAN, BI-SEXUAL and/or TRANSGENDER or GENDER NONCONFORMING. AND we are there for one purpose—to help YOU by listening to your story, providing you a safe and confidential space to express your feelings and fears, and letting you know that you are not alone in this journey.

We hope that once you feel you no longer need PFLAG’s support that you will consider continuing as a member of PFLAG in order to provide that same support to others, just as those before you have done. In addition, we can always use more volunteers to help out in other areas of our missions of education and advocacy. We will be providing more information about how you can volunteer in future postings. In the meantime, if you haven’t joined our PFLAG Chapter or renewed your membership, we hope you will consider doing so now. See the membership form on the back page.

Even if you're not sure that you still need PFLAG, remember that PFLAG needs you the most!
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
November 5, 2014
December 3, 2014
January 7, 2015
February 4, 2015

Contact Us
PFLAG/Greater Providence
c/o 500 Angell Street, Apt. 212
Providence, RI 02906
(401) 751-7571
www.PFLAGprovidence.org
Email: 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
sagerinfo@gmail.com
TGI Network of Rhode Island
PO Box 40365, Providence, RI 02940
info@tginetwork.org
(401) 441-5058 (voicemail)
Family Support Group meets 2nd Monday each month from 6:30-8:30 pm at Bell Street Parish House, Bell Street, Providence
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.

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
The Facebook Transgender Alliance
(Closed Support Group)
Parents of Transgender Children
(Closed Support Group)
The Rhode Island LGBT Center

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 Scott at scmpmr33@gmail.com.

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, c/o 500 Angell Street, Apt. 212, Providence, RI 02906.

☐ Household $30 ☐ Individual $25 ☐ Student/Limited Income $15
☐ Newsletter Only $10 ☐ Additional Contribution $________________________

Name(s) __________________________________________________________________________________________

Address __________________________________________________________________________________________

City __________________________ State ______________________ ZIP ______________________

Phone No. __________________________ E-mail ________________________________________________

☐ I’ll do my part to help save a tree. Please send me the newsletter via email only (.pdf format).

Memberships and contributions to PFLAG are tax deductible. All information will remain confidential. PFLAG does not sell, lease or lend mailing lists to any person or group.