

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter July-October 2024 Newsletter



PFLAG Family,

What can I say? I love Pride Month! While I ascribe to PFLAG National's saying "PFLAG-Pride All Year Long," there is something electric about June. Our loving community comes out in force, and we celebrate. You will be excited to see where our chapter volunteers have been out the last few months!

Grab a coffee and dig into this double-edition of the newsletter – you will not want to miss a thing!

On Page 2, we have a special call out to **#LoveVotes 2024 – please read** – Make sure your voice is heard to create and protect a bright, safe future for all our LGBTQ+ loved ones!

We showcase our 2024 PFLAG eQuality Scholarship Collaborative winners on page 5. I was able to attend the awards ceremony this year and the young adults recognized by this scholarship program were outstanding in their accomplishments and plans for their futures.

Jessica provides an update on advocacy in Sacramento on page 10. Her update reminds us that we have a role in influencing what occurs in our capitol and that positive change is possible.

Rosemary shares a new podcast; in this edition, we hear from Lisa Middleton; the link to the podcast on Buzzsprout can be found on page 11.

Finally, we have information for grandparents from our Marla Parker, our chapter secretary. Check out page 12 for her piece.

In solidarity,
Karen Paese, Newsletter Editor/
Spanish Support Group Co-Facilitator



Sara



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Important Links

Please visit our website:

[PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula](#)

Please also visit our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pflagsanjose/>

2024-2025 Board Members



Rosemary Malvey
Yvonne McGuire
Karen Paese
Windsor Smith
Paul Sonkowsky
Renna Ulvang
Sara Larson
Nina O.
Jessica Gachet
Peter Fournier

Support Meetings



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Recent & Upcoming Chapter Activities



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#LoveVotes 2024 !

We are all very aware that election season is in high gear. News, opinions and information (and misinformation) are everywhere. As a 501(c)(3) organization, PFLAG does not endorse any one candidate, but we do know the importance of making our voices heard at the ballot box this November, and we have tools and information to share!

Make sure your voice is heard to create and protect a bright, safe future for all our LGBTQ+ loved ones!

Find voting information FOR ANY STATE! PFLAG National has partnered with the League of Women Voters to make sure that you can find out about registering to vote, finding a polling place, what is on your ballot and more Share this site with your friends and family across the USA so they can be ready to Vote with Love! vote411.org

NOTE: detailed ballot and polling information for California will start being available in late September - early October. Register now and be ready!

Need another language? California voter and voter registration information is available in many languages at <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections>

Love Votes 2024 PFLAG National has kicked off its campaign with lots of resources, from [vote411](https://vote411.org) mentioned above to resources for education and tips on ways you can take action.. <https://www.vote411.org/pflag>

Vote Yes on California Prop 3 to protect Californian's Freedom to Marry. You may not be aware that our freedom to marry who we love in California right now is thanks to a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court which overruled our state constitution. California's state constitution says "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California." Vote Yes on Prop 3 to change our state constitution and recognize that the right to marry is a fundamental right for all! <http://yesonprop3ca.com/>

Where's my ballot? Eager to know the minute your ballot arrives? You can sign up online to receive email or text when your ballot is mailed to you, received by the polling place, and when it is counted!

<https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/>

Important dates 2024 California General Election

- Ballots start being mailed out by October 7, 2024
- Vote-by-mail ballots can be returned starting October 8, 2024
- Deadline to register in California October 21, 2024
- Voter's Choice Counties' in-person voting begins October 26, 2024
- Election Day November 5, 2024
- Vote-by-mail ballots must be postmarked on or before Election Day!



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Letter from President Sara Larson

Happy Pride! This is a happy time of year for me.

I don't get out into the world as much as I probably should. I work at home, helping my mother and making the household "machine" run smoothly. Pride season is an opportunity to get out into the world and cross-pollinate with other people and organizations. This is the first year I participated in the San Francisco Pride parade. I went with my son, and we rode in the PFLAG San Francisco trolley. It was grand! What a great experience. For the Silicon Valley Pride parade, I walked. It was fun to see all the tech companies with their Pride t-shirts, all the people bringing their dogs to watch the parade, all the children. The weather was perfect too.



We need more volunteers. What are you interested in? Could you help us out? Here are a few areas where we need help.

Volunteer Coordinator: the volunteer coordinator is in charge of filling all the volunteer jobs. Most of these are working at tables at Pride events, but there are also other roles. Right now, there is a spread sheet of volunteers' names, email addresses, phone numbers, and areas of interest. For example, I would be listed as Sara Larson, sara.larson@pflagsanjose.org, parent of a transgender person. The volunteer list is kept up to date as much as possible, to remove people who don't or can't volunteer this year, or to show if somebody is less than 18 years of age but still wants to volunteer. We have a waiver form for the parents of minors to use if their kids want to volunteer for PFLAG.

Scholarship Committee: volunteers on the scholarship committee help decide who will receive our annual PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula scholarships. After a brief training, volunteers spend a couple of weeks in the month of February reviewing PFLAG scholarship applications. Later, there will also be interviews with the applicants. Then the scholarship recipients are announced, and the luncheon in May is where we celebrate the recipients.

The Scholarship Committee also needs one volunteer to attend the monthly scholarship meetings with the scholarship management group we belong to, eQuality. This person will hold the title of "leader," but I can help find more volunteers to help round out the committee if this individual can't do it alone.

Parades, festivals, volunteerism, all of these increase the visibility of LGBTQ people. Make sure people can see you.

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Important Links

You may also contact us by:



info@pflagsanjose.org



(408) 270-8182



P.O. Box 2718
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

To join, renew your membership,
or donate by credit card, visit one
of the two links below:

[Join/Renew](#)
[Donate](#)

Remember to take advantage of
your employer match when
donating to PFLAG as well as
your employer volunteer time
programs!

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Support Meeting Schedule

To participate in full Zoom video (preferred) or by Zoom phone, email info@pflagsanjose.org beforehand, or leave a message at (408) 270-8182; we'll respond with the information you'll need to join the meeting. If you share your email address, we'll continue sending that information in subsequent months, so you won't have to request it each time as we vary it to protect your security. You will note below, some support groups are only zoom, some only in person and some are hybrid.

Starting in October the General Support Group for the South Bay will meet at the Billy DeFrank Center the first Thursday of the month at 7pm.

- Also, please remember we have a One-to-One Support offering: Just send an email to info@pflagsanjose.org or leave a message at (408) 270-8182 and ask about "one-to-one support". Let us know if you have a preferred language other than English.

Dates and Times	Meetings
Sept 4 th and Oct 2 nd 7:30 p.m.	Estamos Contigo (PFLAG en Español). This meeting is typically the <u>first Wednesday</u> of the month. Due to travel, July meeting will occur the 10 th . Zoom only
Sept 7 th and Oct 5 th Sept 21 st and Oct 19 th 10am- Noon	Families of Trans Youth -This meeting is always on the <u>first and third Saturday</u> of the month. First meeting of the month is in person at the Redwood City Main Library and third Saturday of the month is via Zoom. Please note the July and August in-person meetings will both be held in small conference room on the 1st floor
Sept 9 th and Oct 14 th 7:00 p.m.	General Support, Peninsula This meeting is always on the <u>second Monday</u> of the month and is now hybrid (in-person and Zoom) ; feel free to join us at the San Mateo Pride Center
Sept 11 th and Oct 3 th 7:30 p.m.	General Support, South Bay will meet via zoom on Sept 11 and will pivot to in-person meetings at the Billy DeFrank Center the first Thursday of the month starting on October 3, 2024.
Sept 17 th and Oct 15 th 7:00 p.m.	Asian/Pacific Islander (API). This meeting is the <u>third Tuesday</u> of the month. Zoom only
Sept 19 th and Oct 17 th 7:00 p.m.	Board Meetings – <u>Third Thursday</u> of the month Zoom only

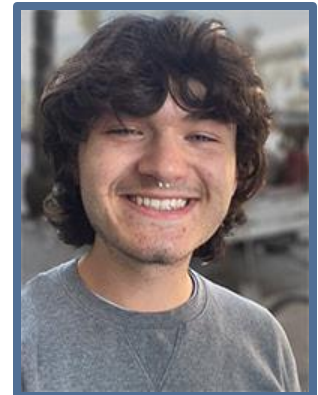
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Congratulations PFLAG San Jose Peninsula 2024 Scholarship Winners !!!



Rosemary Malvey, Sara Larson,
Windsor Smith, Karen Paese, and Kermit
Cuff attended the May 18, 2024
eQuality Scholarship Collaborative
Awards Luncheon on May 18, 2024

Special thanks to Sara for announcing our winners, to Rosemary for chairing our scholarship committee again in 2024, and to Windsor for being the event videographer!



Roan Bedoian (she/her)
Graduating from Saint. Ignatius
Preparatory in San Francisco; going
to Georgetown to study public
policy.

*PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula
Scholar*



Ethan Thaker (he/she/they)
Graduating from Sequoia High
School in Redwood City; going to
Columbia University to major in
women's and gender studies.

*PFLAG/Crocker & Jolly LGBTQ
Achievement Scholar*



Sophia Tran (she/they)
Graduating from Prospect High School
In Saratoga; going to University of
Pennsylvania to study cognitive science
and mathematical economics.

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Scholar



Anonymous (he/she/they)
Graduating from Castilleja High
School In Palo Alto; going to
Northwestern University to major in
theatre and psychology..

*PFLAG/Max Heckler Memorial
Scholar*

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Happy Pride Month ! June was a busy month for the Chapter !

**First Congregational Church
Second Annual Pride Sunday June: 2nd**

Supported by Sara Larson, her son Will Stuart and Paul Sonkowsky



**Filoli 2024 Pride Weekend:
June 1st**

Supported by Windsor Smith, Paula Fraser Crosatto, and Karen Paese



**San Mateo County
Fair Family Pride
June 2nd**

Supported by Windsor Smith, Jessica Gachet, and Shelley Folsom



San Mateo Pride June 8th

Supported by Windsor Smith, Shelley Folsom, Jessica Gachet, Michael Gachet, Gabriel Gachet, Karen Paese, BJ Chin and our famous and ever-so-photogenic PFLAG mascot for the day Yogi (Jessica's dog)



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More Recent Activities in the Community !!!



Giants ERG Panel Presentation June 13th

Karen Paese and Moises Sabio participated with Brian Bond, Executive Director PFLAG National, on a PFLAG Panel for the San Francisco Giants Employee Resource Group (ERG) Pride Celebration.

Brian opened the panel with an introduction to PFLAG National and our mission overall with our network of chapters. Moises and Karen shared their experiences of their two sons' coming out and fielded questions on religious, cultural intersections in a mixed-race family, etc. Lovely partnership with the Giants DEI efforts!

Fremont Pride Fair: June 15th

Supported by Windsor Smith and Peter Fournier



San Jose Earthquakes Pride Night: June 15th

Supported by Windsor Smith, Nadia Sanchez, Gilberto Aparicio
Karen Paese, Moises Sabio and Mateo Sabio Paese

Nadia and Karen joined other non-profits at the event in a half-time recognition event on the field



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Late June and Early July Activities !



[San Francisco Pride Parade:](#)

This year Sara Larson and her son Will Stuart rode the trolley with the PFLAG San Francisco chapter! What a nice way to partner at such a great event.

[San Jose Obon Festival:](#) July 13th and 14th

The Obon Festival brings the community together and reminds us of the connections we all share – our interdependence and the strength we embody – together. This year Paul Sonkowsky, Windsor Smith, Marla Parker, Peter Fournier, and Jessica Gachet volunteered at the chapter's booth.



GIVING IN GRATITUDE
A Time to Remember and Honor



Note: Underlined titles are hyperlinks to more information on the event !

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August Activities !

[Silicon Valley Pride: August 24-25:](#)



Silicon Valley Pride activities typically round out our yearly pride events for the season. This year Silicon Valley Pride was attended by Sara Larson, Paul Sonkowsky, Marc Fuentes, Windsor Smith, Yvonne McGuire. The chapter tabled on Saturday night, marched in the parade on Sunday and tabled then as well.

Note: Underlined titles are hyperlinks to more information on the event!

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Learning About Supporting Legislation to Support LGBTQ+ Lives



PFLAG San Jose Peninsula
Board Member,
Jessica Gachet (left), with
Superintendent of Public
Instruction Tony Thurmond
and fellow advocate Marilyn J.
Dykstra

I have been learning a lot about advocacy and this spring I had my first opportunity to advocate for specific legislation. Back in May, PFLAG National and our own chapter, along with many other organizations in California, signed on to support bill AB 1955, also known as the SAFETY Act. The bill strengthens protections for LGBTQ+ kids in California against forced outing policies at schools. It is another powerful experience where I am learning a lot about our state government and meeting a lot of amazing LGBTQ+ advocates and allies.

First, I learned about contacting our representatives. They are understandably very busy, but I found out that they are also very eager to hear from their constituents. There are many ways to do it, way easier than I imagined. You can go on their Contact page on their website and email them about your concerns and their staff really does carry your message to them. If you call their office, you can leave a short message with their staff. And if you sign up for your representative's newsletters, you will often find out about coffees and meet and greets in your area where you can shake hands, tell them your concerns, and ask them directly where they stand. All of these are effective in letting them know how you want them to represent you and I had the chance to do them all while advocating for AB 1955 - and bugged everyone I knew to do the same!

Later, as the SAFETY Act moved along, it was put before different senate and assembly committees who voted to deny or pass the bill before sending it to their respective floors for a vote. I got to attend two of these hearings at the capitol in Sacramento. It was tough but informative to watch and listen to experts both for and against. Time is given for the public attending the hearing to stand before the committee and give their "me too," which just means giving their name and stating if they are in support or opposition. It only takes a few seconds, but it can feel very empowering to personally be part of the process. As I missed the last hearing, I have also been happy to learn to navigate the senate's and assembly's online media archives where you can almost immediately watch a recording of every committee hearing.

As I am writing this, the SAFETY Act has passed all the committees, and we are waiting for the final floor vote in the Assembly*. Hopefully from there it will be a short trip to the governor's desk for a final signature and it will become effective in 2025. The opposition is increasingly loud as the bill has moved forward, but I am very optimistic about this bill, and it will help send a strong message to people spreading hate and misinformation. But it certainly will not be the end of the road. I know I will soon use what I have learned and continue to learn and meet more amazing people as we advocate for a safe and bright future for our LGBTQ+ loved ones. **Love wins!**

* **Update:** As of 6/27, The SAFETY Act passed the Assembly vote and is now on its way to Governor Newsom's desk.

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PFLAG LGBTQ+ Elders Interviews Podcast Personal Stories in the Making of LGBTQ History

From Palm Springs, CA, and a Palm Springs City Council member, meet **Lisa Middleton**, a transgender woman in her early 70s who has led an inspiring and varied life with no signs of slowing down. Holding high-level corporate positions before stepping into local politics, Lisa is currently a candidate for the CA State Senate representing Riverside and San Bernardino counties – predicted to be the closest election in CA in recent years.

Lisa comes from an organic part of California pioneers, the Dust Bowl Generation. Her family came to California with a storyline not far off track from the beloved characters found in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* – to CA from Oklahoma in the 1930's, leaving behind great poverty and poor prospects of opportunity, most of them went into the fields as laborers in California.



Having been moved to LA at the age of one, Lisa scrambled her way through an education that had her finishing up with a Master's degree at USC.

Lisa's interview takes us through her decades living out her not-true self with great loneliness but always a sense of doing her best wherever life took her: marriage to a man, children, her work-life and her waking up time during the Civil Rights period, when she discovered she could no longer live a lie.

Lisa has a warm, matter-of-fact style and she strikes her listeners as a person greatly at home with all the facets of her life. Enjoy meeting Lisa Middleton.

A special thanks for Rosemary for her dedication to this program.

As a reminder here is a link to the overall podcast series <https://pflagsanjose.buzzsprout.com>

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Support for Grandparents

I am lucky to have a mom and a mom-in-law who are both supportive of my adult trans child. Aged 90 and 91, they each joined the August zoom call for the Grandparents Community, hosted by the National PFLAG Connects program. All the discussion in any support group is strictly confidential, but here is what they told me when I asked them about the call.

- After the call started, they broke the participants up into break-out rooms based on answers to questions during the (free) registration.
- In their breakout room, they all introduced themselves and told the age of their trans grandchild.
- Both grandmas thought the group was very interesting.

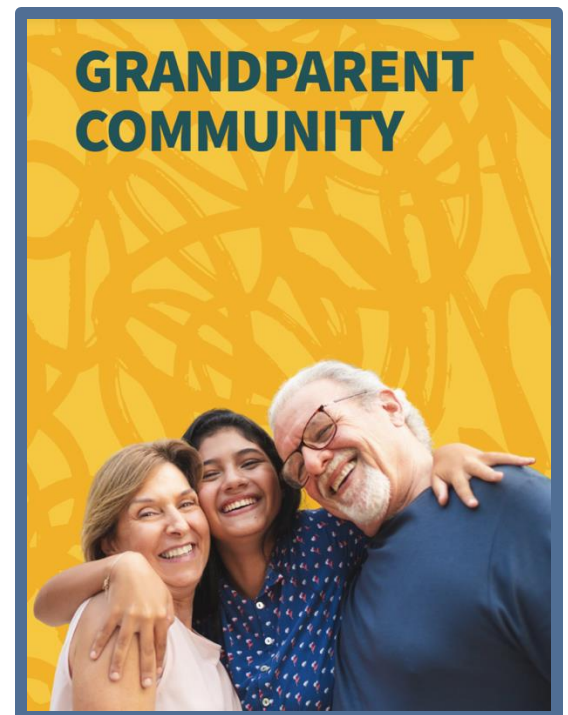
They plan to attend the next call, and would like to have a local group to join. Grandparents can certainly join our chapter support groups (we have many), including the one that I attend for family of trans people. We do not currently have a local *grandparents* support group.

If you know a grandparent who might like to join the Grandparents Community, the national page with information on how to sign up (for free) is here: <https://pflag.org/events/grandparent-community/>.

Here are also links to download PFLAG National's publications for grandparents:

- [Supporting Your LGBTQ+ Grandchild – in English](#)
- [Ayudando a su nieto LGBTQ+ – en español](#)

Marla Parker
PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Secretary



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PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula

All current and prospective PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter Members,

Please keep an eye out for the mailing of the annual membership renewal drive expected to be distributed shortly.

- Family Membership \$40
- Individual Membership \$30
- Student Membership \$15

We would be very grateful if you considered a separate donation to the scholarship fund.

Also, if you are making larger donation, please send a check to help avoid the credit card transaction fees, of almost 5%.

Thank you!

