



# OPEN DOORS

The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois PFLAG Chapters

## President's Column

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 fear 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."

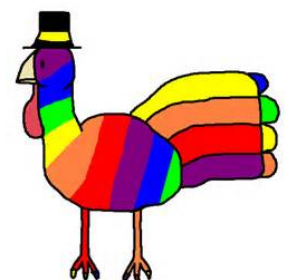
I'm torn. Part of me goes back to the adage that reminds us that those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it. In Nashville, keynote speaker Michelangelo Signorile warned us that "It's Not Over." If we forget the past, might we become too complacent with our present victories? But our young LGBT 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



from **PFLAG**



## 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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www.pflagillinois.org  
www.pflag.org

Be sure to like  
PFLAG Council of Northern IL  
on



# 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*



# what's happening

## in Our 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!!



Arlene Collins

### 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 9<sup>th</sup>; not our usual Thurs night.** Center on Halsted cannot accommodate us on the 10<sup>th</sup> so we've changed it to the 9<sup>th</sup> 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.

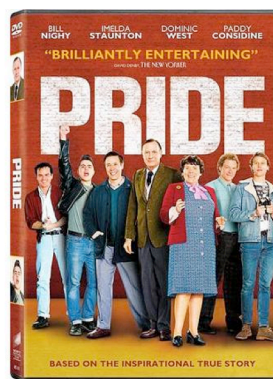
In addition, we were pleased to represent PFLAG by hosting tables at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual [Do Ask, Do Tell](#) Conference at Rush University Medical Center and the [Glenbard Parent Series](#) (GPS). We always appreciate the opportunity to raise awareness of PFLAG in the community to make the organization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



We are looking forward to hosting a table at the Elmhurst College Big Queer Gathering on December 11<sup>th</sup>. 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2016. Here is a link to their website

<http://www.cvent.com/events/midwest-bisexual-lesbian-gay-transgender-ally-college-conference/event-summary-ce291bcbd5fe42ef8854b97735f037a3.aspx>



**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, PTA's 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!




**PTI McHenry – NEW MEETING DAY**

PTI McHenry NOW meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month. Same time: 7 p.m.

The group also has a  
**YOUTH GROUP: PFLAG TAG**  
that meets in the same location (different room).

Hope you can join us at  
Tree of Life Unitarian Church  
5603 W Bull Valley Rd  
McHenry, IL 60050

Questions?  
Flynnmb12@gmail.com



**New chapter of the Northern Illinois Council of PFLAG  
for Chicago's South Suburbs**

**Meetings are 2 p.m.  
the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of every month**

**at Zion Lutheran Church  
17100 South 69th Ave.**  
*Enter through the south doors and go left to the day care room*

**email us at [pflagtinleypark@gmail.com](mailto:pflagtinleypark@gmail.com)**

**A new voice in the South Suburbs for anyone in the LGBT  
community and their families and friends.**

**Our Vision:** PFLAG (Parents, families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) celebrates diversity and envisions a society that embraces everyone, including those of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. Only with respect, dignity and equality for all will we reach our full potential as human beings, individually and collectively.

**Our Mission:** PFLAG promotes the well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons, their families and friends through: support, to cope with an adverse society; education, to enlighten the ill-informed public; and advocacy, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. PFLAG provides an opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity to create a society that respects human diversity.

**If you need help please contact us or attend our meetings.**

**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](mailto: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](http://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](https://www.facebook.com/PTIChicago)

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

READ  
WATCH  
LISTEN  
LEARN

**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 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."





**PFLAG Aurora/Fox Valley**

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

**PFLAG Metro Chicago**

Meetings held 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – 2 pm  
 Center on Halsted (Senior Room)  
 3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613  
 pflagchicagometro@pflagillinois

**PFLAG Deerfield**

Meetings held 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – 2-4 pm  
 Zion Lutheran Church  
 17100 69<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday – 7 pm  
 Tree of Life Unitarian Church  
 5603 W Bull Valley Rd  
 McHenry 60050  
 pflagwoodstockmchenry@pflagillinois.org

**PFLAG Oak Park**

Meetings held 4<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday – 7 pm  
 Center on Halsted  
 3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613  
 parentsoftransgender@pflagillinois.org

**Parents of Transgender (McHenry)**

Meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> 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.**