



## PFLAG Brisbane

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

Newsletter February/March 2012

Keeping Families Together

From Shelley

Hi Everyone

I realise this is coming to you a little later than usual but I was holding off until after Mardi Gras so that I could include some pictures and a small report for you. PFLAG marched with 91 members, family and friends, mostly from NSW. About 12 Queensland representatives flew down for the parade.

The numbers were capped so places were hotly sought after, and after attending for the first time I can understand why. The parade, although extremely soggy and wet, was an uplifting and joyful celebration of diversity and inclusivity. There were over 120 floats and despite the saturating conditions, the crowd estimate was just under 500,000. Fred Nile's prayers for it to rain on our parade were this year answered, but it couldn't dampen the good cheer and loyal support from the participants or the crowd.

The support for the PFLAG walking float was incredible, and personally I was humbled by the number of people who just simply said "Thank you" to us. The Brisbane crew had a small 'shindig' of its own after the parade in Shelley and Don's hotel room and rested our weary feet over a couple of refreshing beverages. As a first timer I can heartily recommend making the trip. It was a chance to show and share how much we love our children and how proud we are of them and my only regret was that I wasn't marching with my son who is currently living in London. I made a late night phonecall to him after the parade though and ignited his passion to fly home for the parade in the not too distant future.

I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter and **please remember our next meeting is coming up soon on Saturday 29th March - details on page 3.**

Cheers Pip :-)

Senate Marriage Inquiry: Submissions in by 2nd April

As parents of gay males and lesbian daughters this is very important and you can help! Regardless of whether your child wants to marry or not please write and support the gay community generally. What is important is having the right and choice to marry the same as their siblings and anyone else in society. Over the last couple of years as you would know I have been travelling to Canberra with other parents talking with MP's about this issue. We are now getting very close to the finish line and you can help.

- You just need to state why are you interested in this Inquiry? Eg. parent of a lesbian daughter/gay son.
- Why change is important to you? Eg you believe in equality, you want your child to have choice
- Tell your personal story eg age of child when he/she came out, was it difficult, how you felt
- Most important: on a covering letter write your full name, phone number, postal address and whether you want your submission kept confidential.

And finally, please address your covering letter to

Ms. Dennett

Committee Secretary Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs

email address: LegCon.Sen@aph.gov.au

Please understand you don't need to be an author and the submission doesn't need to be long.

If you want or need tips please go to our website and you will find a booklet on marriage equality from a parent's perspective and this will help you.

**PLEASE DON'T PASS THIS OVER AS UNNECESSARY, IT MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU EVER DO FOR YOUR GAY SON OR LESBIAN DAUGHTER.** My email [pflagbris@bigpond.com](mailto:pflagbris@bigpond.com) if you have queries

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When you lose someone, we understand the first thing you need is time. Time to plan, to reflect, to remember the special moments. Time to celebrate a life well-lived.

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# Advocate

Shelley Argent and PFLAG - Message to Tony Abbott

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**“Mr. Abbott, please allow my  
gay grandson/son the right to  
marriage equality”.**

Shelley Argent and PFLAG - Message to Tony Abbott

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### ***Talking to Someone Who Really Understands Makes it So Much Easier***

Working through some of the deeper emotional issues with having a gay or lesbian son or daughter can be one of the most painful and stressful experiences of your life. Counselling is a highly effective way of feeling better and also can assist in keeping your family together. *Centre for Human Potential* have been working with parents of gays, lesbians and transgender for over 15 years. Contact one of our friendly psychologists to explore whether counselling can be of real benefit to you and your family, or simply call and book a time with one of us.

Phone: 3211 1117

Email: [info@centreforhumanpotential.com.au](mailto:info@centreforhumanpotential.com.au)



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# From Our Meeting



Our guests at the last PFLAG general meeting were Chrissy and Gina from ATSAQ ( Australian Transgender Support Assoc. Qld.). They spoke comprehensively of social, health and emotional issues experienced by transgender people and those wishing to

transition and/or attain gender reassignment. ATSAQ is a confidential, non-profit, un-government funded organization, relying on donations and membership for financial support. They provide support and information on all aspects of gender reassignment, for the general community and people who are experiencing difficulty with their gender identity.

The objectives of ATSAQ are to provide Queensland's Transgender population with as much support as our resources can permit. The areas we cover do include:

- To continue a program of public education aimed at changing the negative images which the community may have with transgender people.
- To provide support for family and friends of transgender people and help with understanding issues involved.
- To provide information on medical and health services available to transgender people.
- To continue to address the problem of legal recognition and human rights for transgender people in the state of Queensland.
- To assist with legal name changes and exchange knowledge on how to combat social interaction challenge.

Membership is available to people who have changed their gender role or who intend to change their gender role in the near future and/or are in a recognized gender reassignment.

[www.atsaq.com](http://www.atsaq.com)

Ph: +61 7 3843 5024 (8am - 6pm)

The meeting that followed our guest presentation was one of the most invigorating we've had in recent times. There were many new faces and some who had 'Googled' their way to the meeting after seeing the recent television advertisements challenging Tony Abbott to allow a conscience vote on same sex marriage. There was lots of discussion and support around issues raised and it was wonderful to see a support group in action in this way. Comments were considered, respectful and made with love and concern. It was a really productive and worthwhile few hours.

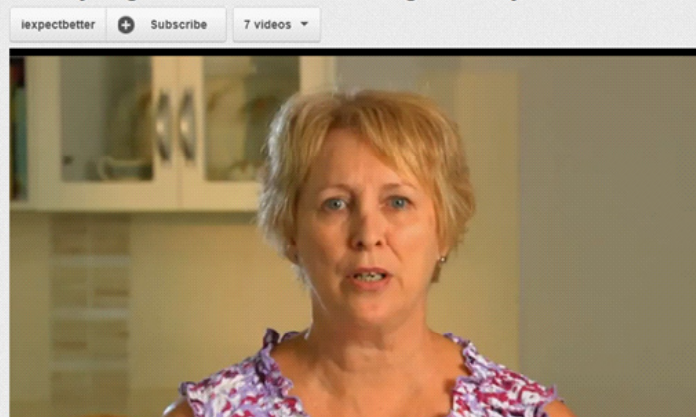
**Our next meeting is at 1.30 p.m.**

**Saturday 31st March**

**Guest Speakers from Rainbow Families**

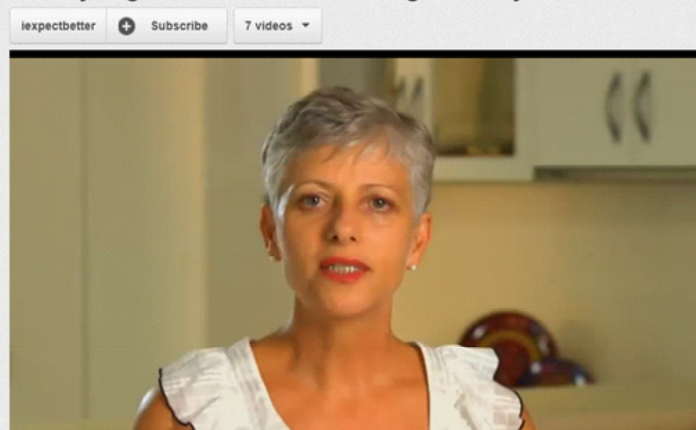
**30 Helen St Teneriffe**

## Shelley Argent and PFLAG - Message to Tony Abbott



**"Mr. Abbott, please allow my gay son/lesbian daughters the right to marriage equality".**

## Shelley Argent and PFLAG - Message to Tony Abbott



# ATSAQ



# Gender & Sex

## What's the Difference?



### **Sex = Male / Female**

Defines your biology via your reproductive organs.

### **Gender = Masculine / Feminine**

This is you, your inner self. How you see yourself.

### **Sexual Orientation [e.g. Straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual]**

Which sex, male or female, a person finds sexually attractive.

### **Sexual Identity**

The anatomy sex that a person feels comfortable with.

### **Gender Identity**

Mentally, emotionally, spiritually how a person see himself or herself.

### **TRANS = across or over, [cross over]**

GENDER = any set of two or more categories, such as masculine, feminine and neuter, into which words are divided according to sex, animation, psychological associations, or some other characteristic and that determine agreement with or the selection of modifiers, referents or grammatical forms.

TRANSGENDER = an ordinary person with a medical condition - Gender Identity Disorder/ Gender Dysphoria

These are good terms because they are an accurate description.

The condition is related to the sense and expression of gender.

It has nothing to do with sex or sexuality.

A person with this condition has a mismatch between the gender they experience in their mind and the sex of their body.

Usually, both the body and mind are healthy and that is why it is such a difficult condition to treat.

There is nothing wrong with the mind or body they are just mismatched.

This mismatch does however cause considerable stress and distress for the person with this condition. "Trapped in the wrong body" is an easy concept to grasp.

Medical science has shown that it's actually easier to change the body then to try and change the mind.

That is why treatment for this condition involves hormone therapy and surgery to change the body to match the mind and relieve the distress.

No one chooses to be a transgender or transsexual.

### **Transgender/Transsexual**

In Queensland we use the term transgender to remove the reference of sex.

The term transsexual is often avoided because it tends to have emotional or sensational connotations for some people.

Both terms are accurate though.

### **Transvestite/Cross-dresser**

A male person who is usually heterosexual [straight], sometimes married with children, who enjoys being a man but needs to wear women's clothing on a regular basis for relief and/or to express their feminine side.

Female cross-dressers are now so much a part of our culture and so common, it goes largely unnoticed.

### **Drag Queen/Drag King**

The term Drag Queen is used to describe a cabaret show that involves gay guys dressing up outrageously to mime to a recorded song. Normally found in gay nightclubs.

Sometimes a transgender person will do this to raise much needed money for surgery.

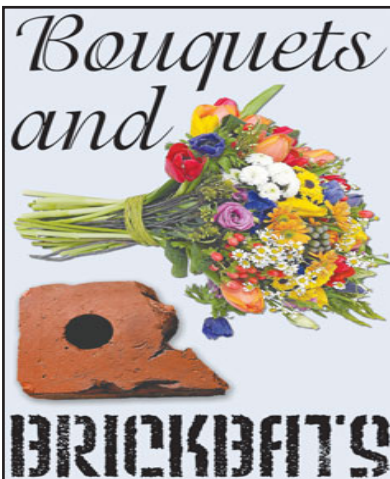
The term Drag King is used for lesbian women dressing up as men in a cabaret show.

[www.atsaq.com](http://www.atsaq.com)

Top image: <http://www.peterould.net/>

ATSAQ





## You've Got to Love Magda!

"I identify as gay myself." "Now when I say that, what that means is I am absolutely not straight."  
 "I wouldn't define myself as bisexual either. I would say I am gay, gay, gay, gay, gay ... a bit not gay, gay gay gay gay."

(The Project, Channel 10, 14th February 2012)



## Not So Much Love for this Ill Informed Ex State Election Candidate!

Mr Peter Watson ( Recently disendorsed ALP candidate for 2012 state elections) said when he was contacted by the ALP last night about his homophobic and racist remarks he denied the allegations because he was not fully aware what the allegations were.

He said he would have worded differently comments he posted four to five years ago comparing homosexuals to paedophiles.

"I regret the way in which I wrote them," he said. "I should have worded it differently.

"I would basically say, according to published scientific statistics... 30 per cent of male paedophiles are homosexuals so that does indicate some kind of link between the two. (REALLY!! Wouldn't that leave 70% of paedophiles to not be homosexual???)

"I'm not saying all homosexuals are paedophiles or all paedophiles are homosexuals, I'm not saying that.

"I'm just saying male homosexuals are grossly over represented in statistics.

"Homosexuality is not natural and should not be regarded as an alternative lifestyle."

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/state-election-2012/labor-teen-regrets-wording-of-gay-slur-but-stands-by-racism->



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Clockwise from Top Left: Shelley and son James at the press briefing prior to the parade, some of the Brisbane crew on their way to march, under our rainbow umbrellas in Hyde Park, the mums posing for a Happy Mother's Day from PFLAG card which is being sent to Federal politicians in May, the wonderful drummers who led us on our 5km march - we didn't miss a beat!!





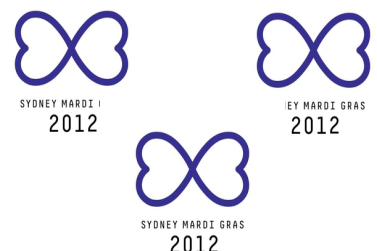
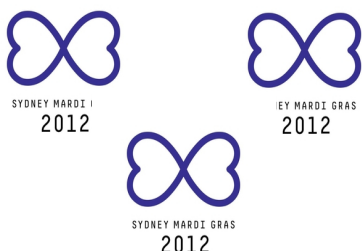
# Let the Future be Kinder and More Just than the Past!



Clockwise from Top Left: At the press launch, Shelley at the press briefing, a proud PFLAG dad, power to the people!

## RANDOM MARDI GRAS FACTS:

- » 2012 Theme - *Infinite Love - over five kilometres of Infinite Love!!*
- » Over 20,000 overseas visitors attended, with approx. 9000 marching in the parade
- » Kylie Minogue's float was actually a series of floats (one of which was covered in Swarovski crystals) that took up a whole city block.
- » The parade is the culminating event in a three week festival of arts, culture and entertainment events and injects \$30 million into the NSW economy annually.
- » The Chief of Parade this year was Shelley Argent who shared the role with her husband Don and son James.
- » You can watch the parade ( and see some of our Qld. members) on [www.mardgrastv.org.au](http://www.mardgrastv.org.au)





# Keeping Families Together

PFLAG is very proactive in promoting acceptance and understanding of people who disclose their sexual diversity to family and loved ones. Parents often feel isolated, confused or angry when their loved one 'comes out' and this is an important area where PFLAG can offer assistance.

**Join us at our meetings, held every 2 months or contact us by  
phone: 0400 767 832 or email: [info@pflagbrisbane.org.au](mailto:info@pflagbrisbane.org.au)**

## **PFLAG Brisbane Annual Membership Form**

Please complete the form below and return to PFLAG.

You can also pay online - [www.pflagbrisbane.org.au](http://www.pflagbrisbane.org.au)

Larger donations are always welcome. Thanks for your support.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Membership Type:

Family - \$25.00 annually - I have included a cheque or Australia Post Money Order made out to PFLAG Brisbane Inc.

Corporate - \$100.00 annually - (includes website and newsletter advertising) I have included a cheque or Australia Post Money Order made out to PFLAG Brisbane Inc.

**Mail to:** PO Box 1372, Eagle Farm BC Qld. 4009

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**Pay Online:** [www.pflagbrisbane.org.au](http://www.pflagbrisbane.org.au)

**Pay direct deposit:** Account Name - PFLAG Brisbane

BSB - 124-001

Account No - 2023-8607

Bank of Queensland

**Please make sure you provide us with your contact details (name, email and /or postal address so we can receipt your payment and ensure you receive our newsletters.**