



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

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Rainbow Connection

DECEMBER, 2013

Equality in IL! Join us at Jan. 14 Forum/Celebration!

The Prairie Pride Coalition and Equality Illinois are teaming up to sponsor an information forum on the new marriage equality law at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 14 in the Osborn Room at the Bloomington Police Department, 305 S. East St. (behind Bloomington City Hall).

The law became official when Gov. Pat Quinn signed the bill on Nov. 20, but it will not take effect until June 2, 2014. On that date Illinois will become

the 16th state to allow same-sex marriages.

The forum will feature a presentation by McLean County Clerk Kathy Michael, who will explain procedures for taking



out a marriage license and will answer any questions from the audience.

The forum will also feature representatives from Equality Illinois who will talk more about the bill and its ramifications on same-sex couples in Illinois.

The event will also provide an avenue to celebrate the victory for marriage equality. Wedding cake, mints, and punch will be served and other activities are also being planned.

Couples and singles are invited to join us for information, celebration, and a good time!

PPC Participates in March on Springfield

The Prairie Pride Coalition organized a bus trip for local activists to attend the "March on Springfield for Marriage Equality" on Oct. 22. Students, retirees, and everyone in between used the opportunity to join the thousands of others who traveled to Springfield to call for passage of SB10, the marriage equality bill. Two weeks later both the Illinois House and Illinois Senate passed the bill, making Illinois the 15th state to pass a marriage equality bill.

Bus riders also took the opportunity to meet with and lobby Rep. Dan Brady. Despite our efforts, Brady and Rep. Keith Sommer, who together represent the Bloomington/Normal area,

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March, cont. on pg. 5



ISU Formalizes LGBTQA Alumni Network

by Barb Dallinger

Having worked at ISU for over twenty years as staff member, I've had the privilege of watching many LGBTQA students attend and graduate from Illinois State. These alums have kept in touch informally throughout the years and happily the University has agreed the time is right to formalize an Alumni Network. This will offer a variety of ways to not only retain those important connections, but essentially even build on them. As a past advisor for the PRIDE organization, I look forward to cultivating my relationship with former PRIDE students and witnessing firsthand their reconnection with each other. The added bonus is the cross generational connecting that happens between people who weren't on campus at the same time. PRIDE Alumni tease me that I always confuse their years and try to give them updates on members who weren't in the organization when they were involved. Which is true! But that's also led to some great connections bridging different years. This network will increase that growth and outreach. We are blessed with an amazing array of LGBTQA alums who want to stay connected to their classmates and the University; in addition, many of them are looking for ways to mentor and support today's

generation of LGBTQA students. The ISU LGBTQA Alumni Network will help fulfill these desires and benefit everyone involved. Alumni Relations is excited to offer a formal way for our alumni to stay engaged and connected with ISU and each other. An event is being planned for the spring that will officially kick off the organization. Like our new Facebook page to restart your connection and stay in touch: <https://www.facebook.com/IllinoisStateLGBTAlumni>

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LGBTQA Business Profile: Another Word For...

Name of Business: Another Word For...

Owner's Name: Tim Kirby

Location: 411 N Main St, Bloomington, Illinois

Website and/or Facebook address: www.facebook.com/AnotherWordFor

Hours of operation: Mon-Fri 10am-6pm; Sat 10am-4pm; closed Sunday

How long in business: We've been open for 13 months.

What type of merchandise is sold? We offer miscellaneous gift items, including bulk candy, baby clothes, plants, decorations, lotions/soaps, candles, and holiday items. Many of our items are unique or one of a kind. We feature many products from local craftsmen such as Money Penny Soy Candles, Luu Luv, Dee Ann's Creations and several others. We, as a local business ourselves, feel it is important to encourage local artisans and companies.

Why did you choose downtown Bloomington for your business location? I chose downtown for the setting because I love the foot traffic and personalities of our local people. The downtown area is a great varietal collection of small store fronts and sale options.

Do you have any special message for the LGBT community? As a part of the LGBTQA community I welcome all of our family to stop by and check out our shop. Even if



we don't have what you're looking for - we are always ready to welcome you with a smile and would love to visit.

Any concluding words? We would love to invite you to like our Facebook page or sign up for our mailing list, where we offer special savings and specials throughout the year and also keep you informed of our new merchandise - which changes throughout the year. So, come on in and pick up a gift for yourself or someone you love.

If you know of a local LGBTQA business we would love to feature it in a future profile. E-mail your suggestions to info@ppc-il.org.

Organization Profile: Central Illinois Gender Society

November 20 was Transgender Day of Remembrance; around the world observances were held to honor the 238 men and women who were murdered in the past year because of anti-transgender violence. Locally, Illinois Wesleyan sponsored a service at Evelyn Chapel to honor the occasion that was well attended.

Laws can help, but transgender people - particularly those in more rural regions - need to know there are others like them. One local group, the Central Illinois Gender Society (CIGS), strives to fulfill that need and provide a sense of community for transgender people in our area.

The Central Illinois Gender Society has monthly socials and maintains a web site at <http://illinoisgender.tumblr.com/>.

The group's mission is to provide "a social support group for transgendered, transsexed, and intersexed adults and their companions., 18+. We meet at least once a month, currently in Macomb, Illinois, and also participate in local educational events, meetings, and activities."

If you know of other local resources for our transgender community, please contact us at info@ppc-il.org so that we can add them to our resources page.

Lancaster's Celebrates 15 Years

Owners Jan and Rob hosted a reception and open house on Nov. 7 to celebrate the 15th anniversary of Lancaster's Restaurant, 513 N. Main Street in downtown Bloomington.

Rob and Jan (who also owns the Bistro) for 15 years have provided great food and top-notch service in a LGBT-friendly environment. Their longtime support of our community helps make Bloomington/Normal a better, more welcoming place.

Lancaster's is open at 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday for dinner and from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday for lunch. Check out their frequently-updated menu at www.lancasters-restaurant.com and like them on their Facebook page.





Fourth Annual Your Normal LGBT Film Fest a Success

As crisp autumn nights and colorful leaves began to fall in central Illinois, many were once again inspired, intrigued, and moved by this year's selection of cinema titles at the fourth annual Your Normal LGBT Film Festival. Audience members from Springfield, Minier, Darien, Chicago, and elsewhere joined Bloomington and Normal residents in the five-day, six event festival sponsored by the Prairie Pride Coalition and the Normal Theater.

Opening the festival was the film *Break Through*, a 2012 documentary about a group of theater students at the University of Central Florida putting on a show that explored issues of equality and acceptance for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in the United States, and how much this group of actors learned by staging their play. *Break Through* was no stranger to the festival circuit—it was screened at events around the country and as far away as South Africa during the past year. During the creative process, the diverse group of actors faced the truths about themselves and their families. Ultimately, they learned the importance of self-acceptance and of overcoming their fears, irrespective of their gender or sexual orientation.

Thursday night's selection was an unrestrained comedy from acclaimed Spanish director and writer Pedro Almodóvar. A light-hearted look at a possible plane crash, *I'm So Excited* took us aboard an aircraft that just may be headed for disaster. As the crew in the cockpit tried to fix things, the crew in the cabin danced as fast as they could to keep their passengers happy. In classic Almodóvar style, the story found humor in abundance with sleeping pills, virgins and whores, sex, love, and the Pointer Sisters! This was Almodóvar; so the characters were bound to be colorful and a little crazy.

Friday's offering took its audience into

more reflective territory, with *Reaching for the Moon*, an endearing and beautifully tragic love story about American poet Elizabeth Bishop and Lota de Macedo Soares, a Brazilian architect she met in the 1950s. Brilliant cinematography and the fabulous Brazilian landscape set the stage for this romantic tale. The two women were opposites in some ways, but both strong and fiercely creative, and their relationship on film became "an empowering portrait of two highly gifted women who defy social convention," said Deborah Young in *The Hollywood Reporter*. We were thrilled to learn that Central Illinois audiences got to see this amazing film nearly a month before it opened in New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco!

The Saturday matinee brought us *Ian Harvie: Superhero*—the story of a transgender stand-up comedian. It was a funny and insightful view into how Ian got to where he is; a "self-made man" who is very comfortable in his own skin. Part documentary, part concert film, this selection gave the audience a behind-the-scenes look at the comedic variety and life and times of Ian Harvie.

Saturday's feature presentation was preceded by a short film called *P.D.A.* that was, in fact, about public displays of affection. The short was screened at Frameline (San Francisco) and Outfest (Los Angeles). Bloomington native Patrick Hancock, now an actor living and working in LA, wrote and produced the short, and 80's pop star Debbie Gibson wrote the film's theme song.

Saturday evening brought us *Geography Club* starring Scott Bakula and Ana Gasteyer in the story of an after-school club comprised of students of varying sexual orientations. From twin brothers

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March

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both voted against the bill. On the positive side, Sen. Jason Barickman was one of the few Republicans who supported the bill. Barickman represents a portion of Bloomington/Normal.

PPC would like to thank everyone who participated in the march and helped bring about a victory. We also would like to thank Ken from Moe's, who donated food so that we could offer box lunches to our bus riders.



Film Fest

Continued from pg. 4

Gary and Edmund Entin (Gary directed and Edmund wrote the screenplay), the movie is based on Brent Hartinger's best-selling young adult (YA) novel, and the YA plot is the focus. *Geography Club* refers to the front group formed by a few high school kids who felt they didn't belong at their school. They came up with the "geography club" –a group hidden behind a boring name but providing them with a support group right under the noses of their homophobic peers. One survey respondent commented that "*Geography Club* was the BEST movie by far!"

G.B.F. was the closing selection in this year's Your Normal LGBT Film Festival. An abbreviation that stands for Gay Best Friend, *G.B.F.* was about a teen who comes out as gay in high school and earns the status of "Gay Best Friend." The *G.B.F.* in question is a boy named Tanner, who finds himself a hot commodity as the potential B.F.F. to the popular princesses atop the social pyramid at his school. It starred Natasha Lyonne, Evanna Lynch, Horatio Sanz, Megan Mullally and Jonathan Silverman. Gawker's Rich Juzwiak described *G.B.F.* as "director Darren Stein's latest movie of high-school clique absurdity."

This year's movie selections were accompanied by a reception that followed *I'm So Excited* at Medici in Uptown Normal and an after party that followed *G.B.F.* at the Firehouse Pizza Pub in Normal with music provided by local folk music band Stone and Snow. The festival committee would like to thank Medici and Firehouse Pub for their gracious hospitality.

New to the festival this year was a Festival Pass, a discounted package of four vouchers for the evening movies. It featured ticket sponsorship from The Bistro, Medici, and Equality Illinois. The committee was also very pleased to partner with the Town of Normal, committee member, web master, and festival artist Jacob DeGeal, and Kevin Collins Design to produce a 20' x 6' full color banner that hung on the east side of the College Avenue Parking Deck in Normal to promote the festival.

Other festival outreach and publicity included a full page article in the *Pantagraph*, radio interviews on WGLT and WJBC, an electronic billboard on Veteran's Parkway, personal presentations to our local college pride and PFLAG groups, and press releases to local GSAs and media outlets.

We also want to thank our many festival underwriters for their generosity in support this year's festival: Hail The Hair King, The Bistro, Marcus Smith, Equality Illinois, PFLAG, Dave Bentlin, McLean County AIDS Task Force, Garlic Press, Jan Lancaster, Sandy Colbs, Ph.D., Lancaster's Fine Dining, Bruce Lang, Medici Restaurant, Panera Bread, Manny Mendoza, Friends of the Arts at Illinois State, Town of Normal, and Another Word For.

Stay tuned for news as we gear up for the 2014 edition of Your Normal LGBT Film festival, which is scheduled for October 15 – 19, 2014. Be sure to stay in touch with us on Facebook and on the web at www.yournoralfilmfest.com.

Calendar

- Friday, November 29— “Black Friday” - be sure to patronize local and LGBT-friendly businesses when doing your holiday shopping!
- Friday, December 6—First Fridays at the Bistro in Downtown Bloomington. Hosted this month by the PPC.
- Monday, December 9– 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.
- Every Wednesday and Thursday – Bingo and Karaoke at the Bistro, starting at 9 p.m.
- Friday, November 8—Summit on Race sponsored by the YWCA held at the ISU Center for the Performing Arts. Speaker is Maura Cullen.



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