

HOST 1: These are open to anyone, it sounds like?

GUEST 1: Anyone. Anyone.

GUEST 2: It's a very, very supportive group, and every meeting is different in that we kind of tailor it, I guess, to meet the needs of the people that are there. I think everybody that would attend would find a lot of support wherever they are, whether they're ready to come out to their parents or whether that's far, far in their mind.

GUEST 1: Well, we have-- one of our members-- a couple of our members are gentleman whose wives have recently come out to them as being lesbians and a wife whose husband has come out to her as being gay.

HOST 1: Yes?

GUEST 1: Lesbian mothers, gay men, parents, sisters--

GUEST 3: Children of.

GUEST 1: --children, everybody. So everybody is welcome.

HOST 1: That's the surprise for me. Because I've always heard of PFLAG, and I thought, well, that's not for me. That's just for parents, and friends, and stuff like that.

GUEST 1: Well, this year, they adopted the additional wording, "relatives," to further expand the group to reflect that we're not just parents and friends. We're relatives on all levels, all the way up and down the family scale, whether it's the grandparents, or the cousins three generations or once removed, third cousin second to the left, or children of, working peers, whatever. It's far-reaching and totally inclusive of anyone and everyone who's supportive of us.

And for those who are not able to attend the meetings and have relatives located in other places in the country, if those people would call into our hotline number, we can put them in touch for their relatives' benefit to the other chapter's close in.

HOST 1: Oh, good.

GUEST 1: And also--

WOMAN: [INAUDIBLE]

HOST 1: What?

[LAUGHTER]

WOMAN: Ha-ha. Give me the [INAUDIBLE].

HOST 1: We'll edit that out later.

HOST 2: Right.

[LAUGHTER]

GUEST 1: People who are interested in knowing what's happening around the country, not just in Houston with respect to the Parents PFLAG chapter, for a small donation-- I believe it's \$15-- you can get yourself on the National mailing membership list. And there is an either bi-monthly or quarterly distribution with a lot-- chock full of information, legislative, medical, chapter formations, who are the latest and greatest people of note to speak at different chapter monthly meetings, you name it, and it's in there. And the national mailing address, for those who are interested, is--

HOST 2: That's right, give it to us.

GUEST 1: --post office box 27605, Washington DC, 20038-7605. And just drop them a line to Parents PFLAG. Tell them you're interested in getting your name on the Federation's mailing list.

If you can't send a small donation, they will put your name on anyway. The interest is more for greater expansion and contact, rather than just to be perceived as money hungry, because it's too important of an issue to ignore someone out in the boonies somewhere or 2,000 miles away from mom and dad. They're clearly interested.

HOST 1: Do you mind if I keep this? Make sure that the switchboard has this information?

GUEST 1: Sure.

HOST 2: Please, no personal business. We're on the air, Mary.

HOST 1: That's right. Well--

HOST 2: We'll edit that out.

HOST 1: --everybody's personal business. Anyway, joining us in the studio this morning, Paula and David and Ronald and all with PFLAG, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. And when we come back, if you'll please read the statement of purpose again for those that have just joined us--

GUEST 1: Be glad to.

HOST 1: --and you're listening to After Hours on KPFT. I want to play a song for you that Michael Callen does. And this-- I don't know. Michael Callen must have talked to my mom and dad when he put this song together because--

HOST 2: Sounds like a lot of people's dads.

HOST 1: --this conversation-- you don't have to be gay or lesbian to appreciate this song. This conversation is the same conversation that I've had with my mother and dad for probably the last 10 or 12 years. And this is Michael Callen from his album Purple Heart.

You're listening to After Hours on KPFT, and we'll be back with PFLAG in just a little bit. So stay tuned. 526-4000 or 526-KPFT-- that's the number to call if you have questions for PFLAG while they're here.

We're going to ask you for your phone number so that we can call you back to verify that you call in. So please give us a call and enjoy Michael Callen. The song is called "Nobody's Fool." Michael Callen from the album "Purple Heart" and "Nobody's Fool." God, it's a beautiful, beautiful song.

HOST 2: Isn't it?

HOST 1: Just once, I'd like to have--

HOST 2: [INAUDIBLE]

HOST 1: Just once, though, I'd like to have my father say, anything you need, just let us know. [INAUDIBLE] they've never said that. They want to.

I'm sure they want to. I mean, all parents, surely, they want to say it. But they just don't. If they only had a PFLAG chapter in Van Buren, Arkansas.

GUEST 1: We'll get you the information, buddy.

HOST 1: There you go. I'll also send them a copy of this tape. I don't know if they'll listen to it, but we'll send them a copy of the show. I've never sent him a copy. Either maybe this is a good one to start with.

HOST 2: Well?

HOST 1: Anyway, you're listening to After Hours on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. Someone by the name of Romanovsky and Phillips-- who is that?

HOST 2: Oh!

HOST 1: These two Queens from-- one's from New Mexico and one's from San Francisco. I don't know where they're--

HOST 2: --now.

HOST 1: I don't know where they're living at now, but they'll sure tell you, and all their stuff is on CD now. Thanks to Stanley, we have CDs.

HOST 2: Ta-da, ta-da. Thank you, Stanley. I love you.

HOST 1: Hey, tell Stanley that we put the Christmas tree up and there are-- no, never mind.

HOST 2: I have to take Stanley to the airport tomorrow.

HOST 1: Do you really?

HOST 2: Yeah.

HOST 1: Are you going to go see [? Ron ?] and Paul?

HOST 2: Yes.

HOST 1: Have you got tickets?

HOST 2: I've got--

HOST 1: Do you?

HOST 2: I do, as a matter of fact. I have eight tickets.

HOST 1: Eight tickets.

HOST 2: Yes, yes.

HOST 1: So Stanley's not going. So you're going to take yourself?

HOST 2: No, Stanley's not--

HOST 1: What, are you going to sit with us or--

HOST 2: You know it. I'm devoted. I've been married 11 years to him.

HOST 1: Yeah, yeah. Are you going to sit with us? You didn't answer my question.

HOST 2: Oh, I guess I will.

HOST 1: Ow! Huh?

[LAUGHTER]

No, we'll just take your ticket away from you and give it to somebody.

HOST 2: Yeah, I know-- somebody with a hairy chest.

HOST 1: Forget that. David, how did you-- you said you've listened to the show before. How did you find out about us?

GUEST 2: I just [INAUDIBLE] I was scanning the dial and--

HOST 1: No kidding!

GUEST 2: --heard it.

HOST 2: [INAUDIBLE]

GUEST 2: But it was the Tuesday show that you all have because I used to come from school, and I would listen to it in the car. And I'd always listen to different stations and--

HOST 1: That's the Wallenstein program with Jack and Debra. In fact, they're moving to 9:00 beginning next Tuesday.

HOST 2: That's right. This is the first week, isn't it?

HOST 1: 9:00 until 11:00. I can't wait. They're going to be running this way out, and heaven knows what all kinds of good stuff. So you need to tune in at 9:00 on Tuesdays now. I just swallowed some cheesecake--

HOST 2: Well, isn't that nice--

HOST 1: --that the civil service lady, the resident fixer and food preparator, brought in. I can't remember her name either.

HOST 2: Yeah.

HOST 1: But if you're listening, thank you, darling. The cheesecake it was great. Anyway, Paula, David, and [INAUDIBLE] joining us-- [INAUDIBLE]-- joining us this morning with Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, better known as PFLAG, a parent's-- well, it's not just a parent support group, I guess.

GUEST 1: No, it's--

HOST 1: Just anybody that'll show up. Anybody that'll show up.

GUEST 1: Anybody. Anyone is welcome. Everyone is welcome.

HOST 1: And we're going to do some production work now.

HOST 2: Da da da da da da.

HOST 1: So Jimmy, I'm going to kill your mic there. And we're going to ask [INAUDIBLE] to read the statement of purpose again, and she's going to identify-- here's what we want you to do. So you guys out there can hear this over and over and over.

We're going to just kind of do it and tape it here. So what we'll do is you can introduce yourself and then read it and then finish up with who you are again and give the phone number. And then we'll of course throw that in later, but can you do that?

GUEST 3: Sure, I think I can.

HOST 1: We're making a radio star out of [INAUDIBLE] this morning. And what we'll do is I'll start some music. Oops, I just turned myself off.

HOST 2: That's a first.

HOST 1: I'll start-- I know. Nobody else can shut me up. Don't say anything, Jimmy.

I want to start this music, and I'll just kind of go like this. Mmm-- that's radio for, OK, you can start. You want to give it a shot?

GUEST 3: Sure.

HOST 1: And if it don't work, well, we'll keep trying until we get it right. No, I'm kidding. This is After Hours on KPFT.

We do all kinds of stuff like this. It's easier to do it now, and our audience is used to worse than this. So anyway--

GUEST 2: Well, thanks.

HOST 1: This is [INAUDIBLE] with the statement of purpose of PFLAG, and we're going to pause for just one second so I can start this record. All right, and it'll be beautiful. So hang on. Here we go.

GUEST 3: Hi. My name is [INAUDIBLE], and I'm president of Parents FLAG, PFLAG. And I would like to read PFLAG's statement of position.

We who are parents, friends, and relatives of lesbian and gay persons have learned that they come from families from all corners of the Earth, from every culture, religious, and ethnic group. Their homosexual orientation is neither chosen nor something they are taught to be, and it is not just a stage they are going through. There is no pattern to the kind of families they come from-- dominant or submissive mothers, weak or strong fathers, single parent homes or model families.

A gay son or daughter may be an only child, the youngest, middle or oldest child, with siblings who are not gay. We who are parents have learned to be free from any burden of guilt for our children's sexual orientation, and we recognize their expression of love as natural for them and moral. We view rejection of a child by his or her family as a tragedy.

We share this stance with you because we are members of close-knit families who are pro-family in every sense and who affirm traditional values. We respect the truth, recognize the reality of individual differences, honor the right of each person to be who he or she authentically is. We love and affirm our children with pride and are committed to their entitlements to full civil and human rights.

Again, I'm [INAUDIBLE], Parents PFLAG. We have a hotline number, which is 952-2525, post office box 31853, Houston, 77231-1853. And the Federation of parents PFLAG, which is in Washington DC, is post office box 27605, Washington DC, 20038-7605. If you would like to be on the Federation's mailing list, write to those people, tell them that you're interested, and they will send you the information.

HOST 1: And that local number again is--

GUEST 3: And the local number again is 952-2525.

HOST 1: Well, all I can say is Casey Kasem, look out. I know, that was great. See, now the next time you tune in, you'll hear that.

GUEST 3: All right.

HOST 1: Now those parents can get a hold of you.

GUEST 3: Right.

HOST 1: Do you-- what do you hear normally from parents when they first come in that are, I don't know, less accepting? Well, by the time they get to you, I guess they've accepted, right? Or not always?

GUEST 3: No, not necessarily. We've had parents come in who spend the entire two hours in tears and sometimes come back and sometimes don't. And we certainly do have those who have already accepted and are coming for other reasons, such as wanting to reach out to those parents who haven't accepted.

But we do. We're always happy to see someone come back twice. If they come back twice, then they normally stay.

HOST 1: Mm-hm.

GUEST 3: Sometimes, they don't.

HOST 1: I think that goes along with what we were talking about earlier-- that when you come out to your parents, you've dealt with this situation for years before you've ever come out and said anything to your parents. And what we as gay people and lesbian people may not realize-- that now, it's time for the parents to do some coming out.

HOST 2: And some dealing with it.

HOST 1: Yes.

HOST 2: Pollock, what were you going to say?

GUEST 3: Our national president just accepted a Humanitarian Award for on behalf of the Federation in New York just recently, and one of the things that she spoke to was parents frequently are passing their children on the way into the closet as their children are coming out of the closet because it's a whole new experience for the parents, and they're essentially shell shocked. And they have to find out all of the things that they're experiencing and understand them before they can deal with it in a front on fashion.

HOST 1: Paula, can you tell us about a typical meeting of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays?

GUEST 1: Sure. What we have been trying to do for the last year is have a program format. Starting with Gay Pride Week, we had a workshop for homosexuals, both lesbians and gays, in determining if coming out to their parents is right for them. Actually, the program format was first devised by my mother's group, I'm very proud to say, a good dozen or so years ago, and all the chapters around the country now offer it at least once a year and in some cases twice a year. We have rap sessions.

HOST 1: This is-- I'm sorry. This is a workshop to establish whether you're ready or not to come out?

GUEST 1: Right, yeah. There are some people whose parents are extremely aged or ill or other family members who are extremely prejudiced and very redneck-oriented, if you will, and there will be no benefit served by coming out to some of them, or the timing in particular might not be appropriate. Perhaps their families have experienced various trauma. And it is a traumatic experience in some cases to be exposed to this new information from the parents and other family members' perspective.

So it's not our intention to encourage or insist that everyone has to come out. It's just not right. And a lot of people have come out for themselves at such an older age that they've lost the opportunity because their parents are in nursing homes.

They're senile, or they've already passed on. So there's no opportunity for them. Some people are flag wavers and drum bangers, and they might come out in such a forceful and tactless manner. We're trying to help them over that hurdle and suggest perhaps there's a kinder, gentler way of doing it.

HOST 1: Good point.

GUEST 1: I myself chose to come out to my father with another adult family member of his age generation there to catch him when he fell. And actually, he said I already knew about you. What about your brother?

And I had come out to my mother a good year or two before my father's awareness, and she kept saying, well, just don't tell your father. She just wasn't really ready for it, and she felt my father was also in the same level of extreme sensitivity and couldn't have dealt well with it. But actually, it was her own problems at that time.

But I explained to my father it really wasn't my position to say anything about my brother. And actually, two nights later, my brother came out with a friend of his and laid it out on the table for my father's benefit. And this is about 18 and 20 years ago, respectively.

But there's not always a right time. When I came out to my mother, it was at the end of a long weekend when my father had had a heart attack. And she couldn't get a hold of my brother.

She couldn't get a hold of me. There was no one there for her. And for two solid days, she was by herself suffering. And when I finally got the message from someone in my apartment complex that I needed to visit with my mother in the hospital and what had happened to my dad, I went and picked her up brought her home late on a Sunday night.

And she was just really distraught and angry and stressed out, and she said, I want to know why I can't have you available to me within a few hours notice. Where were you all this weekend? And essentially, I was brought up to be honest with my parents, and if I had to say anything at all, be honest.

I chose to not say anything at all prior to that, and I felt that that was not the time to be lying to my mother, and it was going to be very painful, but she let me know out at that point. And I said, mother, I was out at the various gay bars and social organizations to support the gay community. I'm a lesbian. And it was a real shock because she just hadn't perceived that about me. I had living on my own for several years already. And she needed to digest all of that, and it took a while.

HOST 1: Mm-hm.

GUEST 1: Took a long while.

HOST 1: 952-4000 or 526-KPFT if you have any questions for Paula or David or [? Rowland ?] with Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. We'll take your phone calls.

It's 1:29, about 31 minutes until 2 o'clock. 2 o'clock, This Way Out with Greg Gordon and Lucia Chappelle coming up. I'm not really sure what they've got this morning in store for us, but it'll be great.

HOST 2: As always.

HOST 1: And then we'll be-- after that, we'll be talking to Romanovsky and Phillips at great length about their career and their concert tonight at the University of Houston. So you need to stay tuned for that. Also, John, if you're listening, we're going to have your tickets air delivered. You'll have them shortly. So just hang on.

Revelations. Federal Express guy just pulled up, and we're going to shoot them over to your house. So just hang on.

You'll get them sooner than you thought. Anyway, we're speaking to [INAUDIBLE] and David and Paula this morning with PFLAG, which stands for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. What do you hear most, [INAUDIBLE], from gay and lesbian people that come to your group?

GUEST 3: They want to come out, and they are afraid too. That's what we hear-- that's what I hear most, which, I'm one of those who I'm am always saying come out, come out, come out.

HOST 1: Good for you.

GUEST 3: I'm one of those.

HOST 1: [INAUDIBLE]

GUEST 3: But I do understand and love those that don't. I certainly do.

HOST 1: Why do you feel that way?

GUEST 3: Well, because I feel that if everybody stays in the closet, there's not going to be any acceptance. I mean, you know, gays and lesbians need to accept themselves to a point where they're not ashamed anymore to come out before they can expect other people to accept them.

HOST 1: For me as a gay person, coming out and being so involved, not in-- it doesn't have anything to do with the show or with what I've done for the community, although that plays into it. But being able, for example, to go back to HPD and be rehired as an openly gay person and not have to worry about telling them that I live in Montrose or that when I go on vacation, I don't bring back pictures of just plants and scenery, that you bring out pictures with people in them-- I remember one time, a girl at work said, you go on all these trips, but when you come back, there are no people in these pictures.

Well, that's because you go through those pictures, and you dig all those out with your friends and them. And it's such a feeling of relief not to have to hide that anymore. The not having my family is still there, and I guess I deal with that through therapy and tears and music and love from other gay and lesbian people. But-- but what?

HOST 2: Well, that is another aspect of it because I'll bet that a lot of people who come out may lose their parents.

HOST 1: Well--

HOST 2: What happens then?

HOST 1: What happens then is you go on with your life.

HOST 2: Well, I know that, but--

HOST 1: We all know that. I mean, we talk about this all the time.

HOST 2: How does PFLAG deal with something like that?

GUEST 3: Well, PFLAG-- Paula, do you want to answer that, how PFLAG deals with that?

HOST 1: Rejection.

GUEST 1: Well, sure. I experienced that myself for a while. It sometimes separates the men from the boys in a sense that you really have to be strong in order to survive the community anyway, survive this lifestyle. And you learn that there's another facet of yourself that you didn't realize is so strong because you do find familial ostracism.

You find perhaps your parents glossing over certain aspects of your conversation when you do call home or visit. And it's very painful. And you keep hoping that eventually, it's going to get better and that perhaps your parents will read an article in Dear Abby or a particular article or brochure that you came upon will be the right temperament to send to your parents. And for whatever reason, maybe divine intervention, it suddenly hits them these are really their children, their flesh and blood, and they can't deny them anymore.

HOST 1: You know, I have a young fan that listens to us, and he said that he leaves things lying around hoping that his parents will find out. I said, maybe that's not the way to tell mom and dad. I mean, that's one way to do it, but the way my family did it, it was there was a lot of yelling and screaming after they found things that were hidden.

But I don't think that leaving things lying around is the answer. And David, we don't mean to aim all this at you, but we had the HATCH group here one time, a group of young people, young gay teenagers, gay and lesbian teenagers. And one of the young guys said, well, I'll come out when the time is right.

And I'm like, well, I waited 30 some odd years to come out to myself enough where I could deal with my sexuality. I mean, I was gay, and I knew I was gay. And I went to the bars, and I did everything that most gay men do when we're caught in that cycle called life.

But I had never come to accept that. I never accepted myself or the lifestyle that I was living until just recently. And it must be even harder for our families to get to that point when they feel like in, my family's case, for instance, that they've done something wrong, and they want to blame someone.

So they either blame us, or they blame themselves. And what we preach all the time, David, is that when Rosa Parks said no and refused to give up her seat on the bus, eight or nine years later, President Johnson was signing legislation into law that protected Blacks from discrimination on the job and in housing and so on and so forth. In 1969 at Stonewall in New York City, a group of gay and lesbian people said no to the police.

We're not going to put up with this garbage anymore. And that was almost 21 years ago. And sometimes, I feel like we haven't come any farther than we were the day after Stonewall.

But the Black community had that, and still, they have that Black skin that they can't hide. You can't go out into society and say we're not Black because you could visually see. And with gay and lesbian people, we can hide our sexual orientation from society, and we choose to do that. And I wish there was a way that we could all suddenly become-- and everybody hates this color. Either lavender, mine is like bright pink overnight so that as gay and lesbian people, we ourselves would see that there are 20 to 30 million of us in this country.

And there are gay and lesbian people everywhere. And then it wouldn't be-- we wouldn't have to worry about hiding it. But does that make any sense?

GUEST 2: Oh--

HOST 1: I mean, without screaming come out, come out, come out, does that-- does that make any sense to you?

GUEST 2: I think one thing that people like does is that, at least for me, there's a process that people go through. And I think I came out to myself probably when I was about 21 years old. I knew I was gay before that, but I mean, I really came out and just accepted it.

And then I began to tell my friends, my very close friends, and I began to tell some of my more distant relatives. But I think at least for me right now at my stage, my parents-- I need PFLAG support to be kind of my parents right now. There will be a time in my life I'll certainly tell my parents. I think that they're missing a great part of my life, and--

HOST 1: That's it.

GUEST 2: --I totally agree with that. But I think that timing is the issue, and I think I have to be ready myself. And right now, I'm not. You know, I'm making the PFLAG group or using, I guess, the PFLAG group to help me find a sense of family. And then as I get stronger, then I will certainly tell them. I don't--

HOST 1: All I can say is yay because when we were young, there was no PFLAG. There was no switchboards. There was no This Week in Texas or Montrose Voice to pick up. There was no gay radio to listen to. There was no one.

GUEST 1: There's no literature.

HOST 1: And now as we speak, in Van Buren, Arkansas, there is still nothing. In Beaumont, Texas, there is still nothing.

GUEST 1: That's not true. There is one now.

HOST 1: But do you know what I mean? In most small, rural areas in our country, there's nothing. And there are still gay and lesbian people that are hurting and growing up thinking I'm the only one. And we know that's not true. And until we go nationwide, coast to coast, live and in color--

HOST 2: [INAUDIBLE] there's something really wonderful about gay and lesbian people that we have and that we do. And it may be because of this alienation from blood relatives is that we're often accused of tearing apart the family. But we are great innovators of family creation, alternate family creation, because we know we need it. We need support. And we gather friends. We gather other people's parents around us.

HOST 1: And you know, form--

HOST 2: And it works.

HOST 1: --from working in the police department for so many years, gay and lesbian people do not abuse children. That's one of the biggest lies that certain people throw at society all the time. I mean, we do not leave children lying in garbage cans to die after they're born.

We don't beat our children, and first of all, most of us don't have children. But we don't beat our children. Statistics are kept by the FBI and by local-- state and local city officials.

And it's not gay and lesbian people that are abusing children. But when it comes to an election, that's what you hear all the time. How do you convey to a family that their kids are OK when they come in just knowing, [INAUDIBLE], that they've done something wrong or they failed somewhere? What do you say to a mom and dad to get them to understand that your child is OK?

GUEST 3: I think that part of the way that they get the feeling that their child is OK is simply by being in that meeting for two hours and hearing the other parents and the other persons in there talking and totally accepting. And as being totally accepting, it kind of rubs off on them, and they think, well, jeez. I guess maybe it's not anything I've done.

I think that it's fairly common for parents to think, the very first thing in their minds-- in fact, my son said, mother, you said this. I don't remember saying it. But is it something I did?

You know, what did I do? And of course, we know that it's not anything anybody did. It's just the way it is.

So I think that being with the group more than anything makes them feel more comfortable with it because those of us-- most of us that there are very comfortable with it. We have a library also that parents can check books out and that's one of the things too. We try to tell those who want to come out to their parents have some reading material for them already there with you. Don't send them down to the library. Actually have it there.

HOST 1: And there are a lot of wonderful books that are out for parents.

GUEST 3: My favorite, I think, is *Now That You Know, What Every Parent Should Know About Homosexuality*. It's an excellent--

HOST 1: Do you know who that's written by?

GUEST 3: Is it on here?

HOST 1: It's on here. Paula?

GUEST 3: All right, thank you. Paula, where is it now?

GUEST 1: It's the third listing, I think.

GUEST 3: It's-- *Now That You Know*. Right, OK. It's-- the authors are B. Fairchild and N. Hayward, and it's put out by Harcourt [? Grayson ?]. And I bought mine at the book stop. And I think most of the big bookstores have that.

GUEST 1: [INAUDIBLE] Inklings.

GUEST 3: Pardon? Oh yeah.

GUEST 1: Inkling has a lot of the books that we refer to, which is located on Richmond, 1846 Richmond.

GUEST 3: [INAUDIBLE]

GUEST 1: There's a plug for Pokey. Also, for people who will either call in or drop us a line, we have the brochure that helps people determine is it appropriate for coming out to their family. It's--

HOST 1: [INAUDIBLE]

GUEST 1: --coming out to your parents.

GUEST 3: I don't think we bought one of along, but we have some other types of things.

GUEST 1: Oh, they'll just call the hotline and leave their--

GUEST 3: Yeah, we have several.

GUEST 1: --address, we'll be happy to send it.

HOST 1: That hotline number again here in Houston is 952-2525.

GUEST 3: That's right.

HOST 1: And we're speaking to [INAUDIBLE] and David and Paula, and we've got about 15 minutes left in this segment of the program. We're talking to members of PFLAG, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. If you'd like to give us a call and ask them a question, we've got just a few minutes left for that. 526-4000 or 526-KPFT. With the-- what you got, baby?

No? OK. With the AIDS epidemic so prevalent, I guess, in society today, do you get any parents down there that have unfortunately lost their children to AIDS? Yes? No?

GUEST 3: May I say, or--

GUEST 1: You can introduce it initially, sure. Go ahead and talk.

GUEST 3: One of our group has lost someone, and I myself have a brother who has AIDS.

HOST 1: Mm-hm.

GUEST 3: Another one of the group has a son with AIDS. Isn't that right, Paula?

GUEST 1: Right?

GUEST 3: And-- but has not lost him beyond that, I don't really--

GUEST 1: And my brother died of AIDS a year ago. So we've got-- it touches everybody's life. And actually, at the national convention in October, one of the things that was newly announced was a program that is a family AIDS support program.

It was developed by a task force put together on the Federation level two years ago. And there were workshops offered and seminars during this four day national convention, and only because of the connection with my brother and knowing what my mother had experienced, what I had experienced myself and with the friends that I have lost in the recent past, I attended for curiosity, for additional information. I also have a medical background.

So I was wondering what additional information was out there on the non-professional level to glean and to maybe share with other people. And as part of that weekend, my mother was given the opportunity to make a presentation to the congregation of family members who attended. If you don't mind my reading this--

HOST 1: That's fine. Go ahead.

GUEST 3: --it kind of leads into the discussion I wanted to offer here. The last time I spoke to this group a few years ago, it was unexpected, and I was extremely nervous. This time, I came to convention hoping to be permitted to speak to you. So I have written out what I want to say, and I'm still nervous.

As a member of several minority communities, I wanted to share some thoughts with you. To start with the obvious, I am a woman. Now, we and our political strengths are far more recognized than we used to be.

I am a senior citizen, and while our ranks are swelling and our political potential is reluctantly being acknowledged, society still pigeonholes us with all the stereotypical myths about aging. So much for that category except to say that I can give you good news, as well as the other kind, about being chronologically advantaged. I am also Jewish, and long before the Holocaust, I have experienced religious bigotry and discrimination.

The sensitivity and pain that is always with me for those victims and survivors who have suffered indescribable loss would be ameliorated if, in truth, there were no more racial bias in at least my country in the years since the Holocaust and indeed today. But sadly, that is not the case. I am also a mother who has lost a fine gay son because of AIDS. Belonging to this minority gives me untold pain, and we know our numbers are unfortunately increasing all the time.

Through all the years of belonging to Parents FLAG-- eight or nine, I'm not sure-- my son was always very proud of my being part of an organization that he considered extremely important, and he encouraged and supported me to be more active and vocal. I knew he would want me to speak out about the horror of dealing with this killer, though my experience was as nothing compared to what he so courageously faced and endured. If there be a message in my remarks, it is that not only as an organization do we continue and enlarge our programs for educating people about AIDS and all the related areas but that those among us who have suffered the loss of a loved one, child, spouse, relative, or friend speak out insofar as we are able wherever and whenever we can about the cause of our loved ones death, not hiding or disguising it, certainly not to brag about the cause but neither to be ashamed of it.

We cannot all be political activists, but from our own experiences, speaking out in this way, though it be painful, is to bring this killer out of the closet also because it is, as you see, not just some strangers out there who are losing dear ones but our friends, our members, our loved ones to whom this is happening. We must speak out in support of research towards finding a cure for AIDS and for the care and support of people with AIDS who sadly have not the support of their own families. It is my hope to see in my lifetime a cure for AIDS as well as a tremendously expanded educational program about AIDS that will become part and parcel of the very air we breathe so that people everywhere-- young, particularly, and older, from every walk of life-- cannot escape the message about the prevention of AIDS.

Let my hopes be a tribute to my son Russ here, before a body for which he had great respect and appreciation, whose purpose and effectiveness as well as my commitment to it he sincerely applauded. In a spirit of continuation and dedication, let me share with you my daughter's presence here with me now. And it was a tear jerking experience, obviously.

Paula comes from Houston, Texas, where she is the vice president of the newly organized, small but effective group that is committed and hardworking. This is Paula's first convention and I hope the beginning of many more for us together. Her being here gives me much happiness.

While it has been difficult to speak before you, it was important for me, and I thank you for your attention. And we had total spontaneous ovation, applause. Everybody was just rolling with the tears down their faces.

The convention had about 300 families who were lesbians and gay members attending from all over the United States and Canada and Nova Scotia. I'm not sure if that's maybe part of Canada or whatever. Geography was not my strong point.

But everyone stood and it was extremely emotional. And unbeknownst to my mother, in my attending that convention and attending these personally chosen workshops and seminars, I came away appointed as the southern region Parents PFLAG family AIDS educator. And my appointed tasks essentially will be to work with the other parents who have chapters in the Southern region, which is made up of five states, and outreach to all of the organizations throughout the state of Texas primarily-- and one other person actually handles the other four states that make up the Southern region-- and offer several programs that have been developed. There was a national press release distributed to 1,600 National AIDS Network organizations. And basically, it's dealing with the current status of those who are HIV positive, or ARRC, and their family members on an open forum seminar basis or after the fact approximately 2 to three months after the family member has died dealing with grief in an eight session sensitivity program.

HOST 1: It sounds wonderful.

GUEST 1: It's-- I feel it's a natural calling for me. The pain and suffering that my mother and I went through would have been so much less if it had been in place in the last couple of years rather than now. But I feel if we can help one other family, one other gay person and their family or friend-- and certainly, there are a lot of us out there who are losing our friends-- then the purpose will be served, at least here in Houston.

HOST 1: Again, we're speaking to Paula and David and [INAUDIBLE] with Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, PFLAG. Is there anything that we haven't said that we need to say in the few minutes we've got left, [INAUDIBLE]?

GUEST 3: Well, before we do get through, I just want to mention what our-- in January and February, our meetings will deal with religion. And the titles in January, which is January 21, third Sunday, Grace Lutheran Church, 2515 Wa, 2:00 in the afternoon-- the program will be Religion and Homosexuality-- What Does the Bible Say? And in February, a follow-up-- Religion and Homosexuality-- Ministering to the Gay Community. I think that a lot of people find that interesting, and if they can get their parents, those parents who are caught up in the religious aspect of this, to come, hopefully it'll be a help.

HOST 1: David, what would you say to young people? Because obviously, you're young. And sit next to Jimmy, you look like-- you know, I'm kidding. He's going to be a heartbreaker. Right, baby?

HOST 2: He is a heartbreaker. Take it from an old queen.

HOST 1: What would you say to young people dealing with the things you've been dealing with about PFLAG?

GUEST 2: Well, I'd say that PFLAG is a great support. I think it meets you where you're at. If you're ready to come out to your parents, it gives you the support and the technique, I guess, to go about telling them. If you're not ready to yet, it provides a real surrogate kind of atmosphere that can help you get through those rough things. I've found lots of parents and lots of friends in the group, and I would encourage people to come.

HOST 1: Paula, what about someone that's lost someone to AIDS or--

GUEST 1: Well, we have a packet that's been developed from our national office as a packet of resource information. Basically, it gears to the current status rather than after the fact. And it's full of articles and brochures and official type information.

There's one excellent piece to it when people are acutely aware of the eventual. It's got lines of information where you would fill in everything that's important about your life and your property, your banking accounts, who might have power of attorney, that kind of stuff. And the suggestion is to keep it in a safe place so those who are involved in your life will be able to access that information when they need it. And if people will write us, call us for a small donation, we can send them out.

We also have a notebook that was also put together at the federation level for organizations to deal with the medical, psychosocial, religious, and legal and legislative issues for those who will then be either counseling with family members or PWAs. So please call us. Write to us. We'll give you the information on how to secure these very valuable packets of information.

HOST 1: And Paula, you're the vice president--

GUEST 1: Vice President.

HOST 1: --of PFLAG. David, a member. And finally, [INAUDIBLE], you're the president-elect?

GUEST 3: Right?

HOST 1: How long will you be serving?

GUEST 3: Well, a year.

HOST 1: I guess the most in--

GUEST 3: Well, at least--

HOST 1: I guess the most important question we have for you is if you're a mom or dad and you're dealing with this, what do you say? What do you do?

GUEST 3: Well, come to PFLAG, for one thing. Send your parents there. But read and educate yourself. To me, that's the key-- education. Because certainly, normally, we're not educated about homosexuality.

HOST 1: Unfortunately, they don't teach that at school.

GUEST 3: --Oneself. No, they don't. You have to do that on your own.

And I think it's very, very important. And don't lose touch with your parents either. Don't think because they didn't accept you the minute you told them, they're not going to. Keep in touch and keep trying.

HOST 1: Listen, this has meant an awful lot to me personally and I'm sure Jimmy also. And we just want to thank y'all for taking the time to come out and--

GUEST 3: Thank you for inviting us.

GUEST 1: Thank you.

HOST 1: You'll come back some time, right?

GUEST 1: Absolutely.

HOST 1: You're listening to After Hours on KPFT, and we'll be back in just a little bit with This Way Out. Immediately following that, we're going to be talking to Romanovsky and Phillips. So stay with us.

This is After Hours on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. Oh, Mom and Dad, I'm gay. Well, my folks found out the hard way. Ha!

We'll tell you about that some time. We certainly enjoyed having [INAUDIBLE] and Paula and David with Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays here this morning. Wasn't that nice?

HOST 6: Yeah, that was nice. I enjoyed listening to them.

HOST 1: Kay coming in now to give you the bulletin board in just a minute. It's about one minute until 2 o'clock, and we're trying to get our proverbial stuff together and get organized, and Kay will be back with the bulletin board in just a second after we listen to Tracy Chapman. We're going to be listening to This Way Out this morning, followed by a complete look at Ron Romanovsky and Paul Phillips' career. So you need to stay with this. It's going to be-- what's so funny?

HOST 6: I want pictures.

HOST 1: You know, we need to sit down and work on that Lynn Lavner stuff too, baby.

HOST 6: Yeah.

HOST 1: You did that up in St. Louis.

HOST 6: Yeah.

HOST 1: Did they get to meet Mike Ford, Ron and Paul? Do you know?

HOST 6: Oh yeah. Fact is, one-- I think it was Ron who sat and hung out with Mike. I mean, they sat up to like 5 o'clock in the morning talking to them.

HOST 1: Because one of them asked me what he said or what he had told him. I was wondering if there was any deep, dark secrets.

HOST 6: I don't know if there's any dirt that we need to find out about, but I will--

HOST 1: Well, if there is, we will find out.

HOST 6: Oh yeah.

HOST 1: Kay's here, and she'll have the bulletin [INAUDIBLE]. What are you going to have for us?

HOST 6: Oh, lots of interesting stuff.

HOST 1: The bulletin board for us in just a second right after this from Tracy-- I can't talk. It's 2 o'clock in the morning. It's a beautiful Sunday, and you're listening to After Hours on KPFT what?

HOST 6: I was going to say. You've been doing this for years. It's occasionally all right to let your tongue just sort of go out of gear.

HOST 1: It did. It certainly did. We'll be back with Kay and the bulletin board and This Way Out with Greg Gordon and Lucia Chappelle and Ron Romanovsky and Paul Phillips all coming up right here on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM After Hours, radio celebrating life from the heart of the Montrose.

HOST 6: Yeah.

HOST 1: We're here and we're queer, baby. This is from the new Tracy Chapman album "Crossroads." It's called Freedom Now. Tracy Chapman-- let us all be free, baby. Now, Mary.

HOST 7: [INAUDIBLE] what? I'm Mary.

HOST 1: Oh, hush.

HOST 7: What?

HOST 1: Oh, I'm just kidding. I didn't mean to-- I listened to last week's show. Was it last week or the week before?

HOST 7: Was I screaming a lot?

HOST 1: No, I was giving you a real hard time about Stanley.

HOST 6: Oh.

HOST 1: I mean, you were on this kick about I've got a husband. Na na na na na. And he's--

HOST 7: Well, I say that every week. I've got a husband.

HOST 1: Yeah, I know. But That was just-- see, you try to be nice, and what do you get?

HOST 6: [INAUDIBLE] it's a useless thing with this one. I love--

HOST 1: Yeah, well, you know. I love Stanley, but you know, it is a part time situation. So what's the point?

GLINDA: It's all right. You may all come out.

HOST 1: I can do this show without even talking to you.

HOST 7: Well!

HOST 6: Will you talk to me even though I'm a friend of his?

HOST 1: Yes.

HOST 6: OK.

HOST 1: In fact, we're going to talk to you here in just a second. You're going to do the bulletin board?

HOST 6: I'm going to do the bulletin board.

HOST 1: OK, Kay's here with the community bulletin board coming up in just a second. I'm going to let you listen to this while I change a tape, and--

HOST 6: Oh, boy.

HOST 1: You're live, though, right?

HOST 6: I'm alive and--

HOST 1: Yep.