



You Have a Home in PFLAG!

GREENSBORO, N.C.

Vol. 18 No. 12

December 2011

PFLAG Greensboro
Monthly meeting
Tuesday, Dec 20th
7:00 p.m.
Friendship Friends
Meeting House
1103 New Garden Road
Greensboro, NC

News Briefs

[Barney Frank To End Congressional Career](#)

Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., the longest-serving openly gay member of Congress and among the most high-profile LGBT advocates in America, has decided not to stand for re-election to the U.S. House next year, citing redrawn congressional districts that would make it much tougher for him to win another election.

First elected in 1980, Frank came out while serving his fourth term in 1987. "His decision to come out as gay more than two decades ago gave LGBT Americans an authentic voice and a persistent champion in Washington. ... We will miss that voice," said Chuck Wolfe, president and CEO of the Victory Fund.

Frank said he expects he'll write and teach, but vowed not to become a lobbyist.

[Washington Blade](#) (11/28), [Gay City News \(New York\)](#) (11/28)

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, December 20th, 2011

Christmas Social (Covered dish supper)
Linda Stroupe
Report on opposition to NC Anti-Gay amendment
Friendship Friends Meeting House
1103 New Garden Road
Greensboro, NC

Tuesday, January 17th, 2012

Addison Orr
Triad Health Project and
Update on the Anti-Gay amendment fight
Friendship Friends Meeting House
1103 New Garden Road
Greensboro, NC

Tuesday February 21st, 2012

Program to be determined and
Update on the Anti-Gay amendment fight
Friendship Friends Meeting House
1103 New Garden Road
Greensboro, NC

Tuesday March 20th, 2012

Program to be determined and
Update on the Anti-Gay amendment fight
Friendship Friends Meeting House
1103 New Garden Road
Greensboro, NC

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"This country has never had a Congressman like Barney Frank, and the House of Representatives will not be the same without him. For over 30 years, Barney has been a fierce advocate for the people of Massachusetts and Americans everywhere who needed a voice. Barney's passion and his quick wit will be missed in the halls of Congress, and Michelle and I join the people of the Bay State in thanking him for his years of service."

-President Barack Obama



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News Briefs

Youth Gets 21 Years

By Catherine Saillant, Los Angeles Times

A teenager who fatally shot a gay classmate in the back of the head during an Oxnard middle school computer lab will spend 21 years in prison under a plea deal reached Monday, closing the books on a case that drew international headlines and ignited debate on how schools should handle sexual identity issues.

Brandon McInerney, who was 14 when he pulled a gun out of his backpack and shot Larry King two times at point-blank range, will be kept behind bars until he is 38 under the terms of the deal.

The 17-year-old pleaded guilty to second-degree and voluntary manslaughter. In return, prosecutors agreed not to go forward with a second trial.

["What Would The Marriage Discrimination Amendment Really Mean For NC?"](#)

Here is an update for those who were unable to attend the Crucial Conversation sponsored by NC Policy Watch and Equality NC. The panel was led by Evan Wolfson, President of Freedom to Marry, with Maxine Eichner, professor at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Law, and Holning Lau, assistant professor at the UNC-Chapel School of Law also on the program. Mac and Linda Stroupe were there, and Linda reports:

It was a good gathering. I shook hands with Evan Wolfson, as did lots of others. Maxine Eichner has probably studied more and knows more about the proposed amendment for NC than anyone. She was a very knowledgeable speaker, as was Holning Lau. Wolfson urged us to talk about the amendment every day and urged us not to wait until after Christmas.

Maxine noted that Idaho is the only other state that has used the term "domestic legal union," and the term has not been tested in or defined by the courts there. She also stated that in NC, couples in either same sex or opposite sex relationships will be able to inherit from one another, even if the amendment is passed, as long as they have a will. I mention these two points because they are not the same as what some other attorneys have speculated. She and Holning also made number of other points, some of which were also made at the ENC annual conference in Greensboro on Nov. 12. Holning had slides that he used to debunk claims of Maggie Gallagher and Focus on the Family, who purport to show that children raised by a traditional mom and a dad are almost always better off than other children. He cited a study that showed that children of lesbian moms do very well, for example.

Stuart Campbell, new executive director of ENC, announced that the www.ProtectNCfamilies.org website will be fully rolled out sometime in the next few weeks. The "shell" website is already up, where people who want to work against the amendment can register. Registration requires furnishing personal information, including phone number.

Hiring is now underway for positions to work against the amendment, which will pay \$9 to \$14 per hour. Most of their work will be performed in Chapel Hill. There will be events scheduled around the state, and there will be some sites set up around the state for regional efforts.

Discussion about the best terminology to use to combat the amendment continues. The people on the panel had different ideas about terminology.

Evan Wolfson is the President of the national nonprofit, Freedom to Marry — the campaign to win marriage nationwide. He is also the author of Why Marriage Matters: America, Equality, and Gay People's Right to Marry.
[Read more ...](#)

News Briefs

[New PFLAG Greensboro Officers for 2012](#)

Current President Joan Parker has elected to retire, following 5 years as President. She will train as an additional Facilitator for our Chapter.

The Board of Directors has chosen the following officers, who will take responsibility for moving the Chapter forward effective January 1, 2012:

President: Jonathan Walker
Secretary: Dave Parker
Treasurer: Mac Stroupe

Additional Board members are:

Mitch Mathews
Gary Palmer
Tom Clarke
Linda Stroupe
Joan Parker

[Election Day 2011: LGBT Candidates Were Victorious](#)

Election Day 2011 [proved victorious for many LGBT candidates](#) and their causes, with at least 53 out of 75 candidates endorsed by the Gay & Lesbian Victory fund winning seats in municipal, judicial and state legislative offices.

Among those [who were successful in their campaigns](#) was Annise Parker, a Democrat who became the first openly gay mayor of a major U.S. city in 2010 and was re-elected to her post despite stiff opposition. Also noteworthy were Alex Morse, a 22-year-old gay Democrat who won his race for [mayor of Holyoke](#), Mass. by "a landslide," and Bruce Harris, who is believed to have made history as the [first openly gay](#), African-American Republican mayor after winning election in the Borough of Chatham, N.J.
[Read more ...](#)

[Donor Disclosure Fights Could Test N.C. Laws](#)

N.C. laws require disclosure but similar laws challenged elsewhere

by Matt Comer | Editor | editor@gognotes.com December 3, 2011

CHARLOTTE — The National Organization for Marriage (NOM), a national anti-gay organization enlisted to support a [new anti-LGBT amendment referendum committee on Thursday](#), is raising eyebrows in the Carolinas and nationwide. Its past challenges to several states' financial disclosure laws is



prompting concern on whether similar challenges will be issued in North Carolina.

The group is one of several founding partners of the new Vote for Marriage NC referendum committee. Led by the N.C. Values Coalition and longtime anti-gay lobbyist Tami Fitzgerald, the committee also includes support from the N.C. Baptist State Convention, the Christian Action League and an unnamed coalition of African-American pastors. Together, the groups will work to pass an anti-LGBT state constitutional amendment banning recognition of marriage, civil unions and domestic partnerships for same-sex couples and some opposite-sex couples.

NOM has become infamous among LGBT activists, bloggers and strategists for its involvement in anti-gay marriage campaigns across the country, most notably California's 2008 Proposition 8 and Maine's 2009 Question 1. The group has also been involved in campaigns in Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, New York and Rhode Island. In each of the states where they've been active, NOM has sought to keep the identities of its donors and supporters secret.

The laws challenged by the group are similar in nature to those in place in North Carolina. Though state referendum committees here can collect unlimited contributions from individuals, businesses and other organizations, donations totaling \$50 or more must be disclosed with the donor's name, address and occupational information.

NOM has lost each of their legal challenges submitted in other states.

In November, U.S. District Court Judge Morrison England Jr. ruled NOM's "limited evidence is simply insufficient" to support their harassment claims.

"Plaintiffs do not, indeed cannot, allege that the movement to recognize marriage in California as existing only between a man and a woman is vulnerable to the same threats as were socialist and communist groups, or, for that matter, the NAACP," England wrote. "Plaintiffs' exemption argument appears to be premised, on the concept that individuals should be free from even legal consequences of their speech. That is simply not the nature of their right. Just as contributors to Proposition 8 are free to speak in favor of the initiative, so are opponents free to express their disagreement through proper legal means."

JOY and SORROW at the PFLAG NATIONAL CONVENTION

...BUT, MUCH MORE JOY THAN SORROW!



I have found the writings of the Lebanese American artist, poet and writer Khalil Gibran (1883-1931) helpful in my 78-year journey as a southern-born (North Carolina) and Texas-raised African American. The sadness and sorrow of the unfairness of my treatment as a black American may have infected me in ways quite different from the ways others were affected. Early on I realized that there was a brooding, isolating sadness about me that most of my friends were able to avoid. It could have been that the sicknesses caused by my asthma soon after I was born, shaped both my emotional as well as my physical being. Thus, the racism that hurt and harmed my community, my family and me, may have had a deeper impact upon me because of my health or lack thereof. When I first read these words of Khalil Gibran, they seemed to be written especially for me:

"Your joy is your sorrow unmasked. And, the selfsame well from which your laughter rises was oftentimes filled with your tears. And how else can it be? The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain."

I finally discovered as a teenager that despite the sorrows that racism caused, I should never allow those sorrows to deny or diminish my capacity for joy. I experienced this to my surprise in the Civil Rights Movement. I do not remember the southern city where we were demonstrating during the day, but I will never forget the joy that permeated our gatherings in the evening. The music, laughter, dancing, and celebrating that was ours after confronting the bias, bigotry and hatred of the day, would have appeared to be contradictory to the casual, non-participant observer. But, it was an expression of the joy that is possible when a person or a people refuse to allow the negation of some to drown out the joy and laughter that is possible when one is "standing up on the inside" in actions that challenge those who seek to limit full expressions of their humanity.

I Experienced This Joy At The [PFLAG National Convention In Alexandria, VA!](#)

The Convention included parents, families and friends of Lesbians and Gay persons, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender and Intersex persons, all gathered to celebrate and continue the significant work of PFLAG. We know that at various times when in the weather there is a combination, maybe confrontation of rain and sunshine, the result is often a multi-colored rainbow. I know more than I ever did before why rainbow colors have become the visual expression, in the flags and banners and posters of that we call the "Gay Human Rights Movement". The tears evoked by the negatives of homophobic heterosexism in faith institutions and in society have been met by the smile/laughter/joy of "PFLAG PEOPLE" who know more than ever that, "In the End, we are going to Win." (Because we already have won within ourselves.)

I understood in Alexandria, what Khalil Gibran meant when he wrote, "Your joy is your sorrow unmasked." I saw, I felt, I experienced this joy with my PFLAG sisters and brothers. May each and every day be a "Rainbow Day" for you who read this.

Gilbert H. Caldwell
Member, National Board of PFLAG