



# PFLAG BOULDER COUNTY

**PFLAG**  
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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May 2009

## Annual Appreciation Banquet

Thursday, May 21st, 6:30pm

Beginning at 6:30 p.m. with a delicious potluck banquet in Mead Hall downstairs in the First United Methodist Church, a festive evening of recognition of special people in our chapter and in our community will be the highlight of our PFLAG year. You will not want to miss the roast turkey, baked ham, a vegetarian main dish, mashed potatoes, spinach salad, drinks, all provided by the PFLAG Board. You are asked to bring salads, side dishes and desserts to complete the meal. Feel free to bring friends and family (and enough food) to this joyful celebration of community.

Following a short business meeting to elect officers, awards will be given these community honorees:

**Business Ally:** Randy Dilkes, Store Manager, McGuckin's Hardware;

**Community Ally:** Carol Grever, author of *My Husband Is Gay* and *When Your Spouse Comes Out*;

**Legislative Ally:** Brandon Shaffer, President of the Colorado Senate and co-sponsor of the Domestic Partners Beneficiary Bill recently passed by the legislature;

**Outstanding LGBT Activist:** Stephanie Wilenchek, Executive Director, GLBT Resource Center at the University of Colorado;

**Education Ally:** Rose Lupinacci, Fairview High School Intervention Specialist and GSA sponsor;

**Outstanding Youth:** Cole Atcheson, Fairview High School (to be presented on June 18<sup>th</sup>)

**National PFLAG High School Youth Scholarship Recipient:** Marley Hamrick, Niwot High School

A short video, "Welcome to Colorado", which was shown at the Creating Change Conference in Denver in Jan, 2009 to show the progress toward LGBT equality in our state, will conclude the evening.

## Pride Program: "A Fair to Remember"

Thursday, June 18th, 7pm

Co-sponsored with Boulder Pride, our June meeting will be a community gathering of many LGBT-related groups where we will learn about some of the many resources available in Boulder County for fun, support, music, outdoor interests, and networking. If you are part of a group that wants to table at this event, contact [alewis@boulderpride.org](mailto:alewis@boulderpride.org). Or just come and enjoy a sociable evening with our annual **Ice Cream Social** open to the LGBT community and its allies. At 6:15 a newcomers support group will meet prior to the event in the First United Methodist Church library.

## Come Join the Pride Fest

Saturday & Sunday, June 27th-28th

Help is needed to staff the PFLAG Coalition table at the Colorado Pride Fest in Civic Park Denver on Sat. and Sun. June 27-28. Call Ron Braun, 303-828-1404, to volunteer 2 hours either day. Come march with the PFLAG contingent in the Pride Parade on Sunday morning starting in Cheesman Park (step off at 9:30 a.m.) and ending at the Capitol and Civic Park. Meet to carpool at 8:00 a.m. at the Table Mesa Park N Ride. Let Jean know if you plan to carpool: [JeanInBlDr@comcast.net](mailto:JeanInBlDr@comcast.net).

## Meetings

PFLAG Boulder County  
First United Methodist Church  
1421 Spruce Street  
14th & Spruce - 303.444.8164

**6:45 PM - Support & Advocacy Groups Meet**  
**7:30 PM - Program**

At 6:45 p.m. a support group, especially intended for newcomers and others dealing with personal LGBT-related issues, meets in the library as long as needed. Confidentiality is promised. At 7:00 p.m. refreshments will be served before the 7:30 p.m. program in the parlor. The public is always welcome to the main program at 7:30 p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of each month.

**May 21st, 6:30**

Annual Appreciation Banquet

**June 18th, 7pm**

A Fair to Remember

**June 27th-28th**

Pride Fest

## Terms, Terminology, and Labels

By Jean Hodges and Dr. Janis Bohan

In a recent discussion on a PFLAG discussion board, the following question was posed by a PFLAG member. Jean turned the question over to Janis Bohan, a retired professor, lesbian activist, and psychologist. Jean considers Janis her “go-to” person for questions such as these, so we thought we would reprint the answer here. The question and answer have been edited lightly for clarity and length.

**Q:** I have become increasingly aware of an awkward feeling whenever I use the terms homosexual, heterosexual, gay, Lesbian, transgender, straight, etc. It is unavoidable in my human sexuality class because these are the terms that we have to use and it seems that they have become institutionalized and therefore acceptable by all who use them. Is there some movement afoot to change our vocabulary to excise these sexually-based terms? To describe someone's personhood by something that is done in privacy seems crazy and frankly repugnant to me. I hate labels but it seems we are stuck with them unless or until we demand change. We don't call women who have abortions “aborters” or people who eat meat “carnivores” (except in nutritional definition perhaps), as their primary description, so why should we define individuals by what they do sexually? I know a lot of young people are refusing to label themselves. What do you think about this? What kind of terminology is being used by those who don't want “labels”? Are there any thoughts from National PFLAG about a change in these labels that we all use?



**A:** Same-sex attractions and behaviors existed long before we had any names for them, especially names like “homosexual.” Importantly, those attractions or behaviors did **not** constitute identities, as this question notes is the problem today. That is, the fact that one “did” homosexual behavior (or heterosexual behavior) didn't make one “A Homosexual” or “A Heterosexual,” any more than doing any other form of behavior defined one's identity (as the question also points out). It was an act, a behavior, and maybe even a sin, but it was not an identity. No one presumed that this defined who one **is** or that it characterized any deep-seated core of personality. It might be illegal, immoral, sick ... and [under prevailing laws] like theft, it could be punished by law, shamed by the church, and thought [to be] perverse. But it was an illegal, immoral, or perverse **act**, not an identity. This changed around the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when the “sexology” movement was born. The terminology around sexual orientation derives from this “movement” to define and classify various forms of sexual identity. Freud (among others) had begun to emphasize the role of sexuality in personality, and so it seemed important to define “who” people were in part by defining their sexuality. It took some time for the terms to evolve to anything like their current usage, but basically, there was “normal” sexuality (which wasn't even named, because it was simply understood to be the “real” sexuality, whereas all others needed names and explanations), and then there were various deviations or perversions. In that context, “homosexuality” (gradually) came to mean a sexual attraction to members of one's own sex. As these terms evolved, so did their meanings. They came to describe not an act, but an identity. So, rather than being an adjective (a homosexual act), homosexual became a noun (“A homosexual”) and referred to the person rather than the behavior. Interestingly, it was some time later that the same thing happened to “heterosexual,” because heterosexuality was taken as so normative that it simply needed no name and no explanation, which, I would suggest, is still the case. So, that's historically how sexuality (i.e., sexual attraction and behavior) became all embedded in the terminology. Then, as homosexuality in particular came to be viewed by the medical profession as a perversion, it was “medicalized”—that is, it came to be viewed as a disease that could be diagnosed and, it was hoped, “cured.” [By the way, Freud himself was not of this mind. He neither felt that homosexuality was a sickness that should be cured, nor did he believe it was possible to change it. It was his (mostly American) successors who added that chapter to the story.] In the face of this pathologizing of homosexuality, the term “heterosexuality” became the crucial foil or contrast against which this perversion could be named and vilified. So, ironically, the **nouns** “heterosexuality” and “A heterosexual” actually



emerged later and (largely) as a form of contrast against the nouns "homosexuality" and "A homosexual." The term "homosexuality" then became the medical/psychiatric *diagnosis* for this particular "personality disorder" (This is important: psychiatrists are medical doctors, and it was psychiatry that really bought into this medical model ... psychologists and others followed later, but it was the medical profession that set up the system. The DSM, the diagnostic manual used by all mental health professionals, is published by the American Psychiatric Association—and it is that manual that pathologized homosexuality until ... that's another story).

Jump to 1969, Stonewall and the birth of the "gay rights movement," and then to 1973 when "homosexuality" was "declassified" (i.e., no longer described as a medical condition ... although the process was not quite that simple) in the DSM, and the gradual growth of consciousness by gay (then lesbian and gay ... then lesbian, gay, and bisexual ... then lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) people. Part of this growth of consciousness was a growing dislike for the term "homosexual"—especially used as a noun ("The homosexual is ..."), but also used as an adjective "Homosexual groups rallied ..."

or "homosexual marriage"). There were/are two major reasons for this discomfort: (1) the term has a long history as a medical label; using it recalls and to some degree recreates the view of LGB people ("T" is a different set of issues in this context) and their lives as sick; and (2) as the question notes, the term seems to focus on sexuality rather than on the broad nature of people's full identity. So, LGB people have vociferously resisted the use of the term homosexual (especially those in younger generations and those with some political consciousness. There are still LGB folks, mostly older or sort of out of the mainstream of LGB community, who use the term). [By the way, the conservative right, including but not limited to the religious right, intentionally uses the word "homosexual"—precisely, I would argue, for these 2 very reasons: to pathologize and sexualize LGB people.] However, even in that segment of the movement that rejects the use of "homosexual," we still use 'bisexual' and 'heterosexual.' I have always thought that this is a problem, especially for reason (2). The word "straight" used for people who identify as heterosexual might answer this problem, except that some non-LGB people are offended by it (because it can imply boring, conventional, etc.) and some LGB people don't like the implication that they are "bent" (whereas others *love* this implication). We currently have no other widely-used word for bisexual.

But here is the beauty of language as a living thing—and of the iconoclastic tendencies of youth. New words are evolving to address these problems (temporarily, to be sure—these will undoubtedly be seen as problematic down the road). The first, and still the most widely-used and well-liked by many, is 'queer.' An old pejorative, it has been reclaimed, and in its broadest sense covers everyone who doesn't live by standard, traditional rules of sexuality and gender. It can even include "straight" people who don't feel that the traditional category fits their full identity [although homophobia/transphobia being what they are, few straight folks are comfortable identifying as queer ... the ones I know are few and far between.]. 'Queer' is used by a lot of adults, especially younger folks and those who are politically active. It is pretty standard fare now among youth, who are developmentally prone to avoid labels anyhow, and who see a movement that gives them huge flexibility in naming who they are. Lots of older LGB(T) folks dislike it, though, because it evokes that long history of 'queer' being used so pejoratively. As the question mentions, it's true that lots of youth reject categories and labels. That's partly a developmental phenomenon (adolescence is all about rejecting the identity handed to you by others and trying out new ones); and, especially for queer kids, it's partly historical (they have the benefit of a now-40-year-old movement that supports their right to define themselves in ways that are not in keeping with the dominant scripts they learned as

Mountain Pride Connections is pleased to support PFLAG at the Boulder Farmers' Market this season ... come visit us!

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kids). Some use terms like "spectrum" or "fluid" to denote their flexibility or fluidity in matters of sexuality and gender; "ambisexual" is sometimes used to refer to sexuality that changes ('ambi' meaning moving or traveling, as in ambulation); "polyamory" refers to the possibility of having multiple lovers, of whatever sex. And there are more. Pushed into the old boxes, others might call these kids 'straight,' 'lesbian,' 'gay,' 'bisexual,' 'questioning,' 'experimenting,' 'confused,' etc. They'd say they are just who they are and that the labels available just don't fit the breadth and fluidity of their identity. That may all change as they get older, but they open possibilities that we can all learn from. As for terms National PFLAG might use ... lots of these terms are sort of proprietary—that is, it's OK for me to call myself queer, but it is uncomfortable for others to presume to do that (unless they have 'permission' from queer folks ... consider the use of terms among members of communities of color that would be offensive were I, a white woman, to use them). The list of initials is getting long, but they do have the advantage of eliminating the "sexual" part of the words, and they also have the advantage of honoring most of the currently-used terms: the core ones would be LGBTQQI ... and there are others ... and they will keep changing. Flexibility is crucial—and a willingness to listen to the folks, that is, to LGBTQQI folks. One idea might be to invite queer kids to help craft your messages. See what they say, label it as theirs, and you can both honor their contribution and include their insights without fear of offense.

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WHEN A FAMILY MEMBER OR LOVED ONE COMES OUT, YOU MIGHT FEEL CONFUSED, SCARED, OR JUST IN NEED OF MORE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT. I OFFER COMPASSIONATE, ACCEPTING AND PRACTICAL COUNSELING FOR FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS; AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH LGBTQ YOUTH, ADOLESCENTS & ADULTS, AND THOSE WHO CARE ABOUT THEM.

**Call Your Representatives Today in Support of Hate Crimes Legislation**

Take Action! The House is preparing to vote on the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act - H.R. 1913 as early as this week. As you know, the bill would give the Justice Department the power to investigate and prosecute bias-motivated violence by providing the department with jurisdiction over crimes of violence where the victim is chosen because of their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

When introducing the bill, Representative Conyers stated that the legislation "provides a constructive and measured response to a problem that continues to plague our nation. These are crimes that shock and shame our national conscience. They should be subject to comprehensive federal law enforcement assistance and prosecution."

Hate crimes impacts all of our loved ones and H.R. 1913 is needed to ensure that *all* of our families and friends have the right to be safe and free from physical harm and intimidation.

**Call Your Representative Today and Share Your Support!**

Representatives need to know you **support** H.R. 1913 as they plan to vote on the bill. We urge you to call them **now** using our toll-free number, **866-346-4611**, and encourage them to support this critical legislation as they prepare to vote. Our opposition continues to barrage representatives with messages of fear and hate - please take advantage of this time to reach out to their representatives and show your **support**. Please take action by visiting <http://capwiz.com/pflag/home/> and help us address the violence our LGBT loved ones face.

**“Call Me ..... Little Bridget”**

T shirts that are fashionable with a slice of GLBTQ advocacy. Our shirts are for anyone who wants to spread the word of love and acceptance. We believe that if people wear them... then the message will get through to others. It's a subtle thing, people may not even know it's happening. But, those are, sometimes, the most powerful. Call Me Little Bridget - changing the world, one shirt at a time.

Visit: [www.callmelittlebridget.com](http://www.callmelittlebridget.com) | Call: 303 588 3696

**Allen Ray Andrae Found Guilty of Murder and Bias Motivated Crime**  
*Colorado Anti-Violence Program & National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs Responds*

Greeley, CO - April 22, 2009

The verdict today brings us mixed emotions. We are reminded that we have lost yet another young member of our community to hate. The fact that Angie's killer was found guilty of first degree murder and a bias motivated crime shows that this murder was taken seriously. This verdict sends the message that violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people is unacceptable. We applaud the Weld County District Attorney for making Colorado a leader in showing that violence against the LGBTQ community will not be tolerated.

We must not leave today thinking that this is an isolated incident or that our work is done. In 2008 alone, there were at least 19 reported anti-LGBTQ murders in the United States. We remember Lawrence King, Duanna Johnson, Latiesha Green, Sanesha Stewart and Simmie Williams Jr.

Since the time of Angie's murder, we at the Colorado Anti-Violence Program and many others have witnessed the mourning of the Zapata family, the Greeley community, the transgender community and the greater lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer and ally communities. We have also witnessed incredible perseverance, strength and love unite people as they began to organize to raise awareness and educate others to prevent this from happening again.

Fear, misunderstanding or hatred of LGBTQ people does not justify violence. It takes incredible courage to be who we are in a world that makes us invisible, forces us to hide, and condones violence against us. Angie was not only a loving daughter, sister, aunt and friend but a beautiful young woman courageous enough to be herself.

Throughout this trial we've heard many myths about transgender people including attempts to blame Angie for her own murder. We witnessed the defense continually focus on the behavior of the murder victim, rather than on the violent actions of her killer. The fact is that transgender people are faced with a Catch 22. Being out about one's transgender status often means experiencing a tremendous amount of violence, the blame for which is often placed on the individual for being out. However, not speaking about one's transgender identity often means being stereotyped as deceptive and yet again, blamed for the violence that one experiences. Implicit throughout this trial was the dangerous assumption that outing oneself as transgender guarantees safety. On the contrary, in some instances, outing can increase the risk of violence. Many transgender people struggle to know when and how to talk about their bodies and gender. This can be extremely difficult and scary to decide when and with whom to have this conversation. CAVP and NCAVP stand by the truth that the right to live free from violence is not conditional. It is a right granted to all of us regardless of whether or not we identify with the gender we were assigned at birth.

Ultimately, this is a human rights issue. Transgender people, like all people, have a right to self-determination, safety and respect. We call on our lawmakers to pass legislation that funds restorative and transformative justice, victim's rights and accountability programs for offenders as well as community-based prevention initiatives and public education that works to counter the stereotypes and misinformation at the root of hate violence. We call on the people of Colorado and the rest of the country to stand up, speak out, and organize to create safer communities where we are all free to live our lives without the fear of violence.

**Governor Ritter Signs Domestic Partner Bill**

Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter has signed a domestic partner bill - *the Designated Beneficiary Agreement Act*. The measure would apply to same- and opposite-sex unmarried couples. Effective July 1, the new law will permit any two people – regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity - to enter into designated beneficiary agreements that confer specific legal rights and responsibilities, including the right to receive state employee pension benefits, the right to make medical decisions for an incapacitated partner, and the right to inherit if a partner dies without a will. Write to your legislators to say thanks.



**PFLAG Boulder County**  
 PO Box 19696  
 Boulder, CO 80308  
**303.444.8164**  
 www.pflagboulder.org

PFLAG Boulder meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at First United Methodist Church, 14th and Spruce, Boulder, Colorado. Sharing time begins at 7:00 pm, program at 8:00 pm.

**REMEMBER**, our confidentiality pledge must not be broken.

Newsletter is published monthly. A subscription is included with each membership to PFLAG. Material related to PFLAG is welcome from any source. Deadline is the twentieth of each month. The editor reserves the right to accept, reject, or edit any material submitted.

**Membership Categories**

- \$25.00 Individual
- \$35.00 Family
- \$10.00 Student
- \$10.00 Newsletter Only
- \$50.00 Supporting
- \$100.00+ Sustaining

Membership dues are renewed on October 1st of each year. Send address changes and membership information to PFLAG, P.O. Box 19696, Boulder, CO 80308.

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**OUR MISSION**

*PFLAG promotes the health and well-being of gays, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered 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 to secure civil rights.

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

**PFLAG Book Discussion Ideas?**

In an effort to encourage more interaction among our members, your PFLAG board offers an innovative program concept. How about reading one book together and discussing it as one of our monthly programs? The One Book Program through the public library engenders a great deal of interest. We think a book focused on some LGBT-related aspect would make for a stimulating discussion in PFLAG. We would like your suggestions for books you think would evoke a stimulating conversation. Here are a couple of ideas to get you going:

- *Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity* by Julia Serano
- *Dude, You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School* by C. J. Pascoe

We'd like to hear from you soon with your suggestions and learn if anyone else would like to be part of such a program maybe quarterly, maybe twice a year, depending on interest. We're thinking of starting with a book for July so we need to decide in May. Email responses to Kit at mcchesnk@colorado.edu.

**May 30-31st: Visible Voices Training**


Sign up for Visible Voices training and become part of the PFLAG Speaker's Bureau. If you would like to be part of this exciting program, please contact Foula Dimopoulos at foula.dimopoulos@colostate.edu or 970.491.4857. Applications are available at <http://www.glbtss.colostate.edu/>.

**PFLAG Birthday Celebration**

Former National PFLAG President Elinor Kirby Lewallen, long-time PFLAG Denver member and inspiration to our chapter at its founding, is celebrating her 90th birthday on May 17th. You are invited to participate in a Surprise Card/Email Shower:

*Elinor Lewallen c/o Janet Lewallen  
 PO Box 200203  
 Denver CO 80220-0203.*

Or send emails to [JanetKL@aol.com](mailto:JanetKL@aol.com). Elinor will receive all cards and emails during her birthday weekend. Help us let her know how much she matters.



**boulder pride**

serving the GLBTQ communities in and around boulder county

**Boulder Pride's Office:**  
 2132 14th Street  
 Boulder, CO 80302

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