



Greater Boston PFLAG

NEWS & VIEWS

March 2008 — May 2008

85 River Street, Suite 5A, Waltham MA 02453

Greater Boston PFLAG is committed to creating environments of understanding and respect for 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. We provide opportunities for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and act to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

President's Message

By Stan Griffith

Contact info: 781-861-7689 or
stangriffith@rcn.com

Greater Boston PFLAG is off to an exciting new year! First, an enthusiastic thank you to our generous donors! We surpassed our year-end fund drive goal by \$11,000 for a total of \$31,000.

We are a volunteer-based organization with a small, but amazing staff. All of us, together, are working to realize the goals of the Board's 2008 Strategic Plan. That plan envisions an expansion of our services to schools throughout the Commonwealth and an increase in our support work with families. We are expanding services to new communities, including communities of color, and have established an outreach program to improve our referral networks.

New Strategic Initiatives:

- We are partnering with four religious denominations, and three counseling associations to ensure that clergy and professionals know about PFLAG and are equipped to make referrals. We're reaching out to counseling professionals by presenting at their conferences and through their newsletters, targeted electronic mail notices, mass mailings and specially designed brochures. Each year, we will add more denominations and professional organizations to the referral networks program.
- We are developing a pilot program that provides workplace-based education and support services to families with GLBT children or other relatives. Building on over 22 years of experience providing community-based services, we will make this expertise available through company employee assistance programs. Preliminary conversations

Greater Boston PFLAG

Waltham Business Office: (781) 891-5966

In-State Toll-Free Help Line
(except from area code 413):

866-GBPFLAG (866-427-3524)

e-mail: info@gbpflag.org

www.gbpflag.org

with major Boston-based employers have encouraged us to move forward with the goal of lining up four to six corporate pilot program participants this year and to seek funding for the pilot.

Mark your calendars: Saturday, April 12 for our 6th Annual Pride and Passion Party. Over 400 people attended last year's event, and we had to turn people away. This is a great opportunity to meet our Elsie Frank Scholarship winners, meet up with old friends and make new ones. Our events are always a great mix of ages, GLBT and Straight Allies; it's a wonderful group of people who care about GLBT people and their allies. We've moved to the Boston Hyatt Hotel to accommodate a target crowd of 600 PFLAG'ers and supporters. Novelist **Robert Parker and his wife, Joan**, are our Honorary Co-Chairs. The **Hon. Barney Frank** will bestow our Elsie Frank Scholarship awards. We look forward to a wonderful evening with great food, live entertainment and some exciting auction opportunities: Red Sox tickets, a vacation for four in beautiful Tuscany and an amazing African Safari. **Buy your tickets early and invite your friends. Guarantee the future of Greater Boston PFLAG's life-saving, award-winning programs by purchasing your Pride and Passion**

(Continued on page 2)

President's Message (Continued from page 1)

tickets now. Order online at www.gbpflag.org/events/showevent/36 or call (781) 891-5966.

Get Involved—Build the future of this amazing organization.

- **Renew or start your membership** by filling out the coupon on page 7 or go to www.gbpflag.org. Give friends or relatives a gift of a PFLAG membership so they can speak out for respect and equality.
- **Join the Pride and Passion Committee**, be a donor to the silent auction or introduce us to a new sponsor.
- **Host a House Party** to introduce others to our work and ask them to join us in the fight for full inclusion and equality for all. We will help you plan your party and provide the program.
- **Become a Greater Boston PFLAG Speaker.** Our Speaker's Bureau spreads our message of understanding, acceptance and equality for all. The power of our stories brings about positive change--your story and your voice make the difference. Our speaker's training will show you how.
- **Host a PFLAG speaker** at your church, temple, work place or other venue.
- **Bring your talents to one of our committees:** Outreach, Technology, Communication, Development, Special Projects, and Safe Schools.

To volunteer, call (781) 891-5966.



ERIC EID-REINER
TRADITIONAL & CONTEMPORARY
MUSIC ON PIANO:
NEW ENGLAND, CAPE BRETON, IRISH, FRENCH-CANADIAN,
JEWISH/KLEZMER, BLUEGRASS, OLD-TIME, AND JAZZ

www.EricEid-Reiner.com Eric.Eid.Reiner@gmail.com

P.O. Box 750007 phone 781-608-3442
Arlington Heights, MA 02475 fax and alternate phone 781-863-0140

Anna Heller, LICSW, LADC 1
Co-founder of COLAGE
(Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere)

Psychotherapy for adults and adolescents. Family coming out issues of any kind. Depression, anxiety, recovery and/or wanting to make changes in you.

930 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02145
TEL 617-844-1611

GLOYD

www.samuelgloyd.com

Samuel J. Gloyd, M Div, LMHC 617.247.4143
268 NEWBURY STREET BOSTON MA 02116

MEN'S GROUP FOCUSING ON
SEXUALITY, INTIMACY, RELATIONSHIPS AND FANTASY
Ongoing - Thursdays from 5:30 until 6:45

Oh The Places I Have Been And The People I Have Met!

By Barbara Mulcahey

In my wildest dreams, I never would have thought that six years after my son Max came out to me I would be writing a story about my incredible journey, from a major “boo-hoo mama” to a mother filled with overwhelming joy because her son has found an amazing partner! Max has finally found someone who he loves, and he is loved in return.

I believe in my heart, that if I had not gone to my first PFLAG meeting three months after Max came out, I would not be the person I am today.

This journey did not happen overnight. It took many tears, much courage and support from friends and family, to help me get over myself. A daunting task, to be sure, but when you are a Mother Bear, you instinctively know you have no choice.

The common thread throughout the past six years has been whenever I was faced with a situation where I was hesitant to jump in, whether it was a PFLAG speaking engagement, marching in the Pride Parade or just speaking candidly at a PFLAG meeting with a group of strangers, each and every time when I've faced my fears, I never once regretted my leap of faith.

I am now reaping the rewards of my hard work! I feel because I shared each experience with Max, whether it was what I spoke about at a high school or the excitement of the Pride Parade, he was validated with each event.

What I found to be true was that as I became more confident and secure as a mother of a gay son, Max's journey began to parallel my own. He has grown so much in the past six years and he has become all that I have known he could be. Though still a work in progress, as we all are, he is a fine young man who happens to be gay.

(Continued on page 8)

Greater Boston PFLAG
Board

2007-2008 Directors

Stanley Griffith—President

Jeffery Dubinski—Vice President

Beth Shaw—Clerk

Sarah Garner—Treasurer

Doris Breay

Meg Costello

Lucretia Godfrey

Beth-Anne Halpert

Linda Peterson

Debby Rempis

Ed Walker

Tim Woodward

Executive Director

Pamela Garramone

Honorary Board

Felix Arroyo

Anne and Chad Gifford

Representative Byron Rushing

Reverend Dr. Nancy Taylor

Valerie Fein-Zachary, M.D.

I've Always Known...

Author Suzanne Brockman "comes out" about having a gay son

Interviewed by: Patricia Walters-Fischer

As printed at www.hotmomsclub.com, reprinted with permission

Note: Suzanne Brockmann's latest book, "All Through The Night" is set in Boston and features the wedding of two of her most popular characters -- who happen to be gay. One of them is a TV actor, and in the book he mentions one of his favorite charities is Greater Boston PFLAG's Safe Schools program.

Suzanne Brockman is a woman with an incredible voice. Not only does she have the talent of a well-skilled storyteller, as shown in her New York Times Best Selling Troubleshooter Series, Suzanne has a voice within the Gay/Lesbian Community that people stop to hear. As a proud card-carrying member of Parents, Families, & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (www.PFLAG.com), this straight-shooter and her husband, Ed, stand proud and side-by-side with their son, Jason. They want to reach out to those parents and children out there who are learning how to live healthy, happy lives as in the gay and lesbian community.

Your son, Jason, is a gay man. You mentioned he tipped off your gaydar early in life. Can you explain?

I knew Jason was gay when he was three. I just knew.

He was such a funny, gentle, special little kid. Like most little kids, he was completely asexual. And yet I was pretty darn sure that when he grew up he'd identify as gay, and that he'd be faced with having to "come out" to us, his family and friends.

Did it scare me? A little, sure. At the time (1988), I hadn't given much thought to what being gay meant. At the time, I didn't have any out gay friends. (That has changed!) I worried about the harshness of the world -- caused by the hatred and fear of ignorant people -- and how it would affect Jason's chances at finding happiness in his life.

But here was my bottom line: I loved my son. And it was very obvious to me that Jason was Jason -- he was such a sweet, sunshine-spreading little boy -- how could he be anything but perfect in God's eyes? I have to tell you, any mistaken belief that I might've had about sexual orientation being a lifestyle choice was completely blasted out

(Continued on page 5)



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR MONTHLY PFLAG MEETINGS

If you cannot reach one of the numbers below, call the PFLAG office at (781) 891-5966.

Arlington – 2nd Tuesday, 7:15 pm
First Parish Church, Sunshine Nursery School
630 Mass Avenue, (781) 891-5966

Brewster/Cape Cod – 3rd Monday, 7:00 pm
1st Parish Brewster, Main Street, (508) 398-6471

Concord – 3rd Sunday, 7:00 pm
Trinity Episcopal Church Library
81 Elm (enter from River St.)
(978) 263-2316, spfle34896@aol.com

Easton – 4th Monday, 7:30 pm (if holiday, then 3rd Monday); Unity Church, 9 Main Street, 508-238-0567,
Chairperson: Cecile Arnold, pflageaston@comcast.net.

Falmouth/Cape Cod – contact Anne
(508) 548-1038, agtoran1202@aol.com

Martha's Vineyard – 3rd Sunday, 3:00 pm
Unitarian Universalist Church
238 Main, Vineyard Haven
(508) 627-4948, RABrown1950@aol.com

Reading – 2nd Thursday, 7:30 pm
Loring House, Unitarian Universalist Church
211 Summer Street, whsthpnt@gmail.com

Springfield – 4th Wednesday, 7:00 pm
Feeding Hills Congregational Church.
21 North Westfield Street. Feeding Hills, MA 01030
(413) 786-5061, agrace1966@comcast.net

Worcester – 3rd Wed, 7:00 pm
The Bridge, 4 Mann Street
(508) 248-5893, pflagworchester@iname.com

Non-PFLAG Group meetings:

Straight Spouses Group, for Boston group, contact ssn.boston@comcast.net or call Ivan (508) 966-0275 or e-mail Tara at tgl563@gmail.com. Other locations use: www.straightspouse.org.

Transgender Group, Waltham/Tiffany Club of New England Call (781) 899-3230 or (781) 891-9325 for info.

Always Our Children 1st and 3rd Tuesday 7:00 pm,
Community Room of Sacred Heart Convent (Behind Sacred Heart Church), 395 Chestnut Street, Springfield, MA 01104, Contact: Ann (413) 736-6803



The Samaritans provide a free and confidential 24-hour befriending helpline. This unique service, staffed entirely by volunteers, provides unconditional and non-judgmental support to anyone who feels alone, depressed, or in crisis. Samaritans is a peer support line staffed by teens talking to teen callers during after-school and weekend hours. For more information on volunteering, call us at 617-536-2460 or visit us online at www.samaritansofboston.org. If you need to talk to someone on our helplines for any reason, you can reach us at 617-247-0220 or for teens at 1-800-252-TEEN.

SPOTLIGHT on Greater Boston PFLAG Chapter Leaders

By Gretchen Frasier

Ann Schlesinger is the facilitator of the Arlington meeting of Greater Boston PFLAG. When her younger brother, in his twenties, told his family that he was a gay man, Ann didn't feel the need to go to a meeting for support. She was not by nature a "joiner" or a group leader. She knew about PFLAG though because her mother attended a group in Manhattan. Almost ten years passed before Ann went to her first PFLAG meeting, and the stimulus came from her employer. At the time, Ann worked for a large state agency, which implemented a policy that was very homophobic. This was deeply upsetting to Ann. Because she knew about PFLAG, she began looking for a meeting where she could vent among people who would understand. She found the Arlington meeting through a newspaper listing. It was the only meeting in Massachusetts at the time. She only intended to go to a couple of meetings while she coped with her distress over the situation at work.

At the Arlington meeting she met George and Alice Clattenburg and they became friends. When the facilitator of the meeting left a short time later, the three of them joined forces as co-leaders to keep the meeting going. Then the Clattenburgs moved on to start the meeting that became the Concord chapter, and Ann continued facilitating in Arlington. She says it has been an amazing, and powerful experience. She is surprised that it has now been over 20 years and is bemused that

(Continued on page 8)

Our Generous Donors

On behalf of all of the young people and families we serve, thank you for your generous support .

\$5,000:

Anonymous (1)

\$3,000:

Anonymous (1)

\$2,500:

Anonymous (1)

\$1,500:

Anonymous (2)

\$1,000:

Anonymous (2)

\$500:

Anonymous (1)

Patron (\$250-\$499):

Marty Ahrens and Gary Madison

Anonymous (9)

Associate (\$150-\$249):

Ann Hartstein and Cathy Stern

Anonymous (5)

Supporter (\$100-\$149):

Marie Montgomery and Laura

Noble Anonymous (40)

Friend (\$50-\$99):

Dennis and Rona Fischman

Mark E. Sullivan and Albert G.

Amodeo

Anonymous (53)

\$25:

Steve Fischer

Anonymous (20)

Membership:

Anonymous (8)

Other:

Linda Campbell

Rabbi Stephen and Cecile Arnold

Anonymous (15)

Greater Boston PFLAG *News & Views* welcomes coming out stories, articles, letters, and comments from our readers.

E-mail articles to Editor at:

GBPFLAG_Newsletter@yahoo.com.

Include your name and phone number.

Editor/LayoutDiane DeLap

ProofreaderAnn Schlesinger

MailingJill Scobie

ADVERTISING INFORMATION

All ads must be camera-ready (that is, in a format ready to print). Mail your ad and payment to Greater Boston PFLAG, PO Box 541619, Waltham, MA 02454-1619, or e-mail your ad as an attachment to Pflagsafeschools@aol.com.

	PER ISSUE	PER YEAR (4x)
Business Card, 3-1/2" w x 2" h	\$15	\$50
Quarter page, 3-1/2" w x 4" h	\$25	\$100

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE:

May 9, 2008

I've Always Known...—(Continued from page 3)

of me as I watched this child grow up. Life, or God, or whatever higher power you believe in, gave Jason to me and by being gay, Jason is exactly as he was born to be.

I do remember feeling out Ed, my husband, when Jason was really young. "What if Jason's gay?" But he echoed my feelings exactly: 'Jason is Jason, and I love him.'

But I worried, too, about Jason's safety. There are still places --

(Continued on page 6)

Psychotherapy for Gay,
Lesbian, Bisexual, &
Transgender Individuals
and Couples

Specializing in Support for
Adolescents and Parents

Annette L. Kennedy,
Psy.D.

Licensed Psychologist

Lexington, MA
(781) 674-9990

DR. ELLEN WOLK
Gentle Chiropractic Care

751 Main St.
Suite 25
Waltham, MA 02451

Office:
781-894-4890

Fax:
781-894-5938

Email: drgentle@verizon.net

I've Always Known...—(Continued from page 5)

many places -- in the United States where Jason could be attacked or even killed -- just because he's gay.

And I worried about the dreaded closet. Many gay people never come out. They hide from their families and friends -- even from themselves. I passionately didn't want my child to live his life in the shadows.

So Ed and I actively set out to make sure that Jason: a) grew up feeling loved unconditionally and reassured that he could be himself, at least in the safety of our home and; b) that Jason grew up aware that there were more options in life than the traditional man plus woman equals love, marriage and family. We didn't whisper the word "gay" in our house. We openly talked about it -- what it means to be gay -- and made it clear that we were open and accepting of all people. See, most gay kids feel isolated and alone. I wanted to be certain that Jason felt neither of those things. Being a teenager is hard enough -- without feeling as if there is something wrong with your sexuality!

We also made a rule -- we would allow no gay slurs in our house. None of this, "Oh, that's so gay," not even in jest. And, eventually, we made the choice to pull Jason out of public high school, where kids hear an average of 25 gay slurs in the course of a single day. Frankly, I didn't want him exposed to that kind of ugliness.

I also wanted Jason to have role models -- gay men who were out and open, several in solid, committed relationships. And we were lucky there -- because Jason fell in love with musical theater at an early age. He was cast in a number of semi-pro productions in the Boston area. And the Boston theater community has a huge area of intersection with the Boston gay community. Jason (and Ed and I) made quite a few gay friends because of this -- friends we cherish to this day.

So Jace grew up believing -- as we believe -- that being gay is no different than being born left-handed or with blue eyes. He never felt as if there was something "wrong" with him -- because there's not! He's a strong, confident young gay man who really, honestly likes himself. As his mother, I'm proud of him -- and of my husband and myself.

When did he come out?

Jason came out to me when he was fifteen. He and I had long had a habit of talking together for few minutes, when he went to bed.

He'd been doing some dating -- going out with girls -- and Ed and I just kind of sat back and waited. I remember thinking, "Is it possible he doesn't know?" and, "Gee, maybe we were wrong..."

But I remember so clearly that one evening. Jason took a deep breath and said, "Mom, I think I'm gay."

And my heart swelled with love and pride (and relief!) because it takes such courage to say that in our society, even to your mom. But I kept things light. "I know. I love you. I'll always love you. Where did you put your dirty socks...?"

"You knew?!?" He was actually surprised -- and so relieved.

Even Jason -- growing up in a home with parents who had spoken openly about their support for gay rights and for their gay friends -- was a little afraid of what would happen when he came out.

You see, he had friends who were kicked out of their houses by their parents, because they were gay. It makes me heartsick to think of such a thing. And yet it happens. Too often.

I have trouble with the concept that a parent could not know that their child is gay. Aren't they paying attention? But okay. I can take a deep breath, and understand that there are some people who simply don't think about anything other than the stereotypical societal "norm." You get married and have sons and daughters and your son will marry a nice woman and give you grandchildren, and your daughter will marry a nice man and... so on. Still, it seems very much to me as if some people live with blinders on, unwilling to see the real world. (Stats are that one out of eight men are gay, so even if you think you don't know anyone who's gay, you probably do.)

What are we afraid of, people? What's so horrible about the idea of Jason finding his own Mr. Right, and living happily ever after with him? Because that's what he wants -- a happily-ever-after with someone special, someone he loves. And that's what he can absolutely find as an out gay man.

I know that being gay is associated with being promiscuous -- that's just not true. People are people, and yes there are promiscuous gay people, the same way there are promiscuous straight people.

But here's the thing -- it's when people are forced to live in the closet, forced to hide who they are, forced to suppress their extremely natural, God-given sexuality, that they sometimes turn to alcohol, drugs and anonymous sexual encounters.

I can imagine a much kinder, better world where all people are allowed to be themselves, where love between two consenting adults is given the respect and honor it deserves.

We can get there if we start with our children -- by loving them and supporting them. And by letting them be themselves.

(Continued on page 7)

I've Always Known...—(Continued from page 6)

With toys, activities, sports, being so gender specific, do you think parents today are more fearful of their child being "different", whether that means their child is less masculine, feminine or gay/bi/straight? Even with the women's right's movement, I see these very strict gender roles that society has created and I wonder how much it confuses parents and kids alike.

You ever hear that (horrible) old joke? "What do you get your son when he asks for ballet lessons? A football."

Our society is FILLED with gender stereotypes -- we are bombarded with them from early childhood. What do we say when we meet a little girl? "Oh, aren't you pretty?" Why don't we say "Oh, aren't you smart," instead? What are we teaching here, people?!

It perplexes me that we can't just let children be children. Because I had both a daughter and a son, we had an array of toys from dolls to cars to dress-up clothes to baseball mitts. Both kids played with everything.

I'm wondering -- does Toys R Us really label the sections of their stores "Boys" and "Girls?" (It's been a while since I've been in one.) I'm wondering this because sometimes gender stereotypes are unconsciously our own. It would, IMO, do your daughter a better service to take care in the labels you use. Instead of calling it the "Boys department," (even if it is called that!) call it the toy tool kit section. Likewise for the doll section. And the sports section. And the crafts section, the puzzle and game section...

Our children learn from everything we do and say. "Boys will be boys." Have you ever caught yourself saying that? That's a terrible message to give our daughters. The subtext is that "boys can't be held responsible for their actions, so when they insult you or hurt you, when they elbow your breasts in the crush

between classes in the middle school hall, when they whistle and taunt you when you walk past a construction site, when they treat you with anything other than respect, just let it go. It's not their fault."

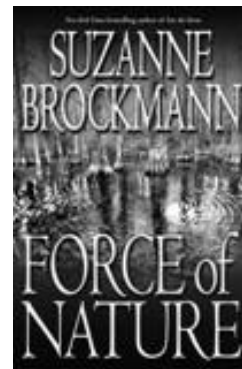
I have a huge problem with all stereotypes -- not just those regarding gender. In my fictional world, my kick-butt, heroic FBI agent is gay. My petite Asian American heroine is a tough-as-nails former LAPD police detective. My seemingly-good-ol'-boy-from-Texas Navy SEAL had a beloved uncle and cousin who were African American.

And in my world -- both my fictional world and in my personal life -- children are allowed to play with toys that interest them.

Of course, my answer to the question "What do you get your son when he asks for ballet lessons?" is "Ballet lessons!"

Suzanne encourages parents who think their sons or daughters might be gay, get more information and support from PFLAG -- Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays at www.PFLAG.org

There, you will find a great and helpful amount of information for you and your child and always keep the lines of communication open between you and your child. They will love you more for it.



Suzanne Brockmann is a New York Times bestselling author. The eleventh book in her Troubleshooters series, "Force Of Nature", is on sale now. Her first Troubleshooters holiday novella, "All Through The Night", was released October 30, 2007. Visit her website at www.SuzanneBrockmann.com

I wish membership in Greater Boston PFLAG

Household @ \$40/year _____

I also wish to make a contribution of: \$ _____

I am interested in volunteer opportunities _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

AMEX: VISA: MC: Card No. _____ Exp. Date ____/____ or Check Enc.: _____

Signature _____

We do not sell, lease or loan our membership lists to individuals or organizations.

Please mail to GBPFLAG, P.O. Box 541619, Waltham, MA 02454-1619

Why We Do This Work

By Pam Garramone, Executive Director

When the Haverhill High School Gay Straight Alliance traveled to Acton-Boxborough Regional High School to see the student production of *The Laramie Project*, they were so moved that they wanted to share it with their school. We worked with the GSA and Violence in Prevention (VIP) to create an assembly to show the film based on the play. After the movie, about 30 students volunteered their thoughts in an open mike session.

After an openly gay student addressed nearly 400 of his peers, his best friend spoke, "I'm straight but Winston's my best friend and he's really funny and a great guy and we gotta think about the words we use and how they can hurt."

"I have two gay uncles. This really made me think about the words I use like fag when my uncles are around and I never thought this might hurt them. I love my uncles and I don't want to hurt them."

The GSA advisor wrote this email: "José is in VIP and was there when PFLAG came and talked. It really had an impact on him. He stopped by my room to read this to me. This was written after a couple of male students saw him walking down the hall with a girl and noticed he had the rainbow ribbon on his backpack. They yelled "Hey faggot!" Instead of fighting like he might have in the past, he said he took his anger and pain and wrote this incredible rap!" Read his words on page 9.

We are making a difference, one student at a time.

(Continued on page 9)

SPOTLIGHT on Greater Boston PFLAG Chapter Leaders--
(Continued from page 4)

she has one of the longest chapter-leader tenures in the country.

She has seen PFLAG in Massachusetts go from having a single meeting in Arlington, to the growth of chapters around the state. She was part of the first steering committee consisting of chapter leaders, which led to the organization of the Greater Boston consortium with an established board. She helped write our bylaws, and served as our second President. She also worked to launch Greater Boston PFLAG's Safe Schools Program in the early 1990's, helping administer the program through its early years.

Ann says that before she became active in Greater Boston PFLAG she would never have believed that she would lobby at the State House, because she was not especially politically engaged. But her passion and commitment to GLBT civil rights and her love for her brother have led her to lobby for gay rights and student

rights laws, and ultimately for same-gender marriage.

Hundreds of people have come to the Arlington meeting during the 20 years of Ann's leadership. She fondly remembers many of them and recounts with pleasure meeting Paul Sullivan when he and his wife Elaine came soon after learning that their son was gay. It was several meetings before Ann learned that Paul's day began at 3:00 in the morning because he worked as a milk-man. On PFLAG nights his day didn't end until after 10:00. But he kept coming. At first he didn't say much, but once he started talking the love for his son was evident. Paul's colleagues were also his friends, but homophobic jokes and banter were the norm. The PFLAG group supported Paul as he decided to tell his colleagues that his son was gay and that their language was offensive. Paul has become one of the most effective speakers for Greater Boston PFLAG's Safe Schools and Communities Program. He has presented to students and business organizations around the state.

Ann lives in Somerville and feels that in many ways it is a microcosm of the state. Years ago the town had a State Representative who was blatantly and publicly homophobic, so it was thrilling in 2004 to see Somerville's mayor stand on the steps of City Hall the day that gay marriage became legal in order to welcome couples who were coming to apply for their licenses. The progress that has been made in securing gay civil rights is amazing, but Ann is cautious that we not be complacent, because anti-gay sentiment is still very evident. And she says there continues to be a role for PFLAG. She believes in the ripple effect as more gay people feel safe to be open about who they are, and families are proud and publicly supportive of their GLBT loved ones. She says, "It is hard to demonize those we know and love." Among Ann's many wonderful assets is a sense of optimism and hope for the future. She says that she is guided by the words of Unitarian Theodore Parker, which were later echoed by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he said, "I am convinced that we shall overcome because the arc of the universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

Oh The Places I Have Been And The People I Have Met!-

(Continued from page 2)

Max now is in a healthy relationship with a wonderful young man, Robert. Rich and I are crazy about him. After meeting Robert and spending time with him, I feel the last piece of the puzzle has been put into place and I finally have a sense of peace in my heart.

While I am embracing the comfort of contentment, I also look forward to all the possibilities for the future, whatever they may be.....

By José Padilla

aka; YoungTruth

2-8-08

Anti-Gay Hate

*Sticks and stones breaks bones this is very true
but words leave a scar that can't be seen by me or you
leaves a tissue broken beyond repair, emotions blue
people shout out faggot like if it was something cool
but whose to say and judge what I wanna do
if I wanna dress punk and have a mohawk thats what I'll do
like the Bible says, tough shall not judge but God
yet Christians hating men for being gay, thats odd
I came to say what's on my mind, to say what's the deal
do you remember slavery when whites used to kill
blacks for being different and no other reason
or when Hitler killed Jews because of their religion
well kkk's used to kill not just the blacks
but gays as well, thats just the hard plain facts
I suppose that in this world knowledge people lack
people say they wanna make a difference but just turn their backs
I guess no courage they have to help people out
well if you don't help him, then who will help you when you shout
or even just imagine, your family's life is at bay
and the only possible survival they have lies on the hands of a gay
would you not want his help and risk the lives of your fam
just because he's gay does not mean he is not human
everyone lives, eats, takes showers, and even cries
everyone, sleeps, feels pain, and at the end dies
who has the right with a knife to end a human life
you must be crazy cuz whose to say that gays not right
you better change your ways because life comes at you fast
a 90 mile fast ball and your up at bat
some say what makes me so right to talk about this
it's true im not gay but i am anti-fist
I've felt the pain that hate can cause
and trust me that life is no game that you can just pause
lives are at stake no second chances or redo
people get hurt, gays just as much as we do
just imagine your little brother killed after a baseball game
after coming out the closet to his teammates of being gay
thought he could confide in someone and that it would be ok
now you will never see him again no matter how hard you pray
then you would reflect on yourself, what would you say
in your heart would the ignorance stay?
learn mistakes, and grows as a person
before someone hurts you, whether with a stick or with words cursing
for what you belive in, whether right or wrong
just listen and digest the words of this song*

GBPFLAG
P.O. Box 541619
Waltham, MA 02454-1619
Return Service Requested

PRESORTED STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BOSTON, MA
PERMIT NO. 56157



Save The Date

The 6th Annual Pride and Passion Party Fundraiser for Greater Boston PFLAG's Safe Schools and Communities Project will be on Saturday, April 12, 2008 at the Hyatt in downtown Boston.

Last year was sold out, so mark your calendars! We can't wait to see you!

Let us know if you would like to join our Pride and Passion planning committee. We're always looking for people who love to plan events! Email us at info@gbpflag.org and join our fabulous team of party planners.



GREATER BOSTON PFLAG
Parents, Families & Friends of
Lesbians/Gays/Bisexuals/Transgenders