

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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Jan 08

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

Next Meeting Wed 2/20/08 7:30pm-9:30pm

17% of Florida LGB couples are raising children- from Pink News- all the latest gay news from the gay community - Pink News

The Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law has released a new research study providing demographic and economic information for the almost 55,000 same-sex couples in Florida.

The study shows that 17% of the same-sex couples in Florida are raising more than 17,000 children.

Same-sex couples raising children have fewer economic resources and own homes at a significantly lower rate than their heterosexual, married counterparts.

pinknews.co.uk

Court Rejects Gay Student 'Outing' Case 365Gay.com
Newscenter Staff

(Tallahassee, Florida) Does something told in confidence to a non-ordained school chaplain have the same right of privacy as it would if told to a priest, minister or rabbi? It is a question the Florida Supreme Court has decided not to take up.

Jeffrey Woodard and his mother sued Jupiter Christian School in Palm Beach County after it kicked him out in his senior year of high school.

Although it is generally accepted that anything told to a priest, minister or rabbi is protected the Florida Supreme Court has never ruled on the issue, although it has in the past affirmed the confidentiality of statements made to attorneys and doctors.

After Woodward confided in school chaplain Todd Bellhorn, Bellhorn went to school officials and the student was expelled three days into the 2003 school year.

Bellhorn, who serves as chaplain of the nondenominational Christian school is not an ordained minister but teaches a Bible class at Jupiter

365gay.com

Michigan and Palm Beach County Ban Transgender Discrimination

Lansing, MI: Michigan's Governor, Jennifer M. Granholm, recently issued an order that bars discrimination against state workers based on their "gender identity or expression". The resolution states, "State employment practices and procedures that encourage nondiscriminatory and equal employment practices provide desirable models for the private sector and local governments".

lawyersandsettlements.com

A Florida group explains reasons for repealing the state's adoption ban. Calls it institutionalized discrimination. by Community Editor

Equality Florida posted a message on its blog Wednesday, December 12 - in response to questions about the group's efforts to repeal Florida's ban on adoption by LGBT prospective parents.

EF communications director, Brian Winfield, writes:

"Florida's ban on adoption by gay and lesbian people, who are otherwise well qualified to be parents, is institutionalized discrimination against our community born out of the Anita Bryant hysteria of the 70's.

The ban hurts 4,000+ children in state custody who want nothing more than to be adopted by a loving family. It also hurts LGBT families in which one parent is the biological parent the other is a "legal stranger" to their own child."

proudparenting.com

Fla. AG's Office Extends DP Benefits by Kilian Melloy

Palm Beach County Human Rights Council President Rand Hoch

The Fla. Attorney General's Office now allows its employees to access sick time hours to attend to the needs of their domestic partners.

The Palm Beach County Human Rights Council issued a press release on the development earlier this week, saying that Fla. AG Bill McCollum had put the new policy in place and praising McCollum.

Said Rand Hoch, the president of the GLBT equality group, "With this pro-family policy, Attorney General McCollum has become the second constitutional officer in Florida history to recognize the needs of non-traditional families."

According to its press release, the Palm Beach County Human Rights Council has been a leader in gay and lesbian family issues for more than 15 years.
edgeboston.com

Fla. activists gearing up for costly marriage battle Both sides expected to spend millions by November
By JOEY DiGUGLIELMO | Dec 19, 2:45 PM

Now that the signatures of the necessary 611,009 Floridians have been secured to get a state constitutional amendment defining marriage there as between only one man and one woman on November's ballot, activists on both sides of the ideological divide are gearing up for an expensive, nearly year-long battle that, in many respects, has already been underway for two years.

Gay couples are already prevented from marrying, as the Florida Legislature in 1997 enacted a statute banning marriages between persons of the same sex. Drafters and supporters of the amendment say it's necessary to prevent judges from overturning the law to allow gays to marry, as happened in Massachusetts, was attempted in Maryland and is being tried in California and Connecticut.

Mat Staver, founder and chair of Liberty Counsel, drafted the amendment, which the Florida Supreme Court approved in March 2006. The court acknowledged the amendment wouldn't change the law but would "ensure that unions between same-sex couples that are treated virtually identical to marriage will not be recognized in Florida."

sovo.com

Fort Lauderdale among top 5 U.S. destinations for gay travelers By Doreen Hemlock | South Florida Sun-Sentinel

There's big money in gay and lesbian travel, and Fort Lauderdale is cashing in as a pioneer marketing to gays — and now as their favorite U.S. resort town.

sun-sentinel.com

Transgender veteran can sue Library of Congress

by Bob Roehr

A federal judge has rejected arguments to throw out an employment lawsuit brought by a decorated transgender veteran against the Library of Congress. The Nov. 28 ruling means that Diane Schroer's case will move forward.

Schroer had a twenty-five year career in the Army. The last third was in special operations, eventually leading a top secret 120-person group charged with tracking and targeting high-threat international terrorist targets. Upon retirement, the Congressional Research Service (CRS), a part of the Library of Congress, was seeking to hire a research analyst on terrorism. Schroer seemed to be a perfect fit.

The Library coveted the mix of boots on the ground and command level experience that it seldom can hire, and it made a job offer to Schroer at the end of 2004. Over lunch with Library official Charlotte Preece, Schroer said he was under a doctor's care for gender dysphoria, was in the process of transitioning, and would begin work presenting as a woman, Diane.

The next day, "after a long, restless night," Preece called Schroer to withdraw the offer of employment. She said Diane would not be a "good fit" with the Library or Congress.

"Did I want to just give it up and walk away? Turn tail and run, or fight it?" Schroer weighed the options for about three hours and decided to fight it

pridesource.com

San Jose Mercury News - Transgender woman sues Catholic hospital, claiming discrimination

SAN FRANCISCO—A transgender woman is suing a Catholic hospital in Daly City, claiming medical officials blocked her from getting surgery there because she had a sex-change operation.

Fifty-seven-year-old Charlene Hastings already had one major surgery she needed to become a woman. But she says when she called Seton Medical Center to inquire about breast enlargement surgery, an official told her it wasn't "God's will" for her to get that treatment.

mercurynews.com

A pastor changes gender

Stephanie Innes

The Rev. Drew Phoenix is pastor of St. John's United Methodist Church.

Phoenix used to be the Rev. Ann Gordon.

The reason this has made news is that the United Methodist Church's highest judicial body recently ruled that, Phoenix may remain the pastor of his congregation.

Several clergy in the United Methodist Church's Baltimore-Washington conference didn't think Phoenix should be allowed to continue in his role. Their appeal raised questions about transgender people within the church - something that has scarcely been broached in all the denominational debates about gays and lesbians.

regulus2.azstarnet.com

Peggy Drexler: The Gaybe Boom - Living on The Huffington Post

As we careen into full blown campaign season, gay marriage will likely move from a simmer to a boil. Declarations will be forced, answers will be parsed, fine lines

But as both sides of the cultural divide argue about the rights to a happy and legal union, there is another issue that is moving steadily, if quietly toward acceptance.

That is gay and lesbian couples - and increasingly singles - adopting, having and raising children. According to The FamilyNet project at the Human Rights Campaign says that a review of American Academy of Pediatrics research indicates that there are between one million and nine million American children under 18 living with gay parents. Other studies put the figure much lower.

The fact is, nobody really knows. But most sociologists agree that the growth is enough to warrant its own snappy trend label: "The Gayby Boom."

huffingtonpost.com

Gay Couples Enter Unions in New Year

As the clock struck midnight marking the start of 2008, dozens of gay and lesbian couples stood outside the New Hampshire Statehouse to enter into civil unions.

Beginning this year, civil unions for same-sex couples are legally recognized in New Hampshire. The law was adopted and signed in May 2007.

christianpost.com

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.

Gay rights 101 Gay

We must do a better job of educating allies about the discrimination we face.

KEVIN NAFF

Friday, November 30, 2007

"WOW, THERE'S A lot to be angry about."

That was the reaction recently from a local gay high school student who was reading the Blade for the first time, earnestly poring over articles about hate crimes, employment discrimination and rising HIV rates.

He seemed genuinely surprised that life for ordinary, grown-up gay Americans didn't necessarily involve the corporate jobs, Prada shoes and stylish apartments made famous by the "Will & Grace" episodes he grew up watching.

But teenagers aren't the only ones in need of an education on gay reality. During the debate over the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, it became clear that many members of Congress, including some freshman Democrats, remain woefully ignorant about our issues. Collectively, openly gay people have done a poor job of educating those around us about the inequalities we face.

washblade.com

Broward County tops state in hate crimes

By Akilah Johnson | South Florida Sun-Sentinel

At a time when national civil rights leaders are calling for a renewed federal focus on hate crimes, Florida reported the lowest level in nearly a decade, according to a report released Monday by the state Attorney General's Office.

Broward County had the most incidents statewide, however, with 50 crimes motivated by hatred of the victims' race, religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity/national origin. Palm Beach County, with 15, was in the top five statewide. sun-sentinel.com