PFLAG

GENEVA/TRI-CITIES

February 2025 Newsletter

OUR LOVE IS COURAGEOUS AND WE ARE UNITED IN RADICAL DEFIANCE

"In this country, every person across races, places, genders and abilities deserves dignity, respect, and the freedom to be ourselves. We are committed to continuing this fight to ensure every LGBTQ+ person and family is safe, celebrated, empowered and loved."
"PFLAG will continue to show up from the state house to the courthouse, the schoolhouse steps to the steps of the U.S. Capitol and Supreme Court.
PFLAG will continue fighting for our LGBTQ+ loved ones."
"Our LGBTQ+ community is strong.
We've been here before, and try as they might, we're not going to let them take us back."

Welcome!

We have some new friends to welcome. The surge in interest towards PFLAG and other advocacy groups is palpable. We're thankful that you're here!

Whether you're joining us for the first time or returning as a steadfast supporter, your involvement is invaluable to our mission.

In this issue, we will explore the latest developments in LGBTQ+ rights and provide resources to help you make a difference in your community.

We'll highlight upcoming events, ways to get involved and take a moment to reflect on LGBTQ+ trailblazers through the scope of Black History Month.

Thank you for standing with us and for being a part of this incredible journey. Let's continue to uplift and empower one another as we strive for a more inclusive and compassionate world and justice for all.

IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome

Upcoming Events

Celebrating Black History Month

Current News & Resources

More Resources

UPCOMING EVENTS & CHAPTER NEWS!

Next Support Meeting February 10th from 6-8 PM

Join us February 10th from 6:00-8:00 PM for our February support meeting!
Our presentation features the Honorable Judge Kimberly DiGiovanni and Associate Attorney Catherine Sheehan.
If possible, please send your questions in advance to pflaggenevatricities@gmail.com, your questions will remain anonymous.

They will be discussing family law issues affecting LGBTQ+ youth.

Topics include:

- Overview of courts for minors
- The players involved in the courtroom (attorneys, GALs (guardian ad litem), & judges)

Types of legal issues in court:

- Parentage
- Parental allocation of time and decision-making
- Interstate transfers
- Name change requests

A Q & A session on legislative updates and case law will follow.

Contact pflaggenevatricities@gmail.com by Sunday, February 9th for our location and if you're interested in joining us via Zoom.

In January and February, we are partnering with Belong Fox Valley to support initiatives such as their weekly Youth Drop-In program. You can contribute by purchasing items from their Amazon wish list or by making direct donations.

BELONG FOX VALLEY

Donate here for Belong Fox Valley

Donate here from their Amazon wish list

Upcoming PFLAG Events & Community Activities

- **2/3 Belong Fox Valley Cheers Queers @ Art History Brewing**
- **2/10 Monthly Support Meeting**
- **2/21 Belong Fox Valley -Teen Queer Prom**
- **3/1 Chapter Volunteer Event Click here for details**
- ***3/10 Monthly Support Meeting & 1 Year Anniversary Celebration!***
  - **We will have some messages to share from PFLAG National, Regional and our Northern IL Council. We'll also spend time connecting, sharing chapter news and what events we're planning.**

Save the Date for October 10th-12th. PFLAG National Conference is coming to Chicago!

"We are powerful because we have survived." — Audre Lorde

SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS

We joined BlueSky!

@pflaggenevatricit.bsky.social

We are not abandoning Facebook or Instagram. Due to the recent policy changes concerning hate speech on Meta, we wanted to offer an alternative space for our followers who are looking for another platform.

Save the Date!

COURAGEOUS LOVE, IN COMMUNITY TOGETHER 2025 PFLAG NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Friday, October 10 - Sunday, October 12, 2025

Chicago, IL

Details and registration information coming soon.

Honoring Black History Month

Happy Black History Month! Stay tuned this month on our social media platforms as we highlight Black LGBTQ+ activists, artists, and icons who have made lasting impacts, and those who are making history right now!

There is no shortage of inspiring stories to celebrate.

Bayard Rustin

1912-1987

Explore Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice here

Bayard Rustin was an LGBTQ and civil rights activist, known as a key adviser to Martin Luther King Jr. He advocated for nonviolent resistance and organized the 1963 March on Washington. After being arrested for a "moral cause," he was publicly outed but embraced his sexuality openly. Choosing to work behind the scenes, he ensured his identity did not overshadow the movement. In 2013, he was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his tireless work promoting equal rights.

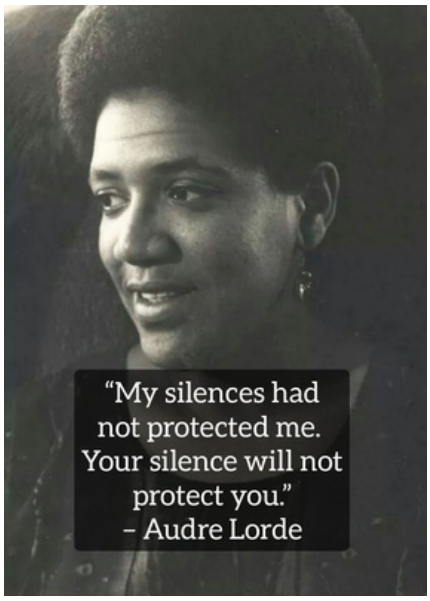
"We need, in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers."
– Bayard Rustin

Audre Lorde

1934-1992

Lorde, a pioneering voice who powerfully embodied and represented various identities - a black woman, a lesbian, a mother, a warrior, and a poet. Her groundbreaking work, particularly her most recognized works "Sister Outsider" and "Zami: A New Spelling of My Name," boldly explores the vibrant intersections of race, gender, class, and sexuality.

Discover 12 Audre Lorde Quotes That'll Spark Conversation here



"When I dare to be powerful—to use my strength in the service of my vision—then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid." *- Aude Lorde*

"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."
-Audre Lorde

THE PFLAG CONNECTS: BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

The PFLAG Connects: Black/African American Community meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 9pm ET.
Register online here!

Next meeting:
February 11th, 2024

PFLAG Connects: Communities (PCC) provide a safe, virtual, moderated space where people with shared experiences can connect each month. The meetings are free to the public and do not require PFLAG National or chapter affiliation.
Explore all of PFLAG Connects Communities *here*

Linked Resources

- **PFLAG Black History Month Resources**
- **National Black Justice Collective**
- **Human Rights Campaign Communities of Color**
- **Issues impacting LGBT communities of color**
- **GLAAD Communities of Color**
- **Call BlackLine**

Discover More

Celebrating Queer Black Women

LGBTQ+ Black Change-Makers You Should Know

Hidden figures in queer Black history

Black Queer History is American History

Spotify Black, Queer, & Proud Playlist

Black Queer Book Recommendations

What's Happening?!

How is everyone? The last two weeks have been overwhelming. With all the changes brought on by the new administration, our goal is to offer tools to help navigate through it all . Take your time with the information provided. Try not to get overwhelmed; review the material at your own pace. The information will remain accessible whenever you are ready to engage with it.

In the last week of January, we participated in virtual meetings with Equality IL, Advocates 4 Trans Equality (A4TE), and PFLAG National. A key takeaway was that executive orders are not the same as laws and cannot immediately change existing policies. However, one executive order did suspend the changing genders on passports.

Discover more information under the two EO Explainers we have listed below. Information regarding updating identity documents can be found under A4TE, TJLP & the EO Explainers.

The EO's will be challenged, with some lawsuits already underway. The chaos of late January was aimed to "shock and awe" - to instill fear & paralyze our actions in defending civil rights.

We won't let that happen!

Remember our PFLAG community is strong. We stand unwaveringly firm, driven by our mission. We feel the gravity of our responsibilities and understand the profound impact of what's at stake.

Our commitment is clear, our passion is unwavering, and our unity is our strength.

Our light will pierce the darkness. We stand on the right side of history.

Where do we Start?

Safety & Community

Safety is crucial for overall well-being. Self-care and mutual support build resilience and enhance our collective impact.

With that in mind, here are some resources with links:

- Crisis & Support Hotlines
- The Transgender Law Center and Repro Legal Defense Fund
- A4TE Trans Survival Guide
- Delete Me

Community:

- Find a PFLAG Chapter
- Find a virtual meeting
- PFLAG Connects: Communities
- The PFLAG National Online Community

Facts & Accurate Information

There is a significant amount of misinformation circulating. Here are some linked resources to help you navigate through the confusion:

- Executive Order Explainers and Resources
- Movement Advancement Project Equality Maps
- ACLU Anti-LGBTQ+ Legislation Tracker
- PEN America Book Ban Report (a resource PFLAG shared)
- A4TE Day One EO Explainer
- Equality IL
  - Equality IL Action Updates
- Lambda Legal
- Media/Bias Fact Check

PFLAG GENEVA/TRI-CITIES SUPPORT MEETINGS

THE 2ND MONDAY EVERY MONTH

6:00-8:00 PM

All are welcome!
You do not need to be a PFLAG member to attend our meetings or events and our meetings are always free

- February 10th
- March 10th
- April 14th
- May 12th
- June 9th
- July 14th

You are welcome to join us at 6:00 or 6:30

- Join us at 6:00 for our support and connecting time
- The educational segment of our meeting begins at 6:30

If you wish to invite a friend to the meeting, that's wonderful! Please ask them to reach out to us via email so we can share the details!

For safety, the doors will remain locked during our meetings.

Our contact number is 630-492-0032
If you know you are going to be late try to call by 6:30.

After 6:40, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to take your call due to the meeting in progress.

Thank you for your understanding!

"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any."
-Alice Walker

Advocacy & Resources

Advocate

Figure Out What Works For You

Where Do We Start?

Many motivating calls to action were presented during the advocacy meetings last week. We will outline suggestions and provide resources that can assist in putting these ideas into practice.

- **Show Up - Get Involved**
  - School Board Meetings
  - Library Board Meetings
- **Mobilize - There's Power in Numbers**
- **Organize & Strategize**
- **Brainstorm**
- **Make Your Voice Heard**
- **Share Your Story**
  - Sharing personal experiences can shift perspectives and touch hearts.
- **Join Rallys**
- **Protest** Safely
- **Reach out to your State & Federal Representatives**
  - Email
  - Call
  - Go in Person
- Action Steps

Advocacy Resources

- **PFLAG National Advocacy Tools: Join the fight!**
- **Advocacy Video Training Series: Advocacy in 10 minutes or less!**

Resources

Get Connected

Discover New Resources

- PFLAG National Newsletter
- PFLAG Connects Communities
- A4TE - Trans Resource
- ACLU
  - Take Action
- Chase Strangio
  - Co-Director of the ACLU's LGBT & HIV Project
- Equality IL
- Erin In The Morning
  - Erin Reed, Trans Reporter - Excellent Resource
- GLESEN
- HRC
- Illinois State Board of Elections
- Find My Elected Officials
- Illinois Department of Human Rights
- Illinois Attorney GeneralKwame Raoul
  - *Civil Rights Immigration Rights*
- LambdaLegal
- Sage Advocacy Services for LGBTQ+ Elders
- TJLP - Name & Gender change resource
- Trangender Law Center
- The Trevor Project
- Trans Youth for Eqality Foundation (TYEF)
- Illinois Parents of Transgender & Gender Diverse Children private FB Group. (just renamed) Illinois Milkweed Network for safety.
  - ***If you are interested in in joining, please contact Elaine. To be added you have to be invited by an existing group member.***
- 5 Calls - Make your voice heard
- Heather Cox Richardson
  - *Professor of American history-she explains daily how the political landscape affects lives*

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

CLICK ON THE ICONS TO CONNECT

PublicPage

Private Group

@pflaggenevatricit.bsky.social

Please note we have a public Facebook page and a private group.
To join the private group, click the blue Facebook icon & answer the membership questions.

Moving Foward

Is your head spinning yet?

If you've made it this far, well done!

- We encourage you to explore the resources to find ones that resonate with you and your family, focusing on what suits you best.
- Stay updated by signing up for email alerts from mentioned organizations to make informed decisions.
- Upcoming Pride events promise fun and remind us of the power of love and advocacy.
- If public engagements aren't your style, attending meetings shows your commitment to supporting your community and advocating for your loved ones.
- Educate family & friends (share our brochure with them) or wear LGBTQ+ support items to show advocacy.
- Follow us and other groups on social media for weekly information.

And rest assured, I know a few people who will continue to keep you informed.

I was reminded today that I may need to take a pause from all the information. Fair assessment.

How do you unwind and recharge?

We'll be asking this on social media this week, so share your thoughts with us!

Keep Leading With Love!

"Advocacy is not just a task for charismatic individuals or high-profile community organizers. Advocacy is for all of us; advocacy is a way of life. It is a natural response to the injustices and inequality in the world."
– Alice Wong

Alice Wong is a Chinese American activist and writer who founded the Disability Visibility Project

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

CLICK ON THE ICONS TO CONNECT

PublicPage

Private Group

@pflaggenevatricit.bsky.social

Please note we have a public Facebook page and a private group.
To join the private group, click the blue Facebook icon & answer the membership questions.