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Parents, Families and
Friends of Lesbians and
Gays promotes the
health and well- being
of gay, lesbian, bisex-
ual, and trans-gendered
persons, their families,
and their friends
through

SUPPORT to cope with
an adverse society

EDUCATION to
enlighten an ill-
informed public

ADVOCACY to end dis-
crimination and secure
equal civil rights.

Oregon Central Coast Chapter

April 2013

Take Action!

The Center for American Progress is asking for people to sign onto their amicus brief directed to the U.S. Supreme Court arguing for the overturn of DOMA. <http://thinkprogress.org/take-action/doma-email/>

President Obama has filed a brief urging the Supreme Court to strike down Prop 8 and restore marriage equality in California. You can add your name to those thanking him. <http://act.couragecampaign.org/letter/obamap8thanks/?akid=21.224704.4PZW6S&rd=1&t=1>

In Arizona the proposed anti-trans amendment to SB 1432 would jail and fine anyone who goes into a public restroom that someone thinks is the "wrong" gender for them. It's discriminatory and wrong. You can petition Arizona to give transpeople respect and fair treatment. <https://www.allout.org/en/actions/arizona> [Update: Shame finally overcame Arizona legislators so that they "softened" the measure to protect businesses that bar a person of the "wrong" gender from entering bathrooms. It should still be protested!]

Ask the Alabama legislature to remove a section of Alabama law that requires sexual education teachers to emphasize "homosexuality is not a lifestyle acceptable to the general public and that homosexual conduct is a criminal offense." [https://www.change.org/petitions/alabama-state-legislators-repeal-law-forcing-schools-to-teach-that-being-gay-is-criminal?](https://www.change.org/petitions/alabama-state-legislators-repeal-law-forcing-schools-to-teach-that-being-gay-is-criminal?utm_source=action_alert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20476&alert_id=sTpcBxYgZv_OoWTxkXEPg)

[utm_source=action_alert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20476&alert_id=sTpcBxYgZv_OoWTxkXEPg](https://www.change.org/petitions/alabama-state-legislators-repeal-law-forcing-schools-to-teach-that-being-gay-is-criminal?utm_source=action_alert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20476&alert_id=sTpcBxYgZv_OoWTxkXEPg)

Hillary Clinton on Gay Marriage:
"I support it personally
and as a matter of policy and law."

PFLAG Rallies with United for Marriage

The “United for Marriage: Light the Way to Justice” campaign is national in scope, with over 200 local events taking place in all 50 states and Washington, DC. From candlelight vigils to rallies to marches to prayers for equality, these events are a powerful testament to the broad public support across the country for marriage equality.



On March 26, the first day of hearings by the U.S. Supreme Court, Marriage Equality rallies were held in Newport and Lincoln City. Lincoln County joined hundreds of other communities across the country to demonstrate support and to engage the public in discussion, prayer, and personal stories about why marriage matters.

In Newport the hardy red-clad band organized by PFLAG was a visible presence for Marriage Equality from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm in front of Newport City Hall. The fifteen participants represented four of the county's seven Welcoming Churches, PFLAG OCC, Newport High's Gay/Straight Alliance, parents of gay children, and lesbian couples who have been together over 30 years--and whose 2004 “Multnomah Marriages” were revoked. Two participants were teens, one a 72-year-old transwoman, and one an 87-year-old straight ally.

We waved to passing cars--good traffic flow because it was during Spring Break. Most of the response was very positive--honks, waves (with all five fingers), and thumbs-up. Only one negative one-finger wave!

The Lincoln City rally (above left) was organized by the Congregational Church (UCC), the first Welcoming Church in Lincoln County, and was attended by members of two other Welcoming Churches and PFLAG as well. Approximately 15 supporters held signs and waved at passing motorists in front of City Hall between 11 AM and 1 PM to very positive responses.

Reports with photos and videos from rallies across the country are available at the United for Marriage website: <http://unitedformarriage.tumblr.com/> Huge rallies in large cities featured celebrities, political and church leaders, and entertainers. Smaller gatherings in towns like Newport and Lincoln City brought out a handful of supporters who stood for equality at city halls and town squares. Casper (WY) and Willits (CA) had their first exposure to LGBT rights and marriage equality—and it won't be the last.—Jeanne St.John

Nearly one-third of gay marriage supporters, 28 percent, say they changed their minds most often because they know someone who is gay. Nearly all those who oppose it have always done so. By 54% to 39%, people in the United States say they would vote for a law giving marriage benefits, such as those for insurance, taxes, or Social Security, to spouses of federal employees in same-sex marriages. A recent Washington Post-ABC News poll shows that 58 percent of people in the United States believe in marriage equality; 36 percent say same-sex marriage should be illegal. A decade ago 37 percent favored gay nuptials, and 55 percent opposed them. Nearly two-thirds of respondents say that the issue should be settled federally on the basis of the U.S. Constitution, not within each state.

Politics on Our Side

New York City: Openly lesbian City Council Speaker Christine Quinn has announced her candidacy for the mayor of the largest city in the United States.

Colorado: After outlawing marriage equality seven years ago, the state has legalized civil union benefits for unmarried couples, LGBT or straight.

Ohio: A poll shows that 54 percent of the state's voters now support marriage equality, while only 40 percent still oppose same-sex marriage. This poll shows a reversal of the 62 percent who opposed marriage equality in 2004 when the state passed a constitutional amendment preventing marriage equality.

Tennessee: Once again a "don't say gay" bill has died in state legislature. The failed bill not only blocked teachers from talking about LGBT issues but also required all certified school employees to contact parents of any self-identified LGBT student.

United States: After avoiding the bill for almost a year, the House finally passed the renewal of the Violence against Women Act. President Obama has now signed VAWA which, for the first time, includes explicit protections for LGBT victims of domestic violence.

United States: A total of 110 U.S. House members have signed a letter calling on President Obama to sign an executive order requiring federal contractors to have non-discrimination protections for their LGBT workers.

Canada: The House of Commons has passed a bill, 149-137 including 16 Conservatives and four cabinet ministers, making it illegal to discriminate against transgender people. The bill now goes to the Senate, which is unelected and is expected to approve it. Prime Minister Stephen Harper opposed the bill.

Mexico: The Supreme Court has ruled that anti-gay slurs are hate speech.

Russia: In a country where homosexuality is legislated against with laws against public displays of affection, the first glossy magazine "About Women for Women," *Agens*, is being published.

United Kingdom: Queen Elizabeth II has signed a Commonwealth Charter backing gay rights and gender equality.

Former George W. Bush deputy chief of staff Karl Rove said Sunday on *This Week* that he can imagine the next Republican presidential candidate supporting gay marriage.

Influential Religious Leader Supports Marriage Equality

Evangelical megapastor, author, and television writer Rob Bell supported marriage equality at San Francisco's Grace Cathedral. "I am for marriage. I am for fidelity. I am for love, whether it's a man and woman, a woman and a woman, a man and a man. I think the ship has sailed and I think the church needs—I think this is the world we are living in and we need to affirm people wherever they are." *Time* listed Bell as one of the top 100 most influential people in the world in 2011, and the Michigan church he founded has an attendance of more than 10,000 members.



Groups Celebrate Women

On Friday, March 8, a group of about 30 people celebrated International Women's Day with a Bridge Walk for Peace across Yaquina Bay Bridge. Members of NOW (National Organization for Women) and ICPJ (Interfaith Community for Peace & Justice) joined PFLAG to remember women leaders whose work for justice and peace is often unrecognized.

Sunny skies and spirits warmed the walkers against the brisk wind, and all returned with renewed commitment and enthusiasm for the work ahead.—Jeanne St. John

(Below: Marchers across Yaquina Bay Bridge enjoy clear skies.)



Supporters Advance LGBT Rights

The Hayward Public Library in the San Francisco Bay area has made a **30-minute historical documentary** about the 1995 creation of a traditional high school dance for LGBT teenagers. *Now We Can Dance: The Story of the Hayward Gay Prom* also shows reactions to the annual event, which draws hundreds of students. Interviews with early prom organizers, attendees, and supportive community members were interspersed with footage from the 2011 gay prom and interviews with recent prom goers, volunteers, and even a protestor.

When transgender Donnie Collins, a student at Emerson College (Boston) couldn't afford breast surgery to remove his tissue, his **fraternity brothers helped him**. Phi Alpha Tau members turned to the Internet to raise the funds that Collins' insurance would not provide him.

The ACLU Foundation of Southern California (ACLU/SC) and the law firm of Nixon Peabody LLP have sent a letter to administrators at Sultana High School and the Hesperia Unified School District in San Bernardino County **demanding that school officials stop censoring** the speech and activities of the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) school club; stop discriminating against lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and queer/questioning (LBGTQ) students in the school; and allow students to wear gender non-conforming clothing to the upcoming prom.

The Green Street United Methodist Church (Winston-Salem, NC) **refuses to perform marriages** until United Methodist pastors are allowed to officiate weddings for same-sex couples in North Carolina. The church made the announcement on its Facebook page before holding a press conference detailing its plan. The Rev. Kelly Carpenter said that his 400-member congregation and its 18-member Leadership Council have long considered the move.

DC Comics has dropped Orson Scott Card as an author for *Adventures of Superman* in its comic app after fans protested the writer as a homophobic bigot. The figure of Superman was created by two Jewish teenagers, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster as a symbol against minorities. DC is continuing its opposition to bigotry. Card is on the board of the National Organization for Marriage, a leader in campaigning against marriage equality.

People Who Make a Difference

Jean Podrasky, first cousin of Chief Justice John Roberts, was in the audience when the Supreme Court heard arguments regarding the constitutionality of California's Prop 8 on March 26. A resident of San Francisco, Podrasky wishes to marry her partner, Grace Fasano. She hopes to introduce Fasano to Roberts while the two of them are in Washington to hear the case. About one-third of people who have changed their minds on gay marriage say they did so because they have a friend, family member, or personal acquaintance who are gay, according to a recent Pew Research Center survey. Two examples of these people are Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) and former vice president Dick Cheney.



Anderson Cooper accepted his fourth Vito Russo Award at the 26 Annual GLAAD Media Awards, saying, "I've had so many blessings in my life, and being gay is certainly one of the greatest blessings. It has allowed me to love and to be loved and to help open my head and my heart in ways I could never have predicted. The ability to love one another, the ability to love another person is, in my opinion, one of God's greatest gifts, and I thank God every day for enabling me to give and share love with the people in my life — my family, and my friends, and my partner Benjamin."

After the photo of 16-year-old **Felicia Rivera** and her girlfriend, **Lialani Hernandez**, was pulled from the Valentine's Day page for the yearbook, Rivera decided to fight back. She said she hopes to start a gay-straight alliance at Brennan High and get the picture put back in the yearbook. Northside ISD spokesman Pascual Gonzalez said it depicted a public display of affection in violation of the school's handbook. "It's just an intimate picture; there's no eye contact, they're both looking down. It looks like a pretty intimate moment," he said. [But it's for Valentine's Day!]



After 16-year-old **Destin Holmes's** teacher bullied her in her Moss Point (MI) class for being a lesbian, the Southern Poverty Law Center took her case to the school district. The teacher divided the math class into two teams, boys vs. girls, but then told Destin to sit alone between the two teams because the teacher didn't know "what she was." The principal refused Destin any help, saying, "I don't want a dyke in this school." Teachers refused to let her use the girls bathroom. SPLC attorney Sam Wolfe said that students, teachers, and administrators, propagated a pervasive anti-gay environment in the district. He added that the district would face a federal lawsuit if it did not immediately develop a plan to correct the issue.



Marriage Equality Goes to Supreme Court

For the one or two of you may not know that two different marriage equality cases were argued in the U.S. Supreme Court at the end of March, one was on overturning Prop 8 in California and the other on overturning DOMA for the United States. The media is full of bits and pieces relating to the arguments, but my favorite news source can sometimes be found on the Comedy Channel with Jon Stewart's *The Daily Show*.

His attack was classic Stewart, eviscerating the lawyers' and justices' arguments against striking down both laws, primarily Justices Antonin Scalia and Samuel Alito. (To no one's surprise, Justice Clarence Thomas was silent after having spent his annual five words in court earlier in the year.)

First, Stewart took umbrage with the argument that the 17-year-old legislation wasn't based on moral grounds from Congress. Then he refuted Scalia's misplaced assertion that some research is negative about the effects lesbians and gays rearing children. To Alito's comment that the court shouldn't rule on either case because gay marriage is newer than cell phones and the Internet, Stewart responded, "You don't have to beta test rights."

You can find the segment at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/29/jon-stewart-blasts-gay-ma_n_2978303.html?utm_hp_ref=gay-voices&ir=Gay%20Voices

Other marriage equality information is available at <http://nelsnewday.wordpress.com/2013/03/28/doma-skim-milk-marriage/>
<http://nelsnewday.wordpress.com/2013/03/26/scalia-needs-to-resign/>

The rulings on these marriage equality cases could very likely be anti-climatic. The court seemed reluctant to make any decision about the Prop 8 case, and the one on DOMA could be narrow enough that it will take many other court cases to sort out.

Transgender First Grader Must be Home Schooled, Fights School Policy

Coy Mathis, a 6-year-old transgender first-grader, is now being home-schooled because Eagleside Elementary School (Fountain, CO) refuses to let her use the girl's bathroom. Her only options are to use the nurse's bathroom, the boy's bathroom, or the staff bathroom.

Michael Silverman, executive director of the Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund, said that Coy's school had originally been very supportive in Coy's needs but then told Coy's family that she would no longer be allowed to use the girls' bathroom. Colorado has a anti-discrimination law to protect transgender people, but the district has taken the position that the law is unclear.

Although Coy was born male at birth, she now identifies as a girl. Her parents, Kathryn and Jeremy Mathis, filed a complaint against Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 in February, hoping that the school would change its position. The school will not enter into mediation with the family or comment on their decision.



A recent polling of Alaskans shows that 70 percent of them support marriage equality. Asked at a press conference about these poll results, the entire legislative GOP caucus burst into laughter. Rep. Lance Pruitt pulled himself together and, in the midst of massive verbiage, said, "I'll be straight. We did not talk about that particular issue." By the next day, the caucus evidently got the message that they have behaved inappropriately and apologized. Although House Speaker Mike Chenault (left) wasn't quite with the program. He also said, "The laughter was in reaction to which legislator had to field the difficult question." At least one Alaska GOP legislator thinks that laughter is appropriate when having trouble answering a question.

April 10 PFLAG Meeting

“LGBT Families Raising Children” is the topic of discussion for the April PFLAG meeting. PFLAG Secretary Deb Lyman will host and introduce the program and speakers.

Local NOW Addresses Youth Issues

“The Effects of Bullying, Sexual Harassment, & Dating Violence” is the topic of the panel discussion at the April 8 NOW (National Organization for Women) meeting at 7:00 pm at Central Lincoln PUD in Newport. PFLAG members Jordan Ostrum and Jeanne St. John are panel members who will discuss these hostile experiences in local schools.

Everyone is invited to attend and participate in the discussion following the panel to brainstorm possible community actions to improve conditions in the schools.

BSA Policies Lose Members

Internal polling documents obtained by Scouts for Equality (SfE) show that the Boy Scouts of America's (BSA) policy of banning gay scouts and scoutmasters is a key driver in scouts decades-long decline. BSA noted that "conservative estimates assign a 15:1 ratio of negative to positive comments about the existing membership standards policy" that prohibits gay scouts or scoutmasters. The documents are available on Scouts for Equality's website: <http://www.scoutsforequality.com/campaign-news/2012-fall-voice-of-the-scout>

GLAAD Includes Transpeople

Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation will now use the simple name GLAAD to include a new focus on advocating for equality for transgender people.

OCC PFLAG Calendar

April 2, 9:00 am: OUT Lesbian Coffee—Coffee House, Newport Bayfront

April 5, 7:00-9:00 pm: Drop-in social for LGBT folks who are deaf or hard of hearing—Eugene Coffee Company, 1840 Chambers St., Eugene

April 6, 7:30 pm: Damsels Divas & Dames 2013: I Will Survive--A Benefit for HIV Alliance—Hult Center, Eugene

April 8, 7:00 pm: NOW Meeting, “The Effects of Bullying, Sexual Harassment, and Dating Violence”—Central Lincoln PUD

April 10, 7:00 pm: PFLAG Meeting, “LGBT Families Raising Children”—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

April 16, 9:00 am: OUT on the Oregon Coast for Lesbians--Green Salmon, Yachats

May 3, 7:00-9:00 pm: Drop-in social for LGBT folks who are deaf or hard of hearing—Eugene Coffee Company, 1840 Chambers St., Eugene

May 7, 9:00 am: OUT Lesbian Coffee—Coffee House, Newport Bayfront

May 8, 7:00 pm: PFLAG Meeting—St. Stephen's, 9th & Hurbert, Newport

May 21, 9:00 am: OUT on the Oregon Coast for Lesbians --Green Salmon, Yachats

The Coastal AIDS Network* monthly activities:

Second Tuesday, 7:00 pm: “Activity Night” (call for information (541)994-5597)

Third Tuesday, 7:00 pm: “Pizza Night” (Newport Abbey's Pizza)

Fourth Tuesday, 7:00 pm: “Men's Pot Luck” (Locations vary! Call (541)994-5597 or email coastalaidnetwork@gmail.com for information)

We also try to have pizza in Tillamook or Pacific City. Email Dan, coastalaidnetwork@gmail.com or leave a message for him at (541)994-5597.

*CAN activities are open to everyone, regardless of HIV status or sexual orientation except for “Men's Pot Luck.” Occasionally we bend that rule for special events.

Social LGBT Oregon Coast Group:

www.outoregoncoast.com

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Out-Oregon-Coast/194768480642314>

Join PFLAG!

YES! I support the mission of PFLAG. Enclosed is my annual membership fee.*

_____ Individual or Household (\$30)
_____ Student/Limited Income (\$20)
_____ Contribution \$ _____

*Includes membership in National PFLAG with affiliates in over 365 worldwide communities.

Make check payable and mail to:

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PO Box 2172
Newport, OR 97365

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