

PFLAG - PERTH



NEWSLETTER MAY/JUNE 2009

PARENTS FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND GAYS PERTH INC

THE OBJECTIVES OF PFLAG ARE TO:

- Provide a support system for parents, families and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and intersex people, in an effort to understand, accept and support them with love and pride.
- Offer loving support and understanding to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and intersex people.
- Support and encourage the recognition of full human rights for them.
- Help parents, family members and friends to learn what the current members of PFLAG have already learnt and to help change attitudes in society and create an environment of understanding, so that all lesbian, gay bisexual, transsexual and intersex people can live with dignity and respect.

HAPPY 20TH YEAR PFLAG - PERTH

Hello Everyone

We certainly have our highs and lows in PFLAG-Perth. On one hand we find ourselves running out of active members and wondering how we can hope to keep going. Then on the other hand (see MEDIA STATEMENT in this NL) we find ourselves being the recipients of \$10,000 (less \$2,500 costs) from an Anti-Discrimination action against John Laws and radio station 2UE in Sydney.

Lately, some of our members have been having a run of bad times with health problems. One tireless worker from our earlier years, Alice, has been poorly for some time and having great trouble getting around. We are thinking of you Alice and send our love and best wishes for a speedy recovery. These best wishes are also extended to Elfie, having chemotherapy, Jill with a badly broken elbow and John W, with a wrecked shoulder. All are all going through painful stressful times with their treatment.

Unfortunately over this last year we have been unable to attract anyone as a formal President and have been working on a roster system with members taking the President's role for a couple of meetings each. With new elections due in August we hope this situation will change but this remains to be seen. At times members suggest that maybe PFLAG has passed its 'Use By Date' and perhaps we should disband. But then along comes a new parent or two to a meeting and we think again "How could we?" Then along comes \$7,500 and again we say "How could we close down now?" So the saga continues.

With some advertising in the "OUT in PERTH" paper we hope to lift our profile a little (or a lot) and maybe attract more of the parents of the thousands of those in the 'Gay Community out there' who may be willing to carry on the work of PFLAG.

Although the 'windfall' was given expressly to PFLAG-Perth we do feel an obligation to help other PFLAG groups in Australia and we are looking at ways to implement this action.

*However in the meantime we have the great need sort all these issues out. Help!
Love and best wishes to you all,*

John Pugh (Acting President)

MEDIA STATEMENT - JOHN LAWS CASE SETTLEMENT

[FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE]

5th April 2009

In 2004 John Laws used his morning program to attack Carson Kressley, however, he also went on to include a general attack on the queer community with a mixture of homophobic jokes, severe ridicule, insults and degrading representations [<http://www.caah.org/colt/johnlaws/pdf/d20041103.pdf>]. This resulted in numerous Anti-Discrimination Board (ADB) complaints from various groups and individuals. This class action of 46 complaints from all around Australia marks the final set of complaints submitted to the Anti-Discrimination Board (ADB) over these comments.

The out-of-court settlement agreement, signed in December last year, included a range of obligations on 2UE including: -

(a) 15 community service announcements, broadcast sporadically on 2UE in the morning and afternoon, advertising the Same Sex Marriage National Day of Action.

(b) A comprehensive open letter of apology.

(c) Implementing broadcasting training to all 2UE on-air staff for 2009 with an emphasis on the Margan proceedings as a case study.

(d) donating \$10,000 to PFLAG Inc (WA). [Parents and Friends of Gays and Lesbians]

(e) reimbursement of legal expenses.

(f) attempts at good faith resolution of any complaint/s lodged by the complainants in the future.

The last legal issues for this joint complaint were resolved on Sunday (05/04/2009).

Simon Margan, Representative of the Complainant Group, stated that "This John Laws complaint is a good example of the community bringing vilification to justice. Wherever possible these type of complaints should be handled, not by a single personality, but collectively, for more effective gains for the queer community."

On receiving the donation WA PFLAG recently produced a statement saying *"PFLAG - Perth has gratefully accepted the \$10,000 "donation". Thanks to Simon Margan and his backers, some justice would seem to have been done over the offensive remarks made by John Laws. (What a great pity it had to take so long and so much effort). PFLAG - Perth grew from parents lobbying during the campaign to have homosexual acts decriminalized in 1989. We battled on to see more major reforms on discrimination in 2002. Receiving \$10,000 is the greatest thing that has happened to us since these events. Apart from the \$2,500 costs and our own small needs we anticipate being able to help PFLAG generally, in Australia, with their battle against discrimination and vilification of the GLBTI community and reaching the multitude of closeted parents that we all know exist 'out there'." A portion of the donation has been set aside for funding PFLAG - Perth's 20th anniversary.*

Simon Margan stated that "whilst John Laws is no longer broadcasting his morning program, this complaint has meant that there is a change of culture at 2UE and indeed generally. Broadcasters in future will think twice about vilifying queer-identifying people, based on their sexuality." "This currently apology is significant, as it does not merely state the outcome of the complaint, or apologise for the hurt feelings in the queer community, but goes further to apologise for any actual harm that resulted from the vilification.

Rachel Evans, CAAH Convenor, stated that "whilst the donation to the queer-community was impressive, it was the 2UE's pledge to work with CAAH to ensure that this type of vilification will never be repeated by implementing a range of measures, in particularly training procedures for on-air broadcasters that was the most important".

Complaints were made to the Australian Communication and Media Authority (ACMA) but once again that body has been unwilling to establish anti-homophobia. This now puts this body at odds with the ADB, which found that the broadcast did amount to vilification.

Simon Margan said "The next legal project will be a class action challenging the prohibition of same sex marriage. Preparation, including gathering complainants from the community, has already begun".

MEDIA RELEASE CONTACTS

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A LETTER FROM Jen

Hi everyone, from sunny Exmouth. Yes, we have moved, well, for a while at least! When Terry was made redundant in November, he decided to start his own consulting business and a contract was offered to him in Exmouth until November/December. We didn't have much time to make our decision, but it was an easy one, especially with the current economic climate and we have been to Exmouth on holiday, so we knew the town.

We have settled in really well and have even got into the local culture of fishing. We aren't very good at it - only caught three so far - but it may also have something to do with the fact that I feel so guilty when I catch one and I can't bear to think it might be in pain. I love eating fish but I'm a wuss when it comes to catching them! The animal life both in and out of the ocean is absolutely fantastic. Emus constantly walk across my path when I am out walking and also around town and we have seen dugongs, turtles and stingrays while fishing off the beach. Then there is the magnificent coral of the Ningaloo Reef which is on a par with the Great Barrier Reef. There is so much to see and do here, our weekends are filled with outings around this beautiful region. Well, I hope to see you at a meeting when we are back in Perth, so until then, I wish you all well now and in the future. Warm wishes to Elfie and hope that she is on the way to recovery. Cheers, Jen Pearson x

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Would all PFLAG – Perth members please note that our AGM is to be held at 12.30 pm, before the normal meeting on August 8th. Membership and nomination forms etc should be included with this Newsletter, but if by chance you've missed out please ring and tell us.

Penguin gays go clucky over egg

BERLIN

Two homosexual penguins have successfully hatched an egg that was rejected by its parents and are now proudly rearing the chick, a German zoo housing the gay couple says.

“Z and Vielpunkt, both males, gladly accepted their ‘Easter present’ and began straight away with hatching the egg,” the zoo in Bremerhaven, northern Germany said on Wednesday.

Since the chick arrived, they are behaving in the same way as one would expect a heterosexual couple to do.

“Both happy fathers are now diligently handling the everyday care of their adopted offspring.”

There are six gay Humboldt penguins among the zoo's collection of endangered birds. They rose to fame in 2005 when four Swedish females were introduced in an unsuccessful attempt to “cure” them.

“Homosexuality is nothing unusual among animals,” the zoo said. “Sex and coupling up in our world do not necessarily have anything to do with reproduction.”

The Humboldt penguin is normally found on the coast of Chile and Peru. Numbers have dropped to between 12,000 and 20,000 after industrial fishing methods led to dwindling stocks of anchovies on which they feed.

“West Australian” Friday, June 5, 200

Quips from “Ginger Meggs” in “West Aust”

- If evolution was true, mothers would have more than two hands.
- I know all the answers to questions I never get asked!
- I have a few faults but I try to make the most of them
- When the going gets tough, the tough take a coffee break!
- Money can't buy love, but it sure can make some people more likeable.
- Enjoy your day before someone comes along and messes it up.
- The difference between fiction and reality? Fiction has to make sense.
- It's not an optical illusion, it just looks that way.
- A procrastinator's work is never done.
- I know all the answersto questions I never get asked.
- I would rather be a pessimist and wrong than an optimist and wrong.
- The nice thing about standards is, there are so many to choose from.
- Remember, if you can't be kind at least have the decency to be vague.
- To have the rainbow, you have to put up with a little rain!
- When in doubt be quiet!

