

The Rainbow Connection

April 2010

ACHR Board of Directors: Dave Bentlin; Peggy Burton; Gary Gletty; Margo Mendoza; Donna O'Crowly

The Rainbow Connection is published by the Advocacy Council for Human Rights (ACHR). Correspondence can be sent to P.O. Box 5048, Bloomington, IL 61702-5048, or e-mail info@achr-il.com

Help enact Civil Unions Legislation - Attend Lobby Day April 22!

A lobby day to urge legislators to support the civil unions bill is slated for Thursday, April 22 in Springfield.

Sponsored by Equality Illinois, the day will begin with a lunch from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Hoogland Center for the Arts, 420 South 6th Street in Springfield. During the lunch officials from Equality Illinois will brief attendees on talking points and other tips for meeting with their legislators.

Attendees will then set off to the State House where from 1 to 3:30 p.m. they will have the opportunity to talk to legislators about the bill. The day will wind up with a debriefing, reception and dinner from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

The primary focus of lobby day will be SB1716, The Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Unions Act. The bill would offer basic protections and fairness for all families in Illinois by recognizing different-sex, same-sex, and senior couples.

If you plan to participate in Lobby Day please RSVP Equality Illinois by phone 773-477-7173 or by e-mail at info@eqil.org.

If you cannot attend, please consider a phone call or e-mail to your legislator encouraging them to support SB1716. Contact information for legislators can be found at www.votesmart.org or at www.ilga.gov.

Transgender legal case topic of April 18 forum

A transgender woman's successful battle with the state to change her birth certificate will be the topic of a panel discussion at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, April 18 in the Spotlight Room at the ISU Bone Student Center.

The woman, Tori Kirk, sued the state of Illinois to compel them to change the gender marker on her birth certificate. The state initially refused to do so because state officials refused to recognize sexual reassignment surgeries that were not performed by a surgeon licensed to practice medicine in the United States.

Tori will be joined on the panel by John Knight, director of the Gay and Lesbian Rights Project for the ACLU of Illinois. The ACLU took on Tori's case which included two other transgender plaintiffs who had been unsuccessful in getting their gender markers changed on their certificates.

The forum is open to all and is free. For more information please contact the Advocacy Council at info@achr-il.com or call 309-212-4031.

Advocacy Council supports Illinois Anti-Bullying Legislation

The Advocacy Council has signed on as an official supporter of SB3266, a bill that addresses the problem of bullying in the state's K-12 schools.

The bill would - for the first time - define bullying and the categories of students against whom bullying is prohibited. It also would call on the State Board of Education to develop a model policy that would be the basis for anti-bullying policies in the schools. In addition, the bill would compel schools to establish a method of tracking incidents of bullying and adopt uniform procedures for dealing with such incidents.

Bullying based on real or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity continues to be a concern in K-12 schools and SB3266 would be a step toward a comprehensive plan for dealing with such incidents.

The bill is supported by a number of local and state organizations including the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance; ACLU of Illinois; Illinois Department of Human Rights; and Voices for Illinois Children.

SB3266 recently passed the Senate and now heads to the House of Representatives for a vote. For updates on the bill go to www.ilga.gov.

Openly-Gay candidate running for General Assembly seat



Illinois has had a handful of openly-gay candidates who have won election to the General Assembly, Without exception those candidates have come from the liberal neighborhoods of Chicago, but downstate candidate Kent DeLay hopes

to change all that with a victory in November.

DeLay, 45, is running as the Democratic candidate in the 99th legislative district which encompasses much of Springfield and Sangamon County.

DeLay was one of 14 openly-gay candidates running for state offices in the February primary, but

he stood out as the sole candidate from downstate. He ran unopposed in the primary and now is gearing up to face Republican incumbent Raymond Poe in the November general election. Poe has held the seat since 1995.

Rep. Poe has been an opponent of equal rights for LGBT people and is on record opposing civil unions, marriage equality and anti-discrimination laws that include sexual orientation (see www.votesmart.org).

Born and raised in the Springfield area, DeLay is a legislative consultant and healthcare advocate and is involved with the American Civil Liberties Union, American Arthritis Foundation, and the Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities of Illinois.

For more information about DeLay go to his web site at www.kentdelay.com.

Four-Week queer theology class at Unitarian Church in April

From Unitarian Church Parish News

The Adult Religious Education Committee of UUBN is sponsoring a Queer Theology class beginning on Tuesday April 13 and running for four weeks.

This class is an overview and exploration of homosexuality in the Christian Bible accompanied by modern day reflections by LGBTQ theologians and people of faith. The class intends to be a starting point and requires no previous study of either Queer Theology or the Bible. Honest conversation and self-reflection of our sexualities and faith life are a vital part of this time together.

Though weekly attendance is not imperative, the class and conversation will build off the previous week's questions and discoveries.

Dates: Tuesday: 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4

Time: 6:30-8:30pm

Place: The Fell Room at The Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, 1613 East Emerson Street

All are welcome. Please notify the UUBN office 309-828-0235 if you require childcare.

Bistro celebrates April

The Bistro, 316 N. Main Street in downtown Bloomington, is kicking off spring with a month of special events.

On Friday, April 2 Pride-A State Farm ERG will provide free appetizers at the monthly First Fridays mixer

from 5 to 7 p.m. Come out and start off the weekend with good food, drinks and conversation with your GLBTQA friends!

On Friday, April 9 the hottest performers will take the stage for the bar's monthly Hot Spot.

And on Saturday, April 10, come down to the bar to see/hear singer Jen Porter as she performs in conjunction with downtown Bloomington's Spring Fest.

For more information about these events call the bar at 309-829-2278 or check out the bar's facebook page at "Bistro Bloomington."

Reasons to NOT support Bill Brady for Illinois Governor!

1. For the past 16 years he has consistently opposed equal rights for LGBT people.
2. Brady recently sponsored a bill that would remove sexual orientation from the state's human rights act.
3. He supports a state constitutional amendment to define marriage as a union between one man and one woman.
4. Brady claims he can balance the state budget without a tax increase and with elimination of the motor fuel tax, a claim dismissed by economists as unrealistic and termed "intellectual laziness" by one of his Republican challengers.
5. He supports a decrease in the state minimum wage.

Keep reading The Rainbow Connection for future updates on the gubernatorial race and the other races that will be decided in November.

Immigration Reform Rally update

"On March 21, 2010 Illinois Peoples Action and Latinos United for Change sent a bus full of leaders from Bloomington/Normal to a March on Washington for Immigration Reform. This has been an issue that IPA and L.U.C. has been working on since June of 2009 we have made numerous efforts to meet with our members of congress and the senate to garner support for this issue with very little success. The day after the march on Washington were over 200,000 supporters of immigration reform hit the national mall the tone of our elected officials changed. They are now more willing to talk to us and discuss how we can move comprehensive immigration reform forward. We have one meeting set up for May 1st and are currently working on setting up others over the Easter Recess and again during NPA. El Pueblo Unido Jamás será Vencido... The People United will never be defeated.

On the local level L.U.C. has been working with families who have been affected by Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) and the lack of transparency they exhibit in regard to finding out what happens to people in the custody of ICE. We are currently

working with no less than 8 different families in McLean County whose family has been torn apart by a broken immigrations system. This along with several complaints of wage theft and racial profiling by law enforcement has kept the Latino community living in a state of fear and helplessness.

It is our objective to recruit more people in the IPA network to help work on this issue, if you or anyone that you know is affected by this contacts us:

Sonny Garcia - Organizer

sonnypgarcia71@gmail.com

Cristo Ortiz-Palafox

cristopalafax@aol.com

Springfield Men's Chorus slates Spring performances

The Capitol City Men's Chorus has two upcoming performances slated for April and May.

The group's spring concert will be at 4 p.m. on Sunday, May 16 at the Laurel United Methodist Church, 631 S. Grand Avenue West in Springfield.

The chorus will also be appearing at the monthly social of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Decatur (GLAD) on Saturday, April 10 at Central Christian Church, 650 W. William Street in Decatur. The social begins at 6:30 p.m. with potluck served at 7 p.m. Visit www.gladdecatur.com for more information on the social.

According to the chorus web site, "back in the day, in 2005, a small group of friends visited a local establishment that featured karaoke night. As the night progressed, several of these friends started to partake in a fun filled evening of karaoke. Onlookers began to comment, not only about their exceptional ability to sing, but about their obvious enjoyment and love of music. With an idea of a local men's chorus, a search for others with the same love of music and singing ability began. With encouragement from family and friends, and their love of music, the creation of 'The Capital City Men's Chorus' was born."


For more information on the chorus and its May 16 concert, contact them at chorus@tccmc.org.

Local Transgender Group to meet

Bloomington/Normal's local transgender group will meet on Saturday, April 10 for a potluck, GLBT roundtable and social time.


The evening will begin at 6 p.m., followed by a potluck at 7 p.m. and a GLBT roundtable at 8 p.m. featuring a panel of local GLBT people from community organizations.

For specifics on the event contact Dana at tginbnil@hotmail.com.



**EQ
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APRIL 22, 2010 LOBBY DAY



**EQ
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Equality Illinois (EQIL) is hosting its annual Lobby Day in Springfield on Thursday, April 22, 2010.

Buses of Equality Illinois members, as well as fair-minded people from all across the state, will converge on the Illinois State Capitol to lobby legislators and push for passage of the Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act – SB1716.

While EQIL continues to work towards full marriage equality in Illinois, SB1716 will offer basic fairness and protections for all families in the State by recognizing different-sex, same-sex and senior couples .

This bill allows ALL couples to:

- ✓ Participate in medical decision making
- ✓ Control the disposition of a deceased partner's remains
- ✓ Visit a loved one in the hospital
- ✓ Share a nursing home room

Too often same-sex relationships are not recognized in crisis situations, and partners are treated as 'strangers in the eyes of the law'. This is your opportunity to put a face to the cause!

Buses will depart around 7am from Chicago's north side, Oak Park (with a stop in Bolingbrook), and Carbondale (with a stop in Belleville). Targeted arrival time in Springfield is 11/11:30am. After a lunch and an informational meeting, participants will head to the State House to meet with legislators. After our lobbying session, Equality Illinois will host a reception and dinner. Buses will depart Springfield around 5:30pm, arriving back at our starting places at approximately 9:00pm. This is a free event.

Supporters from the entire state are welcome and encouraged to join us in Springfield.

PLEASE RSVP! To reserve your space or to get additional information, go to www.EqualityIllinois.org, call 773-477-7173 or email info@eqil.org.

See YOU there!

Rainbow Connection has gone green!

December 2009 was the last mass snail mailing of the newsletter to our readers. We are going to cut costs and save a few trees (as well as volunteer spit) by going electronic. This will leave some extra money in the coffers so we can continue to do outreach and education in the community.

If you do not have access to the internet or would rather receive a paper copy of the newsletter we can arrange to continue mailing the newsletter to you; in return we ask that you consider a donation of \$10 to ACHR to help offset printing and mailing expenses for the calendar year 2010.

If you haven't already done so, please send your email address to us, or send your \$10 donation to:

Advocacy Council for Human Rights
PO Box 5048
Bloomington IL 61702-5048

HEARTLAND THEATRE COMPANY



The Trip to Bountiful
by Horton Foote

April 15,16,17,18,22,23,24,25,29,30 and May 1,2

Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist and two-time Oscar-winning screenwriter Horton Foote, who wrote this 1953 gem of the American Theatre, won Oscars for "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "Tender Mercies." He received the Writer's Guild of America's Lifetime Achievement Award in 1999, the PEN American Center's Master American Dramatist Award in 2000, an Emmy in 1997.

Reservations: 309 452 8709 or
boxoffice@heartlandtheatre.org

www.heartlandtheatre.org

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	<h2 style="margin: 0;">New Covenant Community</h2> <p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Worship Sundays, 10:30 a.m. Sunday School and childcare provided during worship</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 8px;">Chapel of the Campus Religious Center 210 W. Mulberry St., Normal, IL 61761 (309) 454-7362 www.nccnormal.org</p>
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THE BISTRO

316 North Main
Bloomington, Illinois 61701
309/829-2278

M-TH: 8p.m.-1a.m.,
FRI: 4:30p.m.-2a.m.
SAT: 8p.m.-2a.m.