



PFLAG Southwest Washington Chapter

June 2020 Newsletter



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June and July are the Traditional Pride Months Message from PFLAG National about Pride Month



It's a very different Pride Month that starts today. A global pandemic has led to the cancellation of countless celebrations worldwide, and in the US, rage over the lack of equality and justice for people of color has brought protesters to the streets of communities nationwide.

Pride started with a riot against injustice, brutality, and disparate treatment. This year, as we witness the pain and anger of our Black loved ones, we have an opportunity to again be in solidarity, locked arm in arm, and demonstrate that being an ally means showing up to fight for justice in all communities. Pride remains--even without parades and festivals--a time when we get to celebrate our community, reflect on the work that we still need to do, and be seen. Let our work continue to build on the understanding that we are all created equally, and that we all deserve safety, security, and respect.

From our PFLAG family to yours, we wish you a safe and powerful Pride Month.

PFLAG CONNECTS

meeting where you are.

*Our work continues. PFLAG Southwest Washington is here to support you,
so you can support your LGBTQ+ loved ones.*

Please Sign-up for Our Virtual Chapter Support Meetings

- Chapter support and education meetings will be held via **Zoom**.
- PFLAG Connects is a virtual meeting space for the PFLAG Chapter Network. You can join by video, audio, or chat - whatever you're comfortable with.
- PFLAG offers peer support that is available at no cost and is open to all who wish to participate. All of our groups are led and facilitated by PFLAG Southwest Washington volunteers.
- Safety is of our utmost priority for all of our virtual support group meetings. We will discuss privacy, confidentiality, and group agreements at the start of the meeting.

The Vancouver meeting is June 9, 7pm to 9pm

- **Program:** Dan Sockle of Braver Angels will discuss *“Hate Speech: what is it and how to effectively deal with it”* Dan Sockle is a local community leader, Rotarian and Braver (formerly Better) Angels Moderator. He has a long military and government career dealing with various levels of conflict and adverse outcomes. His passion now, is to share his education, training and experience in communications and collaborative problem-solving. Dan was drawn to Braver Angels because of their emphasis on overcoming political and media-driven stereotyping and manipulations –achieved by focusing on our commonalities rather than the often-contrived differences intended to divide us.

As allies of the LGBTQ+ community, PFLAG members have experienced or witnessed hatred or judgment against our loved ones. Dan will share the principles of Braver Angels and introduce some key skills for achieving mutual respect and understanding. And, when confronted with opposing views or potential threats, how we might achieve genuine understanding as a step towards not just tolerance, but mutual acceptance.

- Followed by our caring and sharing support session.

The Battle Ground Meeting is Jun 18, 7pm to 9pm

- **Program:** TBA
- Followed by our caring and sharing support session.

Sign-up for virtual support meetings at our website

www.pflagswwa.org

DECLINE TO SIGN

Decline to Sign - Just Say No AGAIN!

Proponents of R-90 and R-91 need to have 129,811 valid signatures by June 10th

Please continue to Decline to Sign

During 2016 and 2017 efforts were made by anti-LGBTQ forces to roll back transgender rights through the initiative process. They failed!

Now forces are trying to roll back recent legislation that requires schools to provide comprehensive sex education.

The comprehensive sex education law is a huge victory for Washington youth including LGBTQ youth. The overwhelming majority of Washingtonians want young people to get comprehensive sex education — including parents and young people themselves. Young people deserve to have the information, resources, and skills they need to protect their health and build their future — without shame or judgment. Young people, their families, educators, and community leaders fought hard for years and ultimately were successful in convincing legislators to pass comprehensive sex education.

The sex education law:

- Requires all public schools to offer sex education that is comprehensive, age-appropriate, and medically accurate.
- Requires any curriculum adopted or developed by schools to be inclusive of all students, regardless of protected class status.
- Requires components on affirmative consent and healthy relationships as part of the comprehensive sex education curriculum.

Now, small group of anti-science activists are continuing their crusade against honest, age-appropriate, and inclusive sex education and they're being dishonest about the law in the process. They are starting to collect signatures for Referendums 90 and 91, which would overturn the new law and take away access for young people. R-90 and R-91 backers have until June 10 to collect nearly 130,000 valid petition signatures and began those efforts in early April.

Please to join with coalition partners to stand against these regressive referendums.

**If you are approached by signature gatherers please
Decline to Sign - Just Say No AGAIN!**



Change in PFLAG Southwest Washington Leadership



De Stewart resigned as President of PFLAG Southwest Washington chapter on May 27. The Board of Directors extends our deep appreciation to De for her years of service as a Director, Vice President, and President of the chapter, and we wish her well in her continuing service to the LGBTQ community. Under her leadership the chapter greatly expanded its visibility in the community including tabling at eight community events in 2018 and nine 2019. In addition, she led the way as the chapter sponsored *Prideful Voices Vancouver* on June 2, 2019. She has been a voice for PFLAG and the LGBTQ community at many forums and speaking engagements. Please read her attached letter.

Election of New Board Officers: The chapter bylaws state that, “If a vacancy occurs within the Board, a majority of the remainder of the Board then in office may elect a member to fill that vacancy for the remainder of the term.” Therefore, during the May 27 board meeting, the following officers were elected:

- President: Jessica Cole
- Secretary: Dale Gaskin (replacing Jessica Cole, who resigned to serve as president)
- Other board members remain the same:
 - Linda Buckley: Vice President
 - Dale Clukey: Treasurer
 - Barbara Aiken: Director
 - Nancy Drescher: Director

Invitation to Join the Board: The Board of Directors invites chapter members to join the board as Directors-at-Large. Being a Director allows you to more fully participate in and affect the direction of the chapter. Board members must subscribe to the mission of the chapter and support the chapter with membership dues. If you are interested in serving on the board, please send an email to pflagswwa@gmail.org

Mission of PFLAG Southwest Washington—The Chapter shall support the mission of PFLAG National, which is: Our mission is to build on a foundation of loving families united with LGBTQ people and allies who support one another, and to educate ourselves and our communities to speak up as advocates until all hearts and minds respect, value and affirm LGBTQ people.

Letter from De Stewart

Dear PFLAG Southwest Washington Supporters,

I am writing to let you know that after five years in a leadership position with PFLAG Southwest Washington I have chosen to step down from the chapter board of directors.

Not unlike many people, the pandemic and troubles facing our country have given me the opportunity to assess where I am, where I am going, what fuels me, and what I need to change in my life with regards to focus and direction. Last winter, I began singing with the Portland Lesbian Choir (PLC). Singing has always nourished me during times of difficulties and I have found that I cannot do the social justice work I do during the day without my choral connection to turn to in the evenings. I have been asked to work on PLC's fundraising committee and have also been recently elected as tenor co-chair.

Choral groups and the queer community have been hit hard by the pandemic. PLC's fundraising concerts were canceled, pride month activities canceled, as well as PLC's much anticipated performance of A Roof and a Bed: a concert on home and homelessness, at GALA in Minneapolis. But it wasn't just our ability to sing that was affected. It was our ability to gather in support of each other as a marginalized community. I feel the path I should be following now in my life is supporting PLC to survive the effects of the pandemic and supporting community and social justice for LGBTQ+ identified choral groups, yet I am also realistic of my own time constraints and that a job half-done for multiple organizations is not as effective as a job well done for a select few. With this in mind, I made the tough decision to step down from PFLAG Southwest Washington.

I feel that the chapter is in a stronger position than when I joined the board and is currently in a position that will thrive even as I step down in order to make room for other personal priorities. Jessica Cole has stepped in as chapter president. She is a tiger-mom for LGBTQ+ youth, being an important advocate in Battleground and in Olympia for comprehensive sex education in our schools. I know that the chapter is in good hands with her leadership. I hope everyone will support me in my decision and I look forward to gaining broader experience with fundraising and managing non-profits so as to be a greater asset working towards social justice here in Southwest Washington.

Warmly,

De Stewart

Past President, PFLAG Southwest Washington



Queer Heroes NW 2020: Justice of Nikki Task Force

Vancouver, Washington trans teen Nikki Kuhnhausen was 17 when she disappeared in June 2019. Her body was found in December.

Police suspect that Nikki met a man seeking a sexual encounter the night of her disappearance, and upon finding out that she was transgender, he became enraged and killed her.

A group of people concerned about Nikki's murder organized the Justice for Nikki Task Force. They included trans women such as Devon Rose Jones and Mikki Gillette, nonbinary trans person Lynse Leanne, as well as Nikki's family, in particular, her mother Lisa Woods.

The trans or gay panic defense describes the argument straight men make after assaulting or killing trans women, or gay or bi men, who the straight men say expressed sexual interest in them. Their violent reaction comes from "panic," they claim, and shockingly, this defense is still at times successful.



Nikki was one of 26 trans people murdered in the United States in 2019. Many of the victims shared Nikki's story of being killed by a man who reacted violently upon learning about their gender identity.

The Justice for Nikki Task Force worked to bring attention to Nikki's story, organizing a vigil and a celebration of life, arranging media profiles, bringing attention to Nikki's alleged killer's court case, and working with the Washington state legislature to pass the Nikki Kuhnhausen Act, which bans the LGBTQ panic defense in the state. On March 5, 2020, Gov. Jay Inslee signed that act into law.

It's the Justice for Nikki Task Force's hope that Nikki will never be forgotten, and that no family or community will suffer the loss again that Nikki's has.

About the Gay & Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest

GLAPN is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, founded by Thomas Cook and friends in October 1994, with a purpose to serve the greater public interest in advancing the visibility of queer cultural history within the Pacific Northwest. [Click here to read about our history.](#)

United States Census 2000

US Census is Essential to the LGBTQ Community

*It's 2020 Census Time:
We must be counted*



It's Census time, and with stay-at-home orders in place for the majority of the country, there's no better time to take five minutes to participate.

The LGBTQ+ community is one of the hardest-to-count populations, and members of the community who belong to multiple hard-to-count populations--people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, immigrants, people of color, renters, and low-income people--are particularly vulnerable to being undercounted.

With so much at stake, including funding for SNAP, Medicare/Medicaid, public housing and education, and more, filling out the Census 2020 is truly critical to the health and wellbeing of our LGBTQ+ loved ones and their families.

Remember, The Census Bureau is bound by law to protect your answers and keep them strictly confidential.



TUESDAY, JUNE 30 at 5:30 PM PT: [PFLAG Votes 2020: Our Right and Our Responsibility](#)

Voting is a right and responsibility for all Americans. And PFLAG National would like to help PFLAG Chapters, leaders, and members get-out-the-vote in their communities. In 2020 there is too much at stake for our LGBTQ+ loved ones not to. In this brand new session we'll:

- Quickly review what PFLAG members should do to ensure that they are able to cast a ballot in November 2020
- Discuss how PFLAG Chapters can help to register more voters while staying within the guidelines set forth by the IRS for 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations like PFLAG
- Learn more about the unfortunate realities of voting in the US and dissect some of the most common reasons people don't vote
- Reaffirm PFLAG's legislative priorities, highlight races to watch, and consider what is truly at stake for our LGBTQ+ loved ones
- Find out how we can help others make a plan, commit to voting, and advocate for themselves on election day