



JD Johnson, *Desire*, see pp 13-16 for more works

August 2019 | PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois Newsletter

opendoors@pflagillinois.org

Monthly Open Doors

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President 2-3, National 4, Links 4, Chapter News 5-11, Theater 11, Book 11, Events 12, Art 13-16

President's Column

Do you have a Passion for PFLAG? Volunteer!

You are more ready than you think.

One of the biggest challenges in volunteer organizations is keeping the flow of leadership to sustain the organization. And PFLAG shares this challenge. At all levels - the Chapter level, the Council level and even at the National level, there are many leadership positions required to sustain the organization. Sadly, we have lost chapters and currently have some chapters struggling to find folks who feel ready or willing to step up to the challenge. Assuming a leadership role can seem a daunting task. But I believe it can be the most rewarding challenge you'll ever accept.

I understand, it can be extremely intimidating to think about becoming an officer or a chapter leader within the group. I know! I didn't feel ready, qualified or even think I had the time when I was first approached to consider a more active role at PFLAG. It was only a few months since my first meeting and already, I was being approached about being a part of the leadership board and to consider becoming an officer. I remember thinking: "That can't happen. I'm not ready. I have very limited experience. I don't really have time. Aren't there others better prepared than me..." I was afraid and nervous. That was true for me and for many other PFLAG leaders that I have heard from over the years. Almost no-one felt they were ready. Almost no-one felt they had the time. But we all have the same number of hours in a day and we find time for the things that are important to us. The truth is, if we wait until we are ready or if we wait until the right time, we will be waiting forever. If someone approaches you with a request, then it is very likely that you have



what it takes to succeed. The key ingredient is a passion for helping others and making the world a better place. If you have passion, you are ready to start with the tools that you have. You will soon find that there is larger community out there to support you and that you will quickly acquire more tools and talents as you go along your journey.

While it does take time and energy, volunteer leadership has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. It helps develop new skills and builds a broader network of co-workers and friends. It provides the opportunity to go into the community and engage others and help create more inclusive and affirming homes, workplaces, schools and communities. Volunteer and turn your ideas into meaningful actions. It has enriched my life and can enrich yours too. Don't wait. If you have the passion, be open to the challenge. You'll be glad you did.

Volunteer!

In Love and Solidarity,

John





Registration is still 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> to register and to learn more.

PFLAG Chapter Opportunities!

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PFLAG Homer Glen / Lockport - Welcome to our newest PFLAG Chapter in Northern Illinois!

PFLAG HGL held their first meeting in June. They meet on the last Tuesday of the month at Cross of Glory, 14719 W. 163rd, Homer Glen, IL. To get involved or to be added to their email list, email PFLAGhgl@pflagillinois.org.

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 Bolingbrook - Kris and Peter Shulman are moving forward with plans for a Bolingbrook Chapter. They have secured a meeting location and hope to begin meetings in the Fall. If you are interested in helping out or being added to their email list, please send an email to PFLAGbolingbrook@pflagillinois.org.

PFLAG West Dundee - Plans are also moving forward with plans to start a West Dundee PFLAG chapter. They plan to meet at St James' Episcopal Church, located at 516 Washington St, West Dundee, IL 60118. Planning meetings are on the first Saturday at 1:30 pm. Thank you Sharon for leading this initiative. If you have interest in helping form this chapter or want to be added to their email distribution list, please contact Sharon Fu at PFLAGwestdundee@pflagillinois.org

Inquiries have also been made regarding starting Chapters in: **Mt. Prospect, Evanston, Waukegan and Edgebrook in Chicago**. Email info@pflagillinois.org to be connected with the folks who are looking into starting these chapters.

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

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From PFLAG National

TAKE ACTION

Deadline: August 13th - Tell HHS to keep LGBTQ+ nondiscrimination in the ACA

We need your PFLAG family voice to weigh in with the Administration because nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people and families in current law is at risk. As reported previously in Policy Matters, the Trump Administration on June 14th published a proposed rule to roll back existing nondiscrimination protections now included in the Health Care Rights Law of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), called Section 1557.

Please submit your comment without delay; LGBTQ+ lives, healthcare and health insurance access depend on you:

1. Visit www.ProtectTransHealth.org
2. Follow the simple instructions there: begin with your personal story of why retaining nondiscrimination in health care for LGBTQ+ people matters to you and your family
3. Email dsanchez@pflag.org (or call directly at 202.657.6997) if you want help

Background:

The proposed rule by HHS seeks to revoke existing protections for LGBTQ+ people and other communities currently protected by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations.

This rule would severely threaten transgender people's access to all forms of health care, undermine access to care for women and other people with reproductive health needs, make it harder for people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) to access health care, and curtail nondiscrimination protections for everyone by attempting to severely limit their scope, people's access to information about their rights, and ability to enforce them.

As part of this rollback, the administration has opened a mandated 60 day period for comments on the proposed rule. This comment period closes on August 13, 2019. The administration is required to respond to the comments it received and may not implement this new rule until 60 days after the comment period has closed. At this time, anti-discrimination protections under the Health Care Rights Law are still the law of the land.

Visit www.ProtectTransHealth.org to share your story and tell the Trump administration that the new proposal will make it harder for LGBTQ people to access life-saving care.

Links

Trans Lifeline - the first transgender-specific hotline in the United States: 877-565-8860

Garfield Park Behavioral Hospital at 520 N. Ridgeway Ave, Chicago has opened a new program called [Polaris](#). It's an inpatient psychiatric unit (18-bed) where gender and sexual minority adolescents can receive affirming psychiatric care and help addressing identity.

For more information click [here](#).

[Who are you?](#) – a touching blog article by Rich Bentel about his transgender son

8-minutes [video montage](#) by John Hickey of photos from the Chicago Pride Parade 2019 taken by Mary Ann Hickey and Ron Whitfield. Click on this picture to see the whole [photo album](#):



IT GETS BETTER PROJECT.

Visit the [It Gets Better Project site](#) to read a stream of inspiring stories shared by LGBTQ+ people. Share your own story. Visit [Get Help](#) page to find LGBTQ+ youth support services in your community. Sign the pledge to commit to a world where all LGBTQ+ young people are free to live equally and know their worthiness and power as individuals!



PFLAG is coming to Bolingbrook

by Kristin & Peter Shulman

We live in Naperville and are active members of PFLAG DuPage and have represented PFLAG DuPage at resource fairs held in local schools and similar venues, and the **Bolingbrook Pride Picnic** in northern Will County. In discussions with parents, educators, guidance counselors, school nurses, and other public agency employees, it quickly became apparent that there was a lot of interest in a PFLAG chapter serving the Bolingbrook and Romeoville area. Recognizing that the PFLAG DuPage chapter meetings were inconvenient for families and individuals in this area, we decided to devote the time and effort to start a new PFLAG chapter in or around Romeoville or Bolingbrook. The Valley View School District (CUSD 365U) has made remarkable progress accommodating its LGBTQ+ students in recent years and its community outreach staff encouraged us.

Both of us have a lot of experience with volunteer and non-profit entities and also have work experience that lends itself to founding and growing an organization. We were stymied, however, when it came to finding a place to hold the meetings. We had offers to meet in local schools and municipal facilities. Very nice facilities, but as we came to realize, some were just too public, others did not accommodate food. Peter and I were concerned about how people who might not yet be out in their communities would feel about meeting in very public places. Plus, PFLAG meetings are all about the fellowship that comes from sharing a snack together. In addition, we were not familiar with which local churches might be willing to host us. Finding a place to meet was going to take much more time than we anticipated—and it put everything else on hold.

Fortuitously, a member of PFLAG DuPage mentioned our dilemma to a therapist friend who practices in Bolingbrook and is familiar with PFLAG meetings. He said he had space in his office and we immediately took him up on his offer to check it out. It proved to be too small—especially if our attendance took off. While we were there, he mentioned that his church, the

Friendship United Methodist Church in Bolingbrook, had become more welcoming towards the LGBTQ+ community and might be interested in hosting PFLAG meetings. He agreed to ask the pastor on our behalf and a connection was made. We met with Pastor Anna who believes everyone is deserving of God's love and welcomed our use of the church's space. Considering recent decisions with the denomination's hierarchy and her desire for the Friendship United Methodist Church to become a place that welcomed everyone, she thought the timing was perfect. We left feeling very excited about the prospect of a relationship with Friendship United Methodist Church in Bolingbrook and a new PFLAG chapter.

The Valley View School District has made remarkable progress accommodating its LGBTQ+ students in recent years

We're back on track! We have a president, secretary, treasurer, three board members at large, and are in the process of filing the necessary paperwork (i.e. by-laws, affiliation papers, IL non-profit incorporation) with PFLAG National to obtain their approval & endorsement for a new PFLAG chapter. Our board, unofficial at this time, had its first meeting last weekend. We have a dynamic and committed group who are looking forward to our first meeting in October (pending chapter approval). We're using PFLAG DuPage's meeting structure as a model; we have topics for the first three months and a speaker for our first meeting. We'll be prioritizing fellowship and LGBTQ+ 101; helping our new members to get to know each other and to understand basic issues and matters confronting LGBTQ+ families, friends, and community. It's going to be an exciting fall.



News from PFLAG DuPage

by Bernadette & Ron Whitfield

We had a wonderful turnout at our July meeting to welcome Danny Julius, *Transcend Program* Assistant at *Youth Outlook*. About 40 people attended. It was the first PFLAG meeting for 6 of them.

In his presentation [Social-Work-info.pdf](#) Danny outlined the services provided by Youth Outlook: drop in centers for LGBT youth, advocacy, family Support, and community education. He defined 3 basic terms: transgender, gender non-conforming (GNC), and Non-Binary. He used the Gender Unicorn graphic to explain the differences between gender identity, gender expression, sex assigned at birth, physical attraction, and emotional attraction. More importantly, Danny shared his journey with us. We learned, for example, that trans masculine individuals are at high risk in the first 6 months or so of experiencing severe depression and suicidal thought after starting testosterone therapy. It is strongly advisable for them to obtain counseling. He also mentioned the difficulty of finding an understanding physician for issues that are not trans related. Danny has many experiences that help him to counsel trans youths. He came out at age 16, changed his name, began hormone treatment, and has had surgery. He spoke articulately and openly about his experiences. Danny graciously shared 10 “fact sheets” of particular interest to transgender individuals ([Topics-for-transgender-individuals-to-consider.pdf](#)).

Before Danny spoke, we conducted business. We reminded attendees of the *PFLAG National Convention* in October; announced the availability of the July (and earlier) issue of *Open Doors* on the Council Website; called for volunteers to serve as officers (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) in the next fiscal year; invited everyone to participate in the next executive committee meeting (Saturday, July 27, 9 am, St. Paul Lutheran Church); asked for help at Fellowship on the Lawn at St. Paul, 10 am, on Sunday, August 4 (our way of saying thanks to the St. Paul community for graciously allowing us to use their facility for the past 16 years); and asked for help at *Hope Presbyterian Church's Diversity*



Danny Julius (center) with Bernadette and Ron Whitfield

Picnic and the Youth Outlook Family Picnic on Saturday, August 17.

We also gave advance notice of the *Equality Illinois Fahrenheit Chicago* event on Sunday, August 25; and *Naperville's Labor Day Parade* on Monday, September 2. (A PDF version of our program can be viewed or downloaded at [DuPage 2019-July-Program.pdf](#).)

Please let us know if you can help with any of these events.

One more item: we submitted an “ad” to the March 2019 edition of *Youth Connection Magazine* (https://issuu.com/edgemarketing/docs/ycmag_du_page_march2019_issuu?e=2028139/67946757) published by the *DuPage County Prevention Leadership Team (PLT)*. It is a half-page ad that appears on page 22. We plan to submit a full-page ad for the next issue. The PLT is an important community resource. You can learn more about it at <http://www.dupageplt.org>.



News from PFLAG Aurora/Fox Valley

by Tom Purl

We were very fortunate this month to have multiple guests of honor. First, we celebrated the accomplishments of Lynn and Llona Steele who have helped lead the Aurora PFLAG chapter for many years. They are "retiring" from their leadership roles but will still be attending meetings to support their loved ones and community when possible.

We also discussed the future of the Aurora PFLAG chapter with John Hickey, the current president of the PFLAG council of Northern Illinois and someone who has advocated strongly to keep the Aurora/Fox Valley chapter going. He encouraged non-executive members of the chapter to consider running for a position and discussed how rewarding the experience of helping a chapter can be.

We also discussed our favorite memories of previous Pride parades, including the most recent Aurora Pride parade. This was a first Pride parade for some of our newer members! Some others in the group also attended the Chicago Pride parade and were part of the Mom Hugs group. Many stories were shared about the joy we felt supporting our loved ones and community.

One of our members also discussed how he was contacted by a friend who needed help talking to his kids about a relative who had recently come out as a trans woman. The member then also discussed how his involvement in PFLAG has helped him be able to help others learn from his experience and how grateful he is for the opportunity to help other families.

We also had the pleasure of meeting Pam Trice who heads the OASIS Connection group for the LGBTQ community around issues of faith. The group is hosted at the First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn with the mission of creating connections between the LGBTQ community, allies and welcoming churches. You can find more information about the group here:

<https://fccge.org/oasis-lgbt-group/>



News from PFLAG Hinsdale by Barb Medley

Since our July meeting fell on the holiday weekend, we did not have a speaker. Our August 4th speaker is Sandra Wagner. She is a transgender woman and will present a workshop called "*Transgender 101 – Trans Information for the Non-Trans Community.*" This is an important and essential education topic for our members. Sandra is also the author of the book *Bobby the Aardvark*.



News from PTI Northshore

by Paige Edwards

We will have a featured speaker on August 18th. Kyle Bullock from Garfield Park Behavioral Hospital will share information about their program.

This past October, Garfield Park Behavioral Hospital opened the country's first LGBTQ adolescent (12-17) inpatient psych unit, called [Polaris](#). Located on Chicago's Westside, we work with young people whose psychiatric emergency is somehow related to their LGBTQ identities. We have received very positive feedback from our patients like how Polaris is the first hospital that used a patient's chosen name and pronoun.

As the only psychiatric hospital supporting LGBTQ youth in an intentional and evidenced-based manner, they would like to come share a bit more about the work that they do with our group.

Please RSVP if you are coming on 8/18 to hear more about Polaris. I'd like to make sure we have a decent showing to make the trip worth Kyle's time. As it's summer, I know attendance can be lighter and so if many aren't free, I will consider rescheduling, but I hope this works – it may be timely as our kids head back to school.



Kyle Bullock

News from PFLAG Deerfield

by Sue Ginsburg

First, I want to thank Ann McCauliff for participating in the panel discussion of the movie *The Most Dangerous Year*, shown at the Wilmette Theatre on Thursday, July 18. The showing was sponsored by Youth Services of Glenview/Northbrook and there was a great crowd there. It's the story of 5 families with transgender young children and how they fought for their civil rights in Washington State.

Don't miss it!!! This documentary won an award at the *Sundance Film Festival*.

We all were so touched by the frank and welcome help of one another

We did not have a speaker this month, but we did welcome two new families and our discussion lasted the entire two hours. Hardly anyone got up for snacks! I think it makes us realize that having a speaker every month may not be the best way to go. Allowing quality time for substantive discussion and support can be even more important than listening to a speaker. So, we will definitely be re-evaluating our scheduling.

I want to thank the new members and “regulars” for being so open and supportive. We all were so touched by the frank and welcome help of one another. It feels good to know that we offer advice from our own experiences....as we never claim to be “therapists”. Yet somehow, those experiences help one another in ways that can't be explained.

So, I thank all of you who came this month. Looking forward to August!



News from PFLAG McHenry

by Toni Weaver

The parades continue! For the 13th consecutive year, PFLAG McHenry had an active presence in the Crystal Lake Independence Day Parade. Thanks to the fantastic work of our chapter's parade coordinator, Cate Becker, and her awesome team, Michele and Bob Disselhorst, we proudly trooped the colors of the pride and transgender flags through the streets of Crystal Lake. The rainbow families lining the parade route mouthed their silent "thank-you's" as we passed by. I often wonder how many still-closeted young people see us and are heartened by our presence. I wonder, too, how many of the parents who turn their backs as we pass will someday discover that they, too, have LGBTQ kids...?

PFLAG National in conjunction with Verizon produced a short video for Pride Month – *Love Calls Back*. We used this video to open our July meeting, setting the tone for the meeting. What a beautiful introduction for our "new" parents!

In June the McHenry Public Library sponsored an event at *Just for Fun*, our local roller rink, and called the evening *Skate the Rainbow*. I was truly amazed at the turnout, especially among the "young" folks. Two of

our PTI members donned skates and joined the fun while two others of us were content to watch from the sidelines! Be sure to check out the picture of Raina and Allison!



Raina and Allison

"I often wonder how many still-closeted young people see us and are heartened by our presence"



Bob, Courtney, and Mary



Andy and Zoey



Michele, Bob, and Cate



News from PFLAG Tinley Park

by Kathy King

PFLAG Tinley Park has been really busy this summer letting people know who we are, what we do, and where we meet! We were privileged to attend five Pride events throughout the south suburbs: Mokena Instill Pride, Kankakee Pride, Flossmoor Pride, Lighthouse Pride, and Joliet Pride. We handed out 2000 Safe Space cards, 1000 PFLAG Tinley Park stickers, and untold numbers of beaded safety pins and PFLAG Equality Starts with Me stickers. We also took our new #PFLAGTinleyParkLovesMe photo frame to Mokena and got great pictures of people who stopped by our tent! Whether it was rain or shine, we left every event excited about being PFLAGers and

making a difference.

Our Chapter is also participating in the Tinley Park Chamber of Commerce *Musical Chairs* program. The Chamber of Commerce solicited musical themed designs for wooden ladderback chairs and the design created by our extremely talented Media Chair, Diane Kaffka, was selected! Our chair design is LGBT musicians. In the spirit of the game Musical Chairs, all of the chairs will be rotated from business to business around the community and is another way to let the community know about PFLAG's presence.



MAKING A
DIFFERENCE



News from PFLAG Oak Park

by Nancy Johnson

We have been busy this summer. Day in our Village in June was a big success. We were next to Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association (now known as OPALGA+.) We gave out about 500 pins and were able to talk to many people.

Our bake sale date has been set on August 31. **We need additional bakers.** If you want to contribute a baked goody, contact Nancy at njjo907@gmail.com. The bake sale is in conjunction with the *Oak Park Farmers Market* in the Pilgrim Church parking lot at the corner of Lake Street and Elmwood in Oak Park.

THEATER NEWS



ALL THAT HE WAS

A brand-new version of the award-winning 1993 AIDS-themed musical [ALL THAT HE WAS](#) opens on August 12, 2019 at [Pride Arts Center](#).

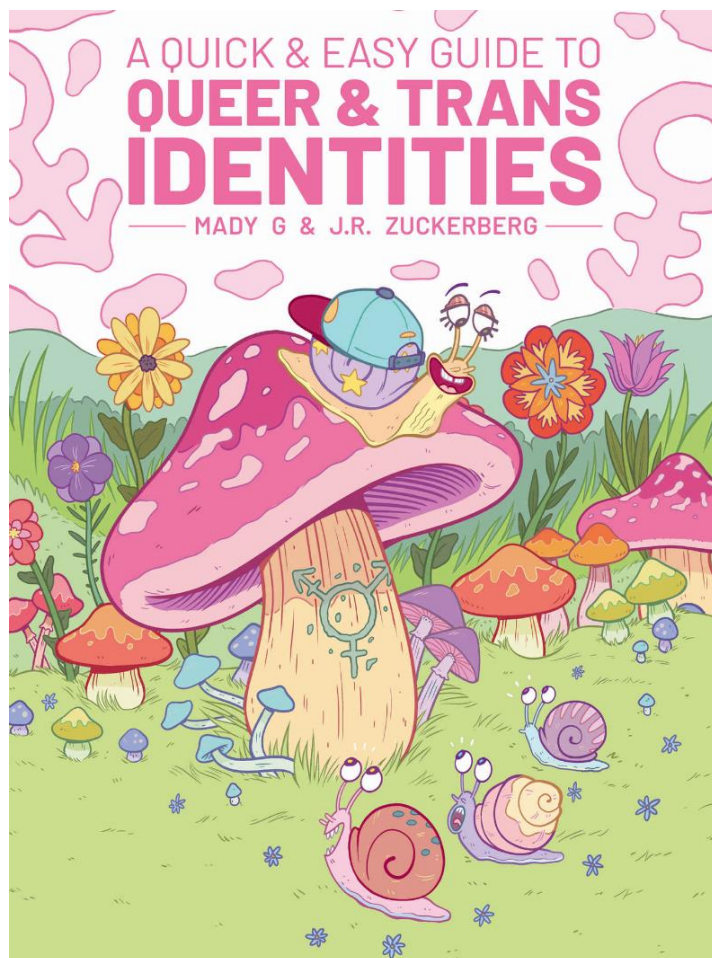
LGBTQ BOOK REVIEW

Recommendations for your Rainbow Library
by Jackie Frett

Mady G. and J.R.Zuckerberg's [Quick and Easy Guide to Queer and Trans Identities](#) takes us on an adventure with sproutlings and queer snails as our guide.

This delightfully illustrated, bubble gum hued, graphic novel educates about gender expression, dysphoria, asexuality, coming out, and more. It is a funny educational book that makes information about queer and trans identities accessible to readers as young as 12 but a valuable read for all ages.

I think this tiny, less than 100 pages, book is a must read and a must have for schools, therapists and libraries.





The Big Sexy Queer Scavenger Hunt

Center on Halsted • Sat., Aug. 3 • 4 - 8 pm

We're taking the streets of Lakeview for a big, sexy, QUEER scavenger hunt! The Hunt will start at 5pm and will end on Center on Halsted's rooftop deck with food and drinks as well as winner and prize announcements. Explore the gayborhood and its sites that are on the Scavenger Hunt, be a part of something fun and active, support local businesses, and learn about the various unknowns from pieces such as the Legacy Walk Icons and more!

[RSVP HERE >](#)



Wrong Way Journey

One Woman Show + Panel Discussion

Center on Halsted • Sat., Aug. 10 • 6 pm

Wrong Way Journey is a story about a young woman who as a result of a traumatic experience is forced out of naiveté into a journey towards healing, wholeness, and liberation. Along the way she grapples with her spirituality and sexuality as she learns how to adjust to, accept, and reject the world's ideas and expectations of women's sexual behavior. This is one queer woman's story..

[RSVP HERE >](#)



Taste of Diversity

Center on Halsted • Thur., Aug. 15 • 5:30 pm

Join the chefs, alumni and students of the Center on Halsted's Silver Fork culinary arts and job readiness program as they present tasting samples from a diverse cultural landscape as well as tasty bites from community partner restaurants. Event will have food stations and wine pairings.

[RSVP HERE >](#)



Counter Balance

The Power of Integrated Dance

Center on Halsted • Sat., Sept. 7 • 7:30 pm and Sun., Sept. 8 • 3:30 pm

A unique dance showcase featuring "integrated" dance choreography and performances by accomplished artists with and without disabilities-returns to Chicago for the ninth consecutive year.

[RSVP HERE >](#)

Art by JD Johnson

Art had been a part of my life since I was young, though it was never my main interest. I had always wanted to dance or sing or act and I thought I might be better at those interests than I was at art. I wanted to be a realist, and though I was a decent, I was not good enough to make a mark as one. And I had no interest to expand my horizons into other art forms.

After University [BA in Psychology from the University of Arizona in 1976], I started doing Community Theatre. Though I had no formal dance training, I showed an aptitude for it. My voice was decent, and I could play a role. But my interest was to play roles that had some meat. And the competition in legitimate theatre was fierce in Chicago. I always looked too young for the roles I auditioned for, and though I was probably not good enough, they always complimented me on what I did.



In 1979 I moved to the Oakland side of the bay Area and got involved in the Punk movement. It was so liberating to me, so full of the visceral but yet had enough artifice and theatrics to make me interested. I felt it was more performance art than the musicals I had done, and I liked pushing the envelope in that way. I ended up working the front desk of an amazing hair salon, which became the backbone of my work life ever since, and just going to concerts, gay and punk clubs and experiencing both cultures. And I started drawing again. Still not thinking that it was something I could pursue. Just did them for my own pleasure. But I started pushing the lines a little bit, distorting the design, opening my art up. But still did not break down any barriers like I was doing with the rest of my life.

In 1981 I moved back to Chicago and found myself a fish out of water. I couldn't go back to doing musicals and didn't have much in common with my friends from theatre anymore. So, I eventually started training with Joel Hall Studios. I loved the classes and improved dramatically as a dancer. But something still was not really connecting. Then I met Nana Shineflug. Started taking classes from her and then joined her company. It was Modern Dance and I loved it. She taught me how to concentrate and use my energy and also how to let my body work the best way it could. And I thought my career was made. This is what I was supposed to do. I found my calling. But it wasn't meant to be my path. A structural back issue caused me to cut short my dance career. Although I boxed the emotions up and tried to forge ahead, I really stagnated. I was just pretty lost.



The Garden In My Mind Where Souls Visit

I went to Europe for a few months, came back and really just cut myself off from any sort of arts community.

It was at this time that I decided to start to paint. I had been drawing throughout this time, but finally picked up a paintbrush. And I have been painting ever since. I still do not get the same satisfaction as I got with dance, and I suppose it was unfair of me to expect it from a medium that is not really physical like dance. But I did develop a technique that gave me the illusion of physical movement.

I feel as though I am an expressionist. I paint emotions. Though I do still have graphic qualities to many of my paintings, I feel what I paint exists beyond the form. My goal when someone sees a painting of mine is that they feel.

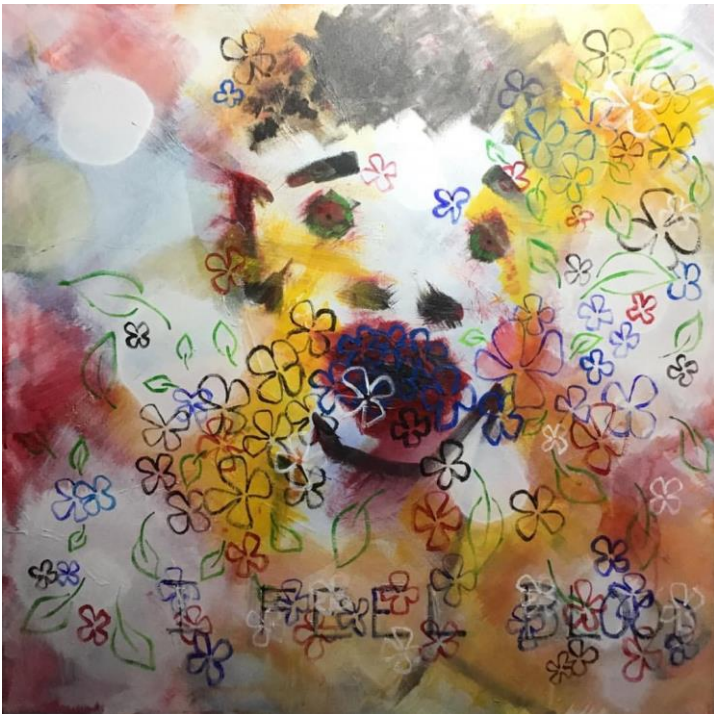
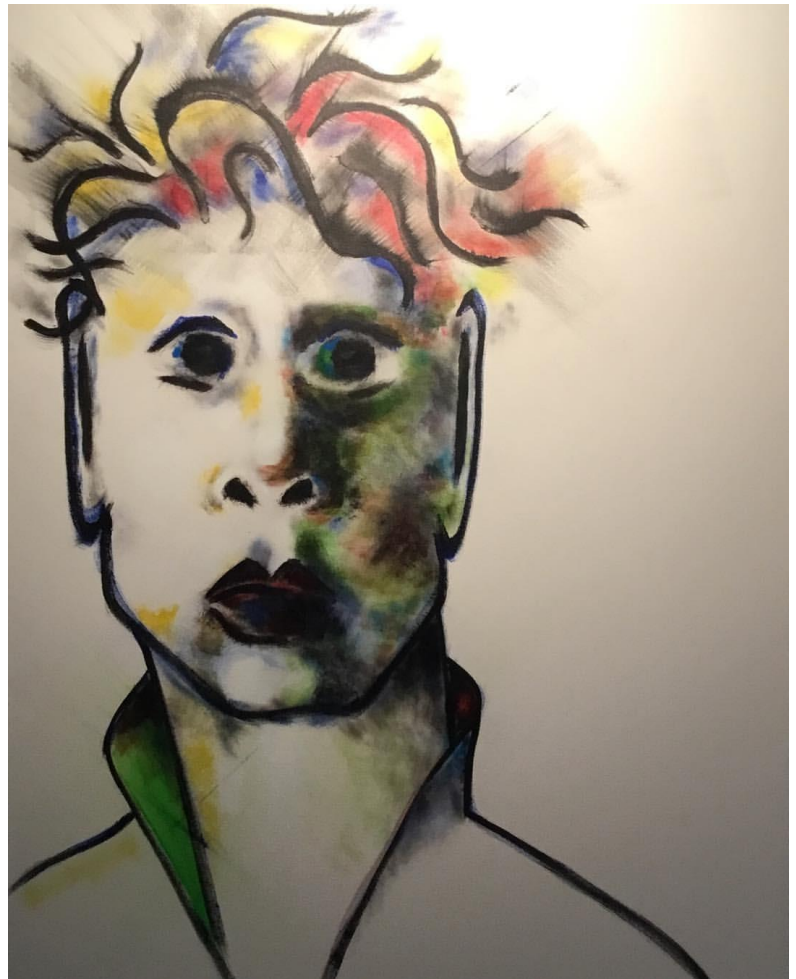
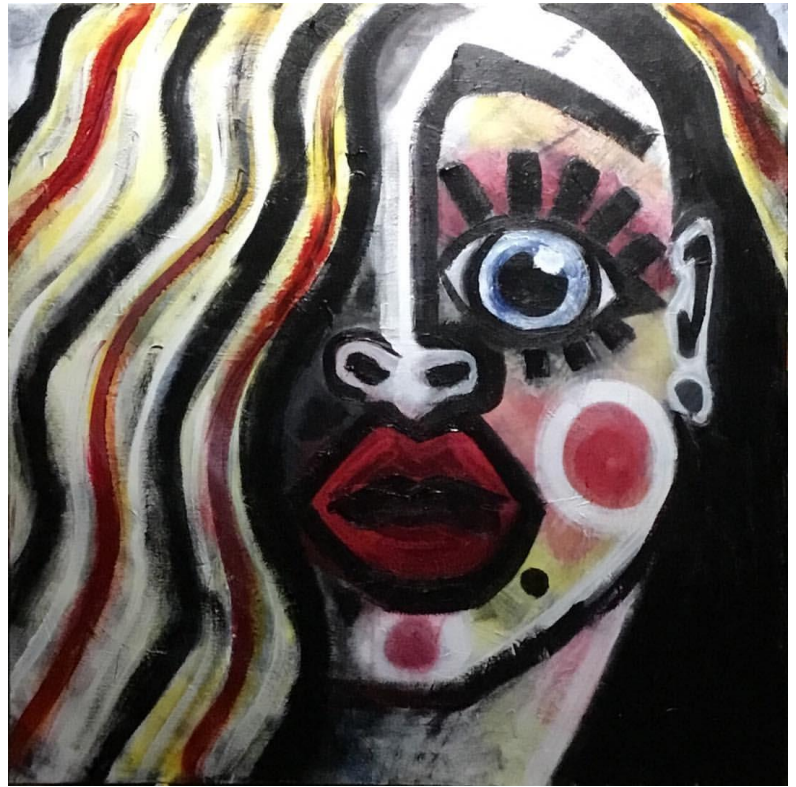
JD Johnson

Mixed Blood →

Portrait of Abuse With Flowers

Red represents the blood and violence. Yellow represents the cowardice of abusers. Flowers represent apologies, hope and death. Abuse comes in many forms and ends in many ways. (quoted from JD's Instagram) ↓

Wonderment →





Graffiti

See more art by JD Johnson online:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JDJohnsonartist/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/jd_johnson_art/

JD Johnson has answered a few questions for Open Doors readers:

OD: What inspires you and makes you create?

JD: What makes me create is my own process of self-psychoanalysis. I majored in Psychology in college. So, when I paint, I am painting others' pain as well as my own.

OD: How do you get new ideas for your work?

JD: I don't plan a painting anymore. I start with laying down some white paint and then add color and see what develops. Then, I just let it take me somewhere.

OD: What are your goals as an artist?

JD: My goal is to make a living at art, but be my own voice. I haven't attached myself to an arts community as I really don't have much free time, so I have developed my style in a sort of vacuum, I guess you could say.



A new piece and rework of a lame abstract I had done. Played around with it, adding here and there as I was going to keep it an abstract. But, then I saw two places where eyes could be and the die was cast. Used a technique that I utilize a lot, so it gives the acrylic a watercolor feel. Still an Expressionist piece, but also felt a little comic book, so I added the flowers to give it more of a pop art effect. Also gives it a bit of a surreal feel to the piece, almost psychedelic somehow. As someone in the midst of an acid trip looked up in the sky and saw the Virgin Mary appear. (quoted from JD's Instagram) →

jd-johnson.squarespace.com

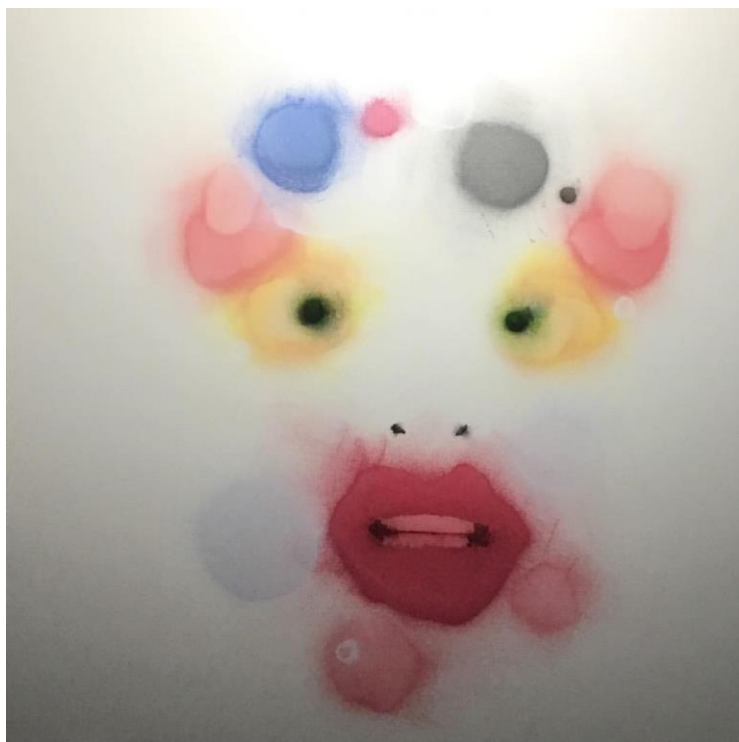
ig: [jd_johnson_art](https://www.instagram.com/jd_johnson_art)

jdj1954@gmail.com

My interpretation of dementia. I tried to show the confusion and fear that it causes in the elderly. My Mom is 96 and sometimes I feel this painting is a portrait of who she has become because of age and the onset of dementia. So, I painted a portrait of it. (quoted from JD's Instagram) ↓



Your Lips Are Like Petals or Poppy Mouth ↓



Youth Outlook
FAMILY PICNIC

**WITH OUR FRIENDS AT PFLAG
AND NAPER PRIDE**

We hope to see you at:
August 17th * 3 pm-7 pm

**DuPage River Park
808 Royce Rd
Naperville, IL 60440**

RSVP:

**[https://www.eventbrite.com/o/
/25336970915](https://www.eventbrite.com/o/25336970915)**

Join us for our Candyland
themed family picnic for food,
games, and fun!

Please bring a side or dessert to
share!



PFLAG Northern Illinois Chapters

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

PFLAG Grayslake/Round Lake
Meetings held the 2nd Wednesday – 6:30 p.m.
Star Homes
783 Barron Blvd.
Grayslake, IL 60030
pflaggrayslake@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Rockford
Meetings are held the 1st Monday – 6 p.m.
Rockford Public Library's Montague Branch
1238 S Winnebago St
Rockford, IL 61102
pflagrockford@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 Deerfield
Meetings held 2nd Thursday – 7:15 pm
Congregation BJE
1201 Lake Cook Rd, Deerfield 60015
pflagdeerfield@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (Chicago)
Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday – 7 pm
Center on Halsted
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
pflagptchicago@pflagillinois.org

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

PFLAG Metro Chicago
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
Center on Halsted (Senior Room)
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
pflagchicagometro@pflagillinois.org

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

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

PFLAG Bollingbrook
Contact Kris and Peter Shulman
PFLAGbollingbrook@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Homer Glen / Lockport
Meetings held Last Tuesday, 6:30–8 pm
Cross of Glory
14719 W. 163rd, Homer Glen, IL
pflaghgl@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Oak Lawn
Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 p.m.
Pilgrim Faith UCC
9411 S 51st Ave
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
pflagoaklawn@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Hinsdale
Meetings held 1st Sunday – 2 pm
Unitarian Church Hinsdale
11 W Maple, Hinsdale 60521
pflaghinsdale@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 Ottawa
Meetings held 4th Sunday - 2:30 pm
Open Table United Church of Christ
910 Columbus St., Ottawa, IL 61350
pflagottawa@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Will, Kankakee, Iroquois
Contact Rev. Barbara Lohrbach
revlohrbach@gmail.com
plagkankakee@pflagillinois.org

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