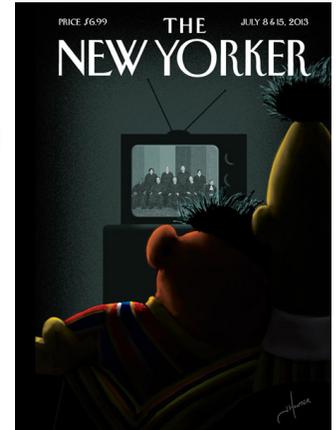


Youngstown
Chapter
Fall
2013

PFLAG Rag

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<http://www.angelfire.com/oh4/pflag/>



Federal Judge Rules Ohio Must Recognize Same-Sex Marriage

—Hannah Rotunda Insider, 7/23/13 (Thanks to Toni)

U.S. District Court Judge Timothy Black has granted a temporary restraining order requiring that the eventual death certificate of a terminally ill Cincinnati man list him as married, overriding Ohio's constitutional prohibition on recognizing same-sex unions. Attorneys for the plaintiffs say the court action paves the way for lawsuits on behalf of other same-sex couples.

for loving married same-sex couples and their families to have equal standing, rights, responsibilities, and protection in the eyes of our federal government.

We know that you, our members and supporters, will continue to urge all federal agencies to follow the lead of those which have already taken steps to equally recognize and respect all legally married couples and their dependents.

Together we will work fervently toward full federal understanding that without exception love is love, family is family, and marriage is marriage.

IRS Recognizes Same-Sex Marriage

—from the Desk of Jody Huckaby (Thanks to Toni)

House of Representatives Grants LGBT Benefits

—Don Rowinsky



Wonderful news from the United States Department of Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service today, where it was announced that same-sex married couples will be treated the same as all other married couples for

federal tax purposes, regardless of where they reside.

This is a huge step forward for equality for our LGBT loved ones: it is just and fair treatment

The Supreme Court having the final say in the matter, the House had few options but to notify all 435 representatives and their staff members in all 50 states that they have 60 days to enroll their same-sex spouses in an array of benefits like vision, dental, long-term care and survivors' annuities. "I'm pleased that they're proceeding, but I don't think they had a choice," said Representative David Cicilline, Democrat of Rhode Island, who is one of the seven openly gay, lesbian, or bisexual members of Congress. "I think people expect that once the court has

Continued on p. 3

Calendar

Th, 9/5, 7:00: Stonewall Democrats meet at 1523 Poland Avenue.

Tues, 9/10, 6:30: PFLAG meeting, St. John's Episcopal Church, lower level

Tues, 9/23, 8:30-12:30 am. CALLING ALL EDUCATORS. The Trumbull County Mental Health Board will hold a Safe Zone training for educators and counselors : LGBTQ 101 and perspective on issues confronting your LGBTQ students. Trainer is Brian Wells, M.Ed. He has a decade of experience developing his training. He founded YSUnity, the gay-straight alliance on campus while a student himself, co-chaired the Pride Center for two years, and is now advises students at YSU.

Sn, 10/6, 11 a.m.: The First Unitarian Universalist Church will hold a LGBT themed service, 1105 Elm St, across from Wick Park. Look for the rainbow flag! The service is in honor of National Coming Out week. The church is open and affirming to all regardless of sexual orientation, gender expression or gender identity. Please feel free to join us, the after service coffee hour is a great way to meet a group of socially engaged, open minded folks. For more information contact Marguerite 330-782-9554.

10/6-12: YSUnity, the Youngstown State University gay straight alliance, is holding a number of events during National Coming Out week on the campus of YSU. Find them on Facebook.

Th, 10/3, 7:00: Stonewall Democrats meet at 1523 Poland Avenue.

Tues, 10/8, 6:30: PFLAG meeting, St. John's Episcopal Church, lower level

F, 10/11, 7-10 p.m.: YSUnity will hold an over 18 LGBT prom on the YSU campus.

Sn, 10/6, 4 p.m.: National Coming Out Week coincides with Nonviolence week. Considering the continuing high rates of harassment, assault,

suicides, and homicide (particularly among transgender persons), this seems an appropriate place for the LGBT community to be and to interact with a diverse segment of the community. A **walk and rally** will begin at the Williamson College of Business of the YSU campus and proceed to downtown Youngstown. You can build a float, walk, decorate a car, carry a banner. Deadline to register your organization is September 15. Contact Penny Wells @ pennywells@sbcglobal.net or 330788-0545 or YSU Office of Diversity, 330-942-3370.

Th, 11/7, 7:00: Stonewall Democrats meet at 1523 Poland Avenue.

Tues, 11/12, 6:30: PFLAG meeting, St. John's Episcopal Church, lower level

Th, 12/5, 7:00: Stonewall Democrats meet at 1523 Poland Avenue.

Tues, 12/10, 6:30: PFLAG meeting, St. John's Episcopal Church, lower level



“House”: Continued from p. 1

spoken, even though they might disagree with the particular decision, it is the law of the land. And it’s our responsibility, especially those in government, to honor and follow the law.”

The Senate and the Administrative Office of the United States Courts have also sent out advisories in recent days pointing to a directive issued by the Office of Personnel Management, the executive branch’s human resources division, affirming the rights of same-sex couples to receive federal benefits, regardless of their state of residency.

In some instances, government agencies will consider a marriage valid only if the state where the couple currently live recognizes it. Others will look to the state where the couple filed their most recent tax return, or where they lived when they applied for benefits, or where they were married.

Most government entities, like the Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration, are still examining how to apply the ruling to same-sex couples. The Justice Department has convened a special task force to assist.

Much of the uncertainty stems from the fact that Congress is not expected to do anything to clear up the questions, despite its power to do so. The Republican-led House has no plans to address any gay rights legislation at the moment.

**Congressman
Tim Huelskamp of Kansas
has introduced the Marriage
Protection Amendment (H.J. RES. 51).
This amendment to the U.S. Constitution
would make marriage legal only between a
man and a woman. It would end all
marriage equality across the entire
United States.**

Sign up for a monthly newsletter
from The Stonewall Democrats.

Send your email address to
<valleyoutnews@hotmail.com>.

NM Judge: Same-Sex Marriage Is Legal

—Vindicator, Page A-10, August 27, 2013

ALBUQUERQUE, NM.

A New Mexico judge Monday declared same-sex marriage legal, ordering the clerk of the state’s most populous county to join two other counties in issuing licenses for gay and lesbian couples.

State District Judge Alan Malott ruled New Mexico’s constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

The Bernalillo County clerk’s office in Albuquerque planned to start issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples at 8 a.m. today. The decision came after a judge in Santa Fe directed the county clerk there to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples Friday. But Malott’s ruling was seen as more sweeping because he directly declared that gay marriage was legal.

PA Governor Strikes Back

One News Now, 8/29/13

—<http://onenewsnow.com//ap/united-states/pa-attorneys-like-children-gay-couples-cant-marry#.UiCsPm-RoSW0>

Marriage licenses given to same-sex couples in the state are invalid because the couples were barred from marrying, just like 12-year-olds, Republican Gov. Tom Corbett’s attorneys said Wednesday.

Corbett’s administration has filed a lawsuit seeking to block same-sex marriage licenses in suburban Philadelphia, where Montgomery County Register of Wills D. Bruce Hanes has issued more

than 150 to gay and lesbian couples since July 24.

State attorneys said in a court filing on Wednesday the gay marriage licenses have no “value or legitimacy” and can’t be defended in court. They compared gay and lesbian couples to children, who can’t marry because a 1996 law says marriage is between a man and a woman.

“Had the clerk issued marriage licenses to 12-year-olds in violation of state law, would anyone seriously contend that each 12-year-old ... is entitled to a hearing on the validity of his ‘license’?” the state wrote, according to a story on the Philly.com news website.

The state Department of Health brought the case against Hanes. Hanes, who says the state law is unconstitutional and discriminatory, is scheduled to appear in Commonwealth Court next week in the case.

More than 30 gay and lesbian couples that received marriage licenses from Hanes say a ruling against him could invalidate their marriages, and they’ve sought to participate in the case.

The state opposes their participation and their efforts to defend what it calls their “purported marriage licenses.” It said the gay and lesbian couples should file their own lawsuits or wait to see what happens with a federal challenge to the state’s marriage law.

“This case is about one thing: whether a local official may willfully disregard a statute based on his personal legal opinion that the statute is unconstitutional,” the state’s lawyers wrote.

The Commonwealth Court last week laid out the topics to be argued at the Sept. 4 hearing on the marriage licenses issued by Hanes. It wants lawyers to focus on whether the court has jurisdiction, given that Hanes is a judicial officer.

Other questions are whether issuing marriage licenses is a judicial act and whether the constitutionality of the state’s marriage law can be raised as a defense.

Also at issue are whether the Department of Health has standing to sue, and, if not, the effect of Democratic Attorney General Kathleen Kane’s delegation of defense of the law to the governor’s

legal staff.

—See more at: <http://onenewsnow.com//ap/united-states/pa-attorneys-like-children-gay-couples-cant-marry#.UiCsPmRoSW0>

Narrow French, Cool Brits?

—Associated Press, 7/17/13

The French like to make fun of the British, joking about their repressed ways in matters of the heart. But when it came time to debate same-sex marriage, it was France that betrayed a deep conservative streak in sometimes violent protests — while the British showed themselves



to be modern and tolerant.

With little fanfare or controversy, Britain announced Wednesday that Queen Elizabeth

II — hardly a social radical — had signed into law a bill legalizing same-sex marriages in England and Wales. France has also legalized gay marriages, but only after a series of gigantic protests attracting families from the traditional heartland that revealed a deeply split society. . . .

Official word that the queen had approved the bill drew cheers in the usually sedate House of Commons. . . .

There were British political figures and religious leaders vehemently opposed to gay marriage but the opposition never reached a fever pitch, in part because the same-sex marriage bill had broad public support and the backing of the leaders of the three major political parties. In fact, it was Prime Minister David Cameron, leader of the tradition-minded Conservatives, who proposed the legislation in the first place.

The public seemed to take it for granted that gay marriage should be a part of British life. It was perhaps a sign of how Britain has evolved in past decades into a much more cosmopolitan

nation than its starchy, traditionalist image would suggest. . . .

The picture was completely different in France. Few people had expected legalizing gay marriage to face much of a hurdle. French polls had shown for more than a decade that the concept enjoyed majority public support, and Paris has had a gay mayor for years.

And to outsiders, of course, France is seen as the land of "anything goes" when it comes to sex — from the Marquis de Sade to author Colette to disgraced French politician Dominique Strauss-Kahn, notorious for his libertine sex parties.

Politically, too, it was meant to be a blip. Legalizing gay marriage was near the bottom of French President Francois Hollande's 36-point agenda for his presidency. It was mentioned in passing during his presidential campaign but was never an issue that galvanized opposition, and was entirely eclipsed by concerns about the economy.

Then, something clicked in the conservative heartland — which showed just how much of a force it is in French life.

When the law was drafted and the idea of gays marrying turned from concept to imminent reality, traditionalists spoke up, and loudly. Protests grew bigger, and spread wider. Opponents of the bill stirred up fears about gay parents raising France's new generations. . . .

In marching against gay marriage, the demonstrators also seemed to be protesting freewheeling Paris life, the image of a wanton, insatiable French sexuality celebrated in films and art — but far from the reality of many provincial French families. For a time in early 2013, France felt like a deeply divided nation.

But the size of the anti-gay marriage movement was largely the result of a political backlash against Hollande, whose popularity dived soon after his election over his handling of the economy.

The movement was the right vehicle at the right time to target Hollande and his Socialists. Once the law passed, the momentum stalled . . .

5
and polls continue to show that most French people think gay marriage — now that it is a fact of life — is fine.

It's Worse in Russia Than We Thought

—Tom Copeland

Russia's campaign against gays is reminiscent of the Roman Empire's homophobia. Augustus Caesar imposed fines upon bachelors as a means of promoting marriage, ostensibly for the sake of traditional Roman values of decency but actually to replenish the ranks of the army by increasing the birth rate. Similarly, in "Understanding Russia's Homophobia" Pico of *The Daily Kos* argues that Russian homophobia is rooted in ethnic panic because of the falling birth rate among ethnic Russians. Russia's multi-ethnicity, the result of having unified many socialist republics into a political conglomerate, has marginalized the ethnic group at the heart of the country (August 12, <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2013/08/12/1228471/-Understanding-Russia-s-homophobia?detail=email#>).

Spreading fear throughout the nation serves to defend this minority, and fear requires demons. Hence the revival of rhetoric from the "Witches, Vampires, and Ethnic Cleansing" shelf. On August 11, Dmitri Kisilev, Deputy General Director of the Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, opined, to a cheering audience, "that just imposing fines on gays for homosexual propaganda among teenagers is not enough. They should be banned from donating blood, sperm. And their hearts, in case of the automobile accident, should be buried in the ground or burned as unsuitable for the continuation of life." *Daily Kos's* Steveningen quips, "Whether or not [the hearts] are still beating at the time doesn't seem to matter enough for clarification. It sends a clear message that Kisilev, and by extension the Russian state, view LGBT people as filthy undesirables undeserving of not only dignity, but of their very lives, and their remains unworthy of proper

and compassionate disposal. The message is unmistakable in the tacet [sic] permission it gives for society at large to do what it will against their own LGBT citizens” (<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2013/08/11/1230527/-Prominent-Russian-News-Anchor-bury-or-burn-gay-hearts#>).

In short, fear that Russia’s ethnic core is in jeopardy has generated both anti-immigrant violence and homophobia. Hence, Pico insists that “the first thing to understand about Russian homophobia is that its roots are linked closely, if not inextricably, to questions of national self-identity and ‘survival.’ Appeals to broader moral questions of the type common to our discussions of LGBT rights and protections, criticisms of the Church and of religious beliefs . . . these things are all secondary to the national question.”

Moving to these other issues, Pico identifies a large and influential segment of the population that believes in what he calls “Russian exceptionalism.” Not mere isolationism and pride in self-sufficiency, this concept includes a belief in “Russia’s unique destiny of providing a moral counterweight to a degenerate world.” This attitude is deeply rooted in Orthodox Christianity in Russia but has for generations been spreading into the secular world. It fueled the Russian Revolution, which its own propaganda machine represented as raising the common man like a Messiah to create a new world order.

But once the Soviet Union evaporated, argues Fyodor Lukyanov, much of its power was lost, and efforts to revive “iconic or ideological remnants of the Soviet past” have failed, leaving self-righteous nationalism to fill what Lukyanov calls an “ideological vacuum” (<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/the-well-of-soviet-nostalgia-is-running-dry/397760.html>). Lukyanov warns that whereas “other post-Communist countries” have done likewise, their nationalism “has been tamed to one degree or another by their entry in the European Union, which enforces strict democratic principles for members, or [aspirants to membership]. But Russia, the proverbial cat that walks by himself, has few external constraints like the EU,” and

ethnic nationalism is very dangerous.

Pico’s view of the danger is that “The nationalist backlash has reawakened a sense of the Russian mission, and the Russian mission, whatever it may be, is singular, native, and deaf to outside appeals. . . . So the second thing to understand about Russian homophobia is this: Russians of the National Exceptionalism bent cannot be shamed . . . by the outside world. It’s rather the outside world, they argue, that’s . . . in need of saving.”

Therefore, says Nancy Goldstein, “There’s no point in pretending that marching around the Olympic Village in Sochi this winter wearing rainbow pins will make a jot of difference, even on the medal-awards platform. ‘The Kremlin,’ Russian LGBT activist Alexei Davydov tells me through an interpreter, ‘has taken a page from the Middle Ages. Incapable of solving the country’s pressing problems, and with Putin’s ratings falling, the Kremlin has decided to consolidate society through fear—and to this purpose is engaged in a search for enemies both internal and external. Gays have been chosen as these victims’” (<http://prospect.org/article/sticking-it-sochi-leading-russian-lgbt-activists-what-will-make-difference>).

Therefore beware! “History informs us,” says Wayne Besen,

that scapegoating vulnerable minorities is a risky proposition that can easily spin out of control. A book about the Black Plague by John Kelly, *The Great Mortality*, reveals some disturbing parallels between anti-Semitism in Middle Age Europe and the current Russian crackdown on LGBT people. While the plight and circumstances experienced by diverse groups in radically different eras of human history makes comparisons tricky, there are undoubtedly commonalities worth exploring.

According to Kelly, there was a dramatic rise in violent anti-Semitism sometime after the year 1000. These brutal attacks did not occur by chance, but were the result of a mutating strain of militant Christianity that

swept the continent:

“The Civitas Dei—or God State—grew out of a wave of intense pietism that swept through Europe in the Central Middle Ages. The new state’s controlling metaphor was the body: just as various limbs fit together into an organic whole, so, too, does—or should Christian society. Inspired by this corporatist vision, the angry sword of orthodoxy struck out at minorities, such as Albigenian heretics of Southern France and the Jews. Many aspects of modern anti-Semitism date from the period of Civitas Dei.”

It appears that contemporary Russia is going through its own Civitas Dei, with LGBT people as its favored targets.”

(http://www.truthwinsout.org/pressrelease/2013/08/36669/?utm_source=Russia%27s+Anti-Gay+Pogrom+Has+Disturbing+Parallels+to+Medieval+Anti-Semitism&utm_campaign=Campus+Crusade&utm_medium=email)

Camp FYrefly

— Dietrich Neu Global News

Since 2004, the weekend retreat called Camp FYrefly (Firefly) has provided . . . Canada’s only national leadership camp for LGBTQ youth. The goal of the retreat is to provide the youth [Canadian for “the young people”] with an environment free of discrimination, and teaches them about leadership, human rights, emotional fitness, and self-defence among other issues.

Ten years ago, before the camp existed, Wells was a teacher and an undergraduate student at the University of Alberta. The youth first approached him because of his position as an educator. “The idea for the camp came from youth in the community that said they wanted more than two hours each week where they could be safe,” said Kris Wells, Camp FYrefly co-founder. They said: ‘you’re a teacher, do something,’” he remembered. Wells took the request to heart, and approached his undergraduate supervisor, André P. Grace, for help. . . .

The camp started out modestly—30 youth, and lasted 2 ½ days. . . . “We knew we had magic,” said Wells. “We knew the power of these young people, when they felt safe, when they felt that

they were no longer alone.”

One of those youth was Evan Westfal, who started out as a camper nine years ago[, when he was 16, “the only openly gay youth at his high school in Spruce Grove.” He] is now a volunteer.

“I didn’t have a sense of community,” he said. “I felt very much alone a lot of the time. . . . [But FYrefly gave him a chance] to see role models, to see people who had exciting careers, not only in spite of the fact they were gay, but because they were queer. . . . That gave me a lot of hope.”

[In the nine years since then,] over 1,000 youth in similar situation have had the chance to experience the retreat for themselves. “That is a thousand youth whose lives have been changed,” said Wells. “They are learning new leadership skills; first to be a leader to themselves, and then to go out and be leaders in their communities.”

“[They learn] to be that positive agent for change, knowing that your voice can make a difference, and that when you feel safe and supported there are no barriers.”

The idea has spread across Alberta and into Saskatchewan as well. This is the first year a FYrefly camp will take place in Calgary, and the fifth year Saskatoon will host a similar retreat.

Wells hopes the idea catches one nationwide. However, he said that the camp is just one small step in a much larger movement towards a more inclusive society.

“We create a world free from fear,” said Wells. “It is an oasis away from homophobia and transphobia. Camp FYrefly is a world that does not yet exist out there. So we bring them together for these four days, and it is the other 361 days that

Trans Safety in California Schools

—Zack Ford, August 13, 2013

<http://www.nationofchange.org/california-governor-signs-groundbreaking-bill-protecting-transgender-students-1376400788>

California made history [on August 12] with Gov. Jerry Brown’s (D) signature on the School Success and Opportunity Act, a bill that

protects transgender students and ensures their full participation in schools. Taking effect January 1, 2014, the law requires California public schools respect students' gender identities and ensure that they can use all appropriate school facilities and participate equally on sports teams and other extracurricular activities.

The law happens to parallel a recent settlement between a California school district and the Departments of Justice and Education, which similarly secured protections for a trans student who had previously been prohibited from using the restroom.

Conservatives have condemned the bill, claiming that transgender people do not exist in "physical reality" and that teachers will become "identity keepers." In reality, the law entrusts students' understanding of their own gender by respecting their identities.

"Open Season" Nationally on Conversion Therapy

—*Truth Wins Out*, 8/29/13

Burlington, VT—Truth Wins Out expressed elation today with a historic victory in California against the abusive practice of conversion therapy, which unsuccessfully attempts to change LGBT youth from gay to straight. As the main national organization that battles conversion therapy, Truth Wins Out says that this significant win means that the organization can now turn to banning this practice for minors across America.

"It is now open season on conversion therapy across America," said Truth Wins Out Executive Director Wayne Besen. "This monumental victory in California means that we can turn our attention to stopping child abuse disguised as therapy wherever this practice rears its ugly head. We are fully committed to protecting LGBT youth from an archaic form of therapy that confuses stigma with legitimate science."

Today's ruling by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit said that a 2012 California law prohibiting licensed therapists from

attempting to change the sexual orientation or gender expression of a patient under 18 years old may be enforced by state licensing officials, according to the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

Writing for the court, Circuit Judge Susan Graber ruled that the California law is a "regulation of professional conduct" and therefore "does not violate the free speech rights of [mental health] practitioners or minor patients, is neither vague nor overbroad, and does not violate parents' fundamental rights."

Truth Wins Out thanks the National Center for Lesbian Rights and Equality California for their heroic efforts in winning this challenge to the landmark California law.

"This decision clears the way for this life-saving law to protect California youth from cruel and damaging practices that have been rejected by all leading medical and mental health professional organizations," said NCLR Legal Director Shannon Minter. "The court of appeals ruled in very clear terms that state-licensed therapists do not have a constitutional right to engage in discredited practices that offer no health benefits and put LGBT youth at risk of severe harm, including depression and suicide. We thank Attorney General Kamala Harris, Deputy Attorney General Alexandra Robert Gordon, and the entire legal team at the California Department of Justice for their brilliant and tireless advocacy in defense of these vital new protections for LGBT youth."

"The court's decision today on Senate Bill 1172 is a major victory for anyone who cares about the well-being of our youth. It will directly impact the lives of thousands of young people by protecting them from this horrific practice," said John O'Connor, Equality California executive director. "We thank Sen. Ted Lieu for authoring this bill and Speaker John A. Perez for his bold leadership in getting the law passed."

The California law, known as Senate Bill 1172, was authored by Senator Ted Lieu and sponsored by Equality California, NCLR, Gaylesta, Courage Campaign, Lambda Legal, and Mental Health America of Northern California,

and supported by dozens of organizations including the California Psychological Association, the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, and the California Division of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. California Governor Jerry Brown signed the bill into law on September 29, 2012.

Truth Wins Out's Executive Director, Wayne Besen, testified in Trenton, NJ on a successful bill banning conversion therapy for minors in New Jersey that was signed into law by Gov. Chris Christie, as well as testified in Boston on a similar bill in Massachusetts.

Truth Wins Out is a nonprofit organization that fights anti-LGBT extremism. TWO specializes in turning information into action by organizing, advocating and fighting for LGBT equality.

Another Ex-Gay Leader Apologizes

—Wayne Besen of Truth Wins Out

[Randy Thomas, once a political lobbyist for Exodus International, apologized on 7/23 for the harm he did while working for Exodus:]

I participated in the hurtful echo chamber of condemnation. I gave lip service to the gay community, but really did not exemplify compassion for them. I placed the battle over policy above my concern for real people. I sometimes valued the shoulder pats I was given by religious leaders more than Jesus' commandment to love and serve. That was wrong and I'm disappointed in myself. . . .

I was, in a sense, attracted to this kind of power and allowed my conscience to be



numbered so I could have a seat at their table. In the name of trying to positively affect Christian leaders, I willingly became one of their pawns. Again, I was selfish and prideful. Please forgive me.

In the past two years, Alan Chambers, John Paulk, John Smid, and now Randy Thomas have all issued apologies, rocking the "ex-gay" industry to its core. Unfortunately, new groups like Restored Hope Network and Voice of the Voiceless have risen to fill the vacuum. The recent apologies, however, undermine the credibility of these new "ex-gay" organizations and complicate their efforts, says TWO.

[Moreover, VOV suffered a serious setback later in July, when it] announced it was putting the kybosh on a fancy gala it had planned with the Family Research Council on July 31st. The event had sought to portray "ex-gays" as victims and had invited Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-MN, and other members of Congress to attend the benefit.

There was never going to be an actual "Ex-gay Pride Month" because ex-gays are as rare as the Dodo bird. They simply could not find real "ex-gays" to participate and had to cancel to save face. This was nothing but a desperate publicity stunt intended to revive a failing industry that has repeatedly embarrassed anti-gay organizations.

Gay Combat Vet Booed

—<http://www.lgbtqnation.com/2013/08/disabled-iraq-combat-veteran-booed-by-anti-gay-protesters-in-san-antonio/>

A highly decorated openly gay Iraq war combat veteran was booed by a crowd of anti-gay protesters during his speech to the San Antonio City Council meeting Wednesday evening. Former Marine Staff Sergeant Eric Alva—a San Antonio native who was the first American service member seriously injured in the Iraq War when he stepped on a land mine in March 2003 and lost his right leg—was speaking in favor of a proposed addition to the city's non-discrimination law that would add protections for sexual orientation, gender

identity, and veteran status. But as Alva began to deliver his remarks, many in the crowd of approximately 200 people attending the council meeting began to boo. “To all you people that preach the word of God, shame on you because God loves me, like the day I laid bleeding on the sands of Iraq and that’s why he saved me,” Alva told the crowd as left the podium, still visibly shaken from the crowd’s reaction.

Later on Facebook, Alva wrote: “Well, I just left city council chambers and I feel like crying. I have never seen a city so divided and hateful towards each other. All of mankind should be ashamed. . . . even some of the religious groups even booed me as I spoke. Such disrespect as they preach the word of God.” Prior to the council session, local anti-gay rights advocate Pastor Charles Flowers of the Faith Outreach Center led a prayer vigil and demonstration outside City

Hall where he told the crowd, “Let them vote ‘no’ to this ordinance, and ‘yes’ to the reign of the kingdom of God.” The San Antonio city clerk’s office said the council is expected to vote on the ordinance on Sept. 5.



without having received a diagnosis of “gender identity disorder” before incarceration. “Alisha Williams, . . . director of the Prison Justice Project at the Sylvia Rivera Law Project (SRLP), which works with incarcerated trans people,” informed Truthout reporter Victoria Law, “It wasn’t until May 2013 that [the state Department of Correctional Services] clarified its policy to state that people can receive diagnosis and treatment for the first time in prison.” “However, even with the clarified policy, the process for diagnosis and prescribed treatment can take many months.”

“Military incarceration provides an additional obstacle to hormone access. Aaron Miracle, a former military police soldier, told Truthout that all items sent to a person at Fort Leavenworth need to be bought directly from a vendor on the prison’s approved list. ‘Even if she were willing to pay for her own hormones, she would have to go through an approved vendor. I don’t think that any of the approved vendors provide those hormones.’”

Although Chelsea’s high profile may restrain prison employees from some of the more disagreeable kinds of abuse for which they are known and although military prisoners are better behaved in general than non-military ones and rape is nearly unknown at Leavenworth, the rate of sexual abuse to trans females behind bars is 7.25 times greater than to non trans prisoners. Gay prisoners are not expected to welcome Chelsea either. But the worst effect of Chelsea’s decision to declare her sexual identity is redirecting public discussion away from national security and war crimes.

Chelsea Manning’s Future

—Summarized from <http://truth-out.org/news/item/18486-what-awaits-chelsea-manning-as-she-begins-her-sentence-as-the-militarys-first-openly-trans-woman>

Chelsea Manning, the military’s first openly trans prisoner, is entering an all-male military prison, Fort Leavenworth, and is unlikely to be transferred or even to be advanced out of maximum security. It will be an uphill battle for her to secure hormone therapy and practically impossible to be permitted cross-dressing. Even in non-military prisons it has been impossible until this year for a prisoner to receive hormones

Accidental Activists

—Bess Watts (<http://www.labornotes.org/2013/08/supreme-court%E2%80%99s-marriage-ruling-extends-benefits-changes-lives>)

My wife and I are “accidental activists.” Eleven years ago, I had to empty my vacation time bank and put my job at risk when Anne’s mother died, and later when Anne was hospitalized out of state.

My heterosexual co-workers would have gotten bereavement time and taken sick time to tend to their ill spouses, and they could have used unpaid Family Medical Leave in the health crisis. The indignity of asking for a “vacation day” to attend my mother-in-law’s funeral was a breaking point.

I approached my union president and asked to have domestic partner (DP) benefits included in the next negotiations. She was willing, but asked me to do the research to help her at the table.

In doing so, I discovered Pride at Work, the AFL-CIO constituency group, and P@W’s “Steps to Negotiating LGBT-Inclusive Contract Language.”

We distributed a binder of research information to both sides of the negotiation, as well as my testimony that the lack of domestic partner benefits made me feel “excluded and alienated” in the academic environment where I worked, where celebration of diversity was the norm.

Our negotiators were uncompromising, and success followed.

Some “Right” Quotes

—from Simon Brown, “Wedding Crashers,” *Church and State*, 9/2013

Mat Staver, founder of Liberty Counsel: “The effort to redefine marriage. . . will bring about an inevitable collision with religious freedom and conscience rights.”

Bradlee Dean, Christian preacher: “We have Elena Kagan and we have Justice Kennedy, who we know that are homosexuals” (sic).

Tim Wildmon, president of the American Family Association: “The homosexual lobby and agenda is running rampant across America, and is even pervading our elementary schools. . . . Now, we must warn against the coming persecution.”

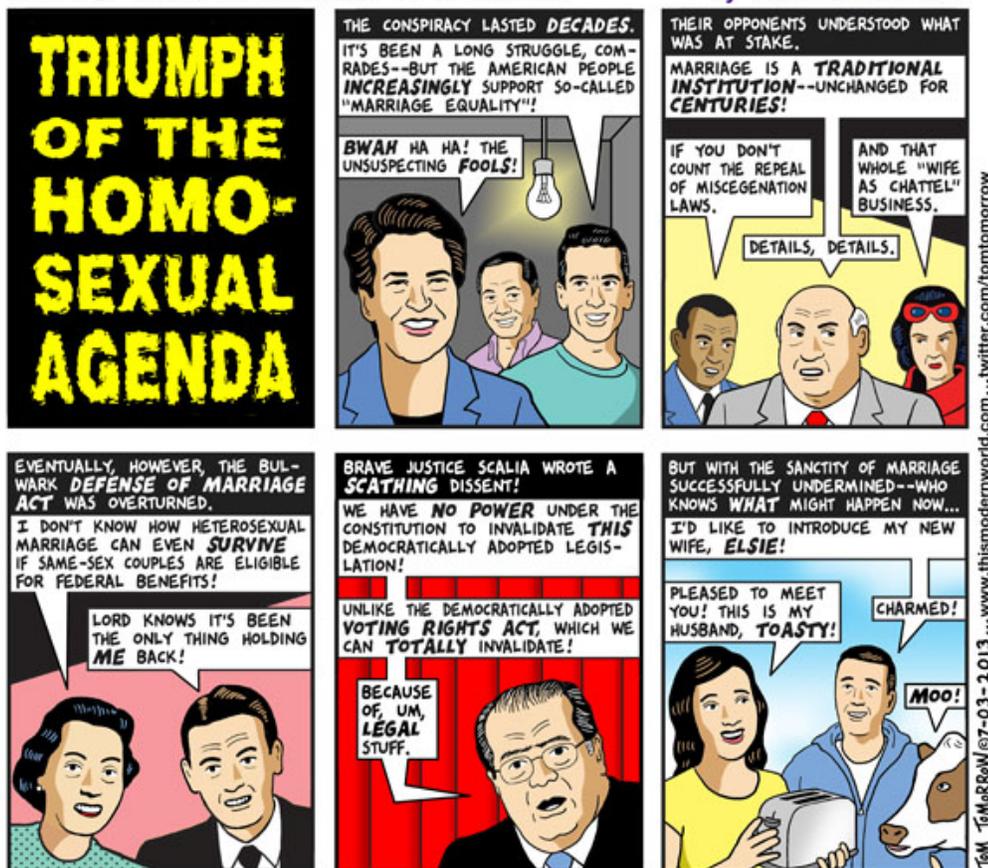
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: “a tragic day for marriage and our nation.”

Gordon Klingenschmitt, Navy chaplain: “The demonic spirits inside the homosexual agenda [are trying to] homosexualize and recruit your children.”

Bryan Fisher: “The DOMA ruling has now made the normalization of polygamy, pedophilia, incest, and bestiality inevitable. Matter of time.”

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



Dues Are Due

PFLAG National's fiscal year begins October 1, 2013. In order for us to submit your dues on time to National, please promptly return the dues form with your check if you have not already paid. From your \$25 dues, we pay \$15 to National, and our chapter uses the remaining \$10. There is no extra charge to receive our quarterly newsletter by email. Your additional tax deductible donation helps our chapter provide funds for our programs, brochures, supplies, meeting expenses, and dues to Help Hotline. Please print this form and mail it with your check to the address below. We depend on your continuing support. Thank you!

- () New
 () Renewal
 () Change of contact information. Please fill in form below.
 () \$25.00 Household membership for fiscal year 2013-14
 () \$5.00 Newsletter postal subscription (if you don't receive it electronically)
 () \$_____ Additional donation

Check enclosed for \$_____

Please make your check payable to Youngstown Area PFLAG.

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Mail to:

Youngstown Area PFLAG
 2201 Goleta Ave.
 Youngstown, OH 44504

If you have a question about dues or your membership status, please contact Steve at smschildcrout@ysu.edu

Submissions

The Youngstown Area PFLAG Rag needs your input. There are four issues annually, having the following deadlines: March 1, June 1, September 1, December 1. Send submissions (including pictures) to tcopeland@neo.rr.com or to

Youngstown Area PFLAG
 313 N. Belle Vista Ave.
 Youngstown, OH 44509



Disclaimer

The views expressed in these pages are not necessarily those of the executive board, editor, or chapter.

Meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30 in the Parish House of St. John's Episcopal Church (lower level), 323 Wick Avenue, Youngstown, OH.