



### Dear PFLAG Supporter

North America has experienced positive steps to help move us forward in bringing equality and safety to our GLBT loved ones. Court rulings in Massachusetts, Ontario and British Columbia, Canada, made marriage for same-sex couples a reality. The Episcopal Church confirmed its first openly gay bishop, our own Gene Robinson, who has agreed to serve on our advisory council. Even Wal-Mart, the largest civilian employer in the United States added sexual orientation to its non-discrimination policy.

Yes, everyone is talking and writing about gay issues and rights. With such visibility and legal gains come negative steps, because those who remain anti-gay are organizing in opposition. Of grave concern is the possibility that discrimination could be written into the Constitution in the form of an amendment, which would ensure that same-sex couples could not marry.

While PFLAG's first mission is to support families when their loved ones come out, we are finding it imperative to focus lots of energy and resources into the education and advocacy parts of our mission in order to combat cultural homophobia and heterosexism.

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### Speaker Series a Success

The first collaborative effort of PFLAG Keene, GLSEN Southwest NH, AIDS Services for the Monadnock Region, and the Keene Unitarian Universalist Church is deemed a success. Our series, "Moving Beyond Tolerance Toward Acceptance," brought four speakers to Keene during October and early November.

Our first speaker, Attorney Craig Dean, spoke about living with equality, dignity and respect as a gay man. He also spoke about his groundbreaking experience in 1991 regarding marriage rights for GLBT persons.

At the second event Troix Bettencourt, told his personal story of coming out as a gay teen. He detailed the lack of support he experienced from his family, from social service agencies, and from law enforcement in Massachusetts. He spoke further about the resulting risk-taking behavior which led to his HIV+ status.

At the third event, eloquent readings were heard from Sabrina Sojourner, who is an African-American Congresswoman. Her presentation focused on diversity and multiculturalism.

Finally, Steve Yurcik, a retired NYC police officer and het-

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### MA Supreme Court Decision applauded

by Roberta Barry

Representatives of PFLAG NH stood in front of the NH Capital on November 18th for a celebration rally. Together with the NH Freedom to Marry and the Gay Straight Alliance from NE College, we were saluting the Massachusetts Supreme Court decision which says that a ban on same-sex marriage is unconstitutional. The impact of this ruling for anyone with loved ones who are GLBT is heartening.

We see this as a step toward the day when all children will live in dignity. We may one day realize that our gay, as well as our straight children, will have equal same civil rights. For today, our GLBT love ones can

*(COURT, Continued on page 3)*

### Leaving a Legacy

We all have the opportunity to make a difference in the community that our children and grandchildren will inherit. How would you like to be remembered?

Legacy gifts, or planned gifts, can help you accomplish your financial goals and at the same time leave a powerful legacy to help further PFLAG's mission of education, advocacy and support for GLBT people

*(LEGACY, Continued on page 4)*

## Transgender News

- PFLAG Observes Transgender Day of Remembrance Washington DC, November 20, 2003 Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) memorialized those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred or prejudice by observing the Transgender Day of Remembrance on Thursday, November 20.

"We are outraged that each day, each of us walks the streets with potential batterers and murderers who believe that they can with impunity, for whatever reasons, brutalize those who are among the most marginalized and discriminated-against members of our society," said David Tseng, PFLAG's executive director. "In a nation formed on the basis of freedom and individual rights, violence against individuals who have done no more than live their lives with personal integrity and honesty must be condemned."

For full text: <[http://www.pflag.org/remem\\_day.htm](http://www.pflag.org/remem_day.htm)>



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erosexual father, taught us how HIV can happen to anyone. He shared how he had contracted HIV from his wife, who had unknowingly contracted the virus from her first husband.

His emotional message spoke to the urgency of providing education and prevention information to wider audiences.

Almost 400 people attended the entire series, enriching their lives and our community about what it means to accept and embrace unique differences. Our collective vision of celebrating diversity and of imagining a society that accepts all sexual orientations and gender differences without fear or recrimination, became a stronger reality after this series. Our wish is for all persons to live without fear, to experience the best possible education in our schools without being rejected and bullied, and to follow an inclusive religious and/or spiritual practice with freedom and compassion.

Should any groups around the state or in the New England area wish to engage any of these speakers, you may contact for information.

Susan MacNeil, AIDS SERVICES of The Monadnock Region (800 639 7903) and Roberta Barry, PFLAG NH President (800 750 2524)

## Massachusetts Court Hailed and Condemned

BOSTON -- The Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts in November became the first state high court in the country to rule that gay and lesbian couples have the legal right to marry. "This is a tremendous victory for fairness and for families." said David Tseng of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

For full text: [www.datalounge.com/datalounge/news/record.html?record=21084](http://www.datalounge.com/datalounge/news/record.html?record=21084)



## WE WANT YOU TO ... JOIN THE PFLAG NH BOARD!

**When:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each Month, 6:30-8:30 PM

**Where:** South Congregational Church, Concord

**Why:** To enhance and support many lives,  
most especially,  
the lives of your GLBT friends and family

## JOIN THE PFLAG NH BOARD!

To nominate yourself or others, please contact Gordon Sherman or Gayle Spelman at 800-750-2524.



PFLAG NH has instituted an electronic newsletter delivery system, in an attempt to cut costs and to keep you better informed about programs, events and important news of interest.

Every 4-6 weeks, an email is being sent out to everyone who signs up, directing them to our website to download the most current newsletter. So far, we have had a positive response to the E-news system. However, we are still working out some bugs, and those who have signed up for the E-news will still continue to receive the printed copy until we are confident we have got it right.

If you would like to sign up for the E-news, or if you have any questions or concerns, please write to [admin@pflagnh.org](mailto:admin@pflagnh.org). As always, your information is confidential, and is never sold or shared with other organizations.

**BEING PRESENT  
AS HISTORY IS MADE**

by Peg Gage

I need to write this out. The experience of witnessing a truly amazing spiritual event is hard to describe. I am exhausted today. I arrived at the Whittemore Center at 12:10 PM and got home at 7:45.

The security was everywhere and I didn't have a view of the "orange" clad Phelps persons, but the press covered it very well. My focus was on what our choir and six other choirs were expected to do in a huge "hockey" arena. We were asked to fill the place with glorious music. We practiced for over an hour and then had to wait.

The arena started filling very slowly but steadily. Every person went through a metal detector. The service was supposed to start at 4 PM but because of crowd and the security it didn't start until nearly 4:45 PM. The processions of the churches with their banners came first, then the clergy, lay persons and special guests, followed by the 50 bishops, and then Gene and the presiding bishop. When he appeared the crowd let out a huge cheer.

The most beautiful thing, besides the singing of the processional hymns, was a gal carrying a paper dove that floated back and forth right behind the crucifer.

The service continued and we came to the point of the detractors. There were three. A priest from Pittsburgh who spoke only of the "homosexual lifestyle" which made me cringe and then tried to



*(COURT, Continued from page 1)*

anticipate a day in the future, when they will be able to fully and legally share their lives with another.

Our PFLAG mission is to continue educating politicians as well as the public at large about the fact that one's sexuality is not a choice. Thus, the denial of marriage rites/rights is denial of equal treatment under the law. We want our GLBT children and loved ones to live truthfully, proudly, and be affirmed in all aspects of their lives regardless of their sexual orientation.

describe the sexual act between two men. The presiding bishop cut him off very firmly and told him to get to the point. The second person was a female from NH who was concerned with sex with unmarried persons. That made me gag a little as I am sure that we all know heterosexuals who try a little sex before marriage or maybe even after. The third was the bishop from Albany, NY who represented the 36 bishops who had not voted for Gene and spoke of the schism that would be caused. The presiding bishop, Frank Griswold thanked them and said that all their complaints had been considered before and therefore he wished to continue. They left the arena to go to another church in the area and to pray for all of us.

Gene was installed with 50 bishops laying on their hands as he knelt in the center. The retiring bishop, Douglas Theuner gave a magnificent, strong sermon. At the point in the ceremony after we passed the Peace, our new Bishop gave a very short homily. He said that he was honored to be chosen, and that he wanted to bring, all the persons who had been marginalized for so long, into the center of the church. He felt it was important for all of us to go out and spread the love of God to all.

He was far more articulate, gracious and humble than I can recreate here. I hope we can find what he said and reprint it.

When Gene was properly robed in gorgeous vestments, the presiding bishop turned to the crowd and said "Greet your new bishop." The place erupted with sound and cheering that lasted for more than two or three minutes.

Our choirs sang gloriously and with gusto. Four thousand people received the "body and blood" of Christ. The bread was baked by a person from NH. The patens and goblets were fashioned by a man from Rumney, NH.

The recessional was equally as grand and believe me I was ready to go home even though there was a reception. When I got home my dinner was waiting. A half hour later I was called by Greg Gordon of This Way Out and I talked to him for some time. He now has my thoughts for his show that went out all over the world today.

That is it. Ask me any questions and I shall try and answer them. It was basically wonderful.

**.. go out  
and spread  
the love of God  
to all.**

(LEGACY, Continued from page 1)

and their families.

Everyone, regardless of age, needs a legal will. When you make a will, you ensure that your wishes are respected.

- Without a will, you lose control over your property;
- Without a will, the government decides on the distribution of your possessions and savings;
- With a will, the taxes on your estate will be minimized, reducing the burden on your loved ones;
- Having a will is a sign of concern for loved ones.

It is simple to make a planned gift in your will, trust, or other estate plan that continues your commitment to PFLAG NH. Charitable gift planning allows you to take advantage of favorable federal and state tax laws and in many cases you can reduce transfer taxes including gift and estate taxes. You can give to PFLAG NH with a bequest through your will or revocable living trust or by naming PFLAG NH as a beneficiary of your bank account, retirement and pension plan or insurance policy.

Legacy gifts are one of the most significant demonstrations of commitment to the community that an individual can make. If you would like to have direct involvement in furthering PFLAG's mission of education, advocacy and support of New Hampshire's GLBT community for generations to come, please consider a legacy gift. Sheila Dion, Administrative Assistant



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The seven PFLAG chapters throughout NH work within their regions to listen to the stories of people who come to their first meeting looking for understanding and information. The core leaders in each of these chapters are also speaking up on behalf of those who cannot yet tell their stories. Our Speakers' Bureau is hard at work contacting schools, churches, and other community venues to get our message of acceptance out to everyone. We've made partnerships with other organizations that share our concerns and have similar missions of bringing equal rights to our GLBT friends and relatives. We join with Welcoming Church Communities, the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN), The Family Resource Connection at the NH State Library, the Youth Suicide Prevention Assembly, New Hampshire Children's Advocacy Network, Gay Straight Alliances, NH Freedom to Marry, and AIDS Services. We are not alone in trying to stretch our budget, thus have come to value collaboration with these groups.

Still, PFLAG NH needs funds to operate. Our board members spend many hours of volunteer time preparing materials, traveling, and speaking throughout the state. Your financial support of PFLAG is crucial. Money raised through your membership dues helps us to continue the work of education and advocacy and support for our GLBT loved ones. Please support our work by sending in your dues. If you haven't joined PFLAG yet, please join today. We must continue educating our neighbors so that steps backward are not taken in our country.

Sincerely, Roberta Barry, President, PFLAG NH

**2004 Membership Form for Renewal or New Members**

**Membership:** Includes Chapter, State and National PFLAG Dues.

\$35 Family/Partnership  \$25 Single  \$10 Newsletter Only  Additional Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Affiliation (please circle one):

Keene ▼ Concord ▼ Plymouth ▼ Seacoast ▼ North Country ▼ Lakes Region ▼ Upper Valley

Please make check payable to: PFLAG NH ~ Mail to PFLAG NH, PO Box 485, Winnisquam, NH 03289

Please send me the PFLAG NH E-news. My email address is: \_\_\_\_\_

**Confidentiality:** The PFLAG NH Mailing List is confidential and is never shared with any other organizations. Everything PFLAG NH sends comes in a plain envelope with only a return address. If you prefer not to receive the National PFLAG mailings, which do come with the PFLAG logo on the envelope, please check this box:

## My Vision of the World

by David Pendleton, editor

Speaking about the recent Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decision, in his position as a political analyst on the PBS Newshour with Jim Lehrer, conservative columnist Brooks said, "I support the decision. I'm for gay marriage. I'm for gay marriage; I not only think gays should be allowed to get married, I think they should be expected to get married and encouraged. We should consider it a disgrace if people fall in love and don't want to get married. Being conservative, I'm for marriage."

The next day, in his NY Times column published November 22<sup>nd</sup>, David Brooks wrote, "You would think that .. we conservatives would do everything in our power to move as many people as possible .. to the path of fidelity. But instead, many argue that gays must be banished from matrimony because gay marriage would weaken all marriage." This repeated broadcast of David Brook's unambiguous point of view, signals a permanent change in our society's thinking.

For Brooks to espouse this position openly, is as encouraging as any number of the other historic events that we have celebrated. For conservatives to take this position, they must move past the belief that, if GLBT people exist at all, they exist only in millions of separate, individual decisions, made by people who choose to be GLBT.

Other conservatives will now need to agree with what David Brooks has said, "I'm for gay marriage. Being conservative, I'm for marriage." As this occurs, the ability to hide behind the ageless myth that GLBT people do not exist, will crumble. Along with this one, many more myths about GLBT people will become hopelessly inadequate. The day has arrived when we can see that, no longer will myths about GLBT people be the mischievous tools of the gay-basher and the homophobic.

When we see a myth being displaced, we know that a permanent change has occurred in the thinking of the people who have lived by this myth. In the movement toward respect and equality for GLBT people, I see this as a tremendous advancement of our cause. Our way of living with one another has changed forever.

## LACONIA / LAKES REGION

The November 9th meeting of the Laconia / Lakes Region PFLAG NH Chapter hosted Rev. Calvin Genzel as speaker. The Rev. Dr. Calvin Genzel is the Vice President of Clinical Services at Pastoral Counseling Services in Manchester, NH. A licensed psychologist and ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, Cal believes that embracing a healthy spirituality is an important component to healing the suffering caused by institutional and internalized homophobia. In his presentation he shared his coming out story and spoke about common psychological stages in the coming out process. In addition, he addressed ways to counter the toxic shame that inhibits the emotional development and spiritual growth of many GLBT persons.



As the last weeks of my term are coming to an end, I look back with gratitude for having the opportunity to serve these many years on the PFLAG NH Board. It has been a pleasure to work with so many wonderful people through the years. It is hard to believe how far GLBT issues have come around in these years. This New Hampshire Board has really "broken new ground" as a model for other states to follow. I will miss our annual Summer Retreat, held the last three years on my deck in Gilford. My best wishes to the Board in the New Year!

Sincerely, Paula Spink

## PFLAG NH Receives Grant

The NH Charitable Foundation has awarded PFLAG NH a \$4000.00 grant to support project and administrative costs for our Speakers' Bureau and Safe Schools Project. We want to thank NHCF for believing in our cause and helping to further our mission of education, advocacy and support for the families of GLBT people.

In 2002, PFLAG NH applied for a three year grant of \$5000.00 per year from NHCF. We received a one year grant of \$5000.00 with the condition that if we increased our membership by 10 - 15%, we could apply again in 2003. Thanks to you, our members, we met and exceeded that amount by 28%!

The State Council wants to thank each and every one of you who supports PFLAG NH with your volunteerism, membership dues and donations. Without your support, we could not do the work we do on behalf of your GLBT loved ones.