



Cincinnati

FALL 2003

www.pflagcinci.org

A Quarterly Publication

P.O. Box 19634
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219-0634

Thoughts from the President:

We have a lot to be thankful for this year. Give yourselves a pat on the back for helping to create a vibrant, healthy, welcoming PFLAG chapter!!!!

The big news is that our own, Marian Weage, has been awarded a Peace and Justice Award in honor of Maurice McCrackin. (See accompanying article) This award is given to those local activists whose work reflects the spirit of Rev. Maurice McCrackin. Congratulations to Marian!!!

The Board Members for 2004 has only a few changes. Most of the Board members agreed to stay on for 2004. However, we do have one loss. Due to academic commitments, we will be losing Lyndsay Schaeffer as our newsletter designer. (See thank you article). Chris Anderson has consented to take over Lyndsay's duties and will wear the hat of both editor and newsletter designer. Thank you Chris.

Dorothy Byers has agreed to take on the duties of Speaker's Bureau. Please contact Dorothy at dfbyers@cinci.rr.com if you would like to schedule a speaker or for more information on how you may contribute to our chapter by public speaking.

If you haven't already noticed, some of us are wearing formal name tags at each monthly meeting. These tags identify those people who are Board Members. This was designed to help the membership easily identify a Board Member. If you

have any concerns or questions, please feel free to talk to anyone on our Board. We are all here to help you.

We will again host a Christmas Potluck on December 9th at 6:00 p.m. Meat and drinks are provided – just bring a dish to pass. Contact Dolores Bebeko at dbebko@prodigy.net / 513-573-0589 to RSVP and let you know what you plan to bring.

In the spirit of the holiday season, please take the time to welcome a newcomer to our meeting. There is nothing more giving than that of yourself. A warm smile, a warm touch or hug all helps those that are new to our group feel welcome. Don't be afraid to share the wonderful spirit that is in each one of you.

I also want to take this opportunity to wish all of you a safe, healthy and happy holiday season!!!

***Remember:
When you no
longer need
PFLAG, PFLAG
Needs YOU!!***

About the PFLAG Cincinnati Chapter:

Our *regular* meetings are always held on the **second Tuesday of each month** at Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church, 103 William Howard Taft Rd., from 7:30 – 10:00 P.M. Our next meetings will be on December 9, 2003 and January 13, 2004. Meetings are open to parents friends and family of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons, as well as to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons.

Board meetings are held on the same night as regular meetings, starting at 6:00 P.M. Please contact a Board Member for information about attending meetings.

MISSION STATEMENT: Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays promotes the health and wellbeing of gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans-gender persons and their families and friends, through *support*, to cope with the adverse society, through *education*, to enlighten an ill-informed public, and through *advocacy*, to end discrimination and to secure civil rights. PFLAG provides an opportunity for confidential dialog about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human dignity. Meetings are open to all and are completely confidential.

From the membership committee

Please remember to check the mailing label on this issue of the news-letter. We have included the date of expiration on your mailing label to send a gentle reminder of when your PFLAG dues expire. The date will also include a letter indicating the type of membership dues you have paid. If a date does not appear on the label that either means that you are not yet a member or that our records do not show when you last paid your dues. Your dues are our only source of revenue. Our only other fundraiser is the annual banquet and the proceeds from that event are earmarked for scholarships. We depend upon your generous support through your dues. If it is time to renew membership, please use the form included in this newsletter to do so. Thank you for your help!

Harold and June Delph and the entire Membership committee

2003/2004 Officers

President.....	Marti Kwiatkowski.....513.489.8776...Kwi31@fuse.net
Vice President.....	Dorothy Byers.....513.559.0271...dfbyers@cinci.rr.com – work: 556.3352
Secretary.....	Marie Jenkins.....513.697.9923...MarieMJ@aol.com
Treasurer.....	Rick Kay..... 513.794.9097...RickKay@ernstandrabe.com – work: 871.3033

2003/2004 Chairpersons/Board Members

Advocacy Chair.....	OPEN.....
Hot Line.....	Judy and Dick Jacobs.....513.755.6150...dickjacobs@fuse.net
Internet Liaison.....	Tom Jenkins.....513.697.9923...tom.jenkins@louisville.edu
Library.....	Kathleen Alexander.....
Program.....	Linda Arnest...513.241.2990...linda_arnest@hotmail.com – work: 556.0811
Refreshments.....	Dolores and Steve Bebeko.....513.573.0589...dbebko@prodigy.net
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MEMBERS TO VOTE ON BYLAW CHANGE

At their November meeting, the Board of PFLAG Greater Cincinnati voted to submit to the membership for approval the following change in the Constitution (first section of the Constitution and Bylaws).

That the following paragraph of the Constitution be amended to remove the clause indicated by strikethroughs:

THIS CORPORATION HAS BEEN FORMED UNDER THE OHIO CORPORATION LAW FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED HEREIN BELOW, AND IT SHALL BE NONPROFIT AND NONPARTISAN. NO SUBSTANTIAL PART OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CORPORATION SHALL CONSIST OF THE PUBLICATION OR DISSEMINATION OF MATERIALS WITH THE PURPOSE OF ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE LEGISLATION, AND THE CORPORATION SHALL

~~NOT PARTICIPATE OR INTERVENE IN ANY POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ON BEHALF OF ANY CANDIDATE FOR PUBLIC OFFICE OR FOR OR AGAINST ANY CAUSE OR MEASURE BEING SUBMITTED TO THE PEOPLE FOR A VOTE.~~

The paragraph in general limitations on lobbying and political action required of non-profits by the IRS for tax-exempt status. The clause in question is not a requirement of either the IRS or federal, state or local laws. Removing it would allow PFLAG to participate to a limited extent in the campaign for repeal of Article 12.

The proposal will be offered for discussion at the regular December meeting. Following that meeting, members in good standing will be sent ballots on which to vote for the change. A member may pay dues at the December meeting in order to receive a ballot.

Thank You, Lyndsay Schaeffer - PFLAG Newsletter Designer

By Linda Arnest

Lyndsay Schaeffer is from New Jersey. You can spot that East Coast edge within five minutes of meeting her. Lyndsay is working on her PhD in Molecular Genetics, Biochemistry and Microbiology at the University of Cincinnati. She says, after arriving in Cincinnati some five years ago, she had to find the local PFLAG chapter to escape the conservative confines of the Queen City.

Four years ago, Lyndsay agreed, in spite of the demands of her academic program and volunteer schedule, to become the layout designer for our quarterly newsletter. At the same time, she was busy volunteering with the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), the Youth Summit and Youth Guardian Services. As a straight supporter, Lyndsay has given a great deal to the GLBT community of Greater Cincinnati.

The PFLAG Newsletter blossomed under Lyndsay's care. She added graphics and pictures for the first time and, with Dan Parsley's prolific editing, expanded the

Newsletter to six full pages. Over those years, she also became the layout designer for our annual banquet program and invitation where her talents produced the most colorful and imaginative publications our chapter has ever produced.

Lyndsay has moved on to more ambitious endeavors and we have a new editor and layout designer, Chris Anderson. Though Lyndsay still graces us occasionally with her presence at our monthly PFLAG meetings, we will miss her special touch on our Newsletter and banquet materials. Her influence will stay with us. Never again will we be content with solid text or plain black and white on colored paper.

Thank you, Lyndsay, for the gift of your time and talents over the years. We wish you the very best in what is sure to be a bright future in the field of medicine. And we know your volunteer spirit will surely continue to shine on the GLBT community wherever you may go.

Citizens To Restore Fairness

Congratulations to all the volunteers for CRF. 6,200 signatures were collected on Election Day!!!! CRF is a broad-based coalition formed for the specific purpose of repealing Article XII of Cincinnati's city charter. Article XII, adopted in 1993, prohibits gay and lesbian citizens from receiving legal protection from discrimination. Article XII specifically says that no one may seek legislative relief for discrimination based upon sexual orientation. CRF needs your help. Please contact June or Harold Delph or visit CRF website at -

www.citizenstorestorefairness.org. for more information on how you can help. You do not have to be a resident of the City of Cincinnati to volunteer.

PFLAG FOUNDER IS AWARD WINNER

by Marti Kwiatkowski

Marian Weage, founder of the Greater Cincinnati Chapter of PFLAG is a 2003 recipient of the Maurice McCrackin Peace & Justice Award.

On behalf of her three gay children, Marian Weage founded the Greater Cincinnati Chapter of PFLAG in 1985. Since that time, Marian has been a constant in our chapter membership and activities.

Since her presidency, Marian has been instrumental in helping our monthly meeting attendance increase from 10 to 15 people to over 40. As our first President, she has been an inspiration and role model to everyone she meets.

Marian was instrumental in helping our chapter develop a scholarship fund supported by our annual scholarship banquet. In 1991 PFLAG held its first scholarship banquet and to date over \$32,000 has been awarded to deserving GLBT or straight supportive college bound allies.

Her vision to create a community service video was realized when our chapter received a grant from the Josephine Schell Foundation and created a video entitled, "Beginning The Journey."

PFLAG has a voice in the community that speaks loud and clear about equal rights for GLBT people.

For 17 years Marian has been an active member of our chapter and involved at both the regional and national level of PFLAG. Her untiring devotion to equal rights has not diminished, she is also a strong advocate for equal rights in her church (United Church of Christ) and she is presently enrolled at NKU majoring in theatre arts.

We in PFLAG consider Marian the "mother" of our chapter and the one person who has been, and continues to be, at our side.

Congratulations to our beloved Marian!!!

This award is sponsored by the Greater Cincinnati Community Shares, an organization working to end social, economic, and environmental injustice in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. Please join us as we honor Marian on Sunday, December 7th at 3:00 p.m. at Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church (103 William Howard Taft Road). Reception to follow. All are welcome!!!

LAUGH OUT LOUD

Marti Kwiatkowski

The 12th Annual Scholarship Banquet will be held on Saturday, March 6th at the Madison in Covington, Kentucky. Co-Sponsored by the HaHa Institute, the banquet will feature a comedian performance by, KAREN WILLIAMS. Karen Williams is a professional comedian of national note and international acclaim. Affectionately known as the *Diva of Comedy* and the *Queen of Improv*, Ms. Williams is recognized as a comic craft master, a multitalented writer and actress, and a committed artist of the higher caliber. Karen is the founder of the International Institute of Humor and Healing Arts (HaHa). The mission of the HaHa Institute is to encourage the fullest and highest activation of human potential for compassion, wisdom and life force through the daily use of humor and healing arts. Mark your calendars, join us, and bring your Ha Ha's with you for a night of fun.

THIRD ANNUAL GLBTQ YOUTH SUMMIT RESOUNDING SUCCESS

"For Youth, By Youth, About Youth" event offered nearly 25 workshops, offering a wide range of choices to the participants during four workshop sessions. The Resource Center (included a PFLAG table) was staffed throughout the day so that youth and adults could learn more about community and support resources. Kathy Y Wilson, the keynote speaker, truly challenged her audience.

PFLAG was honored to host a "mock" PFLAG meeting that provided participants a great opportunity to learn about our chapter, its mission, and its outreach. The summit was a wonderful day to share resources, learn, build coalitions, and just have fun.

There were over 200 participants representing 15 colleges and universities and 24 middle schools and high schools. They came from 20 cities in Ohio and 14 cities in Kentucky. Sixty-five percent of attendees were youth (ages 13-25).

I think we can safely say that we are very proud to be a sponsor of this event. The entire leadership team of the Youth Summit deserves accolades for accomplishing their goal of bringing together GLBTQ and straight supportive youth of high school and college age, as well as their adult supporters to share a day of empowerment.

Congratulations!!!!

PFLAG Thank You
from PFLAG Board

A PFLAG thank you goes to Diane Torrance who spoke at our October meeting on Trans persons. Diane spoke for 30 minutes on what it means in society today to be a trans person. We thank her for her courage to share her personal story and for her willingness to educate us about the need for greater visibility and acceptance of trans individuals. Anyone interested in contacting Diane may reach her at dianetorrance@fuse.net.

**GREATER CINCINNATI PFLAG
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

- New Individual Membership \$25.00
- Renewal Household Membership \$35.00
- Change of Address Supporting Membership \$50.00
- Contributing Membership \$100.00
- Please Contact me for Sponsoring Membership \$500.00
- volunteer opportunities Lifetime Membership \$1,000.00
- Please send all mailings blind label only Other Contribution \$_____

Make all checks payable to "PFLAG" and mail to P.O. Box 19634, Cincinnati, OH 45219-0634 (Your donation is tax deductible, ID #953750674. Thank you!

NAME _____ DATE _____ E-MAIL _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE (____) _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

EDITORS SECTION:

by Chris Anderson

I want to personally wish everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy and Healthful New Year.

I am constantly on the lookout for new articles local, national, and international that are informative and pertinent for our PFLAG readers. If you have an article, idea, or would just like to voice your opinion on a topic then forward your information to me directly at wcanders@juno.com or mail them to PFLAG newsletter, 4607 Williamsburg Rd. North, Cinti., OH. 45215-5143

I look forward to your input!

MASSACHUSETTS SUPREME COURT STRIKES DOWN GAY-MARRIAGE

from PFLAG National

PFLAG lauds the decision of the court as a great victory for fairness and families. The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Council confirms what fair-minded citizens already know: same-sex couple relationships deserve to be honored with the same rights and responsibilities as those of their straight family members and friends. We are gratified that the highest court in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts deems same-sex couples to be equal to their opposite-sex counterparts under the law. Congratulations to Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD), Mary Bonauto who argued the case, and Evan Wolfson of the Freedom to Marry Coalition for his tireless work on this issue

Marriage is a civil right that belongs to everyone. The government has no business deciding whom a person should marry. The decision to enter into marriage is a completely, private personal choice that every individual has the right to make for him or herself – a basic principle that should be as true for same-sex couples as for other couples.

The Massachusetts question will now return to the Legislature, which already is considering a constitutional amendment that would legally define marriage as a union between one man and one woman. The state's powerful speaker of the House, Tom Finneran of Boston, has endorsed this proposal.

Don't be shy, call or write your local media to let them know why this is important to you and those you care about.

PFLAG Regional Conference

by Marie Jenkins

Think about that wonderful feeling you get at a PFLAG meeting, being in a place where you and you loved ones are valued and loved and supported. Think about the freedom to be yourself and the pleasure of learning and the joy of meeting wonderfully diverse new friends. Now multiply that feeling by ten, or even one hundred. That is the feeling you'll get if you attend PFLAG's regional or national meetings – a glimpse of the world, as it ought to be.

On a brisk October weekend, Tom and I attended a PFLAG regional conference in Detroit. Over 100 participants from PFLAG chapters in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana were there. The conference started off with a brief speech by Rep. Dick Gephardt who spoke of his family's journey to understanding after learning their daughter is a lesbian. The next day-and-a-half were filled with stimulating and empowering workshops.

Two of the most interesting for me were on transgender and intersex issues. I continue to be amazed at the magnificent crazy quilt of gender identities with which humanity has been gifted. There were practical hints on how PFLAG chapters can serve these diverse persons and their loved ones.

Following lunch there was a time for chapters to share their successful programs. Tom and I showed the PFLAG Greater Cincinnati video, *Starting the Journey*. It was received with much enthusiasm and seven other chapters bought a copy for their use.

A delicious banquet was capped off by keynote speaker John Corvino. This philosophy professor at Wayne State University talked with wit and wisdom about the need for the glbt community to regain the moral high road. His main point was that with justice, fairness and honesty on our side we are concerned with morality, as fully as those who oppose us.

Sunday morning brought some excellent workshops on lobbying and getting out the vote. We felt truly affirmed as one suggestion after another followed the strategies that Citizens to Restore Fairness is using here in Cincinnati.

But listing activities does not fully describe the conference. The spirit, and love, and fellowship with old friends, and making of new friends are what make a PFLAG conference special. National and regional conferences occur in alternate years. The next national conference will be in Salt Lake City, next October 22-24. It's not too early to start making plans and saving pennies, frequent flyer points or whatever it takes to get you there. You'll be glad you did.

Is Sexuality Determined at Birth?

-UCLA- ES512

Refuting 30 years of scientific theory that solely credits hormones for brain development, UCLA scientists have identified 54 genes that may explain the different organization of male and female brains. Published in the October edition of the journal *Molecular Brain Research*, the UCLA discovery suggests that sexual identity is hard-wired into the brain before birth and may offer physicians a tool for gender assignment of babies born with ambiguous genitalia.

"Our findings may help answer an important question - why do we feel male or female?" said Dr. Eric Vilain, assistant professor of human genetics and urology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and a pediatrician at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital. "Sexual identity is rooted in every person's biology before birth and springs from a variation in our individual genome."

Since the 1970s, scientists have believed that estrogen and testosterone were wholly responsible for sexually organizing the brain. In other words, a fetal brain simply needed to produce more testosterone to become male. Recent evidence, however, indicates that hormones cannot explain everything about the sexual differences between male and female brains. Vilain and his colleagues explored whether genetic influences could explain the variations between male and female brains. Using two genetic testing methods, they compared the production of genes in male and female brains in embryonic mice - long before the animals developed sex organs.

To their surprise, the researchers found 54 genes produced in different amounts in male and female mouse brains, prior to hormonal influence. Eighteen of the genes were produced at higher levels in the male brains; 36 were produced at higher levels in the female brains. "We didn't expect to find genetic differences between the sexes' brains," Vilain said. "But we discovered that the male and female brains differed in many measurable ways, including anatomy and function."

In one intriguing example, the two hemispheres of the brain appeared more symmetrical in females than in males. According to Vilain, the symmetry may improve communication between both sides of the brain, leading to enhanced verbal expressiveness in females. "This anatomical difference may explain why women can sometimes

articulate their feelings more easily than men," he said.

Overall, the UCLA team's findings counter the theory that only hormones are responsible for organizing the brain. "Our research implies that genes account for some of the differences between male and female brains," Vilain said. "We believe that one's genes, hormones and environment exert a combined influence on sexual brain development." The scientists will pursue further studies to distinguish specific roles in the brain's sexual maturation for each of the 54 different genes they identified. What their research reveals may provide insight into how the brain determines gender identity.

"Our findings may explain why we feel male or female, regardless of our actual anatomy," Vilain said. "These discoveries lend credence to the idea that being transgender - feeling that one has been born into the body of the wrong sex - is a state of mind.

"From previous studies, we know that transgender persons possess normal hormonal levels," he said. "Their gender identity likely will be explained by some of the genes we discovered." Vilain's findings on the brain's sex genes may also ease the plight of parents of intersex infants, and help their physicians to assign gender with greater accuracy. Mild cases of malformed genitalia occur in 1 percent of all births - about 3 million cases. More severe cases - where doctors can't inform parents whether they had a boy or girl - occur in one in 3,000 births.

"If physicians could predict the gender of newborns with ambiguous genitalia at birth, we would make less mistakes in gender assignment," Vilain said.

Lastly, Vilain proposes that the UCLA findings may help to explain the origin of homosexuality. "It's quite possible that sexual identity and physical attraction is 'hard-wired' by the brain," he said. "If we accept this concept, we must dismiss the myth that homosexuality is a 'choice' and examine our civil legal system accordingly."

The UCLA study was supported by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Science Foundation and with start-up funds from the UCLA Department of Urology. Vilain's co-authors included Phoebe Dewing, Steve Horvath and Tao Shi, all of UCLA. - UCLA-ES512