



PFLAG Colorado Springs

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

March 2014

Lesbian Mothers Create a Blended Family

Licensed clinical psychologists Christine Gregory and Marika Bower will be our guests at the March 18th PFLAG meeting. Christine and Marika were married in a religious ceremony in 2009 at First Congregational Church.

Because both of them had previously been in heterosexual marriages, they brought a total of six children (four with Christine and two with Marika) into their new relationship. Their children now range in age from 14 to 26.

Christine's counseling practice is known as the Center for Depth Psychotherapy, LLC. She specializes in individual and couples therapy with a particular focus on the LGBT popula-



Marika Bower and Christine Gregory

tion. She provides expertise with regard to gender identity and transgender support issues.

Marika is a forensic psychologist at the Colorado State Hospital in Pueblo.

S-CAP Fundraising Event at The Pinery at the Hill

National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day Luncheon

The Southern Colorado Aids Project (S-CAP) will host a luncheon on Monday, March 10th in observance of the National Women and Girls HIV Awareness Day. Tickets are \$25 per person, with the net proceeds benefiting S-CAP's programs for women and girls.

The guest speaker will be local AIDS activist Sarah Sacco, who graduated from Woodland Park High School in 1998. She received her BS from Colorado State University in 2001 and her MA from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 2007.

The deadline for reservations is Wednesday, March 5th. Call S-CAP at 578-9092 and ask to be seated with the PFLAG group.

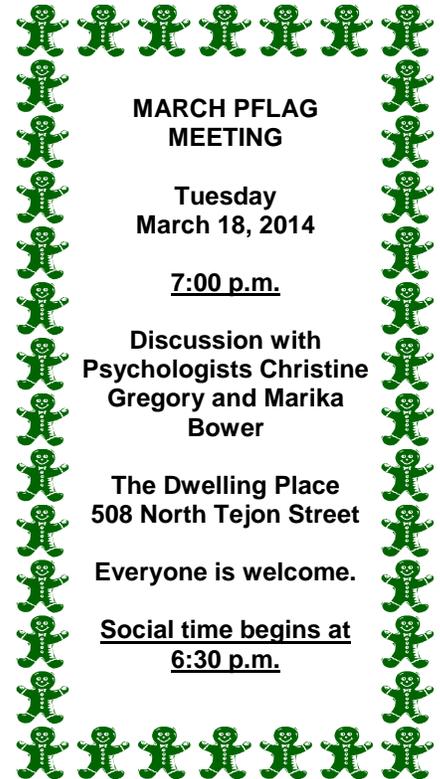
The Katie Couric Interview and Being Careful With Our Allies

by Jenny Martin

As many of you have heard, and likely seen, Katie Couric recently interviewed Laverne Cox (actress on the hit show, *Orange is the New Black*) and model Carmen Carrera, two of the most visible transgender women in pop culture.

During the interview, Couric discussed Carrera's pre-transition identity and asked some invasive questions about gender reassignment surgery. Carrera politely but firmly told Couric that she would prefer not to answer those questions. Subsequently, Cox elo-

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MARCH PFLAG MEETING

**Tuesday
March 18, 2014**

7:00 p.m.

**Discussion with
Psychologists Christine
Gregory and Marika
Bower**

**The Dwelling Place
508 North Tejon Street**

Everyone is welcome.

**Social time begins at
6:30 p.m.**

Civil Rights Director to Speak at PFLAG April 15th

Steven Chavez, Director of the Colorado Civil Rights Division (CCRD) will come from Denver to speak at our April 15th PFLAG meeting.

The CCDR works to protect individuals from discrimination in employment, housing and at places of public accommodation through enforcement of Colorado civil rights laws.

In a June 2013 ruling celebrated as "a high water mark for transgender students" the CCDR acted to protect the rights of a transgender kindergarten student, Coy Mathis, after the Fountain/Ft. Carson School District's good intentions fell short of fair treatment..

Read the story in our August 2013 newsletter on the PFLAG website: www.cspflag.org



This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

PFLAG Mission Statement:

PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) persons, their families and friends through:

- √ **support**, to cope with an adverse society,
- √ **education**, to enlighten an ill-informed public, and
- √ **advocacy**, to end discrimination and secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

PFLAG IS FOR EVERYONE

If you've never been to one of our meetings, we feel you will find it rewarding and may find it leads to a new sense of family.
Membership is not required.
All are welcome.

To join the 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

Grandchildren ???

This was written by a "Mystery Ally" for the Denver PFLAG newsletter.

Time and time again, I have heard parents of GLBT children share that they are so devastated to learn that grandchildren are no longer in their future. Well, this 44-year-old straight woman who has never married nor bestowed her parents with grandchildren has something to say...

I have several gay friends who have favored their parents with grandchildren, and several straight friends who have not. So I beg of you to please stop seeing your child's sexual orientation as something that dictates what your future holds. You just don't know.

These are new times and there is NO guarantee that your children, straight or gay, are going to provide you with grandchildren.

Don't get me wrong, I know grandchildren are magical, can turn lives around and be sources of solid joy. I watch in awe while my parents enjoy the two perfect grandchildren my sister provided them. There are no words to describe the level of happiness and love they experience.

However, watching my father work with my little sister Mariah, from the Big Brother Big Sister program, in his wood garage was so beautiful that it almost made me cry. And there is very little that my mother would not do for Mariah. Although she is not blood, my family treats her as if she is.

My mother always told me that there are Adopt a Grandchild programs that she would seek out if my sister and I did not give her grandchildren. My parents were given grandchildren but they are also practically grandparents to other incredibly lucky children in their lives – a neighborhood child with extremely challenging circumstances along with a child in our family who does not have grandparents. My mother always says that

there is never a shortage of children in need of love.

If you know you want grandchildren — and that is a beautiful thing — go ahead and get yourself a child to love through Big Brother Big Sister, Adopt a Grandchild or similar programs. But you never know, your child, straight or gay, just may surprise you with another.

If you would be interested in writing a "Mystery Ally" piece for our PFLAG newsletter, contact Karen at 634-4433.

Couric Interview (cont..)

quently explained that a preoccupation with transgender people's genitalia distracts from understanding the real discrimination that they experience in their daily lives. (Honestly, for that portion alone, I recommend people watch the interview if they haven't already. The ability to educate with such grace and poise is a gift.)

What concerns me most and what I want to address here is what happened after the interview. Various individuals, groups and entities were sharply critical of Couric for her invasive questions regarding gender re-assignment surgery. No doubt Couric's questions were insensitive. However, when I watched the interview, I never got the impression she asked them with malice or exploitive intent. As a seasoned journalist/anchor, she likely should have known better and certainly should have spoken to her interviewees beforehand regarding the subject of the interview. However, any failure to do so amounts at most to negligence, not prejudice.

For those so heavily criticizing Couric, there are a few things possibly overlooked. One of the first things recommended to parents, especially when they are first dealing with the

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PFLAG Conference: An Invitation to People of Faith Who Want to be Better Allies to the LGBT Community

PFLAG is sponsoring a one day conference featuring Dr. Robert Minor at the Cairn Christian Church in Lafayette, CO, on Saturday, April 5th. The conference, titled "Holding Back, Standing Together, Moving Forward", will be devoted to helping LGBT individuals, families, churches and advocacy groups find better ways to communicate and cooperate with faith communities. This event is free.

The PFLAG Coalition meeting will follow the conference, from 3:00 to 5:00 at the same location.

Doug Kirkpatrick and Therese Van-Overbeke are planning to go to Lafayette for these events.. If you would like to join them in representing our chapter, please contact Doug at 598-6509 as soon as possible.

Couric Interview (cont.)

realization of having a transgender child, is an informative show Couric did last summer on transgender youth, featuring various youth and their families. Additionally, the interview of Cox and Carrera seemed to be an effort to provide a spotlight on this community and a helpful forum. By all accounts, Couric is an ally of the transgender community. She is an ally who asked inappropriate questions, yes, but an ally all the same.

While we still have a long way to go, those of us in the LGB communities have made a lot of strides in fighting discrimination and gaining equality. Our transgender friends are really at the starting gate. It concerns me a great deal when we criticize someone for taking the

wrong approach when that person seems to have good intentions. Progress for any community seeking equality will only be hindered if we alienate those who try to be supportive but simply fumble their efforts.

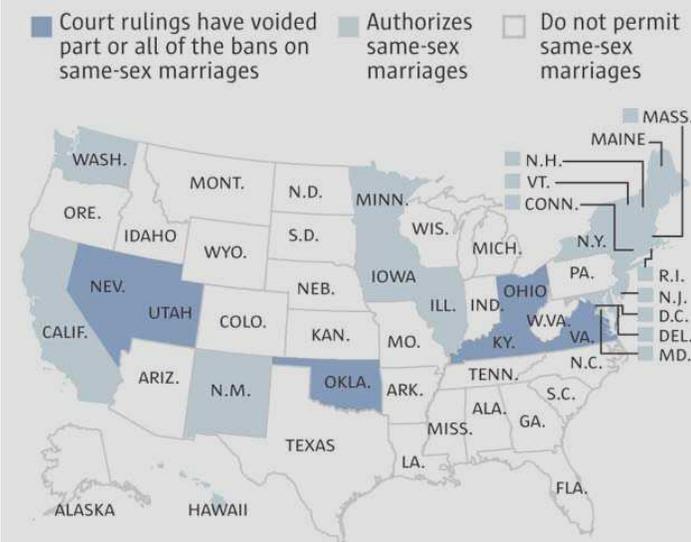
Karen Adams, founder of TYES, stated it very well in the context of family, "Some people get so angry when family members don't 'get it' immediately that there is little opportunity left to continue the conversation and relationships become strained. With patience and information family members can go from ignorance to being a child's strongest supporter." This same principle applies to all of our allies. Let's be mindful of showing our allies the patience and understanding we seek from society. *From www.pflagboulder.org.*

Gay Marriage on a Fast Track

You have to be nimble these days to keep abreast of legal and political developments regarding same-sex marriage. This new chart is already out of date after a court ruling in Texas last week moved that state from "Do not permit same-sex marriages" to: "Court rulings have voided part or all of the bans on same-sex marriages". The Texas ruling may be appealed, as has already happened with a similar ruling in Utah.

Trying to legalize same-sex marriages

Nine Colorado same-sex couples have filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn the state's constitutional ban on gay marriage. Similar challenges have been filed in several other states.



Same-Sex Marriage Case Coming to Denver

Utah's landmark federal court case over same-sex marriage is on its way to Denver, where the U.S. 10th Circuit Court of Appeals will hear the case at the Byron White Courthouse in a process one legal expert said could take place in less than three months – and could potentially affect prospects for marriage equality in Colorado.

On Dec. 20 of last year, U.S. District Judge Robert Shelby stuck down Utah's Amendment 3 defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman. Utah's state government is appealing that decision to the 10th Circuit Court, which has jurisdiction over six states in the region, including Colorado, Kansas, and Oklahoma where there are state constitutional bans on same-sex marriage.

"If the 10th Circuit were to issue a ruling that Utah's marriage ban violates equal protection and due process, it is possible, and perhaps even likely, that that ruling would apply to Colorado's [marriage ban] and other states' marriage bans," said Shannon Minter, co-counsel and Legal Director at the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

But Minter cautioned that the 10th Circuit could narrow its decision to apply only to Utah, leaving Amendment 43 intact. Whatever the outcome may be with the 10th Circuit, the losing party will likely ask the U.S. Supreme Court to review the decision. The high court will either agree to review the case or allow the ruling of the lower court to stand.

- By Mike Yost, *Out Front Magazine*



BULLETIN BOARD

March 10—S-Cap—National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day Luncheon. See story p. 1

March 14-15 - TRANSforming Gender Symposium. University of Colorado at Boulder. For more information call (303) 202-6466.

March 20—Abba Cadabra— Denver Gay Men’s Chorus Concert. For more information, go to www.rmarts.org

April 5— PFLAG Conference and Coalition Meeting See article p. 3.

April 19—”The Great Gatsby” 22nd Annual Red Ribbon Ball - Antlers Hilton,. Details at www.s-cap.org

May 2-3—Out Loud Colorado Springs Mens Chorus—Spring Concert. See article on this page.

TYES—Trans Youth Education and Support

Karen Adams, founder of TYES, is quoted on page 3 in the Katie Couric article. TYES is a Colorado-based statewide group supporting all gender non-conforming children and their families. TYES is dedicated to helping parents support their gender non-conforming children and to helping families find the information, resources, and the understanding that they need.

TYES is an affiliate of PFLAG Boulder and is forming support groups around the state. The TYES website is www.tyes-colorado.org.

Confidentiality.

The PFLAG meeting is a safe space for people to share their stories and their feelings. Please remember that who you met and what was said is to be kept completely confidential. Thank you.

Transgender Health Survey

The Center, in conjunction with The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and One Colorado, is rolling out a “first of its kind in the nation” survey of Transgender Behavioral Health. “The goal of this anonymous survey is to obtain important data which drives funding for education and public policy vital to the trans community. Never before has there been a state-funded survey of the transgender community,” says Courtney Gray, Manager of The Center’s Transgender Programs.

The survey can be taken anonymously on-line as well as through a paper version in just a few minutes. It is essential to obtain an accurate survey of the Colorado trans community. Please participate in this important survey to better the lives of all transgender and gender non-conforming persons.

To complete the survey, go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/trans-genderhealth>. For a paper version, please contact Courtney at The Center, 303-733-7743.

Out Loud Spring Concert

Out Loud, The Colorado Springs Mens Chorus, will present its spring concert, “Two Portraits: Our Stories and Broadway Legends” on May 2 and 3 at 7:30 p.m. at First Congregational Church. Seven PFLAG ushers are needed. If you can help, please call Karen at 634-4433.

Save The Date—The Great Gatsby

S—CAP’s 22nd Annual Red Ribbon Ball to raise money for HIV/AIDS education and support in Southern Colorado is set for April 19th at the Antlers Hilton. Dinner, dancing, a silent auction, Glamorous fun! Do it!

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

Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014.

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.