



Open Doors

↑ Photo from BG Pride 2022
More Pride Month photos inside

The Spirit of Pride Month lives on!

And so we close Pride Month, and hopefully take with it good memories, a renewed spirit, a head held higher, having found again a sense of community and public affirmation that was lost amid the damper of the pandemic. Hopefully, too, the Pride we feel in who we are and whom we love and support has grown even stronger over the month.

During Pride Month, the world around us realizes that the LGBTQ+ community and its allies have something important to say. Through Pride parades and festivals in our communities, we feel the recognition and respect we deserve all year. In many ways, the month of June, Pride Month, creates for us a safe space where affirming religious congregations, corporate Pride groups, retail organizations, entertainment venues, etc. make room for us, celebrate us, provide a platform for us, give us a voice. The contributions and talents of LGBTQ+ people enjoy a special center stage showcase this time each year.

But sadly, one could argue, the embrace seems to lose steam as the month ends. And this is where we, as PFLAGers, grab the baton and carry Pride Month through the rest of the year. We create safe spaces in our chapter meetings where those who gather there feel comfortable and valued and celebrated, where they are among caring people who listen carefully, where the concerns they share are made a priority. In the support we provide, the community we create, the stories we tell, the histories we share, the trust we extend, the love we impart, we have the opportunity to offer all year the embrace of Pride Month.

I think we would all agree that providing this kind of safe, celebrated space is particularly crucial for young people who need to know that the public celebration of their identity and support of their journey is not just a one month a year priority. And so I applaud those who make their mission carrying forward the spirit of Pride Month to our youth. One such organization is the LGBTQ+ Center at Kenneth Young (<https://www.cpydcoalition.org/lgbtq-center>), whose information table I had the chance to visit at a recent Pride event in Carol Stream. I was immediately

impressed with their welcoming staff and engaging programs, and the impact they are having on young people who so need this resource. Colleen Accardo, Community Collaborations Supervisor for the Center, shared with me that their program was established just before the pandemic to provide “a safe space for youth and allies to learn about self-expression while also building strong connections with other LGBTQ+ youth.” Over the course of two short years, they have grown from a support group conducted in a single room into several programs, tailored to specific age groups, offering a wide array of social opportunities and support resources in much expanded space in their Schaumburg location. To see young people gain self-confidence, return time and again and offer, unprompted, that they feel they are in a safe space, Colleen offers, is their best measure of success.

In many ways, the LGBTQ+ Center at Kenneth Young follows in the footsteps of Youth Outlook (www.youthoutlook.org) whose outstanding legacy of providing a “space for LGBTQ+ youth to feel safe, supported and celebrated” is well known to our chapters. Both organizations clearly carry the spirit of Pride Month forward all year.

And while we focus on providing safe affirming space for all who reach out to us, we also commit to traversing space that may not be so safe, educating an ill-informed public and advocating relentlessly for rights, protections, and affirmation due our LGBTQ+ loved ones.

So, our Pride this past month cannot afford to wane. It must only build. It must challenge us, strengthen us, inspire us, bolster us. We, too, vow to carry the spirit of Pride Month with us all year ... and alongside it, a healthy dose of Determination, Resilience and Hope!

Onward!

With much gratitude for all you do,

Don Donahue

President,
PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois



From PFLAG National

FEDERAL

[President Biden officially proclaimed June 2022 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Pride Month.](#) The statement condemns anti-LGBTQI+ legislation and reiterates the administration's support for LGBTQI+ Americans. It also highlights the need for continued work protecting LGBTQI+ rights.

[USDA adds sexual orientation and gender identity to non-discrimination policy for SNAP benefits.](#)

COURT

[Texas Supreme Court makes mixed ruling on child abuse investigations of parents with transgender children.](#) The decision left an injunction in place for a family with a trans child that sued the state of Texas after the state began an investigation against them. The Court invalidated a broad statewide injunction barring investigations of families with trans children, though. In another part of the ruling, the Court also held that the governor's order does not "bind" child protective services to investigate parents of transgender children for abuse.

[Federal judge rules against employers denying trans health coverage.](#) The court ruled on June 2, 2022 that excluding gender-affirming care from employer-provided health insurance violates federal law.

STATE

California - [Assembly passes safe haven law for LGBTQ+ people and people seeking abortions.](#)

Colorado - [Governor Polis signs law easing the process for LGBTQ+ parents adopting their own children.](#)

Illinois - [Governor Pritzker signs law allocating funds toward LGBTQ+ elders and people living with HIV.](#)

Louisiana - [Legislature excludes transgender women from newly-created Office of Women's Health.](#)

Oklahoma - [Governor Stitt signs anti-trans bathroom bill.](#)

Anti-trans sports bans passed in [Indiana](#), [Louisiana](#), and [South Carolina](#).

MEDIA

[FIFA threatens to cut ties with Hotels in Qatar over anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination.](#) The 2022 FIFA World Cup is going to be held in Qatar, where homosexuality is illegal.

[Dr. Jane Rigby awarded 2022 LGBTQ+ Scientist of the Year.](#) Dr. Rigby is an astrophysicist at NASA's Goddard Flight Center.

[Marvel Comics introduces two transgender superheroes](#) Shela Sexton and Morgan Red in "Marvel Voices: Pride #1." They will be joined by their genetically engineered flying turtle, Hibbert.

[Mattel models first trans Barbie on Laverne Cox.](#)

GLOBAL

Belgium - [New action plan adopted to protect LGBTQ+ people.](#)

Italy - [Milan designated as "LGBTQ+ freedom zone" in response to anti-LGBTQ+ policies in Hungary and Poland.](#)

Thailand - [LGBTQ+ community celebrates first official Pride Parade supported by the local government.](#)

Poland - [Dance artist Filip Kijowski creates support network for Ukrainian LGBTQ+ refugees.](#)

United Kingdom - [Whistleblower reveals National Health Service withheld advice for pregnant nonbinary and transgender patients.](#)

These articles are excerpted from *Policy Matters*, an email publication of PFLAG National. Become a PFLAG member to receive the full newsletter: <https://pflagil.org/membership-and-donation/>



Chicago Pride Parade 2022

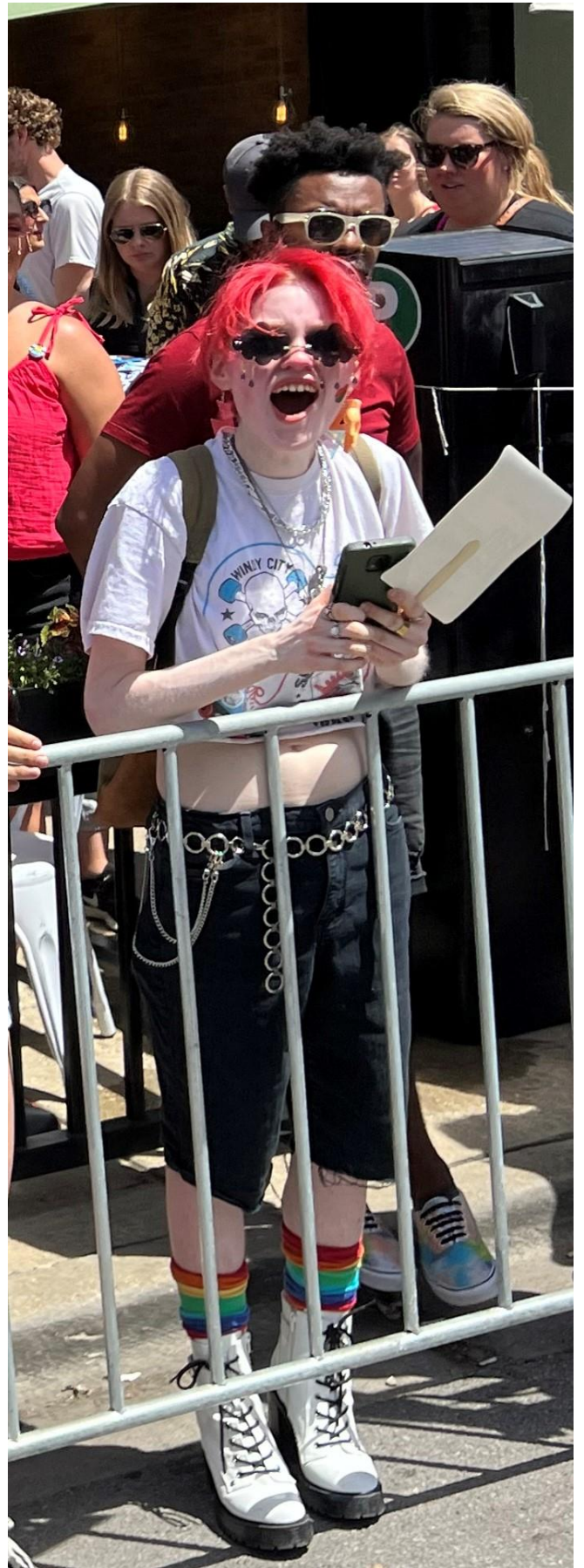
Photos by Andrew Zanevsky

These photos from the Chicago Pride Parade 2022 illustrate the abundant positive energy, love, kindness, and overwhelming support that flowed in all directions. Spectators on sidewalks watching the parade and enthusiastically cheering Parade participants, marchers smiling and waving back, residents and their guests watching the Parade from nearby building windows and balconies. It was a constant stream of emotions – mostly happiness, but with strong voices in defense of human rights and equality. Many self-made posters expressed fully justifiable anger at recent rulings of the U.S. Supreme Court and actions of legislators and governors in some states aggressively reducing LGBTQ+ and women’s rights. We have witnessed incredibly touching moments of compassion, as strangers hugged and some of them cried, overwhelmed by feelings and grateful for that expression of empathy. We, PFLAG members, are not only family to our own LGTBQ+ loved ones, but we are also family to LGBTQ+ people rejected by their biological families. We love and support them! Still, the predominant feeling at the Parade was joy! As we finished marching, one of our members remarked, laughing, that her face hurt from constantly smiling for two hours. It was true for all of us!





















News from PTI Chicago

by Christine Peters

Happy Pride from Parents of Trans Individuals (PTI) Chicago! We've been glad to host more than 20 participants per month at our Zoom meetings, and always welcome several newcomers. Our focus had been getting ready for the Chicago Pride Parade on June 26th. We had newly designed PTI T-shirts that were provided to members free of charge, thanks to the dedication of our President, Bill Guilfoile. We also marched behind a newly designed banner: "PTI Love is Trans-parent."

Marching in the Pride Parade is such an affirming and emotionally charged experience. After all the mean-spirited news we've had to cope with, there is great joy in the applause and cheering from the

rainbow of folks lining the route. Spectators shout out, "Thanks for what you do!" and make a heckuva lotta noise when they see the PTI banner and The PFLAG trolley. The upwelling of feeling overflows in smiles and sometimes tears. It was especially sweet since the parade has been canceled for the last two years due to the epidemic. Many of us met for the first time in real life after 2 years of only seeing virtual faces in Zoom boxes. I hope you enjoy these photos as much as we enjoyed celebrating Pride!

Please don't hesitate to join our next meeting. We continue to greet returning and new parents and grandparents who are part of the extended LGBTQI+ community. PTI Chicago gathers via Zoom on the second Thursday of each month, so



our next meeting is **July 14th, 2022**
from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Participants will receive an email with the link and password to enter the meeting. Relatives and guardians of transgender, non-binary or gender non-conforming individuals who would like to join us for the first time should e-mail PTI Chicago President Bill Guilfoile at bill.guilfoile@gmail.com

PTI Chicago at the Chicago pride Parade 2022 ↓ ↘ →



News from PFLAG Hinsdale

by Barb Medley

Our June 5th speaker was Mony Ruiz-Velasco, the Deputy Director of Equality Illinois. She's an attorney and an advocate dealing mostly with immigrants' rights and social justice issues. We had a hybrid meeting for the first time since the Covid lockdown began; in addition to an in-person meeting, some attended via zoom, and it went well.

Mony is closely following the Supreme Court after the leaked decision on reversing Roe v. Wade (which has since been decided). This is setting off alarm bells, because the basis for the Roe decision, the right to privacy, is the same basis as that for decisions on same sex marriage and contraception, among others dealing with human rights. Here in Illinois, those rights are enshrined in state law, but this could change following elections. Her focus now is to make sure people vote for those who support our values.

Equality Illinois has endorsed candidates and will support these candidates after the primary for the November general election. There will be a vote for a Supreme Court justice this election cycle, which will be extremely important. This information can be found on their website.

In Illinois, Equality Illinois works to partner with and engage with organizations to connect on these important issues. The more moderate members of the

general assembly are leaving and being replaced by the far right. There are more anti-LGBTQ efforts in schools than ever. It is vital we try to work with local groups on these issues. Local level work is very important.

Equality Illinois has a proactive agenda and is working across the state for more representation in government, in communities and on committees. They are focusing on cultural competency education in health care. Almost half of trans people don't seek the care they need because of past treatment experiences.

On a federal level, there is more anti-LGBTQ legislation all over the country. The right has moved further right, and the last few years it is even harder to get a single republican vote on certain legislation. We can't let our guard down. It is important to engage with people so that they see and understand us. There is much to be done, but Mony left us with a message of hope - "Engagement is the key to changing it all. It's a long-term fight with little wins along the way. Resist with joy."

Because of the July 4th holiday we'll gather socially at the Hinsdale Unitarian Church on July 10th. Our August 7th meeting will be hybrid at 2 p.m. The speaker will be Reyna Ortiz, the author of the book, [T: Stands for Truth: In Search of the Queen?](#) The book is available via Amazon.

Engagement is the key to changing it all. It's a long-term fight with little wins along the way. Resist with joy.



**White Sox game for
Pride Night on 6/23**

Photos by Barb Medley

Gay Men's Chorus-Anthem →

Pride Night at White Sox ↓

Sox Mascot Southpaw ↘



News from PFLAG Deerfield

by Jodi

We do not have a regular meeting during PRIDE month. We have an incredibly special celebration! We come together to celebrate the winners of the **Jean Paul Ohadi Scholarship**. Cynthia Drey established this scholarship in memory of her son over twenty years ago. Unfortunately, Cynthia was unable to join us in person this year, she Zoomed in from Texas and joined the celebration, along with her dear friend and other members of PFLAG. We had three winners this year! Two of the winners, Jadyn Schwartz and Giovanni Cistaro, along with their families, celebrated with us in person! The third was not able to attend. These students impressed us with their intelligence, their engaging personalities, and their plans for a brighter tomorrow! Our meeting was one of joy, laughs, and hopes for the future!

In other news, PFLAG Deerfield marched in the Buffalo Grove Pride Parade! The parade had a great turn out! Deerfield members Ann McAuliffe and Sue Ginsburg have been “on the road” bringing PFLAG to



various community events. They spoke at a PRIDE flag raising event in Deerfield and also at a Glenview public library PRIDE event. Their photo was even in a local paper! We are thankful for all our PFLAG ambassadors!

Happy PRIDE everyone!



PFLAG Deerfield at the Buffalo Grove Pride Parade



Deerfield mayor Daniel Shapiro proclaimed June LGBTQ Pride Month in Deerfield and thanked PFLAG Deerfield members for presenting to the Village Board:



Thank you to PFLAG Northern Illinois Deerfield Chapter for presenting to the Village Board and accepting the Village's LGBTQ Pride Month proclamation Monday evening. You can find them at Pride Day at the Deerfield Farmers Market - IL on June 18.



PFLAG Deerfield booth at the Farmer's Market:



News from PFLAG DuPage

by Bonnie Clemens

Chapter Meeting, Sunday June 19th

This month's presenter was Brianna Stefanski, a supervisor at Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp (BNSF Railroad) and a board member of BNSF's LGBTQ+ business resource group, PRIDE+. Brianna is a Trans-woman who began her transition 1 and half years ago. She spoke to us about BNSF as an organization, her ongoing role in BNSF's transformation to be among the best rated in the HRC's "Best Places to Work for LGBTQ+ Equality 2022", and about her experiences coming-out at BNSF. It was informative and exciting to learn more about the wonderful LGBTQ+ progress being made at a traditionally conservative organization.



[BNSF Earns High Rating Among "Best Places to Work" for LGBTQ+ Equality Diversity at BNSF](#)

Chicago Pride Parade, Sunday June 26th

Members of PFLAG DuPage joined the Northern Illinois Council for the **51st Annual Chicago Pride Parade**. We were ecstatic to return to this event after a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic. It was all that we expected and then some! The energy, joy, happy crowds, bright colors, and love-all-around made the day a sheer delight. If you haven't yet experienced marching in the Chicago PRIDE Parade with PFLAG, I urge you to join us next year. It truly is the highlight of the Chicago LGBTQ+ PFLAG experience!



PFLAG DuPage at the Chicago Pride Parade



News from PFLAG Oak Park

by Tara Chavez

Hello from Oak Park! We held our second HYBRID meeting on May 22nd and it was a success! To accommodate all, members joined either in person or remotely via Zoom. We will again offer the hybrid option at our next meeting, held every fourth Sunday at First United Church of Oak Park, 848 Lake St, Oak Park, IL 60301. **Save the date for July 24th!**



During our May meeting, we discussed current and upcoming events, as well as prepared buttons for distribution for Oak Park's premier community event, A Day in Our Village. This event was held on June 5, 2022, in Scoville Park. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, there was a two-year hiatus, so it was even more exciting to attend this jam-packed event where we **gave out approximately 600 buttons!**

PFLAG Oak Park also participated in the FIRST EVER Forest Park Pride Celebration, held on June 23rd on Madison Street. This event, lovingly referred to as the Pride Stroll, was organized by chapter member and Play It Again Sports owner, Erich Krumrei. There were approximately 300 people in attendance, and we distributed about **200 buttons!** According to the U.S. Census analysis by the Williams Institute, Forest Park has the second-highest percentage of LGBTQ residents in the entire state of Illinois (Oak Park is number 1), so Krumrei hopes this will become an annual event.

Lastly, PFLAG Oak Park joined the PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois as we proudly marched in the



Chicago Pride Parade. It has been three years since the parade returned to Northalsted. In light of the SCOTUS decision, the love and support displayed during the parade offered a much-needed reminder that there is still good in the world. As such, PFLAG Oak Park submitted an updated advertisement in a special Pride Section of the local newspaper, Wednesday Journal. **Our work is not done yet** and it is more important than ever to support, advocate, and educate for change. We hope you can join us at our next meeting!



News from PFLAG McHenry

by Marco Floreani and Cate Becker

On Sunday, June 12th, Woodstock held it's PRIDE Fest 2022! Several members of the McHenry Chapter participated in providing a PFLAG booth presence and marching in the parade. A wonderful day of music, parade, vendors, and food was enjoyed by many.

The day started with booth set up on the street of Historic Woodstock Square. We shared a booth with Tree of Life, Unitarian Universalist Congregation. Tree of Life, or T.O.L., has been very supportive of PFLAG McHenry and has been our meeting home for many years.

The parade stepped off at 11:00am at nearby Dean Street School. We started with six PFLAG people marching, and several people joined in along the route. There was music and dancing and what an enthusiastic, joyful, loud, crowd! Event organizers estimated there were 4,000 people at the Fest.

After the parade some of our group explored the other booths and festivities on the square. Several of us staffed our booth; greeting people, answering questions, handing out literature, and hugs when requested.

As it got closer to booth closing at 5:00pm, business started to slow down. We were getting tired and joked about being ready for a nap.

Then Marco started to repeat what some of the people were saying:

- “Thank you PFLAG for all you do for us. Thanks for being here.”
- “I have so many good things to say about PFLAG.”
- “How can I receive more information about PFLAG?”
- “We love PFLAG, Thank you!”

Photos by Marco Floreani →→→

top: Parade line up. Front: Mike Weaver; back: Kristin Ebner and her children, Cate Becker, Marco Floreani

middle: Woodstock Pride Fest entry

bottom: PRIDE Fest, Woodstock Square



Marco also wrote this to submit to Open Doors:

“It was an honor to observe the great work of Toni Weaver, Cate Becker, and Mary Genzler as they staffed the PFLAG booth. As an ally member, the direct feedback from PRIDE Fest participants was wonderful to experience first-hand. This clearly demonstrates that each one of us are important in creating an environment that promotes kindness, support and education.”

Thank you, Marco, for your support, your kind words, and great pictures!



Toni Weaver at PFLAG booth



People approaching the booth

News from PFLAG Chicago Metro

by Art Nicol

WGN produced four different 30-second public service announcements (PSAs) based on recordings made by four of our regular participants who journeyed to WGN's studios. The station also produced a 90-second PSA based on excerpts from Steve Bertrand's interview of Fred Valentini and Marcy Fortnow of our chapter. The full interview is available online at <https://wgnradio.com/chicago-pride/pflag-a-chicago-resource-for-families-of-the-lgbtq-community/>.

It's our hope that they generate greater awareness of and participation in PFLAG across Chicagoland and beyond.

Click on the links below (by names of interviewees) to hear PSA recordings:

- [Lance](#)
- [Laveda](#)
- [Don](#)
- [Terry](#)
- [Fred and Marcy](#)

News from PFLAG Rockford

by Frank Langhoff

Once again, we are going to march (or ride) in Rockford's **4th of July Parade** on Monday July 4th. Below is a copy of the instructions we have received. We will be walking and we will have one pick-up truck (club cab, 6' bed). We will meet and decorate at Emmanuel Lutheran Church at 3:00 PM. Anyone can just come to our assigned spot as well. See you on the Fourth!

INSTRUCTIONS:

We will be in Division 2 West, Unit #10. We should line up on the west side of 7th St on 5th Ave. Approach our line up position from 6th St, DO NOT attempt to come down 7th St. Line up begins at 4:00 PM with the main body leaving at 5:00 PM.

Photos of the Ottawa PRIDE Choir

by Ken Brown



The Morton Arboretum's 2022 Family Pride Night in the Children's Garden

Celebrate LGBTQ+ families at Family Pride Night in the Children's Garden, with arts and crafts and live music throughout the evening

Tuesday, July 12

5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Fee \$5 (includes entrance to the Arboretum, starting at 5:00 pm)

See more information on Morton Arboretum's [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

'Don't Ask, Don't Tell': The Black Church and the LGBTQ+ Community

Thu, 7 July 2022

5:30 PM - 7 PM CST

CHICAGO, IL (LOCATION: TBA)

prideinthepews@gmail.com



Buffalo Grove Pride Parade 2022

Photos by Katrin Zanevsky





RESOURCES



qchatspace.org – a community for LGBTQ+ teens

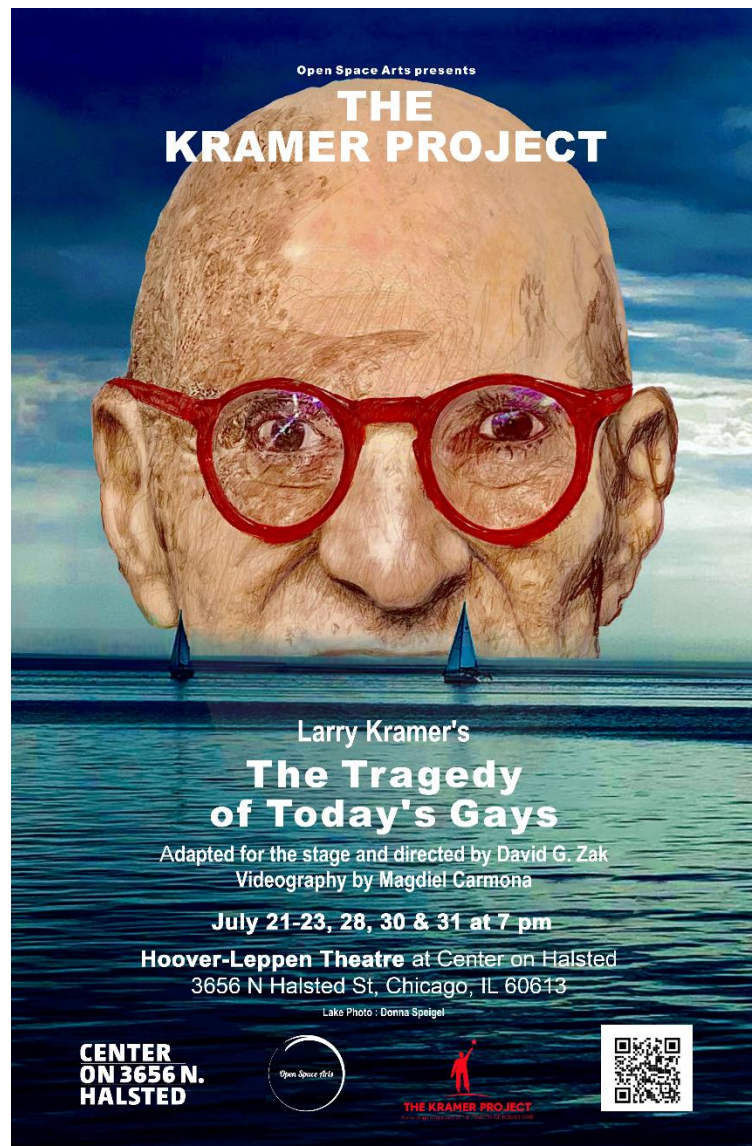
Find and give support, have fun, connect around shared interests and get good information. Chat with like-minded peers in live chats designed for you & by you, facilitated by folks who care.



imi.guide – guides built for and with LGBTQ+ teens to help you explore your identity and support your mental health. This is a free resource to help teens learn practical methods to cope with sexual and gender minority stress in ways that are helpful, relevant, inclusive and joyful.



Center on Halsted 3656 N Halsted Chicago



The Kramer Project is directed and adapted by David Zak from author, playwright, and activist **Larry Kramer's watershed speech, THE TRAGEDY OF TODAY'S GAYS.**

All proceeds benefit Center on Halsted. Click [here](#) for more information.

Get published in Open Doors:
opendoors@pflagillinois.org

THEATER, MOVIES



[Pride Arts](http://pridearts.org) pridearts.org

In July, a two-week-long festival of 11 shorts from the US, Canada, Republic of South Africa, Ireland, and Tunisia, will play from **July 5–19**. The shorts – dealing with matters of the heart ranging from love affairs to parental relationships as well as politics and social considerations faced by queer people around the world – will be presented in two separate week-long programs of approximately ninety minutes per program, with each program streaming for one week.



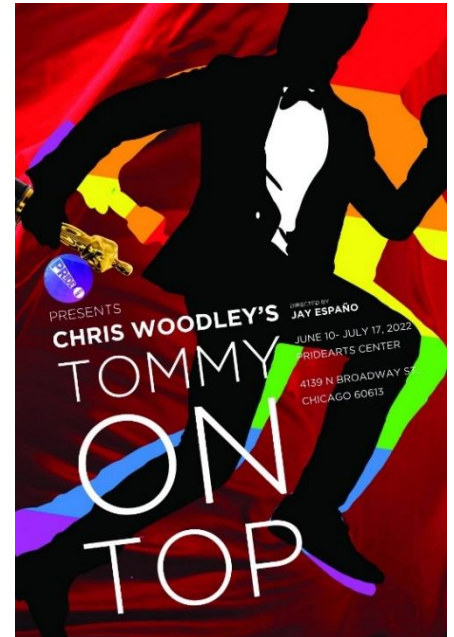
Summer Shorts Week 1:

- A BLOOM (Republic of South Africa, 24:00)
- HOLD THE LINE (USA, 36:47)
- NIDHAL (Tunisia, 10:30)
- PRAY THE GAY AWAY (USA, 11:27)
- STRANDED (Canada, 13:00)

Ticket Price: \$10.00 to view each program of shorts for a full week.

Chris Woodley's **Tommy on Top** runs through July 17th. It's a perfect summer comedy!

4139 N Broadway St
Chicago



Summer Shorts Week 2:

- DON'T TEXT YOUR EX (Canada, 13:52)
- SASHA & MAR (USA, 9:16)
- LOOSE THREADS AND THE SILLY LITTLE EXORCISM (USA, 4:10)
- HEAVY PETTING (Canada, 17:30)
- PUNCH LINE (Ireland, 10:14)
- WEREWOLF (4:37)
- A FEAST THAT NEVER COMES (16:22)

[Purchase tickets for all events here](#)



