



Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

January 2014 Newsletter #39

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 MEETINGS

Wednesday

February 5, 2014
March 5, 2014

7:30 p.m.

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

A message from your President

January 31, 2014

Coming Out – isn't easy.

Every one of us has a 'coming out' story, in fact we likely have many of them as we continue to come out over and over again with each new job, location and changing situations. Whether we are LGBTQ or family members of someone who is LGBTQ we will continue to come out until the heterosexist world in which we live changes and society no longer presupposes that every individual is straight.

We know that it takes a great leap of faith to call our Telephone Support Line or attend a Support Meeting for the first time, and hearing our volunteers share some of their own coming out stories reminds newcomers that they are not alone. Every story shared helps us help individuals and families move from 'coming out' to 'living out'.

Our next Support Meeting is Wednesday, February 5th, 2014. Our volunteers will be there to welcome and to share.

Coming Out – On Stage

There is still time to see a wonderful coming out story onstage at Theatre Passe Muraille. Way Back to Thursday runs until February 8th and you can read Mary-Anne Popescu's review in our newsletter.

Singing Out - Forte

On Monday, February 10th at 7:00 p.m., Forte Men's Chorus will sing the national anthems as the Toronto Raptors play New Orleans at the 2nd Annual Proud to Play event. Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment will donate \$2.00 from each ticket sold to Toronto PFLAG and Egale Canada. Please join us and wear your Toronto PFLAG t-shirt or bring a rainbow to show your Pride!

To purchase tickets and sit with us in our Proud to Play section see the information on page #5 of the newsletter.

Singing Out – Grammy's

I watched the Grammy's last weekend. I enjoyed the show and some performers who sang out left a lasting impression on me:

✚ **Hunter Hayes**, singing '*Invisible*' an anti-bullying song and the following lines stayed with me as I spoke to teachers in a high school this week.

*"Crowded hallways are the loneliest places for outcasts and rebels
Or anyone who just dares to be different"*

✚ **Carole King and Sara Bareilles** performing a duet of '*Beautiful*' and '*Brave*' the former a classic and the latter a song she wrote about one of her close friend's struggle in 'coming out'.

✚ **Kacey Musgraves**, entertained with "*Follow Your Arrow*" a fun song with lyrics including,
*"So make lots of noise, Kiss lots of boys
Or kiss lots of girls, If that's something you're into".*

✚ **Macklemore & Ryan Lewis with Mary Lambert**, who were joined onstage by Madonna and Queen Latifah as they sang "*Same Love*" while 33 couples, some straight, some LGBTQ were married. The *Same Love* video went viral last year, and deservedly so, as the message is so very powerful.

I thought these performances were reminiscent of the 'protest' songs of the 60's and 70's which heralded an increased awareness and a political societal shift. Positive change is happening and I am thankful for those champions who support equality through their music and the arts.

Singing Out – for Russia

As the Sochi Olympics draw closer we are seeing and hearing a groundswell of support from around the world for LGBTQ individuals in Russia and for families like ours who cannot openly show support for their LGBTQ loved ones.

A number of video clips are doing the rounds on social media and these two resonated with me:

The first: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLzXIIyqtB0>

shows how badly Russia has regressed since 1999 when one of the largest gatherings of LGBT people in Russian history gathered to hear the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles perform in Moscow's Tchaikovsky Hall. Here they sing '*We Shall Overcome*'.

The second:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKWhagr1v8s&feature=share>

Is a group of 2,000 people at the Stockholm Olympic Stadium to show their support to the LGBT people of Russia and to sing the Russian national anthem.

Speaking Out

I was disappointed to read an article this week in which Dick Pound a Canadian lawyer, former president of the Canadian Olympic Committee and a member of the IOC – International Olympic Committee made comments about Russia's anti-gay laws and listed other countries that have harsher laws and saying, "***Not that I approve of the law, but putting it on a scale of 1-10 of odious laws, it's not way up there near 10.***"

I have a sort of Bucket List, of people I'd like to invite to lunch (really more of a Lunch & Learn) with me and my son, and Dick Pound's name has been added to my list. Over a croque monsieur I'm sure we could have a lovely chat about his understanding (or lack thereof) of the effects of homophobia on individuals and families.

Meantime the Olympics will begin on February 7th, and here in Toronto we will celebrate with our own Pride House and hope all future Olympics will have a Pride House on-site.

Wishing those who celebrate it a Happy Chinese New Year!

Irene Miller

***The Way Back to Thursday* by Rob Kempson Toronto's Theatre Passe Muraille**

January 21 - February 8, 2014



Before the January 22nd show, Toronto PFLAG President, Irene Miller participated in *Egg Rolls with Andy*, an on-stage chat with Andy McKim, the Artistic Director, and attended by audience members. They talked about the difficult journey some individuals face coming out and the role that PFLAG plays in helping with the 'coming out' process and supporting Parents, Friends and Families with LGBTTTQQI2S loved ones.

The Way Back to Thursday is a story told through song that captures the essence of a loving and very close relationship between a boy and his grandmother. Over the years the pair bond over Hollywood movies and a love of Rock Hudson.

The grandmother can see that Cameron might be gay, but hesitates to share her intuition just as Cameron fears to tell her about his questioning. You can feel the love the Grandmother has for her Grandson, but Cameron is not ready to share the secret of his sexual orientation with her. As a result, Cameron moves far away and evades any relationship with her. The loss of their relationship is devastating to his Grandmother and eventually to Cameron himself.

In the end, after many years, and after memory related illness has befallen his Grandmother, Cameron recognizes her unconditional love, and attempts to reconnect with her.

The Way Back to Thursday is a heart-wrenching story of love, fear and self-acceptance. I watched the show with friends and we all connected with some aspect of the story. You will too. It's on until Feb. 8th.

Review by:

*Mary-Anne Popescu
Toronto PFLAG Mom*

For tickets, go to

<http://www.passemuraille.on.ca/category/2013-14-season/the-way-back-to-thursday/>

Toronto PFLAG visits Glendon Campus

On February 28th, we had the pleasure of attending a get-together with the Glendon Campus queer-ally group on campus. We were invited by Juan, the Residence Life Liaison for GLgbt*.

This was Toronto PFLAG's fourth visit to Glendon, and we hope to be invited back again next year. It was a joy meeting with engaged, young people who were anxious to learn more about what we do. As always, lively discussion ensued, and we were happy to be a part of it.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Brunch with Benefits - a.k.a. Proud FM's Diva Brunch

Starting December 1st, and continuing on the first Sunday of each month, join us for:

Brunch with Benefits a.k.a. Proud FM's Diva Brunch

The next Diva Brunch is
Sunday, March 2nd
11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Ganzi Restaurant at 504
Jarvis Street!

- amazing tunes by DJ Phil - playing The Supremes to Cher to Brit Brit!
- Hosted by the newly crowned Queen of Halloween Scarlett Bobo.
- We will be selling raffle tickets for amazing prizes to benefit Toronto PFLAG.

Mark your calendars for March 2nd, etc., and enjoy Brunch with friends and benefit Toronto PFLAG!



SECOND ANNUAL

PROUD TO PLAY NIGHT

FEBRUARY 10TH



7:00PM

UPPERBOWL TICKETS

\$18*

LOWERBOWL TICKETS

\$50**

PFLAG AND EGALÉ WILL EACH RECEIVE
\$2 FROM EVERY TICKET PURCHASE

SHOW YOUR PRIDE WITH YOUR FRIENDS
AND SUPPORTERS



VISIT  **raptors.com** / TICKETPASS

CODEWORD: PROUDTOPLAY

OR CALL MICHAEL THORNE 416.815.4312 OR MICHAEL.THORNE@MLSE.COM

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Toronto Police Service – Elementary School Officers

On January 24th we delivered a Lunch & Learn type workshop at the Toronto Police College for Community School Liaison Officers in elementary schools. Understanding that the elementary grades are so important for raising awareness about respecting diversity and fostering a supportive school environment the officers were enthusiastic in their participation.

York Memorial Collegiate Institute

It is always a pleasure to make presentations to staff in TDSB schools as they are the people who see and hear how students act and interact on a daily basis and are often the first to notice changes in behaviour.

A Breakfast meeting with staff at York Memorial on January 29th was so well attended we ran out of our bracelets and arranged to send over more so that every staff member has one!

The wearing of our rainbow bracelets is a simple way of showing openness to diversity and indicate that supportive staff and administration are on hand every day. Our thanks to all at York Memorial C.I. for showing your support!!

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 Wolverleigh 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>

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