



President's Welcome

A new year has begun with plenty already happening for us. We have had our first meeting of the year with our new committee and it's heartening to once again be working with keen people who want to be active and willing to promote PFLAG.

This year there will be days when no one is in the office as is advertised, but because of my increased travel it isn't possible to be in two places at once. Margaret will be in at least one day a week, so please don't hesitate to either leave a message or call my mobile if the office phone goes to voice mail. Please be patient and remember we are volunteers.

- Shelley Argent
President, PFLAG Brisbane

Next Meeting

PFLAG Brisbane's next meeting will be on **Saturday 26th March 2011**.

Time: 1.30pm

Place: 30 Helen Street, Newstead (down the driveway to the Training Room at the rear of the building)

Our most recent meeting

Thank you to Sally Morris from Open Doors who came and spoke about LGBTIQ youth at risk. Sally was very enlightening and gave some of the new parents tips on how young people feel when they first "come out."

It was great to have input from Steven and Michael who also gave personal accounts about their feelings, concerns and general input on this topic. I think this helped many parents gain more understanding about their own sons and daughters.

Many thanks to the parents who brought dried goods and meals to add to the Open Doors Food Bank. I am sure the young people will be most thankful when they see the shelves well stocked.

Big Gay Day (13th March 2011)

Thank you to the Wickham Hotel for making us part of the Big Gay Day. This is their major fundraising day for the gay community and they have again included us as part recipients of the profit from the day.

The generous funds from this day always assist us to keep moving ahead either with advertising or extra resources which is so important for PFLAG.

Fun in Canberra

Being selected as Queensland Senior Australian of the Year for 2011 is/was a huge surprise and great honour. This now means I represent the most homophobic age group - the over 60s' - which I must say I think is great.

I just hope I will have the opportunity to break down some barriers and change the thinking of many in the older age group. I hope I will be able to send the message that to be accepting of diverse sexuality and how they can pass on positive messages to their teenage "grandies".

While in Canberra I went to Yarralumla and the Lodge along with the other recipients which was all good fun. I believe most of us walked away feeling there were no losers. I met some of the most interesting, unassuming people who have done and continue to do amazing work.

The winners deserved the awards.

- Shelley Argent

Marriage Equality

This will be one of our main focuses this year. As National Spokesperson, Shelley went to Canberra in February to meet with several Members of Parliament. Shelley had two other parents (Lorraine from Gympie and Geoff from Sydney) with her, passing on the message that, as parents, we want equality for our lesbian daughters and gay sons.

Shelley was also in Sydney and Melbourne in February doing workshops for those in the gay community who want to be part of making change regarding marriage equality but don't know where to start. She was part of a team, including Rodney and Alex from Australia Marriage Equality (AME) passing on ideas and hopefully motivating people to stand up and be counted. This is so important.

Statistics are showing that approximately 80% of Australians are either in favour of, or don't care if marriage equality should occur in this country. But Christian and family lobby groups are of course very active in trying to prevent equality. So it's very important that parents become involved and make contact with their MPs either by mail or phone.

PFLAG Website

Over the past few years, the way in which many people are contacting PFLAG has changed. The stats from our website show that the site receives over 3000 direct hits per month. Booklets are also being downloaded at a great rate. As an example, the booklet "Sexuality is not a Choice," in English, has been downloaded approx 400 times per month and this booklet (in various other languages), up to 600 times per month.

Another positive is that the meetings are growing, but the issues are less intense than they were 10 years ago. Parents still have issues of shame, blame and guilt but many are now more concerned about the welfare of their son or daughter. This shows me that we are an effective organization. People are seeking information to help them understand.

You can visit our new-look website at www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

Women's Weekly January Edition

We hope you saw this edition with three great stories from PFLAG parents. It's amazing how far these parents have come. Ron and Diane are Brisbane parents who really struggled when their son Mark first "came out." Their tears are legendary. Congratulations to them, they are the most "out there" parents now and they can run but never hide again.

We are sure their whole family is very proud of them, as are the families of Gillian and Narelle, the Sydney parents who also took part. WELL DONE!

Newsletter

Should you prefer to receive your newsletter via email please let us know pflagbris@hotmail.com - maybe you prefer both, that is not a problem either.

Membership

Annual membership (\$25 per family) is now due. Corporate membership is \$100 per year which entitles a business to advertise in our newsletter and on our website – if you own a business or know someone who does - they may like to advertise with us.

Membership application/renewal and donations may be made via our website – www.pflagbrisbane.org.au – click on "Membership".

A membership form has also been enclosed with this newsletter should you desire to send cheque/money order made payable "PFLAG Brisbane Inc". It is important to write the name in full as shown.

Thank you for your support.



Celebrating
a life takes
planning.

We give you
time.



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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CLEVELAND	3286 5069	REDCLIFFE	3284 5268
DARRA	3375 6788	SANDGATE	3869 3077
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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 could be of real benefit to you and your family, or simply call and book a time with one of us.

Phone 3211 1117 or you can email us on info@centreforhumanpotential.com.au

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pflag

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PFLAG is totally voluntary & organised by parents.
Please support us. You can assist by advertising here.
For more information, please contact Shelley Argent.

PFLAG Brisbane Annual Membership Form

Please complete the form below and return to PFLAG. You can also pay online, via www.pflagbrisbane.org.au. Larger donations are always welcome. Thanks for your support!

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing address:

Email: _____

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 - made out to "PFLAG BRISBANE INC.")

Mail to: PO Box 1372 Eagle Farm BC, QLD 4009 , or...

Bring to: 30 Helen Street, Newstead 4006, or...

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

Thank you!