



PFLAG NH
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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



Newsletter ▼ PFLAG NH ▼ P.O. Box 957 ▼ Concord NH 03302 ▼ October 2005
<http://pflagnh.org> ▼ email: admin@pflagnh.org ▼ Helpline 800-750-2524

**PFLAG NH
 EARLY NEWS**

by Betsy Janeway

Nora Tuthill and I started PFLAG NH News and took turns putting it together. Whoever had the month off searched for typos and errors. We'd edit by phone (Life Before Email). Nora was the best editor and we avidly sought mistakes, teasing each other unmercifully. Having studied journalism at UNH, Nora checked my fondness for commas.

We wanted photographs in every issue and I loved playing staff photographer. Nora's husband, John ("Tut") was the best all-around help, and always took on any job cheerfully. When we'd finished a newsletter it went to Concord's Town & Country Copy whose owners support PFLAG.

Judy Putnam (PFLAG NH's Treasurer) drove the News to Nancy Greaney's house where she, Ellie Dubois and Nancy put them in envelopes, added labels, and bundled them in zip code order for the post office.

Many people worked hard to make PFLAG NH strong. Those who come to mind (but by no means all) are Betty Batchelder, Paul Belyea, Judy French, Peg Gage, Olivia Howe, Nancy Grant, Hans and Lin Kaufman, Becky

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WE'RE BACK !

PFLAG NH's Newsletter has returned after a one year absence. Unexpected challenges have resulted in organizational changes. In order to concentrate on managing these changes, the leadership chose to take a break from publishing the newsletter.

To welcome you back, we're happy to include some PFLAG NH history and highlights of the past year. First, the council members will share a few words about the restructuring of PFLAG NH.

Note that we are now a "council" instead of a "board". This change reflects our present status as a small, all-volunteer group of people who represent most of the PFLAG chapters of New Hampshire. We are still a non-profit 501 (C) (3) tax deductible organization registered with the state; however, we have moved the process of membership maintenance and affiliation with National PFLAG to each of the seven chapters around the state. Our reason for this change is to encourage leadership at the local grassroots level and to spread the work of organizational maintenance to more people.

The reality is that fewer people are willing to serve with the state PFLAG NH council. There is

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**~ REMEMBERING ~
 ONE MOTHER'S
 VOICE**

PFLAG Beginnings

July 14, 2005 -- One mother's support and acceptance of her gay son led to the creation of a national support group for gays, lesbians and their families. By Tom Owens for Tolerance.org

Jeanne Manford needs few words to make the most complex questions simple. "I loved him," she said of her son, Morty Manford. "He was my son." That love and pride inspired Jeanne Manford to co-found the now internationally-known support group PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) in 1972.

"Of course, I knew Morty was gay," Manford explained. "He didn't want to tell me. I told him that I loved him, and nothing else mattered. At first, there was a little tension there. He didn't believe I was that accepting. But I was."

In 1972, Morty was punched, kicked and thrown down an escalator during a gay rights protest at the New York City Hilton Hotel. Manford and her husband watched the at-

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Larson, Beth McGuinn and Ruth Smith, Les Norman, Ingrid Parkman, Cy and Gordon Sherman. Members of the Advisory Council were always helpful, and our annual meetings with them were lively: I remember Dr. Susanne Boulter, Rep. Barbara French, Monitor Photographer Dan Habib, Richard and Ruth Stuart, Rev. Leanne Tigert, Rep. Rick Trombly, and Concord Outright's Tom Walton and others.

PFLAG has always inspired action: besides nervous trips to the Legislature to testify on bills, talking in schools, and delivering books about gay youth to high schools, we marched in Concord for NH's Gay Pride Days. The march moved to Manchester and PFLAG was asked to lead it. We thought this was because the front position was believed to be dangerous, and I was so excited I raced ahead of the police escort and was sent back. The big gay rights march in Washington was thrilling.

Even now after many years I still receive questions and comments that refer to PFLAG. Parents who've learned their child is gay tell me and I'm surprised anyone remembers. PFLAG NH is still my license plate, earning car horn toots and hand waves on highways.

I'm especially grateful to those who still work to keep PFLAG NH strong.



Straight Spouse Network (SSN)

In 1986, the PFLAG board created a Task Force for straight spouses of lesbians and gay men. In 2001 the SSN incorporated as its own nonprofit, though stayed closely tied with PFLAG.

The SSN is a worldwide organization of heterosexual spouses and partners of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender mates and mixed orientation couples. Members provide personal, confidential support and resource information to spouses, couples, and families.

As outreach, the network offers information about spouse and family issues, mixed orientation marriages and spouse resources to professionals, community organizations and the media.

In the Northeast region there are currently support groups meeting in Boston, MA, Cape Cod (Brewster), MA, Hartford, CT and Portsmouth, NH.

Right now there are spouse contacts for individual sharing in every state and 11 foreign countries; there are nine online support groups, most with chats and webs attached.

SSN is strictly nonprofit, funded by tax deductible donations. All services are free and SSN is staffed by volunteers.

Please visit this web page for more details:
<http://www.ssnetwk.org>

2006 PFLAG Donation / Membership Form

\$35.00 Individual or Family At Large Membership to PFLAG NH
Additional Donation \$ _____ \$50, \$75, \$100, \$250 _____ Other

Name _____ Telephone (optional) _____

Address _____ Zip _____

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

Please make check payable to: PFLAG NH ~ Mail to PFLAG NH, PO Box 957, Concord, NH 03302

CONFIDENTIALITY: The PFLAG NH mailing list is confidential and is never shared with any other organizations. We do everything we can to protect your privacy.

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL DIRECTOR REPORT

By Roberta Barry

Since my election as your New England Director to PFLAG National last fall, my focus has been on getting to know where our chapters are located and who are the leaders.

I attended my first leadership conference in Washington D.C. where I also made my first visit to New England Senate offices to speak about issues that are of concern to our GLBT families and friends.

The National PFLAG office staff works diligently to be on top of issues that have great social and economic impact upon our families. They prepare information that is helpful to us in our various regions of the United States as we move ahead in the advocacy and education legs of our mission. My being connected with PFLAG chapters throughout New England, as well as throughout the nation, has been both inspirational and challenging.

I am happy to report that our own New Hampshire remains a National model with it's state council and having two excellent coordinators - Margie Lindley and Carol Perkins.

PFLAG NH is supporting NH Freedom to Marry and its mission to bring marriage equality to our families.

Last year, the NH Legislature formed a commission to study marriage, and has held four hearings throughout the state. PFLAG NH members are supporting marriage equality as demonstrated by the many who attended, spoken at and written to members of this Legislative Commission. For more information about this initiative, log onto their web site: www.nhftm.org

NEW HAMPSHIRE FREEDOM TO MARRY

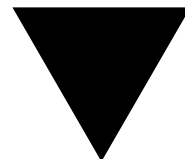
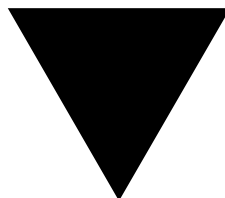
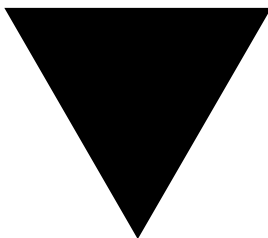
by Carol Perkins, PFLAG NH Council Coordinator

The New Hampshire Freedom to Marry Coalition (NHFTM) is an advocacy organization founded in January 2001. Their new office is located in Concord, New Hampshire. The mission of NHFTM is to provide the grassroots effort and support necessary to successfully advocate for the passage of legislation that will provide same sex couples the legal right to marry in the state of New Hampshire. NHFTM is working to achieve legal rights and responsibilities of marriage for same sex couples through education and advocacy. Mo Baxley is the new Executive Director of NHFTM.

As a PFLAG member, I have been supporting NHFTM by attending the hearings for SB427 last year and attending the hearings of the Commission established last year to study same sex marriage. I testified last year, along with many other past and present PFLAG members, and have testified before the Commission three times this year. They now seem to know what PFLAG represents. I attended the Public Hearings of the Commission held in Littleton and Nashua, while Roberta, Margie, Gordon and Cy attended the Keene Hearing. This Commission will give a full report with suggestions to the Governor on December 1, 2005. The Hearings are all open to the public and I have been honored to show my support, as a PFLAG parent, for the full equal rights of marriage for all couples in NH.

To learn more about NHFTM and the NH Commission go to: www.NHFTM.org or the official NH State government site (SB427 Study Committee).

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win." - Mahatma Gandhi - This quote helped guide NHFTM during their founding years.



(MANFORD, Continued from page 1)

tacks on the evening TV news, outraged that police officers appeared to ignore the assault.

Manford's next steps erased any doubt her son may have had about her loyalty and acceptance. She tried to call The New York Times to expose the injustice, but says she was hung up on.

Next, she wrote a letter to the editor of the New York Post. The letter was published. One sentence jumped out: "My son is a homosexual, and I love him."

The next day, she received a phone call from Morty. "You can't believe it [the response]," he told her. "No mother has ever announced to the world her son is gay."

Through one letter, Manford and her now-deceased husband Jules were newsmakers. Together, they appeared on the Phil Donahue talk show and more than 20 different TV shows.

A 30-year veteran elementary school teacher, Jeanne Manford's activism was quite a risk at that time. "My principal warned me that there were complaints from parents," she said. "She told me to be discreet. I told her this was my private life." The principal retreated, opposition faded and Manford's life as an activist continued through her 1990 retirement from education.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Remembering when her husband faced the realization that his only son was gay, Manford recalls that he didn't enjoy the same quick calm of acceptance. "He talked about a huge knot in his stomach at first," she said. "[But] once Morty had friends over to the house and Jules talked to them, he became very comfortable."

Manford, 84, laughed remembering her elderly

mother's reaction to Morty's coming out. My mother was advancing in years," she said. "When Morty told her, she replied, 'You're gay? I'm Hungarian.'"

As for herself, Manford said she had never known a gay person before. "Gay?" she asked. "I grew up in a family of five girls. The word wasn't in my vocabulary."

MORE HISTORY IS MADE

Manford's son invited her to march with him in the Christopher Street Liberation Day parade in June 1972. She agreed, accompanying him to the parade and carrying a sign to explain why she was there. The poster board read in large capital letters: PARENTS OF

GAYS: UNITE IN SUPPORT FOR OUR CHILDREN. Today, that sign is part of the Gay and Lesbian Collections of the New York Public Library archives.

As the parade began, Manford didn't understand the cheering. She believed the ovation was intended for the marcher behind her, noted parenting advocate Dr. Benjamin Spock. However, once crowd members ran into the parade route to talk to Manford, she realized the cheers belonged to her.

During the march, mother and son agreed that a parents support group was needed. In 1973, the first meeting was held at the Metropolitan Duane Methodist Church in New York City.

Since then, PFLAG has gained international representation, with more than 200,000 members and supporters included in 500 chapters.

Phyllis Steinberg, New York City PFLAG president, recalled Manford in 2003, as guest of honor at an awards dinner. "I still get chills from the ovation she



PFLAG NH
Boston Pride '05

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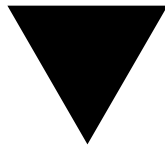
(MANFORD, Continued from page 4)

got," Steinberg said. "The mass sense of gratitude for all she had done, the gratitude to be in the presence of this woman — she didn't have to say a word."

Steinberg's admiration for Manford goes beyond fellow activist. She commended Manford, one parent to another. "What can be a greater expression of a mother's love for her son than to stand up for that child in the face of such great adversity?" she asked.

Ron Schlittler, PFLAG deputy executive director, explained how family members often begin their chapter involvement. "It's parental. It's an instinctual response to protect their own children," he said. "So many parents are not born activists. They don't come by this naturally."

Schlittler related that most PFLAG chapters have started like Manford's 1973 efforts, when one parent wanted to aid a son or daughter. "Every chapter has its own Jeanne Manford," he said. "They are honored and treasured people."



WORTH NOTING

The following statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics was provided to "The Advocate" in response to a request related to the story "Brainwashed No More" in the August 30, 2005, issue:

The term "reparative therapy" refers to psychotherapy aimed at eliminating homosexual desires and is used by people who do not think homosexuality is one variation within human sexual orientation, but rather still believe homosexuality is a mental disorder. The most important fact about "reparative therapy," also sometimes known as "conversion" therapy, is that it is based on an understanding of homosexuality that has been rejected by all the major health and mental health professions.

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not enough money to pay a part time administrator, thus requiring us to rethink our annual operational budget.

Now, the PFLAG NH Council member's tasks will be (1) Continue our successful speakers bureau work, (2) Communicate to members via newsletters, mailings, and e-mail alerts, (3) continue the work of providing support to our GLBT family and friends and (4) work collaboratively with other GLBT organizations to bring equality to the lives of our GLBT family and friends.

Updating our database is our most immediate and urgent responsibility because communication with you is the key to all of our work. Our website is serving us well in keeping our mission moving forward; however, we recognize the need for continued print mailings. Please visit our web site at: www.pflagnh.org



Northeast Regional Planning Underway

PFLAG National Regional Director Roberta Barry led an organizing meeting of PFLAGers throughout the Northeast Region in Worcester, MA on Sunday, Sept. 25th. This meeting was a first step in planning the Northeast Regional Conference in 2006. The group will continue their planning process through the use of PFLAG National's conference call system with the facilitation of our Northeast Field and Policy Coordinator, Jamie Curtis.

PFLAG Hurricane Recovery Fund Update

Thanks to the generosity of many of you, our PFLAG Gulf Coast Chapters Recovery Fund has raised nearly \$2,000 to provide recovery assistance to our PFLAG chapters which have been impacted by Hurricane Katrina. We are in communication with the chapter leaders who are in the process of identifying their specific recovery needs. We look forward to receiving their applications so that we can assist in getting their PFLAG work back up at full capacity once again. It's not too late to contribute to the Recovery Fund.