



PFLAG Colorado Springs

Parents, Families, Friends, and Allies United
With LGBT People to Move Equality Forward

January 2017

Rev. Rost Compares Election Fallout to Amendment 2

On November 9, Rev. Nori Rost wrote a long blog post on the website of All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church. It is well worth reading in its entirety at: <http://revrost.blogspot.com/> Excerpts:

I wasn't in Colorado when Amendment 2 passed, though I remember hearing about it and watching with interest as the results rolled in on election night. I was positive it wouldn't pass. Surely the good people of my home state would not vote to embed homophobic bigotry and intolerance into the State Constitution.

The next morning I read with disbelief that, while Colorado had passed legislation protecting bears, they had also passed Amendment 2, taking protection away from their LGBTQ citizens.

Indeed, it was precisely because of the passage of Amendment 2 that I felt the strong call to go to the heart of the "hate state" as it was then known when the pulpit of Pikes Peak Metropolitan Community Church became open.

What struck me most was how demoralized the queer community was in Colorado Springs. New congregants and friends struggled to tell me about

how it felt, the morning after the election, to wake up and realize that half of their neighbors thought they didn't deserve equal rights.

It was a dark time in the history of Colorado, and of Colorado Springs. Ultimately the US Supreme Court overthrew Amendment 2, rightly calling it unconstitutional.

Many things have changed since then.. And yet, today, I awoke feeling much the same as my friends did on that November morning in 1992.

With the election of Donald Trump as president, I feel that sense of demoralization, only on a national scale. ... His campaign was littered with the victims of his hate speech...the *New York Times* devoted a full two-page spread (see <http://nyti.ms/1nCDVbd>) listing those...he has insulted, demeaned, and just plain lied about...

Half of the people in this country...want a man who wants to build a wall on the border of our neighbors to south, who wants to deport all Muslims... who will overturn the marriage

(Continued on page 3)

Statewide Tour: "We Are One Colorado"

One Colorado Executive Director Daniel Ramos has announced that starting on January



26th and continuing through March, the organization will bring its "We Are One Colorado" tour to 13 cities across the state to talk about how to build on — and protect — our victories and continue to advance equality for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Colo-

radans and their families. One Colorado will also present the findings of its statewide LGBTQ needs assessment that was conducted in 2016.

Sign up today for the stop in Colorado Springs, Colorado on January 31st. Times and locations will be released at the beginning of the new year. Follow this link to sign up and receive the updated schedule when it is available: <http://bit.ly/2iwHDBI> More information is at: <http://bit.ly/2iuuURU>



JANUARY PFLAG MEETING

Tuesday
January 17, 2017
7:00 p.m.

Discussion:

Supporting Our LGBT Community in the Wake of the Election

**The Dwelling Place
508 North Tejon Street**

**Social time begins at 6:30
Everyone is welcome.**

PFLAG Director Steps Down

Jody Huckaby, PFLAG National's Executive Director for the past 12 years, has announced that he is stepping down from the position and departing the organization.

"He leaves a monumental legacy that makes the entire PFLAG family very proud," said Jean Hodges, PFLAG National President.

Jody stated, "This is a very different organization today than it was when my journey began. PFLAG's vision and mission are more critical than ever before. The 2016 election is a clear indicator that PFLAG's work is far from over. Now, more than ever, this is the time for people to make an investment in PFLAG to strengthen its indispensable role."

Elizabeth Kohm is acting as Interim Executive Director. For PFLAG news and articles, see www.pflag.org.



This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG.

PFLAG Vision Statement. PFLAG envisions a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

PFLAG Mission Statement: By meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG realizes its vision through:

Support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ

Education for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ

Advocacy in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ.

To join the local chapter and receive the newsletter regularly, complete and mail the membership form on page four. To receive complimentary copies of the newsletter, please contact us.

E-mail address: info@cspflag.org

Support Line: (719) 425-9567

P.O. Box 49131
Colorado Springs, CO 80949

PFLAG Colorado Springs website:
www.cspflag.org

PFLAG National Office website:
www.pflag.org

Newsletter Editor: Karen Flitton Stith
E-mail: karenfstith@gmail.com

To receive your newsletter by e-mail, send a request to info@cspflag.org

What A Difference A Patch Makes

... I was four and nothing if not optimistic. I just knew the day would arrive when I got to choose my gender. I had no doubt about what gender I would choose. I was just waiting for Selection Day to arrive so I could announce to the universe I was a girl.

Alas, there was no Selection Day. I tried to tell my mother, but she shushed me before my words could find air. I was a boy, and I'd better get used to it. My father was an Evangelical pastor and if my "ridiculous notion I was a girl" continued we could all be ruined.

So I kept it to myself. For decades I swallowed my voice and buried my heart. I married, had children, and became a pastor myself, a very successful pastor. I rose through the ranks to become one of the most influential leaders in our denomination. Occasionally I'd steal off into a corner of the local library to read Jan Morris's *Conundrum*, or one of the awful clinical texts about transvestism. (Could there be an uglier word?) But mostly, I just sped through life, numbing myself through ambitious activity.

Only my wife knew what I had chosen to keep private. I finally told a

good friend, then my psychotherapist. And so it remained until I finally spoke the name I had refused to say. In *The Soul Lives Contented* David White writes:

*"The soul lives contented by listening
If it wants to change into the beauty of
terrifying shapes it tries to speak*

*That is why you will not sing, frightened
as you are of who might join with you*

*The voice hesitant and her hand trembling
in the dark for yours*

*She touches your face and says your
name in the same instant*

*The one you refused to say, over and
over, the one you refused to say."*

In the spring of 2012 I spoke my name. I applied a .1mg patch of estradiol and took 150 mg of spironolactone and began the most harrowing, challenging, difficult journey of my life. I lost all of my jobs – CEO of one of the nation's largest church planting organizations; editor-at-large of a 150-year-old leadership magazine; adjunct positions at two seminaries; preaching positions at two influential megachurches; guest preaching slots in three of the 10 largest churches in America.

Within one year I went from sought after leader to unemployable pariah. All because I dared speak the name I had refused to say, the name I would have chosen had there ever been a Selection Day. All because I dared tell the world what my soul had known all along – I was Paula.

(This is the first of 12 columns in which Paula Stone Williams shares her recent journey from Paul to Paula. Thank you to Boulder PFLAG for posting this piece in the Blog section of its website. PFLAG Boulder can be found at www.pflagboulder.org).

Trans Youth Education and Support (TYES)

TYES is a PFLAG affiliate that offers education and support to families with gender variant children. TYES information is available at PFLAG meetings.

TYES families in the Pikes Peak region keep in touch by phone and through a private Facebook page. To contact the Colorado Springs TYES volunteers, call PFLAG at (719) 425-9567 or send an e-mail to info@cspflag.org.

The TYES program originated and is headquartered in Boulder, Colorado.

More information is available at the national TYES website www.TYES-Colorado.org

PFLAG meetings are a safe space.

Who you meet, and what you hear
Must remain strictly confidential.



Invitation to Denver PFLAG Scholarship Event



A Message from Denver PFLAG:

The Denver PFLAG Scholarship Program invites you to our annual scholarship program fundraiser on February 11th. to raise money for our scholarship awards. Our awards have been helping Colorado LGBTQ and ally students for more than five years.

Join us at Artwork Network in Denver from 7 to 9 PM. Enjoy our amazing auction items, delicious appetizers, two tickets for beer and wine, and entertainment including Yolanda Deherrera in full, fabulous drag and Spinphony Electric String Quartet. Tickets are available on Facebook at <http://bit.ly/2ix8gsm> or at Eventbrite: <http://bit.ly/2j6nGEZ>

Nori Rost (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

equality the SCOTUS (Supreme Court) gave us.... Half of my neighbors — including family members and friends—voted for him knowing that he wants to take away my place at America's table.

I want to pass on a message to each of you: You are beautiful, you are worthy of love, and I am here for you. Tomorrow I will dry my eyes and gather with colleagues and friends and others who still believe we can change the world.

Tomorrow I will once again pick up the gauntlet of justice and equality and human dignity.

Today, I grieve. I grieve for myself and for all of us whose lives have been discounted and devalued by this election; and I grieve for our nation that has shown us how deeply the divide of racism and sexism cuts.

Tomorrow, I will work to eradicate that. I hope you will join me.

"National Disgrace" LGBT Community Reacts to HB2 Repeal Failure

North Carolina lawmakers on December 22 failed to reach a deal to scrap House Bill 2 (HB2), the so-called "bathroom bill" that bans transgender people from using public restrooms that don't match the gender on their birth certificate.

Since its passage earlier this year, the anti-LGBTQ law has helped oust the sitting governor; has triggered a boycott of the state by businesses, performers and sports leagues; and has cost North Carolina at least tens of millions—and by some estimates hundreds of millions—of dollars.

A storm of protest ensued:

Human Rights Campaign: "Today's failure to repeal HB2 sends the message that North Carolina is closed for business."

National Center for Transgender Equality executive director Mara Keisling called the General Assembly "a national disgrace".

"North Carolina—particularly transgender North Carolinians—cannot have any faith in their shameless lawmakers," Keisling added. "We continue to stand with the people of North Carolina, particularly the transgender people who have been harmed by HB2 and their own lawmakers' actions, and we will continue to fight shoulder-to-shoulder with them until this shameful legislation is repealed in its entirety."

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) statement: "Another chance for North Carolina Republicans to repeal HB2 and stop LGBT discrimination. They failed. So we'll see them in court."

PFLAG: Elizabeth Kohm, the interim executive director of PFLAG, the nation's largest LGBTQ family and ally organization, called Wednesday's failure to repeal HB2 "outrageous, unconscionable and unacceptable."

Read the full story: <http://nbcnews.to/2isaVU5>



Congratulations to Out Loud on its joyful December holiday concert. The music was delightful, the choreography was charming and the audiences were large and enthusiastic. Thank you to everyone who attended and especially to those who have donated.

Interim Artistic Director Joey Young was both playful and professional, conducting the chorus and leading Fourtè, its quartet. Joey holds a Bachelor's degree in Music Education and a Master's degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Northern Colorado. Thank you, Joey, for leading Out Loud in its final concerts of 2016.



In January, Out Loud will begin rehearsing with a new artistic director, Joshua Brown. He holds a Bachelor's degree in music education and a Master's degree in choral conducting. He is the Minister of Music and Worship at Presbyterian Church of the Covenant in the Denver Tech Center. Welcome, Joshua.



Creating Gender Inclusive Schools—Short Film

The November PFLAG meeting featured a film about work being done to make elementary schools a safer place for gender variant or non-binary children. The film is thought-provoking. It inspired a lively discussion at the meeting. We will be happy to share this film with local educators upon request. Contact us at info@cspsflag.org.



BULLETIN BOARD

January 14—Educating Children of Color Summit at Colorado College 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Volunteers needed. Call Cindy Waldmann 488-9887 if you can help.

January 31— One Colorado Statewide Tour arrives in Colorado Springs. See article p. 1.

February 6 — “Gender Revolution” Documentary airs on National Geographic Channel. See article on this page.

February 11— Denver PFLAG Annual Scholarship Fund-raiser at Artwork Network 7-9 p.m.. See article, p. 3

February 27— LGBT Lobby Day at Colorado Legislature More information to come in February PFLAG newsletter.

March 25 — 25th Annual Red Ribbon Ball— “Be a Hero.” Elegant fundraiser for Southern Colorado AIDS Project. For more information see: www.redribbonball2017.kintera.org

AmazonSmile Program

Remember that purchases on Amazon can provide a donation to PFLAG. When you use the following portal to enter the Amazon site <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/84-1281187> 0.5% of your purchase will be sent to Colorado Springs PFLAG.

King Soopers Gift Cards

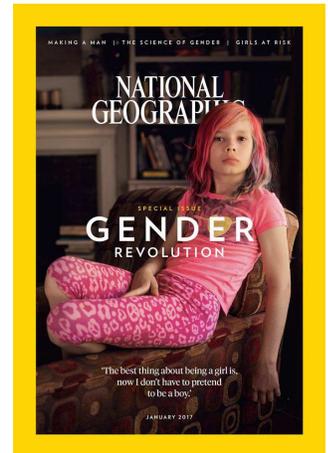
Thank you to everyone who is currently using a King Soopers gift card linked to Colorado Springs PFLAG. Our chapter receives five percent of all grocery, pharmacy and gas purchases made with these gift cards. Re-loadable cards are available at PFLAG meetings.

Thank you

To the Saponas Foundation and First Congregational United Church of Christ for their significant, ongoing support of Colorado Springs PFLAG.

National Geographic Explores Gender Through January Issue, February 6th Documentary

The January 2017 cover of National Geographic's issue on gender features nine-year old Avery Jackson from Missouri. Gender around the world will also be examined in an accompanying broadcast documentary, "Gender Revolution, a Journey with Katie Couric," airing February 6th on the National Geographic Channel.



"National Geographic is almost 130 years old, and we

have been covering cultures, societies and social issues for all of those years. It struck us, listening to the national conversation, that gender was at the center of so many of these issues in the news," Susan Goldberg, editorial director of National Geographic Partners and editor in chief of National Geographic magazine, told NBC Out. (The complete story can be read at <http://nbcnews.to/2hSuC3X>)

The topic of transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals is further explored in an accompanying two-hour documentary hosted by Katie Couric, also titled "Gender Revolution". In the documentary, Couric speaks to the parents of trans kids, people undergoing gender-confirming surgery and individuals who are intersex.

"It's hard to avoid hearing about some aspect of gender these days. Every time you check your phone, turn on the TV or scan Twitter, there's another story that's challenging our preconceived notions of what gender is, how it's determined and the impact these new definitions are having on society," Couric said in a statement. "I set out on a journey to try to educate myself about a topic that young people are living with so effortlessly—and get to know the real people behind the headlines. Because the first step to inclusiveness and tolerance is understanding."

Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017.

Name: _____

_____ New member _____ Renewing member

Address: _____

- _____ Regular Membership \$ 30
- _____ Supporting Member—Silver 40
- _____ Supporting Member—Gold 60
- _____ Supporting Member—Platinum 100

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Check here if you wish to receive the newsletter by e-mail _____

Each year our chapter must contribute \$15.00 for each paid membership to the PFLAG national office to support its mission.

Make checks payable to Colorado Springs PFLAG and mail to P.O. Box 49131, Colorado Springs, CO 80949. Membership fees and contributions are tax deductible. All information will remain confidential. PFLAG is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization.