President’s Column

“All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without the due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” (Section 1, 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States)

By the time this month’s newsletter is published the United States Supreme Court will have heard the arguments put forth by attorneys representing same-sex couples who live within the jurisdiction of the 6th Circuit Court, an entity that bucked the trend by upholding the ban on same-sex marriage. By the time the Chicago Pride Parade kicks off on June 28, we should know whether or not those LGBT people whom we love will be accorded the same rights and privileges under the law that our non-LGBT loved ones enjoy – the right to have their relationships acknowledged as being as legitimate and legal as ours.

Speaking of the Pride Parade, let’s focus for a moment on our parade entry. Last year we had an actual float in place of the closed-in trolley to transport PFLAG folk who cannot walk the entire parade route. Ridership on the trolley had declined to the point where we could no longer justify spending $1000 to transport a handful of people. The float, designed and executed by council member Carolann Dunn, can safely seat 16/17 people. Because it’s completely open and beautifully decorated, a seat on the trolley is much in demand.

Therefore we need to establish a policy for ridership. Priority will be given to paid PFLAG members who cannot physically walk the entire parade route. Chapter leaders will soon have all the particulars, which will then be passed along to chapter members.

If you haven’t visited www.pflagillinois.org lately, please stop by soon and admire the colorful changes brought about by our new web guru, Bonnie Clemens. Bonnie has been in transition (no, not that kind) as Tony Dornacher, our devoted webmaster, treasurer, membership chair, and a whole lot more, slowly turns over the tasks he’s so faithfully executed for years as he prepares to marry the love of his life and move to Seattle later this year.

In other news, a new PFLAG chapter is being established in Tinley Park. Other inquiries have come from Evanston and Elgin. Over the last several years, three of our chapters have moved from active to inactive status: Kankakee, Joliet, and Palatine. Fortunately, each of those chapter leaders has agreed to remain, as points of contact should there be folks making inquiry of PFLAG.

Well, that’s it for this month. Let’s keep our collective fingers crossed and our minds positively focused that the Supreme Court will decide in our favor, that the justices will see the importance of being on the right side of history.

Toni
PFLAG is a non-profit, tax-exempt, all volunteer, local community-based organization of parents, relatives and friends of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons. PFLAG is not affiliated with any ethnic, religious, economic or political group.

OPEN DOORS is a publication of the Northern Illinois PFLAG chapters. Articles that appear do not necessarily reflect the opinions of PFLAG, its Board of Directors or members. We reserve the right to edit any submissions. Priority is given to original work by the membership.

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www.pflagillinois.org
www.pflag.org

Looking to get involved?
Look what’s coming up!

WE ARE THE CHANGE
2015 PFLAG National Convention
October 16-18, 2015  Nashville, TN

For more info, visit http://community.pflag.org/2015convention

WE’RE STILL HERE

CGMC Celebrates Stephen Sondheim At 85

Saturday May 16, 2015 – 8 p.m.
North Shore Center
9501 Skokie Boulevard
Skokie, IL 60077
(847) 673-6300

North Shore Show tix

Saturday May 23, 2015 – 8 p.m.
Harris Theater
205 E Randolph St
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 334-7777

Harris Theater tix

Sunday May 24, 2015 – 3 p.m.
Wentz Concert Hall
171 E Chicago Ave
Naperville, IL 60540
(630) 637-7469

Wentz Hall tix
HINSDALE CHAPTER
By Barb Medley

Our April meeting was held on Easter Sunday, as a result, we were a very small group. We watched the movie, “Daddy and Papa,” about gay fathers and their day-to-day challenges. It was excellent, and featured men, some married or living with their partner, some single, who are trying to adopt children. As with straight parent couples, some are successful in doing so; some are not. Their stories are very heartwarming. I highly recommend the movie. It’s about an hour in length.

Our May speaker is Mike Feinerman, co-executive director of the Center for Advancing Domestic Peace. He’ll talk about domestic violence in the LGBT community.

OAK PARK CHAPTER
By Nancy Johnson

Our monthly meeting took place on April 26. Our speaker was David Fischer from Health & Medicine Policy Research Group speaking about the LGBT book and movie drive for juvenile locked facilities. We were impressed by the work being done on behalf of LGBT youth in Illinois jails and prisons. You can find a wish list on Amazon.com by searching on dfischer@hmprg.org on the wish list link. If you do purchase on Amazon, don’t forget to purchase via Amazon Smile in order to donate to PFLAG Northern Illinois Council. You can benefit 2 organizations with the same purchase!

Our biggest news is that Kate Kroker had knee surgery on April 23. She is doing great. Her rehab is going well, and she expects to be transferred to Oak Park Hospital for inpatient rehab.

DUPAGE CHAPTER
By John Hickey

We had a wonderful meeting in April. Our speakers were Lorry Luscri and Mandi Evanson, from the Veteran’s Administration. We viewed Camouflage Closet and had a discussion of some of the programs they have including their Do Ask, Do Tell Program in October. We followed the program with powerful discussions and sharing.

Below are some of the announcements and upcoming plans from the meeting.

Announcements:
Local Events and Outreach:
Community/Work/School/Religious

The 750 Club provides housing and other support for LGBTQ homeless youth. You can donate directly to the 750 club via their website. This may be more convenient for you for tax purposes. Please enter PFLAG as “Team Captain” so that the organization knows how much I received from the extended PFLAG family.

We will have a follow-up planning meeting at Zion Lutheran Church in Tinley Park on May 24th at 2 pm regarding starting a new PFLAG chapter in the SW suburbs.

Ron and Bernie have had great success in opening communications with public and private schools. Great job and you are great ambassadors for PFLAG!

St. Thomas Catholic Church in Naperville has posted information about PFLAG Aurora and DuPage in their bulletin. How cool is that!!

Upcoming Events:

We have been asked to host a PFLAG Panel discussion at Richard’s HS in Oak Lawn in early May.

Ron and Bernie will be visiting Glenbard South in April.

We will be hosting a table at the “Big Gay Gathering” at Elmhurst College- currently planned for May 1. Elmhurst College welcomes HS students from GSAs throughout the area.

PFLAG Hosts a Mother’s Day (May 10) community event
and fundraiser at Sidetracks in Chicago. “Hugs and Kisses” from mom. We have filled the slots available for our shift. Thanks to Sandra for coordinating and all those participating!!

We will be hosting another movie night on May 29th at 6pm we will be viewing the film Milk, about the history of Harvey Milk. We will also be providing a potato bar dinner. Please email JTHickey1@gmail.com to participate.

June 20 there will be another Plainfield Community Resource Fair. Please email me if you are interested in helping host the table.

June 28 is the Chicago Pride Parade. 

July 4 is the Wheaton Independence Day Parade. Please mark your calendars.

Thank you to Don Donahue for representing PFLAG on the Community Network of Professionals Supporting LGBTQ Youth.

Special Thanks to Bonnie who is now the NIC web master. Check out her awesome work at http://www.pflagillinois.org/

Special thanks to Don for agreeing to be the council membership chair and JoAnn for assisting on the committee. Thanks folks!

Don’t miss our May 17 meeting…. We will be viewing a Ted Talk with Sam Killerman… recorded at UIC in 2013: Understanding the complexities of gender.

MCHENRY CHAPTER
By Toni Weaver

In April we welcomed PFLAG Chicago Metro leader Meg Valentini to speak about how she became involved with the annual AIDS ride. Long before her son came out, Meg, as a registered nurse, was involved in the care of HIV+ people and participated in TPAN, the Test Positive Awareness Network. She’s passionate about her involvement with the ride, which she and her spouse, Fred, do in the name of PFLAG – Team PFLAG. If you wish to sponsor the two of them, please e-mail her at megmop@yahoo.com). PS: Consider inviting Meg to speak at your PFLAG meeting; she’s great!

Dr. Bonnie Estensen will be speaking to our chapter on the topic of bisexuality at the May 12 meeting. Too often, bisexuality is seen as an intermediate step in the coming-out process rather than as the bona fide orientation that it is.

We continue to make inroads with local GSAs as we offer to purchase Pride flags for each club that wants one. So far we’ve placed flags at Crystal Lake Central, Prairie Ridge, Cary-Grove, and Grant High Schools. The flags are accompanied by copious resources: PFLAG booklets, Blue Books, NI council tri-folds, lists of good websites, and spools of rainbow ribbon for craft projects. In addition, we’ve offered to help fund GSA advisers so that they can attend LGBT-related trainings, and we’ll continue to do this until our funds run out.

Now for the really exciting news! While the McHenry PTI group is meeting, a youth group dubbed TAG (teens activity group) is also meeting. The PTI parents showed so much gratitude to have a place to bring their trans/gender fluid/gender questioning/gender queer children that we knew we were on to something special. Raina Hodgson who belongs to both McHenry PFLAG and McHenry PTI convened the first meeting on April 22. We have high hopes for its success!

PTI McHenry
By Marya Flynn

Happy Spring!

Big News: PFLAG TAG

Our April PTI meeting was especially wonderful for two reasons. First because we continue to learn and grow as we meet new parents who share their experiences with us.

And second because Toni and Raina have spear headed a new group for TWEENS AND TEENS and YOUNG adults. PFLAG TAG meets at the same time and place as our regular P.T.I. meeting but in the YOUTH ROOM. I am very excited because I believe it will help fill a void.

PFLAG TAG: Youth Activity Group

WHERE:
Tree of Life UU Congregation - Youth Room
5603 Bull Valley Road , McHenry, IL 60050

WHEN:
4th Wednesday of each month 7:00 - 9:00pm.
WHY:
Because we believe that all LGBTQ youth need and deserve a safe place to gather and meet. Games, snacks, and activities are provided.

ALSO coming on MAY 16th we will have an EXTRA meeting! WE are having a SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER. Natalie is a transgender woman who will share with us her story of making a successful TRANSITION all while working in a male-dominated career in central Wisconsin. She joined us once before and everyone appreciated her positive energy and thoughtful insights into the transgender experience.

And our next regular meeting, along with PFLAG TAG(!), will be on May 27th at 7:00pm. 5603 Bull Valley Road McHenry, IL 60050. flynnmb12@gmail.com

Several PFLAGers attended

The Night of Noise

The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance ended the Day of Silence with the 14th annual Night of Noise on April 17 at the Thompson Center.

The Day of Silence is a day at school when students, teachers, school administrators and other supporters across the country protest with silence to bring awareness of the effects of LGBTQA bullying.

The Alliance Youth Committee organized the loud event and invited GSAs across Illinois. The activist celebration was open to the public and about 200 people gathered in the open outdoor space to turn up the Night of Noise volume.
THE LEGACY PROJECT PRESENTS

CINEMA Q V FILM SERIES
FREE!! FREE!! FREE!!

Featuring:

Thursday, May 7
6:30p | Chicago Cultural Center
I Am Divine (2013): Jeffrey Schwarz's dishy, entertaining documentary portrait of Legacy Project Nominee Harris Glenn Milstead aka Divine, the 300 pound drag-queen, infamous star of Pink Flamingos, Female Trouble and Hairspray, who improbably traveled from underground film superfan to mainstream sensation. Filled to the brim with surprising insights and hilarious clips, this one is not to be missed!

Thursday, May 14
6:30p | Chicago Cultural Center
Violette (2013): The tumultuous personal life and work of bisexual French feminist writer Violette Leduc - who counted Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Jean Genet, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Jean Cocteau as friends and contemporaries - is recounted in writer-director Marin Provost's critically lauded biopic. The screening is co-sponsored by the Cultural Service at the Consulate-General of France in Chicago.

Thursday, May 21
6:30p | Chicago Cultural Center
Beautiful Boxer (2003): The astonishing TRUE story of transgender female Paninya Charoenplot, better known as Nong Toom, the boy who fought like a man in the male-dominated sport of kickboxing in order to become a woman. Asanee Suwan gives a multi-faceted performance in Ekachai Eukrongtham's LGBT film festival sensation. This screening is co-sponsored by the Royal Thai Consulate-General for Chicago.

Thursday, May 28
6:30p | Chicago Cultural Center
Death in Venice (1971): Legendary Italian director (and Legacy Project Nominee) Luchino Visconti's masterpiece is a lush, baroque adaptation of Thomas Mann's novella about a quiet, middle-aged composer and his deep infatuation with an angelic looking teenage boy he encounters while vacationing in early 20th century France. This screening is co-sponsored by the Italian Cultural Institute of Chicago.

Also

PTI Chicago has a new Facebook page. Please check it out and LIKE it: PTI Chicago Facebook

To stay updated on what is going on with PFLAG National, check out these links...

Stay current with PFLAG National: PFLAG national

Follow PFLAG national on Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/pflag

See what PFLAG National is tweeting about: http://twitter.com/#!/PFLAG

Check out recent posts on PFLAG National's blog: http://blog.pflag.org/

Watch PFLAG national on their YouTube channel: http://www.youtube.com/user/pflagnational

Think Spring
OPEN DOORS – The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois PFLAG Chapters

PFLAG Aurora/Fox Valley
Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2 pm
New England Congregational Church
406 W Galena Blvd, Aurora 60506
pflagaurorafoxvalley@pflagillinois.com

PFLAG Metro Chicago
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
Center on Halsted (Senior Room)
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
pflagchicagometro@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Deerfield
Meetings held 2nd Thursday – 7:15 pm
Congregation BJBE
1201 Lake Cook Rd, Deerfield 60015
pflagdeerfield@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG DeKalb County
Meetings held LAST Tuesday – 7 pm
158 N 4th St
DeKalb, IL 60115
pflagdekalbcountry@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG DuPage
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
St Paul Lutheran Church
515 S Wheaton Ave, Wheaton 60187
pflagdupage@yahoo.com
www.pflagdupage.org

Entre Familia: PFLAG En Espanol
Meetings typically held 2nd Sunday – 1:30 pm
Please contact us to confirm date, time and location
pflagenespanol@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Hinsdale
Meetings held 1st Sunday – 2 pm
Unitarian Church Hinsdale
11 W Maple, Hinsdale 60521
pflaghinsdale@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Joliet
Contact Lea Anne Stoughton
lastoughton@gmail.com
815-793-5138

PFLAG Kankakee
Contact Barbara Lohrbach
815-932-2845

PFLAG McHenry
Meetings held 2nd Tuesday – 7 pm
Tree of Life Unitarian Church
5603 W Bull Valley Rd
McHenry 60050
pflagwoodstockmchenry@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Oak Park
Meetings held 4th Sunday – 3 pm
First United Church
848 Lake St, Oak Park 60304
pflagoakpark@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Palatine
Contact Deirdre O’Connell
herself68@yahoo.com

Parents of Transgender (Chicago)
Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday – 7 pm
Center on Halsted
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
parentsoftransgender@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (McHenry)
Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday – 7 p.m.
(not in December)
Tree of Life Unitarian Church
5603 W Bull Valley Rd, McHenry 60050
flynnmb12@gmail.com
marygenzler@hotmail.com

Please join us for any chapter meeting.
If you are not comfortable meeting in a large group, arrangements can be made to meet one-on-one.
Contact any one of our chapters for more information.