

June 2020 | PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois Newsletter

opendoors@pflagillinois.org

Open Doors





PRIDE

We know what Pride looks like, don't we? It's June, right? Pride is bold, and loud and brazen! It rides high in brilliant displays of color in flags and banners, celebrates in picnics and festivals, and marches confidently in parades. Pride means being present and public in our communities. And in recent years, Pride takes full command of the June calendar.

But that's only one face of Pride ... and this year, this June, perhaps we wear another one. No less confident or determined, no less present, and equally as strong. We gather differently this year, more creatively and perhaps we're more reflective. More dispersed, we may be more difficult to find. But I guarantee you the flags, the banners, the window and lawn displays and digital celebrations will be there! And we will be loud again this year!

The pandemic does not mean that we merely march in place this year, or take a step backward, but rather forge a new path and move forward with the same determination. Yes, we've drawn some physical boundaries in our daily travels but just because we shelter in place does not mean we stagnate. We take time to reflect but continue to move forward. We focus on the future we have always envisioned. We bolster our plans for a greater impact. We build community in our zoom calls, seek out and reach out to those that might be struggling. We invest in better understanding of local and national legislation that advances LGBTQ+ rights and commit to being informed voters this fall. And as PFLAGers, we explore new avenues to Support, Educate and Advocate.

We hope that you are all finding ways to create community, to celebrate, to support, to welcome.

In each month's issue of Open Doors, but particularly this month, you will find lots of examples of Pride in action ... inspiring stories, photographs, moving narratives, spectacular artwork. This month, I encourage you to fully digest it.

In the coming weeks and months, we will see much change in our world as we proceed cautiously to open up many things that have been shuttered. In the past few months, we have become much more conscious of our global neighbors, around the country and around the world, struggling physically and economically. It seems daily that we check on their health, take their temperature of sorts through all kind of statistics. And we hail the heroes, those on the front line that commit to making a difference and not accepting defeat -- not a foreign concept for the LGBTQ+ community that has always championed courage and resilience.

There has been an element of caring, of recognition for first responders and caregivers, of appreciation for the suffering of others that we have not seen for some time. We must not lose this. Please be safe, be good to yourself ... and be Proud.

-- Don Donahue

See our *Gear Up for Pride* photo collage of PFLAG families celebrating Pride at home on pages 8-15. We are isolated physically but not in spirit!



Zoom Meeting with Kim Oclon: Saturday, June 6 10:00 – 11:30 AM



Kim will discuss her experience with co-founding the GSA at the high school where she worked and how that work influences her writing and led to her involvement in PFLAG. She will also share the journey of getting her just-released young adult fiction novel *MAN UP* to publication and a few novels that she read along the way for inspiration. Kim is a PFLAG parent and a member of the Grayslake/Round Lake chapter

Kim's talk will be followed by a Q&A session.

Everyone is welcome! No RSVP

Join Zoom meeting:

https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/84380475786?pwd=N 1ZJMDRBbUM5VlMwMGxhYkFuZWc5UT09

Meeting ID: 843 8047 5786

Password: 950285

Dial-in: +1-312-626-6799 (Chicago)



Chapter Meetings

While face-to-face PFLAG chapter meetings have been suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most of our chapters have moved online and are conducting monthly meetings over Zoom. Look for announcements from your chapter leaders about Zoom meeting dates and times (they are usually the same as regular meetings, but please confirm that with your chapter) and for instructions on how to join.

If your chapter is not currently conducting online meetings and you need support of other PFLAG families, please contact OpenDoors@PFLAGillinois.org. We will help you join meetings of another chapter.

PFLAG National Free Publications

PFLAG National has <u>free publications</u> in PDF format for anyone trying to be a better ally.

- OUR CHILDREN offers a fresh eye for families and others about what to do when a loved one comes out.
- OUR TRANS LOVED ONES: Questions and Answers for Parents, Families, and Friends of People Who Are Transgender and Gender Expansive.
- BE YOURSELF
- Straight for Equality: Guide to Being a Straight Ally
- Straight for Equality: Guide to Being a Trans Ally
- Cultivating Respect: Safe Schools for All

See the <u>web site</u> for more publications in English and Spanish or to purchase hardcopies.

From Equality Illinois

Team Equality Illinois invites you to the first-ever statewide Pride celebration: Can't Stop Our Pride: One Day, One Illinois. This broadcast will include family storytime and interfaith services, cooking and mixology classes, conversations with LGBTQ leaders in cities across the state, and a DJ afterparty. Purchase \$25 tickets to receive the private broadcast link HERE.







https://www.equalityillinois.us/covid-19-resources-center/

The LGBTQ Inclusive Curriculum Law will take effect soon for the 2020-2021 public school year. The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, Equality Illinois, and the Legacy Project are working with our partners, including educators and the Illinois State Board of Education, on implementation of this exciting law.

Read the first <u>Inclusive Curriculum Law e-newsletter</u> and sign up for future alerts from the Alliance, EI, and Legacy Project here: https://www.ilsafeschools.org/inclusive-curriculum-updates.

-- Mike Ziri



News from PFLAG DuPage

by Kristin Shulman and Margaret Donahue

PFLAG DuPage Zooms!

PFLAG DuPage is not letting the pandemic keep us down. We held our first quarter Executive Team meeting and have now held both our April and May chapter meetings over Zoom. While it is not a perfect substitute for meeting in-person it has been a great way to stay connected, support each other and share information.

At our first quarter Executive Team meeting, we talked about how we were not facing some of our normal expenses and how we wanted to support an important LGBTQ+ service in our community. We immediately thought of 360 Youth Services LGBTQ+ Transitional Housing. Our chapter continuously collects household products for the agency and often seeks out Carolyn Wahlskog, LCSW Executive Director of Housing about speakers and LGBTQ+ programs in the suburbs. With unanimous agreement, we donated \$500 hoping it will fill some of the void left by withdrawal of federal support for the LGBTQ+ housing program.

Now that we are starting to get the hang of Zoom chapter meetings, we are bringing back speakers! In May we heard from the Glenbard Voices of Equity group a community group of students, parents and residents residing in District 87 School District that support trans students who attend Glenbard High Schools through advocacy, training, and working to create affirming policies. Lots of good questions and discussion ensued.

Zoom is also allowing people who might not normally be able to attend our in-person meetings to join us. In May, we had one of our member's children join us from Paris (yes, France) and one of our long time members who now lives in Kansas join us too. Looking ahead, in August our speaker will join us from Arizona. Zoom isn't perfect but it is opening new possibilities for us.

Our speaker in June will be Michael Ziri, a veteran in legislative affairs and the current Director of Public Policy at Equality Illinois. PFLAG DuPage meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month at 2 PM. If you wish to join our Zoom meetings, please reach out to us at PFLAGDuPage@gmail.com.

News from PTI Chicago

by Bill Guilfoile

PTI Chicago held their May monthly meeting for the second time using Zoom because of the Covid-19 Pandemic on 14-May-2020. We also invited the members of PTI North Shore and PTI McHenry to participate.

We had several new members to the group. We again had participation from several people who normally are not able to attend because of the distance of travel to Center on Halsted in Chicago.

The meeting went well and everyone who participated appreciated the support and contact that we had during the meeting. PTI Chicago will continue to hold our meetings by Zoom until the situation with the pandemic changes.

Our next Zoom meeting will be on 11-June-2020 from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Members will receive an e-mail the week before the Zoom meeting with the Zoom link and password to enter the meeting.

Anyone, who is not a member and is a parent or family member of a transgender, non-binary or gender non-conforming individual, who wishes to participate should e-mail Bill Guilfoile at bill.guilfoile@gmail.com.

News from PFLAG McHenry

by Toni Weaver

All in all, I have to say I'm pleased with our first ever Zoom meeting. Next month, I think I'll reach out to folks who have moved away. How great it would be to see their faces again! With Zoom, distance disappears, and once again we're together!

Now I'm wondering how Zoom could be used to do outreach in the communities served by PFLAG McHenry. For example, could we reach out to GSA advisers, asking if they'd invite their members to join in on a Zoom call? We could link these kids with supportive parents who would listen to their concerns and offer sage advice.

Speaking of outreach, placing The Savvy Ally by Jeannie Gainsburg in the hands of every GSA adviser/school psychologist/ school social worker/guidance counselor would be a fantastic way to educate the folks who work directly with our LGBTQ+ youth – just another tool in the toolbox.

News from PFLAG Ottawa

by Ken Brown

PFLAG Ottawa has some good news! After not meeting since February, we are resuming our chapter meetings via Zoom. Our first Zoom meeting will be held on Sunday, May 24, at 2:30 pm. (I am writing this on May 22). We arranged for a Zoom pro account through PFLAG National, so we should be ready to go. We plan to spend the meeting catching up with everyone.

We used the Zoom account about two weeks ago to hold our Board of Directors meeting, and it went well. We are excited about getting things rolling again and seeing each other on our screens at our regular monthly meetings on the fourth Sunday.

News from PFLAG Deerfield

by Jodi Zavos

We had our second Zoom meeting in May and as always, it was a meeting full of support and love. We welcomed several new members and were so happy to see so many regulars this month. Instead of having a speaker, we welcomed our children to join us, both young and adult. They were free to share their thoughts or just be present. Many expressed how PFLAG had impacted their lives in a positive way. For those of us who had children who lived far away, it was a welcome extra visit. After all, THEY are the reason we all came to PFLAG! There was much love and some tears in our virtual room that evening! So many of us have come to know and love each other's children, it was wonderful to actually meet them! PFLAG Deerfield truly feels like a family!

While the Buffalo Grove Pride Parade has been canceled till 2021, there will be a **Buffalo Grove Pride Drive**. Two of our members will decorate their home and showcase PFLAG to be part of the BG Pride Drive route. We'll look forward to celebrating Pride in a new way this year.

Others are encouraged to decorate their homes as well.

PFLAG Deerfield will continue to hold Zoom meetings on the second Thursday of every month, 7:15 pm. New members and members in other chapters are always welcome!

Sue's Rabbi talked about virtual meetings and reminded her that all connections are REAL! Just because our meetings are now virtual, does not mean they are not REAL! The important thing is that we are still there for all those who are in need of this connection. We need to remember how it made us feel when we were together; the connections were REAL then and they still are, even virtually!



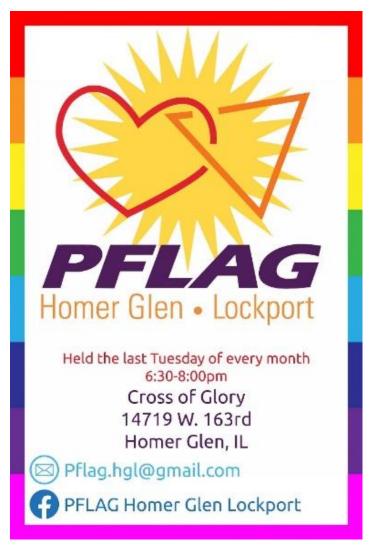
News from PFLAG Homer Glen, Lockport

by Michelle Eckmayer

Happy Pride!!!!

PFLAG Homer Glen Lockport has gone virtual and has had several meetings since the virus hit. In the month of April, we heard from Danny Julius. Danny works at Youth Outlook and he shared his story along with information about Youth Outlook and their wonderful program. In May, we will hear from Emma Vosicky who will share her experience strength and hope. Since many Pride events have been cancelled, we still want to share our pride in Lockport & Homer Glen. The facility we meet at has agreed to let us put a 4x8 foot sign up on Cedar road for all to see!





In June, depending on the status of Covid 19, we may hold our meeting in the parking lot so we can socially distance and see each other too!

News from PTI McHenry

by Andrew Zanevsky

PTI McHenry held the first Zoom meeting in May. We had 6 attendees, which gave everyone an opportunity to talk and ask questions without worrying about time limits. We invited members of sister groups PTI Chicago and PTI North Shore and were glad to welcome one person from PTI Chicago and one who was referred by PTI North Shore.

We will continue holding monthly meetings over Zoom on the 4th Wednesday of every month at 7-9 PM. Members of PTI McHenry will receive meeting instructions by email from

<u>opendoors@pflagillinois.org</u> within a week before each meeting. PTI Chicago and PTI North Shore will receive instructions from their group leaders.

New families (not in any PTI group yet) must email opendoors@pflagillinois.org to RSVP.



Gear Up for Pride

Last month, Open Doors asked you to send photos of your Pride celebration at home. Photos on the cover page and in the following collage demonstrate our ability to adapt to circumstances and keep our Pride spirit even under quarantine. Also included are a few photos from past Pride Parades – to bring back good memories. If you haven't participated in this photo action, it's not too late – Pride month is just starting! Email your NEW photos taken now to opendoors@pflagillinois.org. Include a caption to give credit to participants and mention your PFLAG chapter or location if you wish. Happy Pride!

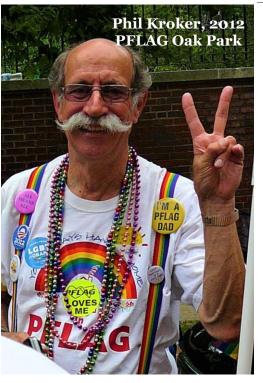


Amelia and Ava, photo sent by Courtney, PTI McHenry Nature celebrated Pride with this spectacular rainbow over Lake Michigan in May.









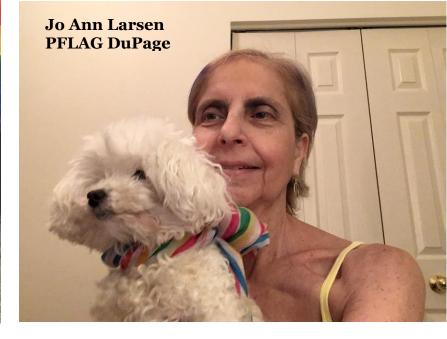




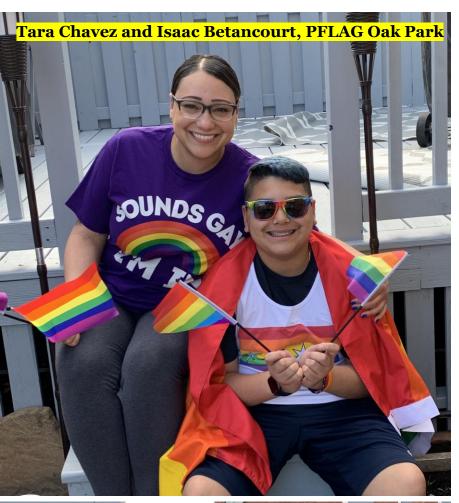


























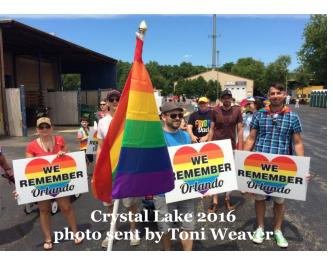


























All photos on this page are Kisses from Moms from past years, sent by Marcia Prichason









Pride Parades Drives

The cancellation of the 2nd annual Buffalo Grove pride parade has not stopped 14 year old bisexual activist Molly Pinta and her family to celebrate Pride Month in Buffalo Grove. Mark your calendars for Sunday June 7th beginning at 12 noon for the Buffalo Grove Pride Drive. More than 75 homes in Buffalo Grove will be decorated to celebrate Pride month. People from all over Chicagoland can drive by to view these beautifully decorated homes. There will be safe giveaways, music and even a few drag queens as you drive by to celebrate pride.

Visit the Buffalo Grove Pride Drive website, pintaprideproject.com for a list of homes along with a map to be used to navigate and find the family friendly pride homes, businesses and even schools. There will be amazing décor from Balloons by Tommy, a favorite of the Chicago Pride Parade. Mark your calendar for Buffalo Grove Pride Drive, Sunday June 7th. For more information visit www.pintaprideproject.com or join the BG Pride Facebook page.



aurora Pride DRIVE!

Sign up to decorate your home or business for a June 14th Pride Drive. Aurora Pride will share a list of houses to visit by car!



To participate, register at: http://bit.ly/PrideDrive

Our fab photographers
will visit each spot on
the list to take a pride
portrait for you to share
virtually and you will
get a copy!

Photography by:

Sandra González Amelia Baird Sadie Bean Nicholas Richard-Thompson Amy Nelson



Global Pride 2020

Global Pride 2020, a live-streamed festival is scheduled for Saturday, June 27. Anyone with an internet connection will be able to participate. www.facebook.com/GlobalPride2020

Youth Services www.ysgn.org

Summer with Pride: Workshop Series for Rising 7th-12th Graders (and recent grads!)

Two sessions of 3-week interactive virtual workshop series beginning June 8th on a variety of topics including social justice, yoga, and writing. Session I will be held 6/8-6/26; Session II will be held 7/6-7/24. Full menu of options and sign up: https://bit.ly/pridesummerwkshp20.

Registration for Session I required by June 3rd.

Summer with Pride: Weekly Online Challenges for All Ages!

Weekly online challenges throughout June & July for all ages. Participate to earn prizes and get outside (as we can safely)! Learn more and sign up online here: https://bit.ly/pridesummerchallenge20

Summer with Pride: Drop-In Events & Virtual Action Camp

Youth are invited to join us online this summer, including art activities, game nights, and more. RSVP is required for all events. Additionally, we have re-opened applications for Action Camp: Virtual Edition, which will be hosted online during the first week of August. Apply online: https://bit.ly/virtualacapp20 by May 31st. Stay updated on the latest events by following us on Instagram @ysgnpride or checking http://bit.ly/prideeventsandinfo

prideSUPPORT Groups Summer Sessions: Fruit Loops and Trans & Nonbinary Process Group

7-week summer session of two of our weekly support groups, including Fruit Loops (rising 5th-8th graders) and our Trans and Nonbinary Process Group (rising 9th graders through recent grads). Session will begin the week of June 8th. Youth interested in joining should email to

Lizzy.Appleby@ysgn.org

Other Youth Services Offerings: Junior High Social Skills Group

Junior High Adventures is a social skills group for 6th-8th graders (students who just completed 5th grade are welcome to join for the summer). This group provides a safe space for young people to practice social skills such as getting to know people, nonverbal communication, and perspective taking through games, activities, and discussion. Summer session begins June 18th; interested families can reach out to jessica.levine@ysgn.org.



Heather Hester from Chrysalis Mama is here to transform the conversation around having an LGBTQ+ teenager. In the three+ years since her son embraced his sexual identity as a young gay man, Heather and her family have felt every emotion, and have experienced dozens of situations ranging from heartwarming and humorous to terrifyingly lifethreatening. She and her husband initially felt alone and overwhelmed, moving her to want to support others traveling a similar path. She desires to discuss taboo topics and erase stigmas surrounding the coming out process and parenting an LGBTQ+ teen.

Listen to the Podcast here: <u>Just Breathe: Parenting Your LGBTO Teen!</u> (We recommend episodes: 1-4, 7,10, 15.)

TED Talk (click on the image to open the link)



Article (click on the image to open the link)





TV, Cinema, Theater



LOVE, **VICTOR** – this Young Adult Dramedy series will be available on Hulu on June 19

Watch the first clip from the series:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJBvXAUo2Ug

Set in the world of the 2018 groundbreaking film Love, Simon, which was inspired by Becky Albertalli's acclaimed novel, *Simon Vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*, the series follows Victor, a new student at Creekwood High School on his own journey of self-discovery, facing challenges at home, adjusting to a new city, and struggling with his sexual orientation. When it all seems too much, he reaches out to Simon to help him navigate the ups and downs of high school.

FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO

www.fortheyknow.org

Opening nationwide June 12th.

In the wake of the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case legalizing marriage equality, the right has launched an effective, new, state-by-state campaign to limit the rights of America's LGBTQ citizens across the country.



pridefilmsandplays.com
866 811 4111

PRIDE IN PLACE SERIES

Live online readings of LGBTQ-themed plays performed live by actors, each appearing via Zoom from their own homes.

Tickets \$10.00 are available by phone at 866-811-4111 or 773-857-0222 or online at www.pridefilmsandplays.com

June 4: Buyer and Cellar

In this one-man comedy, Alex More is a struggling actor who takes a job managing a make-believe shopping mall in the basement of Barbra Streisand's Malibu home. Scott Gryder returns in the role he performed in Pride Films and Plays' full production from spring 2019, directed by Donterrio Johnson.

June 28: The Last Sunday in June

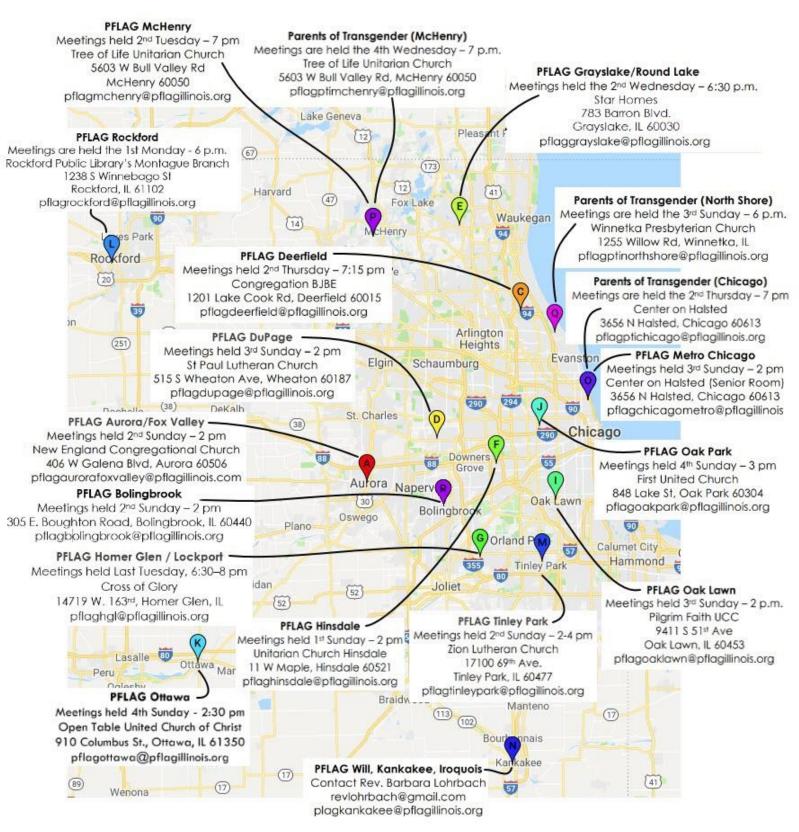
Tom and Michael, his partner of seven years, intend to spend the Gay Pride Parade day planning their impending move from the Big Apple to the upstate town of Nyack, but their plans are rerouted as one friend after another drops by to view the parade from the window of their apartment. A series of conversations about relationships follows amid the partying. Since this is the first time in decades the Pride Parade will NOT go down Broadway, the Pride reading celebrates a tradition as it looks at friends and lovers.

July 1: Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love

Shocking when it first premiered in 1989, this Canadian work follows the lives of several sexually frustrated "thirty-somethings" and one teenager who try to learn the meaning of love — during a time in which a serial killer is terrorizing the city. Candy is a heterosexual woman trying to meet the perfect man but who along the way finds herself experimenting with lesbianism; her gay roommate David no longer believes that love exists; Kane is a sexually confused teenager who idolizes David; Bernie is David's troubled best friend; and Jerri is a lesbian who falls in love with Candy. Overlooking the proceedings is the otherworldly Benita, a prostitute with psychic abilities. Fraser's drama still carries a punch.



PFLAG Northern Illinois Chapters



Click anywhere on the map to open the list of chapters online

