

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays  
 A joint publication of the Akron and Cleveland chapters

# Sign of the Times

By Ed Kancler, Akron chapter president

There are signs that good things are about to happen for the gay rights movement. And good things can't happen soon enough. Yet, at the same time, there is a feeling of edginess, impatience, and concern that good things won't happen soon enough. Saying you should be patient is reminiscent of the reaction to such a suggestion by blacks before, during, and after the Civil Rights movement.

Well, just as they could not be patient then, we can't be patient either. That does not mean we should go out and do crazy things. Instead, we have to be smart and look at what we can do to make reality of what's on the table. Right now in Congress, Senate Bill 1023 (the Hate Crimes bill) is pending. In the House, Barney Frank has introduced a federal non-discrimination bill to protect LGBT citizens. In Ohio,

House Bill 176, the Equal Housing and Employment Act, is out of committee and waiting for a vote.

We can help by sending letters to our U.S. senators and representatives, as well as our state representatives, telling them of the need for such laws, so that everyone has legal protection from hate and the undeniable right to housing and job protection. Email can be more immediate, but a personal, handwritten letter often can have a big positive impact. So, I will start writing mine, just as Audrey already has. Will you join us? A website to help you find mailing addresses for your congress people appears at the end of this column.

Looking back over the past month, it's clear that Pride had some terrific successes. Akron Pride Center's Day in the Sun was well attended. Pride marches throughout the nation were

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### CHAPTER MEETINGS

**Akron PFLAG**  
 July 16, 7:00 pm  
 August 20, 7:00 pm  
**N. Springfield Presbyt.**  
 671 N. Canton Rd.

**Cleveland PFLAG**  
 July 14, 7:30 pm  
 August 11, 7:30 pm  
**Trinity Episcopal**  
 2230 Euclid Ave., 44115

**Alliance PFLAG**  
 July 28, 7:00 pm  
 August 25, 7:00 pm  
**Union Ave. Methodist**  
 S. Union Ave.

**Wooster PFLAG**  
 July 16, 7:00 pm  
 August 20, 7:00 pm  
**Universalist Fellowship**  
 3186 Burbank Rd.  
 Please call ahead to confirm.

**Youngstown PFLAG**  
 July 19, 3:00 pm  
 August 16, 3:00 pm  
**Stonewall Comm. Ctr.**  
 1523 Poland Ave.



### Our Mission

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 to secure equal civil rights.

PFLAG provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

### AKRON CHAPTER

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[WWW.PFLAGAKRON.ORG](http://WWW.PFLAGAKRON.ORG)

**HELPLINE:  
330-342-5825**

#### Executive Board

President-Ed Kancler; Vice President-Chris Goldthorpe; Secretary-Joe Gardner; Treasurer-Bob Menapace; At Large-David Horowitz, Bill & Marie Libby, Audrey Kancler, Trish Casserly, Joy Watts, Jim Lake, Sue & Chuck Magilavy

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING

**JUL  
26**

**CLEVELAND PFLAG PICNIC**, 1:00-4:00 p.m., Horseshoe Lake Picnic Area, Shaker Heights. For info: [www.pflagcleveland.org](http://www.pflagcleveland.org).

**JUL  
31**

**MY GAMES ROCK**, bid party to support efforts to bring the 2014 Gay Games to Cleveland, 8:00 p.m., Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, 1100 Rock and Roll Blvd., Cleveland. For info: 216-583-0833 or [www.clevelandsynergyfoundation.org](http://www.clevelandsynergyfoundation.org).

**AUG  
7-9**

**CLEVELAND BLACK PRIDE WEEKEND**, three days of events for African American LGBT people and their allies. Info: [www.bgpcleveland.com](http://www.bgpcleveland.com).

**AUG  
8**

**TALENT BASH COMPETITION AND DANCE PARTY**, open to all LGBT performers, meet 'n' greet 7:00 p.m., show 9:00 p.m., dance midnight, Studio 62nd, 1030 E. 62nd St., Cleveland. Tickets \$15. Info: [sonja@colorsofclevelandpride.org](mailto:sonja@colorsofclevelandpride.org).

**AUG  
14-16**

**TRANSOHIO TRANSGENDER & ALLY SYMPOSIUM**, Capital University Law School, downtown Columbus. Sessions include legal, spiritual, health, safety, and relationship topics. Info: [www.transohio.org](http://www.transohio.org).

**AUG  
23**

**DANCIN' IN THE STREETS**, 25th anniversary party to benefit the AIDS Taskforce of Cleveland, 1:00-10:00 p.m., Clifton Blvd. between West 116th and 117th streets. Tickets \$20 advance, \$25 at gate. Info: 216-221-2233 or <http://twistsocialclub.com/dancinginthestreets.aspx>.

**SEP  
8**

**BRIAN THORNTON LECTURE**, founder of Spangle website on founding a new LGBT business in NE Ohio, with joint Cleveland/Akron meeting of Plexus LGBT chamber of commerce, 6:00 p.m., Sarava, 13225 Shaker Square. Info: [www.thinkplexus.org](http://www.thinkplexus.org).

## Sign *(Continued from page 1)*

net with positive media reporting—the Cleveland parade getting special mention for a job well done. And, of all things, Dick Cheney, probably the most abhorrent person in the United States, publicly came out in favor of same-sex marriage. In that regard, it is my hope that one day, the solemn union of a couple will be called “marriage,” pure and simple, no appellation attached. Being a couple will be enough.

So, let's enjoy the rest of the summer, do what we can for our cause, and celebrate the season with our families and friends.

*To find a mailing address or email for your state and federal congress people, visit:*

US Representatives:

<http://www.house.gov>

US Senators:

<http://www.senate.gov>

Ohio Representatives:

<http://www.house.state.oh.us/>

Ohio Senators:

<http://www.senate.state.oh.us/>

## Councilman Cimperman receives Bruce Kriete award

By Pat Brandt, Cleveland chapter

Congratulations to Cleveland City Councilman Joe Cimperman, who was honored with the PFLAG Cleveland annual Bruce G. Kriete Community Award at their brunch on June 20 before the Cleveland Pride Parade.



Joe Cimperman

The award is given to a community member whose effort and support furthers the civil rights of the LGBT community in Cleveland. Councilman Cimperman's extraordinary leadership and campaign, along with several other city council mem-

bers, helped to pass the Domestic Partner Registry in December of 2008.

The registry creates a legal record of committed relationships and makes it easier for public, private and legal institutions to treat unmarried, committed couples (gay or straight) as families. It is open to all same-sex couples who live in the city. Couples must show they are in an interdependent relationship and live together. It does not provide spousal benefits to same-sex couples, but it could be used as proof of a relationship. Cleveland is the third city in Ohio, following Cleveland Heights and Toledo, to have undertaken instituting a registry for LGBT couples.

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## Gay marriage means money for Mass.

A study by a noted university think tank has found that same-sex marriage in Massachusetts has resulted in a \$111 million windfall for the state's economy.

According to a 365gay.com news release on this and a second study conducted by the same group, same-sex weddings in the state have largely contributed to the boost in business revenue.

The survey shows that the typical gay or lesbian couple spent \$7,400 on their weddings in the state, with one in ten couples spending more than \$20,000. Hotel occupancy tax payments also confirmed an increase in out-of-state guests for these weddings.

"Florists, caterers, hotels, bakers, restaurants, and many other businesses have gotten a share of the \$111 million spent on the 12,000-plus weddings of same-sex couples," noted economist and study co-author M.V. Lee Badgett. The study was conducted by the Williams Institute and the UCLA School of Law.

UCLA researcher Gary L. Gates also noted, "Data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey show that same-sex couples were 2.5 times more likely to move to Massachusetts after 2004," the year the state legalized same-sex marriage. The majority of these couples were young, highly educated "creative class" professionals.

## Seeking lesbian moms for study

A New York researcher is seeking two-parent, lesbian headed families for a national study.

Psychology professor Suzanne Johnson of Dowling College in Oakdale, N.Y., and her partner Elizabeth O'Connor, have published research on gay and lesbian headed families, including *For Lesbian Parents: Your Guide to Helping Your Family Grow Up Happy, Healthy and Proud* (Guildford Press) and *The Gay Baby Boom: The Psychology of Gay Parenthood* (New York University Press).

"A few years ago, my partner and I set out to conduct a study on gay and lesbian headed families, and the response from the commu-



nity was overwhelming!" said Johnson in a recent email. Her continuation of this research will focus on lesbian moms in two-parent families from across the nation.

The research is being conducted by survey, which can be completed online or by regular mail.

If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact Prof. Johnson at 631-244-3061 or by email at johnsons@dowling.edu.

## Gay sex decriminalized in New Delhi, India

A New Delhi court has ruled to decriminalize homosexuality in the Indian capital, a decision that could break ground for more freedom to gays in a deeply conservative nation.

According to an Associated Press article, the Delhi High Court ruled that treating consensual gay sex as a crime was a violation of fundamental rights protected by India's constitution. The ruling applies only to the capital city.

This overturns a 148-year-old colonial law by which homosexual acts were punishable by 10 years in prison. The ruling is expected to help protect New Delhi's gay community from criminal charges and police harassment.

According to BBC correspondent Soutik Biswas, the ruling is likely to

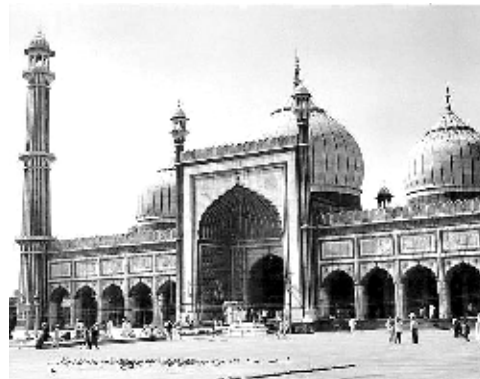
be challenged, but also promises to change the discourse on sexuality in a country where even talking about sex is taboo.

Leading gay rights activist and the editor of India's first gay magazine Ashok Row Kavi told the BBC he welcomed the judgment but the stigma against homosexuals will persist.

"It is [still] a long struggle," he said in the BBC report. "But the ruling will help in HIV prevention. Gay men can now visit doctors and talk about their problems."

According to one estimate, more than 8 percent of homosexual men in India are infected with HIV.

The ruling has been criticized by religious leaders, including the head



Jama Masjid Mosque, New Delhi

cleric of Jama Masjid, India's largest mosque.

"This is absolutely wrong. We will not accept any such law," Ahmed Bukhari told the Agence France-Presse news agency.

## *Out of state gay marriages to be recognized in D.C.*

Gays and lesbians who are married in Iowa, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, or Vermont will also be recognized as married in Washington, D.C.

According to a news report by 365gay.com editor-in-chief Jennifer Vanasco, the D.C. City Council approved the measure in June, but it was subject to a 30-day Congressional review period. Since Congress took no action, same-sex marriages legally performed in other states are now legal in D.C. as well.

However, the law does not imply recognition of same-sex marriage by the Federal government.

According to an article published in the Washington Times, the law will

affect "everything from tax filing, employer health care benefits, inheritance and hospital visitation rights to mundane activities, such as gym memberships and car rentals."

The U.S. Census Bureau lists nearly 4,000 same sex couples residing in D.C., according to 2005-2007 data.



## Poland gets openly gay rabbi

One gay rabbi is playing his part to revive the once vibrant Jewish district in Warsaw, a faith community largely wiped out by Hitler.

Rabbi Aaron Katz, who was featured in an Associated Press article last month, grew up in Argentina after his parents fled Poland. Now, living near his father's childhood home with his partner, Rabbi Katz said in the AP article that he hopes for "a normal Jewish life in Poland," a country where neither being Jewish or being gay is the norm.

Rabbi Katz told the AP he has not faced anti-Semitism or homophobia in Warsaw so far, but his relationship with his partner can sometimes catch people off guard.

## Recent poll shows gays are not anti-religious

Despite a stereotype that gays can't be religious, a Barna Group survey shows that most gay Americans lead pretty robust faith lives.

According to an article in U.S. News and World Report written by Dan Gilgoff, even some gay people who have been spurned by their churches continue to find ways to grow in their faith.

The article cited one example in Harry Knox, who left the United Methodist Church in order to become a pastor, but then was refused ordination by the United Church of Christ as well. He eventually came to lead the religion and faith program of the Human Rights Campaign, the nation's largest gay rights group.

"My whole career as an activist is an accidental ministry," he told USNWR. "I would rather be a local pastor."

The Barna survey found that while 72 percent of straight American adults describe their faith as "very important," so do 60 percent of gays and lesbians. And 58 percent say they have made a personal and on-going commitment to Jesus Christ.

Gays and lesbians are much less likely to identify with the born-again tradition, as most born-again churches condemn homosexuality. Yet 27 percent of gays do share the beliefs of born-again Christians, according to the Barna survey.

"Many in the Christian community assume there's this significant gap between heterosexuals and homosexuals in terms of faith beliefs and activities," said George Barna, the country's top pollster on religious issues, who supervised the survey and was quoted in the USNWR article. "While there are statistically sig-



nificant differences, it's the narrow size of the gap that's most surprising."

The poll unleashed a torrent of hate mail from people "furious with

Barna's conclusion that many gays are Bible-believing Christians," noted the article. It added that more gay rights organizations are adding faith-based outreach to their programming, and some religious traditions and denominations are becoming more welcoming to gays and lesbians. The United Church of Christ now ordains gay ministers, and the Presbyterian Church (USA) is considering doing the same.

Yet, some gay rights advocates still see a connection between homophobia and religious rhetoric. Rev. Rebecca Voelkel, who heads faith outreach for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, said in the USNWR article that her group's list of welcoming Christian congregations was up to 3,400 from 1,300 four years ago. However, she was quoted as saying:

"For as long as there has been an anti-LGBT movement, the language and organizations behind it have been religious. So there's still a gulf between the LGBT secular community and pro-LGBT religious folks, and there's a lot of trust that needs to be built."

## *Ohio schools unsafe for gay kids*

The Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) has released a research study brief stating that Ohio schools are not a safe place for many LGBT secondary students.

The study, which surveyed 244 high school students in Ohio and 6,209 nationally, concluded that LGBT students still lack access to important school resources such as gay-straight alliances and are not protected by comprehensive anti-harassment policies.

Among the findings:

- 👉 97 percent of the students surveyed reported regularly hearing the word "gay" used as an insult.
- 👉 78 percent regularly heard homophobic epithets like "faggot" and "dyke" from other students.
- 👉 88 percent of Ohio students reported hearing negative remarks on gender expression

The study was a follow-up to the 2007 National School Climate Survey.



## Disparities in gay health care

A report published by the Empire Pride Agenda in New York state shows significant disparities between the health and human service care that LGBT people receive compared to straight people, a finding that reflects trends nationwide.

The state-sponsored report (the first of its kind, according to The Advocate) was based on surveys of 3,500 non-HIV LGBT New York residents and 60 experts in the health and human service field.

According to researcher Somjen Frazer, who prepared the report that was later summarized in The Advocate, key findings include the pervasiveness of homelessness, which poses a substantial barrier to service access. Fourteen percent of respondents, including one-third of transgender respondents, reported being home-

less either at the time of the survey or at some point in their lives.

Forty percent of respondents said too few health care professionals have the training to properly care for OGBT patients. In addition, over

**Over a quarter of respondents said they believe they would be treated differently if their health care provider learned they were gay.**

a quarter of respondents said they believed they would be treated differently if their health care provider learned they were LGBT.

The report also noted that respondents living outside of major urban areas in the state reported more difficulty

in finding adequate health care, including mental health care. It cited a separate survey by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in 2007 which indicated that approximately 20 percent of gays and lesbians and nearly 24 percent of bisexuals lack health insurance, compared to 14 percent of heterosexual individuals.

## Pride Clinic offers LGBT-focused care in Cleveland

MetroHealth's Pride Clinic, in the McCafferty Health Center, 4242 Lorain Ave., is the first clinic in the region and one of only 12 health centers in country devoted to serving the health needs of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community.

With specially trained physicians and an open and honest environment, the Pride Clinic provides care that respects the unique health needs of LGBT individuals, including:

- 🏠 Prevention
- 🏠 Disease risk reductions
- 🏠 STD and HIV screening and treatment
- 🏠 Management of chronic diseases: hypertension, diabetes, lung disease
- 🏠 Smoking cessation
- 🏠 Family planning
- 🏠 Well child and OB/GYN care
- 🏠 Specialty and support services

Visits to the Pride Clinic are by appointment only on Wednesday from 4:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. For an appointment, call (216) 651-3499.



You always have a home at PFLAG!