

PFLAG Madison

Voice-Mail: 608-848-2333

Email: pflagmadison@yahoo.com

Website: <http://www.pflag-madison.org>

Meeting Place:

Friends Meeting House, 1704 Roberts Court, Madison, WI

Meeting: 2:00 to 4:00 PM, 3rd Sunday of the month, Sept. to May

National PFLAG Website: <http://www.pflag.org>



**Parents, Families, Friends and Allies United with LGBTQ
People to move equality forward**

Support

Education

Advocacy

President: Lora Schmid-Dolan

President-Elect: Susie Murray

Past President: Jeanne Williams

Treasurer: Susie Murray

Board Members: Joanne Lee, Sandy Feria, Paul Wertsch, Nancy Jones, Ken Jones and Joann Elder

NEXT MEETING December 17

MMSD GSAFE student reps and annual holiday party.

November Meeting Summary - Lora Schmid-Dolan

Ex-military Darla Lannert and Colonel (Retired) Sheri Swokowski were the guest speakers for November's meeting.

Darla is one of nine children who grew up in a Christian home. Her father discovered her trying on her sister's clothing four times during her childhood but never said anything to her. They did not speak about it for 33 years. Darla came out to her father 4 years ago when he was 93 and he has been supportive. Darla was married and has three children and four grandchildren. They also are supportive of her, stating "It doesn't matter, we still love you."

Darla transitioned in 2010 and her spouse at the time was very supportive and understood that if she did not transition she would die. She has become an advocate for the transgender community. She is a past board member of Outreach and is currently involved with a program called Building New Beginnings that assist young transgender people get off the streets by providing emergency housing for individuals over the age of eighteen.

Sheri retired from the National Guard in 2004 and at the time of her retirement she was the most senior out person in the military. Wanting to continue to serve her country she joined the US Army Management School. While in Washington, DC, she lived authentically for the first time when not at the school. She was fired in 2007 after returning from six weeks off to begin her transition. Four months later she was hired by the Pentagon as an analyst. Her most recent employment was as the director of the US Forest Service—Rocky Mountain region. She left this post in 2013 and returned to Madison.

Sheri has served on the boards of the ACLU of Wisconsin and FAIR Wisconsin. She marched in the Pentagon PRIDE parade three years ago. She continues her advocacy work through the National Center for Transgender Equality.

Although the decision to transition was the most difficult one in her life she states the last 12-14 years have been the most happy. She lives by the motto “Be the best person for yourself before being the best person for others.”

PFLAG at Monona United Methodist Church - Lora Schmid-Dolan

Casey Garhart and Lora Schmid-Dolan were guest speakers at the November 19th sermon of the Monona United Methodist Church. The Monona UMC is a Reconciling Congregation. After the sermon we spoke with church members during their coffee hour. We received many positive and warm thanks for attending the service. It was a great opportunity to share what Madison PFLAG does for the LGBTQ+ community.

PFLAG at First Congregational United Church of Christ - Lora Schmid-Dolan

On Wednesday, November 29, Susie Murray and Lora Schmid-Dolan along with Michele Ponder of Janesville and Reverend Eldonna Hazen of First Congregational United Church of Christ were guests on the Queery show on local community radio station WORT 89.9 FM. We discussed how to be a supportive parent to a child that is coming out. Queery host Zachary Johnson asked several thoughtful questions and we hope the answers we provided will be helpful to both those individuals and their families who are struggling with the coming out process.

In Memoriam

As the year draws to a close let us pause to remember once again two of the friends that we lost this year, Frank Roub and Kay Heggstad.



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PLEASE NOTE: If you are viewing the printed version of this newsletter, check the on-line version at <http://www.pflag-madison.org/newsletters/2017/Dec17NL.pdf> to easily follow the links that are mentioned in the news items.

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From home to home, and heart to heart,
from one place to another.
The warmth and joy of Christmas,
brings us closer to each other.

Emily Matthews