



# PFLAG of Cape Cod, Brewster

**Parents, Families, Friends of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Transgenders**

**Jan-Mar 2005**

**NEWSLETTER**

**Brewster, MA**

## Public Broadcasting & 'Buster'

PFLAG Alert 3/10/05]

As most of you are aware, PBS pulled the national airdate of the "Sugartime!" episode of its acclaimed children's program *Postcards from Buster* - all because Margaret Spellings, Secretary of the Department of Education, deemed it "inappropriate for children." Why did she think it was inappropriate? Because in that episode whose intent is to teach children about the production of maple sugar, Buster meets two lesbian moms.

While PBS pulled the episode nationally, some local PBS stations decided to air it - but for anyone who isn't lucky enough to be in those cities, we have streamed the entire episode at the following site <http://buster.familypride.org>.

We hope everyone who supports GLBT families will write to Secretary Spellings today!

Additionally, PFLAG is requesting a meeting with Sec. Spellings to discuss our concerns about her recent actions and apparent position on the place of GLBT issues in schools. We'll keep you posted.

## PAVIA to Sing at PFLAG April Meeting

The April 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of PFLAG will feature a cabaret-style performance by Pavia, a Wellfleet chanteuse who will sing favorite old American and European songs. Accompanying herself on accordion, Pavia evokes an old-world feeling with her vocal interpretation and arrangements of torch songs, love songs, cabaret songs, and street songs. She has presented her program in theatres, museums, libraries, and art centers in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York.

Refreshments will be served, and donations will support our scholarship fund. Bring your friends and join the fun! This meeting is open to the public and will honor all those who support PFLAG. 7pm at the First Parish UU Church, Routes 6A and 124 in Brewster.

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## 'Military Readiness Enhancement'

[*Boston Globe*, 3/2/05]

Congressman Marty Meehan (D - MA), a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, has introduced legislation to repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law and replace it with a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the Armed Forces.

"The strain on our military personnel is one of the key national security challenges facing this country today. In a time of war, it is outrageous that our military continues to discharge thousands of experienced and dedicated service members -- many with critical skills in the war on terror -- for reasons that have nothing to do with their conduct in uniform or their willingness to serve their country," said Meehan.

Meehan's bill, The Military Readiness Enhancement Act, will strengthen our military by retaining valuable service members.

Last week, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report at Meehan's request that determined that "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" has cost the government over \$200 million to implement and resulted in the discharge of nearly 10,000 soldiers, hundreds of whom have critical skills for the war on terror, including over 300 linguists with skills in key languages such as Arabic and Korean.

The legislation is bipartisan, with 55 cosponsors, and is endorsed by many retired generals and admirals.

Sixty percent of the countries that make up the Coalition in Iraq allow gays to serve openly, including Great Britain, Australia, and Italy.

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## Children Win in Illinois

[[lambdalegal.org](http://lambdalegal.org)]

Children's needs, not parents' sexual orientation, will dictate parenting decisions in Illinois.

The state Supreme Court recently overturned a lower-court ruling that said a foster child should be placed with abusive grandparents instead of staying in a loving home with his lesbian foster mother.

The Senior Counsel for Lambda Legal's Midwest Regional Office said, "Today's ruling puts the child's best interests first, overturning a lower-court decision that made the disturbing choice of preferring a home where the boy had been seriously injured over a loving home headed by two lesbians. The Supreme Court said that 'serious errors' were made when the abuse this child suffered was discounted by caseworkers and the lower court."

Lambda Legal fought for three years to make sure that the child, now 5 years old, was not taken during the appeals process from the safe and loving home he has enjoyed since he was an infant recovering from skull and leg fractures.

Lambda Legal arranged representation for the foster mother from Michael Brody at Winston & Strawn and submitted a friend-of-the-court brief to the state Supreme Court together with the National Association of Social Workers and its Illinois chapter, the Children and Family Justice Center at Northwestern University School of Law, and ACLU of Illinois.

## "Lesbian-Baiting" Tactics

[planetout.org]

Publicizing a struggle faced by many international advocates for human rights, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) released a report documenting attacks on women's sexuality and gender roles through smear tactics in a process dubbed "lesbian baiting."

The report, co-sponsored by the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University, is the centerpiece of a panel held Wednesday during a United Nations conference examining women's equality and human rights around the world.

"With the rise of fundamentalism in both the US and abroad, we are seeing that women who take public leadership on any range of issues are on the receiving end of very calculated attacks," says Susana Fried, IGLHRC's program director. "We want to show how women's sexuality is manipulated in this specific and increasingly common way to discredit and silence women around the world."

The 189-page report, written by Cynthia Rothschild, documents examples of such attacks in countries ranging from the United States to Argentina, India, Thailand, Costa Rica, and more. "If a woman is single, she's attacked as a lesbian," says Paula Eitelbrick, IGLHRC's executive director. "If she's married, she's attacked for neglecting her family. Either way, the issue becomes gender and sexuality rather than the merits of the issue under discussion."

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## Wedding Photo Abuse

[planetout.com]

Rick Raymen and Steve Hansen were tired of seeing their wedding photo used in an anti-gay political attack ad. The couple from Portland, OR, said they did not give permission to the creator of the ad to use their image, and their request to stop using it has been ignored. They filed a \$25 million lawsuit in federal court.

The suit targets USA Next and its political consulting firm for allegedly stealing the photo from a *Portland Herald* web site..

"Our privacy and personal integrity were violated when our wedding photo was stolen and used to portray us as treasonous, unpatriotic and a threat to American troops," Raymen said in a press release. "We have been harassed and humiliated by this hateful ad campaign and by the bigotry and anger it has generated against us nationwide."

USA Next is an offshoot group of the United Seniors Association, which is led by former TV personality Art Linkletter. USA Next has endorsed President Bush's plan to privatize Social Security. The attack ad featuring Raymen and Hansen is aimed at a rival senior advocacy group, AARP, which opposes the privatization plan.

The ad places the photo of Raymen and Hansen alongside a photo of a soldier, with the caption, "The REAL AARP Agenda." USA Next claims AARP is anti-military and favors gay marriage. AARP, in fact, has not taken a stance on military issues or gay rights.

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## HRC Welcomes Citigroup

[hrc.com]

The Human Rights Campaign announced today that Citigroup, the world's largest financial institution, has become a platinum-level sponsor of HRC's mission to secure equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans. With a perfect score on the HRC Corporate Equality Index, Citigroup's support for HRC cements the company's role as one of the top business leaders supporting GLBT equality.

## New Zealand Moves To Legalize Gay Unions

[Peter Hacker, 365Gay.com]

New Zealand is set to enact legislation giving same-sex couples all of the rights of marriage except the name. The Civil Union Bill passed all-important second reading in Parliament. It now requires a final vote before becoming law. The vote is expected to be close, but most observers believe it will squeak through despite fierce opposition by the Catholic Church.

The legislation would allow same-sex couples to solemnize and register their relationships with the same recognition and rights afforded married couples.

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## Gov. Romney in South Carolina

Last month, Mitt Romney spoke at a Republican Party meeting in South Carolina. For blatant political gain, he used the opportunity to scapegoat same-sex couples and their children in order to please a conservative crowd.

Romney scoffed at the fact that same-sex couples are marrying in Massachusetts. He said that "some are actually having children born to them," as if he is incredulous that same-sex couples are having and raising children. He called same-sex marriage and parenting "not right on paper" and "not right in fact," and added, "America cannot continue to lead the family of nations around the world if we suffer the collapse of the family here at home."

He also admitted that as a conservative Republican in Massachusetts he felt like a "cattle rancher at a vegetarian convention."

Romney has every right to speak to conservative audiences in South Carolina or anywhere else. But he needs to know that many people think it is wrong to demean same-sex couples, their families, and Massachusetts citizens for political gain.

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## Anglican Gap Closing

Excerpted from *Boston Globe*, 3/1/05]

The danger of a schism in the global Anglican Communion appears to be lessening, according to Bishop M. Thomas Shaw, leader of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

Shaw, responding to the gathering in Northern Ireland of worldwide leaders last month, said he would oppose a moratorium on consecration of gay and lesbian clergy as bishops. "It's a very bad idea," he said. "It scapegoats the gay and lesbian community."

But Shaw said he would support complying with a request by the Anglican primates that the Episcopal Church USA and Anglican Church of Canada temporarily withdraw their representatives from the Anglican Consultative Council, a panel of clergy and laity from around the world. Shaw said that the panel has only one scheduled meeting between now and 2008.

"I think it makes sense to withdraw from this one meeting, especially if we're going to be talking about why we did what we did," Shaw said. "This is not the way it was reported in the press. It is not the first step toward separation of the Anglican Communion at all. It's probably the lightest thing they could have done."

Shaw, a leading liberal voice in the American church, was an active supporter of the 2003 ordination of the Rev. V. Gene Robinson of New Hampshire as the first openly gay bishop in the Episcopal Church.

## Note from PEM

There will be an important BOARD meeting at 5:30 pm, before our regular March 21 PFLAG meeting. We will discuss the April cabaret event with PAVIA and the fall ABBA Concert by the Providence Gay Men's Chorus. We will also discuss and possibly rearrange our board. Anyone who is interested is invited to attend. We need new board members.

If you know of an organization that would like to offer a diversity presentation, please call Pem at 508-432-8119.

## GALE Fund Spring Fling

May 26 is the date of this year's fundraiser/auction featuring the nationally-known political comedian, Kate Clinton and professional auctioneer, Kathy Kingston. The event will be held at the Ocean Edge Resort Carriage House, 6A in Brewster, 6:30-10:30. Buffet and cash bar. Please call the Cape Cod Foundation at 508-790-3040 for reservations.

## Regional Safe-Schools Conference

CIGSYA (Cape & Islands Gay Straight Alliance) recently sponsored a regional conference for Safe Schools. Despite the elimination of state funding for this annual Cape conference, CIGSYA decided it was too important to skip.

The conference was attended by 60 students and about 15 adults -- GSA advisors, guidance counselors, and PFLAG members. For students, the purpose was to meet other students and experience what Gay/Straight Alliances can do. For adults, who met separately, the GLSEN (Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network) advisor answered questions and encouraged interaction. The advisor is creating a model for GSA development, focusing on the role of the GSA, activities, resources, and both short- and long-term goals.

In addition, CIGSYA and PFLAG are working together to apply for funding from the GALE fund to support future training in area schools this coming year.

## GLSEN Educator Conference "Challenging Intolerance - Sustaining Hope"

The 15th Annual GLSEN Boston Conference will be held Saturday, April 30, 2005, 8:30 AM until 4:30 PM, Brookline High School, Brookline, MA.

GLSEN is expecting more than 600 educators, students, administrators, parents, allies, and support staff. If you would like to receive a brochure, please call 617-536-9669 or email [conference@glsenboston.org](mailto:conference@glsenboston.org).

## Legal Advice for LGBT's

The following interesting and educational pamphlets are available for downloading from [lambdalegal.org](http://lambdalegal.org).

**Bending the Mold: An Action Kit for Transgender Youth**  
**Out At Work: A Guide for LGBT Employee**

## GLBT Group Meetings

PFLAG/Brewster every third Monday, 7pm, 1<sup>st</sup> Parish Church  
CISGYA, 56 Barnstable Rd., Hyannis, 7pm Wed & Thur  
Freedom to Marry Coalition of CC: [ccftmc@yahoo.com](mailto:ccftmc@yahoo.com)  
Lesbian Connections: 1<sup>st</sup> Fridays, 6:30-8pm, 1<sup>st</sup> Parish Barn  
Metropolitan Community Church: 1st & 3rd Sundays, 6pm,  
Chapel in the Pines, Eastham 508-398-6471 or 432-8361  
Straight Spouse Group: 1st Tuesdays, 7pm, 1<sup>st</sup> Parish, 896-2620  
Transgender Support: 2nd Sundays 3-5pm, 1<sup>st</sup> Parish, Winslow  
House, on hill across 6A on Harwich Rd., 362-4435

## Dates to Remember

Mar 21, Apr 18, May 16: Brewster PFLAG, 7 pm  
Mar 8 Apr 5, May 2: Straight Spouse Group, 896-2620  
Mar 13, Apr 10, May 8: Transgender Support 362-4435  
Apr 9 Boston PFLAG "Pride and Passion" party  
Apr 30 GLSEN Educator Conference, Brookline, 617-536-9669  
May 26 GALE Fund Spring Fling with Kate Clinton

## PFLAG/Cape Cod, Brewster

PO Box 1167 Orleans, MA 02653

**MISSION:** *Promote the health and well-being of gay, 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 secure equal civil rights.*

**MEETINGS:** 7 pm on the third Monday of each month at First Parish Church, Brewster; everyone is welcome. For information call 508-240-2737 or 508-432-8119.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Dues-paying members support the efforts of PFLAG both locally and nationally. Ten dollars goes to PFLAG National (includes subscription to *Pflagpole*), and the balance is used for our own Newsletter and the purchase of pamphlets, books, and videos. Our fiscal year begins Oct. 1.

**OFFICERS:** Co-Leaders, Pem Schultz & Rob Lewis; Treasurer, Martha Berndt; Corresponding Sec'y, Betsy Cochran; Publicity, (volunteer needed); Newsletter, Joann Figueras and Doris Scherbak; Program, (volunteer needed); and Library, Randy Kendall. Additional Board member Joanne Hush.

**NEWSLETTER:** Published four times a year. Send articles to PO Box 1167 or e-mail [joann@pflagcapecod.org](mailto:joann@pflagcapecod.org).

**WEBPAGE:** [www.pflagcapecod.org](http://www.pflagcapecod.org)

\_\_\_\_\_\$35 Family \_\_\_\_\$25 Individual \_\_\_\_\$15 Limited income

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional donation for local chapter

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to PFLAG/Brewster. Mail to Martha Berndt, 2 Englewood Dr. H-5, Harwich, MA