



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

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# Rainbow Connection

AUGUST, 2013

## Musings, by Gene Naden

I imagine that the tragic passing this month of Glee star Cory Monteith will be something of a blow to the show's many gay fans. The program's association with the LGBT community could make Monteith's passing a somewhat personal event for some of us. The cause, a lethal mix of alcohol and heroin, makes the event more discouraging than if it had been, say, a plane crash or car accident. For those whose private lives have been touched by similar circumstances, the pain may be especially sharp. Yet it is important to remember that many persons have recovered from addiction and alcoholism and that many more will recover in the future.

Watching Chicago's Pride parade, I saw placards celebrating the fact the "DOMA is dead." Certainly, this Supreme Court decision was a victory for us. The vote was 5-4. This disturbingly narrow margin underscores the fact that heterosexist opinion remains a threat to the American LGBT community.

Many also celebrated the Court's decision on California's Proposition 8. Yet the judges did not actually rule on the constitutionality of marriage equality. They merely allowed a lower court's decision to stand. This decision did not affect states other than California.

Pondering these circumstances, one is led to ask why, in a just world, large numbers of people hold homo-

phobic views. It seems that humans have an innate tendency to dislike and oppose those who appear different from themselves. Perhaps this is a consequence of evolution, a hold-over from the earlier periods of our race's history when neighboring tribes, perhaps even tribes of differing humanoid species, competed for the same foraging and hunting territory.

Faced with the fact that a large part of the country's population still does not like us, it would be easy to return that animosity in kind. This is a response I would do well not to indulge in. I already carry enough grudges, fears and resentments to hamper my basic humanity. To dwell on the malice of the homophobic right would merely add to the burden, tending to exaggerate my already over-developed defensive nature. I would do well to love these enemies, to try to understand the fears that drive them and to educate them as one would teach an ignorant child.

There is a bit of a paradox here. We need to love our enemies but we *must not surrender to them*. It is important to keep up the political struggle, using all the tools and tactics available in our democracy. That is the challenge we face: to affirm the humanity of our opponents and yet maintain vigorous motivation to defend against them and to advance our agenda.

# McLean County AIDS Task Force AIDS Run/Walk Set for Sept. 15



Runners, walkers, and volunteers are invited to the AIDS Walk/Run at 9 a.m. on Sunday, Sept. 15 at the Tipton Park North Pavilion on Bloomington's east side (corner of College Ave. and Airport Road). Registration/check-in begins at 8:30 a.m.

Online registration through Sept. 1 is \$25 for walkers and runners (\$30 if you desire a commemorative t-shirt). Register online by going to <https://secure.getmeregistered.com/> and type "AIDS Walk/Run" in the "search" field to find the event. A paper version of the entry form

can be found at <http://www.lakerunclub.org/FormMenu.htm>.

Proceeds from the event will assist individuals and families living with HIV and AIDS in McLean County. Awards will go to overall male & female and top three finishers in age groups 19 and under, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, and 50+.

For more information visit the Facebook event page at <https://www.facebook.com/events/490360731040583/> or contact the task force at 309-827-2437 or [mcatf@mcatf.org](mailto:mcatf@mcatf.org).

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# Campus, Local LGBT Leaders Meet with ISU Coach Following Controversial Tweet

Leaders from ISU's campus LGBT employee group and the Prairie Pride Coalition recently met with ISU men's basketball coach Dan Muller in response to a tweet in which Muller espoused the values of Chik-Fil-A, a national restaurant chain whose CEO has voiced several anti-gay sentiments.

Muller's tweet of July 27 read "I love Chik-fil-a! Love their food and what they stand for." Following the tweet Muller received a handful of texts critical of his tweet, and after consultation he opted to remove the tweet from his feed.

Following further coverage of the situation via a news report from campus radio station WGLT, Prairie Pride Coalition board president Dave Bentlin reached out to Coach Muller to clarify the message and intent of the tweet. That communication led to a meeting that included Muller, Bentlin, and ISU Triangle Association chairperson Barb Dallinger.

Dallinger and Bentlin felt reassured by the meeting with Muller.

"He is deeply upset about the situation," Dallinger wrote in an e-mail to the Triangle Association membership. "Dave and I both agreed that while his comment was not the best thing he's done since returning to campus, there did not appear to be any malicious intent."

Muller said he first learned of CEO Dan Cathy's anti-gay views after conducting an Internet search following negative responses to his tweet. He continued that his tweet was referencing the chain's food and charitable work that he learned about while he was an assistant at Vanderbilt University.

"We talked a great deal about how everyone has issues they are aware of/follow and others they don't," Dallinger continued. "We did suggest he work at keeping abreast on current issues (especially those receiving the amount of press we have recently)."

The trio also discussed Illinois State's commit-

ment to diversity as being one of Educating Illinois' core values. Muller agreed and even commented that people who don't buy into the core value of diversity should look for a job elsewhere.

For background on the tweet view the WGLT report at [http://wgl.org/wireready/news/2013/07/04558\\_muller\\_chick\\_fil\\_a\\_130021.shtml](http://wgl.org/wireready/news/2013/07/04558_muller_chick_fil_a_130021.shtml)

## Save the Date—March on Springfield Oct. 22

The March on Springfield for Marriage Equality will take place on Oct. 22, the scheduled first day of the fall veto session of the Illinois state legislature.

The "March on Springfield" is part of a broad grassroots strategy to secure final passage of Senate Bill 10, the "Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act," already approved by the Illinois Senate. Once adopted by the Illinois House and signed by Gov. Pat Quinn, Illinois will become the 14th state plus the District of Columbia, to treat all of its citizens equally under state marriage laws.

Locally, Prairie Pride Coalition members have attended organizing meetings in Springfield and will work with the local LGBT communities to coordinate a Bloomington/Normal presence in Springfield on Oct. 22.

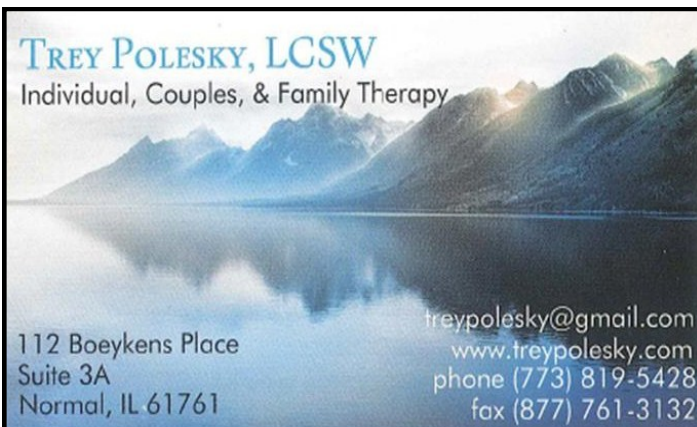
More details are available on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MarchOnSpringfieldForMarriageEquality> and on Twitter at @IllinoisMarches. To help with plans for a Bloomington/Normal delegation please contact the Prairie Pride Coalition at [info@ppc-il.org](mailto:info@ppc-il.org).



# Calendar

- **Monday, August 12— 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.**
- **Weekend of August 22—The Uptown Normal Sweetcorn Festival—visit the PFLAG booth!**
- **Thursday, August 29—PPC will have a table at Festival ISU on the quad of Illinois State University.**
- **Friday, August 30—Volunteer meeting for the AIDS walk/run for life. 6:30 at the Unity Church building—1100 N. Beech St. in Normal.**
- **Every Wednesday and Thursday – Bingo and Karaoke at the Bistro, starting at 9 p.m.**
- **Monday, Sept. 2—PPC, along with other local LGBT organizations, will be marching in the Bloomington Labor Day parade that kicks off at 10 a.m. in downtown Bloomington. If you would like to march with us, please contact us at [info@ppc-il.org](mailto:info@ppc-il.org)**
- **Saturday, Sept. 28—PPC will have a bake sale during the Downtown Bloomington Farmer’s Market to support the organization. The Farmer’s Market opens at 7:30. All proceeds collected will go toward the work of the PPC.**

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