



Buffalo / Niagara

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www.PFLAG-buffalo-niagara.org

We meet because we have learned that someone very close to us is Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgendered.

We try to help one another deal with this information in a positive manner.

Although we do not agree at all times, we try to be understanding.

We offer help to those who seek it, but do not force ourselves on others.

We strive to maintain anonymity while sharing on a level that is comfortable for all of us.

We encourage all to attend meetings for their own benefit as well as that of the group.

It is our hope that when each of us reaches a point of understanding and acceptance, we realize that this is when others need us the most.

LGBT Trivia Monthly Meeting Sunday, April 15, 2012 2:30-5:30 PM

Kenilworth United Church of Christ

The April meeting will begin with a quiz on LGBT trivia that will be fun and informative as past trivia meetings have shown. There will also be time for sharing. As always, newcomers will be offered the alternative of meeting privately with a PFLAG parent.

Kenilworth United Church of Christ
45 Dalton Drive
Tonawanda, NY 14223

The church is located two blocks west of Niagara Falls Boulevard at the corner of Decatur Rd and Dalton Dr. Decatur runs off of Niagara Falls Boulevard about 0.8 miles south of Sheridan Drive and about 0.8 miles north of Kenmore Ave.

Our monthly meetings are in the library, which is near the parking lot entrance. The facility is handicap accessible.

Annual Meeting Notice

This is the official notice that PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara will hold its annual meeting on May 20, 2012 at Kenilworth United Church of Christ 45 Dalton Drive, Tonawanda, NY 14223 at 2:30pm. At the meeting, a slate of candidates will be presented for the offices of President and Treasurer as well as members of the Board of Directors. The Board is looking for people who are willing to serve on the Board. Please call the helpline if you would like to get involved. A Treasurer's report for the fiscal year running from April 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012 will be presented.

New Parents Meetings are scheduled as needed at a location convenient to those involved. These self-help one-on-one meetings deal with the concerns of parents and family members who have recently learned that a loved one is Lesbian or Gay.

Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Buffalo/Niagara, is a non-profit, all volunteer, community-based organization not affiliated with any ethnic, religious, economic, or political group. Membership is open to all. PFLAG membership lists are kept confidential and mailings are sent in plain envelopes.

Anti-same-sex marriage group's racial wedge strategy revealed

By Barbara Raab, NBC News

The blogosphere is abuzz with the story that broke last night, when the Human Rights Campaign released internal memos from the National Organization for Marriage (NOM), the nation's largest and most visible anti-same sex-marriage group, calling for the use of a racial wedge strategy to fight campaigns for marriage equality.

"The strategic goal of this project is to drive a wedge between gays and blacks – two key Democratic constituencies," one of the NOM memos says.

"The documents, marked "confidential," were unsealed yesterday afternoon in Maine by court order, as part of that state's ongoing ethics investigation into NOM's campaign finances.

The memo spells out specific steps to enact, including: Find, equip, energize and connect African American spokespeople for marriage, develop a media campaign around their objections to gay marriage as a civil right; provoke the gay marriage base into responding by denouncing these spokesmen and women as bigots..."

Here is an excerpt on NOM's Hispanic strategy: "The Latino vote in America is a key swing vote, and will be so even more so in the future, both because of demographic growth and inherent uncertainty: Will the process of assimilation to the dominant Anglo culture lead Hispanics

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to abandon traditional family values? We must interrupt this process of assimilation by making support for marriage a key badge of Latino identity - a symbol of resistance to inappropriate assimilation."

NOM also spells out its plans for the 2012 presidential election: "From a political angle," the NOM document says, "this strategy will require electing a pro-marriage President in 2012." Strategies for defeating, ("sideswiping," as the document calls it) President Obama include "expose Obama as a social radical," and "raise such issues as pornography, protection of children, and the need to oppose all efforts to weaken religious liberty at the federal level."

NOM is a 501(c)3 and cannot endorse presidential candidates, but the former chairwoman of NOM's board, Maggie Gallagher, endorsed Santorum in January.

Public opinion has moved considerably in the three years since the memos were drafted. The most recent NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll (conducted Feb. 29 through March 3) shows a plurality favors same-sex marriage – 49 percent say so versus 40 percent who oppose. That's a reversal from 41-49 percent in October 2009.

Among African Americans, a majority (50 percent) said they were in favor (41 were opposed). That's a big change from October 2009, when just a third (32 percent) were in favor and a majority (53 percent) were opposed. Among Hispanics, in the most recent poll, 55 percent said they were in favor, 30 percent said they were against. That's also a change from October 2009, when the margin was tighter (45-40 favor to oppose).

Joe Solmonese, president of the Human Rights Campaign – which supports efforts to legalize same-sex marriage – criticized NOM. "Nothing beats hearing from the horse's mouth exactly how callous and extremist this group really is," Solmonese said in a statement.

NOM posted a statement on its website today, saying it is "proud of [its] strong record on minority partnerships."

It added: "Gay marriage advocates have attempted to portray same-sex marriage as a civil right, but the voices of these and many other leaders have provided powerful witness that this claim is patently false. Gay marriage is not a civil right, and we will continue to point this out in written materials such as those released in Maine. We proudly bring together people of different races, creeds and colors to fight for our most fundamental institution: marriage."

What makes NC different in gay marriage debate?

By Tom Breen, Associated Press

From Texas to Virginia, the South has spoken with almost one voice on same-sex marriage, amending state constitutions to ban the practice in hopes of blocking court decisions that would allow gays and lesbians to marry.

It's "almost" one voice because there's a discordant note in the Southern choir. North Carolina, which likes to distinguish itself as a "vale of humility" surrounded by more bombastic neighbors, is the last state in the region without such an amendment. That fact is repeated constantly in the debate over a May 8 referendum when voters will have a chance to change the situation. But while it's bandied about by both sides, it's less clear what the distinction means.

Is it simply because the North Carolina Democrats who controlled the Legislature until 2010 had no interest in putting the amendment up for a vote? Or does it reflect the history and outlook of a state where leaders shepherded desegregation into law during the 1960s with little of the violence that broke out elsewhere?

Both explanations have merit in a state where Republicans waited nearly 140 years to take full control of the General Assembly and in which the political careers of moderate Democrat Jim Hunt and conservative Republican stalwart Jesse Helms could flourish at the same time, thanks to some of the same voters.

"North Carolina is an ambivalent state," said Harry Watson, director of the Center for the Study of the American South at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. "It's got very strong conservative instincts, and it's got very strong liberal instincts. It's one of the things that's peculiar about Tar Heel politics that voters can go either way depending on the issue or the politician."

Raleigh resident Molly Beavers, 25, whose front lawn is adorned with a sign urging voters to reject the amendment, summed up that paradox in contemporary politics.

"In some ways I feel like we've made a lot of progress and I know we voted as a state for (Barack) Obama in 2008, which was a big deal," she said. "But now our state Legislature's kind of gone the other way."

The state will be front and center in September, when Charlotte hosts the Democratic National Convention at which President Obama is nominated for a second term.

Missouri became the first U.S. state to pass a constitutional amendment against same-sex marriage in August 2004, less than a year after the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled that that state's constitution guaranteed same-sex couples the right to marry. The first Southern state to impose a constitutional ban was Louisiana, voting a month after Missouri. They were followed in November by Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Arkansas and others outside the region.

By the end of 2008, every state in the South had an amendment except North Carolina. West Virginia also lacks a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage, but that state — which was created when it broke away from the rest of Virginia to fight alongside the Union in the Civil

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Saturday, June 9th at 8:00 PM

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Sunday, June 10th at 5:00 PM

St. James United Church of Christ – 76 Main St, Hamburg, 14075

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War — culturally shares as much or more with Rust Belt neighbors like Ohio and Pennsylvania as with Dixie.

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley recently signed legislation legalizing gay marriage, but opponents are seeking to overturn the law through a ballot vote.

In North Carolina, there's little doubt the immediate reason for the absence of a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage is that Democrats controlled the General Assembly until 2010. A bill that would amend the constitution was first introduced in May 2004 and in every subsequent session. While the party includes many social conservatives, each time the issue arose, the Democratic leadership made sure it stayed bottled up in committee.

"It hasn't passed here because it wasn't on the ballot, and it wasn't on the ballot because Democrats in the leadership had no interest in seeing it on the ballot," said Gary Pearce, who worked for Hunt, the former four-term Democratic governor.

That's all that needs to be said on the subject, according to Tami Fitzgerald, chairwoman of Vote FOR Marriage NC, the coalition leading support of the amendment.

"It's entirely political," she said. "The problem is that the legislative leadership wanted to keep voters with strong beliefs on social issues away from the polls."

But the very fact of such tenacious Democratic control, though it ended two years ago, shows how North Carolina differs from most of its Southern counterparts, Pearce said. While Republicans have come to dominate Southern politics over the last 30 years, North Carolina still elects Democratic senators, governors, state lawmakers — and, in 2008, gave its 15 electoral votes to Obama, who condemned the proposed amendment last week.

That's the context stressed by opponents of the amendment. The Coalition to Protect All NC Families, the main group rallying opposition to the amendment, also points to ties with the NAACP and endorsements from business executives, town governments and hundreds of members of the clergy as signs North Carolina is not like its neighbors on this issue.

"You wouldn't see this happening in another Southern state," said Jeremy Kennedy, the group's campaign manager.

North Carolina's civil rights history is one of the themes regularly invoked by opponents of the measure. The bombings, mob violence and official defiance of desegregation that marked states like Mississippi and Alabama were largely absent from North Carolina, where then-Gov. Luther Hodges and other leaders courted business development by promising North Carolina would remain free of the chaos erupting elsewhere.

"It's fair to say that North Carolina has been seen as more progressive or at least more moderate, even if the reputation and the reality haven't always matched," said James Cobb, a professor of history at the University of

Georgia and the author of "Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity."

Whether North Carolina remains an outlier in the South will be up to voters on May 8, when immediate circumstances, including a contested Republican presidential primary, could help determine the outcome more than more abstract factors.

"I think the chances of it passing are pretty strong here," said Pearce, veteran of numerous North Carolina elections. "It's a tough issue for any Southern state, even one that's more progressive than the others."

U.S. may allow gay couples to use single customs form

By Chris Johnson, The Washington Blade

U.S. Customs & Border Protection published a proposed rule at the end of March that will ease the paperwork burden on same-sex couples returning to the United States after traveling abroad.

Under the proposed change, same-sex couples residing in one household who travel together on their return home can make a single joint declaration. Same-sex couples have been forced to fill out two separate forms, even though the customs form states "only one written declaration per family is required."

The definition of the term "members of a family residing in one household" would be expanded to include domestic relationships, including foster children, stepchildren, half-siblings, legal wards — as well as same-sex couples. Two adults of the same gender in a civil union, domestic partnership or who have shared financial assets and obligations would be eligible.

The CBP statement makes no explicit mention of married same-sex couples — likely because of the Defense of Marriage Act — although they would be eligible as well under different terms if they're living together in the same household and have shared financial assets.

LGBT groups that had requested the change praised the Obama administration for starting the process to make it happen. Rachel Tiven, executive director of Immigration Equality, said her organization is "proud to see this change come to fruition."

"Separating families in the customs line was a waste of government resources and a painful symbol of the double standard LGBT families face at the federal level," Tiven said. "This proposal ends that insult. It sends an unmistakable message that the administration and the United States recognize gay families as 'real families,' too."

Jennifer Chrisler, executive director of the Family Equality Council, hailed the proposed change as a major victory and said the administration proposed the rule because it "recognized the need to modernize forms and regulations to reflect the reality of today's American families."

"No child should have to ask their parent if they really are a family because of an arcane customs form," Chrisler said. "But that is what is happening to LGBT families who are treated differently when re-entering the United States through Customs & Border Protection after travelling abroad. In many cases couples are forced to declare they have no relationship with their spouses and parents are forced to split up their children in order to get through the customs process."

According to a statement from CBP, the change should reduce the number of declarations, streamline passenger processing by CBP officers and bring down costs. Additionally, CBP states that the proposed change would "more accurately reflect relationships between members of the public who are traveling together as a family."

Comments on the proposed rule must be received by May 26.

"Bully" Documentary to Be Unrated

By Zorianna Kit, Reuters

The Weinstein Co. said it has decided to release its documentary "Bully" without a U.S. film rating after failing to persuade the Motion Picture Association of America to change to one that is less restrictive.

"Bully," set for release on March 30, has drawn controversy over the MPAA's "R" rating that means people under 17-years-old must be accompanied by adult to see it. The group gave it the rating due to strong language used by kids in the movie.

Opponents of the MPAA's decision, including Weinstein Co., argue that many youth need to see the film in order to tackle the problem of bullying, and the "R" rating will bar kids not only from theaters but also from watching it in schools.

The MPAA, which represents Hollywood's major movie studios in governmental matters, rates films for content such as sex, violence and language to give audiences an idea of what will be in the movies they see.

Releasing "Bully" unrated means anyone will be admitted where it is screened, but in the past many major theater chains have spurned films without an MPAA rating. As a result, distributors such as Weinstein Co. seek the ranking.

"We believe theater owners everywhere will step up and do what's right for the benefit of all of the children out there who have been bullied or may have otherwise become bullies themselves. We're working to do everything we can to make this film available to as many parents, teachers and students across the country," Weinstein Co. marketing president Stephen Bruno said in a statement.

Weinstein Co. had appealed the "R" earlier this year and sought a less-restrictive rating, but the MPAA refused to budge. Director Lee Hirsch could edit out the

objectionable words, but has declined to make changes arguing the language is essential to the story.

"The small amount of language in the film that's responsible for the R rating is there because it's real. It's what the children who are victims of bullying face on most days," Hirsch said in a statement. "All of our supporters see that, and we're grateful for the support we've received across the board. I know the kids will come, so it's up to the theaters to let them in."

Gay Marriage Upheld

By Matthew Spolar, Concord Monitor staff

The New Hampshire House voted March 21, 2012 to keep gay marriage legal, soundly defeating an attempt to make the state the first to legislatively repeal same-sex marriage.

The Republican-controlled House voted 202-133 to reject a repeal of the 2009 law allowing gay couples to marry here. The House then voted 211-116 to officially kill House Bill 437, which was first introduced over a year ago and became the subject of intense lobbying and debate.

"These folks are people just like you are," said Rep. Mike Ball, the chairman of the Manchester Republican Committee who compared the anti-gay marriage effort to segregation he witnessed growing up in the South. "They just want the same things you do. This bill needs to be put down."

The 202 votes against the bill included 109 Republicans who broke with the state party platform, which defines marriage as between a man and a woman. Republican opponents of repeal said their vote was about affirming the principles of small government and allowing all to seek happiness. Rep. Keith Murphy, a Bedford Republican, said the party platform "promises to respect your rights to live as you see fit."

"At its heart, it protects the right to be yourself," Murphy said. "How can anyone claim to support limited government and then with a straight face tell a grown adult they cannot marry another person?"

Murphy said he has a relative who is gay and is starting to talk about marriage with his partner of two years. "He's happy. No one is being hurt. His choices are his own to make," Murphy said.

The repeal bill was spearheaded by Rep. David Bates, a Windham Republican, and supported by 11 Republican co-sponsors. Bates argued his bill was not about discrimination or bigotry.

"Marriage is not just any two people who love one another and want to spend their lives together," Bates said. "I don't suspect there's anybody here who would suggest that it would be appropriate for me to marry my father, for me to marry my brother, for me to marry my children." An amendment by Bates last week sought to pick up more floor votes by including a non-binding ballot question asking voters in November if they support

defining marriage as between a man and a woman. Bates framed the ballot question as an assurance the repeal would only go forward with the consent of the voters, but other Republicans raised concerns yesterday about its inclusion in the bill, even attempting to strike it from the rest of the text.

"This is an issue that is confusing, sets one section of the House against the other. And it will do the same thing, if it passed, out in our communities," said longtime Republican Rep. David Welch of Kingston.

Once Bates's amendment failed on a 188-162 vote, the underlying legislation was doomed. Bates had sought to widen support for his amendment by including a civil union provision for gay couples that he said was the same one supported by Democrats prior to the passage of same-sex marriage. The original bill had no civil union protection. A motion to table it was proposed, but Bates disagreed.

"The time has come to make a decision," he said. Bates's bill would have continued to recognize the marriages of nearly 2,000 same-sex couples who have wed since the law took effect in January 2010, but some argued that would have treated future couples who were denied marriage rights as second-class citizens.

Gay marriage supporters had initially downplayed yesterday's vote in case it didn't go their way, focusing instead on the lack of a two-thirds majority in the House to override a likely veto from Democratic Gov. John Lynch, who signed the law three years ago making New Hampshire the sixth state to allow same-sex marriage.

Polls showed New Hampshire citizens opposed the repeal effort by a nearly two-to-one margin. Tyler Deaton, a lobbyist with pro-gay marriage group Standing Up For New Hampshire Families, said it was fitting House members also rejected the repeal by a margin of nearly two-to-one. "They're speaking for the people, they're listening to their constituents, they're doing what's right for all families, they're doing what's right for liberty," Deaton said.

Not all Republicans agreed. Rep. Warren Groen, a Rochester Republican, said same-sex marriage is part of a "slippery slope" that would lead to polygamy for bisexual people and Muslims seeking to "take over the world." "Who's next in line? The animal lovers can't be too far behind," Groen said. "Once you open a word to redefinition, it's open to redefinition."

Rep. Dan McGuire, an Epsom Republican, voted to repeal same-sex marriage after admitting he has three close female relatives, including his mother and sister, who have been in long-term lesbian relationships. "I love all three of them, this is not about them personally," McGuire said. "I consider this debate to be one of extreme political correctness. Political correctness tries to win arguments and limit debate by twisting the meaning of words."

Rep. Marilinda Garcia, a Salem Republican, said gay marriage should not be allowed because only

heterosexual couples can "unite biologically." Marriage has to do with generativity, not love or commitment, she said. "A same-sex couple cannot thus unite, therefore the state has no interest in regulating their relationship," Garcia said. "The symbolic message of inclusion for same-sex couples in an institution that makes no sense for them would be coupled with another message: That marriage is about the desires of adults rather than the interests of children."

Yesterday's votes laid bare a difference of opinion on the issue between House Speaker Bill O'Brien, a Mont Vernon Republican, and House Majority Leader D.J. Bettencourt, a Salem Republican. O'Brien had been a vocal supporter of the repeal bill, saying gay marriage supporters are "seeking to destroy the very society that we have." Bettencourt, meanwhile, declined last year and this year to put the gay marriage bill on the House Republican agenda. O'Brien stepped down from the speaker's rostrum yesterday to vote in favor of the repeal bill and let Bettencourt preside over the debate. Bettencourt did not vote on the question of whether to pass the bill, but later cast a largely symbolic vote to help officially kill the legislation.

"The House will note that the chair has voted in the affirmative," Bettencourt said. As he turned the rostrum back over to O'Brien, many like-minded legislators rose to applaud. House Majority Whip Shawn Jasper, a nine-term Hudson Republican, voted against the repeal bill. So did former House speaker Gene Chandler, a Bartlett Republican.

After the 202-133 vote, Rep. Tammy Simmons, a Manchester Republican, began to cry as she made the motion to officially kill the bill. Rep. Steve Vaillancourt, a gay Republican from Manchester, said the number of House Republicans voting in favor of gay marriage had grown in the past three years from a dozen to more than 100. "As happy as I was three years ago... I'm even prouder and happier today," he said.

NOM Wants Starbucks Boycott

By Rachel La Corte, Associated Press

A national group opposed to gay marriage called for a boycott of Starbucks in response to the company's public support of a new same-sex marriage law in Washington State.

Following a shareholders' meeting of the Seattle-based coffee giant on Wednesday, the Washington, D.C.-based National Organization for Marriage announced a "Dump Starbucks" protest. The group says it will place ads throughout the country, as well as in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, urging consumers to boycott the company. The group is supporting a referendum effort to overturn a recently passed law legalizing same-sex marriage in Washington State. "We will not tolerate an international company attempting to force its misguided values on citizens," said the group's president, Brian Brown, in a written statement announcing the boycott.

CEO Howard Schultz defended the company's stance on gay marriage during the shareholders' meeting, saying it was made "in our view, through the lens of humanity, and being the kind of company that embraces diversity." Schultz received loud applause when he told the group that the decision to support gay marriage was "not something that was a difficult decision for us." Starbucks is just one of several prominent Pacific Northwest businesses that have expressed their support for same-sex marriage, including Microsoft Corp. and Nike Inc.

Schultz was asked by three shareholders about the company's stance, with one asking: "Is it prudent to risk the economic interests of all the shareholders for something that might affect the private lives of a very small percentage of our employees?" Schultz responded that he believed the success of the company, "which is linked to shareholder value, has a great deal to do with whether or not our people are proud of the company they work for and feel they are part of something larger than themselves. I would say, candidly, since we've made that decision, there's not been dilution whatsoever in our business," he said.

Maggie Gallagher, co-founder of NOM, said the main focus of the group's protest is to make sure Starbucks knows that not all of their customers agree with their philosophy on gay marriage. Gallagher said that in addition to ads, the plan is to have customers call Starbucks managers around the state to let them know how they feel. "We would be satisfied if, in the future, they would refrain from entering in these hot-button moral issues," she said.

Human Rights Campaign, a national gay-rights group, said Wednesday it would soon launch a campaign asking consumers to support Starbucks. That group's president, Joe Solmonese, called NOM's protest "typical bullying tactics."

Washington State's gay marriage law takes effect June 7, but could be put on hold by a referendum effort supported by the National Organization for Marriage, which was involved in ballot measures that overturned same-sex marriage in California and Maine. A group called Preserve Marriage Washington filed Referendum 74 immediately after Gov. Chris Gregoire signed the new measure into law last month. If they collect the more than 120,577 valid voter signatures needed by June 6, the law will be put on hold pending the outcome of a November vote. Separately, an initiative was filed at the beginning of the legislative session that opponents of gay marriage say could also lead to the new law being overturned.

Chronicling Gay History

By Johnny Diaz, Sun Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, FL)

At the Stonewall National Museum & Archives, gay history is bursting at the seams.

Even as libraries are shrinking and many bookstores are closing because of the Web, this repository has outgrown its shelf space since moving into its home on East Sunrise Boulevard three years ago.

"It's a good sign. It's a sign of the vibrance of this movement," said U.S. Congressman Barney Frank, D-Mass., who visits Fort Lauderdale twice a year with his partner. "This is a very important cause to document."

With 25,000 books and videos, Stonewall is the largest circulating library of gay literature and periodicals and one of at least a handful nationally. It changed its name last year, from the Stonewall Library & Archives, to reflect a more national focus with its collection and traveling exhibitions. The organization's advertising boasts that it's "the LGBT community's Smithsonian."

"We are this national treasure of stuff and we needed to have a name that reflects that," said Bryan Knicely president of the nonprofit Stonewall, which has about 7,000 items in its archives, representing 8,000 linear feet or about 1 1/2 miles of materials.

But the center also houses slices of old gay South Florida. Remember the outdoor sign of the former Marlin Beach Hotel, a popular beach spot for Fort Lauderdale gays? That sign bedecks the entrance of the library's conference room. The hotel's original blueprints are also part of the archive.

"If someone doesn't collect or preserve this, it's one of those things that gets thrown away," Knicely said.

As he stood inside the archive recently, Knicely was dwarfed by 16 towering rows of shelving racks packed with everything from gay pulp fiction novels from the 1950s to event buttons such as one from the 1982 Gay Games in San Francisco. Sealed plastic bags display jerseys from local and national gay sports leagues.

"When you are part of a community like the LGBT community, unless you know what has happened before you and what rights you have been fighting for, you really have no sense of place in your community," he said. "So that's why it's important to preserve this so the story can always be told."

The archive is part of that story. The library got its start in 1973 when Mark Silber, a 19-year-old student at Florida Atlantic University, began collecting gay books and magazines to better understand his homosexuality.

The collection "was a lending library among friends that grew and grew," said John Coppola, a Miami-based consultant for museums in Latin America and former head of exhibits at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

"I remember when the library was in a closet," said Fred Fejes, a communications professor at FAU. "It was a real band of very loyal archivists that kept this going on for a long time."

The library eventually found a home at the former Gay and Lesbian Community Center on Andrews Avenue.

But the collection wasn't always embraced.

In 2007, then-Fort Lauderdale Mayor Jim Naugle objected to the library moving to a city-owned building, citing concerns over some pornographic material in a space at the ArtServe center next to Holiday Park, where children played.

Naugle lost the fight, and Stonewall officially relocated to its new home in 2009, with local officials including Broward County Sheriff Al Lamberti on hand to celebrate.

Back then, only a third of its shelves were full and the archive's shelving racks were bare. These days, the library is so full that new additions are place on the top of bookshelves. And the archive section is at 95 percent capacity.

Stonewall receives about 200 new and used books each year from snowbirds and local residents. Donated goods vary in size. One recent donation: 30 boxes of music videos that played at the former Cathode Ray bar on Las Olas Boulevard. And autographed sheet music by the writers of the Broadway musical "Hairspray."

To deal with the growth, Knicely is storing items in two off-site storage units.

The center, which has one full-time employee and a part-timer, receives more than half of its annual \$230,000 budget from local and out of-state donors, Knicely said. At its first fundraiser outside South Florida last summer, the organization raised about \$9,000 in Provincetown. The rest of the group's budget comes from corporate sponsors and cultural grants.

"Stonewall is filling the niche left by older gay bookstores closing," said Coppola, the museum consultant. "You can walk in and most of what has been published in fiction and nonfiction on gay and lesbian topics is there."

Last year, about 15,000 people came to the Fort Lauderdale facility for its programs, events and content. Steven Lutz, 56, stops by weekly to read magazines and has donated books.

"There is a lot of freedom being able to go and pick up a magazine that has some amazing articles but has [men] in bikinis and you don't feel embarrassed doing it," said Lutz, a Fort Lauderdale nurse.

The repository also has become a tourist stop for gay vacationers. Before they leave, some post messages on a bulletin board by the library's entrance.

On a recent Monday, one message in Spanish read, "Fantastic library! Thank you."

Another in Italian said, "I feel at home here."

Location:

Stonewall National Museum & Archives
1300 E. Sunrise Blvd., Fort Lauderdale
954-763-8565, stonewallnationalmuseum.org

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2011-2012**

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Your National PFLAG membership is included in your local chapter dues. You will also receive the quarterly PFLAG-Pole Newsletter delivered to your home or by email from the national office. Circle here if you don't want to receive the PFLAG-Pole Newsletter ▾		
Make checks payable to PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara and mail to: P.O.Box 617 Buffalo, NY 14207		
<i>PFLAG Buffalo/Niagara is a non-profit 501(c)3 and donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.</i>		
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