



Serving the womyn's
community
since 1983

Herland Voice

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december 2008



JOIN THE IMPACT

Election night was a bitter-sweet celebration. We came together to witness the first black man who will become our president, yet watched in sadness as Florida, Arizona, Arkansas, and California all voted down equal rights for all citizens. In California, Proposition 8, which eliminated the right of same-sex couples to marry, passed by 52%.

Proposition 8's passage left only Massachusetts and Connecticut as states where same-sex marriages are legal, though both Rhode Island and New York will continue to recognize such ceremonies performed elsewhere.

In Arizona, Prop 102 passed by 56% and amended the state constitution to define marriage as between one man and one woman. Florida's Prop 2 was a similar constitutional amendment and passed by 62%.

Arkansas voters approved a measure banning unmarried Arkansas couples who are living together from serving as adoptive or foster parents, imposing a ban that the Legislature balked at adopting. More than 56% of voters supported the ban, said by its proponents to be aimed primarily at keeping gays from becoming foster or adoptive parents. The measure's sponsor, the Arkansas Family Council,

(continued page 3)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fri., December 5th

Louise & Mary at Full Circle
7-9 pm

Fri., December 12th

Miss Brown to You at Galileo
9 pm—midnite \$5

Sat., December 13th

Potluck & Dirty Santa Party at
Herland 6:30 pm

Bring a potluck dish and a white
elephant gift and join us for an
evening of fun and friends.

Sat., December 20th

Sisters of Swing Christmas Show
Saint John's 5201 N Brookline

New Year's Eve

Covert Union in Concert
Church of the Open Arms 7:30 pm \$5

New Year's Day

Potluck at Herland 1-4 pm
Join in our tradition!

women in the news

first female four-star general

After 33 years in the Army, Ann E. Dunwoody ascended to the rank of four-star general, a first for U.S. military.

Dunwoody received her Army commission after graduation from the State University of New York in 1975. Her first assignment was to Fort Sill, as supply platoon leader. She was sent to quartermaster officer school at Fort Lee, Va. In 1980.

After graduating from the Command and General Staff College in 1987, she was assigned to Fort Bragg, N.C., where she became the 82nd Airborne Division's first female battalion commander.

She has numerous decorations, including the Distinguished Service Medal and Defense Superior Service Medal.

There are 21 female general officers in the Army, and all but four at the rank of one-star brigadier. The first one-star general of the Army was Anna Mae Hays, chief of the Army Nurse Corps, in 1970.

ERA champion dies at 81

Jane M. Patten, of Norman, died November 12 at home following a short illness. She began her career as a kindergarten teacher, and became one of the most influential women in Norman as the chairman of the board of Security National Bank. She was a founding member of the Norman Public Schools Foundation, and served as a board member of the Okla. Department of Libraries. With her friend Margaret Melton, she chaired the Norman Equal Rights Amendment Coalition and participated in local Democratic Party efforts.

For more information on this accomplished woman, go to www.normantranscript.com, November 14, 2008.

community events

PFLAG-OKC Tuesday December 2 Church of the Open Arms 7 pm

OGLPC Monthly Meeting Monday December 8 1236 NW 36 7 pm

PFLAG-Norman Thursday December 11 St Stephens 7 pm

OKC PRIDE General Meeting Monday December 15 Neighborhood Alliance 1236 NW 36 7pm

ou women's studies archives

The Western History Collection at the University of Oklahoma has begun a Women's Studies Archive, reports Martha Skeeters, Associate Professor of Women's Studies, and Adjunct Assoc. Professor of History at OU. Skeeters is recommending that anyone with papers on women's studies, or related subjects, consider donating them to this collection. Contact Barbara McClurkin, archivist, at her office in Monnet Hall on the North Oval, at 405-325-3641 or at barbmclurkin@ou.edu, or Martha Skeeters at 405-325-3481, mskeeters@ou.edu.

w.r.c. benefit dinner & concert

The Norman Women's Resource Center, Shelter and Rape Crisis Center are having their 22nd annual Stay-At-Home Benefit Dinner in December. This ingenious fund raiser lets you stay in your home and out of the cold, while feeling warm inside about your contribution to the lives of many women and children.

If you don't mind the weather, love a sing-along, and still want that warm feeling, attend the 15th Annual Sullivan Family Concert on Monday, December 22 at 7:00 PM at the Sharp Concert Hall, Catlett Music Center, at the University of OK. The concert is free and open to the public, with donations to WRC accepted. Concert Sponsors are still needed, and will be listed in the program.

The WRC is one of the oldest, continually operating women's center/shelter in the U.S. To find out more about their history and services call 364-9424 or go to wrcnorman.org.

JOIN THE IMPACT *(cont. from page 1)*

tried to paint its proposal as a battle against a "gay agenda." The conservative group successfully pushed for an amendment banning same-sex marriage four years ago.

This is not a one time, four-state issue. It's an issue of equality across America. Stand up and make your voice heard!

In an effort to make a positive impact in the lives of our community, our allies, and even our opposition, JoinTheImpact.com emerged. JoinTheImpact coordinates the national effort to promote LGBTQ equality and organized the recent rallies across the nation against California's Prop 8.

Our movement seeks to encourage the LGBTQ community not to look towards the past and place blame, but instead to look forward toward

what needs to be done now to achieve one goal: Full equality for ALL. We stand for reaching out across all communities. We do not stand for bigotry, for scapegoating, or using anger as our driving force. Our mission is to encourage our community to engage our opposition in a conversation about full equality and to do this with respect, dignity, and an attitude of outreach and education.

At JoinTheImpact, we are all inclusive. As such, we will continue to encourage debate from all sides of the conversation provided it is civil and respectful. We will encourage our community to not let anger steer the conversation, but with an understanding that anger is a human reaction and we hope that it can be used as a catalyst toward positive change.

New Year's Eve Party!

Are you looking for a clean and sober way to bring in the New Year? Well, look no further! Church of

the Open Arms is hosting a New Year's Eve Party with lots of fun activities.



The celebration will begin with a **concert by Covert Union** from 8 - 10pm. After the concert, there will be music (spinning CDs), dancing, games, and refreshments until 1am.

The entire night of entertainment is completely free, but if you'd like to bring a snack to share, it would be welcome and appreciated.

Start your New Year off right with friends, in a fun, relaxing, and sober environment! Church of the Open Arms is located at 3131 N. Pennsylvania Avenue.

thank you, thank you!

Herland is grateful for the continued support of many, many women, locally and from distant places. Sometimes donations come from those who can afford to give, and from others who are grateful for the community of women who have kept Herland alive for 25 years.

In keeping with our privacy policies,

we refrain from giving full names, but want to thank everyone who has responded to our plea for support: So here goes!



Thank you to BF, BM, BN, CK, CT, DTH, DS, FP, GF, GM, JB, JG, KR, KL, LA, LC, LS, MC, MD, NK, NN, PM, PJ, PK, RH, SB, SH, SI, TC, T, VD, JM, DD, EB, VE, and GP.

we won! we lost!

Barack Obama is headed to the White House, but California and other states turned back equality. What's next for the GLBT community?

By Sean Bugg, *Metro Weekly Magazine*, Nov. 13

Elections are natural emotional rollercoasters, plunging from heady heights to profound lows.. For the GLBT Community, 2008 was particularly high—and particularly low. Even as Barack Obama became the first African American to be elected to the presidency—and with more than two-thirds of gays and lesbians voting for him—Florida and Arizona voters approved amendments banning same-sex marriage, and Arkansas took the retrograde step of effectively barring adoption and foster-parenting by gays and lesbians.

But the lowest moment had to be the passage of California's Proposition 8, a measure to end marriage equality for gays and lesbians in the state. As a result, thousands of gay and lesbian couples find the legality of their marriages no longer certain. While demoralizing, the passage of Prop. 8 has also proved galvanizing, with protests sprouting across the country, including D.C. (and 3 in Oklahoma) And as President-elect Obama begins his transition into the White House, the GLBT community faces a time of great opportunity on the Federal level.

We asked the leaders of a number of national GLBT and HIV/AIDS organizations their thoughts on the new administration, what the community can achieve, and what the victory of anti-gay campaigns across the country means for the GLBT movement.

Metro Weekly: From your perspective, what is the most immediate effect of the presidential election on the GLBT community?

Rea Carey, Executive Director, The Task Force: It is that for the first time in eight years there is a possibility for the enactment of pro-LGBT policies. It is now possible for us to move forward without the fear of immediate veto threat or administrative ideology obstructing our efforts. We have an opportunity to see our work result in real change and tangible improvement in the lives of LGBT people in America.

Aubrey Sarvis, Servicemembers Legal Defense Network: The Obama presidency will bring an

expotentially greater level of support for LGBT issues and a greater awareness and understanding of our community. Sen. Obama ran opposing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and the Defense of Marriage Act, while openly supporting ENDA and expanded hate-crimes protections. Without shying away from those positions and while mentioning gays and lesbians in his rallies, Obama carried conservative states including North Carolina, Virginia, Indiana and Florida. This, along with the election of an African American to the presidency, shows how far we have come.

Mara Keising, Executive Director, National Center for Transgender Equality: Clearly we are excited that we are likely to see fewer proactive attacks against all LGBT people from an Obama administration. We have all spent the last eight years fending off very hurtful and unproductive policies, and knowing that meaningful advances in federal policy required difficult uphill battles. We are hopeful for the next four years.

Jon Hoadley, Executive Director, National Stonewall Democrats: From before day one, Obama has had a fully inclusive approach to our community. Even his transition team serves as a model for things to come. Not only did he immediately put into a place a non-discrimination policy for the transition team that was inclusive of both sexual orientation and gender identity, but also he isn't pigeonholing his LGBT staff into LGBT roles. This sends a message that our issues will be addressed and we will be treated as full people.

Patrick Sammon, President, Log Cabin Republicans: I think out of the ashes of what is now the Republican Party there is a real opportunity to help rebuild the party in a way that makes it a party of the future rather than a party of the past. What remains to be seen is what President-elect Obama and the Democrats actually deliver on in terms of promises they've made.

Paul Kawata, Executive Director, National Minority AIDS Council: For me, the election of Obama, and a Democratic Congress, means that Americans are ready for change on so many levels. Though Proposition 8 passed in California, it did not win by the margin that it probably would have even four years ago. We must take heart that our courts are starting to look favorably on gay rights, and that gay marriage was legal in California, even if for a short time. We are on the cusp of a new day. It is up to us as community organizers and LGBT leaders to continue the fight for our rights.

STOP HATE IN THE HALLWAYS

By Victor Gorin, for "Metro Star" December 1, 2008

Educators, mental health professionals, activists and others interested in Oklahoma's students came together November 13 for the 2nd Stop Hate in the Hallways Conference. Following the success of the first conference held in Oklahoma City, this meeting was held at the U.S. Postal Service's National Facility for Employee Development in Norman, bringing in people throughout Oklahoma interested in making Oklahoma's schools safer.

The Conference was originally organized by Cimarron Alliance, mainly because of a glaring need that wasn't being met. While there have been many incidents of school violence, and conferences and discussion to address it, there had never been a conference, seminar or major meeting that included what many feel is the most common target of bullying, those who are or are perceived to be gay or lesbian.

Whether the problem is growing or simply being recognized and addressed is open to question. What is certain is that there definitely is a problem. In a national study, over 30% of U.S. students reported being involved in bullying either as a bully (13%), a victim (11%), or both (6%). Coming close to home, the Oklahoma State Department of Health did a study surveying 7,848 Oklahoma students. They found similar results, with 33% that had been involved in bullying, 12% as the bully, 14% as the victim, and 7% involved in both. One in five students worried often or daily about being bullied. More than half never reported it to an adult at school or a parent. When asked what could be done about the situation, 2/3 of those who were bullied and half of those not bullied wanted better adult supervision.

Not only is bullying damaging to the victims, but frequently the bullies suffer as well, with over 60% of those categorized as bullies in grades 6-9 having at least one criminal conviction by age 24. A study of the U.S. Department of Education of 37 school shooting incidents found that 71% of the shooters felt threatened and/or persecuted, or had been attacked.

Following a welcome by Richard Odgen, Chairman of Cimarron Alliance, the conference was addressed by Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson. He pointed out how things

have changed, how prejudices from home are brought to schools, and how those who are different frequently become objects of bullying.

This point was best made by the keynote speaker, Stephen Wessler, who directs the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence located in Portland, Maine, and was a former assistant Attorney General in that state as well. He is the author of the book, "The Respectful School," and has received many awards for his work in the area of civil rights.

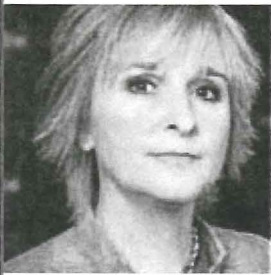
He pointed out that serious bullying begins with words. He told of a student (pseudonym John), who was perceived to be gay by four male students at his school. At first they talked behind his back, and nobody objected. It escalated to name calling directly to John. Then it escalated to tripping and shoving in the hall, with no objections or intervention. The following February he was jumped by three boys and severely beaten, and nobody intervened or told an adult. This was followed by three similar incidents, including an attempt in the bathroom to put his head in a toilet, and another incident where a boy put John's head in a noose and pulled it tight for over 40 seconds. Finally, when one of the boys threatened to shoot John, the threat was overheard by a girl who reported this to school authorities. Finally, the police were called and Mr. Wessler, as a prosecutor with the state hate crimes prosecution unit, finally took action. The four boys involved in the harassment were age 12.

Although the conference included the issues of GLBT students, it was also inclusive of other targets of bullying as well, including Islamic and Latino students. Other issues included students with disabilities, and other characteristics such as being overweight.

Reverend Scott Jones of Oklahoma City's Cathedral of Hope led a panel discussion of religion and the role it played in harassment, and also those who are victimized. Another workshop, conducted by Kathy Middleton with the Oklahoma State Department of Health, demonstrated how bullying could be prevented, and how students and administrators can deal with it.

And intervention can't come too soon, not only for those bullied, but for all Oklahoma students who have the right to a productive, safe education.

MELISSA ETHERIDGE ON CALIFORNIA'S PROP 8



FROM THE DAILY BEAST

Okay. So Prop 8 passed. Alright, I get it. 51% of you think that I am a second class citizen. Alright then. So my wife, uh I mean, roommate? Girlfriend? Special lady friend? You are gonna have to help me here

because I am not sure what to call her now. Anyways, she and I are not allowed the same right under the state constitution as any other citizen. Okay, so I am taking that to mean I do not have to pay my state taxes because I am not a full citizen. I mean that would just be wrong, to make someone pay taxes and not give them the same rights, sounds sort of like that taxation without representation thing from the history books.

Okay, cool I don't mean to get too personal here but there is a lot I can do with the extra half a million dollars that I will be keeping instead of handing it over to the state of California. Oh, and I am sure Ellen will be a little excited to keep her bazillion bucks that she pays in taxes too. Wow, come to think of it, there are quite a few of us fortunate gay folks that will be having some extra cash this year. What recession? We're gay! I am sure there will be a little box on the tax forms now single, married, divorced, gay, check here if you are gay, yeah, that's not so bad. Of course all of the waiters and hairdressers and UPS workers and gym teachers and such, they won't have to pay their taxes either.

Oh and too bad California, I know you were looking forward to the revenue from all of those extra marriages. I guess you will have to find some other way to get out of the budget trouble you are in.

...Really?

When did it become okay to legislate morality? I try to envision someone reading that legislation "eliminates the right" and then clicking yes. What goes through their mind? Was it the frightening commercial where the little girl comes home and says, "Hi mom, we learned about gays in class

today" and then the mother gets that awful worried look and the scary music plays? Do they not know anyone who is gay? If they do, can they look them in the face and say "I believe you do not deserve the same rights as me"? Do they think that their children will never encounter a gay person? Do they think they will never have to explain the 20% of us who are gay and living and working side by side with all the citizens of California?

I got news for them, someday your child is going to come home and ask you what a gay person is. Gay people are born everyday. You will never legislate that away.

I know when I grew up gay was a bad word. Homo, lezzie, faggot, dyke. Ignorance and fear ruled the day. There were so many "thems" back then. The blacks, the poor ... you know, "them". Then there was the immigrants. "Them." Now the them is me.

I tell myself to take a breath, okay take another one, one of the thems made it to the top. Obama has been elected president. This crazy fearful insanity will end soon. This great state and this great country of ours will finally come to the understanding that there is no "them". We are one. We are united. What you do to someone else you do to yourself. That "judge not, lest ye yourself be judged" are truthful words and not Christian rhetoric.

Today the gay citizenry of this state will pick themselves up and dust themselves off and do what we have been doing for years. We will get back into it. We love this state, we love this country and we are not going to leave it. Even though we could be married in Mass. or Conn, Canada, Holland, Spain and a handful of other countries, this is our home. This is where we work and play and raise our families. We will not rest until we have the full rights of any other citizen. It is that simple, no fearful vote will ever stop us, that is not the American way.

Come to think of it, I should get a federal tax break too...

JOIN THE IMPACT

An estimated 200 people attended the rally against Prop 8 in OKC on Saturday, Nov. 15, at City Hall, shown at right.



Resources for Seniors

The Senior Law Resource Center empowers Oklahomans to age with independence, dignity, and security by providing high quality, affordable legal information and services. They provide elders and caregivers legal information and assistance with the following issues:

- Basic Estate Planning & Probate
- Incapacity Planning & Guardianships
- Long-Term Care
- Social Security & Retirement
- Consumer Protection
- Grandparents' Rights
- Age Discrimination
- Elder Abuse & Exploitation
- End-of-Life Issues

The center provides free information through group presentations and an on-line resource center. Legal services are offered for a sliding-scale fee.

Contact the center to schedule a free presentation or legal consultation at their office or a location of your choice. Call them at (405) 528-0858 or e-mail info@oklahomaseniorlaw.org visit their website at www.OklahomaSeniorLaw.org.

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