

PFLAG Newsletter

December 2015 / January 2016



Welcome!

Welcome to the December 2015 /December 2016 edition of our PFLAG Newsletter!

We have now had our last meeting for the year, which was our AGM - We had a nice size group. After the AGM meeting we went around the table giving everyone an update on how our children prospered or coped in 2015.

We welcomed a new mum and it was nice to see some of the original group attend. Everyone brought some Christmas food - So to me, Christmas season has now officially started.

On behalf of the PFLAG Committee we would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas or Seasons Greetings, whatever you prefer. I do hope that we have been supportive of you over the last year. And, if you have attended meetings, I do hope that you found us to be helpful, friendly and inclusive.

Coffee
mornings at
McDonalds are



Coffee mornings at McDonalds Newmarket will begin again with Belinda as the facilitator.

The first meeting will be on 30th January at 10am.

If you have any queries please make contact with Belinda on limbel65@hotmail.com



Have you visited our website yet?

All our resources have been updated and are available to download now. The site also has links to our previous newsletters, community services and other websites families may find helpful <http://www.pflagbrisbane.org.au>



Safe School Coalition

PFLAG is now part of the Safe School Coalition and I will be at times travelling to regional high schools with True and Open Doors to talk everything LGBT.

The Safe Schools Coalition Australia is a national coalition of organisations and **schools working together to create safe and inclusive school environments** for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, staff and families. It is funded by the Australian Government and, in Victoria, by the Victorian Government.

I have had a meeting with the Assistant Director General and a Senior Advisor to Kate Jones the Education Minister.

We discussed how some schools are not as supportive as hoped. I have been assured by both men that this is not acceptable.

If you are having or have had problems getting the proper support and you feel you have done everything possible to make them understand what needs to be done to support your child, please make contact with me.

No names will be used; your child will not be associated in anyway if the Education Department makes contact with the school needing more training. They have promised they will be very tactful.

By Shelley Argent

Myths debunked here...

Myth: You Are Either Heterosexual Or Homosexual. Very Few Are Bisexual.

Fact: The studies of Dr Alfred Kinsey and his associates are most frequently cited on this question.

Their data suggests that, in fact, few people are predominately heterosexual or homosexual. Most people fall somewhere along the continuum between these two ends of the scale, and therefore have the capacity to experience both affection and sexual feelings for members of both sexes.



Homophobia in the Workplace: A great outcome

A young fourteen year old boy and his older sister were walking down a Brisbane Street in the Valley where the boy was verbally abused by a group of construction workers. This is what happened next...



Just recently a young boy of fourteen years and his older sister were walking down Costin Street in the Valley where the boy was verbally abused by Lend Lease construction workers buying their lunch at a food van.

Not surprisingly, the boy was very shaken, from the experience and so was his sister. The mother was keen to take some action and so I wrote to the CEO of Lend Lease explaining what happened and within the day, contact was made with me and from there things then moved very quickly.

To cut a long story short, within the week a series of meetings were held with the mother of the son, myself and management about what should be done.

Lend Lease, supported by the Construction Forestry Mining Energy Union (CFMEU) will be holding a meeting at the site to reprimand workers and to provide more training about

acceptable behaviour. Lend Lease is a company very aware of its responsibilities and is aware of the impact such language can have on individuals.

A big bouquet to Lend Lease is warranted for not allowing such bad behaviour to be trivialised by their workers.

After this episode, we have decided we need to provide added resources to highlight the fact that homophobia is never acceptable anywhere.



Know Your Rights - It's illegal for any employee to be discriminated against because of their sexual orientation. If you're an employer, make sure that your

policy on zero tolerance on hate of all kinds is made clear in all appropriate policies.

If you're an employee and are dealing with biphobia, homophobia and transphobia in the workplace, tell your employer immediately.

PFLAG Brisbane has published a booklet called, "Addressing Homophobia in the Workplace", it has a lot of useful information about what is and what you can do about it including tips for organisations, large and small, to halt homophobia and make their workplace more equitable.

You can download it from our PFLAG Brisbane website www.pflagbrisbane.org.au/wp-content/uploads/booklet_homophobia_in_the_workplace.pdf.

By Shelley Argent.



New Committee for 2016!

Our last meeting held on November 28th, was also our Annual General Meeting and all members in attendance participated in the election of the new Brisbane PFLAG 2016 Committee. Here are the results;

Pasi will again be Treasurer

Antoneta will again be Secretary

Debra will again be the Vice President

Beth, Belinda will again be general Committee members.

Jackie our lovely young Police Officer will be a new

committee member and Margaret who is one of our original Mums has stepped back onto the Committee

And Shelley was re elected as President.

All our new (and old!) Committee members look forward to working with everyone again in the New Year.

Don't forget, if you have ideas about how we can further the support we provide parents, provide general community education, or lobby as PFLAG we would be keen to hear your ideas; But please keep in mind our work is voluntary, no one gets paid and very little funding is provided.

Additionally, if you would like to be on the Committee please let us know, it's never too late.

A Voice of Reason: 'It is impossible to make anyone gay so get rid of law that bans promoting homosexuality'

Russian TV presenter Vladimir Pozner is making powerful waves by speaking out against the law that bans the promotion of homosexuality.

The 81-year-old broadcaster believes it is impossible to make anyone gay if they're straight or straight if they're gay so the law makes no sense at all.

Pozner said it is time politicians get out of people's sex lives.

'What business is it of yours? It has nothing to do with you! If two adult men want to sleep together, let them sleep. If you don't like it, you don't have to have sex with them,' Pozner told Business-Gazeta.RU.

When asked about the LGBTI community 'imposing their culture' on Russia, Pozner said: 'What does it mean to to "impose"? If I love women, but not men, who am I "imposing"?'

He called the law that bans the promotion of homosexuality, which was enacted in June 2013, as a relic of the Soviet era.

'It is no crime to be gay,' he said. 'If you believe God made the world, well, 10% of the world's population are gay. Are you going to argue with what God decided for 10% of the world?'

And then, when he was asked about the 'western craze' for 'young people wanting to change their sex', he then put down the question as 'ignorant'.

'No one would ever change their sex on a whim. It is not a craze at all.'

A journalist and broadcaster since 1961, Pozner is widely known for his frank and honest appraisals of current affairs in Russia. In 2014, he won GLAAD's



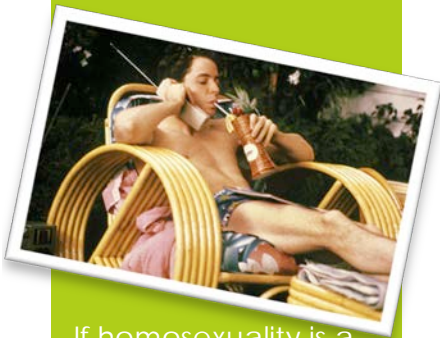
Gold Medal award for his defense of the LGBTI community.

Article from the Gay Star News 4/12/15



"The only queer people are those who don't love anybody".

- Rita Mae Brown



If homosexuality is a disease, let's all call in queer to work: 'Hello. Can't work today, still queer'.

- Robin Tyler



"If they were so concerned with marriage, why aren't they promoting a constitutional ban on divorce? Divorce is a threat to heterosexual marriage. Gay people are not."

-Rick Garcia

"WHAT ABOUT OUR CHILDREN?" A campaign to raise the awareness of the other side of the marriage equality argument

I am sure you have all heard about the debate of Plebiscite versus Free Vote regarding the issue of marriage equality for our sons and daughters.

The two reasons now that those in opposition to equality use are; (a) the tradition and (b) what about the children?

When people ask about the second comment, technically it's our grandchildren not our sons and daughters. So we have developed campaigns around the grand children, but I need your help.

Can you make a donation towards the campaigns? It's a case of helping me to help your children and grandchildren.

We have one campaign virtually completed, which is a Christmas card with grandparents and their grandchildren on the front with relevant wording inside. These have

been sent to Federal MP's and Senators and will be sent to two hundred churches and Christian organisations.

In addition, we also have created a booklet on how a Plebiscite will negatively affect our families.

Thirdly, we are in the process of putting together a 'Grandparents Brag Book'. This again, will have relevant wording and many photos of grandparents with their grandchildren from same sex couples.

The fourth campaign is just at this stage is just a 'thought bubble'.

PLEASE DONATE IF YOU CAN and if you have already thank you very much.

Bank of Qld: "What about the Children?" Campaign
BSB 124-006
Account No. 22395649

What actually is a Plebiscite?

According the Parliamentary Education Office website a "plebiscite (also known as an advisory referendum) is used to decide a national question that does not affect the Constitution".

It can be used to test whether the government has sufficient support from the people to go ahead with a proposed action, however, (and it's a big HOWEVER) unlike a referendum, the decision reached in a plebiscite does not have any legal force. So, you may ask 'what's the point of having one if it's not legally binding'? It's a very intriguing question...

On 27 May 2004 the then federal Attorney-General, Philip Ruddock introduced the Marriage Amendment Bill 2004. This bill amendment was 'meant' to clarify the meaning of the term 'marriage' in the Marriage Act, instead all it realistically achieved was the exclusion of two people of the same sex being allowed to enter into legal matrimony – it was no accident.

The real question is, why was it, that in 2004 such a significant change could be made to our constitutional rights without public input and now our government wants to ask our opinion but, yet not make it a legally binding vote?

Resources

The PFLAG resources are very popular. We have just had another 5000 Sexuality is not a Choice and 2,500 Information for Parents of Trans* printed.

We are getting several requests from Sexual Health clinics, psychologists and schools at the moment – which is great. Additionally, QUAC and Open Doors also use them.

All our resources can be downloaded from our website
<http://www.pflagbrisbane.org.au>



PFLAG wants to know: “How can we help you?”



- Do you need help with referrals for your child?
- Do you need help with schools that aren't supportive?
 - Do you need buddy support?
- What else (if possible) can we help you with?

Email: pflagbris@bigpond.com

PFLAG MEMBERSHIP FORM

First Name:	
Last name:	
Email:	

Type of membership

Individual / Family ☐ \$25

Corporate ☐ \$100

Please make checks payable to: PFLAG Brisbane

Address: **PO Box 1372, Eagle Farm BC QLD 4009**

Or, you can transfer your membership directly into our bank account Bank of Queensland

BSB: Account#:

Please reference your transfer as “PFLAG Membership” and your name

Would you like to receive e-newsletter? Yes ☐ No ☐

Would you like to receive emails letting you know about upcoming PFLAG events? Yes ☐ No ☐



CityCat Design Competition!

Brisbane City Council have announced a community competition (open to all who reside in BCC area) to design a CityCat wrap.

The winning design will be developed into a CityCat feature wrap, to travel up and down the river for all to see.

Please share this link with your friends and social media, encouraging everyone to lodge [Rainbow](#) wrap entries.

<http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/whats-brisbane/team-brisbane/team-brisbane/citycat-design-competition-its-wrap>

Entries can be either online via paper entry form available for collection from Council libraries and Ward offices.

And the Brisbane PFLAG Lifetime Achievement Award goes to.... **Meryl McTaggart**

Meryl attended the first Brisbane PFLAG meeting in 1999 and every other until ill health early this year slowed her down.

She was on the Committee for several years, volunteered for all PFLAG events, travelled with me when possible and was a great advocate for LGBTI rights.

We at Brisbane PFLAG would like to Thank Meryl for her unwavering support over the years which has been an enormous contribution to our organisation -- we are truly grateful to have Meryl as part of PFLAG.



And lastly.....

Closets are for clothes

- Source: 90s Bumper sticker.