



INSIDEOUT

Convention 2008

The Newsletter of **B**lind, **F**riends, **L**esbian, **G**ay, **B**isexual and **T**ransgender People (BFLAG)

BFLAG is affiliated with the American Council of the Blind and is dedicated to facilitating the free exchange of ideas, opinions and information relative to matters of concern to blind people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender

Visit us at www.BFLAG.org

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From the President's Desk

By Butch Arnold, President

As I sit here and write this column for, what I believe will be the last time I have a lot to be thankful for. BFLAG now has over 180 members and it looks like we will have 2 to 3 affiliates as of our convention in Louisville next month. Thanks to Kevin, our web site is back, up and running. It still isn't perfect but it is a work in progress and getting better every month. It now takes credit cards and BFLAG members are taking advantage of this opportunity and paying dues on line.

DUES: Since I mentioned dues, let me fill you in about a proposal put forth by the board for your vote in Louisville. The board is proposing lowering the cost of annual dues. This is unheard of with everything going up in price. The board is proposing that regular member dues be reduced to \$6 per year and student dues be reduced to \$3. The board believes that "Life Membership" should stay at \$300 since that money goes into the BFLAG Endowment fund. The board also wants to be able to wave dues if necessary.

ENDOWMENT FUND: It is with a lot of pride that I can tell you that the BFLAG Endowment fund is approaching the \$5,000 figure. It is growing slowly but surely. We were getting a 5.28% return on the fund but it has just dropped to 4.75%. When the fund reaches \$10,000 we will be able to use the interest from it on projects such as the web site and convention support. I strongly believe we will reach that \$10,000 point in the next year or so.

FUND RAISING: Our convention committee has had found it hard to raise money this year. There have been several obstacles that have hindered the process that were beyond the control of the committee. We have a \$10,000 convention budget and we are short. BFLAG has not spent any operating funds on a convention since we were in Pittsburgh. I hope we don't have to this year. Donations are being accepted to offset the cost of the convention. There is a form on the back page of "InsideOUT" or you can donate via BFLAG.org.

AFFILIATES: BFLAG members have wanted affiliate chapters since I joined BFLAG during the 2002 convention in Houston. The board has put together a comprehensive affiliate program which includes a constitutional change as well as a bylaw change. The membership is being asked to support these changes early in our annual meeting on July 7th. Assuming the BFLAG membership approves the changes, we will be presenting charters to our first batch of affiliates at our banquet on Tuesday at the convention. It appears that we will have affiliates in Houston Texas, Tulsa Oklahoma and a rather unique affiliate of "BFLAG LIFE MEMBERS" in the Mid-Atlantic region. The board has proposed a minimum of 7 members for an affiliate. I believe that we will have at

least 6 affiliates by the time of our 2010 convention. This process is sure to increase BFLAG membership and activities throughout the country.

PRIDE EVENTS: It's that time of the year once again and BFLAG members are making arrangements to step out and be seen in "GAY PRIDE" events across the country. It is not too late to join in the fun and spread the word about BFLAG.

BOSTON PRIDE PARADE...Jeff and Bruce are making the arrangements in Boston and will be marching in Boston Pride Parade on June 14th. If you are interested in getting together for local events or for more information you can contact Bruce Giller at 781-393-5944 or Jeff Harris at 617-254-9861 or by email: jd9257@yahoo.com. They would like to get at least 4-5 more interested BFLAG members that want to step out in Boston.

CAPITAL PRIDE in Washington DC....For the third consecutive year, BFLAG will be visible and participate in the Capital Pride Parade. George and Frankie are once again stepping up to put it together. They will be meeting at DuPont Circle and I know this event will be a lot of fun. Last year, George pulled together a group of about 12 people and he wants to out do himself this year. The Capital Pride Parade is one of the best PR events that BFLAG has ever participated in. If you want to join in the fun you can contact George at 202-309-2723.

MY FUTURE: As I plan on not running for President again, I would like to run for and be BFLAG's next treasurer. I have set in place the process of record keeping that we now use and since I became president, we have doubled our membership. No matter what, I plan to stay very active in BFLAG and will be working hard with the "Mid-Atlantic Life Member Association" to support BFLAG programs in the future. I look forward to being on the board and not having to do the work of President. I know I will be able to accomplish a lot more that way. I ask that the next president be given a board of committed leaders who will stand the test of time and fulfill their obligation as a board member. It isn't an easy task and quite often you feel alone. With a fully manned and working board, BFLAG can accomplish miracles in growth and education. Let's do it together and keep building on the solid foundation that our past leaders have provided for us.

Thank you for the wonderful opportunity to serve as your president for the past 3 years.

Butch Arnold

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Convention Program

Saturday, July 5th

4:30 BFLAG Board Dinner at the Marriott Hotel

Sunday, July 6th

2:00 BFLAG Welcome Party in the BFLAG Suite

This year people can buy tickets to this event at the door and not pay the registration fee.

10:00 Evening Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

Monday, July 7th

7:30 Morning Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

1:00 "PFLAG Advocacy" Seminar in the BFLAG Suite

3:00 "Diversity in GLBT Culture" Seminar in the BFLAG Suite

7:30 Annual BFLAG Meeting in the BFLAG Suite

Pizza Party to follow

10:00 Evening Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

Tuesday, July 8th

7:30 Morning Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

1:00 "Body Language" Seminar in the BFLAG Suite

3:00 "Relationship" Seminar in the BFLAG Suite

7:00 BFLAG Annual Banquet at the "Cardinal Hall of Fame"

10:00 Evening Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

Wednesday, July 9th

7:30 Morning Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

4:30 BFLAG Board Meeting

10:00 Evening Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

Thursday, July 10th

7:30 Morning Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

11:00 "Six Flags" Amusement Park Trip

10:00 Support Group Meeting in the BFLAG Suite

Friday, July 11th

7:30 Morning Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

5:00 BFLAG Farewell Dinner at the "Cardinal Hall of Fame"

10:00 Evening Get Together in the BFLAG Suite

Saturday, July 12th

7:30 Morning Get Together and suite clean out

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July 7th Featured Speaker

Kimberly Jones moved to the DC area from Texas to work with PFLAG National. She earned her Bachelor's of Social Work from the University

of Texas at Arlington and her Master's of Public Service and Administration from Texas A&M University, with an emphasis in nonprofit management. As a social worker, she primarily worked in the Dallas-Fort Worth area with a variety of clientele including refugees starting a new life in the United States, families living in homeless shelters or low-income residences, survivors of violent crimes, and youth with emotional and/or behavioral difficulties. As a public servant, Kimberly advocated on the state and federal level for progressive civil liberties policy, nonprofit capacity-building policy, equitable health policy, and sustainable development/environmental policy. Her prior work in gay rights advocacy includes working against unjust legislation in Texas, striving to include the GLBTQ community as a representation of diversity in workplaces and schools, promoting collaboration between the faith community and the GLBTQ community, providing supportive social work services for GLBTQ youth, and identifying the resources available to the GLBTQ community through coalition building. Kimberly additionally devotes a great amount of research, travel, and work to understanding other cultures. She authored a thesis examining cultural sensitivity in higher education. She has also served on numerous diversity committees. She can be reached by phone at (202) 467-8180, ext. 229 or at the address below.

Kimberly Jones
Senior Field and Policy Coordinator Western Region
PFLAG National
1726 M St. NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036

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Proposed Constitution and Bylaw Changes

The BFLAG Board has addressed the need of changing our constitution and bylaws and in doing so, recommends the following changes be approved in our July 7th meeting in Louisville.

Constitutional Changes Related to Affiliates

ARTICLE III **EXISTING WORDING**

AFFILIATION:

BFLAG is organized and chartered as an affiliate of the AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND. As an affiliate, BFLAG and each of its members individually, are bound by the Constitution and bylaws of the American Council of the Blind.

ARTICLE III **PROPOSED WORDING**

AFFILIATION:

A. Affiliation with ACB

BFLAG is organized and chartered as an affiliate of the AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND. As an affiliate, BFLAG and each of its members and affiliates individually, are bound by the Constitution and bylaws of the American Council of the Blind.

B: Affiliation with BFLAG

1. BFLAG may grant recognition to any local organization that seeks affiliation with BFLAG at the annual convention of BFLAG by majority vote, provided such organizations affirm the constitutional purposes of BFLAG and that such organizations adhere to the constitution and bylaws of BFLAG

2. Each member of an affiliate must be a member of BFLAG

3. A majority of members of such affiliate must be legally blind as defined by the Internal Revenue Service

4. The board of directors may grant provisional affiliation to an affiliate between conventions, but such grant must be ratified by a majority of members present and voting at the convention immediately following such action

5. The board of directors may suspend the charter of an affiliate for cause, but such action must be affirmed by a majority of members present and voting at the convention immediately following such action

ARTICLE V
EXISTING WORDING

Membership, Voting and Dues

Any person who affirms the purposes of this organization is eligible to become a member of BFLAG providing she or he complies with the provisions herein

A. Voting: Each voting member in good standing attending an annual convention of BFLAG shall be entitled to one vote.

B. Dues: Members shall remit dues in accordance with the bylaws herein contained.

ARTICLE V
PROPOSED WORDING

Membership, Voting and Dues

Membership

Any person who affirms the purposes of this organization is eligible to become a member of BFLAG providing she or he complies with the provisions herein

Voting:

Each voting member and affiliate in good standing attending an annual convention of BFLAG shall be entitled to one vote. A person casting a vote on behalf of his or her affiliate may cast both his or her individual vote and the vote for his or her affiliate.

Dues:

Members shall remit dues in accordance with the bylaws herein contained.

ARTICLE VI **PROPOSED ADDITIONAL CLAUSE**

H. Each affiliate shall name a representative to attend board meetings, but such representative shall not vote

Bylaw Changes Related to Affiliates

PROPOSED NEW BYLAW 4

Affiliate responsibilities

- A. Each group requesting affiliate status must submit the following, for BFLAG Board approval, prior to receiving recognition as an affiliate
 - A. A copy of the proposed affiliate's constitution and bylaws
 - B. A full membership list with each members full information as set forth by the BFLAG board and ACB
 - C. A signed "Service Mark and Trade Name Agreement"
- B. Each affiliate must keep their Membership list submitted to BFLAG up to date
- C. Each affiliate will pay BFLAG dues, as specified in these bylaws, each January for all of its members

The Board is also recommending two other changes to our bylaws. The first is a "Housekeeping" change relating to the BFLAG ENDOWMENT FUND.

PROPOSED NEW BYLAW 5

- A. BFLAG will maintain an “Endowment Fund” for the purpose of generating interest income to be used for services such as web costs and convention program support.
- B. All funds from “Life memberships” and other donations specifically donated to be placed in the “Endowment Fund” will be added to the fund and the fund will be invested in “Secure” investments. The interest will be re-invested until the principle reaches \$10,000 at which time the interest can be transferred to the convention or general account.

The final board recommended bylaw change is a change to Bylaw 1 related to dues.

Substitute the word “six” for the word “twelve” and substitute the word “three” for the word “six” and add a new section “E”

Proposed New Section E

- E Dues may be waved for an individual at the discretion of the president or his or her designee.

These changes would reduce the annual BFLAG dues by 50% and allow more individuals to become members.

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Announced Candidates

The Following members have announced their candidacy for office. Unfortunately, we need more individuals to step up and commit to the demanding tasks of leadership. There are obligations that come with the offices but the satisfaction of accomplishments is rewarding.

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For the Office of President, 2 year term

None announced

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For the Office of Vice President, 2 year term

Jeff Harris

I am Jeff Harris and I am interested in being considered for the two year Vice-President position. I am 50 years old and live in Boston. I am legally blind with only one eye with 20/200 vision as a result of prematurity and additional complications. My work is in the educational research field and I also am also a non-practicing attorney admitted to practice in Massachusetts. I joined BFLAG in March 2007 and attended the convention in Minneapolis.

I was blown away by what I experienced at BFLAG's meetings. I was just coming out at knowing I was gay for 30+ years because before I could not accept who I was and felt that "no one was like me." As a result of BFLAG there were people I could relate to, people who were empowered to accept who they are, and most importantly, to have parents, family and friends accept them and realizing that being blind and gay does not make us less of a person than others. I'm grateful that such an organization exists for all visually impaired GLBT persons.

I want to bring my research, legal, and practical skills to BFLAG and will do my best to serve in the capacity by attending meetings and doing projects as delegated. I feel strongly that I want to give back to a great organization in ACB and will do so whether or not you chose me to be to serve you on the Board. If one person has two hours of work, it is a one man show but if ten people do it then it only takes 12 minutes for each person and they have comradely and each other's support. I encourage others to support BFLAG in whatever way they can.

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For the Office or Treasurer, 2 year term

Butch Arnold

I would like to continue my work with BFLAG as treasurer and further increase our membership and develop our resources so that they will better fund BFLAG projects in the future. I am a strong believer in the fact that many who benefit from BFLAG are to afraid to "Come OUT" and join in our activities. We must make it easier for potential members to access information and get the information and support they want and need. Our constitutional "mission" shows us the way. As your treasurer, I will be able to work on these matters and continue moving BFLAG forward. I would appreciate your support.

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For the Office of Secretary, 1 year term

None announced

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For the office of Member-at-Large, 1 year term

Barb Matson

I'd like to run for board member. I have been a member of BFLAG for several years, and have been attending most phone conference meetings over the past year. As a member of the National Organization for Women, my church's gay/straight group, and a recent member of PFLAG, I believe I can bring knowledge to the group and also learn at the same time.

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Seeing Sex

By: Ray O'Neil
Trinity College
The University of Dublin

1492 was the landmark year Christopher Columbus discovered America, seeing it with his own eyes, his vision of an alternative spice route realised. Within seventy years another great Columbus marked another great discovery, with the 1559 publication of Mateo Columbus's *De Re Anatomica* revealing the "seat of woman's delight"; the clitoris, arguing that "since no one has discerned these projections and their workings, if it is permissible to give names to things discovered by me.

What is significant about both "discoveries" is they are observations dependant on vision. Clearly the "new worlds" of both America and the clitoris had existed and were intimately known to those who had well charted their territories for millennia. But regardless, two white, European, imperialist males had seen "it", documented "it", and therefore brought "it" legitimacy and into existence. What does it matter that both men were wrong and had in fact mis-seen? Christopher had not circumnavigated the globe and found the Far-East and met Indians. Likewise Mateo thought he had discovered a rudimentary penis, an inferior phallus. What matters more is what both, as voices of authority saw.

In our culture observation is always presumed around the visual; seeing, is believing. And particularly in matters of sex and sexuality, "the look of love" predominates; our sexual culture is saturated by the visual. In the psycho-social theories of sexual awareness, development, orientation and desire, seeing and mis-seeing are everything. Freud himself had dismissed the clitoris from a visual basis as "that small and inconspicuous organ." ultimately buttressing his infamous theories of penis envy where the woman, because she has nothing

therefore is nothing. And so within our culture psycho-social identity has become too much based on what is seen and not seen, and concepts of female sexual pleasure in particular are all too often invisible.

Freudian psychoanalysis seems to evidence the prevalent prioritisation of the visual in psycho-social understandings of sexual difference and sexuality: "The young girl notices the penis of a brother or playmate, strikingly visible. She has seen it and knows she is without it and wants to have it. When a little boy first catches sight of a girl's genital region he sees nothing." However there are other voices recognising the danger in any kind of sexuality that gets privilege because it is one based on looking, and the visual, especially if it is founded upon the visibility of one sexual organ, the penis. French feminist and psychoanalyst Luce Irigaray disputes the "predominance of the visual, as being particularly foreign to female eroticism." Sexuality and sexual difference can all too often become scopophilic, and reduced to a voyeurism.

It is the voyeuristic domination within current sexual culture and theories of sexual development that has led me to wonder what does the visually impaired experience have to say about how sex is seen? Can the blind perhaps see something that the seeing have failed to see? Significantly, most psychoanalytic theories define the infant's first experience of desire and pleasure as coming from touch, physical contact with their 'mother'. For French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, this pre-linguistic pleasure associated with physical and psychical contact with the maternal body must be left behind in order to enter into language. It is through this encounter with language that the child shifts its primary mode of perception from touch to vision; looking and seeing. For both Freud and Lacan, the return to the pre-linguistic, the desire to return to touch the maternal is what is forbidden in adulthood. The original child's tactile erotic connection is banished to the unconscious; unrepresentable in language, unsignifiable.

Luce Irigaray's questioning of the privileging of the visual over the non-visual points to visual sexual constructions where the woman's "sexual organ represents the horror of nothing to see ... Women's genitals are simply absent, masked." Irigaray challenges Freud's and Lacan's arguments that eroticism should be based on the visual, not on touch. "Woman takes her pleasure more from touching than from looking and her entry into a dominant visual economy signifies again, her consignment to passivity." For me, what is revolutionary in Irigaray is her observation of how touch requires closeness or nearness while vision is distancing. Any and all relations privileging sight are privileging distance between subject and object. Intimacy requires touch, and modern day sexuality, with its emphasis on the visual, seems to have lost touch with intimacy.

Lynne Segal's declaration that Irigaray's "preference for the tactile over the visual" can similarly evoke new ways of approaching or conceiving sexuality "as a strategy for undermining the dominant ways of thinking and writing about

the body.” This privileging of the visual affects language which again is almost entirely visually based, it is a linguistic system that does not like anything that cannot be seen. Once the notion of vision is disturbed - language, knowledge and meaning collapses. A system based on non-visual sexuality offers a potential reconfiguration of sexuality in the countering of vision with touch, potentially lessening distance between people, with less definitive, distancing boundaries between self and other or between subject and object, and thus potentially deconstructing both.

But I don't want to “see” what a non-visual focused sexuality might entail, and fall into the Columbus's conceit of seeing only what I want to see there. Instead I think it is important to listen to the indigenous inhabitants of the non-visual world and hear their voices, their experiences; and let this knowledge inform others. Sex and sexuality is not something acquired but our speaking of it is. There is something original about sex and sexuality, eroticism and desire that has become corrupted by a visually focused capitalist culture that tells us what to see, what not to see and how to see and where to see. Sex has lost contact with feelings; how can we see this?

*“Long before your birth, you touched yourself, innocently.
Your/my body doesn't acquire its sex through an operation.
Through the action of some power, function or organ. Without
any intervention or special manipulation, you are already.
There is no need for an outside, the other already affects you.
It is inseparable from you. You are altered forever, through
and through. That is your crime, which you didn't commit; you
disturb their love of property.”*

When Our Lips Speak Together, Luce Irigaray.

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Opportunities Abound

By: Connie David
Past President of BFLAG

It seems to me that one of the biggest complaints in the GLBT community is that we can't get our relationships properly recognized. Laws have been passed making gay marriage illegal, and only in a very few places are our weddings legal and honored.

One of the biggest complaints heard in the blind community is the high rate of under and unemployment. Many reasons are given for this, but reasons don't solve the problem.

Well, I have discovered something that not only offers an income opportunity for persons who are blind or visually impaired, but also recognized our GLBT partnerships as domestic partnerships. This company doesn't discriminate on any basis, and anybody who wants to either utilize their services or market them has an equal opportunity for service and employment.

How do I know this? I am an associate with this company, and my partner, Marianne, and I are registered for their services as domestic partners.

The company is Prepaid Legal Services, Inc. they have been around for 37+ years, and are publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange. This is important because this means that all of their records and activities are of public record.

Why should you care? First of all, this company makes legal services affordable to just about everybody. How many times have you wished you could call a lawyer to ask a question, but you didn't because you either didn't know whom to call, or you couldn't afford the fee? How many times have you wished you had a lawyer to help you solve a situation, or maybe just write a letter or make a phone call for you? You can have it with this company.

I am not going to say any more, except to say that there are opportunities here for all of you who have had trouble getting hired. You have to be able to work independently, you have to be self-motivated, and you have to have some modicum of patience.

If you are interested in either the service or the opportunity, you can visit www.prepaidlegal.com/hub/connied_42 The links there will take you to information about the various areas.

If you do not have a computer and you would like information, you can call 1-800-394-6919 toll free. If you have any questions, please call me at 612-695-6991, and I'll call you back.

Remember, sometimes we have to take the bull by the horns and make things happen for ourselves.

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Letters to BFLAG

Below is only a small sample of the communications BFLAG receives regularly.

Hi Butch,

Thank you so much for responding so quickly. I am very excited that I have found this site. I will tell you my story and then maybe you can direct me to the next step of maybe sharing my story with your blind transgender members. Here goes:

I am a 43 year old heterosexual female that lives in a very rural community in Montana. I am also a home health/hospice nurse.

2 years ago the agency that I worked for assigned me a new patient to care for. Her name was the same as mine-Mishelle. She was a 56 year old MTF transgender. She was also totally blind-since the age of 18 months old. Mishelle was referred to our agency to receive a 7 to 14 day course of IV antibiotics at her home. She had a severe respiratory infection. She also had COPD, or emphysema. She was very compromised and able to do very little activity due to her severe shortness of breath.

I have to admit that I was nervous about meeting Mishelle. I had never met or worked with a blind person or a transgender. I was not even sure what a transgender was. What started out to be just a 7 to 14 day course, turned into a 4 1/2 month journey that I will never forget.

Once meeting Mishelle, I was comfortable about asking her questions about her blindness but afraid to ask any questions about her being a transgender. I was, however, very curious. About 3 weeks after meeting Mishelle, she must have sensed my curiosity-she told me "If you have the courage to ask, I have the courage to answer." This started my educational process. She answered each and every question that I had with such openness and honesty. She gave me several books to read and videos to watch to educate me. I was her perfect little student. One day when I was visiting her she gave me her journal to read. She had typed (on the old fashioned type writer) her deepest thoughts and feelings over the 3 year period of time that she was transitioning from Micheal to Mishelle. This is what opened my eyes and my heart to my new friend. I finally got it-being a transgender had nothing to do with a lifestyle choice! She had a very hard and lonely life.

About 2 months after meeting Mishelle, I went to a spiritual retreat and came home knowing why I was in her life. She was going to die. I cannot even explain how I knew this but I did. I was in her life not only to help her through the emotional aspects of the dying process but for her to know, before she died, that she was 100% unconditionally loved and accepted.

As a home health/hospice nurse, I rarely crossed boundaries with my patients. But with Mishelle it was different. I introduced her to my husband and 2 boys (ages 9 and 12). Mishelle and my youngest son developed a very close friendship. She taught him how to read and write Braille. She also taught me. We

all visited her quite often and also brought her to our home on several occasions. She had not been invited to a social event in 4 years! We loved to pamper her and make her feel special, because she was. We got to know Mishelle on a soul to soul level>

4 1/2 months after meeting Mishelle she did die. She did die knowing that she was so loved and accepted. She also felt worthy of that love. I feel so blessed because I just happened to be the one with Mishelle when she died. I was hugging her and comforting her when she took her last breath. I always knew that there were lessons for me to learn from her as well. I knew that she was in my life to educate me so I could in turn educate others about transgenders. I also knew that there were other lessons to learn that are still unfolding to this day.

Since Mishelle died I want to do more to support the transgender community. I have the utmost respect for all transgenders and the struggles they go through just to be true to who they are.

Mishelle searched for another blind transgender for 20 years and did not come across even one. She would be so excited about this site and knowing that she was not the only one.

So Butch- what do you think? Do you think that if I sign up as a member and told my story to your blind transgender members that it may be helpful? I would love to hear your ideas-and again I am excited that I found this site.

Sincerely,
Michelle
Michelle Alexander

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Fellow BFLAG Members

I'd like to encourage BFLAG members to seek out the new DreamWorks release "Kung Fu Panda" now in theaters everywhere. Find a theater offering audio description because I wrote the audio description script. I'm very proud of my work on this movie - and I hope everyone will enjoy the description.

I'm gonna miss seeing y'all at the ACB convention this year, but work commitments prevent me from joining you. I hold memories of such fun times at the Minneapolis convention. I hope to be at the 2009 convention. Please pass along my greetings to everyone there.

Remember: "Kung Fu Panda" - in a theater near you!

Rick Jacobson
Minneapolis Minnesota

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The Rainbow Room

By: Don Schreiber

Are you gay, think you might be, have a question about dating or relationships? Or maybe you just want to chat with some good friends in a supportive environment. Join us in the Rainbow Room where it's okay to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered. Everyone is welcome!

The Rainbow room is a specifically created voice chat room for people who are blind and are members of the GLBT community. It is also open to their sighted friends, partners and family. We are hosted on the website www.for-the-people.com.

Perhaps you have heard others talking about us but never quite got all the details. The only requirement is a non-web based E-mail address, i.e., Hot Mail, Google Mail, etc. To get started, go to the home page of www.for-the-people.com and click on the join link. Complete the registration form. If you have any problems installing the chat client, click on the help link from the home page. There are several help files there to assist you with frequently asked questions. Also, if you email the help desk, the help team will call you on the telephone and walk you through your difficulties adjusting your settings.

All you need is your computer, speakers and a microphone. We use a chat client that lets us key up by pressing our left control key and talk. Then when you release the control key you hear others respond. Only one person can talk at a time. It is similar to talking on a walky-talky.

The Rainbow room has been around as part of For-The-People.com since the site was created. We are in our seventh year now. We meet together on Sunday evenings from 7 to 9 PM, although many evenings during the week you will find someone in the room looking to chat.

In the past, we have had specific conversations surrounding issues we face as blind and gay individuals. Sometimes we actually play games in which we divide into two teams and compete against one another just for fun. Still other

times we just fill a void in what maybe is a lonely time for one or more of us. We do listen and support each other in a caring and nurturing environment. Yes and sometimes we just get plain down silly!

Meeting in cyber space, we held a virtual nude swimming party this past Memorial Day where lots of folks stopped by to take a dip. We have had cyber cocktail Happy hours as well.

The owners of For-The-People strive to meet the needs of the blind GLBT community. They extend an invitation to the BFLAG board to utilize the site to conduct board business in a private room which the site will donate free of charge. Also I am asked to extend an invitation to the Lesbian members of BFLAG that, if they desire to have a room created specifically for them, it can be done simply by making the request.

The Rainbow room provides a wonderful opportunity to members of the blind GLBT community to connect. We would like to encourage everyone to stop by and visit with us.

In the spirit of gay pride
Miss Pink Boy

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Vacant, Member-At-Large

ADVERTISE IN INSIDEOUT

This newsletter welcomes advertisements from businesses, organizations, educational programs, as well as for products, and services.

BFLAG's Board of Directors retains sole discretion to reject ads, which are considered to be offensive or inappropriate for the intended audience of the newsletter.

INSIDEOUT is published in, October, March, and June. Material to be published of interest to the membership is welcome. All material to be included must be received prior to the first of the month prior to publication. Items for publication should be sent to BFLAG@BFLAG.org

BFLAG BUSINESS FORM

Please Print

NAME _____
COMPANY optional _____
STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____
STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____ @ _____

PHONE NUMBER (_____) - _____ - _____

VISION STATUS FULLY SIGHTED, YES _____ NO _____

BFLAG ANNUAL DUES	\$12.00	_____
BFLAG ANNUAL STUDENT DUES	\$6.00	_____
BFLAG "LIFE MEMBERSHIP"	\$300.00	_____

2008 CONVENTION "RAINBOW SPONSOR"

RED	\$ 50.00	_____
ORANGE	\$100.00	_____
YELLOW	\$150.00	_____
GREEN	\$200.00	_____
BLUE	\$250.00	_____
PURPLE	\$500.00	_____

2008 CONVENTION EVENT SPONSOR
EVENT YOU WANT TO SPONSOR _____

AMOUNT OF SPONSORSHIP _____

Total amount of Check _____

Make checks payable to "BFLAG" and send to

BFLAG
612 Holland Street
Cumberland, MD 21502

For further information please call **240-522-0093**

Special Instructions or Notes

