



PFLAG Colorado Springs

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

February 2021

President Biden Energizes LGBTQ Community With Quick Action

Not only is President Joe Biden the first president to enter the White House supporting Marriage Equality, (<http://bit.ly/3rdECsd>), but once sworn in, he has promised a wave of change for the LGBTQ community, and especially for transgender people.

The changes came quickly when, on his fifth day in office, he reversed the ban on transgender people serving in the military, offering hope to thousands of servicemembers who had been subject to discriminatory policies during the previous administration.

He has nominated Mayor Pete Buttigieg to be his Transportation Secretary. If confirmed, Buttigieg will be the first openly gay American approved by the Senate to lead a U.S. Cabinet department.

Biden has also nominated Rachel Levine, Pennsylvania's top health official, as his assistant secretary of health. Levine, a pediatrician, would become the first openly transgender federal official to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Biden said in a statement. "She is a historic and deeply qualified choice to help lead our administration's health efforts."

Some of his pledges include reinstating Obama era protections for transgender students in schools, and utilizing federal resources to curb violence against trans people. He has also promised to prioritize passing the Equality Act during his first 100 days in office. The Equality Act would ban anti-LGBTQ discrimination at the national level.

And....Pronouns! The White House's website has already been completely changed to reflect the new Biden administration, and one feature has caught people's attention: the contact form now asks users for their pronouns. In a dropdown menu, people trying to contact the White House can choose whether their pronouns are she/her, he/him, they/them, other, or "Prefer not to share."



February is about love. Gretchen, a 13-year old from Manitou, was sharing photos of her painting at the TransVisibility event in Acacia Park last fall and she brought one to the PFLAG information table. Beautiful work, beautiful message, Gretchen. Thank you.

February PFLAG Meeting
Zoom Online

Tuesday, February 16
7:00 p.m.

Conversation and Support

To attend the meeting, please send an email message to:
virtualmeeting@cspflag.org

You will receive an email with information about how to join the upcoming meeting. If you don't get this email within 30 minutes, please send an email to:

information@cspflag.org

Please note: The link for the meeting changes every month, so don't use last month's link!

Our good virtual meetings are bringing together people from out of town and also out of state.

Everyone is welcome.

A Call to Action From PFLAG National Office

Message from PFLAG National to all PFLAG Chapters:

On January 28, Mayor Pete Buttigieg received an overwhelming approval vote in the Senate Commerce Committee (21 to 3) in support of his nomination for Transportation Secretary. His nomination will now go to the full Senate.

If confirmed, he will be the first openly gay Cabinet member.

For LGBTQ+ people, especially LGBTQ+ youth, the importance of this kind of inclusion and visibility cannot be overstated. As evidenced in his hearing, Mayor Buttigieg comes prepared with the skills and plans to help our cities, suburbs, and rural communities build back better by rebuilding critical infrastructure, creating jobs, and improving the quality of life for all

people living in the United States. The Senate vote may happen as early as Monday, February 1.

PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL your two Senators IMMEDIATELY and tell them to swiftly vote YES to confirm Mayor Buttigieg as the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation.

John Hickenlooper (202) 224-5941
www.hickenlooper.senate.gov

Michael Bennett (202) 224-5852
<http://bit.ly/3aA6DDJ>

And when they vote to support issues benefiting the LGBTQ community, please call or email to say Thank you.



Once a Girl, Always a Boy—Book Review

once a girl, always a boy

a family memoir of
a transgender journey



Jo Ivester

Colorado Springs PFLAG

This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG - providing support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ+.

To receive this newsletter regularly, go to the website: www.cspflag.org.

To contact PFLAG, send email to: information@cspflag.org.

Support Line: (719) 425-9567

Facebook: PFLAG—Colorado Springs <https://www.facebook.com/PFLAGCS/>

PFLAG National Office website: www.pflag.org

TransParent Group

The TransParent group for parents of gender variant and transgender youth is meeting virtually on Zoom on the third Thursday of the month from 6:00—7:30 p.m. For more information, and to receive the Zoom meeting link, email transparenting@insideoutys.org or call Inside/Out at (719) 328-1056.

TYES

Transgender Youth Education and Support (TYES) is a Boulder-based parent group that provides information and a community of support for parents of gender dysphoric and gender variant younger children. Website: www.TYES-Colorado.org.

Stand With Trans

Stand With Trans is a national support group of parents supporting the transgender community. See <https://standwithtrans.org>

Danette Tritch, a PFLAG Mom, strong Inside/Out volunteer and leader of the Inside/Out TransParent group, has written the following review of an excellent new book, Once a Girl : Always a Boy—A Memoir of a Transgender Journey by Jo Ivester, 2020 .

Family memoirs are an important contribution to understanding the transgender journey, as it's a journey that affects everyone in the family. *Once a Girl, Always a Boy* by Jo Ivester is a recommended addition to my list of trans family memoirs.

I was especially eager to read Ivester's work after hearing her speak at a virtual book fair and learning that her son's transition took place at a similar time in his life to my own son's.

A particularly interesting aspect of the book for me was the opportunity to learn about the sexual orientation of asexual/aromantic. As Jeremy, Ivester's son, was struggling with gender dysphoria, it was his absence of attraction that led him to understand his orientation through groups like Aces and Aros.

After meeting other asexual and aromantic people online, Jeremy made declarations to his family and close circle of friends about his orientation. Shortly afterward, he pursued top surgery to align his body with how he felt himself to be.

Jeremy resisted the label of transgender for some time, making masculine gender expression decisions, eventually followed by name and pronoun decisions and identifying as trans.

The memoir is unique in that many family voices are heard. Jo and Jeremy write the majority of the chapters, but Jeremy's father and three siblings also author different chapters. It is through the various voices that parents and other family members can find comfort that we are not alone and that other families have questioned, struggled, learned and accepted their trans children.

Ivester chronicles Jeremy's early life through his love of sports, especially football, and hanging out mostly with neighborhood and school boys until hitting middle school where his former friendships become more awkward and activities more difficult to participate in.

High school was a struggle, somewhat due to a difficulty finding a diagnosis and treatment for some unexplained pain, and Jeremy continued to fall behind in school.

He started college in Montana, but physical difficulties required frequent trips home (Austin, TX) and stopping and starting school.

He eventually attends CU Boulder, where he finds a great group of friends and, while school doesn't work out, he finds meaningful employment and continues his self discovery. It is a sister's wedding in which Jeremy is to participate as a bridesmaid that brings an important family moment: a declaration that he cannot wear the dress but will wear a suit.

Ivester makes an interesting decision to use her son's given name and female pronouns in the first part of the book, but does so to help others understand how a family grapples with their concept of the binary of sex (assigned at birth), expectations that come with that, and how the family transitions to new awareness and understanding of sex, gender and orientation.

Of course, it is the family's advocacy activities that lead to Ivester's decision to write the book and expose personal aspects of her family and Jeremy's life. Together they have advocated at the state and national level and spoken widely throughout Texas and the United States.

Important

You don't always know where other people are on their journeys.

THEREFORE, PFLAG meetings, both in-person and virtual, must always be a safe space.

Who you meet, and what you hear

Must remain strictly confidential.

Thank You

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



BULLETIN BOARD

Feb. 16— PFLAG Chapter Meeting on Zoom 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 18—TransParent Group (Inside Out Youth Services) meets on Zoom at 6:00 p.m. For information, call (719) 328-1056

Amazon Smile Program Supports PFLAG

Make your shopping count for PFLAG!

Colorado Springs PFLAG participates in the Amazon Smile program. When you make purchases on Amazon, please enter the site through our portal:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/84-1281187>

When you do this, Amazon will send 0.5% of the value of your purchase to our chapter. Send an email to information@cspflag.org to request a flyer with more details about this easy support program.



When we can't have live concerts, the Denver Gay Men's Chorus's small group "Off Kilter" is bringing us virtual presentations. Click for "All of Me" <https://bit.ly/3pD8duz>



ICONS Gay Piano Bar—Indy Review

Icons was featured in *The Colorado Springs Indy* on January 27. "Icons Gay Piano Bar is Queer Excellence Downtown". See <http://bit.ly/36vABY5> Excerpts:

"Colorado Springs has more than a few places where a person can find a bar with a great vibe, have a good bite to eat and enjoy it with a delicious cocktails...But there's something more to ICONS, the new LGBTQIA+ bar on Bijou Street co-owned by Josh Franklin and John Wolfe, who are fiancés. It occupies a unique niche in our city – one that has, to our memory, never quite been filled before. Not by the storied Hide 'n Seek, V-Bar, the Underground or sole contemporary Club Q.

"It's vastly different from anything anybody has tried before for this (LGBTQIA) community' says Wolfe. 'I think the community is to the point where there are enough people that just want to go have a conversation and meet new people, and not necessarily grind on the dance floor, but enjoy a nice cocktail and some entertainment and make new friends.'

"Every bartender, Franklin and Wolfe included, sings. When we first visit, the two kick off the evening with a Broadway-grade duet that gets the whole bar laughing and applauding.

"Stepping away from the restaurant review curtain and speaking as a queer person, visiting ICONS wasn't just a typical great time out. Having a space where I can be unreservedly, unapologetically and loudly queer, where I can swap saucy banter with the bartenders and be affectionate in public without worrying about potentially violent consequences, where people like me are the target audience instead of a bonus or afterthought, there's no price that can be put on that."

- Griffin Swartzell gswartzell@csindy.com

Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021.

Name: _____

___ New member ___ Renewing member

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail _____

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

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

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Each year our chapter contributes \$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 additional donations are tax deductible. Or pay by credit card online at website: www.cspflag.org PFLAG is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.