



P F L A G

# PFLAG Cincinnati Quarterly Newsletter

## PFLAG Cincinnati

Volume 23, Issue 1

Winter 2008

### Special points of interest:

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- ☺ PFLAG and The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center—Page 5
- ☺ Straight For Equality—Page 8

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## Letter from the President

Dear PFLAG Cincinnati members and friends,

I can not believe that it has been over three months since Lynne Lefebvre and I took over leadership of the organization. Even with the holidays, the board has managed to continue the momentum in creating and executing our plans for 2008. Dorothy Byers has been leading the planning effort for a fantastic free event that will be held at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in March. See page 5 for an article by Dorothy that will provide all the information you need regarding this great event. The board hopes that you will be able to attend AND that you will pass the word about the event so we have a large turnout.

We had a speaking engagement with the P&G GLBT Employee group—GaBLE and we are scheduled to speak to a class at Xavier University and participate in a continuing education class for the social workers at Jewish Family services.

We have a new person that is supporting your Chapter's board. Dan Ley is our new scholarship chair. He is assuming the leadership of the scholarship committee from Rick Stackpole. Dan has a strong experience

base, with a focus in the education community that suits his new role. While Dan served on the 2007 scholarship committee Rick was mentoring Dan on the scholarship process and leadership role responsibilities. Dan has assumed all leadership responsibilities and is actively executing against the 2008 plan. Please see page 3 for an article from Dan regarding the 2008 Greater Cincinnati PFLAG Scholarship Program. You will find all the details about how to submit, when to submit and the rules.

Note: You will find Dan's bio on page 6.

The board would like to thank Rick Stackpole for his leadership, drive and dedication to our scholarship activities over the years. Through his leadership we have selected and awarded scholarships to students that truly deserved our financial support.

Closely tied to the scholarship fund is of course our fund raising activity. The board is currently planning several fund raising events and designing a mail campaign for membership and the scholarship fund. I can't share any details right now, but trust me this is a major focus area for the board, and you will see some actions

executed in this area very shortly.

And finally, you may notice as you turn the pages, the newsletter has been through a minor restructure. There is a new Membership & Change of Address form on page 9. The Nuts & Bolts section has been removed and replaced with a new section called Chapter Information and Resources that can be found on page 10. This new section is the result of completing tasks (there are many left!) that the board addressed in our effort to better market the resources that PFLAG of Greater Cincinnati can offer to the community. In this new section you will find a summary of each of the major sub committees/activities and directions on how to engage them. We also reworded the Meetings section and included links for directions and instructions on how to request information.

Continued on page 7

## Mission

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons, their families and friends through:

Support, to cope with an adverse society,  
Education, to enlighten an ill-informed public, and  
Advocacy, to end discrimination and secure civil rights.



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## Meetings

Our monthly chapter meetings are on the **second Tuesday of each month** from 7:00 – 9:30 P.M. at Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church (link for directions [www.mtauburnpresby.org/more\\_about\\_us.html](http://www.mtauburnpresby.org/more_about_us.html)) located at 103 William Howard Taft Rd, 45219. The monthly **chapter meeting is open to everyone**, including parents, friends and family of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons, as well as to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons or anyone inter-

ested in learning more about the topic. Meetings are completely confidential. What is said there stays there. Confidentiality is important to most of us for one reason or another, and at all time we respect the rights of others.

The chapter also has a monthly board meeting that is held on the Thursday before the monthly chapter meeting, starting at 6:30 P.M. at various loca-

tions. Paid up members of the chapter are welcome to attend the monthly board meeting.

Please send an email to [info@pflagcinci.org](mailto:info@pflagcinci.org) or call the PFLAG Help Line at 513-721-7900 if you need more information about the monthly chapter meeting OR information about attending the chapter board meeting.

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## Newsletter

This newsletter is published quarterly (usually sometime in the first month of the quarter). The chapter would benefit greatly from your involvement in the creation of this newsletter.

Send an email to the editor at [newsletter@pflagcinci.org](mailto:newsletter@pflagcinci.org) if you have an announcement that should be included, an idea for an article, or even better, would be interested in writing

an article. Also, feel free to send an email to the editor if you have any suggestions or comments regarding your chapter's quarterly newsletter's content or design.

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## 2007/2008 Officers & Chairpersons/Board Members

### Executive Board

Co—President: Mark Smith & Lynne Lefebvre  
president@pflagcinci.org  
Vice President: Michael Cotrell  
vicepresident@pflagcinci.org  
Secretary: Monica Plett  
secretary@pflagcinci.org  
Treasurer: Dorothy Byers  
treasurer@pflagcinci.org  
Members at Large  
Tom Jenkins, Marti Kwiatkowski, and  
Tim Gross

### Committee Chairs

Advocacy Chair: Lynne Lefebvre  
Hotline: Lois Kay  
Email Liaison: Tom Jenkins  
Library: **OPEN**  
Membership: Tom Jenkins  
Newsletter: Tim Gross  
newsletter@pflagcinci.org  
Programs: Marti Kwiatkowski  
Refreshments: Tim & Carol Egbert  
Speaker's Bureau: **OPEN**  
Scholarship: Dan Ley  
Scholarship@pflagcinci.org  
Webmaster: Tim Gross  
webmaster@pflagcinci.org

**WHEN YOU NO LONGER NEED PFLAG. PFLAG NEEDS YOU!!**

## PFLAG Cincinnati Chapter Meetings

7—9:30 pm  
Mt Auburn Presbyterian  
Church, 103 W. H. Taft, 45219

February 12  
March 11

April 8  
May 13  
June 10

July 8  
August 12  
September 9

October 14  
November 11  
December 9

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## Events

### Cincinnati PFLAG Scholarship Application Available

February 4, 2008  
<http://pflagcinci.org/Scholarship.html>

### GLSEN Social

February 21, 2008 6:30 pm  
Bean Haus, Covington  
<http://www.beanhaus.com>

### Rev. Brad Schmeling Freedom Forum

PFLAG Cincinnati and The Na-  
tional Underground Railroad Free-  
dom Center  
March, 4, 2008 7:00 pm  
The National Underground Rail-  
road Freedom Center  
[www.freedomcenter.org](http://www.freedomcenter.org)

### “Freedom’s Sisters” Open with Singing

MUSE Women’s Chorus  
March, 14, 2008 7:00 pm  
Cincinnati Museum Center  
[www.musechoir.org](http://www.musechoir.org)

### Revenge of the Divas

Cincinnati Men’s Chorus  
March, 28 & 29, 2008 8:07 pm  
Gallagher Student Center Theater,  
Xavier University  
[www.cincinnatiomenschorus.org](http://www.cincinnatiomenschorus.org)

### Hope Come True - The 12th New Spirituals

MUSE Women’s Chorus  
April 5, 2008 8:00 pm  
April 6, 2008 7:00 pm  
House of Joy  
5918 Hamilton Ave.  
[www.musechoir.org](http://www.musechoir.org)

### Cincinnati PFLAG Scholarship Application Due

April 18, 2008

### PFLAG Ohio State Conference

April 26, 2008  
Warren, Ohio

### GLSEN Prom

April 26, 2008  
Contemporary Arts Center  
[www.glsencincinnati.org](http://www.glsencincinnati.org)

Every Saturday on WAIF 88.3 FM  
Alternating Currents - 3-5pm  
Weekly Gay and Lesbian public  
affairs radio program featuring  
news, interviews, music, and infor-  
mation on what is happening in  
the local community.  
<http://www.waif883.org/>

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## PFLAG Scholarship Applications Available! By Dan Ley

It is that time of the year again when high school seniors start thinking about where they’re going to school next year and parents start thinking about how they’re going to pay for it. It is with great pleasure that we announce the 2008 PFLAG Scholarship Award program!

The scholarship is available to high school seniors and current college students who demonstrate positive involvement in the GLBT community. Applicants must also be a resident of or attending college in the Greater Cincinnati area.

The goals of the scholarship program are to: (1) recognize out-

standing gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-gendered, intersex and straight supportive students in the local community, (2) encourage continuing education for individuals involved with the GLBT community, and (3) foster a positive image of these people in society.

This is the 17<sup>th</sup> year that PFLAG is offering financial support for high school and college students through the Scholarship Award program. Since the program’s beginning, ninety-six deserving students have received over \$100,000 in scholarship awards.

Additional information about

the scholarship program and applica-  
tions are available on the website  
([www.pflagcinci.org](http://www.pflagcinci.org)). Local schools  
also received application materials via  
mail. All applications must be post-  
marked by Friday, April 18, 2008. Call  
284-6485 or e-mail  
[scholarship@pflagcinci.org](mailto:scholarship@pflagcinci.org) with ques-  
tions.

Please help us spread the word and  
support fundraising events for the  
Scholarship Award program. We would  
like to honor as many deserving stu-  
dents as we can; your support is greatly  
appreciated!

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## A Year in Review: By Jane Biddinger

January is a month for reflection. January is a month for setting goals. January is a month for doing anything that doesn't require a debit or credit card. As I hang the 2008 calendar, I look back at the year just past—my personal year in review. What about those resolutions I made as 2007 dawned with promise? Did I keep them? A step on the scale claims I did not. January is a month to replace a defective scale.

I resolve to start this new year with a sense of optimism, so I recall those special moments of the year past that made my spirit soar. Vacations. Holidays. Birthdays eagerly awaited by the grandchildren. My own milestone birthday ending in a zero, but I focus on the fact I ended the year vertically, not horizontally, a priest praying over me.

I also review the past year for accomplishments and successes to inspire and encourage me in the year ahead. Undaunted by my scale encounter, I add a category to my list—gay progress in 2007. I start with the global and national news grabbers. As I google, I hum a few bars of *Always Look on the Bright Side of Life* from the musical comedy *Spamalot*. My first match is *Gay near Progress, Indiana*. A map shows the location of Gay Street. The second match? *Osaka – 2007 - Benjamin, Wariner, Gay Progress*. An athlete named Tyson Gay won the 200-meter heat in 20.46 seconds and progressed to the next round of competition.

The third is an article entitled *FDA Reiterates Ban on Gay Men Donating Blood despite Red Cross Objections*. Not good news. The writer goes on to cite estimates that 62,300 persons per year are rejected. Looking for the positive, I note that Red Cross calls this action medically and scientifically unjustified.

My thoughts run to the military and its *Don't Ask, Don't Tell* policy that I dream one day will add *Don't Matter* to its name. My googling locates an article reporting the military kicked out 58 Arabic linguists be-

cause they were gay. I question their thinking or lack thereof. Then I attempt to reason like one of them. I suspect that soon the commander-in-chief or one of the generals will unveil top-secret high-level surveillance films showing gay interpreters speaking a form of Arabic different from that of straight terrorists. Add to that the testimony of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad that there are no homosexuals in Iran or Iraq. One must, with right-wing logic, come to the conclusion that these gay language specialists could not possibly keep our country safe and free.

The actual positive is that Members of the House of Representatives wrote the House Armed Services Committee chairman that the continued loss of such “capable, highly skilled Arabic linguists continues to compromise our national security during time of war.” Some elected officials are enlightened at last.

I move on to the ever-volatile subject of religion and read about the split in the Episcopal Church over the ordination of openly gay Bishop Gene Robinson. In addition, I discover a message delivered by the Pope on World Peace Day titled *The Human Family, A Community of Peace*. He calls for a dismantling of nuclear weapons and environmental responsibility. I think we'd all agree these actions would make our world a more peaceful planet to inhabit. It just might cut down the number of Prozac prescriptions to boot. He says other wonderful things, one being, “All peoples”—as the Second Vatican Council declared—“are one community and have one origin because God caused the whole human race to dwell on the face of the earth (cf. *Acts 17:26*); they also have one final end, God”. All people? Score one for the good guys. No gay exclusion here.

But the Holy Father, who is no fan of gay marriage and most probably cannot imagine a homosexual stepping foot into Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, goes on to say, “... everything that serves to weaken the

family based on the marriage of a man and a woman...constitutes an objective obstacle on the road to peace.”

At first reading, and not so loosely translated, this can be construed to mean that gay marriage is an obstacle to peace. Go figure. Two persons pledging to love, honor, and cherish one another are a threat to peace? More frightening and dangerous than unbridled genocide, rampant disease and hunger, and terrorists who kill in God's name? I ask, have Elton John and his partner ever been summoned to Camp David to sign a peace accord? Surely this is not the true message here.

I examine the quote further. I have questions. Just how does gay marriage weaken the family based on the marriage of a man and a woman? Not that I consider myself an expert on marriage or smarter and more knowledgeable than the Pope, but my husband and I will be married 40 years this month, and that makes us veterans of the establishment. Have we remained with one another because gay marriage is not an option? Don't think so. If gay marriage is legalized tomorrow, will we cease to love, comfort, and honor one another forsaking all others? No way. What negative effect could gay marriage possibly have on our relationship as man and wife? Darned if I know.

It is not gay persons who weaken the marriage of a man and a woman. Marriage is the most public and private of all unions. Ultimately, it is the participants who build and strengthen them. Likewise, it is the participants who weaken and destroy them. Gay persons are not seeking to end marriage. They are seeking to participate fully in the blessings and rights that come with it.

Therefore, after careful analysis, and in keeping with my resolution to seek the positive, I decide the Pope's message, in the strictest of translations, is not directed to gay persons at all.



## A Year in Review: continued

I'm already of caucuses and primaries, but the Pope's comments spark me to check the candidates' positions on gay marriage. Clinton opposed. Edwards opposed. Guiliano opposed. Huckabee? Don't know why I even looked. Obama opposed. !

Romney opposed. One positive, though it falls far short of the quest for equality, is the acceptance of gay unions by a number of candidates. A small step in the right direction. Until recently, the subject would never have been broached.

I move on to personal involvement. My husband Bill and I are members of a group named Concerned Catholics for Gay and Lesbian Inclusion (CCGLI). As a team, we present educational sessions to parishes. Ours is a three-part presenta-

tion—myths about homosexuality, personal witness, and scripture. Bill and I speak of our personal experiences and did so this past year at our home parish. When we spoke there a number of years ago, the pastor received numerous complaints and even a threat. This time around, he received only one phone call, and it was rather tame. Our audience was supportive.

Bill and I had the opportunity to represent PFLAG at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. We were invited to join a class called *Critical Thinking about Family Relationships: LGBT People in Families*. We were both surprised to find that this conservative university had such a class and that it was well attended and filled with receptive students.

I wasn't present for the moment that was for me the touching and powerful of 2007. It was a small moment. A personal moment. A telling moment. My daughter-in-law told me about it. She was trying to convince our 3 ½ year-old granddaughter who likes to climb into bed with Mommy and Daddy, that sleeping in her own bed is a good thing. Mommy told her that she and daddy have their own bed. Grandma and Grandpa have their own bed. To which our granddaughter added, with no hesitation at all, "Uncle Greg and Uncle Mike have their own bed."

Yes, 2007 was a positively good year. Bring on 2008

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## PFLAG Collaborates with National Underground Freedom Center: By Dorothy Byers

PFLAG is partnering with the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center to host a Community Forum at 7 pm on Tuesday March 4. The Forum will feature Brad Schmeling, the Lutheran pastor who was defrocked last July in Atlanta because he is gay (OK with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) and now in a committed relationship (not OK). Brad grew up in Cincinnati and his mother Judy is a former president of the PFLAG Cincinnati chapter.

Brad will be part of a panel featuring an additional pastor (not yet confirmed) who will probably NOT take Brad's position, thus generating opportunity for exposure and discussion for the community at large. The National Un-

derground Railroad Freedom Center follows the format of the Bruegeman Center for Dialogue at Xavier University in presenting Community Forums. Community Forums have a freedom theme, which in this case relates to freedom to practice one's religion. Caracole, a Freedom Station of the National Underground Railroad, is a sponsor of the event.

The Forum will be free and open to the public, and will take place in the Harriet Tubman Theater. The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center is at 50 E. Freedom Way, Cincinnati 45202 ([www.freedomcenter.org](http://www.freedomcenter.org)) The back of the Center faces 2nd Street, between Vine and Walnut. Vine Street becomes Rosa Parks,

and the Harriet Tubman Theater entrance is on the Rosa Parks side.

Brad's Atlanta congregation is very supportive of him. Prior to March 4, you can learn more about his situation at <http://www.stjohnsatlanta.org/trialupdate.html>. A documentary of Brad's situation will be shown at the PFLAG meeting February 12 to prepare us for the big event. Plan to attend the Community Forum, bring your friends, and spread the word!

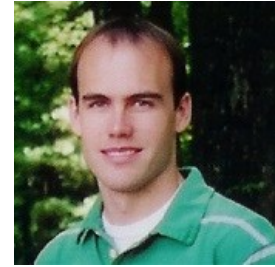
For further information contact Dorothy Byers at 513-559-0271.

# New PFLAG Cincinnati Board Member

## Dan Ley—scholarship@pflagcinci.org

I am originally from Wisconsin and came to Cincinnati to attend graduate school at UC. That was over five years ago, and I've never left, as I currently work as a school psychologist. My first involvement with PFLAG came two years ago when my friend asked me to join the scholarship committee. I am

actively involved with the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), having served four years on the board as the Membership and Volunteer Relations Chair. I've also helped organize and volunteered for the GLBTQ Youth Summit.



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## ISQCCBE Check Presentation



Michael Cotrell a.k.a. Empress XVI Brooklyn Steele-Tate of the Imperial Sovereign Queen City Court of the Buckeye Empire All of Ohio, Inc presents PFLAG with a check from her reign as Empress XVI.

Pictured Dorothy Byers (Past President), Michael and Mark Smith (Current Co-President)

## Marie, Dorothy, Dan Thank You



Mark Smith (Current President) thanks outgoing Board Member Marie Jenkins and Past President Dorothy Byers and Dan Parsley at our November 2008 meeting.

Punctured Marie, Mark and Dorothy

(not pictured Dan Parsley)

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## Kevin R. Bleyle, P&G GO GaBLE Coordinator

Lynne and Kent Lefebvre came to speak about PFLAG to a subset of P&G's GaBLE organization (the GLBT Employee Resource Group). About 10 GaBLE members who are based in the downtown offices and participate in a monthly lunch group attended. The downtown monthly lunch group acknowledges the importance of raising awareness of the issues facing the Greater Cincinnati GLBT Community and to make connections for any mutual support needs. So far GLSEN and PFLAG have spoken, with plans in the works to bring in STOP AIDS! and other organiza-

tions. The plan is then to have these organizations go to several other local P&G offices which have monthly lunch meetings to have similar discussions. P&G was named as one of the five best companies in 2007 for GLBT employees by The Advocate.

As usual, Lynne and Kent spoke from their hearts thus putting everyone at ease with their open and supporting words. This made the first 15 minutes of the discussion turn into a "when and how I came out both to family/friends and at work" sharing session. It was great and exactly what PFLAG at-

tempts to accomplish within the GLBT community. They went on to speak about the mission of PFLAG, how the local chapter is organized, what types of monthly/yearly events PFLAG coordinates and how individuals can get involved. Several people were unaware of what PFLAG did both nationally and locally and expressed interest in learning more (especially those who had children or other family members still struggling through their 'coming out' experiences as relatives of GLBT individuals).

## The Change; By Lynne Lefebvre

"There are moments when history passes you so close you can smell its breath, you can reach your hand out and touch it on its flank ..."

(from a poem by Tony Hoagland.)

I read this while drinking a well deserved cup of tea after a meeting at the Mariemont School district. Many years have passed since my children graduated from this fine hub of learning and I am here to report that things

have changed. Our son Ross never spoke to a teacher, counselor or even friend about confusion over his sexuality. The times, the place did not welcome such questions. Last week Kathy Laufman from GLSEN accompanied me to the offices of the new Superintendent of Schools. Also in attendance were their three counselors. Our intention of offering assistance and support was welcomed. In return we learned that there are

openly gay staff, children and even same sex parent families in the village of Mariemont.

Sometimes all you have to do is have a conversation to find out things really have changed, it is a better time and place.

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## Letter from the President continued

And last but certainly not least, we reworked the section that discusses membership so it is more up to date. The key focus of this round of changes was marketing and awareness, with the hope that it will drive a better understanding of the full scope of your chapter's resources and entice people to join this wonderful organization. You can expect that the

newsletter will slowly evolve throughout 2008 as we transform it into an even better communication vehicle.

If you have any comments or suggestions about the newsletter or the organization in general, please send us an email at

[president@pflagcinci.org](mailto:president@pflagcinci.org). We hope to see you at the chapter meetings on the second Tuesday of the month

(see page 2 for details/location)!

Sincerely,

Mark Smith & Lynne Lefebvre  
Co-presidents PFLAG Cincinnati

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## Cooking with John Braised Meatballs

6 oz Day Old French Bread, cut up  
1 cup Whole Milk  
1 3/4 LBS Ground Beef  
2 Eggs  
1 med onion finely chopped  
1/2 cups+ 1 TBS chopped Italian Parsley  
2 tsp salt  
1 tea pepper  
1 tsp summer savory  
flour  
2 TBS butter

1 1/2 tsp olive oil  
2 cup dry red wine  
1/4 cup tomato paste

3 cups beef broth

Heat oven to 350.

Combine bread and milk, submerge and let set 10 minutes. Squeeze milk from bread and discard milk. Mix beef, eggs, onion, 1/2 cup parsley, salt, pepper, savory, blend well. Form into desired sized meatballs and Bake for 30 minutes.

Dust Meat balls with flour and shake off excess. Melt butter with oil over med-high heat. Add meat balls and sauté until brown on all sides, (about 3 minutes). Wisk together wine and tomato paste. Add Wine mixture to meat balls and bring to a boil. Continue to boil until thickened, stirring frequently (about 5 minutes). Add broth, reduce heat to medium, simmer until thickened stirring frequently (about 15 minutes).

Serve with mashed potatoes and garnish with remaining parsley.





## New PFLAG Initiative: Straight for Equality

*"I always wanted to be one of those people who would make things change for my gay friends – I just wasn't sure how or where to do it."*

As a straight PFLAG supporter, have you thought the same thing? As a gay individual, do you have straight friends who feel this way? Across the country, thousands of allies - straight individuals who may or may not have a family member who is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (GLBT) - are seeing big changes in the way their GLBT colleagues and friends are treated. While many of these changes are good, there's still a long way to go before equality is reached. The problem is that many of these allies want to help, but just don't know how, or if they're needed, or, for that matter, where to start.

The national PFLAG organization has launched a new program to engage these supportive straight allies.

**Straight for Equality** is a national outreach and education project to empower allies in supporting and advocating for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people in three primary arenas:

- homes
- workplaces
- communities

The following are **Ten Things To Do as a Straight Ally**. If you are GLBT, share this list with your straight friends and family members.

### **One:**

Become informed about the realities, challenges and issues affecting the lives of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people through websites, books, documentaries, and educational materials.

### **Two:**

Be open about having GLBT friends, family or acquaintances that you value, respect, and are grateful to have in your life. When you talk about them, don't omit the fact that they are GLBT.

### **Three:**

Speak up when you hear derogatory slurs or jokes and don't use them yourself.

### **Four:**

Ask, if you are unsure, how a GLBT person would like their significant other to be referred to or introduced, rather than avoiding acknowledgment of the relationship.

### **Five:**

Help your kids learn about and appreciate all different kinds of families. Be mindful of the day-to-day messages they receive about GLBT people and issues in school, from friends, and on TV. Talk with them about these issues.

### **Six:**

Quit or don't join organizations that overtly discriminate. Let them know why you are leaving or not joining.

### **Seven:**

Support GLBT-owned and GLBT-friendly businesses.

### **Eight:**

Encourage and support company policies and programs that promote a positive work environment for GLBT employees at your workplace. If your company has a GLBT network group, join and encourage them to include straight allies so more people can be openly supportive of their work.

### **Nine:**

Write letters to the editor of your newspaper to comment, as a straight ally, on why you support respectful and equal treatment for GLBT people.

### **Ten:**

Call, write, e-mail, or visit public policy makers and let them know that as a straight person who votes, you support laws that extend equal rights and protections to GLBT people.

It may take a while to feel comfortable doing all ten, but there is one thing you can do right now. Go to [www.straightforequality.org](http://www.straightforequality.org) and take the **Straight for Equality Pledge** printed below. Join your name to others committed to making a difference.

## **The Straight for Equality Pledge**

**As a straight ally committed to supporting and advocating for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people, I will:**

### ***Come out.***

I will acknowledge and work on any uncertainties I may have in "coming out" as a straight ally, and, as I grow in confidence, I'll increasingly let my family, friends, and colleagues know that I support equality for GLBT people.

### ***Speak up.***

Whenever I have an opportunity, I'll say something supportive of GLBT people, whether I'm responding to a homophobic joke or remark, commenting positively about a current event, or making the case for equality in a discussion.

### ***Join in.***

I will review the many recommended actions provided through **Straight for Equality** that will help me create change in big and small ways and incorporate those with which I am comfortable into my growth as a straight ally to help move equality forward.



## Special Thanks to Tammie and Debi; By: Marti Kwiatkowski

A person's sense of being male or female resulting from a combination of genetic and environmental influences or gender awareness is usually experienced in infancy and reinforced in adolescence. The word transgender is a broad term describing the state of a person's gender identity which does not necessarily match his/her assigned gender at birth. Other words commonly used are female to male, male to female, cross-dresser, drag queen or king, gender queer, gender blender, two-spirit, and androgyny.

Gay, lesbian and bisexual people seldom appear physically different from straight people. Transgender people, however, must go through a process of transition where they might have difficulty "passing" as their correct gender. They can opt for surgery and/or hormone therapy to better align their physical bodies with their correct gender; changes can be made to names and identifying documents. This can eventually provide them with a way to pass as a biological male or female and thus disappear from the "GLBT" community.

In 2002, the PFLAG Transgender Network (TNET), became PFLAG's first "Special Affiliate," recognized with the same privileges and responsibilities as

PFLAG chapters – support for transgender persons, their friends and family joined the PFLAG family of support.

Despite this national support, most parents often find themselves tongue-tied at the mention of transgender. And it was in the spirit of education, understanding, and support that Tammie Huber and Debi Johnson, a trans couple, came and spoke at our November meeting to help everyone in our chapter understand and appreciate the uniqueness of the transgender child and adult, as well as to answer any questions we might have.

When a person is transgender, they may not have the words to describe how they see themselves in the world. Tammie and Debi want to build a community that will give a voice to the trans people so they don't have to suffer or try to combat invisibility and isolation.

Often the transgender identity is often lumped in with lesbians, gays, and bisexuals, without an understanding of its unique differences or any recognition of the need for specific services. And mainstream American culture offers little beyond the stereotypes of the drag queen, sex worker or criminal put forth by the media.

It was clear from the beginning of their presentations, that these two individuals have been on a special journey. Their willingness to share their heartfelt stories touched everyone at the meeting. Tammie and Debi agree that young people are identifying as transgender and beginning to transition earlier, and they were at our meeting to offer their support and to educate the parents, family and friends of our PFLAG chapter.

Tammie and Debi believe that if we can educate everyone about transgender issues, the younger generation will not have to endure some of the stigma and suffering they endured while growing up. They made it clear that the most difficult issue was not the extensive surgeries, but getting others to understand that they are still the same persons they always were inside. They may have changed in some ways – voice, hair, walk, talk dress, etc. ,but they still have much of the personality they always had.

Thank you Tammie and Debi for your courage and for joining us for a wonderful presentation. We are proud to have you as part of our PFLAG family.

For more information visit the National PFLAG website at [www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org) and type in TNET.

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## Crossport

Crossport is made up of cross dressers, transsexuals of both the male to female as well the female to male variety and the entire transgender category as a whole. Come as what you feel is most comfortable for you. Significant others are most welcome.

Please do not be afraid, you will be most impressed by the kindness and heartfelt welcomes you will receive from within our group.

Each individual is on a journey to discover themselves in the same way as you are. In some, it may all be very new to them,

as it may be to you. They have found through the Internet, that they are not alone after all.

Taken from:

<http://www.transgender.org/crossprt/index.html>

## General Chapter Information & Resources

**Advocacy:** Understanding and participating in advocacy for GLBT concerns at a local, state, national and international level is addressed by our Advocacy committee. If you have anything concerning awareness or participation in advocacy for GLBT concerns please contact our Advocacy chairperson at [info@pflagcinci.org](mailto:info@pflagcinci.org)

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**Hotline/Email:** Throughout this section and the entire newsletter you will see references to the hotline and various email addresses. If you ever get confused about whom to contact, you can just use the chapter Hotline or general email address. The chapter hotline can be reached via 513-721-7900. The general email address for the chapter is [info@pflagcinci.org](mailto:info@pflagcinci.org). Feel free to use these as your single point of contact for anything related to the chapter. Just keep in mind that depending on your request, the operator/email monitor may need to contact someone else in order to properly address your questions/comments.

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**Library:** Your chapter has a mobile library that is open for business at every monthly meeting. The library is an excellent resource that contains many great books and videos that address topics such as homosexuality, homosexuality and religion, coming out and GLBT issues for children and families. You are welcome to borrow any of the books or videos.

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**Membership:** PFLAG Cincinnati values your support and interest in the chapter. Your membership supports the activities of chapter which include purchasing publications for distribution at meetings and events where we are represented, books for the library, dues to National PFLAG and the printing and mailing of this newsletter. The scholarship program is funded primarily through our fund raising events and donations. If you have paid membership dues in the past, the expiration date of your membership appears on the mailing label on this newsletter. If it is time to renew your membership, please use the form included in this issue.

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**Programs:** Periodically throughout the year at the monthly meetings, a guest speaker will be included in the agenda. In the past we have had religious leaders, doctors, lawyers, financial advisors and GLBT non profit health and support leaders as guest speakers. If you have an idea or would be interested in being a guest speaker send an email to [info@pflagcinci.org](mailto:info@pflagcinci.org).

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**Scholarship:** Each year your chapter funds its own scholarship program. The scholarships are awarded annually to deserving members of the community attending local universities. More information can be found at the chapter website, [www.pflagcinci.org](http://www.pflagcinci.org) in the Scholarship Info section or by sending an email to [info@pflagcinci.org](mailto:info@pflagcinci.org). If you are interested in donating to the scholarship fund, send a check to P.O. Box 19634, Cincinnati Ohio 45219-0634 made out to PFLAG Cincinnati, noting in the memo that the check is for the scholarship fund; PFLAG Cincinnati is a non-profit organization with a 501(C) 3 status. Your contribution may be tax deductible – seek advice from your tax preparer.

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**Speakers:** If you ever need anyone to speak to a group, organization, business, school or church, your chapter has experienced members that have volunteered to speak on behalf of the chapter. Send an email to [info@pflagcinci.org](mailto:info@pflagcinci.org) to make a request OR if you would like to volunteer to be on the speakers bureau.

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**Website:** The chapter has an excellent website ([www.pflagcinci.org](http://www.pflagcinci.org)). There is up to date information about the chapter including things like monthly meetings, information about events and volunteer opportunities. If you have any feedback on the website send an email to [webmaster@pflagcinci.org](mailto:webmaster@pflagcinci.org)

# General Membership Application

## Membership Application & Address Change Form



### Request Type

- New
- Renewal
- Change of Address

### Membership Category

- Individual \$25
- Household \$35
- Supporting \$50
- Contributing \$100
- Sponsoring \$500
- Lifetime \$1000
- Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name

Address

City, State, ZIP

Email Address

Phone

- Send all mailing blind (will have no references to the organization name on the envelope)
- Please contact me for Volunteer Opportunities
- I do not wish to receive email announcements

**Send completed form to:**  
**PFLAG Cincinnati**  
**P.O. Box 19634**  
**Cincinnati Ohio 45219-0634**



PO BOX 19634  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219-0634

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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U.S. Postage Paid  
Cincinnati, OH  
Permit No. 4559

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