



PFLAG Colorado Springs

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

May 2016

PrideFest Promoter Nic Grzecka to Speak at May PFLAG Meeting

At our May meeting, Nic Grzecka will bring PFLAG members an update on plans for the 26th Annual Colorado Springs PrideFest to be held at America the Beautiful Park on July 9-10.

The Colorado Springs Pride Center closed in January of 2015, Nic, who is an owner of Club Q and V-Bar, spearheaded the effort to keep PrideFest going while other groups were working to rebuild the LGBT community center in the Springs. For ongoing information, follow the Colorado Springs PrideFest website: <http://www.coloradospringspridefest.com/> and Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pridefest>

When the PFLAG chapter was first formed in Colorado Springs in 1992, Eva McGeehan was the lone PFLAG member who was able to march in the Pride Parade because other parents



Pride Parade marchers cross the Colorado Avenue Bridge—Pikes Peak in the distance.

had children in high school who were not yet out to their classmates.

The chapter's participation has been steady ever since, culminating in its first ever float in the 2015 parade, created by parents and children from our PFLAG/TYES group. Make a note of the date! March in the parade and help at the PFLAG booth.

Anni-ver-sa-ry: Music and Milestones

The theme of the spring concert to be presented by Out Loud: Colorado Springs Men's Chorus at First Congregational Church on May 20-21 will be "Anni-ver-sa-ry: Music and Milestones". The Facebook page for the concert

says: "We have a little Broadway, a newly commissioned work, a special guest artist and a few other surprises in store for you! Don't miss this opportunity as we take you on our journey of "Building Community through Music" in Colorado Springs."

As always, the chorus will sing its signature piece, "Why We Sing". Dale Tims posted it on YouTube in 2010. Click here to see it: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTbo_XuE1Vc



Performances are at 7:30 p.m. May 20 and 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on May 21. Tickets are available online at www.rmarts.org. They may also be purchased at the door.

For the past ten years, PFLAG has ushered for Out Loud concerts. Ushers are needed for the May concerts! Please call Cindy Waldmann at 988-4887 to volunteer.

Facebook users can help Out Loud to publicize the concert by "liking" its Facebook page for the concert at "Anniversary: Music and Milestones".

MAY PFLAG MEETING

Tuesday
May 17, 2016
7:00 p.m.

Nic Grzecka
Colorado Springs PrideFest

The Dwelling Place
508 North Tejon Street
Everyone is welcome.

Social time begins at 6:30 p.m.

Cookies
Everyone is welcome.

June PFLAG Meeting

At the PFLAG meeting on June 21st Laura "Pinky" Reinsch, Political Director of OneColorado, will discuss OneColorado's current political activities.

Citizens Project

Diversity
Equality
Religious Freedom



"Creating Community" Breakfast - June 2 — Antlers Hotel

Help us to celebrate the fine work of Citizen's Project at its 12th annual breakfast. Speakers will review the work Citizen's Project does to promote diversity in the Pikes Peak region. The event is free, and donations at the breakfast are encouraged. If you would like to sit at the PFLAG table, please call Lori Vollmar 520-9198 as soon as possible.



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

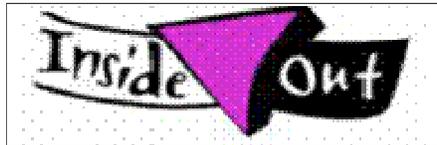
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To receive your newsletter by e-mail, send a request to info@cspflag.org

Are You Facebook-Capable?

Our chapter president, Doug Kirkpatrick, would like some help in learning how to manage the PFLAG Facebook account. He's been handling it, but he needs someone to help him bring it up to date and post a wider variety of material. If you can help, please call him at (719) 598-6509.



PFLAG Parents Doug Kirkpatrick, Therese Van Overbeke and Keith Roberts volunteer to work with the youth regularly at Inside/Out.

PANTRY REMINDER

Everyone is encouraged to bring food for the Inside/Out Youth Services Pantry to PFLAG meetings. Volunteers will deliver it to Inside/Out. Teenagers are always hungry, and some of the youth are homeless.

Suggestions:

Tuna/cracker packets; individual size ravioli, chili, noodles, ramen, any kind of comfort food that can be microwaved; canned meat or tuna; small containers of peanut butter; nutrition bars; trail mix; cookies; Gatorade; bottled water.

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

Rest in Peace, Bonnie Frum

On April 19th, Bonnie Frum died peacefully at home, surrounded by her children and friends, after a year-long jour-



ney with endometrial cancer.

Bonnie was involved with numerous organizations, including Rotary, Young Life, her church and PFLAG. She and her husband, Buzz, were co-presidents of the Colorado Springs chapter of PFLAG when the chapter was formed in the early 1990s. A steadfast PFLAG supporter, she ushered with other PFLAG members at Out Loud concerts, marched in the Pride Parade, and helped at the PFLAG booth at PrideFest, talking to members of the public about her experience as a PFLAG mom and encouraging other parents to passionately support their LGBT children.

During the Amendment 2 controversy in 1992, when a (subsequently cancelled) constitutional amendment was passed in Colorado prohibiting passage of local ordinances designed to protect LGBT people, Bonnie and Buzz reached out to Amendment 2 sponsor Will Perkins and invited him for dinner in their home to talk about the issues.

Bonnie was involved at the outset in forming a PFLAG chapter in Colorado Springs. Her PFLAG friend Eva McGeehan said, "For me, Bonnie exemplified love. She was beautiful inside and out. Her smile would light a room."

"She put her children first and defended them by becoming the president of PFLAG ."

Bonnie's family has asked that memorial contributions in her name be sent to Springs Rescue Mission, 5 West Las Vegas Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80903. Its website is at: <http://www.springsrescuemission.org/>

Colorado Springs PFLAG has sent a contribution in her memory.



Congratulations, Out Loud



Out Loud recently celebrated the Tenth Anniversary of its first concert in 2006. Alumni, singers and friends of Out Loud gathered at the Gold Hill Mesa clubhouse to reminisce, party, and sing together.

I Worried a Lot— By Mary Oliver

I worried a lot. Will the garden grow, will the rivers flow in the right direction, will the earth turn as it was taught, and if not how shall I correct it?

Was I right, was I wrong, will I be forgiven, can I do better?

Will I ever be able to sing, even the sparrows can do it, and I am, well, hopeless.

Is my eyesight fading or am I just imagining it, am I going to get rheumatism, lockjaw, dementia?

Finally I saw that worrying had come to nothing

And gave it up. And took my old body and went out into the morning, and sang.

— Thank you to Carol Brown Oberg

Thank you

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

Always Remember —

That our PFLAG meetings are a safe space.

Who you meet, and what you hear—

Must remain strictly confidential.

Steve Lee-O'Neal Testifies before Legislature

By Steve Lee-O'Neal

(Reprinted from May, 2016 Denver PFLAG Newsletter)

House Bill 1210 has already been defeated, but not without a good fight!

This is the second year that a bill to ban conversion therapy for teenagers in Colorado has been defeated. Three Republicans, Senators Owen Hill, Ray Scott, and Jerry Sonnenberg, voted to indefinitely postpone House Bill 16-1210. Both Senators Kerry Donovan and Irene Aguilar voted in support of the bill.

After I testified, Senator Aguilar personally thanked me for testifying and for being a survivor of this terrible practice.

Conversion therapy, sometimes known as reparative therapy, is anchored in non-accepting religions. It only exists to convert a gay person to be heterosexual, to “repair” a gay person’s sexual orientation. In 2016 there are only four states (California, New Jersey, Illinois, Oregon), plus the District of Columbia, that have effectively banned this dangerous and harmful method, and I still cannot believe that it isn’t a crime nationally.

Why are we still debating a practice that renders gay teens 40% more likely to commit suicide?

I testified twice during the committee hearings, and each time we were met with stupefying questions and statements from some of the representatives and senators, e.g., “I believe that being gay is like being addicted to drugs and alcohol,” or “I believe that there are teens who don’t want to live that ‘lifestyle,’ and they want to compartmentalize their feelings so that they can live a traditional life and have a traditional family.”

The latter statement, posed by Rep. Kathleen Conti, doesn’t reflect reality. I’ve never heard such a thing slip from any teenager’s mouth. Teens want to be accepted and loved. Only the programming from certain religious adults could possibly make a

teen utter something like that.

Focus on the Family was in attendance at each session, stating that conversion therapy isn’t even practiced any more.

This is a lie, and ironic since they started the practice 20-30 years ago and coined the name.

For over a decade I participated in the Mormon Church’s conversion therapy program Evergreen (now called North Star), here in Denver with 15 other local men, most of whom were married fathers with children. We were all funneled into Evergreen after seeking help from our religious leaders, who shamed us and told us that we had to be cured of this sin. One third of these men committed suicide. As a child born into and raised in the Mormon Church, I was told throughout my life that the rituals of the church would cure me of my homosexuality, that serving a mission would cure me, that marrying a woman would cure me. Finally, I was told that conversion therapy would cure me.

During the time I was active in conversion therapy, I was taught that homosexuality was the same as drug addiction and I tried at each therapy session to convince myself that I was an addict. I was taught to act straight and I would be straight. I was married at the time, and I was acting a part that was driving me to insanity. The techniques given me to cure myself only made me feel emotionally worse and more depressed.

I can only imagine the impact this so-called therapy would have had on me if I were under the age of 18. But I don’t have to imagine – the data show that conversion therapy can lead to depression, decreased self-esteem, substance abuse, and even suicide.

After coming out and leaving the Mormon church, I became a mentally healthy, gay father of six successful children with my husband. Living openly and honestly as a gay parent, the same as heterosexual parents do, brings me true joy.



BULLETIN BOARD

May 7— Coalition of Colorado PFLAG Chapters— Meeting Chun Mansion, Denver.

May 19 — 2016 Southern Colorado Ally Awards — Cocktail reception at the Mining Exchange, a Wyndham Grand Hotel, 8 South Nevada Ave., Colorado Springs, 5:30 p.m. Sponsored by OneColorado Education Fund. Honoring Mary Lou Makepeace, Mary Ellen McNally and Bo Ortiz. More information and tickets at <http://www.one-colorado.org/whats-happening/> or call (303) 863-7326.

May 20-21— Out Loud Colorado Springs Mens Chorus— Spring Concert. 7:30 p.m. May 20 and 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. May 21. First Congregational Church, 20 East St. Vrain St. See article, p. 1.

June 2 — Citizens Project “Creating Community” Breakfast. Antlers Hotel. Sit at the PFLAG Table! Call Lori Vollmar at 520-9198 to reserve a place at the PFLAG table.

June 18— Out Loud Colorado Springs Mens Chorus - Pre- GALA Festival Event. Save the date—details to be announced.

June 18— Pink Party sponsored by OneColorado — Tracks/EXDO Event Center, Denver. Tickets are limited. Go to <http://www.one-colorado.org/whats-happening/> or call (303) 863-7326.

June 18-19 — Denver PrideFest — Civic Center Park. More information at www.glbtcolorado.org/pridefest/

July 2-6 Gala Choruses Festival in Denver—Colorado is hosting its second GALA Festival. Like the World Cup, GALA happens every 4 years. See <http://galachoruses.org>

July 9-10—Colorado Springs PrideFest — America the Beautiful Park. PFLAG volunteers are needed to staff the PFLAG booth both days. Plan to march in the Pride Parade on Sunday morning. Send an e-mail to info@cspflag if you can help.

Easy King Soopers Fundraiser Supports Colorado Springs PFLAG

King Soopers reports that PFLAG will soon receive \$250 earned in the first four months of participation in this fundraiser. Join the PFLAGgers who have already



purchased reloadable King Soopers Gift Cards at our meetings. Every time they reload the card and purchase groceries PFLAG receives 5%. Now that’s an easy fundraiser! Please participate!

Notes from Carol Brown Oberg

Finding Love Again, This Time With a Man — *New York Times*, April 24, 2016

A sensitive essay by Harris Wofford, a 70-year old widower. Find it by Googling the title, author. Or click this link:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/24/opinion/sunday/findinglove-again-this-time-with-a-man.html?ac-tion=click&contentCollection=Opinion&module=Trending&version=Full®ion=Marginalia&pgtype=article>

Lesbian Widow’s Lawsuit Seeking Benefits from FedEx to Proceed

The Washington Blade—January 24, 2016

A federal court in California has ruled a lawsuit can proceed against shipping giant FedEx for withholding pension benefits to the same-sex partner of a deceased worker.

<http://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/01/04/court-allows-gay-benefits-case-against-fedex-to-proceed/#sthash.CfN44iic.dpuf>

Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016.

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.