

Portland Voice

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March 2011

President's Message

Rhodes Perry, MPH, of PFLAG National puts together this wonderful summary of events and policy decisions that affect us as PFLAGers. I'm happy to share with you Rhodes' most recent entries. In addition, we also received the joyful news that Hawaii recently voted to permit civil unions. The Governor is expected to sign the bill into law later this week. We hope to see you on March 8 when we welcome Ron Rasmussen of Veterans for Human Rights to PFLAG Portland to discuss Don't Ask, Don't Tell and where we go from here.

Dawn Holt, President, PFLAG Portland

PFLAG Policy Matters – Front Page Headlines

[Veteran LGBT Advocate Appointed to U.S. Commission on Civil Rights](#). President Barack Obama has named former National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) Executive Director Roberta Achtenberg to a seat on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The White House announced the appointment of the San Francisco resident, a California State University trustee, to the commission on January 26th. Achtenberg co-founded NCLR and was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1990. In 1993, she became the first openly LGBT person to be confirmed for a federal appointment when the Senate approved President Bill Clinton's nomination of -- *Continued on page 2* --

Monthly Meeting Information

Tuesday, 7-9 pm, March 8, 2011

Ron Rasmussen of Veterans for Human Rights is our speaker this month. Despite Secretary Robert Gate's assurances that Don't Ask, Don't Tell is soon to be a thing of the past, there are still many unanswered questions about how this long standing, inequitable policy will finally be put to rest. Come hear Ron Rasmussen, co-founder of Veterans for Human Rights, talk about this complex issue and where we go from here.

First United Methodist Church, SW 18th Avenue at Jefferson Street, Portland, OR

Update on Proposition 8

California's Supreme Court will answer the question on whether supporters of Proposition 8 have standing in *Perry v. Schwarzenegger*. Standing is the right for individuals to sue, or to be legally involved in the case. Prop 8 supporters are trying to defend the constitutionality of the initiative, when many public officials like the Governor have refused to do so.

The California Supreme Court plans to answer this question in April, and aims to hold oral arguments on the issue as early as September, 2011. If the high court rules that initiative proponents do indeed lack standing, it is our hope that the ruling will promptly lift the barrier to marriage. This action would grant the full rights and responsibilities to same-sex couples living in California.

Steve Krantz, PFLAG National's Southern Pacific Regional Director said, "I continue to hope that California's Supreme Court will rule that our opponents have no standing - that Judge Walker's wise ruling will stand."

PFLAG

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President's Message *(Cont'd from page 1)*

Achtenberg as assistant secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

[Ugandan LGBT Advocate Murdered](#). David Kato knew he was a marked man. As the most outspoken LGBT rights advocate in Uganda, a country where homophobia and transphobia is so severe that Parliament is considering a bill to execute LGBT people, Mr. Kato had received a stream of death threats, his friends said. A few months ago, a Ugandan newspaper ran an anti-LGBT diatribe with Mr. Kato's picture on the front page under a banner urging, "Hang Them." On Wednesday afternoon, Mr. Kato was beaten to death with a hammer. Police officials were quick to chalk up the motive to robbery, but members of the small and increasingly besieged LGBT community in Uganda suspect otherwise. President Obama [issued a statement](#) decrying the act, stating Kato "was a powerful advocate for fairness and freedom. The United States mourns his murder, and we recommit ourselves to David's work."

[HHS Issues Factsheet on Health Reform's Impact on LGBT Americans](#). Last week, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a fact sheet describing how the Affordable Care Act will impact LGBT Americans. According to HHS there is evidence to suggest that at least a portion of the LGBT community is disproportionately uninsured. This makes the new coverage options under the Affordable Care Act that much more significant to the LGBT community. The fact sheet goes on to outline the numerous ways the act will improve on healthcare for LGBT Americans, including noting that funding will go to build a more diverse and culturally competent health care workforce, as well as to invest in community health centers to serve up to 20 million more patients.

Public Policy Watch

[Defense Secretary Says New Military Policy Can Start Soon](#). Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said that the military could be ready this year to carry out the repeal of a ban on lesbian, gay and bisexual service members serving openly in the armed forces, and that he has accelerated efforts to revise training and regulations. Pentagon officials said Thursday that they had nearly finished revising Department of Defense rules on personnel, recruiting and housing and were close to completing plans for the training of commanders and the rank and file. Pentagon officials said the defense secretary's reference to a "tiering" of training referred to different levels of preparation to allow

Calendar of Events

April 12: 7:00 pm. What if your favorite co-worker told you she was going to become a man? What would your response be if a friend from church told you the same thing? Or, what if he was your brother-in-law or she was your aunt? Your best friend from school? Your spouse? *Switch: A Community in Transition* is a new documentary that explores these responses from one community comprised of co-workers, congregants, friends, and family. Come to the monthly [PFLAG Portland Meeting](#) and hear the film maker, Brooks Nelson, and view the film.

April 30 and May 1: The first [Oregon Queer Student of Color Conference](#) will be take place April 30th & May 1st, 2011, at Portland State University. Members of our own PFLAG Portland Black Chapter will present a workshop. For more information, email Jayvin Jordan-Green at Grej@pdx.edu.

June: It's not too early to plan for Pride 2011. Watch this space for information on getting your own PFLAG T-shirt, marching with PFLAG, and helping with our festival booth.

PFLAG Looking for New Editor for this Newsletter

If you love creating newsletters, are good at editing other people's writing, have an ear to the ground about the latest news in the GLBT community, and know how to use Microsoft Word and Gmail, we'd love for you to become our next *Portland Voice* Editor.

This volunteer position is deeply satisfying and takes only a couple of hours each month of your time. Myra Lavenue is ready to move on to other endeavors after having served as our newsletter editor now for more than four years. Drop an email to us to express your interest at pflagpdxnews@gmail.com. We'll reply!

gay and bisexual troops to serve openly: one for senior administrative officials and personnel officers who need a deep understanding of what is permitted or not under the new regulations, another for commanders who will have to carry out the changes in their units and a third for all personnel.

[Ohio Governor Issues Anti-Trans Executive Order](#). Ohio Governor John Kasich issued his own state employment non-discrimination [executive order](#), which omits critical gender identity protections. When asked about the omission, spokesman Scott Milburn -- *Continued on page 3* --

Yes! I support the mission of PFLAG Portland

Enclosed is my membership fee. (Your membership includes National PFLAG membership.)

Name _____

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Make check payable to PFLAG Portland. PFLAG is a 501c(3) tax-exempt organization.

Mail to: PFLAG, P.O. Box 8944, Portland, OR 97207

The Mission of PFLAG Portland

We, the parents, families, and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons, celebrate diversity and envision a society that embraces everyone, including those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. PFLAG promotes the health and well being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons, their families and their friends through support, education, and advocacy. PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and strives to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity. Contact PFLAG Portland at 503 232-7676 or visit our website at www.PFLAGPDX.org.

President (Cont'd from page 2)

replied: "The governor is opposed to discrimination in state employment and has made that clear in this executive order in the way that he feels is most appropriate." Read more about PFLAG's response to this order in PFLAG Dayton President Nancy Tepfer's [blog post](#).

[Iowa Senate Vote on Anti-Marriage Equality Constitutional Amendment Fails](#). A symbolic vote on taking the first small step to ban marriage equality failed in the Iowa Senate last Thursday. The defeat of this measure slows momentum for marriage equality opponents to add a voter referendum determining whether the state will continue recognizing same-sex marriages, similar to Californian's Proposition 8. The motion senators voted on was whether to break traditional Senate rules and overrule a procedural decision by a majority party leader, but it failed 26-24, strictly along party lines.

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The *Portland Voice* is published monthly. Readers are welcome and encouraged to submit articles, editorials, poetry, news items, and photography for consideration to be included in our newsletter. Email our editor at pflagpdxnews@gmail.com or send information to P.O. Box 8944, Portland, Oregon 97207. Submissions are published at the discretion of the editor and may be edited for length or content. The **deadline for content submissions to this newsletter is the 20th of the month** prior to publication.

To get this newsletter via email, send an email to pflagpdxnews@gmail.com.

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