



# Rainbow Connection

Prairie Pride Coalition

Summer 2017

## June 12 event at Bistro to commemorate Orlando shootings, Roll out new PPC Service Project

The Prairie Pride Coalition, the Bistro, and the Central Illinois Pride Health Center will sponsor a reception from 5 to 7 p.m. on Monday, June 12 at the Bistro to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the Orlando shootings and to introduce an LGBTQIA+ Business and Resource Directory produced by PPC.

The national theme of this year's commemoration is "honor them with action." In keeping with that sentiment, representatives from PPC, the health center, and other organizations will speak during a brief program at 5:30 p.m. on what their groups are doing to create a more inclusive, safe, and welcoming environment.

Prairie Pride Coalition is excited to use the occasion to roll out its inaugural edition of the B/N Area Business and Resource Directory, a database of more than 70 local establishments that have pledged to offer a safe, accepting, and inclusive environment for members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Each member of the directory will demonstrate their support by displaying a specially-designed rainbow decal either at the entrance to their establishment or on their web site/facebook pages.

Limited copies of the directory will be available at the reception. Donations will be accepted to help defray the cost of the printing.



The reception is open to the public...so please join us as we remember those we lost one year ago and to learn more about what's being done locally to create a safe, welcoming environment.

## Page 2: DC, Cities Around the Country to Participate in June 11 Equality March



## Bloomington/Normal LGBTQIA+ 21st Family Reunion Picnic! JUNE 4

A collaboration hosted by Central Illinois PRIDE Health Center, Prairie Pride Coalition, and PFLAG Bloomington-Normal. **Sunday June 4 from 12:01 PM - 4 PM at Anderson Park in Normal, IL.** This is the 21st consecutive family reunion picnic.

Our annual pride picnic for the local LGBTQIA community, and civil rights friends and allies! Fried chicken, tableware, and drinks will be provided. We encourage attendees to bring a food item to share.

Join us for an afternoon of food, fun, conversation, and information sharing!



## DC, Cities Around the Country to Participate in June 11 Equality March

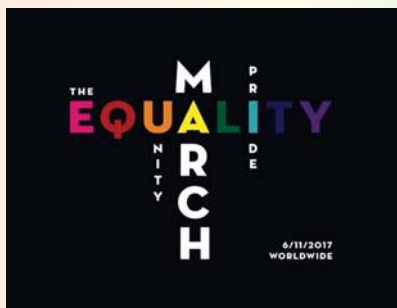
Three cities within easy driving distance of central Illinois will participate in the June 11 “Equality March for Unity & Pride,” a grassroots movement which will mobilize the diverse LGBTQ+ communities in DC and across the country to peacefully and clearly address concerns about the current political landscapes and how it is contributing to the persecution and discrimination of LGBTQ+ individuals.

A national march expected to draw tens of thousands of supporters will take place in Washington DC, and more than 75 cities around the country will also sponsor marches and rallies on behalf of the effort.

### Participating cities in our area include:



Chicago. At 11 a.m. on Sunday, June 11 organizers of the city’s Andersonville Midsommarfest will sponsor an equality rally on the festival pride stage.



Frankfort. This community, located in south suburban Chicagoland, will host an equality march and rally from 2 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, June 11 in Breidert Green Park.



Davenport, IA. Our activist friends from the Quad Cities will sponsor a rally at 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 11 at Centennial Park in Davenport.



Progress has been made over the past decade in the ongoing fight for LGBTQ+ inclusion, access, and justice, but there’s still so much more to be done – especially since the progress we’ve achieved is currently being threatened by increased hostile rhetoric, discriminatory policies, and violence perpetrated against the most vulnerable in our communities.

The Equality March and its sister events across the country will give voice to our concerns, and to support, uplift, and bring attention to those in our communities who are targeted and marginalized.



For more information about the marches visit the national web site at [www.equalitymarch2017.org](http://www.equalitymarch2017.org) or the organization’s facebook page at [www.facebook.com/TheEqualityMarch2017/](https://www.facebook.com/TheEqualityMarch2017/).

## Community Calendar



**Friday, June 2, Noon - Steampunk Drag Show**  
316 N. Main St., Bloomington



**Sunday, June 4, - 21st Annual Family Reunion Picnic [see page 1]**  
Noon - 4 PM, Anderson Park pavilion, Normal



**Sunday, June 11, DC & all over US [see page 2]**  
Equality March for Unity & Pride



**Monday, June 12, Orlando Shootings Were One Year Ago - Commemoration; PPC introduces new Business & Resource Directory, [see page 1]**  
5-7 PM, Bistro, 316 N. Main Street, Bloomington  
The Bistro - Central Illinois PRIDE Health Center - Prairie Pride Coalition



**Friday, June 18, Bistro Big Show**  
316 N. Main Street, Bloomington



**Tuesday, June 27, National HIV Testing Day [see page 5 for info & to find a testing site near you]**  
Nationwide. If you think you may need to be tested, you probably do.



**Tuesday, July 4, Independence Day**  
Celebrations in Miller Park, Bloomington and Fairview Park, Normal; and throughout the county



**Saturday, August 26 Sweet Corn Festival**  
Uptown Normal

## RECURRING EVENTS



**Fridays - Weekly**  
**LGBTQ Youth Group**  
First United Methodist, 211 N. School St., Normal



**Thursdays - Weekly**  
**Bingo** at 9 PM, a the Bistro  
**Karaoke** at 10 PM, a the Bistro  
316 N. Main Street, Bloomington



**Fridays - Weekly**  
**Improv Attack**, 8:30 PM at the Bistro  
316 N. Main Street, Bloomington



**2nd Mondays, 5:30 p.m. - Monthly**  
**PFLAG of Bloomington-Normal**  
Unitarian-Universalist Church  
1316 E. Emerson St., Bloomington, IL



**2nd Tuesdays, 5:30-6:00 p.m. - Monthly**  
**Stand Up for Social Justice - BloNo, IL**  
front lawn of the BCPA, downtown Bloomington  
June 13; July 11; August 8

**The  
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**info@ppc-il.org**

### PPC Board

**Dave Bentlin, President**  
**Elizabeth Arvick, Secretary**  
**Olemuel Ashford, Treasurer**  
**Gary Gletty • Margot Mendoza**

Send newsletter submissions to  
info@ppc-il.org  
All submissions subject to PPC board  
approval and to timeliness of inclusion.

Visit these organizations on Facebook for more details about their activities:

Central Illinois PRIDE Health Center

The Bistro

Prairie Pride Coalition

PFLAG Bloomington/Normal

Stand Up for Social Justice - BloNo, IL

City of Bloomington

Town of Normal



## What PPC has been doing

Here are some of the ways that the **Prairie Pride Coalition** has recently been involved in the local community as well as at the State level.

- We had an information table at the **LGBTQ Youth Resource Event** at the Bloomington YWCA on Friday, May 19, along with several other LGBTQ organizations and allies. Youth aged 10-23 were able to talk with the organizations and vendors and pick up information. The event was sponsored by the Central Illinois PRIDE Health Center.
- On Saturday, May 20, we had an information table at the **Social Justice Fair** at the Unitarian-Universalist Church in Bloomington where we shared our resources and networked with other groups.
- We co-sponsored the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Festival of New Plays called **Voices of Pride** along with The New Route Theater on May 4-6 at the Chateau Bloomington Hotel and Conference Center in the Jesse Smart Auditorium. Staged readings of 4 new LGBT plays were presented along with talk backs including 3 of the playwrights.
- We helped facilitate Equality Illinois' **LGBTQ Ally 101** – awareness training - for local law enforcement at Heartland Community College on March 30-31.
- Our Secretary, Elizabeth Fox-Anvick and her wife Caroline did a presentation and discussion on LGBT foster parenting and adoption at **Equality Con** in Springfield on May 6.
- Elizabeth Fox-Anvick was recently elected to the District 87 School Board.
- Board member, Margot Mendoza, continues to represent us at the **Minority and Police Partnership (MAPP)** of Bloomington-Normal. MAPP works to build lasting relationships between the community and law enforcement.



## Legislative update from Springfield

As of press time the General Assembly is still in session so here is the current status of legislation still being debated:

HB1785 - Bill to Simplify Changing Gender Marker on Birth Certificate. This bill would bring the process in line with modern medical standards to make it easier for people to change the gender marker on their birth certificates to correspond with their authentic gender identity. This bill passed the House and is awaiting action in the Senate. Rep. Dan Brady, Rep. Keith Sommer, Rep. Bill Mitchell, and Rep. Mike Unes all opposed the bill.

SB1761 - Bill that would prohibit the use of LGBTQ panic defense in murder cases. This bill passed the Senate and is awaiting action in the House. Sen. Bill Brady, Sen. Dave Koehler, and Sen. Chuck Weaver all supported the bill. Sen. Jason Barickman did not vote but had supported the legislation in a committee vote.

Sb1670 - Bill that would allow individuals to self-identify as LGBTQ when applying on a state board or commission. This bill passed both the House and Senate and awaits Gov. Rauner's signature. Rep. Dan Brady supported the bill; Sommer, Mitchell, and Unes are on record as not voting on the bill. Sen. Brady, Sen. Koehler, and Sen. Weaver all supported the bill; Sen. Barickman are on record as not voting on the bill.

SB64 - Bill that would have created the Religious Freedom Defense Act. This bill is dead for now; it has been referred to committee with no chance of a vote this session.

*Legislative update, continued on next page*

## Legislative update from previous page

HB664 - Bill that would have prohibited transgender and gender non-conforming students from using facilities that correspond with their gender identity. This bill is dead for now; it has been referred to committee with no chance of a vote this session.

For the latest information on HB1785 and SB1761 please check out the Equality Illinois Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/equalityillinois/](http://www.facebook.com/equalityillinois/) or the organization's 2017 legislation web page at [www.equalityillinois.us/2017-legis](http://www.equalityillinois.us/2017-legis)

## If you think the mere fact that Illinois has no state budget doesn't matter, please read this story from the AIDS Foundation of Illinois.

May 26, 2017

<http://www.aidschicago.org/page/news/all-news/fewer-people-with-hiv-identified#.WSH2iEPFKuQ.facebook>

## 250 Fewer people with HIV identified during Illinois budget impasse

The three organizations that coordinate HIV prevention services in Illinois outside Chicago – Champaign-Urbana Public Health District, Illinois Public Health Association, and Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago – and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago are outraged to learn that new data from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) found the state budget impasse decreased the number of people newly identified as HIV-positive by nearly 250 people in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

The new IDPH data shows that the number of HIV tests performed in Illinois decreased by nearly nine percent (to 189,273 in 2016 from 207,889 in 2014) resulting in the identification of 245 fewer people with HIV. In 2014, 215 people with HIV were identified outside Chicago. That number dropped to 107 in 2015 and a mere 78 in 2016.

Illinois last had a complete budget in 2014, and in 2015 operated without a budget for the first half of the calendar year under a Stop Gap appropriations bill from July through December. State general revenue funds, which have been most impacted by the lack of a state budget, support nearly all

HIV testing conducted outside the city of Chicago. As a result, most of the undiagnosed people with HIV are living in cities and towns across Illinois, including the Cook County suburbs.

Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner and the Illinois General Assembly must recognize this unprecedented stalemate is jeopardizing the lives of Illinoisans. A full-year state budget with adequate revenue is needed immediately to ensure individuals with HIV are identified and linked to care. With fewer resources dedicated for HIV testing, opportunities to identify and link individuals living with HIV to care have significantly decreased.

That 245 people with HIV have not been diagnosed has two major consequences for public health in the state of Illinois:

These individuals are at greater risk of transmitting HIV to others as they cannot seek their own HIV treatment (which leads to viral suppression and a dramatically lower risk of sexual transmission) and cannot make informed decisions about their sexual behavior.

Individuals who are diagnosed late are at risk of serious and costly AIDS-related illness, much of which will be paid for by Medicaid. It costs over \$350,000 to provide medical care to a person with HIV over their lifetime.

The IDPH data is especially appalling considering the disproportionate impact of HIV in communities of color, particularly African Americans. Black men are 6.4 times more likely to receive an HIV diagnosis in their lifetime compared to white men; Black women are 18.8 times more likely to contract the virus compared to white women.

It is inexcusable to endanger the lives of our most vulnerable citizens due to a political stalemate. There is no time to waste – we urge Illinois to invest in comprehensive HIV testing and treatment programs to prevent new cases of HIV and link those living with the virus to care.

The lives of Illinoisans are on the line.





## June 27 is National HIV Testing Day, a day to get the facts, get tested!

Around 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV, and one in eight people don't know they have it. Nearly 45,000 people find out they have HIV every year.

HIV testing is the gateway to prevention and care.

People who test negative have more prevention tools available today than ever before.

People who test positive can take HIV medicines that can keep them healthy for many years and greatly reduce their chance of passing HIV to others. Learn more about living with HIV. More than 90% of new HIV infections in the United States could be prevented by testing and diagnosing people living with HIV and making sure they receive early, ongoing treatment.

Find more information about HIV testing, and who should be tested, on CDC's HIV Testing Basics web page.

### What Can You Do?

**Get the Facts.** Learn about HIV, and share this lifesaving information with your family, friends, and community. Tell them about the importance of making HIV testing a part of their regular health routine.

**Get Tested.** Knowing your HIV status gives you powerful information to help keep you and your partner healthy.

CDC recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care. People with certain risk factors should get tested more often. Learn what those risk factors are and how often you should be tested.

### To find a testing site near you:

- visit [ActAgainstAIDS](http://ActAgainstAIDS)
- text your ZIP code to KNOWIT (566948)
- call 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636).

You can also use a home testing kit available in drugstores or online.

Material above from  
<https://www.cdc.gov/features/hivtesting/>

## Bloomington-Normal HIV test sites

### McLean County Health Department

HIV/STI testing and counseling  
<http://health.mcleancountyil.gov/>

200 W. Front Street, Bloomington  
309-888-5435

### Planned Parenthood Bloomington Health Center

HIV/STI testing and counseling. Hormone therapy and health services for transgender clients

[www.plannedparenthood.org](http://www.plannedparenthood.org)  
1319 N. Veterans Parkway, Bloomington  
309-827-4014