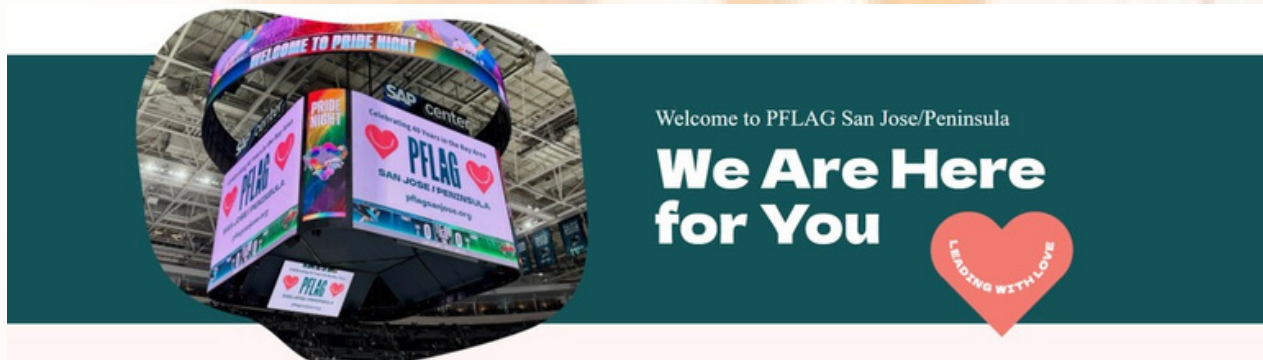


PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter September 2026 Newsletter



Pumpkin Spice, Sweater weather, and Protecting Our Rights.

Get ready for an autumn full of crisp weather, mandatory pumpkin spice lattes, and an inescapable flood of Brock Purdy, Stephen Curry, or Macklin Celebrini completely taking over your feed. But while we're trying to settle into the seasonal shift—and watch our favorite quarterbacks do their thing—the return of fall also marks the annual kickoff of some incredibly high-stakes political theater.

Across the country, hostile statehouses are treating basic human existence like a nationwide code red, rushing to pass anti-LGBTQ+ restrictions at a frantic, almost panicked pace. Right now, lawmakers are moving on critical local packages like Assembly Bill 1540 to bring back our defunded 988 LGBTQ+ youth crisis lifelines. Whether the national media is currently obsessing over school bathroom bans or forced outing policies, the reality on the ground remains exactly the same: sitting on the sidelines just isn't an option. With November staring us right in the face, it's time to channel that cozy autumn energy into actual momentum. Let's turn our collective power into action, show up at the ballot box, and fiercely defend our community's home turf.

Like the weather, there are changes coming to PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula chapter. It's time to elect new officers and board members on page 3. Also, special announcements from Sara and Marla on page 2 & 4 and check out Paul's helpful read recommendations on page 5.

"Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life; define yourself." Harvey Fierstein

Be safe and stay radiant,

Newsletter Editor

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President's Message

As I write this, I am looking forward to Silicon Valley Pride. I have been going each year for the past few years, and it is always a good time.

On October 3rd, at 10:00 AM, at the Redwood City Library in the large meeting room on the 2nd floor, we will have an annual meeting to vote in new board officers and new board members. This meeting will be short, and the regular support meeting will happen afterward, perhaps as early as 10:30 AM. I will be resigning as president as we vote in a new board president. I have served as president for 2 years and, because I will be moving out of state within the next year, it is time for me to leave the board of our PFLAG chapter. I will continue to work with our chapter as long as I can. After I move, I will join a new local chapter. PFLAG is an important part of my life.

This summer PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula had a booth at Pride and other events. We marched in one or two parades. Several of us met with other PFLAG chapters, and we all marched together at San Francisco Pride. Our group was hosted by PFLAG San Francisco.

Potential volunteers, here are some ideas for you. Right now, we are looking for people for the following:

- Chapter Board Secretary
- Committees for:
 - Volunteer coordination
 - Outreach (picnics, teas, ?)
 - Advocacy
 - Finance (work with treasurer, including possibly an "apprentice" treasurer to learn from the current treasurer)

Other ideas for volunteers: Come to our support meetings to meet people and make personal connections. Join us when we have booths at events—we call this "tabling events." We also need help with liaising with other organizations in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. Think about how you can help. Can you attend a school board meeting on a regular basis, and send in a report to the chapter? How about participating in events at another local LGBTQ+ organization, such as the Billy DeFrank Center?

There will be a West Coast regional PFLAG meeting in October. Sign up now!

<https://midpacific.pflag.org/> These meetings are great places to fill your soul with hope and encouragement, as well as times to learn about a whole host of things related to PFLAG. Sessions will include, "Safety First: Exploring Chapter Safety Planning," "State Legislative Advocacy, 2026 Advocacy Activities, and Ideas for Improvement," and "How to Grow a Diverse Chapter: Stories from the Asian-American Ethnoburbs."

sara

Chapter President



Chapter Election

Attention MEMBERS of PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula:

It's time to elect new officers and board members of our chapter. It's time for the 2026 Annual Meeting

On October 3rd of this year, we will hold an annual meeting. On this occasion we will elect a new board president, a new vice president, and also vote on our official name change to, simply, PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula. We're still registered with the outdated Peninsula Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays name in some places.

Voting is open to all current members of PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula. You can vote in person if you attend the meeting in person, on October 3rd, 2026, at 10:00 AM, in the Community Room on the 2nd floor of the Redwood City Library. Alternatively, you can fill out the ballot below, and sign and print your name. You could mail the paper ballot to us, at

PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula
P.O. Box 2718
Sunnyvale, CA 94087-0718

or just take a photo with your phone and email it to info@pflagsanjose.org.

The position of Secretary is open, so please nominate someone to be secretary. Secretary is a board position also. If you would like to nominate someone to become a member of the board, please list their name (or your name, if it's you) on your ballot.

Vote by checking the box next to each name. Thank you.

Sara Larson
Outgoing President, PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula

PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula

October 2026 Ballot

Please turn in by October 3, 2026. No ballots will be accepted after that date.

Name Change

- I approve amending Article I of the Articles of Incorporation to read: The name of the corporation is PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula.

Nominees

- ☐ President: Gloria Eldredge
- ☐ Vice President: Rhiannon Berenbaum
- ☐ Treasurer: Neyha Rajan
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Signed: _____

Member Name: _____





Secretary's Corner

I joined this PFLAG chapter in 2024 when I decided I was going to retire in a few months. I figured I'd have the time, and it seemed like a good way to make a contribution in this crazy world tipping back towards intolerance and hate, some of it aimed directly at my adult child.

That turned out to be true, but it wasn't what I expected. I found that I value the support groups above all else. I had expected to play my usual role of education, networking, connecting people and organizations, and, I hoped, Advocacy work. Instead, I volunteered to do the minutes for the board, quickly got invited to actually join the board and then became (logically, for the minutes taker) Secretary. I have not yet done significant Advocacy work, other than sending appeals as requested/directed by other PFLAG volunteers who are outstanding Advocates.

But that is ok. The three pillars of PFLAG are Support, Education, and Advocacy. Attending support group meetings (I try to sometimes also go to the Support for All meeting in person in downtown San Jose), I've been able to help some people but I've also gotten so much support for myself, even when I didn't think I needed it. Sometimes I learned a better understanding of past rough spots that my family went through, because another, new parent articulated something very similar, and with my ten years of perspective, I had an ah-HA moment. So THAT's what was going on there. No wonder. One of many minor mysteries solved.

Volunteering as Secretary, I did my usual highly verbose style of minutes with a highlights section. Based on feedback, I've switched to a concise set of statements for the official minutes (formerly highlights), followed by whatever informal notes I or others want to contribute. Only the short bit at the top needs to be reviewed and approved by the board each month. I also created a worksheet showing every motion passed by this board over the past two years, a record of the votes, in effect, all in one place.

I'm stepping down as Secretary, after two years, but I plan to stay on the board for a while and volunteer to better document our tech systems and help manage our membership data both locally and with the national PFLAG office.

Chapter Secretary



Matters of Faith

If you grew up in, or are still a part of, a conservative Christian community, you're probably aware of a certain tension. There is likely to be a big gap between what that community expects you to believe about gender and/or sexuality, and your own desire to love and support your LGBTQ+ family member or friend. Maybe you were even pushed out of your community. You may find yourself having to significantly re-think what you believe.

I know this can be a difficult journey to make. Here are a couple of the books that have helped me along the way:

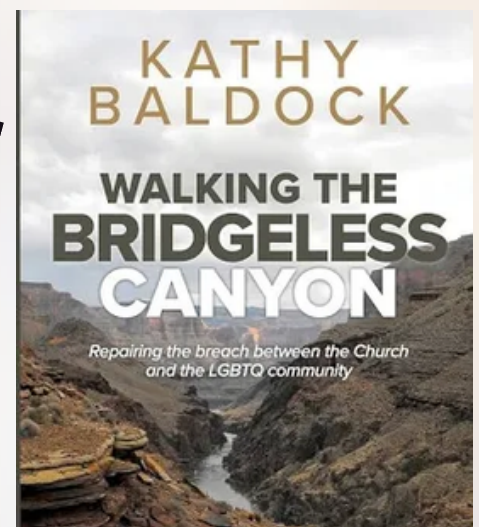
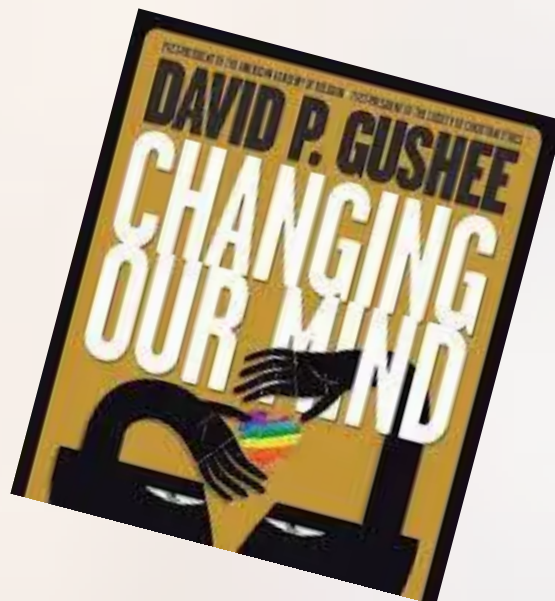
Changing Our Mind, by David Gushee. Dr. Gushee has been a leading evangelical Christian ethicist. In this book he explains why he changed his mind and heart, moving from a traditionalist view to advocating for the full inclusion, dignity, and civic/church equality of LGBTQ individuals.

Walking the Bridgeless Canyon, by Kathy Baldock. I don't know if there's any more thorough a researcher than Kathy Baldock. A straight evangelical Christian who became a tireless advocate for LGBTQ folks in the church, she presents a wide ranging treatment of relevant history, science, scripture, politics and more. And she does so in a very clear and accessible way.

Maybe these will be helpful for you too. Perhaps you have others to recommend? Let me know. It would be especially interesting to hear from a variety of faith traditions. You can write to me at paul.sonkowsky@pflagsanjose.org.

Warm regards,

Paul



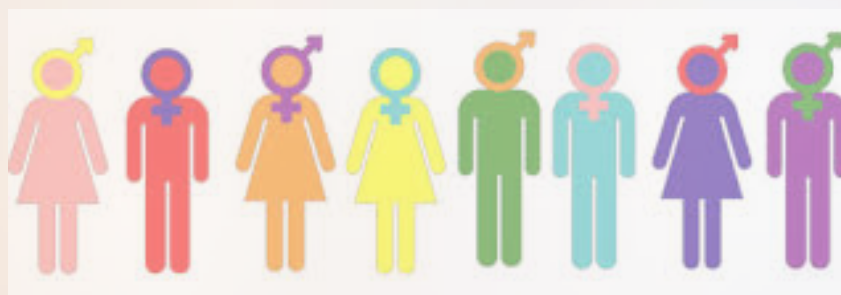


We're Back! The PFLAG Speakers Bureau

Those of you who were with us pre-COVID may remember our Speakers Bureau. Volunteers from our chapter told their stories of being parents of LGBTQ+ children of any age, or members of that community. They spoke at high schools, colleges, churches, and in many other settings, supplying faces and real world examples for sometimes poorly understood concepts of gender identity and sexual orientation. This aspect of our education and advocacy mission went on hiatus when in-person gatherings were suspended.

We're back! PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula has a totally revamped Speakers Bureau program, with a new Speakers Bureau Coordinator, new training materials, and newly trained volunteer speakers from our membership. We provide panels of up to 4 people who each present a 3-5 minute story, followed by Q&A. It is not too late to join us! We are continuing to add speakers, who choose where, when, and to whom they wish to speak, as well as what to share and what to keep private. Contact speakersbureau@pflagsanjose.org to find out more or get started, or if you would like to request a Speaker panel for your organization.

Spread the word!





eQuality Scholarship Collaborative

After a successful fundraising drive in 2025 (and early 2026), PFLAG San Jose / Peninsula was able to raise enough money to award six scholarships totaling \$36,000 to deserving high school and community college graduates this year!

The awards luncheon was held in San Francisco at Catch French Bistro on Market Street on May 16th. The energy and enthusiasm from our winners, along with their moving acceptance speeches, was truly inspiring. These future leaders and LGBTQ+ advocates truly gave me hope for the future.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to the Scholarship Fund this past year - even the smallest amounts added up to make a difference!

This year's fundraising campaign will kick off in October. But if you feel like donating early, you can do so here: [PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Scholarship donation page](#)

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gloria".

Gloria Eldredge
Scholarship Committee Chair





It was fun! Hope you will join us next year

Your PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter marched proudly in the 2026 Silicon Valley Pride event Sunday August 30th alongside thousands of other representatives from organizations, businesses and groups along a parade route of cheering supporters. Energy was high and smiles were bright. We ended the parade at our booth where we met new and old friends, sharing our mission and vision of love and support for all. A big thanks to our board members and support group leaders, especially our Estamos Contigo group for their strong representation at the event.

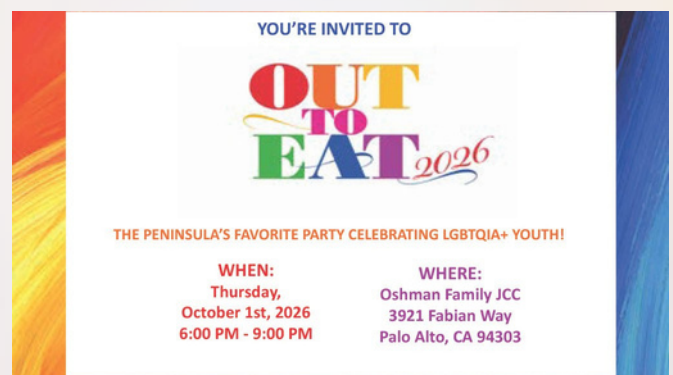
To find out more about how you can join us in these community events or to learn more about support groups, please visit our [website](#) or [contact us](#) at info@pflagsanjose.org



Support a great cause while enjoying great food

Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS) is bringing back [Out to Eat](#), a fundraiser for the Outlet program. Outlet empowers LGBTQ+ youth and builds safe and accepting communities through support, education, and advocacy. Last year they connected with 16,000 young people in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.

For more information and to sign up, click [here](#)





More than just a meeting place

If your LGBTQ+ friends and family are in the greater San Jose area, do they know about the Billy DeFrank center? Our in-person Support for All meetings are there, on the first Thursday of each month, but as you can see, there is a lot more going on at this community center.

For more information, check out their website [here](http://www.defrank.org)

A flyer for the Billy DeFrank LGBTQ+ Community Center. The flyer has a colorful, abstract background with diagonal stripes in shades of blue, purple, green, and yellow. On the left side, there is a large, stylized arrow pointing right, composed of these same colors. The text on the flyer is organized into horizontal sections. At the top, it says "Queer Library & Cyber Center" and "Gaymes in the Library". Below that, it says "Peer Discussion Groups and Activities". To the right of this section is the Billy DeFrank LGBTQ+ Community Center logo, which features a stylized mountain range above the text "Billy DeFrank LGBTQ+ Community Center". Below the "Peer Discussion Groups" section, it says "Queer Events & FUNraisers" and "Volunteer@defrank.org". Below that, it says "Rainbow Bingo - Wednesdays" and "7PM, back gate opens 6:15PM". At the bottom, it says "Vintage means Valuable, 50+" and "Vintage@defrank.org". Finally, at the very bottom, it says "Free HIV Testing: AACI's Hope Program". On the left side, within the arrow graphic, it says "For more details & updates go to: www.defrank.org".

Queer Library & Cyber Center
Gaymes in the Library

Peer Discussion Groups
and Activities

Queer Events & FUNraisers
Volunteer@defrank.org

Rainbow Bingo - Wednesdays
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For more details & updates go to:
www.defrank.org

Billy DeFrank
LGBTQ+
Community Center



Support Meeting Schedules

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. 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	Meeting Locations
9/2, 10/7 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.	Estamos Contigo (PFLAG en Español). This meeting is typically the first Wednesday of the month. Zoom only.
9/5, 10/3, 17 10am - 12 noon	Families of Transgender/Nonbinary family members is always on 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. First meeting of the month is in person at the Redwood City Main library. Third Saturday of the month meeting is via Zoom. ** 10/3 meeting** The first half hour will be the Annual Meeting for chapter election.
9/14, 10/12 7:00 p.m.	General Support, Peninsula. This meeting is always on the second Monday of the month. Zoom only.
9/3, 10/1 7:00 p.m.	General Support, South Bay meets in-person at the Billy DeFrank Center of the first Thursday of the month.
9/15, 10/20 7:00 p.m.	Asian/Pacific Islander (API). This meeting is the third Tuesday of the month. Zoom only.
9/17, 10/15 7:00 p.m.	Board Meetings – Third Thursday of the month. Zoom only.



Welcome to PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula

We Are Here for You



Important PFLAG Contact information and Links

There are many ways to reach us for support or join our cause.

Email: info@pflagsanjose.org

Phone: 408-270-8182

Mail: PFLAG San Jose

P.O. Box 2718

Sunnyvale, Ca 94087

www.pflagsanjose.org

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

PFLAG San Jose/Peninsula Chapter membership rates:

Family Membership \$40

Individual Membership \$30

Student Membership \$15

If you are over 70 ½ and have an IRA, you are qualify to make tax-free donations! A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) transfers money from your traditional IRA to a non-profit, without going into your income. It does not matter whether you currently have to take RMDs, as long as you are over age 70 ½ at the time of the donation. But if you do have to take an RMD, your donation counts toward that amount. Check with your institution to see whether they'll send the money directly to the charity for you, or send you a check payable to the charity for you to send on. 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%.

If you would like to donate, please click [here](#)

THANK YOU!