



**Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays NSW Inc.
(Incorporating Western Sydney)**

August 2014 Newsletter VOLUME 17-ISSUE 7

The next meeting of PFLAG NSW Inc. (Incorporating Western Sydney) will be on Saturday, 23 August at 2pm in the Conference Room, Wesley Lodge Motel. The Wesley Lodge is situated on the Cnr. Hawkesbury & Queens Roads, Westmead and is very close to Westmead Hospital and Train station. **Car entry is only from Hawkesbury Rd via a boom gate.**

For Information contact: Judy on (02) 9869 1454 Postal Address: PO Box 3751, Marsfield NSW 2122. Email: jr_brown@bigpond.net.au

President's Report

“For many young men and women, it is a struggle to be comfortable with their sexual orientation, and there are still many reasons why they need to plan the timing of their coming out as gay. Family, social, career, religious and financial considerations are all very reasonable concerns, even in post Mardi Gras Australia.” – Fr Peter Maher (www.eurekastreet.com.au).

Fr Peter's comments were made the day after Ian Thorpe's public "coming out" in his interview with Sir Michael Parkinson on July 13. Fr Peter has the privilege of supporting young men and women coming out through a ministry to LGBTIQ Catholics and their families and friends at Newtown Catholic Church. He says that Ian Thorpe's story did not surprise him. He still hears it from 18 and 19 year olds, afraid to tell their parents. He adds: "Some parents still blame their children for 'insisting on being gay' and some priests still seem to be advising young people coming out to seek medical and psychological help for their 'problem'." Fr Peter Maher was recently awarded an Order of Australia medal for his community service promoting acceptance of diversity.

Due to Ian Thorpe's "coming out", I was asked to compose an article for the "ivillage" website. My advice to parents, confronted with the news that their child is gay, was to immediately hug their child and tell them that you love them unconditionally. If you don't understand much about homosexuality, tell your child that, but tell them that you are willing to be educated and to fully accept them. You can find the article at <http://www.ivillage.com.au/how-to-support-gay-children/>.

An article in the SMH August 9-10, written by Eryk Bagshaw and Amy McNeilage, highlights the continuing need for education in schools to combat homophobia. The article refers to a new study of 400 same-sex attracted and gender diverse young people, exposing that physical education classes are presenting the most hostile environments for gay & lesbian students.

Website www.pflagaustralia.org.au Email info@pflagaustralia.org.au

Meeting held 4th Saturday of each month
(23 August, 27 Sept, 25 Oct, 22 Nov)

I was very pleased to have been invited to attend the Launch of the Safe Schools Coalition NSW at Parliament House in Sydney on July 31. The state partner of the national coalition, Family Planning NSW, is very excited that the program has been launched and is ready to reach schools across the state. The Human Rights Commissioner, Tim Wilson, officially launched the program to a very positive and enthusiastic reception and he and same-difference panel speaker, Laura Blundell, shared their vision for a future that supports all young people, teachers and school communities. More than 150 young people, teachers, influencers, community organisations and politicians from across the spectrum came together to kickstart the conversation, to make schools safer and more inclusive for same-sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse young people.



Narelle and I recently forwarded a submission on behalf of PFLAG to the Senate Inquiry into the Recognition of Foreign Marriages Bill 2014. Positive news in the Sun-Herald August 10, that nearly 80% of swing voters support same-sex marriage, according to the Liberal Party's in-house pollster. It is hoped the findings will pressure Prime Minister Abbott to allow his MPs a free vote on the issue. I have just watched "It Could Happen To You" on You Tube. Thanks to Carol for alerting me to it. It is a clip of Shane Bitney Crone's story told in the professional documentary "Bridegroom". We had a notice about the Australian adaptation "Wish for Tomorrow" feature film in our July newsletter. Watch this heartbreaking clip to be absolutely convinced of the need for Marriage Equality.

Thanks to Jackie Braw, GLBTI liaison officer with NSW Police, for inviting PFLAG to be a part of the training of GLLOs (Gay & Lesbian Liaison Officers) at Surry Hills Police Station on Monday, August 18. Thanks also to Jason To for inviting us to address the employees of the HSBC Bank on Tuesday, August 19. Narelle, Ray and I will take part in the lunch-time event.

The July Family Meeting was a very good one, with many experienced PFLAG parents on hand to offer much needed support to new parents. Thanks to Mollie for facilitating so well. It was lovely to have Rudy present, looking so well and offering wise counsel. I hope to see many of you at our Family Meeting on August 23, where our Guest Speaker will be John Harradine, Relationships Counsellor, whose very apt topic will be "The Coming Out Process – It's not a straight line!" Remember Rudy's adage: "When you don't need PFLAG anymore, that's when PFLAG needs YOU to help others!"

Judy

Stella Does Bingo-Fund-raiser for MCC Good Shepherd Western Sydney Inc.

WHEN Friday October 3rd 2014

WHERE 37 East Street Granville

TIME 6.30 for 7pm

TABLE BOOKINGS OF 8 with Robert on 0412 481 195 or Email lingling@ozemail.com.au Book early!

GREAT PRIZES, Raffles & lots of fun! BYO, nibbles provided. Coffee & Tea available.

Looking forward to seeing you with us.

If you would like to be part of a PFLAG table, contact Judy on 9869 1454.

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News from Giovanni Campolo-Arcidiaco – Co-Producer with Vanessa Gonzalez of Bouncing Castle

My home town of Reggio Calabria, in the very south of Italy, had its first Pride march ever on July 19th. Almost 5,000 people showed up, a great deal of supporting heterosexuals too and, contrary to all fears, it was all festive with many curious spectators and supporters along the way (a 3km route through the two main streets of the city) and no protesters against it.

My mum, Ninetta, told me she'd go even if I wasn't there; and that she would wear the PFLAG t-shirt I



bought her at your meeting. Then she sent me these photos: not only did she go with my sister and two of her teenage kids - they ended up holding up the AGEDO banner (the Italian PFLAG) all along the way. The other parents were hesitant to expose themselves apart from being in the parade (which is already great), so mum and my sister volunteer to do it even though they had no connection to it that far. Needless to say it brought tears to my eyes, as the south of



Italy is not the most progressive area (or is it?).

I wanted to say thank you to all of you for having inspired my mum (and belated dad) in how much more than accepting of their kids parents can be.

And mum, Ninetta, is coming back in September to stay with us for three months. I may bring her along to one of your events again to say hello. ☺

Ciao for now

Giovanni

State Labor Conference

On 26th and 27th July I attended State Labor Conference in Sydney and a couple of things came up for the LGBTIQ community -

1. Under the heading of Promoting Civil Liberties, after paragraph 2.49 on page 14, add the following paragraph: "NSW Labor supports State Parliament making a formal apology to all people convicted under NSW on the basis of their homosexuality including:

- a. People convicted prior to the decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1984; and
- b. People convicted between 1984 and 2003 who would not have been convicted were it not for the fact the offence involved same-sex sexual activity (i.e. due to the unequal age of consent)

NSW Labor also supports the establishment of a process whereby people affected by these laws can have any and all relevant criminal records expunged.

2. Labor State Conference took the historic step of voting to support same sex marriage while maintaining a conscience vote in parliament.

Michelle Lancey

Newcastle/Hunter Pflag

Survey for SX Magazine/www.gaynewsnetwork.com.au

We are doing a reader survey. People go in a draw to win an iPad mini - so at least someone will walk away happy...

Link below

<http://gaynewsnetwork.com.au/news/tell-us-what-you-want-from-your-local-lgbti-news-magazine-14697.html>

Cheers

Cec Busby

News Journalist - Evo Media Pty Ltd.

Website www.pflagaustralia.org.au Email info@pflagaustralia.org.au

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Two Queer Screen Films

We have two great screenings in August, which both have filmmaker guests, and are themed around gay families.

THE CASE AGAINST 8

August 20th 7pm @ Event Cinemas, George St. Sydney.

Queer Screen is proud to present a special screening of THE CASE AGAINST 8, followed by a Q&A with director Ryan White. THE CASE AGAINST 8 is a behind-the-scenes look inside the historic case to overturn California's ban on same-sex marriage. <http://queerscreen.org.au/the-case-against-8-screening/>

THE RUGBY PLAYER

August 25th 7pm @ Event Cinemas, George St. Sydney. An uplifting and stereotype-defying documentary of Mark Bingham, an unlikely hero and his unique relationship with his mother. This is the story behind the man after whom the Bingham Cup is named. We are excited to announce that Mark's mother, Alice Hoagland, will be participating in a Q&A after this special Bingham Cup screening of The Rugby Player. <http://binghamcup.com/events/the-rugby-player/>

Launch of Out & Online – Mental Health & Wellbeing Program for Young LGBTI

My name is Bronte McLeod and I am a researcher from Swinburne University of Technology. I write to inform you about the launch of Out & Online, a free interactive online program designed to improve the mental health and wellbeing of same-gender attracted young adults aged 18-25. Access to the Out & Online program is now available via participation in a research trial being conducted by researchers from Swinburne University of Technology, Federation University Australia and Deakin University, in consultation with mental health experts and same-gender attracted young people. Program development has been funded by *beyondblue*. The aim of the program is to help make mental health assistance more accessible and relevant to the needs of same-gender attracted young adults. Following evaluation, improvements will be made based on feedback received and the program will be made publicly available.

For more information on the program: Website – www.outandonline.org.au Facebook – www.facebook.com/outandonline

Leadership in Sport Training for Young Women

MECA (Mt. Drutt Ethnic Community Agencies) and NSW Department of Sport & Recreation are holding a comprehensive training program for young women, who would like to be more involved in their community.

When: September 22 & 23 – 6 Figtree Drive, Olympic Park (9.30am – 2.30pm)
September 24 & 25 – The Hub, Mt Drutt (9.30am – 2.30pm)

For more info, call Rose on 9006 3711 or email: rose.powell@sport.nsw.gov.au

Help required for PFLAG stall @ Parramatta Pride Picnic on September 14 (11am – 4pm)

Parramatta River Foreshore Reserve (North side of Parramatta river, east of Barry Wilde Bridge – Access via Elizabeth St. Parramatta or walk across from car park on south side.

The banks of the Parramatta River will come alive with Rainbow Pride on Sunday the 14th September as Helen Westwood MLC opens the Parramatta Pride Picnic.

This is the biggest annual event for Western Sydney's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community and is important as it helps to combat isolation and homophobia.

The picnic is being presented by the Parramatta Queer Forum, a group of GLBT community organisations including ACON – Australia's largest GLBT health and HIV/AIDS organisation – Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), Parramatta City Council and the Western Suburbs Haven.

Music, sporting activities, games, competitions, prizes – the picnic has it all. There'll also be a range of community information stalls with people from various organisations which provide services for the GLBT community in Western Sydney.

Australia's Got Talent's Yodelling Drag Queen, Laydee KinMee, will be the MC for the picnic. There'll be lots of activities for the humans as well as a dog show and fun for our four legged companions. Picnic goers are encouraged to bring their dogs and enter them in Doggywood, to be judged by David Graham of Big Brother fame.

The Western Suburbs Haven will be there again this year cooking the barbeque for those people who don't want to bring a picnic basket. All the money from the barbeque goes back to the Western Suburbs Haven which supports people with HIV in Western Sydney."

NSW Police Gay & Lesbian Liaison Officers from Parramatta, Eastwood & Gladesville LACs will be there with a snazzy police car for photo opportunities.

*If you'd like to help on our stall or just come along call **Judy** on **9869 1454**. **Judy***

New PFLAG Apparel We now have for sale: PFLAG T-shirts @ \$25 each and white PFLAG caps @ \$10 each. We also have rainbow umbrellas and kites @ \$15 each or 2 for \$25 and rainbow lanyards and PFLAG badges @ \$3 each or 2 for \$5. Contact Judy on 9869 1454 or see us at the meetings.

Civil Marriage Celebrant - Rev Robert Clark from Metropolitan Community Church of the Good Shepherd, Granville, is a **Civil Marriage Celebrant**. You can check out his website: www.weddingswithflair.net

Renewal Notice Reminder Please do not forget to renew your membership for 14/15! Thanks to all the members who have renewed already. If you joined after 30 June 2014, you are deemed to be financial until end of 2015.

EMAIL ADDRESSES

If you are on email, please help us reduce our costs by sending us an email with your details (which will remain confidential) and all future information will be emailed to you

Website www.pflagaustralia.org.au **Email** info@pflagaustralia.org.au

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Upcoming Events: Family Meeting - Saturday 23 August @ 2pm
Wear It Purple Day – August 29
Parramatta Pride Picnic – September 14 (New venue: Parramatta River Foreshore Reserve)

PFLAG Penrith: Vicki 02 4730 4660 or Carol 02 47354680

PFLAG Northside: Maree. 02 8959 2830

PFLAG Blue Mountains: Ruth & Ron Green 02 4757 4864

PFLAG Central Coast: Helen 0431 863 799 pflag.nsw.centralcoast@gmail.com

PFLAG Northwest: Val Harris 02 6769 7552 or Fay Heywood 02 6785 7325

PFLAG Wagga Wagga: Cheryl Harvey 0439 488 202 cheryl28june@gmail.com

PFLAG Bathurst: Tony and Bernadette Sutton 02 6331 7267 nottus2@bigpond.com

PFLAG Albury Wodonga: Sarah 0419 019 254 pflagalburywodonga@gmail.com

PFLAG Great Lakes/Manning: Greg & Lauranne Byrne 0427 918 568
gregbyrne3@bigpond.com

PFLAG Coffs Harbour: Leanne: pflagcoffs@gmail.com

PFLAG Newcastle/Hunter: Michelle Lancey pflag.hunter@gmail.com



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SEIKO Australia Pty Ltd supports PFLAG Australia

The advertisement features a close-up of a silver-toned Seiko watch with a black dial and Roman numerals. The watch is set against a dark background with horizontal light streaks. The Seiko logo and slogan are prominently displayed on the left side of the image.