



OPEN DOORS

The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois PFLAG Chapters

President's Column

Believing versus Acting

Perhaps in anticipation of a favorable ruling by the Supreme Court that would allow same-sex couples to marry, The "First Amendment Defense Act" (H.R. 2802) was introduced in the The bill reads, in part "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Federal Government shall not take any discriminatory action against a person, wholly or partially on the basis that such person believes or acts (emphasis mine) in accordance with a religious belief or moral conviction that marriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one woman, or that sexual relations are properly reserved to such a marriage."

I'm so angry I could spit. This bill, if passed, would prevent repercussions to the very people who have been discriminating against our loved ones for so long. Why should my son suffer an affront to his dignity as a person, as a human being, from a person claiming a "religious objection" when he comes to the county clerk's office to obtain a marriage license and is refused? People are free to believe anything they please, but they are not free to act upon their belief when fulfilling the duties in the public sphere where their salaries are being paid by taxpayer dollars. They must act in accordance with the law regardless of what they believe. There should be repercussions because that clerk is not fulfilling the duties required of him/her by law.

Furthermore, this bill, if passed, would prevent the Federal government from withholding grants to religious institutions that object to same-sex marriage. In other words, these institutions want to have their cake and eat it, too. They're saying, in essence, give us Federal money but let us abide by our own rules, believing and acting as we deem fit.

This is unacceptable. The separation of church and state comes into play here. Let the churches fund their own programs if they feel so strongly about this issue. Raise the money from the people in the pews. Let them support their own programs and thus free themselves from the need for government funding.

We must not be silent as friends and family – are religious war. We've fought victory. We mustn't let it be making it legal for people continue the discrimination

Toni Weaver



our LGBT loved ones – treated as mere pawns in a long and hard for this slowly whittled away by to ACT in a way that would against those we love.

Northern Illinois Council News

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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Seventeen folks representing McHenry, McHenry PTI, Chicago PTI, Hinsdale, Oak Park, Deerfield, Aurora/Fox Valley, DuPage, and Equality Illinois gathered on July 18 for our quarterly council meeting.

Mike Ziri (Eqll) explained three bills currently sitting on Governor Rauner's desk awaiting his signature. They are HB 217 (the Youth Mental Health Protection Act which would outlaw conversion therapy), HB 3552 which pertains to the disposition of one's remains and the requirement that a person's indicated gender identity be listed on the legal documents pertain to one's death, and HB 3930 which amends the Illinois Hate Crime Statute to include gender identity. Everyone is encouraged to contact the governor's office asking for his support for these bills.

Mike also spoke about cuts to the social services budget as it pertains to people who have HIV/AIDS and are dependent upon state aid to cover their medication expenses. The problem arises because of the way the anti-retroviral drugs act. Resistance to a drug occurs rapidly when a person misses even a single dose. If this happens repeatedly, a person may run out of options for drug therapy.

Jim Levie (Deerfield) was unanimously voted into the office of treasurer, stepping into the shoes of Tony Dornacher who has served in that capacity 2010. Tony and his husband to be will be relocating to Seattle sometime in early 2016. Tony will be working with Jim during the transition process.

Don Donahue (DuPage) was introduced as the new membership chair, another post previously held by Tony D.

Memorial contributions honoring the memory of past council presidents John Larson and Barbara Schon-Lundberg have been sitting in the council's treasury since their passing. Because the money was not enough to form a sustaining scholarship fund, the council voted to contribute the funds to the 750 Club, an endeavor begun by Tracy Baim (Windy City Times) to house homeless LGBT youth.

New chapters are forming or are in the process of forming, and additional inquiries are being received. There's a new Downers Grove chapter, fully affiliated with National but not with council. Tinley Park has been exploring the feasibility of forming a chapter, and inquiries have come from Peoria, Elgin, and Evanston.

The heart of every council meeting centers on what's happening in our chapters. Council meetings provide the opportunity for chapter leaders to trade ideas and use one another as sounding boards for improving our chapters. It's always the best part of the day!

Thanks to Kate and Phil Kroker, Nancy Johnson, and Sylvia Menninga for hosting the meeting.

The next council meeting will be held in Oak Park on October 24.

Toni

What's Happening in Our Chapters?

HINSDALE CHAPTER

By Barb Medley

Our July speaker was Dawn Marie Galterie from One Wheaton, a community of LGBTQ students and alumni allies from Wheaton College. The group is four years old and rose following a chapel speaker series voicing only one view of sexual and gender identity issues. The group composed and distributed a letter during the speaker series, which followed the theme of the "It Gets Better" support initiative. (You can view the letter and learn more from their website, www.onewheaton.com.) Over 1,000 alumnae have now signed this open Letter. They offer supportive resources on their website, have contact information for anyone who needs someone to talk to, and tell their stories. This group demonstrates through their personal experiences that there is life after Wheaton. They encourage students who need support that following their college years, their lives are just beginning and can be fulfilling, whole and filled with love.



DUPAGE CHAPTER

By John Hickey

I hope you are enjoying the summer. In addition to the fabulous time we all had at the Chicago Pride Parade, PFLAG DuPage participated in the Wheaton 4th of July Parade with over 30 participating. It was a beautiful day and it is so important for us to be visible as an integral part of the local community. This was our 11th time marching in a Wheaton parade and our first year with music to help lift spirits and celebrate freedom and equality. Here is a link to a video of our parade experience:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/hhaz6twkc1d4umq/AAC7uDTRPP5Qw4_j38sF__Lfa?dl=0

Jamil Khoury, Artistic Director of Silk Road Rising, provided our July program. Silk Road Rising creates live theatre and online videos that tell stories through primarily Asian American and Middle Eastern American lenses. In representing communities that intersect and

overlap, they advance a polycultural worldview.

Jamil talked about Silk Road Rising and his latest play, Mosque Alert which tells the story of two suburban American families living in Naperville, IL—one Christian, the other Muslim—who find their lives torn apart by a proposal to build a new mosque in their community.



We viewed a short video entitled The Imam & The Homosexual (15 min, 50 sec). "The Imam and The Homosexual" probes the "strange bedfellows" political alliance between Imam Mustafa Khan (played by Khurram Mozaffar), spiritual leader of a besieged Naperville, IL mosque, and Carl Baker (played by Nicholas Cimino), the gay son of the imam's chief nemesis. As Imam Mustafa struggles to reconcile his support for civil rights with his religious and cultural objections to homosexuality, Carl imagines the Muslim and LGBT communities uniting against their common enemies.

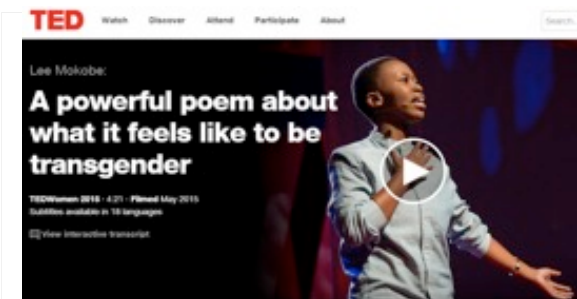
Following the video, Jamil facilitated a discussion with the group. The video is rich and layered with conflict and topics for discussion, including exploring the true meaning of allies.

The arts provide an interesting means of facilitating exploration and discussion of social justice issues. **Check out the Silk Road Rising website at: <http://www.silkroadrising.org/>** Also, be sure to watch the video clip we viewed entitled Imam and the Homosexual. <http://www.silkroadrising.org/video-plays/mosque-alert/the-imam-the-homosexual>

I believe empathy is an important element to being an authentic ally. Empathy opens us up to understanding. This month, I want to share a link that I recently saw on TED. It is

a powerful poem about what it feels like to be transgender.

http://www.ted.com/talks/lee_mokobe_a_powerful_poem_about_what_it_feels_like_to_be_transgender?utm_source=newsletter_daily&utm_campaign=daily&utm_medium=email&utm_content=button_2015-06-12



Please consider joining us for our next meeting on Aug 16- when Owen Daniel McCarter esquire from the [Illinois Safe School Alliance](#) (ISSA) joins us to talk about **transgender inclusion**.

ISSA is a great organization providing support to our youth through their work with school Gay Straight Alliance groups (GSA's) throughout the state.



MCHENRY CHAPTER

By Toni Weaver

PFLAG McHenry members marched in the July Crystal Lake Parade for the 9th year in a row. The tradition of marching in Crystal Lake was the brainchild of Barbara Marian, long-time chapter member. In 2006 the rowing event of the Gay Games was held in Crystal Lake despite the loud protests of a relatively small group of people. Barbara had the idea of making the face of the LGBT community and its allies (PFLAG) very visible in the

community and entered us for the first time in the 2007 parade. Tracy Baim (Windy City Times) personally covered the event and reported on it with the headline "Crystal Lake – One Year Later."

Three years ago Barbara coordinated our participation in the Milk Days Parade in Harvard, a small farming community very near the Wisconsin border in NW McHenry County, a bastion of conservatism. Because of the large Hispanic population in Harvard, Barbara had PFLAG banners made up in both English and Spanish. She played, too, to the traditionally Roman Catholic Hispanics, carrying English and Spanish banners for Fortunate Families, a support network for Catholic parents of LGBT individuals.

With her loving and faithful spouse Jerry working tirelessly by her side, Barbara has coordinated our parade outreach for nine years, but now they are hanging up their banners and putting away their bubbles with the hope that a new, younger generation of PFLAGers will pick up the baton and carry it forward.

We are indebted to Barbara and Jerry, their nephew Damian and his husband Johnny, and Joan and Wayne Brown for their dedication and service to PFLAG McHenry and indeed, to all LGBT persons in McHenry County.



OAK PARK CHAPTER

By Nancy Johnson

Several of us marched in the Oak Park 4th of July Parade. It was a lovely day for a parade. We helped Oak Park Lesbian and Gay Association give out rainbow lollipops.

We didn't have a speaker for July, so we had a preview screening of "The Year We Thought About Love." (See "New Films of Interest.") Everyone liked it, and we are looking forward to having a free public screening of it on October 11 at the Oak Park Public Library. We did have an unexpected PFLAGer from the chapter in Omaha, Nebraska. He told us some about various LGBT activities and events there. It sounds like a good city for LGBT people. They have a city ordinance protecting LGBT rights.

For our August 23 meeting we are planning a potluck

meeting instead of having our Fifth Sunday Potluck on the 30th. The September 5 is our annual bake sale at the Oak Park Farmers Market.



PTI CHICAGO CHAPTER

By Arlene Collins

I would like to thank all our families and friends for being such loyal Pride Parade marchers. Our purple "Proud Parents" shirts and purple Banner stood out and we all enjoyed the day immensely. As soon as I have more photos I will get them into Open Doors.

Owen Daniel McCarter was our guest speaker for July. He is the Policy Director for Illinois Safe Schools Alliance. Owen spoke of the Model Policy he is working toward for Illinois schools K -12. In conjunction with Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, PTI is proud to announce that a group of parents in our group are also working to develop a program as well that is Gender Inclusive for all Transgender/Gender Non-Conforming students in Illinois. As many of you know, we have a growing number of pre-pubescent children who identify as TGNC. Perseverance in this matter is of utmost importance to all incoming students and those presently in the school system. We will keep you posted on any and all news in this area.

Jae Puckett is with Northwestern University's IMPACT LGBT Health and Development Program (<http://www.impactprogram.org/>). Last year, when the Impact Program was getting underway, Jae was guest speaker at a PTI meeting. At the time the goal was to bring together a community advisory board of transgender men and women (ages 16

and up).The purpose was to study how stigma impacts the trans community.

On Thurs., August 13th Jae will return and share with us the responses that participants provided that were relevant to their families. These cut across barriers that they encountered from their families, to receiving gender affirming care (like starting hormone replacement therapy) and stressors related to being trans or gender nonconforming (like being afraid to come out or having an unsupportive family). Hope you can all attend this very informative evening.

I would also like to share PTI's experience when we were requested to speak to the Psyche staff at Good Samaritan Hospital in June. The department was caring for more and more trans people and wanted to be sure they were being sensitive to their needs. I was accompanied by Michelle Emerick of Howard Brown Center and Dan Frett also a therapist from Guided Path Psychological Services in Palatine. In addition Josie, a friend of the LGBT community who is trans also agreed to be on our Panel addressing the staff. The panel spoke of issues including the use of proper pronouns, organizations that are helpful to the trans community and their families and mainly treating them with respect. Josie was a great inspiration and many people had many questions for her. We went over Basic Trans 101, which they were very grateful for. It was a great turnout and we have been invited to return. In addition to Support and Advocacy, Education is paramount in our goals. We need to educate as many people as we can.



PFLAG DEKALB

NEW LOCATION

Our new meeting place is:

Federated Church of Sycamore
612 W. State St.
Sycamore, IL 60178

Last Tuesday of each month @ 7p.m.



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

Stay current with PFLAG National: [PFLAG national](http://www.pflag.org/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>

ALSO

PTI Chicago has a new Facebook page. Please check it out and LIKE it: [PTI Chicago Facebook](#)

Support the PFLAG Council of Northern IL when you shop on Amazon: <http://www.smile.amazon.com>.

RESOURCES

BOOK SUGGESTIONS

- **Walking the Bridgeless Canyon** by Kathy Baldock – repairing the breach between the Church and the LGBT community
- **On the Couch with Dr. Angello** by Dr. Michele Angello – a guide to raising and supporting transgender youth
- **God and the Gay Christian** by Matthew Vines – the biblical case in support of same-sex relationships

LGBTQ MOVIES YOU NEED TO SEE

1. **Out in the Silence** Available at the Oak Park Public Library and some others. We got our (free) copy from PFLAG National along with permission for any public free screening. (Coming out in a small town featuring pair of lesbians, and a gay teenager.)
2. **Dangerous Living** Available at the Oak Park Public Library and some others. (Dangerous to be gay in some other countries)
3. **Screaming Queens** Available at the Oak Park Public Library. (The pre-Stonewall riot in the Tenderloin of San Francisco by trans women and male prostitutes.)
4. **Anyone and Everyone** Available at the Oak Park Public Library. I got a free copy of this at a PFLAG National Convention. The film-maker emailed me that anyone can show it to any audience because she wants it to be seen by everyone. (Parents from a variety of cultures, religions, races speak about their LGBT children.)
5. **Gen Silent** Not at the public library. Go to the website to see how to get a copy to show. http://stumaddux.com/GEN_SILENT.html (About older LGBT people including a transwoman dying of lung cancer.)
6. **Bullied** Available from the Blue Island and Chicago Heights Public Libraries. I got our copy from the Southern Poverty Law Center. <http://www.splcenter.org/?ref=logo> Click on "Teaching Tolerance." (Gay teen who was bullied right out of his home and town and his school.)
7. **Getting Out** Not available in the U.S. It was made in Uganda, and can only be played on a computer. (Gays, lesbians and trans people trying to escape the toxic living conditions in their home countries; some escape, some don't)
8. **No Dumb Questions** Available from the Oak Park Public Library. Also available for purchase. <http://www.nodumbquestions.com/> (Three young sisters with their parents ponder how their Uncle is becoming their Aunt)
9. **Just Call Me Kade** Available at the Oak Park Public Library (Trans FTM teen's family and friends give him lots of love and support.)
10. **Trans** Available at Oak Park Public Library. (A variety of trans people speak of their lives, including a Trans female surgeon who performs sexual reassignment surgeries.)
11. **Brother Outsider** Available at Oak Park Public Library and some others. (Unknown architect of the civil rights movement, gay Bayard Rustin, a hero whose name should be on a street in every town in the U.S.)
12. **Inlaws and Outlaws** Available at the Oak Park Public Library. Kate got our copy for free at a PFLAG National Convention. (Couples of various genders, ethnicities talk about their relationships. A happy, hopeful film.)
13. **Love Free or Die** Available at the Oak Park Public Library and one other. (Gay Bishop Gene Robinson and his struggles with the Episcopal Church.)

Nancy Johnson has these movies in the Oak Park PFLAG collection. Contact her at njj0907@gmail.com

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

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
 Federated Church of Sycamore
 612 W State St
 Sycamore, IL 60178
 pflagdekalbcounty@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

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.**