



Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

December 2012 Newsletter #26

www.torontopflag.org

office@pflagtoronto.org

TORONTO PFLAG VISION

Toronto PFLAG is a charitable organization that speaks for a more accepting Canadian society by providing support, education and resources to all people who wish to grow in their understanding of sexual and gender diversity.

Toronto PFLAG actively assists in the recognition and growth of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, intersex, queer and questioning persons, and their families and friends, within their diverse cultures and societies.

Next Support Meeting

Wednesday
February 6, 2012
7:30 p.m.

Kimbourne Park
United Church
200 Wolverleigh Blvd.,
Toronto, ON M4C 1S2

Proud to Play - Raptor's Game February 13th, 2013

**This game will end a day of educational programming for
Toronto High School students**

**In partnership with
Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment Toronto Police Service
Egale Canada
Toronto PFLAG**

Details of Special Ticket Prices will be available
mid-January on our website
www.torontopflag.org

Mark your calendar!

February 13th, 2013
join **Toronto PFLAG** and allies
for
Proud to Play Night
*Supporting LGBTQ youth, families and
their allies in sport*

Join us and our partners
Egale Canada
Toronto Police Service
Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment
For
a Raptor's Game!

**Details and Special Ticket Price information will be on
our website mid January!**
www.torontopflag.org

A message from your President

January 3, 2013

A New Year has begun. A blank calendar with days stretching into the future open to opportunities, possibilities and/or challenges for all of us! Exciting? Most definitely. Daunting? Perhaps a little. Are we up for it? Absolutely!

Looking back at the last twelve months, 2012 was an incredibly busy and rewarding year for all of us involved with PFLAG Toronto, and my plans to write a year-in-review type of update were scuppered when illness struck after Christmas.

Instead, I want to write briefly about some of the thoughts I had at the closing of the year.

Toronto PFLAG is like a family, and like all families we had highs and lows in 2012. The lows were the losses we suffered. Personal losses of close family members that remind us daily of how family is integral to all we do.

The highs ran the gamut from moments in the spotlight to quiet moments.

Like the ones when we leave the stage after a Whole School Assembly and a high school student approaches a volunteer to tell them that something they said was important for them to hear that day.

Or like the afternoon we spent with Grade 4 and 5 students who listened and asked really pertinent questions.

Or like the high school and college students who are given assignments related to topics LGBTQ and who don't know quite where to start and contact us for help.

One student had an assignment due January 4th, the questions had been submitted and answered by email, and all that was needed was the follow up interview. Due to logistics she agreed to come to my home for what we thought would be a short meeting but in fact turned into a long information sharing session, in which we both learned a lot from each other.

A Hindu lady quite recently arrived in Canada from India, married with a high-school age child she is studying at college to begin a new career. So we talked about our lives, our backgrounds, our cultures, our beliefs and our hopes for our families. We talked about diversity and how wonderful it is to learn about things 'beyond our ken'.

I hope she does well on her assignment. I know she left my home with bookmarks and bracelets and ideas and thoughts that she was keen to share with others in her college class, her family and community.

And I gained an insight into what it might be like for families in different cultures when one of their loved ones is LGBTQ.

And I think Toronto PFLAG has a new Ally! A definite high point!

On a personal note, this Christmas was a special one for our family in that we had all our kids under one roof at the same time, which as many of you will know is something that happens less and less as years go by and seems all the more precious when it happens.

On Christmas morning, we had all agreed that we would wear the 'most Christmassy-looking Christmas sweaters' we could find and we sat by the tree and opened presents. My husband and I opened 2 gifts from our daughter and son-in-law to reveal 2 t-shirts they brought over from Wales. They then stripped off their sweaters to reveal their t-shirts underneath – and here they are.



Living in Wales, and missing out on our Pride fun, they wanted to show that family pride is 365 days a year. I love our kids!

The gift of volunteering: People are always astonished to learn that Toronto PFLAG carries out all its duties without the benefit of paid employees. We all are volunteers.

Toronto PFLAG volunteers carried out an inordinate amount of good work in this city and beyond, offering support and outreach, with no agenda other than to be of help.

Fully volunteer-run with everyone sharing the workload in the spirit of co-operation and volunteerism our group continues to expand as others join us and strengthen our volunteer resources.

This bodes well for 2013 and our plans for the New Year.

If you want to be one of our volunteers, you can complete a Volunteer Form on our website www.torontopflag.org or you can email our office at office@pflagtoronto.org and our Volunteer Co-Ordinator will contact you directly.

As we begin 2013 let's look forward to all those opportunities that await us, and fill our calendars with more wonderful PFLAG Toronto events!

Wishing everyone in our PFLAG family the hope that 2013 is a good year!

Yours in anticipation, Irene

December News

Support Meeting: The December 5th and the January 2nd meetings were well-attended and we welcomed some newcomers to our group. Our thanks to the volunteers who provided coffee, hot chocolate and festive treats.

Next Meeting is Wednesday, February 6th, 2013 and our volunteers will be ready to welcome guests as usual at 7:15 p.m., prior to the meeting beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Some special guest speakers are being lined up for meetings in 2013 and we will provide speaker information in advance of these meetings.

LGBT CCC – The December 11th Community Consultative Committee meeting reviewed the applications for the Police Bursary Awards.

PFLAG Toronto email messages:

You can reach us by email at
office@pflagtoronto.org

Apparently an old Google site is still showing the old email address via PFLAG Canada's webmail, and unfortunately messages directed to the old email address are not forwarded to us. Please ensure that you have our email address in your contact list, and know that we do respond quickly to all emails received.

TAX RECEIPTS

Tax Receipts for donations made directly to the charity will be sent out in early February. On-line donations made via CanadaHelps will have had tax receipts issued by CanadaHelps at the time the donation was made.

TDSB GBVP:

The Toronto District School Board Gender Based Violence Prevention team met with three of our Board Members to discuss current and future ventures.

Irene, Marla and Michael met with Ken Jeffers and his team at the Toronto District School Board. Ken is the Co-ordinator of the Gender-Based Violence Prevention program which services all Toronto schools.

Toronto PFLAG had a very successful meeting, and discussed different ways in which we could work with various school groups during the upcoming year. Toronto PFLAG is always available to meet with school administrators and their staff, parents, and students. We were warmly welcomed by Ken and his group, and we look forward to continuing our work in Toronto schools.



(photograph taken by Irene Miller)

THANK YOU

Toronto PFLAG wants to offer a heartfelt '**Thank You**' to the wonderful people who have recently made a donation to Toronto PFLAG. Your donations are allowing us to continue offering our 24/7 Telephone Support Line, our Monthly Support Meetings and our ongoing outreach and community support.

If you would like to help, you can make a donation through the secure servers at CanadaHelps.org (charitable donation receipts are issued automatically), and if you wish you can specify that your donation remain anonymous, or you can choose to honour someone or a special occasion.

Or you may send a cheque to

Toronto PFLAG, 200 Waverleigh Blvd., Toronto, ON, M4C 1S2.
(charitable donation receipts will be issued for amounts of \$20+)

DONATE NOW

<http://www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?CharityID=s70090>

Charitable Registration BN: 891493348RR0001