



# OPEN DOORS

Newsletter of Northern Illinois PFLAG

## President's Column

### Support Loving Families!

#### Oppose "License to Discriminate" and Attacks on Human Rights!

I can't understand why so many political leaders and citizens feel empowered to promote discrimination and bigotry. It seems that every month there is a new attack on human rights. These attacks must not go unchecked. In July, the House Appropriations Committee advanced the "Aderholt Amendment" that would protect federal funding for adoption agencies that refuse services based on the agency's religious beliefs.



Robert Aderholt of Alabama introduced the amendment to the 2019 funding bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. It would provide that "The Federal Government, and any State or local government that receives Federal funding for any program that provides child welfare services," ... "shall not discriminate or take an adverse action against a child welfare service provider on the basis that the provider has declined or will decline to provide, facilitate, or refer for a child welfare service that conflicts with, or under circumstances that conflict with, the provider's sincerely held religious beliefs or moral convictions." Furthermore, if states and localities do "discriminate" against these agencies, the amendment permits the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to withhold "15 percent of the federal funds the state or local government receives for a program that provides child welfare services." So, in effect, this amendment protects funding for discriminatory agencies and gives license to discriminate against LGBTQ families. Plus, it would impose funding cut penalties, to states that do not support discrimination!

Proponents of the amendment argue that this amendment is not "anti-gay" and emphasized nothing in it prohibits LGBTQ people from adopting or fostering a child. Brian Rell, a spokesperson for Rep. Aderholt, insisted the amendment is not about excluding same-sex couples from adoption, but rather including as many providers as possible. "If you are a same sex couple, you can go to a different agency and adopt there," he said.

Thankfully, there are some leaders who are very concerned about this amendment. On July 25<sup>th</sup>, 40 US Senators signed a letter opposing this amendment. In addition, the HRC recently released a report, titled [Disregarding the Best Interest of the Child: License to Discriminate In Child Welfare Services](#), detailing the harms of efforts to write anti-LGBTQ discrimination by child welfare agencies into law. Check it out. At this time, the House bill, with the amendment, has not been scheduled for floor debate. The Senate bill, which does not contain the provision, is expected to be considered in August.

**Support loving families.** Oppose attacks on human rights. Please contact your federal representatives so they know your opinion. Your voice matters. Your personal story and reasoning for your position on issues is undeniable and more powerful than you might imagine. Stay informed and 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:

OPEN DOORS Editor  
og4equality@gmail.com

### EDITORIAL BOARD

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[www.pflagillinois.org/transgender](http://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](mailto:info@pflagillinois.org) or Carmi Frankovich at [regionaldiva1@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](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



Summer is a time to enjoy a great book. At PFLAG we have learned the value of the LGBTQ community seeing their lives reflected in the world around them. On July 15 Margaret and Don Donahue led a discussion of fiction and non-fiction titles relevant to LGBTQ individuals and their families. They also introduced a 2018 PFLAG Dupage reading selection: *Tinderbox* by Robert Fiesler. Fiesler is a Naperville Central graduate. He is on book tour now but is willing to speak to our group when scheduling permits.

Thank you, Don and Margaret, for leading the meeting while we are out of town!

Thanks to Gail, Paul, and Brittany Hanson for their usual outstanding work arranging our participation in Wheaton's July 4th Parade, equipping their van with sound and decorations, shuttling people to and from the parade route, transporting the posters, and bringing the snacks and water that were vital in keeping us hydrated and nourished on a very hot day.



PFLAG DuPage and supporters following the Wheaton July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade. The theme was "Great American Heroes." We introduced parade watchers to "Great Gay American Heroes!"

Thanks also to Hope Presbyterian Church members for preparing for and marching with us in Wheaton! John and Pam Dalby (PFLAG DuPage and Hope) arranged a poster making party on July 1. Pastor Jay Moses inspired a strong turnout by his parishioners

Since the last edition of Open Doors went to press, we represented PFLAG at the Second Annual Family Pride Night at the Morton Arboretum on June 28<sup>th</sup>. We had a safety pin decorating craft for the children, lots of buttons (the children were fascinated to see how they are made), and rainbow flags. It was quite a sight to see dozens of children waving those flags!



PFLAG DuPage at Morton Arboretum's Second Annual Family Pride Night.

Although we have tried several times to upload photos to our Facebook page (PFLAG DuPage in Wheaton Illinois), we have not had much success. A better strategy might be to make the photos available on Flickr. Stay tuned!

## HINSDALE CHAPTER

By Marcia Prichason

PFLAG Hinsdale met on Sunday, July 1<sup>st</sup>. In lieu of a speaker, members watched the first half of "Out & Proud in Chicago." This interesting documentary portrayed the rich history of Chicago's LGBT community and was hosted by Jane Lynch. Next month's meeting, which will be on Sunday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, the guest speaker is Tatyana Moaton who works at Howard Brown as both the Diversity and Inclusion Services Coordinator and the Volunteer and Internship Program Coordinator. She will discuss both these positions.

## MCHENRY CHAPTER

By Toni Weaver

July 7 marked the 12<sup>th</sup> straight year (no pun intended) that PFLAG McHenry has marched in the Crystal Lake Independence Day Parade. Community parades are so important because we're not preaching to the choir as we do in the Chicago Pride Parade. For many LGBTQ bystanders, we offer hope and affirmation as the Pride flag is carried through the streets. I saw one woman in

particular stand as we passed. She pressed her palms together and bowed slightly while mouthing “thank you,” over and over again. For her our presence was life-giving. Many of us saw similar responses as we passed. The applause far outweighed any negative response. In general, the response to our presence in the parade has been overwhelmingly positive!

Many thanks to Cate Becker, our parade coordinator, and her crew: Bob Disselhorst and Tom Weaver. Joe Copley provided sandwiches and snacks during set-up, and Bob and Aileen Chikos hosted a bar-b-q at their home later in the day. The chapter also invites all who march with us to join us for ice cream at the Colonial Café

following the parade. We really made a day of it!

Our July program centered on an 18 minute video of a TED Talk given by iO Tillett Wright: Fifty Shades of Gay. Tom Weaver led



an animated discussion of the concepts presented in the talk.

Seven students from a

counseling program of Aurora University attended the meeting, and they proved to be eager participants in the discussion. It really was a joy having them. The August program will feature their instructor!

### DOWNERS GROVE CHAPTER

By Gloria

**PFLAG Downers Grove-** is looking for folks to strengthen and provide leadership to their chapter. In the coming months the chapter will be considering whether to continue as a separate chapter or join forces with other chapters in the western suburbs.

Contact [PFLAGdownersgrove@pflagillinois.org](mailto:PFLAGdownersgrove@pflagillinois.org) if you are interested in helping out.



Equality Illinois invites you to please join us as one of the more than 200 activists and attendees expected at this year's conference, which will focus on two areas of concentration: health justice (HIV/AIDS topics are encouraged) and civic engagement.

EqualityCon 2018 will be held on September 28-29 in Springfield.

Conference registration is open (use the link below)! It begins with a Friday night reception followed by a full-day program on Saturday.

info: <https://www.equalityillinois.us/events/equalitycon-2018/>

Register: <https://act.myngp.com/Forms/9019530270902258432>



We have a PFLAG Informational tent once again this year for the **Fahrenheit Chicago Beach Party**

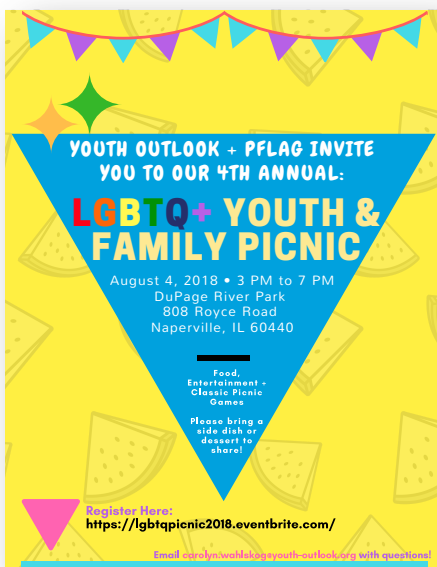
Sunday August 26<sup>th</sup>  
Oakwood Beach  
4100 S. Lake Shore Dr. - Chicago

For more information about the Fahrenheit weekend events check out the EQ IL website: <https://www.equalityillinois.us/events/fahrenheit-chicago2018/>

The Beach Party event is scheduled from 11 am until 7 pm. So, we would like to staff the event in **two shifts- one from 11 am until 3 pm, and one from 3 pm until 7 pm.** We would love to have a great PFLAG showing at this event and let more folks know about PFLAG.

**Please consider joining us. It was a great day last year. Email [jthickey1@gmail.com](mailto:jthickey1@gmail.com) if you can volunteer.**

- Hosted by: Ruff N Stuff, Otis Mack, Terry D'Mor**  
11-12pm Lighthouse Beach Service with Pastor J.  
12-2pm – DJ Lori Branch  
2-3pm- DJ Da Joka with House Arrest 2  
3-3:30 pm Terisa Griffin  
3:30-5:00pm – Mini Ball  
4:30-5:00 – TINK  
5:30-6:30 – Fahrenheit Chicago Drag Show  
6:30-7:30pm – DJ Superman  
**VIP EXPERIENCE**  
Hosted by Ruff N Stuff & Terry D'Mor  
12-2pm – DJ Dreea  
2-4pm – Music by Sean Parks  
4-5pm – Fahrenheit Chicago Drag Show  
5-7:30pm – DJ All the Way Kay



# CHECK THIS OUT



Check out Far From The Tree. For a special treat consider going August 17 or 18 when there will be an opportunity for Q&A with the book author Andrew Solomon.

Book Author Andrew Solomon  
Fri, Aug 17, 7:15pm show w/Q&A  
Sat, Aug 18, 1:45pm show w/Q&A,  
4:30pm show w/Q&A

<https://www.landmarktheatres.com/chicago/century-centre-cinema/film-info/far-from-the-tree>

*The life-affirming documentary Far From the Tree explores the difficulties and rewards of raising and being a child whose experience is vastly different from that of his or her parents. Directed and produced by Emmy-winning filmmaker Rachel Dretzin, it follows families coping with the challenges presented by Down syndrome, dwarfism, autism, and having a child in prison. Their profound, sometimes heartbreaking, but ultimately hopeful stories are related with extraordinary candor and transparency; this is a film rooted in the myriad forms of intimacy. Based on Andrew Solomon's award-winning non-fiction book Far From the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity, the film provides lessons in love that far outstrip its immediate subjects, but also makes us unafraid of differences by which we might otherwise have been very much intimidated. It is a film that restores dignity to people whose rights are under siege, a rare window into the lives of others. Music by Yo La Tengo and Nico Muhly.*

**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 DuPage**

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

**PFLAG Tinley Park**

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

**PFLAG Downers Grove**

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

**PFLAG Oak Lawn (NEW)**

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

**PFLAG Grayslake/Round Lake (NEW)**

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

**PFLAG Hinsdale**

Meetings held 1<sup>st</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday – 7 pm  
 Tree of Life Unitarian Church  
 5603 W Bull Valley Rd  
 McHenry 60050  
 pflagmchenry@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

**Parents of Transgender (Chicago)**

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

**Parents of Transgender (McHenry)**

Meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – 6 p.m.  
 Winnetka Presbyterian Church  
 1255 Willow Rd, Winnetka, IL  
 pflagptnorthshore@pflagillinois.org

**PFLAG Rockford (updated info)**

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