

PPC Donates Books to High School Libraries

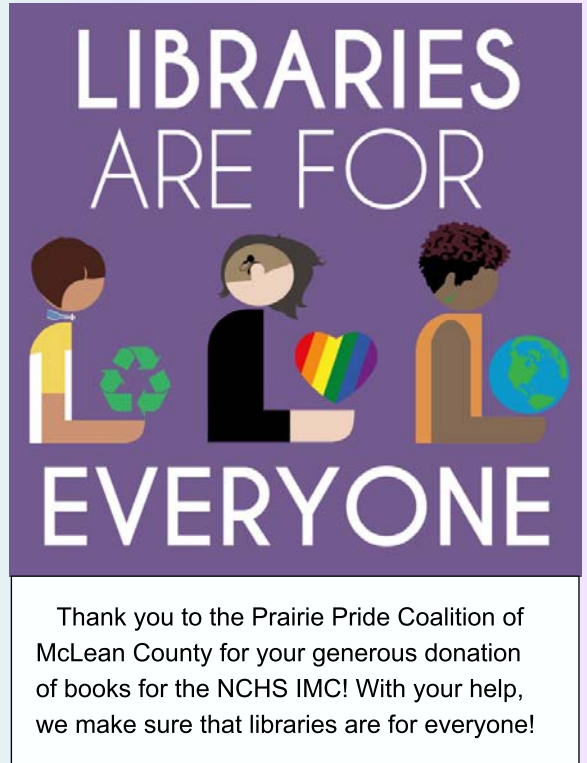
This month, the PPC has made generous donations of current LGBTQA+ friendly young adult books to local high school libraries. Many school libraries have to really stretch their book budget dollars, so the donation of around a dozen books each was very appreciated.

Local schools Normal Community High School, Normal West High School, and Bloomington High School were the initial recipients of the donation. The school librarians were contacted directly and asked to provide a wish list of books to PPC. This was done instead of coming up with a master list to give to all libraries in order to avoid duplicates and to allow local librarians to get books most in demand by their students.

“It is so important for young adults (YA) to be able to ‘see’ themselves in the books they read; YA literature has come so far in the last several years in its representation of diverse ethnicities, spiritual practices, gender and sexual identification, and points of view. We have a high demand for LGBT books in our library, and I was thrilled to get some new, current books to offer to my kids,” said NCHS librarian Caroline Fox Anvick about the donation.

The books were so well received locally, that PPC decided to offer books to more rural schools within McLean County as well. Librarians from high schools in Heyworth, LeRoy and Lexington all responded enthusiastically to the opportunity to get more diverse books.

Although the books are appreciated everywhere, it’s often the students in those smaller communities that need more of a helping hand. One librarian from LeRoy even followed up her book request with questions about GSA clubs at larger schools, saying that her school has only recently been able to start one. Conversations like these are just one reason why the outreach that PPC has been doing for youth is so important.



SAVE THE DATE: Voices of Pride Festival May 3-6

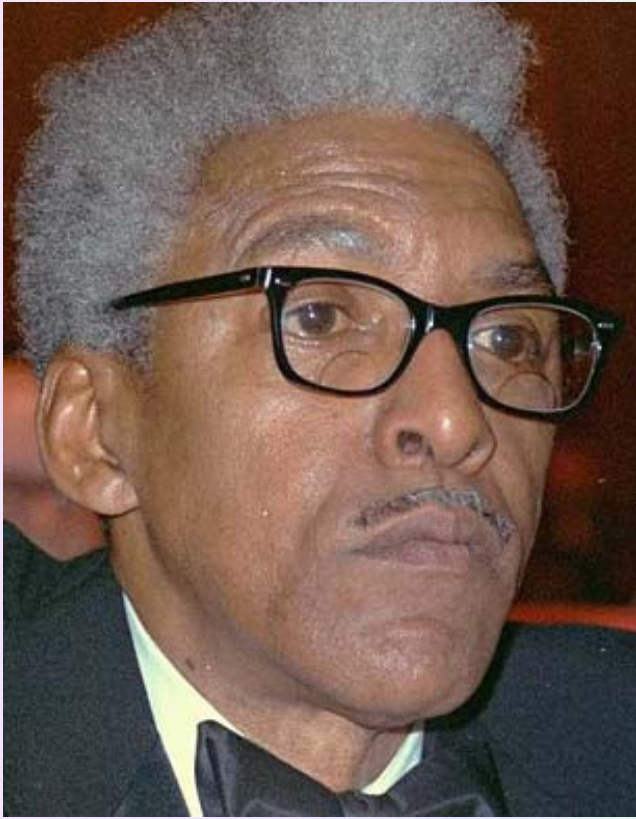
The Prairie Pride Coalition will present the third annual VOICES OF PRIDE festival of new plays May 3-6 in the Smart Auditorium at the Chateau, 1621 Jumer Drive in Bloomington.

The festival of staged readings of new plays will be organized by local theater professionals Joe McDonnell and Don Shandrow.

Plays are still being considered for inclusion. Look on our Facebook page for additional details in the coming weeks.



Speak Truth to Power: Reclaiming Bayard Rustin's Clarion Call



In the last couple of years the phrase "speak truth to power" has been employed by many who believe in something deeply and passionately and speak that truth in the face of a power structure that believes otherwise. Those four words have become particularly popular in light of the 2016 elections.

Despite its widespread use the origins of the phrase are not widely known. While it is most often attributed to a 1955 book published by the American Friends Service Committee, more recent research asserts that the phrase and concept was first articulated in 1942 by gay civil rights activist Bayard Rustin in describing how religious groups should embrace pacifism.

That Rustin hasn't received proper credit is consistent with the marginalizing of Rustin and his work in the 1950s and 1960s. He was an architect of many social movements including the 1963 March on Washington, yet Rustin was shunted to the background by other civil rights activists who didn't agree with his sexual orientation and his expressing his gayness.

As we think about and celebrate Black History Month let's work to be sure our heroes like Rustin, Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, and Barbara Jordan are included in that celebration.



Photos from the Family Reunion Picnic in past years.



SAVE THE DATE: 22nd Annual Family Reunion Picnic.

Mark Sunday, June 10, 2018 on your calendar for the annual Family Reunion Picnic. The picnic will be from noon till 3 (set up starting at 11 AM). It seems to be the best date we could think of that doesn't conflict with anything else. (Peoria is having its event the day before - 6/9; Father's Day is 6/17; and Chicago Pride is 6/24.) We're hoping that PFLAG members will join with us, too, as they have in the past few years.

The site, hopefully, will be either: 1) the large pavilion at Anderson Park at 503 East College Avenue; or 2) the pavilion at Underwood Park at 200 Jersey Avenue. (Registration is on 3/1/18.) Stay tuned for updates! Underwood is good but there are more things for kids to do at Anderson so Anderson is our first choice.

PPC will provide fried chicken, bottled water, and paper/plastic products for the event. Please bring a "dish to pass" for a buffet style meal. PPC will also provide the bean bag game, Jarts, and balloons. Please bring any games you would like to share.

We hope to see you there!

Getting to Zero: A Framework to Eliminate HIV in Illinois

Illinois is making dramatic progress against HIV. New HIV cases have dropped by 28% from 2006 to 2015, mother-to-child HIV transmission has been nearly eliminated, and there are fewer than 1,000 cases a year in Chicago for the first time in two decades.

However, not all groups are benefitting equally. HIV disproportionately impacts Black and Latino individuals. Black gay men are experiencing an increase in HIV cases, particularly among youth. Black women account for more than three-quarters of women who are newly diagnosed and women who are living with HIV. New HIV cases among Latinos of all genders rose 16% outside Chicago between 2006 and 2015.

What does “Getting to Zero” mean?

It is critical to define what “Getting to Zero” means. In this context, it refers to both HIV prevention and care goals.

- Zero new HIV infections.
- Zero people living with HIV who are not receiving treatment.

Illinois has what it takes to Get to Zero. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, nearly everyone in Illinois vulnerable to or living with HIV has access to comprehensive, more affordable insurance. We have pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a prevention pill and program that is up to 99% effective at preventing HIV infection when utilized consistently and correctly. Finally, powerful antiretroviral medications mean that people living with HIV on successful antiretroviral treatment — meaning their viral load is undetectable for at least six months — cannot transmit HIV sexually to their HIV-negative partners.

With focused investment and attention, we can do even better. Illinois must focus on strategies that provide the greatest potential for reducing HIV transmission. Scientific modeling suggests that with increased investments in HIV treatment and PrEP, Illinois could see fewer than 100 new HIV cases each year by 2027.

The fiscal benefits for the state are substantial. Lifetime medical care costs for a person living with HIV is over \$350,000. If Illinois takes no action, it will cost an estimated \$5.2 billion to provide lifetime care for the 15,000 people projected to be infected between 2018 and 2027.

How will Illinois get to zero? If Illinois increases current rates of PrEP and HIV treatment by 20%, we would expect fewer than 100 new HIV cases per year -- a point where the HIV epidemic can no longer sustain itself, or “functional zero.”

What’s next? Since the summer of 2016, a workgroup of 12 organizations has been developing a Getting to Zero framework. The group asks Gov. Bruce Rauner and Mayor Rahm Emanuel to appoint a taskforce. Comprised of key agency officials and stakeholders, the taskforce will develop the plan, which will be implemented over a five-year period beginning in 2019.

INCREASE PREP
UPTAKE FROM 20%
TO 40%



INCREASE VIRAL
SUPPRESSION
UPTAKE FROM 50%
TO 70%



FUNCTIONAL
ZERO

Thank you to the AIDS Foundation of Chicago and others for this information.

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One of the nine Illinois Town Hall programs around the state took place in Normal on January 18. About 40 mostly local individuals and agency representatives took part in this town hall/workshop to learn what can be possible to “Get to Zero” with HIV by 2027. The consensus was that it will take the support of people who think they have no connection to HIV.

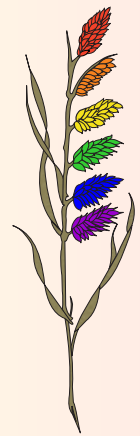


PPC and Equality Illinois to Co-Sponsor Town Hall April 5

The Prairie Pride Coalition and Equality Illinois are joining forces to sponsor a community town hall meeting at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 5 at the YWCA of McLean County, 1201 N. Hershey Road in Bloomington.

We will invite our local elected officials who represent us in Springfield to dialogue with community members about issues that are of importance to our LGBTQI+ community. We hope to establish a line of communication with our elected officials to remind them that their constituencies include a diverse population.

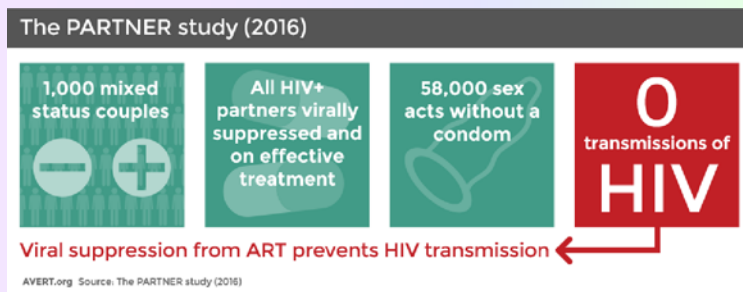
Look for additional details in the coming weeks on our Facebook page.



PPC Web Site Update

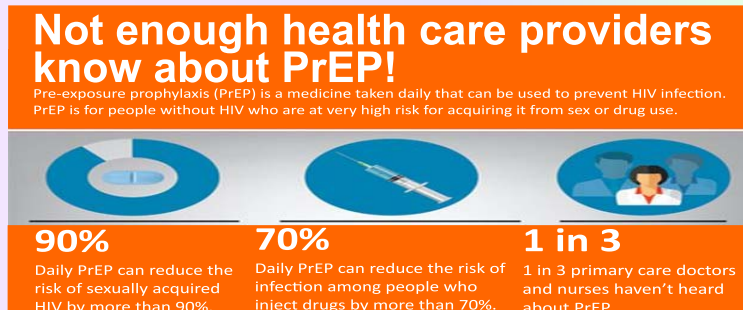
One of our board members has been working with 48 in 48, a nationwide effort to assist not-for-profit organizations to create new, powerful, and informative web sites at no cost. Look for a slick new Prairie Pride Coalition web site in the coming months!

You may find out more about Getting to Zero world-wide by visiting this website:
http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/JC2216_WorldAIDSday_report_2011_en_1.pdf



UNDETECTABLE = UNTRANSMITTABLE
UNDENIABLE
UNDESTROYABLE
UNDETERRABLE

U = U



PEP: Post Exposure Prophylaxis



Taking **antiretroviral** medications within **72 hours** after an HIV exposure may **reduce** the risk of HIV infection **>80%**

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