

The Rainbow Connection is published by the Prairie Pride Coalition (PPC).

Send Correspondence to
P.O. Box 5048
Bloomington, IL
61702-5048,
or e-mail
info@ppc-il.org

PPC Board:
Dave Bentlin
Kathleen Burger
Peggy Burton
Gary Gletty
Margot Mendoza
Donna O’Crowly
Elizabeth Anvick
and
Olemuel Ashford

Rainbow Connection

JULY, 2013

Celebrating PRIDE in Peru (IL)

by Dave Bentlin

June 30 was a big day as many LGBT peeps flocked to the festivals and parades to celebrate the recent decisions handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court. I viewed with envy the many Facebook postings from friends who were either marching or attending the pride parades in Chicago and St. Louis and wished I could be there to participate in the celebration.



of my element when I visit there. To make matters worse, it sits right in the middle of Putnam County, whose county clerk is one of three in the state who are appealing the marriage equality lawsuit filed by 25 same-sex couples. No charm there!

Even though I wasn’t going to be surrounded by thousands of my LGBT brothers and sisters, I had earlier decided that I would celebrate the day by wearing one of my

rainbow pride t-shirts. If I couldn’t be in Boystown I’d at least find a way to declare my pride wherever I was.

When I arrived, my parents mentioned that they also needed to do some shopping. I assumed they weren’t talking about buying guns, so I agreed to drive them to nearby LaSalle/Peru where they regularly shop for groceries and other stuff. Now LaSalle/Peru is no Chicago, and I was sure there was no pride celebration there, but it’s a nice community on the Illinois River, so the idea of a little road trip sounded fine. With that, I settled in behind the wheel of their 2004 Buick LaSabre and we set off for L-P.

We arrived at one of our stops: the local Aldi’s where my parents typically buy a few items to supplement what

Please see PRIDE, continued on page 3

Instead, I was planning a trip to visit my parents in Magnolia, a tiny burg about 50 miles north of Bloomington/Normal. They needed some help with a project and Sunday was the only day I could do it, so reluctantly I abandoned my pride plans and headed up I-39 to what I often call Central Illinois’ version of Hooterville.

Those of you who have never been there might be forgiven for assuming that any town named Magnolia must possess a quaint charm and gentility. Let me assure you, charm and gentility are in short supply in Magnolia. It’s a hard-scrabble, economically-depressed community of 200 people with a business district that consists of a bar, restaurant, post office, and gun shop (!). The people are nice but decidedly conservative in most ways and I always feel a bit out

Our LGBTQ Youth Need Us!



National research shows that youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ) are at higher risk of homelessness, abuse, and ne-

glect. In Illinois, as many as one in five homeless youth and as many as one in ten abused and neglected children are believed to be LGBTQ.

LGBTQ youth may enter Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) care either because they have been forced out of their homes by their parents and declared a ward of the state by a judge, or because of abuse or ne-



services to assist foster families in building life-affirming skills as youth prepare to be reunified with their families. And when reunification simply is not possible, as determined by the

courts, DCFS also needs adoptive families to provide safe, loving, and permanent homes for LGBTQ youth.

Whether you are single, divorced, separated, married, in a civil union, or LGBTQ yourself, the need for LGBTQ-friendly foster and adoptive families is real. Both foster parenting and adoption are an emotionally rewarding experience, benefiting you, the children you bring into your family, and your community and society as a whole.

For more information on becoming a foster parent or adoptive parent, contact Tracy Wolf, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, at Tracy.Wolf@illinois.gov or 309-828-0022.

glect within their families - often related to their sexual identities - that is so severe that they cannot remain in their homes safely. In either case, DCFS strives to address the particular needs and challenges each youth is facing.

DCFS has specific services and outreach staff that assist LGBTQ youth and their birth families, promoting acceptance and understanding and providing mentoring and counseling to assist them in realizing their full potential in hopes of reunification. In the interim, DCFS needs foster families to provide a temporary safe haven for LGBTQ youth, accepting them and supporting their needs. DCFS provides a wide range of

Gretchen Shelly
Owner

309-661-1726 • 309-661-1729

merry maids.

1702 W. College Ave
Suite A-3
Normal, IL 61761
mmofbn@yahoo.com

A ServicerMASTER BRAND



Law office of
Allison & Mosby-Scott

Jon D. McLaughlin
Attorney at Law
Caring help when you need it most

Phone: (309) 662-5084 · Cell: (309) 319-6206 · Fax: (309) 662-2994
Jon@allisonmosby-scott.com · www.allisonmosby-scott.com



Law office of
Allison & Mosby-Scott

Michelle Mosby-Scott
Attorney at Law
Caring help when you need it most

Phone: (309) 662-5084 · Cell: (309) 310-1154 · Fax: (309) 662-2994
Michelle@allisonmosby-scott.com · www.allisonmosby-scott.com

PRIDE

Continued from page 1

they purchase at their regular grocery store. Since they only had a handful of things to pick up I opted to stay in the car while they shopped.

I had closed my eyes for few seconds and began dozing off when I was awakened by an elevated monster truck that pulled into the space next to mine. The rumble of the exhaust was sufficient to bring me out of my nap, but in the event it wasn't, the passengers had some vintage Led Zeppelin blasting away that shooed away any peace and tranquility (that could be found in an Aldi's parking lot). The driver shut off the engine and went inside while his passenger stayed behind, continuing to listen to Robert Plant wail away about some "Stairway to Heaven."

The passenger was a big, burly guy, probably in his mid-40s, complete with scruffy beard and a few teeth missing. "Great," I tell myself... "here I am on pride day wearing my pretty rainbow pride shirt, sitting in my parents' 2004 Buick in the Aldi's parking lot, and now I've got someone next to me who looks like he walked off the set of *Deliverance*." I was waiting for him to pull out a banjo and start pickin'.

"Let me know if the music's too loud," he said in a surprisingly not-too-gruff voice. "No problem, enjoy," I replied.

A couple of minutes passed, and I guess my brain had become numb to the music because I actually had started to doze off again.

"Hey, I like your shirt, that's cool."

I was sort of thrown by the comment as I assumed this guy to be at best conservative and at worst a rabid gun-rack Tea Party supporter. I managed to reply "thanks, appreciate that" but before I could say more my parents had returned to the car so I hopped out to unlock the trunk for

them. We loaded the groceries, everyone got in and I prepared to start the trip back to Magnolia.

"Takin' your parents shopping, that's being a good son," the man continued. "Not all children would do that for their families."

At that moment my blah pride day became something very unexpected...a moment where several truths were revealed to me:

1. *Support for LGBTQ equality is diverse.* I had stereotyped this man and assumed because he didn't fit my vision of a progressive citizen that he must be a bigot. How many times have I kept my pride "under a bushel" because I feared that I would be confronted, or worse yet battered?

2. *We need to be a little less scared about being ourselves,* even in situations where we might have second thoughts about it. He's been gone almost 35 years, but Harvey Milk's argument that we must "come out" and be visible still rings true today. That visibility leads to understanding and the destruction of myths and untruths.

3. *Celebrating pride takes many forms.* We celebrate being LGBT, but we also should remember to celebrate our other identities that include being LGBT sons, daughters, parents, brothers, sisters, friends, and coworkers. It reinforces our argument that in many (most) ways we are very similar to our straight counterparts: We care for our families, we pay taxes, we go to church, we volunteer, and we seek and appreciate legal recognition of our equality.

4. *At their core most people are kind, fair, and support equality for all people.* Not only are we everywhere...so are our allies.

Is there still a small part of me that regrets missing the big pride parade in Chicago? Yes, but I also know that sometimes we have to "bloom where we are planted," and on that day it felt right for me to be in that old Buick LaSabre sitting in the parking lot at Aldi's in Peru.

PPC Annual Family Reunion Picnic



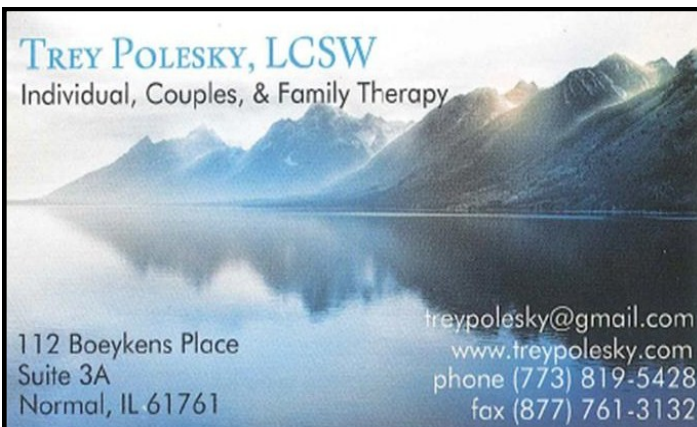
Date and Time: Sunday, July 14, noon—4 p.m.

Location: Underwood Park Picnic Shelter

Come one, come all to the annual PPC Family Reunion Picnic! Brats, burgers and veggie options, as well as entertainment, will be provided. Please bring your own beverages and a dish to share.

Calendar

- **Friday, July 5, First Fridays** – join the fun at the **Bistro, 316 N. Main Street, Bloomington**, for appetizers and drink specials. Hosted this month by **PFLAG**.
- **Friday, July 5**—Missfits Roller Derby fundraiser at the **Bistro**.
- **Monday, July 8**– **PFLAG, the Parents, Friends and Family of Lesbians and Gays**, meets on the second **Monday** of each month at the **Unitarian Church – 1613 E. Emerson**, from **5:30 – 7:30**.
- **Friday, July 12**—Happy Anniversary, **Bistro!** A special anniversary show with special guest **Candi Stratton** will be hosted by **Sharon Share-a-Like**.
- **Saturday, July 13**—80's Night Dance Party at the **Bistro**
- **Sunday, July 14**—Annual **PPC Family Reunion Picnic** from noon to 4 p.m. at the **Underwood Park picnic shelter**. Burgers and brats will be provided, please bring beverages and a dish to share.
- **Friday, July 19**—Hotspot Talent Night, hosted by **Sharon Share-a-Like** at the **Bistro**
- **Saturday, July 27**—Pub Crawl with **Plain Jane** from 8-12 and **DJ Squeesa** from midnight to close at the **Bistro**.
- **Every Wednesday and Thursday** – **Bingo and Karaoke** at the **Bistro**, starting at **9 p.m.**



TREY POLESKY, LCSW
Individual, Couples, & Family Therapy

112 Boeykens Place
Suite 3A
Normal, IL 61761

treypolesky@gmail.com
www.treypolesky.com
phone (773) 819-5428
fax (877) 761-3132

Jeanette L. Roberts
Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Psychotherapy for Individuals, Couples, and Groups

200 West Monroe, Suite 305
Bloomington, Illinois 61701

(309) 820-8162

Healing Touch Bloomington
Energy Therapy reduces pain, supports healing from surgery or chemo, promotes relaxation.

For information, contact
Chris Kaufman, R.N., Certified Healing Touch Practitioner
305 E. Front St., Bloomington
(309) 826-5546
Wellsprings1@gmail.com



New Covenant Community

An Open and Affirming/More Light congregation which welcomes all persons into full participation in the life of our community, regardless of race, gender, age or sexual orientation.

Worship Sundays, 10 a.m.
Sunday School and childcare provided during worship

Chapel of the Campus Religious Center
210 W. Mulberry St., Normal, IL 61761 | (309) 454-7362
www.nccnormal.org