



**Philadelphia  
Family Pride**

# Out & About

News and notes for LGBT-parented families  
May 2009

## PFP ROCKS THE DOME IN HARRISBURG

Several Philadelphia Family Pride families traveled to Harrisburg on **Tuesday, March 17th** for the **Rock the Dome Rally** -- sponsored by the **Value All Families Coalition**. VAFC is a diverse group of statewide, regional, and local organizations that support equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Pennsylvanians.

We are working with VAFC to support House Bill 300 which seeks to amend the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. The bill would provide basic protection to ensure fairness in housing, employment, and public accommodations for LGBT Pennsylvanians.

After passing out of committee for the first time, HB 300 will move to a floor vote in the State House this fall. PFP will be sending letters to our members residing in Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties in the next few weeks asking for your help in reaching out to your local legislators.

PFP will be coordinating district office visits between PFP families and legislators during the month of July. "We are directly affected by discrimination, and our elected officials need to hear from LGBT families living in their districts about the importance of this legislation," said *Tiffany Palmer*, PFP Board Member and Education/Advocacy Committee Chair. ■



▲ PFP board member *Wendy Forbes* (center, top) at the rally with her son *Dylan* (holding the sign) with *Doug Metcalfe's* daughter *Helen*.

## EQUALITY FORUM 2009



▲ *The Slack-Welles family: Seth, George and Jeremiah* at the Family Zone before the rally.

Philadelphia Family Pride once again sponsored the **Becoming Parents workshop** during **Equality Forum** on Saturday, **May 2**. The panel was coordinated by board member *Tiffany Palmer* in front of a standing-room-only crowd. We're hoping to expand the number of sessions we offer next year to accommodate a larger audience.

**SundayOUT** on **May 3** was chilly and wet, but it couldn't dampen our Family Zone spirit! Our usual place under the portico at 4th and Market became an oasis for those families who braved the rain. Mountain Meadow co-sponsored and provided lots of volunteers to help the kids with crafts and "soft zone" bean bags and rugs to cozy things up. Lesbian mom *Cyde Klaristenfeld* donated her face

painting skills from noon to 2pm. The trick was saving her artwork from the rain. Keep her in mind for upcoming birthday parties. She's fantastic! (Check out her work at [www.madjackart.com](http://www.madjackart.com).)

A PFP contingent broke in our new banner (donated by board member *Chris Carver*) during the **National Equality March and Rally** around Independence Mall. Former Community Coordinator and PFP member *Jennifer Raison* did a great job when she spoke to the crowd about issues affecting LGBT families! Kudos Jenn! ■

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# NEWS BRIEFS

- The first annual **Gay Day at the Zoo**, sponsored by the William Way Center, took place on **April 18th** on an unusually sunny and warm day. Many PFP members stopped by our table in Peacock Pavilion behind the Small Mammal House to say hello, buy a t-shirt and find out about upcoming events. Several new families came by to introduce themselves and had lunch together in the shade while the kids followed the peacocks around outside.
- Philly Family Pride and Mountain Meadow set up a Family Zone at **Philly Black Pride** on Sunday, **April 26th** at Shampoo Nightclub.
- On Tuesday, **May 12th**, PFP hosted a fundraiser at five **Peace A Pizza** locations in the Philadelphia area. Supporters presented a coupon which entitled PFP to 20% of the patron's bill for the night. Cyde also donated face painting at the Warrington location for this fun event. Great job to board member *Joshua Young* for coordinating this fundraiser. Stay tuned for the final results!
- PFP joined **New Hope Celebrates** on Saturday, **May 16th** for their annual pride



▲ Board member *Aimee Schulz-Plarr*'s kids *Sydney* and *Parker* at the *Peace A Pizza* fundraiser in Warrington.

festivities. We walked down Main Street with the "We Are Family" contingent along with other parade favorites: the DC Cowboys Dance Company, the Big Apple Marching Band, a Mummies String Band and local Congressman Patrick Murphy.

Following the parade, we gathered at the elementary school playground for family, fun and fitness. PFP provided spin art and bubble machines to add to other crafts and kite flying that New Hope Celebrates organizer Lauren Weil organized. ■

PFP is getting a Corporate Sponsorship Program off the ground. Know of a company that may be interested?

Send info to

[joshua@phillyfamilypride.org](mailto:joshua@phillyfamilypride.org)

## COMMUNITY COORDINATOR POSITION FILLED BY PFP MEMBER STEPHANIE HAYNES

PFP member Stephanie Haynes began her role as the new Community Coordinator last month at Gay Day at the zoo. Stephanie and her partner Vicky Kresge are proud moms to twin 2 ½ year-old boys Jove and Griffin.

Before becoming a stay-at-home mom, Stephanie had extensive organizing experience working with the Fund for Public Interest Research for 14 years, a non-profit that provides campaign expertise to groups such as PennEnvironment,

the state PIRGs, Sierra Club and the Human Rights Campaign.

Board Chair Doug Metcalfe sent out a press release to various organizations and local media when Stephanie was hired. The Philadelphia Gay News picked up the story. Read it online at <http://tinyurl.com/pw9yev>. She can be reached at [stephanie@phillyfamilypride.org](mailto:stephanie@phillyfamilypride.org) or 215-888-0722. ■

▶ *Stephanie Haynes* and son *Griffin*  
Photo by *Leise Jones*





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Trans-Health Conference Saturday, June 13th

PFP will have a table on June 13th from 9am – 5pm at the 8th annual Philadelphia Trans-Health Conference at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Visit [www.trans-health.org](http://www.trans-health.org) for more information.

## Philly Pride Parade Sunday, June 14th

Join PFP as we show off our family pride in this year's parade on Sunday, June 14th. Meet at 11am in the Philadelphia Room at the William Way Center at 1315 Spruce Street to make signs and decorate your

wagons and strollers. The first 25 PFPers who gather to march with us will receive a free t-shirt.

The parade steps off at noon from 13th and Locust and ends at Penn's Landing. Following the parade, we will again host the ever-popular Family Zone at Penn's Landing from 12pm to 5pm with Mountain Meadow.

The Family Zone is a place to recharge in the shade for families in the midst of Pride. We'll have a diaper changing area, a place to feed your baby, crafts for the kids, minor first aid and sunscreen, games, sidewalk chalk, bubbles and free face painting for kids under 12 from 1-3pm by lesbian mom Cyde from [www.madjackart.com](http://www.madjackart.com).

## Volunteer at the Family Zone:

Please contact Stephanie at [stephanie@phillyfamilypride.org](mailto:stephanie@phillyfamilypride.org) to help out for an hour or two.

## Camping with Pride 2 July 10-12th

Back by popular demand, PFP board member *Lee Chudzinski* is leading a group of 25 PFP families to Elk Neck State Park in Maryland for a weekend of camping, hiking, swimming, campfire sing-a-longs, arts and crafts and much more! Check the web site for more details.

## PFP Summer Potluck Picnic Sunday, July 19th

Save the date now for our annual summer picnic from 11am-2pm on Sunday, July 19th. This year it will be at Mason's Mill in Huntingdon Valley at Pavilion #2 (3500 Masons Mill Rd, 19006). For you first time picnickers, the event is potluck. Watch your e-mail for more details on who should bring what!

## Dutch Wonderland Saturday, August 15th

Join PFP families at Dutch Wonderland in Lancaster County for a day of rides and fun. Register for discounted tickets through our web site by July 24th. ■



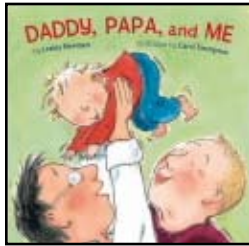
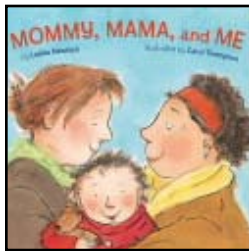


# BOOK REVIEWS BY LAURINA CASHIN

## FROM TWO LIVES PUBLISHING ([WWW.TWOLIVES.COM](http://WWW.TWOLIVES.COM))

### Mommy, Mama, and Me and Daddy, Papa, and Me

Written by Lesléa Newman  
and Illustrated by Carol Thompson  
Tricycle, June 2009  
Board Book, \$7.99  
Ages birth – 3



Oh, it's a delight to have board books featuring two moms and two dads. Now we can see our families represented in books for the very youngest; these books have real people and not anthropomorphic animals. It's fitting that these new gems have been

written by the pioneering author of *Heather Has Two Mommies*. Each title features a toddler and parents going about their day -- with rhymed verse and pleasant, cartoony art we witness breakfast, playtime, touching moments and bedtime. There's no real story here, it's all about the love. Of course, these titles make a perfect baby shower gift. (You all remember how crucial it is to read to babies, don't you?)

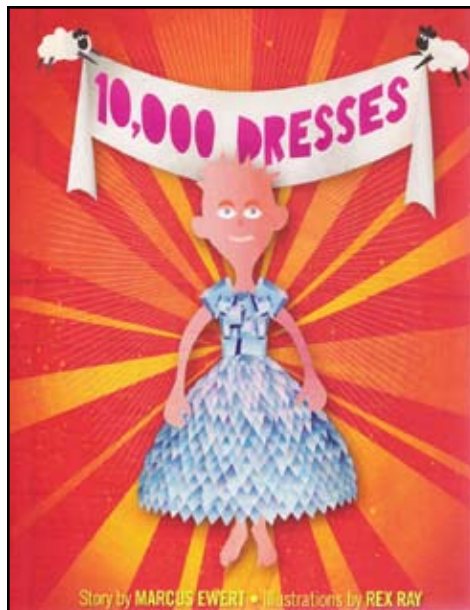
### 10, 000 Dresses

Written by Marcus Ewert  
and Illustrated by Rex Ray  
Seven Stories Press, 2008  
Hardcover, \$14.95  
Ages 4-7

This is the first picture book we know of with a transgender child as the main character. While some reactions might be "Whoa! Why a trans

book for so young?" we've heard that there is a need – kids can and do identify with gender at young ages.

Bailey happily dreams of dresses every night – gorgeous, original dresses made of "crystals that flashed rainbows in the sun," "lilies and roses with honeysuckle sleeves," and "windows which showed the Great Wall of China and the Pyramids." But when she tries to tell her parents about the dreams and her desire to own dresses like the ones she dreams about, their negative reaction fills her with despair. "You're a boy. Boys don't wear dresses! . . . don't mention dresses again!" Luckily Bailey meets Laurel who thinks Bailey's designs are "awesome" and together they make beautiful dresses for themselves. Laurel's understanding and acceptance of Bailey are a huge gift to her, as this empowering book will be for many children. Artist and graphic designer Rex Ray's paper collages provide a colorful, retro-futuristic backdrop for Bailey's story.



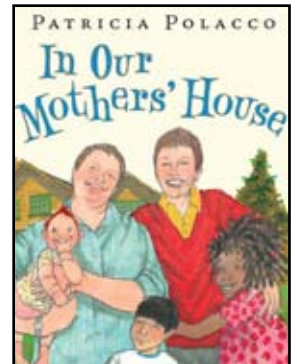
The analogy of a window and mirror is often used when talking about diversity in children's books – the books provide both a mirror for self-recognition and a window to viewing the world outside. The author's use of dresses made of mirrors and windows may be coincidence but it's a nice touch.

### In Our Mothers' House

Written and illustrated by Patricia Polacco  
Philomel/ Penguin USA  
Hardcover, \$17.99  
Ages 6-8

Wow! It's going to be hard to include everything that's great about this book, but here goes:

- We love Patricia Polacco's warm pictures of this two-mom family, and her loving story that spans their life together.
- The three kids in the family are all adopted, and all of different ethnicities.
- The story spans many years, and near the end of the story we see two happy lesbian grandmothers with their kids and grandkids.
- There are great scenes of the extended family at holidays, around their wonderfully diverse neighborhood and just around the house.
- The moms in this book look like REAL lesbians - you'll swear you know someone who looks just like one of them.



Even the one crabby, bigoted woman on the block can't interfere with the love that Marmee and Meema provide to all. ■



# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR: FAMILY ACTIVISM



As LGBT parents, we are in a unique position to change people's views and challenge their understanding of the LGBT Community. I often say that we have more in common with straight parents in our neighborhoods, places of worship and places of employment than with our gay friends without children or in the larger LGBT community.

In March I took my seven year-old daughter out of school for the day to go with me to the Rock the Dome Rally in Harrisburg. She probably learned more that day with me than she would have in her first grade class. But more important than the educational value of a political rally for a seven year-old is the visibility of LGBT families. My husband, seven year-old and two and one-half year-old braved the rainy weather in early May to participate with the PFP contingent in the National Equality Rally at Independence Mall. We did this to remind the LGBT community that LGBT families are part of the community and to show the straight world that families are defined by love and commitment – not government definitions.

It is important within the LGBT community that our families be visible and participate. I sometimes think our bigger struggle is being a *family* accepted into the LGBT community, rather than being an *LGBT family* accepted into the larger community within which we live, work and worship. By participating as an LGBT family we bring visibility, voice and values to the issue. Seeing a child with his two moms; or two dads and their children; or a child holding a sign extolling the virtues of her family sends a powerful picture. Listening to LGBT families and our children articulate the issues sends a powerful message. Our families have strong values – the

right-wing Christian conservatives don't have a monopoly on "Family Values!"

Family activism takes many different shapes, such as: participating in your children's school PTA; having a family photo on your desk at work; worshiping as a family; actively participating in your neighborhood association; coaching your child's soccer team; donating LGBT family books to your local library or child's classroom. In other words, being out in our everyday lives.

Family activism is also contacting your elected officials to ask them to support positive LGBT legislation or to oppose anti-LGBT legislation. It also means taking your family to meet your state representative or senator, your town councilperson, or your county supervisor. There are elected officials that believe that they don't have LGBT families in their districts. It is our job to make sure they know otherwise. Send your elected officials a holiday card with a picture of your family.

Family activism is also participating in political rallies and marches, attending Gay Pride events, and speaking up for LGBT Families within our LGBT community and our larger community.

I hope you incorporate family activism into your family traditions, values and customs.

Warm Regards,

Douglas B. Metcalfe  
Chair  
Philadelphia Family Pride

## Philadelphia Family Pride Board of Directors:

*Douglas Metcalfe, Chair*

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*Ron Baumann-Erb, Secretary*

*Lee Chudzinski, Treasurer*

*Wendy Forbes,  
Membership Committee Chair*

*Tiffany Palmer, Education/  
Advocacy Committee Chair*

*Joshua Young, Fundraising/  
Finance Committee Chair*

*Chris Carver, Member-at-large*

*Aimee Schulz-Plarr, Member-at-large*

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▲ PFP kids waiting for the candy to fall at the 2008 summer picnic.

Special thanks to Sabiha Basrai of Design Action Collective for the design and layout of this newsletter. [www.designaction.org](http://www.designaction.org)