



Coalition of Rainbow Alliances Monthly Meeting August 9, 2026

Members Present and on Zoom

Brian Sylvester President	Jim Barr
Lisa Cotton, Vice President	Jeff Poeschel
April Poole Treasurer	Mike Johnson
Francine Turner Secretary	Bert Morton
Rex Schadow Board Member	Lee Korty
Lauren Wilder Board Member	Roger Ruth
Liv Gray Board Member	Kennedy Gray
Candice Clotfelter Board Member	
Bob Immel Board Member	

- I. Meeting called to order at 4:05 pm
- II. Roll Call and Introduction of Guests
- III. **Approval of minutes from July 12, 2026. Lisa made a motion to accept the minutes, Rex seconded, motion carried.**
- IV. **Officer's Reports:**
 - A. **Treasurers Report:** April Poole provided a written and verbal report.
Rex made a motion to accept and file for audit, Lisa seconded. Motion carried.
 - B. **Executive Retreat Report:** Brian reported the executive committee met on August 8th at 10:00 a.m. till approximately 2:00 p.m. to discuss the format and future of CORAL. Topics covered with board position descriptions and duties, committee purpose and duties, the mission and values of CORAL as well as goals and strategies for the organization.

Some discussions that came out of this was the production of a hard-copy of the finance report monthly that could be provided to members that

wouldn't compromise security concerns, creating a donation form, growing our engaged member base, fundraising and searching for a steady stream of revenue, committee formats, using more technology, addressing diversity with board and membership, and review of service/social events twice monthly. The executive committee will tentatively set up another retreat in October to establish short and long term goals as well as strategies to obtain them.

V. Committee Reports:

A. Membership Committee: Liv Gray reported that she is continuing to work at generating interest in the younger queer community in Springfield. This is being done basically through online communication at this time.

B. Communications Committee: Brian reported the social media pages had 28 new followers bringing the total to 2,272. We are still seeing some unusual international activity but it's coming from Pakistan and Bangladesh this month as opposed to China last month. These entries were view only though. The top posts were the Pride Social in Williamsville at 1,030, Bond County's Pride Picnic with 785, and the APL fundraiser with 319.

The website saw a drop in sessions this month but still had 153 visits and 22 blog views. Google and direct are still the most prominent traffic sources. Two things to note though is the time that viewers are staying on the page, which has grown to over five minutes. The second is the gradual growth in AI inquiries, which jumped to 118 this past month. The most active AI generators used for this are ChatGPT (65%), Gemini (80%), and Perplexity (55%). CORAL is receiving a positive response on all three of these avenues but did provide some suggestions to the site that might receive better hits in the future that we will look into.

C. Activities Committee: Lisa reported that reached out again to the Senior Center about an intergeneration project. She was informed that there is a six-month waiting list for projects, so Lisa will reach out again in the future.

D. Finance Committee: April reported on the July 23 Finance Committee Zoom meeting. A decision was made to use Quicken/Quickbooks as CORAL's accounting software. Quicken is known for the ability to produce professional level audit reports. The software cost will be \$5.00/month to be paid by CORAL.

There is now a plan to transition the donation processor from Network for Good fundraising software to Zeffy software. Zeffy is a free product as compared to fee-based Network for Good.

April reported that the laptop with the latest financial records was stolen recently. She is now in the process of reconstructing the data from prior years using old ledgers and online records. Records starting from 2018 and moving forward to be included.

E. Partners & Supporters Committee: Brian reported that we received a request from Habitat for Humanity calling for volunteers to help with painting on July 20th. Unfortunately, they wanted those volunteers on Friday the 23rd which really didn't give us much time to gather a group to help with their project. Lisa was going to reach out to them in hopes of getting these requests sooner.

Also, CORAL was contacted by the mother of a transgender daughter living in Indiana who will be moving to Springfield for a new job in the near future. She was asking if CORAL could suggest safe places in Springfield that she might live once she moves here. Brian called the mother to have a conversation with her about this but did not receive a response to his voice mail. However, Brian was hoping that this might be an opportunity for CORAL to discuss how we might handle these types of requests in the future as he thought it might be nice if we offered assistance on a more personal level such as meeting with the member to find out more about what they might be looking for and how CORAL can help with acclimating to the area.

April made a motion to accept the committee reports, Rex seconded it. Motion Carried

VI. Old Business

A. Event Wrap-Ups:

1. **APL Fundraiser** - Lisa reported that the fundraiser at Fluid raised approximately \$1728 (with \$200 already routed to the Animal Protection League). The funds raised in the different categories included: 50/50 raffle - \$56 (Corals take), Door Donations - \$384, Drink Sales - \$88 (to be confirmed), \$200 Check written directly to APL, CORAL donation - \$1000
2. **Row for Dough** - Rex reported that the CORAL sponsored team for this Special Olympics fundraiser brought in \$1200. The total amount raised from all the 13 teams was over \$16,000. CORAL's rowers completed

42,195 meters over 3.5 hours. CORAL also received visibility via sponsor listing on shirts and radio mentions.

3. **Agelinc Murder Mystery** - This fundraising event was attended by a significant number of CORAL members. The general consensus was that it was entertaining and had an original approach in presenting the clues and characters to the audience.

B. Adopt a Street Proposal:

- April reported that the City of Springfield is willing to provide CORAL with a street clean up location at two different locations. The location the group chose was 11th and Ash.
- The primary date to be scheduled would be August 22th, alternative dates could be August 26th or in September. A morning start of approximately 9am was discussed. April will confirm the start time and logistics by Tuesday following the meeting.
- Dress requirements for volunteers include long pants, closed toe shoes, gloves (thin cotton gloves will be provided, but April recommends bringing your own thick gloves). Grabbers, vests, trash bags and possibly rakes to be provided by the city.

C. Pride Social with Interurban Merchants (Williamsburg) (9/5/26):

This event is from 2p - 4p. Event to include music, free coffee, pastries and other refreshments.

D. Fifth Street Harvest for Homes (9/22/26):

Brian also reminded everyone about Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Centers' upcoming social on September 11th at Pole Barn Chic at 6:00 p.m. The event will have heavy appetizers, a bar, DJ and dancing. There will be a short program beginning at 7:00 p.m. and a silent auction. All of the board members are attending at this time and their guests.

E. Decatur Pridefest (9/12/26):

Brian reported Pridefest Decatur will be on September 12th from 11:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Fairview Park. CORAL will have three tables for the event and we've been told we will be under the pavilion. The entertainment stage will be in the middle of the pavilion this year so the set-up is going to be different from how we've seen it in the past. Brian will bring the merch, tablecloths, and usual Pridefest materials. Brian asked who will be available to staff the tables on that date.

VIII. New Business

A. TRANS Up Front:

Brian met the group Trans Up Front at the Peoria Pridefest event. They are a state-wide trans-led non profit serving the transgender and gender nonconforming youth ages 4-25 and their support systems. They were very excited about the possibility of working with CORAL in the future so Brian has spoken with Lauren about being CORAL's delegate with this group so that we might find a way to keep them informed of how to integrate their presence with any upcoming events and functions.

B. MainStream Media:

Brian also met with the team from the media group, MainStream, while he was in Peoria. They are a paper and online publication that specifically reports on LGBTQ current events and issues throughout Illinois and parts of Iowa, Indiana, and Wisconsin. Christine Hawes runs this publication and was looking for some financial support from CORAL as well as anyone who might be interested in reporting for the paper. She and Brian will be meeting in the future to discuss how this might look if CORAL decides this might be of interest.

C. CIRC Community Wellness/Resource Fair: (Lincoln Library, 8/29/26)

Brian enrolled CORAL in the CIRC Community Wellness/Resource Fair on August 29th from 11:00 to 2:00 p.m. at the Lincoln Library. We have attended these fairs in the past but as this is on a Saturday it should be easier for everyone. Brian is willing to staff the table by himself if necessary but it would be nice to have some attendee assistance.

Candice made a motion to adjourn, Rex seconded it. Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned at 5:17pm.