

PFLAG ORLANDO

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, their families and friends.

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Feb 07

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, their families and friends. This is done through: support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

Support meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the Month at the First United Methodist Church of Downtown Orlando 142 East Jackson Street, Orlando, FL, Wesley Building, Room 205 and start at 7:30pm



HANNA, MINIVER SUE, 62, of Orlando, died on Sunday, February 4, 2007. Sue moved to Orlando in 1958. She was a pioneer in the gay and lesbian community. In 1983, she opened the first women's bar in Orlando, and named it

"Faces". Over the years she has sponsored numerous benefits to support aides and cancer victims in the gay and lesbian community. She knew no stranger. Her heart and home was always open to anyone in need. She was a caregiver, a mom, a best friend and a great sister. She was loved by all and will be greatly missed. There will be a memorial service Saturday, February 10, 2007 at 2PM at Faces Lounge. She is survived by her brother, Lowell E. Waldrop, sister-in-law, Wanda J Waldrop, brother, John Waldrop III, nephews, Lowell E Waldrop Jr., and Gary L. Waldrop, great nephews, Justin, Logan Korey and great niece, Kayla Waldrop. In lieu of flowers the family request donations to be made to Vitas Hospice Care, Manor Care, 2075 Loch Lomond Dr, Winter Park Fl 32792 ATTN: Vitas.

<http://www.legacy.com/orlandosentinel/DeathNotices.asp?Page=Lifestory&PersonId=86347814>

Orlando Meltdown holds their biggest tournament yet By Ross Forman

The 8th annual Orlando Meltdown, a four-division tournament held Jan. 13-14 and presented by the Central Florida Softball League (CFSL), was the biggest and best they've had yet. There were 35 co-ed teams competing in B, C and D divisions, and an 11-team Women's Division. The 46 teams were the most ever, surpassing last year's 43. About 700 players participated, with games played at Lake Fairview Softball Complex in Orlando and the Seminole County Softball Complex in Altamonte Springs. - outsports.com

Gay Civil Rights Bill Filed In Florida by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(Tallahassee, Florida) Legislation that would prohibit anti-gay discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations has been introduced in the Florida legislature.

Currently, the Florida Civil Rights Act protects against discrimination in employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status. The Deutch/Skidmore Civil Rights Bill would add "sexual orientation" and "familial status" as additional protected classes.

Florida's Fair Housing Act currently protects against discrimination in housing and public accommodations based on race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, familial status, or religion.

The legislation, introduced in the Senate by Ted Deutch (D-Boca Raton) and in the House by Kelly Skidmore (D-Boca Raton) would add "sexual orientation" and "marital status" as additional protected classes.

365gay.com

Fla. Gov. Urged To Ban Anti-Gay Discrimination

by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

(Tallahassee, Florida) Florida Gov. Charlie Crist (R) is being urged to issue an executive order prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in state employment.

In a letter to the governor, the Palm Beach County Human Rights Council says that executive orders have been used in 28 states to ensure equal employment opportunities for the LGBT community - Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

365gay.com

Human Rights Council asks Sink for domestic partner benefits by By John Johnston

Immediately following Florida's new Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink being sworn in Jan. 2, the Palm Beach Human Rights Council (PBCHRC) placed a letter from PBCHRC President and Founder Rand Hoch on the desk of Jim Cassidy, Sink's chief of staff.

It was the first piece of business Sink was asked to consider and, Hoch says, the letter asks Sink to "implement a comprehensive nondiscrimination policy to protect all employees working in her office, the Florida Department of Financial Services."

bocaratonnews.com

Anti-bullying bill easily clears Fla. Senate education committee

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -- A mother whose son committed suicide after repeated taunting and the father of another boy who nearly died when a schoolmate beat him urged Florida lawmakers Wednesday to pass anti-bullying legislation.

The Senate's Education Prekindergarten-12 Committee voted 6-1 to approve the bill (SB 114) after hearing their testimony.

If enacted, the new law would be called the Jeffery Johnston Stand Up for All Students Act in honor of Debbie Johnston's 15-year-old son. The Cape Coral teen hanged himself in 2005 after repeated harassment. He was called gay and a stalker at school and over the Internet, but never suffered any physical harm.

sun-herald.com

Welcome to Gayberry

The Island City -- Wilton Manors is surrounded by canals and two forks of the New River -- is perhaps best known as the gayest city in South Florida. Estimates of the gay population are as high as 40 percent, sizable in a town with just under 13,000 residents.

At the Shoppes of Wilton Manors, considered the heart of the city's downtown, a rainbow flag flies next to the Stars and Stripes. Many residents lovingly refer to their city as "Gayberry" or the "gayborhood."

But while Wilton Drive might be home to six gay bars, it's also where the Kiwanis Club sells Christmas trees every December. The Italian-American club is right across the street from The Poverello thrift store, which raises money for people living with HIV. southflorida.com



In The Life TV In the Life is a national television series in a newsmagazine format that reports on LGBT issues and culture.

WMFE Channel 24 Orlando Episode: 1606

Leading Ladies

Wednesday, March 28 , 11:00 PM

<http://www.inthelifetv.org/>

Palm Beach County School district unblocks access to gay supportive web sites

Last March, an Inlet Grove High School senior published an investigative report disclosing that while Palm Beach County's teachers and students were denied access to gay-supportive web sites on the District's computer system, they could access the anti-gay web sites of the Traditional Values Coalition, the American Family Association, and Focus on the Family from any School District computer. Inletspin.com editor-in-chief Joe Dellosa, reported that the web sites of the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (www.glsen.org), Gay-Straight Alliance Network (www.gsanetwork.org) and Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (www.pflag.org) were among those being blocked by the School District.

When this was brought to the attention of the Palm Beach County Human Rights Council, the Council enlisted the support of both Lambda Legal and the ACLU of Florida, Hoch said. For several months, Lambda Legal senior staff attorney Greg Nevins and ACLU of Florida Legal Director Randall Marshall had been working with the district to find a solution to this problem. As a result, the district is considering switching to the filtering software currently used by the School District of Miami-Dade County.

bocaratonnews.com

Hawaiian Becomes Highest-Elected Transgender Official

HONOLULU — Growing up Kim Coco Iwamoto's parents made it clear to her that education was the key to achieving more of her goals.

Now she has a post on Hawaii's state Board of Education and is the subject of a surprise blitz of national media attention as the highest-elected transgender official in the country.

"I didn't run to get this attention as an individual. I ran to be an advocate for the students," the 38-year-old civil rights lawyer said Wednesday.

foxnews.com

12-year-old trans case "not unusual"

It is very unusual for someone so young to even be considered for gender reassignment.

A 12-year-old Austrian child has undergone gender reassignment treatment after persuading his parents and doctors that she was sure she was a girl.

The child, known as Kim, was born a boy and is currently receiving hormone treatment which will eventually lead to gender reassignment surgery.

It is very unusual for someone so young to even be considered for gender reassignment.

Persia West, who is a transgender activist, spoke to PinkNews.co.uk about the case.

"It is absolutely not unusual for trans people to know from a very early age. Being transgender is a birth condition.

"The only difference in this case is that the condition of this child has been acknowledged they are acting on it."

pinknews.co.uk

Mexico's Transexual Amendment?

CBNNews.com -- MEXICO CITY -- A bill to amend Mexico's constitution and change civil laws guaranteeing transexuals the right to change their name and gender legally will be submitted in March by Mexican congressman David Sanchez Camacho.

If Sanchez Camacho's bill passes, Article Four of the Mexican Constitution will have an extra paragraph asserting that "every person has the right to the recognition and free exercise of their gender identity and their gender expression." cbn.com

Case tests handling of gay relationships THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RUTLAND, Vt. -- A court has ordered a woman to pay \$240 a month to her former lesbian partner for child support in a case that is testing legal questions on how states differ in their recognition of same-sex relationships.

Last month's order by the Rutland Family Court comes amid a continuing custody battle between Janet Jenkins and Lisa Miller over a 4-year-old girl, Isabella.

seattlepi.nwsourc.com

New Jersey Lawmakers Move Toward Protecting Transgender Rights

New Jersey made a historic stride forward in protecting the civil rights of transgender people by passing a bill this week that legislates discriminatory practices based on gender identity or expression illegal.

New Jersey's Senate passed bill S362 on Monday, December 11, by a vote of 31-5. The Assembly version, A930, passed New Jersey's lower house today by a vote of 69-5, and now goes to Governor Jon S. Corzine, who is expected to sign the bill into law.

gaywired.com

Nepal gives legal status to transgender for the first time

Kathmandu, Feb 04: In a first for Nepal, a transgender person has been given a citizenship certificate which gives special recognition to the gender.

Chanda Musalman of Banke district in western Nepal has been recognised not as a man or woman, but as "both" in the official document, an NGO working for the protection of the rights of sexual minorities said today. zeenews.com

Connecticut lawmakers push for gay marriage

HARTFORD: Gay rights advocates in Connecticut said they would introduce legislation that aims to make the state the second in the United States to legalise same-sex marriage, but they face tough opposition.

stuff.co.nz

GOP lawmaker offers gay union bill

CONCORD, N.H. — Former Senate Republican Leader Bob Clegg told The Associated Press on Thursday he will introduce legislation giving gays — and other adults who don't choose to marry — the same legal rights as married couples.

rutlandherald.com

Gay couples hopeful about passage of Ore. civil unions law

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — After legal and political setbacks in recent years, Alex and Kevin Bailey-Gilliam of West Linn believe they and other same-sex couples are on the verge of winning new rights and benefits in Oregon.

The reason for their optimism is the new pro-gay rights majority in both the Oregon House and the Senate. With backing from Gov. Ted Kulongoski, it appears likely the Legislature will adopt a civil unions law opening up to same-sex couples benefits available to married couples.

oregonlive.com

Outcry at new laws allowing gay adoption

LOUISE GRAY SCOTTISH POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT (lgray@scotsman.com)

GAY couples in Scotland will be able to adopt children for the first time under controversial new laws passed by the Scottish Parliament yesterday.

The Adoption Bill, which will also allow unmarried couples to adopt, sparked furious debate in the Scottish Parliament and protests from religious organisations.

news.scotsman.com

Viewpoint: Same-sex benefits reversal 'distressing' By Jay Kalpan

Most of you by now have heard about the Michigan Court of Appeals' decision, which reversed the Ingham County Circuit court decision that the language of 2004 Prop 2, now a constitutional amendment, does not prevent public employers from voluntarily offering domestic partner benefits. In reversing this decision, the panel (3-0 Judges Hoekstra, Wilder and Zahra) opted for a very broad interpretation of Prop 2's language, essentially saying that it prohibits public employers from recognizing same-sex relationships for any purpose. This is pretty much Attorney General Mike Cox's interpretation of the "so-called" Marriage Amendment and was certainly not the way that the Proposal was presented to voters. The decision is distressing and disappointing for a number of reasons:

pridesource.com

Gay pairs won't leave Calif. clerk empty-handed

Every Feb. 14 -- Valentine's Day -- gay men and lesbians throughout the United States hold Freedom to Marry demonstrations, in which they apply to their local authorities for marriage licenses that are duly denied. gay.com

Democrats in both houses support proposed law; no constitutional block seen

Hawaii state Sen. Gary Hooser has introduced a civil unions bill that would allow people who are at least 16 years old and unrelated to apply for a civil union license without regard to each other's gender. HONOLULU — A group of bills introduced in the Legislature could provide same-sex couples with the legal benefits of marriage through civil unions.

dallasvoice.com

Court rules gay couples can't receive health insurance benefits

LANSING, Mich. -- Associate professor Alexandra Stern says a big reason she moved from California to Ann Arbor in 2002 was because the University of Michigan provides health care benefits to her lesbian partner.

Now she's wondering if they should stay. The state Court of Appeals ruled Friday that Michigan's ban against gay marriage also blocks public universities and state and local governments from providing health insurance benefits to the partners of gay workers. woodtv.com

Gay youth homeless rate between 20 to 40%

Homelessness is rampant among young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, according to a report released Tuesday by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the National Coalition for the Homeless.

digitaljournal.com

Hospital visitation measure advances (Gay)

Broad measure would open doors to gay partners
By ELIZABETH PERRY

The Virginia House of Delegates passed a bill this week that would allow hospital patients to receive any visitors they desire, a move that would open up visitation by gay partners.

washblade.com

Tony Blair gives personal backing to gay adoptions -

In a statement this afternoon (25 January 2007), British Prime Minister Tony Blair, a practicing Anglican married to a devout Catholic, has said that he has always personally been in favour of the right of lesbian and gay couples to adopt, adding that proposals to resolve the dispute with the Catholic Church will be brought forward next week.

ekklesia.co.uk

God's gay child

January 15, 2007

LOVE AND let love.

God gave me a gift, a wonderful son who happens to be gay. God does not give inferiors gifts. God does not make mistakes. This little boy that God gave to me is now a fine young man. But my son is treated like a second-class citizen by my church. Maybe my state constitution will treat him likewise. I pray that it will not.

If you had a gay loved one in your family you would be a better person. You would be sensitive to the discrimination gays endure. You would realize that they, too, are entitled to mutual love.

God will continue to send gay babies. We must take them into our hearts and our lives. That would please God.

DOROTHY DONAHUE

Norwell

boston.com

Gay Americans no longer able to adopt from China

Unmarried individuals, fat people, among those banned by new rules

By RYAN LEE

Friday, January 05, 2007

Sweeping changes to China's adoption policies will make it virtually impossible for gay and lesbian Americans to adopt children from the world's most popular source of international adoptions.

The Chinese government has a long-standing policy of not allowing adoptions by gay and lesbian parents, but that ban was often circumvented by gay applicants applying as single parents instead of as part of a gay or lesbian couple.

The new restrictions on prospective parents — which were announced by the China Center of Adoption Affairs last month and take effect May 1 — close that loophole by ending Chinese adoptions to any unmarried individuals.

southernvoice.com

A bill to be introduced in the next legislative session would let gays who have proven themselves as foster parents adopt their foster children.

Take a step closer, and you will see it is the right thing to do. Mike Thomas can be reached at 407-420-5525 or mthomas@orlandosentinel.com. dorlandosentinel.com

It's time to do the right thing on gay adoption

Published January 30, 2007

You are supposed to take a step back to put things into perspective.

But on matters of discrimination, it is best to take a step closer. That is how you see individuals rather than preconceived notions.

Consider Mary Cheney, the gay daughter of Vice President Dick Cheney. Her pregnancy caused quite a flap with social conservatives.

The Christian conservative group Focus on the Family said: "Just because it's possible to conceive a child outside of the relationship of a married mother and father doesn't mean it's the best for the child."

But Dick Cheney, the most conservative of conservatives, said he was "delighted" by the news, at least as delighted as it's possible for Dick Cheney to be.

He knows the individual involved.

He knows his daughter.

He knows that she will be what is best for her child.

orlandosentinel.com

Negotiating the moral maze of gay adoption

Published on 02/02/2007

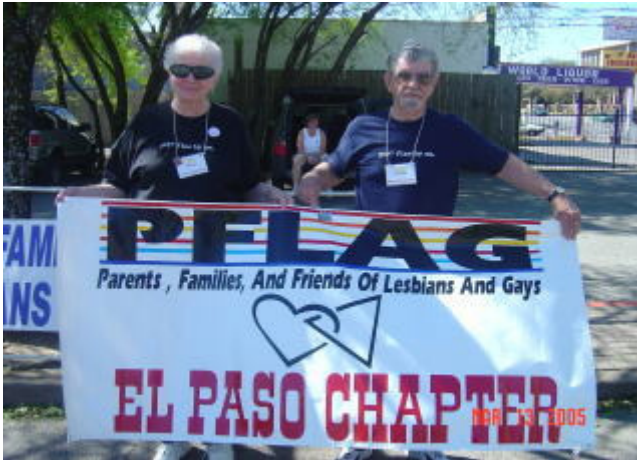
THE reaction of Workington MP Tony Cunningham to the contentious issue of whether gay couples should be allowed to adopt children is revealing.

The Government has announced that there can be no opt out for Catholic adoption agencies from a new law making it an offence for them to refuse to place children with gay couples.

Yet here is our Catholic, church-going Labour MP questioning the situation not so much on religious grounds but because he freely admits that he feels "uncomfortable" with the idea of gay adoption

timesandstar.co.uk

Several news sites move articles behind firewall creating broken links. Please go to their site and use the search boxes to find more on articles found here.



TUESDAY, FEB. 20th is the date of the regular monthly El Paso PFLAG meeting. It is also an important day for you to come and find out how we as members of the El Paso community can gather in an action in opposition to the hatred shown by members of Westboro Baptist church, Topeka, Kansas, led by Fred Phelps, who plans to be in El Paso to protest at the memorial service of soldiers at Ft Bliss on Feb 21st.

If you don't know about Fred and his group, they travel all over the U.S. and other countries protesting and carrying signs that say "God hates Fags", "Bring back more body bags" & "God hates Fag enablers" etc.

Please come and find out how we can be part of the counter action that is being planned.

Hoping to see you on Tuesday, Feb 20th, 7:00 pm at MCC, 900 Chelsea in El Paso.

For more info contact us : (915) 751-9046

camundso@elp.rr.com

Gery & Lorain Amundson

PFLAG www.pflag.org

www.geocities.com/pflagelpaso

For Etheridge, Oscar Nod Is a Dream

Etheridge, 45, competes in the best-song category for the anthem "I Need to Wake Up" from the global-warming documentary, "An Inconvenient Truth."

Gay-friendly pastors to protest Love Won Out Lawn Griffiths, Tribune

A major Valley conference next weekend on how homosexuals can overcome same-sex attraction is being protested by pastors and lay people who say it amounts to "spiritual abuse" of gays and lesbians. The daylong Love Won Out conference Feb. 10 at Bethany Bible Church in Phoenix, sponsored by Focus on the Family, is being countered by an effort tagged Love One In. The pastors and lay people plan a protest with pickets, a prayer vigil and a post-conference gathering for gays to tell their stories. Focus on the Family, founded by psychologist James Dobson, launched Love Won Out in 1998 and has held 41 conferences around the world to show homosexuals they "don't have to be gay and that a homosexual identity is something that can be overcome."

"We have been protested and picketed more than we haven't," said Gary Schneeberger, Love Won Out media director at Focus on the Family's offices in Colorado Springs, Colo. He says 800 to 1,000 people typically attend the conferences, some just to understand issues behind homosexuality, "to learn to love folks who are living homosexually but not compromise their faith at the same time." Parents of gays come to be better equipped to "love their children in a way that is Christian and is right, but not compromise their core values," Schneeberger said.

eastvalleytribune.com

South Florida Pridefest

(www.pridesouthflorida.org), the state's biggest, hits Lauderdale March 10 and 11. The sexy and sassy Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festival (www.mglff.com) runs April 27-May 6. planetout.com

Proposed Constitutional Amendment Would Strip Benefits Healthcare for Domestic Partners of Public Employees Canceled 2/6/07

(St. Petersburg) Equality Florida today spotlighted a February 1st Michigan Court of Appeals ruling that the state's marriage amendment prohibits public employers, including Universities, from offering domestic partner benefits. The amendment that passed in Michigan is almost identical to the proposed amendment in Florida.

"We have said from the start of our campaign to oppose this amendment that this is not just about marriage," said Nadine Smith, Executive Director of Equality Florida. "This amendment permanently prohibits any possibility for Civil Unions and will strip the few protections and benefits that thousands of unmarried couples, gay and straight, already enjoy in Florida."

The decision overturns an earlier ruling that public employers may offer domestic partner benefits without violating the "marriage amendment." The lower court decision was appealed by Attorney General Mike Cox, who intervened as a defendant.

When Michigan voters passed the amendment in November 2004, they were assured by the amendment's supporters that it would not impact domestic partnership benefits that provide health coverage for gay and straight unmarried couples. Groups pushing the Florida amendment have also made these false assurances.

"When fair-minded Floridians come to understand just how harmful this initiative is to so many Florida families, I am confident they will reject this amendment," said Smith. "Laws should not make it harder to take care of the people you love."

eqfl.org

Marriage Amendment Sparks GOP Debate

February 13th, 2007 by Victoria Langley

Governor Charlie Crist dropped a bombshell on Republican social conservatives today. He says the state Republican Party should stop financing an effort to put an anti-gay marriage amendment on the 2008 ballot. As Victoria Langley tells us, conservatives feel abandoned, but predict the amendment will succeed anyway.

Hear it here: [Marriage Amendment](#)

A controversial ban on same sex marriage is just 25 thousand signatures short of winning a spot on the 2008 ballot in Florida. Opponents are already calling it a disaster.

Pamela Fort with the newly-formed Fairness for All Families Coalition says the so-called Marriage Protection Act could end up stripping away existing domestic partnership benefits from thousands of Florida families.

"Those unintended consequences can really wreak havoc on the lives of individuals, unnecessarily so," Fort said.

The Fairness for All Families Coalition may have found a surprise ally in Governor Charlie Crist. Florida's most powerful Republican now sounds less than supportive of the proposed marriage amendment.

The state Republican Party has pumped 300-thousand dollars into financing the petition drive. The governor himself signed the petition to put the marriage amendment on the ballot while campaigning last fall. But Crist now says there are better ways for the party to spend its money

flanews.com