



OPEN DOORS

Newsletter of Northern Illinois PFLAG

President's Column

WOW... Go PFLAG !!!

We have been seen, now let's be heard!

I want to thank all of you who were able to join us for this year's Chicago Pride Parade. PFLAG showed up in force! It was the best weather for the Parade that I remember, and it was the largest PFLAG showing I have seen. The photograph from Windy City Times gives a great view of the group. Plus, there were 30+ people on the Trolley too! The show of love and support, and the connection with the crowd, was very powerful.



Throughout Northern Illinois, Chapters are participating in local parades, hosting informational tables at a variety of community events, and speaking at many workplaces including private companies, public companies and government operations. The interest in creating open and affirming spaces has been fantastic. I am encouraged by the number of organizations working to learn and grow to become more inclusive. I am grateful and encouraged by the growing number of employers and employee resource groups dedicated to equality in the workplace. I am encouraged by the growing number of open and affirming places of worship. I am encouraged at the growth of Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) in schools – including middle schools! I believe that we have generational momentum, and that with your help, the trajectory is unstoppable.

However, while I believe that we have generational momentum, I also know that there are threats to our civil rights. I want to encourage you to get involved help out in whatever way you are most comfortable.

Stay informed and engaged with issues facing our community. We have great resources available to us. Check the "Get Involved" section for links. Sign up for action alerts and newsletters to stay informed. Let your elected officials know your opinion on important issues. Equality Illinois has made this especially easy for us. You can send a message in seconds. Your voice matters; please take action and be heard. For a more personal touch, consider calling or better yet, visiting your representatives. Your personal story and reasoning for your position on issues is undeniable and more powerful than you might imagine. You have the power; please take the time to exercise it. Be an advocate for yourself and those you love.

Thank you, John



New PFLAG Chapters!

PFLAG is a non-profit, tax-exempt, all volunteer, local community-based organization of parents, relatives and friends of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender 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:

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www.pflagillinois.org
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www.pflagillinois.org/transgender

Be sure to like
PFLAG Council of Northern IL
on



We have had a great year in Northern Illinois so far with new chapters in Ottawa, Oak Lawn and Grayslake/Round Lake.

PFLAG Aurora/Fox Valley- is looking for folks who want to help strengthen the chapter and build on their proud legacy of support for the LGBTQ community and allies in Aurora / Fox Valley. If you are interested in helping make a difference please contact John Hickey at info@pflagillinois.org or Carmi Frankovich at regionaldiva1@yahoo.com . A special thanks to Carmi for leading the charge.

PFLAG Chicago Español- There is preliminary discussion about interest in starting a PFLAG Chapter to primarily support Spanish speaking members. If you have interest in helping form this chapter in Chicago, please contact John Hickey at info@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Romeoville- Kris and Peter Shulman are looking for interested parties to help start a new in Romeoville to help serve Will County. If you are interested in helping out please send an email to PFLAGRomeoville@pflagillinois.org .

It is really great to see PFLAG chapters becoming accessible to more families. We would love to see PFLAG more accessible to ALL families. If there is not a PFLAG chapter near you, and you are interested in forming a chapter in your community, please contact John Hickey at info@PFLAGillinois.com

Stay Informed and Take Action / Be Heard



Below are links to great advocacy organizations that can help you stay informed and take action to help support equality. If you pick just one link click the Eq IL Take Action Link and help make a difference!

- **PFLAG** <http://www.pflag.org/>
 - Where we stand: <http://www.pflag.org/wherewestand>
 - Sign up for Action Alerts: <http://www.pflag.org/stay-informed>
- **Equality Illinois** <https://www.equalityillinois.us/>
 - Sign up to stay informed about issues and special events <https://act.myngp.com/Forms/1071801728988547840>
 - **Take Action**- This page makes it simple to send your elected officials your feedback <https://www.equalityillinois.us/category/get-involved/take-action/>

Follow this link and be heard! Thank you Mike Ziri and Eq IL
- **HRC** <http://www.hrc.org/>
 - Local Issues-Illinois <http://www.hrc.org/local-issues/illinois>
 - Take Action Page https://takeaction.hrc.org/?_ga=2.21348027.1892320809.1530155937-1225694022.1529549016
- **ACLU** <https://www.aclu.org/>
 - LGBTQ+ Rights <https://www.aclu.org/issues/lgbt-rights>
(enter your email address to stay informed and join their newsletter)

DUPAGE CHAPTER

By Ron & Bernadette Whitfield

June is always a busy month for PFLAG-ers! This year was no exception. It began on the 6th with our "Second Annual"

FUNdraiser at California Pizza Kitchen, which netted nearly \$500 in donations. DuPage members (Peter and Kristin Shulman) represented us at the Bolingbrook Pride Picnic on the 10th. They met several people who expressed interest in starting a new chapter in the arena. On the 14th, John Hickey promoted PFLAG at Navigant and Morningstar.

On the 17th we split our time and members between our regular meeting at St. Paul and the Inaugural Aurora Pride Parade. At the meeting we remembered the second anniversary of the Pulse Nightclub murders, viewed Dan Savage's presentation on the "It Gets Better Project," and shared our thoughts about Savage's message. We had a strong showing in Aurora. The short (compared to Chicago!) 0.6 mile parade route was welcome given the 95 degree heat.

On the 23rd, Lisa Garber (DuPage) and Eileen and Jen (Hinsdale) promoted PFLAG at the first annual Elmhurst Presbyterian Pride Block Party. Lisa had safety pins, buttons, cookies, and more in an attractive table setup. John, Ron, and Jo Ann staffed the PFLAG booth at Pride on the Pier. We had the safety pin craft for the children, gave away about 300 buttons (most of which we assembled onsite), and distributed PFLAG information to visitors from Chicagoland and numerous states. Visitors were very generous and donated nearly \$200.

Turnout for Chicago Pride Parade the next day was overwhelming! We estimate that we had more than 100 people marching with us. The trolley was very popular and provided a welcome respite for tired marchers.

Still ahead at this writing is an appearance at the Second Annual Family Pride Night at the Morton Arboretum on the 28th, which was rescheduled due to torrential rains on the 21st.

Pictures from the Aurora parade are now on our Facebook page (PFLAG DuPage in Wheaton Illinois). Pictures from the Chicago parade



will be uploaded to Facebook by the time of publication of this issue of Open Doors.

DEERFIELD CHAPTER

By Sue Ginsburg & Janet Svatos

As has been the tradition for the past 19 years, June has been the month we award the John Paul Ohadi Scholarships to some amazing LGBT graduating seniors in our area. Thanks to Cynthia Drey, mother of John Paul, who established these scholarships in John Paul's memory, we were able to celebrate these smart, multi-talented and engaging students. Cynthia awarded \$2,000 scholarships to each of the four winners.

The scholarship recipients were: *Tifani Panek*, graduated from Lane Tech and will be attending Davidson in North Carolina; *Luis Cordero*, also graduated from Lane Tech and also will be attending Davidson; *Tyler Schwarz*, graduated from Glenbard South and is headed to the



University of Illinois; and *Nick Aiello*, who graduated from Grayslake North and will be heading to the University of Minnesota.

Nick, Tifani, Luis and Tyler

While we celebrated these students, we were still able to welcome a new family and have time to break into small groups to connect, discuss and support one another. Happy Pride Month to all!!!

HINSDALE CHAPTER

By Marcia Prichason

This month's speaker was Katie Silvosky of the Chicago Children's Museum who spoke about creating a culture of acceptance both in schools and at the Museum. Some of the activities the Museum itself is engaged in are an International Family Equality Day, a Drag Queen story hour, a Gender Cool Project, and LGBTQ awareness training for staff and volunteers. Katie discussed ways

anybody can help create a culture of acceptance including, just smiling and being nice, using names and pronouns that people ask to be used, showing signs of welcome such as “All Families Welcome,” providing a safe place to use the bathroom, and including LGBTQ images, activities, and communications. Katie heightened her presentation by conducting an activity using colored paint chips to identify how people feel when outside the binary M/F roles. It was an educational and enlightening meeting for all attendees.



MCHENRY CHAPTER

By Toni Weaver

James Conley and Kurt Heinrich journeyed from Chicago to McHenry June 12 to discuss the exhibit “Gay is Good” currently being presented at the Gerber/Hart Library in Chicago. For many of us, our knowledge of gay history begins with Stonewall (June 28, 1969) and does not include the people and the movements that helped lay the groundwork for Stonewall. James, exhibit curator and son of PFLAG McHenry member Cate Conley, and his husband Kurt, exhibit designer, provided the background details on how this exhibit came to be.

For additional information about the “Gay is Good” exhibit, please refer to the following article published in the Windy City Times:

<http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Gay-is-Good-exhibit-opens-at-Gerber-Hart/62662.html>

For general information about the Gerber/Hart Library, please visit the website:

<http://www.gerberhart.org/>

For those who'd like to pursue a study of the movements leading up to the modern gay rights movement, I recommend *Making Gay History* by Eric Marcus or any number of books authored by John D'Emilio of the University of Illinois – Chicago.

Because our June meeting fell on the 2nd anniversary of the Pulse Nightclub massacre, we spent a few moments reflecting upon the meaning of this tragedy and our hopes for the future.

We are looking forward to our participation in the Crystal Lake Independence Day Parade on Saturday, July 7 and welcome PFLAG members from the entire Northern Illinois area to join us. Line-up will be at 12:30 in the staging area adjacent to the Crystal Lake Municipal Complex. Cate Becker, our chapter's parade coordinator, does an outstanding job, helping us present the public face of PFLAG to the community.

OTTAWA CHAPTER

By Ken Brown

PFLAG Ottawa is up and running! We are meeting on the fourth Sunday of each month from 2:30 until 4:00 pm at Open Table UCC, located in downtown Ottawa at 910 Columbus Street. The Chapter had its first meeting on April 22, 2018. The 20 people in attendance shared their stories and learned about our partnership with Youth Outlook from Heather Francis, the program director of our LGBTQ+ drop-in center, which meets at the same location. At our second meeting on Memorial Day weekend in May, a group of 15 watched a portion of the “Gender Revolution,” hosted by Katie Couric, and a discussion followed.

At our next meeting on June 24, members Donna Martin and Sarah Reckmeyer (retired Ottawa middle school and high school band directors) will share the first of a two-part series they have developed on LGBTQ history starting with Stonewall. Please feel free to join us!

OAK PARK CHAPTER

By Nancy Johnson

Our first event of June, Day in Our Village was a big success! Here's what Phil had to say:

"Today's event was, I believe, very successful. We gave 4

out close to 500 buttons and 50 of the rainbow friendship pins. The most popular buttons were: rainbow Mickey Mouse, Love is Love, Ally (with both rainbow and trans colors) and I'm the rainbow sheep in my family."

The last were very popular with the OPALGA folks who were next to us. We had fun interacting with them. The weather was perfect, our booth location a prime one--directly facing the main entrance to the library, just East of the food court.

Sylvia successfully hawked the books that have been in her basement. The Jesus tri-fold got a lot of knowing smiles.

BIG THANK YOU for the help in making buttons, pins, and staffing the booth. We were exhausted but it's a "good" exhausted."

A few of us volunteered at Donut Days on June 16 with Oak Park Lesbian and Gay Association. It was a really hot day, so some of us had to opt out. It's a weekly event at the Farmers Market and local nonprofits are allowed to cook donuts in the basement of Pilgrim Church, and split the profits with the church.

As in the past some of us will participate in the Oak Park Fourth of July parade.

Our next event is our big fundraiser, the Bake Sale at the Farmers Market on July 7.



- Saturday August 4- LGBTQ+ Youth and Family Picnic
- Sunday August 26- Fahrenheit Chicago at Oakwood Beach. PFLAG will sponsor a table at this celebration of LGBTQ people of color.
- October 11th, National Coming Out Day- PFLAG Fundraiser at local California Pizza Kitchen Locations throughout the area. Mention you came to support the PFLAG Fundraiser and a portion of the proceeds will go to support your local PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois Chapters.

CHECK THIS OUT

- TLC has a new series out called: Lost in Translation. The series follows 4 couples whose husbands come out as transgender.

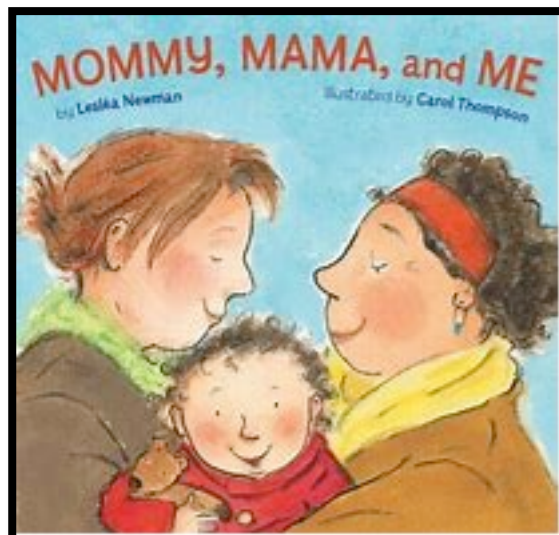
Here is more information about the show:

<https://www.broadwayworld.com/bwwtv/article/TLC-To-Premiere-New-Docu-Series-LOST-IN-TRANSLATION-May-20-20180425>

- TRANSGENER MINISTRY PIONEER LETS WORLD KNOW HER IDENTITY

<http://globalsistersreport.org/column/ministry-equality/ministry-gender-margins-54321>

- Great children's book available on Amazon that features a family with 2 mommies: *Mommy, Mama, Me*



PRIDE MONTH



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 DuPage

Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
 St Paul Lutheran Church
 515 S Wheaton Ave, Wheaton 60187
 pflagdupage@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Tinley Park

Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2-4 pm
 Zion Lutheran Church
 17100 69th Ave.
 Tinley Park, IL 60477
 pflagtinleypark@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Downers Grove

Meetings held 2nd Wednesday – 7p.m.
 First Congregational UCC
 1047 Curtiss
 Downers Grove, IL 60515
 pflagdownersgrove@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Oak Lawn (NEW)

Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 p.m.
 Pilgrim Faith UCC
 9411 S 52st Ave
 Oak Lawn, IL 60453
 pflagoaklawn@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Grayslake/Round Lake (NEW)

Meetings held the 2nd Wednesday – 7 p.m.
 Grayslake Teen Center
 151 Hawley Street
 Grayslake, IL 60453
 pflaggrayslake@pflagillinois.org
 630/415-0622

PFLAG Hinsdale

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

PFLAG Romeoville

Contact Kris and Peter Shulman
 pflagromeoville@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Will, Kankakee, Iroquois

Contact Rev. Barbara Lohrbach
 revlohrbach@gmail.com
 plagkankakee@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG McHenry

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

PFLAG Oak Park

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

Parents of Transgender (Chicago)

Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday – 7 pm
 Center on Halsted
 3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
 pflagptichicago@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (McHenry)

Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday – 7 p.m.
 Tree of Life Unitarian Church
 5603 W Bull Valley Rd, McHenry 60050
 pflagptimchenry@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (North Shore)

Meetings are held the 3rd Sunday – 6 p.m.
 Winnetka Presbyterian Church
 1255 Willow Rd, Winnetka, IL
 pflagptnorthshore@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Rockford (updated info)

Meetings are held the 1st Monday – 6:00 pm
 East Branch Public Library
 Friends Community Meeting Room
 6685 East State St, Rockford, IL 61108
 pflagrockford@pflagillinois.org