



Newsletter September 2014

This has been a very busy time between meetings. And, for a band of volunteers I feel we do very well. People are always ready to put up their hands to volunteer and happy to step up when needed.

Unfortunately, this has been a year of change. Donna Goddard needed to resign as President earlier this year due to personal family issues and Janet Berry our Secretary has also just resigned hence, my "not so pretty" newsletter.

We would like to thank Janet for her hard work while as Secretary of PFLAG Brisbane and her effort with the Safe School Project. Even though Janet will no longer be secretary, she will continue with the Safe School Project which is great news for all concerned.

Guest Speaker at the upcoming PFLAG meeting:

Heather Corkhill from the Anti Discrimination Commission Queensland will come along to give an informal talk on what they do and the service they provide.

Time: 1.30pm

Place: 30 Helen Street, Newstead

Date: Saturday, 11th October

Guest Speaker at the support group meeting for PFLAG's Parent of Trans*

Dr. Fiona Bishop and her partner Gwyneth will tell their story. I feel this will be most interesting for the parents attending.

Time: 2pm

Date: Saturday 18th October

Place: my home so please call 0409 363 335 or email pflagbris@bigpond.com for my address.

Now on with what has been happening.

Pride Fair Day:

This was a fun day held at New Farm Park with lots of colour and rainbows. Thanks to Debbie, Jenny, Pasi and Antoneta for their time on the stall talking to people and providing information about what PFLAG does while handing out resources.

This is a day for parents to enjoy a day in the LGBTIQQ world listening to music, getting information from stalls and talking with other parents who come along to say hello.

To me what seems most lovely is/are the young people who come along to chat with us. Many just want to say thank you to PFLAG for being there for them and loved ones during their "coming out" process.

School Safety Project:

Janet Berry organised a special event with Daniel Witthaus as the guest speaker. The event was held at Milton where those on the Safe School Committee and others interested, came to listen to Daniel discuss homophobia in schools and what other States are doing. Plus he discussed his program that is used in schools called Pride and Prejudice.

Daniel is very knowledgeable about this topic. A couple of years ago he drove around Australia speaking with random people about homophobic attitudes. We all thought he was a little crazy, but the outcome was a pleasant surprise.

Marriage Equality:

As National Spokesperson, this is an issue that is keeping me very busy. In the last 2 months I have been travelling with Rodney Croome from Australia Marriage Equality doing workshops and speaking at public events encouraging the general community to make contact with their Federal MP's to make it clear they are in favour of marriage equality.

We have been to Geelong twice, the Gold Coast and Melbourne speaking to the community, doing workshops and holding stalls in areas where Members of Parliament are undecided about the issue. I have also been to Canberra twice since the last meeting talking to MP's in Parliament House.

We need you as parents to also speak to your MP about the need for marriage equality.

So far we are hearing that most of their constituents aren't in favour of equality, but we know this isn't correct from all of the polls, which are showing that the vast majority of Australians do want equality, but MP's aren't willing to make a stand.

This is where you can make a difference.

Your silence may ensure the discrimination continues and none of us want our children to suffer. If you want more information please check out the Crosby Textor Poll taken in July 2014 and/or go to our website pflagbrisbane.org.au for more information and then make contact with your Federal MP and tell him/her you want marriage equality for your son or daughter.

Updating Resources:

As most would know we received a grant of over \$30,000 to update our resources. We are on the way to updating now. As completed they will be added to our website and then sent to the printer.

As we have been updating I realise just how times have changed not only for our sons and daughters "coming out" but how parental attitudes have changed in so many ways in the last 10-15 years when some were written.

It is no longer the extent of shame, blame and guilt. There is still shock and lack of understanding why, **BUT** so many are quickly moving to "how do I support him/her?" and "where can they find a social group for him/her" which I think is just fantastic.

Plus, young people seem to be "coming out" to family so much earlier. It is now generally 17 not 27 which lessens many of the negative impacts that many have suffered in the past due to keeping secrets and for some living a double life for too long.

Mardi Gras 2015:

Who is interested in going to Sydney next year to be part of the PFLAG family who march? Or perhaps, you

may prefer to watch. This is always fun and makes everyone feel valued and appreciated. As a mum I feel it really is quite special to be part of our LGBTIQ sons and daughters one day of celebration of who they are.

Some of us who have already decided will soon be booking accommodation so if you would like to be part of the group please let me know.

The weekend is the 7/8th March.

University of Sunshine Coast Campus Ally Program and PFLAG Contact on Sunshine Coast

PFLAG was invited to go and give a presentation to the Straight Allies on this campus. It was well attended with people very interested in how they could assist and support the students on campus.

From this event we met two parents who are happy to become the contacts for the Sunshine Coast region.

So we would like to welcome Laura and Darryl to the PFLAG family.

Darryl can be contacted on Mob 0422 912 822 and Laura email: lpaine@usc.edu.au

Annual General Meeting:

If you would like to be part of the committee member or hold an official position on the committee please let us know.

The AGM will be held at the November meeting, so you have plenty of time to consider. Also if you have a particular project that PFLAG can consider please let us know.

Helpline: 0400 767 832

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If you or someone you know needs support please don't hesitate to make contact. Or bring them along to the meetings.

