



happy new year

# PFLAG Southwest Washington Chapter

## January 2020 Newsletter

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### Join us at our regular meetings:

**Vancouver Meeting**  
Second Tuesday, 7pm  
Children's Home Society  
1112 Columbia Street,  
Vancouver, WA 98660

**Battle Ground Meeting**  
Third Thursday, 7pm  
Mallard Landing Assisted Living  
813 SE Clark Ave  
Battle Ground, WA 98604

### January 14, 7pm-9pm. [Vancouver Meeting](#)

- Program: Planned Parenthood will discuss comprehensive sex education.
- Our caring and sharing support group will follow.

### January 16, 7pm-9pm. [Battle Ground Meeting](#)

- Program: TBA.
- Our caring and sharing support group and advocacy discussion will follow.

### 2020 dates to remember:

- February 11 2020 , 7pm  
Vancouver meeting
- February 20, 7pm  
Battle Ground meeting
- March 10 2020 , 7pm  
Vancouver meeting
- March 19, 7pm  
Battle Ground meeting

### In this issue:

- Annual Business Meeting of the Members
- Tragedy in Our Community – the Murder of Niki Kunhausen
  - Three articles from The Columbian



### Annual Business Meeting of the Members

As required by the chapter bylaws, the Annual Business Meeting of the Members is to be held annually. This year the meeting will be held on February 11 following the regular education and support meeting.

### The agenda includes:

- FY 2019 review
- FY 2020 goals
- Membership report
- Finance report
- Communication report
- Advocacy report
- Election of board

Join us for the Chapter's  
24th anniversary  
commemoration.

*Let us eat cake!*



If you want to serve on the board please email the board at [pflagswwa@gmail.com](mailto:pflagswwa@gmail.com). Positions are president, vice president, secretary, treasurer or secretary/treasurer, and at least two board directors. We welcome new faces and views.

## Tragedy in Our Community

### PFLAG President De Stewart speaks at vigil

# Hundreds mourn slain transgender Vancouver teen at vigil

By Jessica Prokop, Columbian Assistant Metro Editor

Published: December 20, 2019, 9:01pm

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Nikki Kuhnhausen's mother remembers the day her daughter officially came out as transgender. It was the first day of sixth grade.

"She wasn't Nick anymore. She was Nikki," Lisa Woods told media Friday night before a vigil for the slain teenager. "She had been Nikki behind closed doors since she was 2 years old. She had Hannah Montana and high heels and makeup. We would buy her girls clothes for her bedroom."

Kuhnhausen was proud of who she was, Woods said, but the family worried that others may not be as accepting.

Their worst fears were realized when Kuhnhausen went missing in early June, and her remains were found Dec. 7 on Larch Mountain.

Vancouver police detectives say David Y. Bogdanov, 25, strangled the 17-year-old after learning she was transgender. The two reportedly met in downtown Vancouver that night and drank together. They later communicated via Snapchat and met up again early the next morning, court records say. That was the last time she was seen alive. Bogdanov is facing second-degree murder in Clark County Superior Court.

"She didn't deserve this — that hatred, the last thing she felt on this Earth," Woods said. "Yes, she was murdered out of hatred because she was transgender."

About 300 community members attended a vigil for Kuhnhausen, organized by National Women's Coalition Against Violence & Exploitation, at Vancouver United Church of Christ in Hazel Dell. The organization was contacted by the Vancouver Police Department early in the missing person case — overseeing the distribution of more than 2,400 flyers and social media outreach.

"This last six months has been the longest six months of our lives. It's just been a roller-coaster ride, up and down, playing in our minds, 'What has happened? Where is she?'" Kuhnhausen's stepfather, Vincent Woods, told media. "People have been awesome with putting up flyers. A lot of people have put in a lot of hard work trying to bring her home. The outcome, we played with that in our head. We still wasn't ready for the outcome when detectives talked to us."

During the vigil, Michelle Bart, president of NWCAVE, said she believes Bogdanov won't be the only person charged in Kuhnhausen's death.

"We will not tolerate violence in Vancouver anymore," she declared to a burst of applause. "This so far is not a hate crime, but it is a hate crime."

Bart said Kuhnhausen will be NWCAVE's cause for 2020. The organization is pushing for "Nikki's law" to address hate crimes and has already reached out to legislators, including Rep. Sharon Wylie, D-Vancouver.

“I’m so sorry. I’m so, so sorry,” Wylie told Kuhnhausen’s supporters. “This is a battle that may not be over for a long time. These days, it seems even worse.”

But she said it’s the people who care about Kuhnhausen who will inspire change.

Vancouver Councilman Ty Stober and Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle also attended the vigil.

“There’s been a lot of tragedy in our community this year. A lot of tragedy. A lot of trauma,” Stober said, choking up as he spoke.

Washington is a leader in transgender rights, he said, but there was a plea a decade ago for the trans community to not be left behind. The response then, he said, was to “wait their turn.”

“There is no more waiting,” he said. “The time is now to act.”

“There are no words for the ugliness that happened to Nikki,” McEnerny-Ogle said. “In our hearts, we know she’ll always be with us.”

**De Stewart** with PFLAG Southwest Washington, an organization that supports LGBTQ people, their parents and families, and allies, said with Kuhnhausen’s death, 2019 became the most dangerous year for transgender people.

“How can they justify taking someone as glorious as Nikki from our world?” she questioned. “It takes courage to live honestly. It is the coward who chooses violence.”

Counselor Mackenzie Dunham with Wild Heart Society said Kuhnhausen’s death is a painful reminder of the danger to living one’s truth. She encouraged those at the vigil to give themselves permission to feel the pain of Kuhnhausen’s loss — a young woman she described as being “tremendously brave.”

But to her mother, Kuhnhausen will be remembered as “a rainbow of light.”

## NWCAVE continues advocacy for slain transgender Vancouver teen, family

Warning clarifies not all fundraisers approved by, handled by Nikki Kuhnhausen’s mother

By Jerzy Shedlock, Columbian Breaking News Reporter

Published: December 27, 2019, 5:43pm01pm

(reproduced with the permission of The Columbian)

A Vancouver-based women’s coalition is continuing its advocacy in support of slain 17-year-old Nikki Kuhnhausen by warning people about fundraisers not approved by the family and by enrolling the help of a coordinator.

NWCAVE said in a press release that it is continuing to work alongside Lisa Woods, Kuhnhausen’s mother, as the family moves toward a memorial service. The coalition is also overseeing all fundraising on behalf of the family for the funeral and other expenses.

While everyone's support has been appreciated, the nonprofit noted that not all Go Fund Me Pages are handled by or have been OK'd by Woods.

All funds should be donated to NWCAVE, with the memo "Justice For Nikki," and sent to P.O. Box 872494, Vancouver, Wash., 98687 or online at <https://greatnonprofits.org/org/national-womens-coalition-against-violence-exploitation>.

The coalition said it is working with numerous local and national agencies to ensure the LGBTQ community's voice is heard as its efforts and the state's case against Kuhnhausen's alleged killer, David Y. Bogdanov of Vancouver, move forward.

"On Jan. 2, 2020, and beyond, we must as a community come together to have a voice for (Nikki Kuhnhausen) and make sure the person or persons who caused the death of Nikki are brought to justice," Michelle Bart, the coalition's president and co-founder, said in the release.

Bogdanov is scheduled to appear in Clark County Superior Court on Jan. 2 for a bail hearing. Judge Suzan Clark previously granted the state's request for no bail in the case, but a defense attorney stated during Bogdanov's first appearance hearing that he would be contesting the condition.

NWCAVE is encouraging people to attend the court hearing at 9 a.m. to show support for Kuhnhausen and her family, and "to send the message to the court system and law enforcement that justice must be served in this case," the coalition said in a Facebook post.

People who decide to go should wear pink clothing, so supporters are easy to identify.

"Our presence will be impactful by numbers, not by protest or disobedience at this time. This invitation is not an opportunity to enter court and create a disturbance. It is an opportunity to enter the court as part of an impacted community, and let our presence be known," the post says.

To further its efforts, the coalition has brought on board Devon Rose Davis, a clinical social worker and activist from Portland. Rose has worked in social services since 2007 around issues of disability, homelessness, commercially and sexually exploited children, childhood trauma, substance use, HIV and mental health. Her activism work has focused on health care access for trans people. NWCAVE is overseen by volunteers and has no paid staff.

Kuhnhausen disappeared June 5. Her remains were discovered after someone reported finding a human skull Dec. 7 in the woods at Larch Mountain, about 10 minutes from Larch Corrections Center.

Bogdanov appeared in court on the morning of Dec. 18 on suspicion of second-degree murder in Kuhnhausen's death. Authorities allege he strangled Kuhnhausen after learning she was transgender.

A Crime Stoppers reward is still available in Kuhnhausen's case. Anyone with information on other people allegedly involved in her death should contact the Vancouver Police Department or Crime Stopp.

# Vancouver teen's slaying revives hate-crime discussion

Case may amplify 'rage bias,' panic defense concerns

By Jerzy Shedlock, Columbian Breaking News Reporter

Published: January 1, 2020, 6:00am

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Since the slaying of 17-year-old Nikki Kuhnhausen, several readers have asked The Columbian whether her killing fits the definition of a hate crime.

Bogdanov of Vancouver is accused of second-degree murder in her death. Authorities allege the 25-year-old man strangled Kuhnhausen after learning she was transgender.

"She didn't deserve this — that hatred, the last thing she felt on this earth," Kuhnhausen's mother, Lisa Woods, said at a Dec. 20 vigil. "Yes, she was murdered out of hatred because she was transgender."

Bogdanov has not been charged with a hate crime. Vancouver police Lt. Tom Ryan said during a press conference last month that Kuhnhausen being transgender is suspected to have played a role in Bogdanov's alleged deadly actions, but investigators think it was not a targeted killing.

Advocates disagree.

"Although investigators cannot show premeditation for (Bogdanov's alleged actions) ... we believe there was a hate crime and Nikki had no chance whatsoever, whether she was LGBTQ, even a woman, for that matter," said Michelle Bart, president and co-founder of the Vancouver-based National Women's Coalition Against Violence & Exploitation.

Washington law defines a hate, or "bias motivated" offense, as a crime or threat against someone because of their race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or mental, physical or sensory handicaps.

During the last legislative session, state lawmakers passed a bill that renamed and redefined several aspects of Washington's hate crime law. Previously, crimes motivated by hate were prosecuted as malicious harassment. Now, they're simply called hate crime offenses.

The legislation also added "gender identity or expression" to the list of protected categories, and it created an advisory work group that will try to identify the root causes of and prevent hate crimes.

A hate crime offense is a class C felony, which carries a maximum of five years in prison. It's prosecuted similarly to other crimes. The current version of the law states that anyone who commits another crime during the commission of a hate crime may be punished and prosecuted for the other crime separately.

## Rise in hate crimes

Kuhnhausen disappeared in early June. Her remains were discovered Dec. 7 after someone reported finding a human skull in the woods at Larch Mountain, southeast of Battle Ground.

Bogdanov appeared on the morning of Dec. 18 in Clark County Superior Court in connection with Kuhnhausen's death. He has a bail hearing scheduled for Thursday. Kuhnhausen's family and supporters are expected to attend.

He told detectives he encountered Kuhnhausen on the night of June 5 in the 1300 block of Main Street in downtown Vancouver and invited her to join him and his brothers at a bar, according to a probable cause affidavit.

They drank together, parted ways early on June 6 and then reunited later that morning after communicating via Snapchat and exchanging addresses. As Kuhnhausen and Bogdanov chatted in a vehicle, she told him she was transgender, the affidavit says.

“David said that he was ‘shocked’ and ‘uncomfortable’ and ‘really, really disturbed’ to learn Nikki was male and asked her to get out of the van and leave,” the court document reads.

“I believe that David became enraged at the realization that he had engaged in sexual contact with a male whom he believed to be female and strangled Nikki to death,” the affidavit later asserts.

Vancouver police Sgt. Jeff Kipp said the evidence collected so far supports detectives’ decision to forward the second-degree murder charge to the county prosecutor, who will review the case and determine if there’s a more appropriate charge, he said.

Clark County Prosecuting Attorney Tony Golik said his office is still evaluating the case and the evidence against Bogdanov, and the charge may be amended before going to trial. Golik declined to discuss the potential for a hate crime charge being added to the case.

Seattle-based lawyer Anne Bremner said that if a criminal case lacks clear evidence showing a strong basis for a hate crime, prosecutors may be reluctant to file such a charge. The proof has to be beyond a reasonable doubt to ensure a unanimous jury verdict, Bremner said.

Second-degree murder “is a serious charge that’s going to determine bail. But I think it’s important to (LGBTQ advocacy groups) that when there is a bias involved in an alleged crime based on hate, based on gender expression, it’s important that it be recognized and prosecuted,” Bremner said.

“I don’t want to prejudice this case, but I will say that when police have evidence that shows when someone found out about another person’s gender identity and had an adverse reaction that resulted in a homicide, then there’s at least some circumstantial evidence that it could be a hate crime ... if you look at this objectively, there wasn’t a homicide for any other reason or motive,” she said.

Bremner said there recently has been heightened awareness of hate crimes being on the rise in Washington and nationwide. Law enforcement and lawmakers have taken steps to combat the trend.

In 2018, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, the organization in charge of collecting and reporting on hate crimes, received 765 reports of offenses where the victim was targeted for a characteristic protected by state law.

According to 2018 hate crime data from the FBI, Washington ranks second nationwide for the most hate crimes. Agencies here reported 666 such crimes, the data say. California reported 1,222 bias-motivated crimes last year.

The Clark County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office has tried 19 hate crime, or malicious mischief, cases over the past five years, Golik said. According to his numbers, prosecutors handled only a single such case in 2017; the next year, they handled six. All other years since 2015, there were four hate crime cases.

“We consistently have several cases each year,” Golik said.

The working group created during the last state legislative session will develop strategies to raise awareness of hate crimes and aid law enforcement’s responses to those incidents.

“In creating this working group, Washington is demonstrating its commitment to the safety of all its residents, regardless of their gender, national origin or religion,” Attorney General Bob Ferguson said in a press release announcing the group.

“Our Hate Crime Advisory Working Group will be taking a hard look at what kind of hate crimes are happening in Washington and how we can strengthen our response and support victims.”

Bart, with NWCAVE, said during the vigil for Kuhnhausen that the teen will be the nonprofit’s cause for 2020. The organization is pushing for a new “Nikki’s Law” to address hate crimes and has already reached out to legislators, including Rep. Sharon Wylie, D-Vancouver.

Wylie said Tuesday that she is researching the current law and speaking with colleagues about whether changes are needed.

“If there is a way to strengthen our laws for crime like this, I’m certainly going to be introducing legislation to make what kind of things are considered hate crimes more definitive, more clear,” Wylie said.

Bogdanov has not yet been formally charged, and it’s not clear what defense he may present.

However, advocates, such as the Gender Justice League, have expressed concerns that Bogdanov’s statements to police fit what’s known as a bias rage or panic defense, where a defendant claims they should face less responsibility for their actions because they were startled to discover someone was transgender or gay.

Last year, the Legislature considered House Bill 1687, which would have prohibited panic defenses. It stalled in the House Rules Committee and was not passed.

In a letter asking legislators to support the bill, Denise Diskin, executive director of the QLaw Foundation of Washington wrote, “When a criminal defendant employs a gay or trans panic defense, they are asking our legal system to endorse the notion that our mere existence — going on dates, initiating consensual romantic encounters, or engaging in other interpersonal relationships — is enraging, and are playing upon the implicit biases of jurors to garner sympathy for that view.”

Diskin said in an email to The Columbian that those defenses have been raised largely in other states, but legal protections against them are needed.

“Transgender girls and women in our state, like all people, deserve to be treated with care and respect. David Bogdanov showed neither care nor respect for Nikki Kuhnhausen, and it is our hope that the legal system will not allow Nikki’s gender to excuse any of his actions toward her,” Diskin said.

# Bail set at \$750,000 in death of Vancouver transgender teen

Prosecutors amend charges to add hate-crime offense

By [Jerzy Shedlock](#), Columbian Breaking News Reporter

Published: January 2, 2020, 12:34pm

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17-year-old Nikki G. Kuhnhausen's remains were found Dec. 7 near Larch Mountain. (Vancouver Police Department) **Photo**

“Justice for Nikki!” a large crowd chanted three times outside the Clark County Courthouse after a judge set \$750,000 bail Thursday morning for the suspect in the slaying of the transgender Vancouver teen.

David Y. Bogdanov, 25, of Vancouver appeared in Superior Court for a bail review hearing and arraignment about two weeks after prosecutors requested and were granted a no-bail hold in the case. He was arrested Dec. 17 on suspicion of second-degree murder in the death of 17-year-old Nikki Kuhnhausen.

In addition to murder, prosecutors have filed a single count of malicious harassment against Bogdanov — now legally called a hate-crime offense in Washington.

The charge was added under its former name — which was changed during the last legislative session — because the crime is suspected to have happened after the law’s refinement, which included adding “gender identity or expression” to the state’s list of protected categories.

Authorities allege Bogdanov strangled Kuhnhausen after learning she was transgender.

He entered not-guilty pleas to the charges Thursday. His trial is scheduled for July 6.

Kuhnhausen disappeared in early June. Her remains were discovered Dec. 7 after someone reported finding a human skull in the woods at Larch Mountain, southeast of Battle Ground.

During Thursday’s hearing, Judge David Gregerson said \$750,000 bail was appropriate because, despite the allegations being among the most serious, Bogdanov lacks criminal history.

Senior Deputy Prosecutor Colin Hayes had requested a continuation of the no-bail hold or, alternatively, \$6 million bail.

Hayes said the allegations show that Bogdanov has a propensity for violence and poses a risk to the community, particularly the LGBTQ community.

Kuhnhausen’s mother, Lisa Woods, also addressed the judge before bail was imposed. Woods said her daughter’s alleged killer does not deserve the chance to be released before trial.

“I want to stress that the LGBTQ community is not safe with this monster on the streets,” Woods said.

During Bogdanov’s first court appearance Dec. 18, a defense attorney said he’d be arguing against the no-bail condition. Since then, advocates for the transgender community have called on Clark County to support Kuhnhausen’s family and attend the bail hearing so that “Nikki’s murder cannot be brushed aside,” according to a post on the Facebook page “Justice For Nikki.”

Hundreds of people attended a Dec. 20 vigil for the teen at Vancouver United Church of Christ in Hazel Dell.

‘Profoundly disappointed’

About a hundred supporters came out Thursday morning, lined up in the rain outside the county courthouse. They were encouraged to wear pink and remain civil. Once the basement courtroom was full, the remaining supporters were sent to another room on the fourth floor to watch Bogdanov’s hearing on live video.

The large group in the basement was quiet during the hearing, but there were several audible gasps when the judge set bail. Outside the courthouse, surrounded by supporters, Kuhnhausen’s family said they were disappointed and saddened by the judge’s decision.

“(Bogdanov) chose to kill her and then not (do) anything about it for six months,” such as confess or provide tips about the location of Kuhnhausen’s body, said Michelle Bart, president and co-founder of the Vancouver-based National Women’s Coalition Against Violence & Exploitation. “He doesn’t deserve to be out on the street. And the judge was wrong. The judge was wrong in this particular case.”

Bart noted that bail was recently set at \$2 million in an attempted murder case involving teenage suspects and a 66-year-old victim.

“Nikki Kuhnhausen did not get justice today. And this hurts me, because we spent so much resources looking for her,” Bart said. NWCAGE and others placed thousands of flyers around Clark County and Portland, and campaigned to keep Kuhnhausen’s disappearance in the public’s eye the entire time she was missing.

There is a lack of trust of law enforcement and the judicial process within the trans community, said Devon Rose Davis, a clinical social worker and activist from Portland working with NWCAGE.

No one is charged in more than 50 percent of the cases involving the murder of trans women nationwide, Davis said. According to the FBI’s 2018 Crime in the United States report, the clearance rate — the calculation of cases that end with an arrest or identification of a suspect who can’t be apprehended — for all murders and non-negligent homicides for that year was 62.3 percent.

“It is difficult as a member of the trans community ... to take part in a process like this, knowing full well that these things usually do not go in my community’s favor,” she said. “We’re profoundly disappointed.”

Among Kuhnhausen’s supporters Thursday was Jamie Potter, a Portland resident whose own 17-year-old daughter is transgender. The judge’s decision on bail is tragic, he said.

His daughter transitioned at 7 years old. The experience has made him acutely aware of the challenges faced by LGBTQ people and the need to create change.

“Everybody deserves a chance at life. No one would choose to put themselves into this body, into this life. People are born this way, and they deserve the same respect as any of us do,” Potter said.