Once we’ve been in PFLAG long enough, we begin to take the knowledge of certain events for granted. June 28, 1969 – the Stonewall uprising. October 12, 1998 – the day that Matthew Sheppard died. Others among us can still remember the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis, two organizations that were forerunners of the modern gay rights movement. How many can still remember 1981 when a mysterious virus appeared on the scene and began to wipe out large segments of the gay population? There’s a history here, one we take for granted, but the sad truth is that the younger LGBT generation has no knowledge of these events. This strikingly hit home this past week when I addressed a group of young people in a nearby high school GSA. Only one person in the group had heard of Stonewall, but he wasn’t able to explain it, and not a single one of them knew the story of Matthew Sheppard.

I wrote to a friend of mine, describing my experience and basically vented my dismay that our young people are losing the sense of their history. Well, she and her wife talked it over between themselves and then wrote back to me: “Our conclusion about the lack of knowledge on the part of young LGBTs is that it is a good thing and a sign that incredible progress has been made…Our generation fought and sweat and cried, and shook in far and marched and prayed. We KNEW the history and knew what the stakes were. This generation is more comfortable with who they are. They sure aren’t learning the history in school (black history month or women’s history month — there is no gay history month). This generation is moving on and that is a testimony to the changes that have come about in recent years. They don’t have to be afraid. They don’t have to fight like others have fought. They can just be free to be who they are. The history will be recorded in books and Matt Sheppard, along with so many others, will be remembered in that way. The times are changing – have changed - and this is good news.”

I’m torn. Part of me goes back to the adage that reminds us that those who don’t know history are doomed to repeat it. In Nashville, keynote speaker Michelangelo Signorile warned us that “It’s Not Over.” If we forget the past, might we become too complacent with our present victories? But our young LGBT people are so optimistic about their future. Should we warn them that it could happen again if certain segments of our society gain the ascendancy? With the 2016 elections looming on the horizon, should we warn them of the dangers of not getting involved in the political process? If they don’t know where they’ve been, how will they know the importance of being involved in their future?

What say you?

Toni Weaver
President - PFLAG Council of NI
Membership Form

By becoming a PFLAG member, you will help provide support, education and advocacy. All information we collect from you on this form will remain confidential, and we will only share it within PFLAG.

Membership runs from October 1 to September 30; no partial-year membership is available.

Please check:

___ New Membership  ___ Renewal Membership  ___ Donation

(Name)________________________________________________________________________________________________________

(Date) _________________________________________________________________________________________________________

(Address) _____________________________________________________________________________________________________

(City) (State) (ZIP) ___________________________________________________________________________________________

(Preferred Phone ___ Home ___ Cell) ______________________________________________________________________________

(E-mail Address) _______________________________________________________________________________________________

(Notes or In Memory of ___ In Honor of) ___________________________________________________________________________

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

___ PFLAG Superhero $500+  ___ Parents Flag Waver $100  ___ Household/Individual Membership $45____

___ PFLAG Hero $250  ___ Supporting Membership $60  ___ Donation $___________

SELECT A CHAPTER:

Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

___ Hinsdale  ___ Aurora/Fox Valley  ___ McHenry County  ___ McHenry Parents of Transgendered Individuals  ___ Deerfield  ___ Chicago/Metro  ___ Chicago Parents of Transgendered Individuals  ___ Joliet  ___ Kankakee  ___ Palatine  ___ Oak Park  ___ DeKalb  ___ DuPage  ___ Downers Grove  ___ Tinley Park

___ Check enclosed payable to PFLAG

Please charge my credit card (___ Visa ___ MasterCard ___ Amex ___ Discover)

(Credit Card #) _________________________________________________________________________________________________

(Exp Date DD/MM) _______________ (CVV – V/MC/D 3 digits on the back – AX 4 digits on the front) __________

(Name on Card) _________________________________________________________________________________________________

Please return form to your chapter representative or mail form and to:

PFLAG Membership P.O. Box 734, Elmhurst, IL 60126
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.

Send submissions, comments and photos to:

OPEN DOORS Editor
og4equality@gmail.com

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SLEEP OUT

To Raise Awareness of Youth Homelessness

To all of my supporters:

A heartfelt thanks for your generous support of the Sleep Out to raise awareness of youth homelessness, and for your contribution to the 750 Apartment Adoption Project. Here are some numbers of interest:

• Nearly 400 attended the event
• Approximately 200 camped out overnight – The snowfall was the most on that date in 120 years
• Nearly $42,000 was raised to benefit 19 Agencies that provide services to homeless youth;
• The 750 Club raised $3,620; with Team Kouba raising $1,650 (still time to donate through the end of the year!!)

The night was brutal, but the stories told and the enthusiasm of performers and attendees was very impactful. Thanks for helping make this a better world!!

Lisa Marco Kouba

November 2015

OPEN DOORS – The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois PFLAG Chapters
**HINSDALE CHAPTER**  
*By Barb Medley*

Our November speaker was our friend, Arlene Collins, founder of PTI (Parents of Transgender Individuals) PFLAG. It was just wonderful having her at our meeting, and I think she was a tremendous help for our parents who are experiencing what she did having a transgender child, and a wonderful learning resource for the rest of us who attended. She was amazingly generous sharing her personal story with us. She shared the feelings parents do, which include sadness, guilt, grief, and worry. There has been tremendous growth in her chapter, and more chapters are forming that are focused primarily on transgender issues. There is also a siblings group that is starting. Serious issues faced by transgender individuals and their parents and loved ones include those dealing with transition and with depression. Parents just want to get it right, for the sake of their children. She gave lots of advice, including keeping your sense of humor. She recommended the film, “No Dumb Questions: A Documentary about Teaching Three Kids Why Their Uncle is Becoming a Woman,” and the book, “Gender Born, Gender Made: Raising Healthy Gender-Nonconforming Children,” which she also donated to our library. We were truly privileged to have Arlene as our guest!

Our December meeting is our popular, annual holiday potluck. We’ll celebrate the holidays through eating and sharing, and we’ll also donate items and prepare holiday stockings for distribution at the Night Ministry’s The Crib. Warmest wishes for a wonderful and happy holiday season!!

**OAK PARK CHAPTER**  
*By Nancy Johnson*

Our November meeting consisted of the proud and the few. It was on Sunday November 22 the day after the record snow over night. Our speaker was absent as well as a good number of others, so we enjoyed talking and catching up for a while before we disbanded.

The November 6 screening of Mr. Angel at the Oak Park Public Library followed by Buck Angel talking and answering questions. Earlier in the day Buck had given a talk to the library staff and according to librarians I talked to, he charmed them all. Buck is a charming charismatic person with a winning, welcoming smile. Before and after the screening and talk, he gave hugs, words of encouragement, and posed for pictures with anyone who had a camera.

In response to a question about what advice he would give to parents, he said that parents should let their children be who they are, support them and love them. That advice seems to be what PFLAG parents enact, and I’ll say that our children seem to profit from our love and acceptance.

On November 29 we’re having our Fifth Sunday potluck at Kate and Phil’s. And it’s not supposed to be leftovers!

We will have someone at our meeting place for our December 27 meeting, but no speaker is scheduled. We don’t have a speaker scheduled for January yet.
PTI CHICAGO CHAPTER
By Arlene Collins

Our November 12th meeting welcomed five new families and our speaker was Representative Jan Schakowsky, IL-D. Representative Schakowsky filled us in on legislative news for the LGBT Community. I think we enlightened her also on many Trans issues and needs, and reiterated the continued discrimination and bullying taking place in our schools and places of business. Working together on these matters is a common goal for our children no matter the age.

We will celebrate the Holidays with Pot Luck on Wed Dec 9th; not our usual Thurs night. Center on Halsted cannot accommodate us on the 10th so we’ve changed it to the 9th at same time 7-9 pm. We look forward to celebrating the year, as we get ready to welcome 2016.

DuPage CHAPTER
By John Hickey

The PFLAG DuPage November meeting featured a panel discussion of the recent conference participation at: The PFLAG National Conference in Nashville, The Out and Equal Summit in Dallas and the Call to Action Conference in Milwaukee. All three were fantastic conferences providing great networking opportunities and excellent educational workshops and speakers. These organizations are helping blaze a trail for equality and are all truly inspirational and motivational experiences.

In addition, we were pleased to represent PFLAG by hosting tables at the 4th Annual Do Ask, Do Tell Conference at Rush University Medical Center and the Glenbard Parent Series (GPS). We always appreciate the opportunity to raise awareness of PFLAG in the community to make the organization accessible to those who might benefit.

We are looking forward to hosting a table at the Elmhurst College Big Queer Gathering on December 11th. An annual event, the Big Queer Gathering welcomes LGBT students from area high schools for an evening of lectures, discussions, performances and more. Sponsored by EQUAL (Elmhurst Queers and Allies), the gathering is designed to extend a sense of community to LGBT teenagers while increasing awareness.

January 29, we will be hosting a movie night at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Wheaton at 6 p.m. We will be sharing a soup and salad supper and watching the movie Pride (2014- R): U.K. gay activists work to help miners during their lengthy strike of the National Union of Mineworkers in the summer of 1984.

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3169706/

Our December 20 meeting will be a more social gathering where participants bring a dish to share. We meet the 3rd Sunday of each month at St Paul Lutheran Church in Wheaton. Please consider joining us for a meeting and feel free to bring a friend or family member.

If you know any college age students, you may want to look into MBLGTACC.... Registration is open for the Midwest Bisexual Lesbian Gay Transgender Ally College Conference (MBLGTACC) is the largest student-led LGBTQIA college conference in the nation!

MBLGTACC 2016 is hosted by Purdue University, in West Lafayette, Indiana on February 19th-21st, 2016. Here is a link to their website

Deerfield CHAPTER
By Susan Ginsburg

While our November speaker was unable to attend our meeting, (she will reschedule for January or February), we were delighted to welcome 24 past members and 1 new member! After our monthly announcements of current events, it was evident after our introductory ‘go around’ that instead of watching a video we have that we haven’t seen, the consensus was that we break up into our groups and just talk! We have found before that not having a speaker once in a while is a good thing! It gives us the extra time to have those conversations of support, advice and exchange of resources that so many of our members and visitors need. After all, isn’t that why they attend at first?

What’s most important is for all to realize that even after your needs for PFLAG seem to wane, that’s when PFLAG needs YOU! In order for PFLAG, as a National organization, to thrive, we need large numbers of people. The large numbers will demonstrate to those in Washington who make the laws, that we are a formidable group and are spread all over our nation. So, again, I urged those who haven’t sent in their membership to do so! And so, repeat that to all of you Deerfield past members, who don’t find the need to attend meetings, please send in your membership. PFLAG will always need you!

As I reported at the meeting, we are continuing to follow up on our goal to reach as many high schools and middle schools that we can in the Deerfield area. We met with five social workers from a Buffalo Grove school district that were happy to receive our information and message of support. We informed them that we are available to speak to School Boards, PTAs or any other venue, to introduce ourselves and let them know we exist for support, education and advocacy. And yes, there are still places on the North Shore where LGBT youth are being thrown out of their homes because they are gay, and being forced into DCFS. We have a lot of work to do.

Don’t forget, we will NOT have a “regular” meeting in December. Instead, we will have an end of the year celebration; an evening of conversation and friendship. Please join us and bring your kids!
McHenry CHAPTER
By Raina Hodgson

The McHenry chapter of PFLAG used their November meeting to remember, honor, and act through observation of the Transgender Day of Remembrance. TDOR is an annual memorial of those whose lives were lost due to anti-transgender fear, bigotry, and hatred. In addition to the solemn reading of names of dozens of victims, we read positive stories of transgender people in the news all over the world. While the deaths are tragic, the stories of openly transgender homecoming queens, cheerleaders, military veterans, and soap opera stars helped us smile through our tears and give us many reasons to celebrate.

I encourage everyone to submit pictures, articles, stories, etc. to this newsletter. What makes it great is sharing our passions, our experiences and our love for our LGBTQ family and friends.
You can submit directly to og4equality@gmail.com.

Happy Holidays

The NI PFLAG Council wishes you a safe and festive holiday season and joyous New Year.
There will be no newsletter for the month of December.
We will be back in the New year!
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

ALSO

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


LGBTQ BOOKS YOU NEED TO READ

Thank you for Jackie Frett for recommending these publications. These books are some new finds and cover broad range of LGBT topics.

**George** is the coming out story of a transgender child and is appropriate for middle school age children but it will also be helpful for their parents. **Fairyland** took me back to the 1970’s and 80’s when LGBT issues were not even on my radar. Two books tackle being gay and Christian. **No House** takes us into the complex and frightening world of homeless gay youth. **On the Couch** and **Trans Bodies, Trans Selves** give us a wealth of reader friendly information on transgender issues.

So see if you have room on your PFLAG book shelves for...

**George** by Alex Gino ; “When people look at George ,they think they see a boy. But she knows she’s a girl. George thinks she will have to keep this secret forever.” Her middle school play is going to be Charlotte’s Web. George really wants to play Charlotte but the teacher says no because she is a boy. Her best friend Kelly helps with a plan so everyone gets to know the real George.

**On the Couch With Dr. Angello- A Guide to Raising & Supporting Transgender Youth** by Dr. Michele Angello ; "When a single child comes out, their entire family will transition, along with the community."

**Fairyland- A Memoir of My Father** by Alysia Abbott ; “ A vibrant memoir recounts growing up in the 1970’s in San Francisco with Steve Abbott , a gay, single father during an era when that was rare.”

**Walking the Bridgeless Canyon-Repairing the Breach Between the Church and the LGBT Community** By Kathy Baldock.; "In 2001, Kathy Baldock, a straight conservative evangelical Christian, met Netto Montoya, a lesbian Native American, on the local hiking trails near her home in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Their friendship challenged Beldock’s cultural and religious beliefs about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people."

**God and the Gay Christian** by Matthew Vines ; “The Landmark book exploring what the Bible actually says-and doesn’t say-about same-sex relationships.”

**No House To Call My Home** by Ryan Berg ; “Ryan Berg immerses readers in the gritty, dangerous, and shockingly underreported world of homeless LGBTQ teens in New York. As a caseworker in a group home for disowned LGBTQ teenagers, Berg witnessed the struggles, fears, and ambitions of these disconnected youth as they resisted the pull of the street tottering between destruction and survival.”

**Trans Bodies, Trans Selves –A Resource for the Transgender Community.** Edited by Laura Erickson-Schroth; “There is no one way to be transgender. While trans people share many common experiences, there is immense diversity within trans communities. Trans Bodies, Trans Selves is a revolutionary resource- a comprehensive, reader-friendly guide for transgender people, with each chapter written by transgender or genderqueer authors.”
OPEN DOORS – The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois PFLAG Chapters

November 2015

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
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

PFLAG Tinley Park - NEW
Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2-4 pm
Zion Lutheran Church
17100 69th Ave.
Tinley Park, IL 60477

PFLAG Downers Grove - NEW
First meeting is Wednesday Sept 9 @ 7 pm
First Congregational UCC
1047 Curtiss
Downers Grove, IL 60515

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 1st Monday – 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.