Equality Illinois 2019 Gala on February 2nd sold out 1500 seats. It was a powerful celebration of the LGBTQ+ community. Attended by highest-ranking state politicians and celebrities, it demonstrated strong support and raised funds for Equality Illinois’ operations. Consider attending this annual event in the future.


**President’s Column**

**Visibility Matters**

In today’s environment, it seems more important than ever that kind, empathetic, informed allies show up and speak up to counter misinformation and hate, with truth and compassion. Trans Visibility Matters and March 31st is International Transgender Day of Visibility. So, whether you are Cisgender or Transgender, let’s make March a month where we all do something to learn and grow as Trans Allies. As former VP Joe Biden said, Transgender discrimination is ‘the civil rights issue of our time’.

While I know that there are many of you who are already wearing your Super Ally cape, I also recognize that we are all at different parts of the ally spectrum. Luckily, there are many opportunities for us to explore. Consider attending an event or just exploring through reading, movies and websites. Below are some ideas and links to get started.

**Activities / Events**

- Experience **Trans Art is Final** at the Chicago Magic Lounge on 3/13, 6-9 pm. For more info click here.
- Visit **Trans Art is: Love & Liberation** on display at the Andersonville Galleria through March 22.
- PFLAG DuPage hosts a free screening of **BECOMING MORE VISIBLE**- 3/31 at 2 pm. Reserve seats here.

**Resources and Links**

- PFLAG **Guide to Being a Trans Ally** – A great primer.
- Illinois Safe Schools Alliance: **Gender Inclusion** – Excellent resources for school inclusion.
- GLSEN: **Supporting trans and GNC Students** – Good resources for GSAs and more. Check out the videos.
- GLSEN: **Trans Student Rights** -
- GLSEN: **2017 National Student Climate Survey** – Important data on the state of school environments.
- HRC: **International Transgender Day of Visibility** – Check out the videos
- TRER Trans Student Educational Resources- **Transgender Day of Visibility**

Help love and truth override hate and misinformation. Join me in the journey to get familiar, get comfortable and grow. Help create affirming spaces where you learn, work and live...

In Love and Solidarity,

John
March 2019 | PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois Newsletter

Registration is now open for the 2019 PFLAG National Convention! Join PFLAG members and supporters from across the country at the Kansas City Marriott Downtown from October 25 – 27, 2019 for two full days of skill building, networking, and preparing for 2020.

Visit [https://pflag.org/2019nationalconvention](https://pflag.org/2019nationalconvention) to register and to learn more.

**PFLAG Convention Scholarships**

In an effort to encourage participation, The PFLAG Council is offering scholarships of $225 each to up to 5 members of PCNI chapters in good standing who will attend the 2019 PFLAG National Convention in Kansas City, MO in October 2019. Recipients must register for the conference by the early bird registration deadline of March 29th and must commit to write about their convention experience for publication in Open Doors.

Register at Eventbrite to apply for the scholarship: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/scholarship-registration-for-pflag-conference-we-are-the-change-tickets-57471680343](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/scholarship-registration-for-pflag-conference-we-are-the-change-tickets-57471680343).

If more than 5 people apply for scholarships, then 5 recipients will be determined by a random drawing at the April PCNI meeting. All members can apply. However, the scholarship awards are limited to one per PFLAG family membership.

If you are not already a PFLAG member, be sure to [join PFLAG now](https://pflag.org/join) to be eligible for the scholarship and to get the member discount pricing.

Early bird pricing is $185 for members and $270 for non-members.

Open Doors is looking for art, photography, creative writing, poetry, and anything else imaginative and fun by, for, or about LGBTQ individuals. Send your submissions to: [opendoors@pflagillinois.org](mailto:opendoors@pflagillinois.org)
From PFLAG National

Court Matters

Bans on LGBTQ “Conversion Therapy” for minors remain a priority in the spotlight. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 3rd and 9th Circuits rejected First Amendment challenges to state law banning conversion therapy in New Jersey and California. The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) declined to hear both cases, and no SCOTUS justices noted concern with the rulings. Conversion therapy for minors is illegal in 15 states and DC and in 50 cities and counties. In contrast, a NYC psychotherapist is suing, alleging infringement on his and his patients’ religious faith and freedom of speech because of a new ordinance that protects LGBTQ patients limits on counseling services to LGBT patients that the city disagrees.

The American Bar Association, the nation’s top voluntary bar association for lawyers adopted Resolution 113, taking a stand for LGBT parenting rights in the aftermath of states enacting laws enabling anti-LGBT discrimination in adoption. Read Resolution 113.

Illinois State Matters

Yorke Print Shoppe refuses to publish brochures for Chicago’s LGBT Community Fund because of its religious beliefs. The Fund, ”works toward the vision of a region where Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender residents live responsibly in harmony with all communities, enjoying the same freedoms and quality of life, and with the same opportunity to make the region a better and safer place for all to live.” The Fund will file a complaint with the Illinois Department of Human Rights.

PFLAG Chapter Opportunities!

We start 2019 with some positive initiatives for growth in Northern Illinois. If you or someone you know is interested in getting more involved, please reach out to one of the folks listed below.

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 Carmi Frankovich at PFLAGaurorafoxvalley@pflagillinois.org. Special thanks to Carmi for leading the charge with her positive energy.

PFLAG Chicago Español- There are preliminary discussions 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 Chicago / Hyde Park- There are preliminary discussions about interest in starting a PFLAG Chapter in the Hyde Park area. If you have interest in helping form this chapter, 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. They are currently in search of a facility for their meetings. If you are interested in helping out please send an email to PFLAGromeoville@pflagillinois.org.

PFLAG West Dundee- There is a small core of folks looking to add volunteers to help start a PFLAG chapter to meet at St James’ Episcopal Church, located at 516 Washington St, West Dundee, IL 60118. Thank you Sharon for leading this initiative. If you have interest in helping form this chapter, please contact Sharon Fu at PFLAGwestdundee@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.

Look for opportunities to join in a community outreach activity.
Federal Matters

The President said he would work to “decriminalize homosexuality” around the globe. The initiative was reportedly set to kick off in Berlin, where the U.S. embassy is flying in LGBTQ activists from across Europe for a strategy dinner. The Vice President supported the statement despite past anti-LGBTQ actions as well as his public support of Gay conversion therapy. However, none of the major LGBTQ rights organizations—including PFLAG National—were included in any conversations around the effort and, later in the week, the president seemed not to know anything about his own plan. When asked about his decriminalization plan report by press he responded, “I don't know which report you're talking about. We have many reports.”

CDC issues new fact sheets on HIV's impact in the African-American community. The findings show that in 2017, Blacks/African-Americans represented 13% of the U.S. population but 43% of the new HIV diagnoses (incidence) in the U.S. and its territories. Also, findings show that Black/African-American gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM) are more disproportionately affected by HIV than any other U.S. population, accounting for 26% of the 38,739 new HIV diagnoses in the U.S. in 2017 (incidence). Three of four of these MSM were aged 13-34.

First large-scale NIH clinical trial to study liver transplantation between people with HIV underway across U.S. PFLAG National was among the drafters and supporters of the HIV Organ Policy Equity (HOPE) Act, sponsored by Congresswoman Barbara Lee and which passed in 2013, which made this possible. Stay tuned to PFLAG media channels for progress.

Take Action

Transgender Day of Visibility is on March 31, 2019, and we are proud to partner with some wonderful filmmakers who are making their content available on a sliding scale to PFLAG chapters for their TDOV activities this year.

- **The Most Dangerous Year**: Washington state-based filmmaker—and PFLAGer—Vlada Knowlton has created a much-awarded and must-see documentary about a small group of families with transgender kids who embarked on an uncharted journey of fighting for their children’s lives and futures. Watch the trailer—and schedule your own screening—at the link.

- **America In Transition**: Recently highlighted in the January 31st issue of The PFLAG Voice, this is a trans-led documentary series exploring relationships, family, and social issues with trans people of color. Watch the trailer—and schedule your own screening—at the link.

- **Becoming More Visible**: Filmmaker Pamela French shines a humanizing light on the stories of four fearless transgender young adults, showcasing the crucial importance of having a steady support system—like PFLAG. Watch the trailer—and schedule your own screening—at the link.

Feel free to reach out directly to the filmmakers for more information and, of course, contact us at info@pflag.org for any support you might need for your events.

Disneyland Paris will host its first official LGBTQ “Magical Pride” on June 1, the first day of Pride Month. Though “Magical Pride” events have been held at Disneyland Paris since 2014 and annual “Gay Days” have been celebrated at Disney’s American theme parks since the early 1990s, these have all been unofficial events not formally affiliated with Disney. This year’s event in the French theme park will be the first Pride event officially organized by The Walt Disney Co.
Governor J.B. Pritzker Prioritizes Trans Student Inclusion in Transition Document

On February 8, 2019, Governor Pritzker’s administration published the report for the Educational Success Committee. The report included a section titled “Make every school a safe and welcoming environment for LGBTQ students.”

This section specifically named that “[t]he new administration should encourage the Illinois State Board of Education to provide affirming, student-centered guidance to school districts on how to support LGBTQ students, with an emphasis on gender expansive and transgender students.”

If adopted, model, student-centered guidance would finally give comprehensive guidance to school districts across IL. Because of a current lack of guidance, Illinois school districts currently vary greatly in their practices, leaving students to constantly advocate for themselves and receive different supports based simply on how well they advocate.

Victory in Glen Ellyn - District 87 Adopts an Inclusive Gender Policy!

On February 11, 2019, Glenbard Township High School District 87 Board voted to amend their 7:10 Equal Educational Opportunities Policy to include the following language:

“Students shall be treated and supported in a manner consistent with their gender identity. This shall include but not be limited to; students having access to gendered facilities, including restrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their gender identity.”

District 87 is the fourth-largest high school district in Illinois.

“Students shall be treated and supported in a manner consistent with their gender identity”

Shop using Amazon Smile and support The PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois Click here.
News from PTI North Shore
by Paige Edwards

We had a great turnout at the February meeting, despite the poor weather. A special thank you to Lizzy Appleby for joining us. She shared a lot about what the Youth Services Group of Glenview/Northbrook (YSGN) is doing and I thought it would be helpful to share some notes. See two fliers on Trans Youth and Family Summit and prideCREATE program on the next page - please be sure to read the clarifying notes as to who can attend as it is broader than the flyer may imply.

Lizzy says her favorite thing about her job is helping parents of transgender kids so please don’t hesitate to reach out with questions, etc. Also - this is a really great place if you are looking for opportunities to donate or volunteer your time!

Lizzy.Appleby@ysgn.org
3080 West Lake Ave
Glenview, IL
847 724 2620

Meeting Minutes:

1) YSGN serves N. Suburban Cook/Lake counties - it tends to pull from Evanston up through Lake Forest typically. They have a satellite site in Grayslake. They offer the services listed on the flyer attached (see prideSOCIAL, prideSUPPORT and pride LEAD for more details). They also provide education to schools and training for teachers (when requested) about LGBTQ identities. This can include sex ed support for grades 5-12. I went out there a few weeks ago and got a personal tour. I was so impressed by all that they offer. It’s a place for our kids to find and build community. They also offer some counseling if needed, but it’s mostly about a chance for our kids to find a safe space to just be themselves.

2) All Pride programs are FREE

3) For the Trans Youth and Family Summit, you can attend with OR without your child and it doesn’t matter the age of your child as to if you can attend. There will be a variety of speakers and panels so you can pick what matters to you. A sampling of the types of speakers are: Dr. Schechter (medical panel - expert on transgender clientele); a speaker from Lurie’s; parent speaker; a speaker to talk about gender affirming gear (e.g. binders, packers, etc.) and more. Lunch will be served. Please register on the link shown on the flyer so they know how much food to order.

4) YSGN offers a camp in conjunction with Illinois Safe Schools called Action Camp. It’s for 5 days on the first week of August - about 1 hour away. Your child must apply - cost ranges from $0-$400 depending on need. This camp focuses on advocacy for rising 8th to 12th graders. Please reach out to Lizzy for more info. Her email is listed above.

5) Lizzy shared a few resources that may be helpful to our group:

a. For support with name changes you can reach out to TJLP - Transformative Justice Law Project or www.tjlp.org.

b. Mike Ziri - at Equality IL - knows a great deal about the laws and the changing landscape politically - we may invite him to an upcoming session so we can all learn more.

c. bit.ly/thelistillinois - go here for a good link to resources. This is also posted on the Northern IL PFLAG site and has been updated by our own Andrew Zanevsky. Our members tell us it’s much easier to follow now and has been helpful to many - thanks Andrew.

d. Buffalo Grove has some pride events next weekend if you want to check that out. I believe they have a facebook page called Buffalo Grove Pride.

News from PTI McHenry

At the January meeting, Bob Chikos made a presentation on how to make schools LGBTQ-supportive.
The most affirming part of Lizzy's presentation rang a bell to all of us “PFLAG’ers”: Family Acceptance Project: Evidence based resource for family members: IT’S POSSIBLE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS TO GIVE SUPPORT WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING IT. How do we do that?

- express love
- talk with person about identity
- require other family members to respect that person
- welcome their friends in your home
- connect with role models
- believe that person can have a happy future

(It’s just what we strive to do at PFLAG, right?)

They like to say it’s not so much your loved one is “coming out”, but that your loved one is “inviting us in” to share their gender identity and sexual identity.

Lizzy let us know that all services are FREE. Youth Services is funded through township grants and individual donations.

She wanted to let us know that there will be a TRANS YOUTH AND FAMILY SUMMIT, March 3, 3080 W. Lake Ave, Glenview. More information to come.

They always accept volunteers. You can reach Lizzy at Lizzy.Appleby@ysgn.org; 847-724-2620.

OF COURSE, WE REMINDED ALL TO SEND IN THEIR PFLAG YEARLY DUES!!!!

News from PFLAG Deerfield
by Sue Ginsburg

We were honored to host the Pinta Family from Buffalo Grove: Mom, Carolyn, Dad, Bob and Molly, their 12 year old daughter who was so inspired by attending the Aurora Pride Parade last June, that she decided to work toward organizing one in Buffalo Grove. Molly attends Twin Groves Middle School in Buffalo Grove and with several other students started a GSA called “The Acceptance Club.” Members of the Acceptance Club created a presentation for the faculty, explaining how they want to feel safe and what they need to feel safe in school. The family has created their own Facebook page: "BG Pride 2019" and on it there is a sign up sheet for volunteering for the parade, which will take place June 2. While they are being sponsored by businesses and organizations such as Siemen’s and Eddie Merlot’s restaurant, the Village of Buffalo Grove hasn’t done much to help, other than giving them permission to stage the parade. They have to raise $35,000 to get the Parade off the ground, which will include police, permits, etc. They have a Go Fund Me page and have already raised $26,000.

The Pinta’s have organized several activities around Buffalo Grove to raise awareness and acceptance. A Festival of Diversity is planned after the parade. On May 19, A Royal Rainbow Ball is planned at the Community Art Center in Buffalo Grove, which will be open to all, but will especially honor the LGBTQ youth as kind of a Gay Prom. Tickets have to be purchased, of course. There will even be a drag queen entertaining during dinner!

Meeting this family was absolutely inspiring. They support their daughter and her desire to be who she is and in doing so, want to help all the youth in their area do the same.

REMINDERS:

TRANS YOUTH AND FAMILY SUMMIT, 2019, at Youth Services, 3080 W. Lake Ave, Glenview. For trans and gender expansive youth and family members. Includes workshops for youth and adult activities and lunch. Register at BIT.LY/TYAFS2019

DRAG QUEEN STORY HOUR, at Deerfield Library, Saturday, March 9th at 11 am. Join Masala Sapphire for an hour of stories, songs, and dancing.
**News from PFLAG McHenry**

by Toni Weaver

Four brave souls ventured out in an ice/snow storm to attend the February meeting of PFLAG McHenry. Rather than cancel, meeting leader Bob Chikos opted to hold the meeting in spite of the weather. We have to get away from the mentality that the best meetings are those in which there are many attendees, i.e. playing the numbers game. Frequently people are more open in very small groups, so never judge the quality of a meeting by the number of people who attend. For those four people, the setting was just perfect!

As I had mentioned in an earlier Open Doors article, PFLAG McHenry has been invited to have a seat at the table for the McHenry County Suicide Prevention Task Force for the purpose of raising awareness of how suicide impacts the LGBTQ+ community. The task force’s annual event is a “Walk to Fight Suicide.”

**Event Details**

Walk Date: 04/27/2019  
Walk Location: McHenry High School West Campus - McHenry, IL  
Check-in/Registration Time: 8:00 am  
Walk Begins: 9:00 am  
Walk Ends: 11:00 am

For more information, please contact:  
Contact Name: Patti Hartmann  
Contact Phone: 815-382-4639  
Contact Email: afsp.mchenry@gmail.com

I think that all of us are aware of the tragic loss of the son of our Rockford PFLAG leader last year. Suicide is very real, and as members of PFLAG, we should educate ourselves about suicide prevention. Look for a training called QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer), a 90 minute introduction to behavior that can indicate a suicidal ideation. I understand that this training is widely available. For information please refer to this site: [https://qprinstitute.com/about-qpr](https://qprinstitute.com/about-qpr)

**News from PFLAG Hinsdale**

by Barb Medley

We were delighted to welcome back our guest speaker, Tracy Baim, on Feb 3rd. She talked about her latest book, Gay Press: Gay Power: the Growth of LGBT Community Newspapers in America, and so much more.

Tracy co-founded the Windy City Times in 1985. She brought posters of some of the key front pages of memorable events through the years. The paper told the stories of those fighting for their rights, and battling the AIDS epidemic. It strengthened her resolve to keep speaking out for equality and total acceptance. She remained as publisher of the Windy City Times until recently, when she became the new publisher of The Reader.

Tracy related how important it is for us to tell our stories. She described media history. Henry Gerber, an immigrant who fought in World War I, founded the first gay rights organization and first media publication. In the 1960’s many LGBT writers started their careers in alternative publications, since they were more accepting and valued equality. She highlighted the Advocate, one of the first main publications.

Tracy talked briefly about her hopes to bolster readership of The Reader, including partnering with local media organizations and staffing enhancements. With over 30 years in journalism, Tracy worked hard in Illinois for marriage equality and was inducted into the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association Hall of Fame in 2014. Tracy has written 11 books and also created a trivia game. She brought a couple games with her, and they were quickly snapped up. They are available through Amazon, although at the time she said Amazon had run out. She is thinking of turning the game into a book.

Our speaker for March 3rd will be the Reverend Michael Jones who will talk about his parish, his perspective on how to create a welcoming space for the LGBTQ community within a faith-based organization, and how to reconcile with friends and family who may express religious objections.
News from PFLAG DuPage
by Bernadette & Ron Whitfield

We had a fantastic meeting in February! A large number of enthusiastic attendees welcomed our guest speaker Victor Salvo. Victor is the executive director of the Legacy Project, a Chicago-based nonprofit that informs, inspires, and fosters an appreciation for the role that LGBTQ individuals have played in the advancement of world history, science, technology and culture. Victor is a longtime activist for the LGBTQ community and was named to the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame in 1998.

Ron, Bernadette, John Hickey (who arranged for Victor's visit; thanks John!), and Victor

Victor captivated us with an awesome presentation that showcases the contributions of dozens of LGBTQ icons. He has in-depth and insider stories about many of them. His PowerPoint presentation is eye-catching and informative. Central to his presentation is The Legacy Walk -- an outdoor public display in Chicago that celebrates LGBT contributions to world history and culture. It is the world’s only outdoor museum walk and youth education program dedicated to combating anti-gay bullying by celebrating well-known and not-so-well known LGBT contributions to history. It is the world’s largest collection of bronze biographical memorials.

The Legacy Project was conceived at the National March on Washington for GLBT Civil Rights in 1987. The advent of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, the first recognition of what would become National Coming Out Day (October 11), the first Act Up civil disobedience at the U.S. Supreme Court, and the simple experience of being at the March itself inspired the Legacy Walk’s creators to propose an outdoor LGBT history installation that would leap-frog over the education system which failed to acknowledge and teach about LGBT contributions to world history and culture. The City of Chicago became the logical site because, in 1991, it had established the first Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame to recognize the contributions of Chicago’s LGBT community; and because, in 1998, the City of Chicago had dedicated the "Rainbow Pylon" streetscape on North Halsted Street [9] to define the cultural and business nexus of Chicago's LGBT community. The dedication of the rainbow pylon streetscape brought to an end the eleven-year search for a site to house the outdoor museum. Planning for the Legacy Walk’s creation and fundraising for its launch took 13 years. The inaugural dedication of the Legacy Walk’s first eighteen (18) bronze memorials took place on National Coming Out Day, October 11, 2012 -- exactly 25 years to the day that the idea was first conceived. Each year on the anniversary of its creation, additional bronze memorials are added.

As of 2019 the Legacy Walk consists of thirty-eight bronze memorials, each of which is digitally linked to a cloud-based system accessed either by scanning a QR Code or by activating a microchip on each marker with Near Field Communication technology. This opens a portal in users' smartphones to watch video and download education resources. The Legacy Walk is joined by its cousin - the traveling "Legacy Wall" - which began a state-wide tour in 2015. In 2017 the Legacy Wall began a national tour that has taken LGBT contributions to world history and culture on the road by visiting libraries, high school and university campuses, cultural institutions, civic plazas, and corporate headquarters across the country.

Click these links to learn more about The Legacy Project, The Legacy Wall, and The Legacy Walk. We also learned that guided tours are available. We plan on a group outing when the weather improves. So, stay tuned to this space!

You can also connect with The Legacy Project at https://www.facebook.com/legacyprojectchicago/.

Our guest speaker in March will be Cecilia (Cec) Teresa Hardacker of Howard Brown Health. Howard Brown Health exists to eliminate the disparities in healthcare experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people through research, education and the provision of services that promote health and wellness.

Mark your calendars!
News from PFLAG Ottawa
by Ken Brown

At January’s meeting, 20 attendees had a very positive discussion concerning the Inclusive Curriculum Bill (Illinois HB 246). We shared materials about the bill that were sent to us by Mike Ziri of Equality Illinois. The bill would ensure that the contributions of LGBTQ+ people and events are shared in the history taught in public schools across Illinois. We encouraged each other to contact our legislators and, in doing so, urge them to support the bill.

At our meeting on February 24, we plan on viewing the documentary “Anyone and Everyone.” The documentary is a supportive and inspiring program about parents coming to terms with their child’s coming out. The families included in the program are Mormon, Asian, Indian, Jewish, African-American, Catholic and Puerto Rican.

At our March 24 meeting, our guest speaker will be Rev. Dr. Mary Ann Dier-Zimmerman. Mary Ann will talk about her journey as a transgender woman. She is a licensed counselor and pastor. In her private practice, Mary Ann counsels a number of parents of transgender youth. As part of her presentation, Mary Ann will be talking about the issues these parents face.
**News from PFLAG Oak Park**

by Nancy Johnson

In January, our speaker was Hadeis Safi, Community Outreach Coordinator, of the Potosnak Family Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine at Lurie Children’s Hospital (hsafi@lurieschildren.org, 312-227-2274.) He gave an excellent presentation about gender identity. He stressed the importance of using correct pronouns and told us that if we incorporate giving our preferred pronouns EVERY TIME we identify ourselves, it will become a (good) habit for us to give ourselves to show we are aware that others may use different pronouns and it’s okay with us! It was a good discussion with Hadeis. We recommend him for other chapter meetings.

Our February speaker was to have been Kate Reading from Scouts for All, but she had the flu. Fortunately we had an offer to talk to us from Deb Stracco of Oak Park who talked about her years in the Boy Scouts trying to work from the inside to change rules about gay scouts, and gay or lesbian leaders.

We are looking ahead to Bake Sale day for us at the Oak Park Farmers Market. We are going to try to get some more people to do some baking for us. If anyone reading this is interested in helping with some baked goodies, contact me at njjohnson0907@gmail.com and I’ll send you information. We do not yet know our day for the sale, but we will try for July, August or September.

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**Theatre News**

by David Zak, Executive Director

**Pride Film & Plays**

PFP has a wonderful and moving trans musical coming up with the Chicago premiere of SOUTHERN COMFORT by Julianne Wick Davis and Dan Collins. It is a surprising and stunning work, directed by JD Caudill, with music direction by Robert Ollis.

Comp tickets are available for our opening weekend - Friday and Saturday March 1 and 2, Sunday March 3 at 3:30, and Thursday and Friday March 7 and 8 at 7:30.

To arrange for tickets, email pfptickets@gmail.com with the date of the show, if you want 1 or 2 tickets, and we will confirm your reservation.

It is a wonderful show - unlike any you have seen before.

PRIDE ARTS continues to host Good Neighbor Nights for our new shows the first Friday of any run. Next up is SOUTHERN COMFORT on Friday, March 1 at 7:30. Audience members who live in 60613 can get a ticket for $13 using the code 60613. Code can be used on the phone 866 811 4111 or on line at www.pridefilmsandplays.com. Join us for a moving, funny, and important work for our time!
Calendar at the Center on 3656 N. Halsted, Chicago

LGBTQ Artist Gallery Opening • Friday, March 1st
Center on Halsted • 3656 N. Halsted • 6-8 pm

2nd Floor Gallery • Slobodan Randjelovic
3rd Floor Gallery • Chuck Kramer

About Slobodan Randjelovic
Part of the ongoing series of photo books published by The New Press with the Arcus Foundation and Emerson, Wajdowicz Studios on queer communities around the world, “Lives in Transition: LGBTQ Serbia” is a stunning portrait of a community battling discrimination in Serbia. The photography series will be on display at Center on Halsted launching on March 1, 2019. Learn more >

About Chuck Kramer
I come to photography with a journalist’s eye, looking for the story people tell in their faces, their attire, the way they carry themselves, and things they do. I want my photos to reveal the humanity of my subjects and provide the viewer with a glimpse into someone else’s world. This collection of LGBTQ photos, portraits really, have been shot on the go, capturing people in their day to day lives. Candid and revealing they present men and women, gay and bi, lesbian and trans, and queer too, at moments when they are celebrating who they are—in the clubs, attending pride, and on the street. Learn more >

Opening night reception will include a cash bar, pizza and other bites. No RSVP is required. $5 suggested donation.

From Toni Weaver, PFLAG McHenry: I located the website http://queerkidstuff.com/ through the “It Gets Better Project.” The videos seem geared to younger kids, but some of the activity sheets might be for middle school... I’ll let the educators decide on that one!

Thai Massage for the Transgender Community
Center on Halsted • Sat., Mar. 9 • 11 am - 1 pm
Are you experiencing muscle tension? Are you over-whelmed by stress? Are you seeking new ways to feel better? Come experience a donation-based, 15-20 minute mini-session sampler of Thai Bodywork from Y Healing Arts.

HIV Lunch n’ Learn
Significance of HIV Drug Resistance in the Treatment of HIV-1
Center on Halsted • Fri., Mar. 15 • 2 - 3 pm
Janssen will host a lunch and learn with speaker Kristin Baker, PA. Kristin is an expert in treating the LGBTQ community with a focus on the Transgender community.

Complimentary lunch provided.
**TRANSISTORS**

CURATED BY ARIEL GENTALEN

Feb 21 to Mar 22 // Ralph Arnold Gallery // **FREE**
1020 W. Sheridan Rd., Chicago

Transistors, in a practical sense, are semiconductor devices capable of amplification and rectification. They are ubiquitous in daily life and enhance our abilities to communicate, listen, & quite literally, hear each other. As a trans arts-laborer, I am seeking to find ways for other queer artists and arts-laborers to not only find each other through creating accessible networks for unification and solidarity in a rigorous art world, but to also create a space to openly interrogate frustrating issues facing queer artists and laborers, through dialogues with artists, educators and activists working in Chicago today.

This is primarily NOT an exhibition. It is a living node of connection in hopes of offering needed resources & experiences for a marginalized group of voices within the arts world. On view will be A. Klass’s “TRANS IN PUBLIC” photography series, alongside a reading & resource library. During the run of the project, we will manifest micro studio visits, a writing & research residency, “the chart” with photographer A. Klass, and a series of public programs & dialogues driven by queer artists & thinkers within Chicago that will be recorded, transcribed and archived via a publication.

**RSVP ON FACEBOOK**

**Program Outline (for March)**

Fridays throughout the project
March 1 // March. 8 // March. 15
Trans in residence: A. Gentalen
A writing & research residency to focus on time, masculinity, & trans aesthetics.

March. 2
Masculinity round table
Private convo to be recorded, transcribed, & published in print/online/audio

Artist in Residence: A. Klass
March 7, 12 - 3pm

March 7 - 10
The Chart: queer artists + laborers
10am - 2pm // 5pm - 8pm

March. 15
Queer eye: portfolio reviews
with Amina Ross + A. Gentalen + A. Klass
Closing program (readings)

925 Curator in Residence

Every Friday during the incubator’s run, the curator will be in residence in the space working on researching and exploring the history of trans and queer artists. They plan to utilize this time to write around questions regarding time, masculinity, transgender art & artists.

The curator will also hold micro studio visits on site available via sign up online. 30 minute studio visits with queer artists/students/organizers who need portfolio reviews, research advice, or have art related quandaries. Additional queer curators may be added if interest demands!
In February, The GenderCool Project celebrated its first anniversary. A year ago, in the midst of a national conversation about the rights of transgender youth, two parent advocates came together to unveil a campaign that’s more “show” than “tell.”

The GenderCool Project is an awareness campaign that opens up the conversation around gender in a way the general public can understand. The campaign’s centerpiece chronicles the accomplishments of transgender kids and their young allies across the United States.

At first glance, the effort feels more like a brand campaign than an educational effort, and that’s exactly how founders Jennifer Grosshandler and Gearah Goldstein [the keynote speaker of our Power of Positivity conference last November] intended it. Grosshandler, a marketing veteran and mother of four, including a 12-year-old transgender daughter, says she’s spent a lot of time advancing inclusive school policy in Illinois and traveling the country, studying the optics between transgender youth and the communities they live in. Their family’s own journey with Chazzie, which started when she was a toddler, helped Grosshandler understand the disconnect between who these kids are and how others perceive them.

“The way to build understanding is for people to see just how remarkable these kids are,” said Grosshandler. “There is no lack of stories about the difficulties these young folks are going through, but I’ve met so many powerful, smart, talented young people. They are musicians, athletes, future politicians, business leaders, Broadway actors, and I’m asking ... ‘Who’s telling their stories?’”

Goldstein, a nationally recognized subject matter expert and mother helping to bridge a deeper understanding about gender and its impact on communities, has seen for herself the power of sharing her own experience. “Those who have never met someone who identifies as a transgender person are more likely to harbor fear and bias,” said Goldstein. “My job as a connector and proud transgender person is to guide them to an informed place of understanding and to discover the difference between an opinion and a real life experience. With the launch of GenderCool, we get out of the way as adults and let these amazing young people inspire others by showing their real life experiences and accomplishments.”

Experts are learning the number of young people who identify as transgender or gender nonconforming in the United States is exponentially higher than previously thought. A study from the University of
Minnesota published in *Pediatrics* looked at students in ninth and 11th grade and estimated that nearly 3 percent are transgender or gender nonconforming, meaning they don’t always self-identify as the sex they were assigned at birth. The study is an analysis of a 2016 statewide survey of almost 81,000 Minnesota teens. Nearly 2,200 identified as transgender or gender nonconforming.

“when they see these stories, they will understand that these kids and their families are not so different than their own”

This percentage is markedly higher than a study released in 2017 by the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law. This study found that in the United States, there is an estimated 150,000 youth age 13 to 17 who identify as transgender. This represents roughly .7% of this age group nationally. The study, titled *Age of Individuals Who Identify as Transgender in the United States*, is the first to provide population estimates for youth who identify as transgender in each of the 50 states, plus the District of Columbia.

GenderCool launched in February 2018 to coincide with the one-year anniversary of the federal government rescinding its guidance to fully protect and support transgender students in public schools and other schools receiving federal funds.

“The actions on the federal level have had an unintended and inspiring consequence,” said Goldstein. “We’ve seen school districts, businesses and communities on the state level come together to stand for the fundamental civil rights of these amazing young people and their families.”

In spite of the positive momentum, the founders are well aware of the work ahead. “This campaign is about reaching the millions of people who continue to be conflicted about what they read and hear about our children and the families raising them,” adds Grosshandler. “They are seeing a steady drumbeat of inaccurate, negative news about transgender youth. We want to speak directly to them because we know when they see these stories, they will understand that these kids and their families are not so different than their own.”

About The GenderCool Project

The GenderCool Project is a national awareness campaign and 501c3 that brings to life the stories of remarkable transgender young people. The campaign offers dynamic video content series highlighting charismatic young people; positive messaging around the topic of gender highlighted through engaging website and social media platforms; powerful family story video, told for the first time by one of the founding families; and Team GenderCool, a movement to build power and strength while doing good for others. For more information, please visit [www.gendercool.org](http://www.gendercool.org)

*GenderCool founders
Jen Grosshandler and Gearah Goldstein*
GenderCool is one of a handful of non-profits that the 38TH Annual Proud to Run Chicago is Officially spotlighting and raising money for in their race this June 29th. This is the largest LGBTQ race in Chicago, which attracts approximately 2,000 runners, walkers plus loads of spectators and volunteers. It kicks off Chicago Pride Week.

This is the link to the race.

This is the link to how to register to become a Team GenderCool runner/walker.

GenderCool will have 5 GenderCool Champions in town because they are being flown in by Chicago corporations who have asked the campaign to present to their thousands of employees as part of Chicago Pride Week. This is happening the 2 to 3 days leading up to the race. A cool kids' ally organization called Gratitude Generation will be volunteering/running/walking with GenderCool.

Jen Grosshandler says: “We are going to have the chance to go up on stage at the end of the race, fire up the crowd and my dream would be to fill that stage with our kids and their families. Talk about an incredible and impactful moment. Think of the video content and powerful still shots!! We would love nothing more than to have as many PFLAG families and their glorious transgender and non-binary kiddos standing proudly, being lifted up by the crowds there. Affirming!!!!!”

PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois encourages its members to join GenderCool on the day of the Proud to Run race.

LGBTQ Books

My Journey Sally to Shay by Shay Robertson

Book review by Sam Nelson

Sally to Shay is a book I strongly recommend to transgender allies, advocates, those in transition looking for inspiration, to medical professionals, to those in educational fields and to the parents of transitioning ftm (afab) and non-binary children.

Sally to Shay is a short but extremely powerful read that tells the story of one person’s journey to becoming their truest and most authentic self. The book is laid out in sections of Shay’s life beginning with the chapters about Sally the person Shay was thought to be but never really was. The book goes on to describe childhood trauma, family background, loss, birth, relationships and his struggles with identity.

One of the most profound moments in the book is when Shay, who was living as Sally in a lesbian relationship with a woman named Julie is asked “You want to be a man, don’t you?”. Shay responds to Julie “Yes”. Julie then says one of the most beautiful things, “It doesn’t matter to me whether you are man or woman. I want you for you”. It is from that point forward that the book shifts from the life of
Books by Brian Anthony Kraemer

The author wrote to Open Doors: 
Both [books] are revelations of my life experiences shared openly and unashamedly. My accounts are, at times, shocking, but not to be provocative, only to tell the truth. When I'm open and honest, I find others are able to be open and honest as well.

The first is entitled, "Why I Slept With My Therapist, How One Gay Man Tried to Go Straight," It details a two-year period of my life from 1998 to 1999 in which I sought a professional Christian therapist to try to go straight.

The second book, I just published two weeks ago, details the first twenty years of my life and is entitled, "Spring, the First Twenty Years, My Memoirs." I was molested by an uncle at ages eight and nine. I had obsessive-compulsive disorder, and grew up Roman Catholic, the full combo!

In Summary, Sally to Shay is a story of trauma, triumph, evolution, truth and love that I think anyone can benefit from reading. I especially recommend this book those wishing to be better allies, better parents to trans youth, better educators and better medical professionals. I also recommend this book to anyone who likes a love story as the love Julie and Shay have is most certainly one of the strongest I have had the privilege of knowing.

Click here to find My Journey Sally to Shay on Amazon. Please remember the book is being shipped from the UK so delivery takes about 2 weeks.

Stonewall: A Building. an Uprising. a Revolution

From Toni Weaver, PFLAG McHenry:

PFLAG! Take a look at this new children’s book, written to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Stonewall! I'm getting it for my grandbabies!!! I discovered it while reading an article in the NYT on covertly gay children’s books, the books we either grew up with or read to our kids.

From Rob Sanders, author of the acclaimed Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag, comes this powerful and timeless true story that will allow young readers to discover the rich and dynamic history of the Stonewall Inn and its role in the LGBTQ+ civil rights movement—a movement that continues to this very day. In the early-morning hours of June 28, 1969, the Stonewall Inn was raided by police in New York City. It would be the night when empowered members of the LGBTQ+ community began to protest and demand their equal rights as citizens of the United States.
Hello Friends! I would like to share information about another organization near and dear to my heart – Pinta Pride. Pinta Pride was founded by the Pinta family; Carolyn, Bob and Molly who reside in Buffalo Grove. Pinta Pride began as Carolyn and Bob's daughter Molly shared her coming out journey with her parents and the world in an effort to increase LGBTQ acceptance and awareness among young audiences in the Buffalo Grove and surrounding suburbs.

After attending the Pride parade in Aurora Molly dreamed of having a similar family friendly parade in Buffalo Grove. That's when pintaprideproject.com was formed.

The Pinta's have done an excellent job of understanding all members of the LGBTQ + community and have made so many special efforts to raise their own awareness and the awareness of others to the transgender community.

The group has hosted many Q&A's on how to be better Allies/Advocates to the trans community, hosted marches in support, has hosted a TDOR vigil and recently partnered with Youth Outlook in hosting a viewing of Trans the movie. I am truly proud of how far the Pintas have come in support the LGBTQ + community.

Pinta Pride has some really fun events coming up such as a dinner gathering at Eddie Merlots, A Queer Prom in May for 14-19 year olds and of course the parade on June 2nd.

I wanted to invite you all to join the BG Pride 2019 Facebook group so you can be briefed on the many upcoming events the Pinta's are hosting.

I also offer this up as an opportunity to become involved in by volunteering to help with promoting the parade, with parade set up/ clean up and by helping with fundraising.

Please join BG Pride 2019 Facebook group and check out pintaprideproject.com for more information.