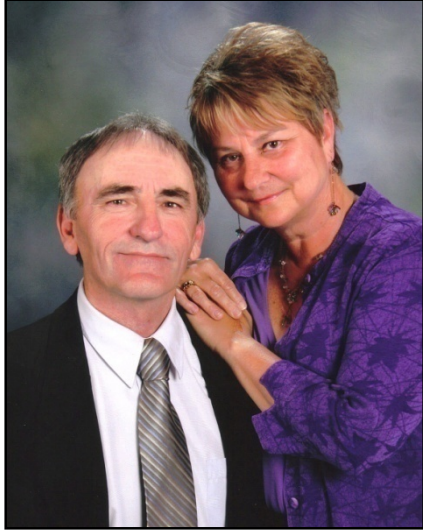




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About Paul and Hjordy Wagner

Authors of *Ready or Not...They're Gay*



Both born and raised in Minnesota, Paul and Hjordy Wagner first met during college on Valentine's Day in 1970. Wed only a few years later, they settled in Eau Claire, Wis., and the two have been married for more than 35 years.

Paul and Hjordy have what many consider the typical all-American family life: careers in education, two kids, a house with a two car garage and a family dog. But when their eldest son, Brad, came out to them as gay at age 19, their lives—and the life they had envisioned for their son—was changed. And when their younger son, Andrew, came out to them five years later, they were certain life as they knew it would never be the same.

A religious, Midwestern family, the news that Brad and Andrew were gay came as a surprise to Paul and Hjordy. The boys' childhood and adolescence was a mixture of school, sports, church

and friends, and each briefly had a girlfriend at one time.

When Brad came out, they spent a sleepless night both wrestling with their own feelings and beliefs, and worrying about his future and the kinds of harassment he might face living as an openly gay man. However, Brad quickly became their guide on their journey to acceptance, and they also found comfort in discussing their spiritual questions with a minister. When Andrew came out years later, it was still a surprise, but the Wagners embrace their sons' lifestyles and continue to love them unconditionally today.

Though the Wagners quickly accepted their sons' sexuality, they realize that many young people do not share the same positive experience after coming out to friends and family.

"Our two sons encouraged us to tell our story to help others," say Paul and Hjordy. "The four of us had all encountered stories of young people who were abandoned by their families, and we felt our experience could offer hope and encouragement."

In their new book, *Ready or Not...They're Gay* (Synergy Books, May 2009, 978-0-9815462-8-5, \$14.95), the Wagners share their personal story in the hopes of helping other families who find themselves in a similar situation, or even other young gay people who are considering coming out to their friends and family. *Ready or Not...They're Gay* takes you on their journey of being the parents of two gay sons, offering reflection, insight and helpful advice for families, schools, and workplaces. The book also includes personal accounts from Brad, Andrew, their grandmother and even their minister, on the coming out experience.

Paul and Hjordy split their time between Eau Claire and Andrew's new hometown of Las Vegas, Nevada. Hjordy received her undergraduate degree in library/media and speech from Winona State University and a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire. Paul received his undergraduate degree in physical education and health at Winona State University and an elementary teaching degree and master's degree from the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire. Both are retired from their careers in education, and remain active in their community and in state associations. Visit www.readyornotstories.com for additional information.

To receive a review copy of *Ready or Not...They're Gay*, or to schedule an interview with the Wagners, please contact Amy Currie at (512) 478-2028 ext. 211 or acurrie@phenixpublicity.com.