



Removal of Economic Discrimination

It has just been announced (25th November) that the LGBT Community have succeeded... and our sons and daughters in long term same sex relationships will receive the same economic benefits as their straight siblings.

How exciting is that - and what a wonderful Christmas present! I am told that the Opposition folded and so the legislation went through relatively unopposed.

We must thank those who have tirelessly worked for years to achieve this, and thanks must also go to the present government for recognising the need to end the discrimination. Of course there is still much to be done, but this is a start.



And on that note, on behalf of myself and the team at PFLAG Brisbane, I would like to wish everyone a very merry, and safe, Christmas.

And remember... ***the greatest gift we can give our sons & daughters is acceptance.***

- Shelley Argent
(Convener, PFLAG Brisbane)

Next Meeting

PFLAG Brisbane's next meeting will be on **Saturday 31st January, 2009.**

Time: 1.30pm

Place: 30 Helen Street, Newstead

Election of Committee

Our Annual General Meeting was held on the 22 of

November 2008. Shelley was again elected as President, Gail Dalton continues as Secretary, Maxine Humphrey remains as Treasurer and Una Harkin will again be our Vice President.

Everyone was re-elected unopposed.

Our new Committee comprises Margaret Parkhill, Meryl McTaggart, Ewen DeCamp, Robyn Underwood, Joy Glover, Chrissie Barker, Eddie Shaw and Andy Pudmenzky.

Many thanks to the aforementioned for being part of the team for 2009. Andy will remain as our Webmaster and Newsletter Editor.

Support for Parents of Transgender and Intersex Sons & Daughters

We are holding a special support meeting for parents with transgendered and intersex sons and daughters.

These parents are always welcome at the usual PFLAG meetings, but I believe that sometimes they feel very alone. So with this in mind, we would like to provide an opportunity for them to meet together and perhaps become a support to each other.

PFLAG meetings help to break the isolation for parents with lesbian daughters and gay sons and we would like to offer this opportunity to parents of transgender and intersex sons and daughters.

This special meeting will be held on Saturday, 7 February 2009 at 1pm (30 Helen Street, Newstead). For more information please call Shelley on 0409-363-335 or email pflagbris@hotmail.com.

PFLAG Brisbane Inc. - Annual Report 2008

Compiled by Shelley Argent, (convenor, PFLAG Brisbane)

GUEST SPEAKERS:

- ★ Paul Martin – our favourite Psychologist
- ★ Yvette Burgess – LGBT Police Co-ordinator
- ★ Chris Pye – Counsellor from Relationship Australia
- ★ Adrian - A gay dad who discussed his life with children and ex wife

ARTICLES:

- ★ LOTL (Lesbians On The Loose)
- ★ Queensland Pride
- ★ Kindred – Parenting magazine
- ★ Connect - magazine for North Queensland.
- ★ Sun Herald (we must be making headway when we receive calls from mainstream papers for comments, which is happening more and more these days)

NEW RESOURCES:

- ★ Tips for parents disclosing their sexual and gender diversity
- ★ Brochure - for parents wanting to understand but not knowing the questions to ask
- ★ An information pack "Addressing Homophobia in the Workplace".

Milestones, Achievements & Events:

In January and September I gave a talk to Gay and Lesbian Welfare Association (GLWA) Trainee Counsellors.

In February a number of PFLAG members went along for training regarding suicide with the GLWA Counsellor Trainees. I also gave a talk to Lifeline Counsellors.

In March we were part recipients of the Big Gay Day

held at the Wickham Hotel, where we raised \$17,500 for PFLAG by collecting the admission fees. This was a huge day for all of us, but well worth the effort.

In April I was invited to participate in the 2020 Summit which entailed a couple of visits to Canberra because I was on a Pre-Summit Committee. From the Summit came Elizabeth Broderick Commissioner Women and Sex discrimination asking to meet with lesbian mums to learn about their issues and discriminations as same sex couples. A morning tea was held so she could meet and listen to their concerns.

I was also asked to speak to a class of Year 11 and 12 students at Tullawong State High School near Caboolture in April. This was very heartening as all the kids were interested and had intelligent questions.

I was asked to speak at the launch of Pride month in June and PFLAG also had a presence at Pride Fair Day where we marched in the parade and had our usual stall for those seeking information.

I spoke at the Stonewall Service at the Metropolitan Community Church, which was quite an honour, as this was in celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Human Rights March.

During June and July I was on National Radio and ABC Western Queensland talking about family issues. Throughout the year I was on Joy Radio from Melbourne discussing current events relating to the LGBT Community and PFLAG projects.

Finally, in June we held an LGBTIQ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer) Forum to discuss ways we could empower the community to help themselves and also to see where the government could be more supportive.

In July I spoke at an International Human Rights Conference at Byron Bay. One day I was asked to speak for about 30 minutes on how a parent perceives the discrimination our same sex attracted sons and daughters experience. The second day I was on a panel talking generally about LGBT issues.

In July, PFLAG also submitted a paper to the HEROC (Human Rights & Equal Opportunities Commission) regarding the discrimination the Transgender and Intersex Community face.

In August we were part recipients of the profits from the Great Bake Off at the Sportsman's Hotel for which we received \$9,500. These funds provided for the translation of the brochures "Sexuality is not a Choice" and "Questions Parents don't know what to Ask" into 17 languages and will be available on the PFLAG website just after Christmas when the website will be undergoing some enhancements.

In September I was an opening speaker at the launch of Cairns Pride. I also joined in the Pride march on the Saturday night and on the Sunday attended the Pride Day held in the botanical gardens. I also met Cairns PFLAG mum, Di Clarke.

September saw the PFLAG group collating 5,000 Information Packs addressing Homophobia in the Workplace. We received funding from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund to make this possible and the Unions have shown great interest in this resource. They have so far distributed all 5,000 packs and are having further discussions about printing more.

In October, we were approached by a Coalition of LGBT groups in Brisbane to provide funding for a Galaxy Poll. The State Government keeps telling us that Queenslanders aren't ready for same sex equality, but we propose to ask them ourselves. We know it's a

gamble but we think it's worth it. The questions have now been decided and are with Galaxy for refinement.

We have also provided funding for a study into how LGBT youth perceive police and vice versa. This we believe appropriate because there is a lot of upheaval between police and the gay community at this time. This is being conducted by a lecturer at QUT, Angela Dwyer.

This year, Margaret has come on board as the person who keeps the helpline working and she comes into the office each Tuesday and every second Wednesday. Margaret is a great help to me personally as she is very reliable and capable, so thank you Margaret.

We have also been involved with the problems concerning policing issues and the LGBT community. We have been asked to write letters of support about some police officers and letters of concern about others to the Police Commissioner and have attended meetings regarding this issue. I have spoken on gay radio in Melbourne and been quoted in Sydney newspapers, but the Queensland mainstream media is ignoring the whole issue.

I was asked to speak at a local Rotary meeting a couple of weeks ago and did this from a local perspective. The majority of the audience was very supportive.

Finally, we are also in the process of putting together a PFLAG Pack for indigenous families. This is being done with Brett Mooney of Queensland Association of Healthy Communities (QAHC) with the assistance of the indigenous community.

I would like to thank everyone on the Committee this year. We have worked well together. It isn't a fluke that we have achieved so much, it's the enthusiasm shown by everyone involved with PFLAG in Brisbane that makes the group a success.

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PFLAG is totally voluntary & organised by parents.
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Name: _____

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Membership type:

Family (\$25 annually - I have included a cheque or Australia Post Money Order)

Corporate (\$100 annually [incl. website & news letter advertising]; I have included a cheque or Australia Post money Order)

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Pay online at: www.pflagbrisbane.org.au, or into our account (*Bank of Qld / BSB: 124-001 / Acct: 2023-8607*).

Thank you!