



## **Coalition of Rainbow Alliances Monthly Meeting September 8, 2024**

### **Members Present**

Brian Sylvester President

Sheila Morris Treasurer

Shelly Vaughn Board Member at Large

Jim Barr, Ex-officio

Mike Yankee

Bert Morton

Sam Downs (zoom)

Bob Immel

Lisa Cotton, Vice President

David Yankee Board Member at Large

Jenna Broom Board Member at Large

Lee Korty

Rex Schadow

April Poole

Mike Johnson

Meeting called to order at 4:00 pm

Approval of minutes from July 14, 2024. Lisa made a motion to accept the minutes, Rex seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Treasurers Report-** Sheila gave printed copies of the report and gave a verbal report of the account. Lisa moved and Rex seconded. Motion Passed.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Membership Committee:**

Brian had nothing to report other than another membership orientation will be scheduled in September.

#### **Social Media Committee:**

Brian reported that the Facebook group received 12 new members this month bringing the total to 865. There were 37 posts viewed by 797 members. Our most popular posts were the Barn Dance announcement of buying tickets online at 441, the free therapy for generational trauma by Intricate Minds with 223, and the Culture Festival announcement with 207.

The Facebook page received 7 new members bringing the total to 926. There were 25 posts viewed by 1,600 individuals and 165 commenting to those posts. Our most popular posts were the announcement of the City of Springfield Homeless ordinance with 1,001, the Illinois Eagle's article on the city council meeting about the homeless ordinance with 336, and the announcement of our involvement with the Suicide Prevention Walk with 142.

The web page had 129 visits with the average time on site at 4.5 minutes. The number of people coming through direct and via Google is almost even at this time, with a slight increase coming via Facebook. The ticket sales via the website is up to 7 tickets and pay outs have commenced into the CORAL checking account.

### **Activities Committee:**

Lisa is busy doing publicity for the Barn Dance in October. CORAL also did a \$250.00 dollar scholarship (\$50.00 from Lisa) to the Kankakee LGBTQ group, and they have posted us on their social media page. Also mentioned was the Rainbow Café in Carbondale. Lee made motion for a donation up to \$500.00 dollars Veterans campout is to be October 5, 2024 at Edwards Place in Springfield. to be determined by Brian. Jim seconded and motion was passed.

### **Finance Committee:**

Sheila provided a summary of what was discussed at the last Finance committee meeting held on 8/23/24. She covered the new online payment system that was brought live on the CORAL website and that tickets to the CORAL Barn Dance are currently being processed via that system. Due to the fees charged for utilizing that system, there is a modest upcharge to the tickets being sold.

The budget for 2024 was also discussed and updates for the first several months of the year are currently being tabulated and a new report will hopefully be presented at the next membership meeting. The pledged dollar amounts were discussed and it was decided that some of them need to be paid out in the near future. Sheila will also be contacting the bank to see what is needed to convert the account to interest bearing.

Sheila presented her idea for creating a grant request process, including the form that would be used. Since Jenna has experience in this field, she was asked to look over the form and make recommendations.

Brian added that he reached out to Jane Strickland about the Parker Memorial Funds that are pledged. Jane stated that Candy was interested in helping young

people, specifically those who identify as LGBTQ+. Jane has no issue with CORAL donating those funds to BLM if it's used expressly for young people and not for salaries. She also said that she could see it used for youth projects such as GSA's at local schools in Springfield or Chatham. Brian said he would reach out to Sunshine Clemons with BLM as well as find a contact person for one of the local GSA's to see if they might receive those funds and what they would be used for.

As for the holiday dinner funds that are pledged, it is believed that April needs to find a new sponsor for this project and the funds could be disbursed to the sponsor. As April was present for the meeting, she requested the funds be sent to Chatham Methodist Church. Jenna made motion to send to Chatham Methodist Church the pledge amount of \$1,050,63 for Holiday Meals. Jim seconded and motion was passed.

### **Partners/Supporters Committee:**

Speak Out Illinois has invited CORAL to their Invitation portal, which will allow us to advertise events state wide. Brian has already established the connection and placed an ad about the Barn Dance so we could be seeing an increase of memberships from outside our general area in the future.

Brian reported that the new Rural Harmony advisory committee members have been selected and congratulated Candice Clodfelter for being chosen for the new term. The first meeting is scheduled for this coming Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. via Webex. More than likely this will be an introductory meeting but there will probably be some discussion of the current study on HPV cancer with trans-males as well.

Brian briefly discussed an issue that has arisen with AgeLinc/PrideLinc in regards to personnel.

Brian also covered the release of the PR video for OutSafe training conducted by AgeLinc/PrideLinc, which has been posted on CORAL's social media. This training will be conducted by them to those who work with older LGBTQ members in hopes of making the interaction more beneficial for those who have suffered violence.

Brian also discussed the beginning of the project with SIU School of Medicine and the Pritzker Family Foundation which yielded us the grant. This study will include many different aspects of medical needs with the LGBTQ community but will very likely concentrate on the GTZ 2.0 directive. This will mean that those who work

on the project will need to get well versed on what and how that directive is being conducted. For those interested, Brian suggested that they spend some time on their website, Home | Getting to Zero Illinois :Getting to Zero Illinois (gtzillinois.hiv).

### **RITZ Committee:**

David reported that they were busy setting up a schedule of events that need to take place over the next several months. They will be meeting on September 17, 2024 via zoom.

Rex moved to accept all committee reports. Lisa seconded and motion passed.

### **Old Business**

#### **Camelot Jump Jamboree**

The event was a success and all every child present was able to obtain school supplies. CORAL had a tent at the event. It was suggested that in the future they may need to be clearer about where the drop off sites were located and that the tents need to be placed closer together.

#### **Fifth Street/SARA Center AIDS Memorial**

April, Mike, Lori, Harry and Sheila cleaned up the memorial at Lincoln Park on 8/15/24. April discussed possibly placing white rock around edges of memorial to keep lawnmowers from running over the stones. There was also discussion about urns and possibly bushes around memorial, Brian was going to pass this by Penny Powell of Fifth Street/SARA Center to see what might be done regarding those suggestions.

#### **Pridelinc**

Brian conducted a CORAL membership orientation presentation at the PrideLinc luncheon on 8/22/24. There were several compliments made on the design of the presentation.

#### **Wakery Signature Drink:**

Brian spoke with Elizabeth at the Wakery about having a signature drink for CORAL and she has suggested that we have one for this October. She emailed a few ideas for drinks:

*Hi Brian! Thanks so much for stopping in and chatting with me.*

*I would love to do an October drink for CORAL.*

*Our most popular fall drinks are: Butter Beer (a bubbly, creamy, butterscotch drink), Pumpkin Juice (the perfect blend of pumpkin and apple cider), and Caramel Apple Cider*

*All three of these are good hot or cold and are great for all ages. Although these have "names" the official drink name can always be changed!*

*Alternatively, if you would like something on the coffee or tea side, we could do a specialty latte -- like an apple cider chai tea latte sweetened with vanilla and cinnamon syrup, with steamed milk or cinnamon cold foam.*

*Or a fall s'mores latte with our house chocolate syrup, toasted marshmallow syrup, espresso, and steamed milk or marshmallow cold foam.*

After much discussion, the Caramel Apple Cider was selected. Brian proposed calling it "CORAL Caramel Delight."

Mike Johnson made motion to call the CORAL drink "CORAL Carmel Delight" Jim seconded, and motion passed.

#### **Barn Dance:**

Lisa stated that CORAL will need up to ten weenie forks for the S'mores. Jim and Mike said they had some to bring. There will be three fire pits available which Lisa, Lori, Jenna stated they would bring. There will be hay bales. Mike Yankee has made all the table decorations. Jim made a motion to allocate up to \$500.00 dollars for an ad in the Illinois Times and Brian will work with James Bengfort on those details. Bert seconded and the motion passed. Bert and Lee agreed to sponsor the security for the event and Brian will reach out to Fifth Street/SARA Center to discuss the option for them to sponsor the entertainment for the evening. Lisa is trying to keep budget at \$2,000.00 this year to see how ticket sales go.

#### **Phoenix Center Fall Gala:**

Brian reported that CORAL had purchased 12 tickets for the event, which includes a table and four chairs. The four additional seats will be sitting with the AgeLinc table so those persons will be sitting with people you are familiar with. We have not received payments for all individuals who have said they would like to attend yet so it is recommended that this get done quickly as the event is in two weeks.

### **Decatur Pride:**

The event will be held on September 14, 2024 from 11 to 4 PM. The Drag show will be at 6:30 PM. Pride after Dark will be later at Port Royal on Oakland Street. There will also be a food drive at the event so food goods and possibly pet food will be encouraged. There will be food trucks at the Pavilion as well.

### **New Business:**

#### **Rural Harmony:**

Brian reported that the new members of the advisory council were announced and Candice Clotfelter has been chosen to serve for the next two years.

#### **Fifth Street Camp Out for the Veterans:**

CORAL is a GOLD Sponsor and Sam Woods will be sleeping overnight representing CORAL. Jim made motion that we allocate up to \$100.00 dollars to purchase the smores for the event. Rex seconded and motion passed.

Brian posted the first sponsorship announcement by Fifth Street this morning for the event on CORAL's social media. CORAL has been asked to provide the makings for S-mores for the event so we will need to have someone purchase the chocolate, marshmallows and graham crackers before 10/5.

Brian, Lisa, and Rob will be attending another event that same afternoon but should be back in time for this event that evening.

#### **Homeless Ordinance:**

On 9/1/24, Brian posted the announcement of an emergency passage ordinance (2024-376) requested by Alderwoman Lakeisha Purchase and Mayor Misty Buscher that involved criminalizing "public camping" by the homeless.

"I want to bring to every member's attention an emergency passage ordinance (Ordinance 2024-376) requested by Lakeisha Purchase and Misty Buscher that will be presented at the City of Springfield city council meeting this coming Tuesday, September 3rd.

While homelessness may not be seen by some as a big issue to the LGBTQ+ community in Springfield, nationally speaking, 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+. In fact, according to Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, LGBTQ

youth are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than other youth. In other words, this IS an issue we should pay attention to and advocate towards addressing.

This ordinance was quickly written as a result of a Supreme Court decision held on 6/28/24 called City of Grants Pass v. Johnson that would make illegal any individual using public property for “public camping.” It would allow the city to confiscate their belongings, a fine of up to \$750.00 and/or incarceration or community service by cleaning the impacted area. Another requirement of the ordinance is that the individual must seek assistance from an appropriate agency offering social services to homeless persons, which many are struggling to meet those needs as it is.

The ordinance, at best, is a band-aid. In an attempt to solve one problem, it creates several more. It places the responsibility of enforcement squarely on the shoulders of the local police departments and provides no funding to local agencies for them to meet the needs of those who have been affected.

I ask that you reach out to your local alderperson and let him/her know how poorly thought out this ordinance is in its current form and that criminalization is not the answer.”

The passage discussion was to take place the very next day at the city council meeting. Thankfully, the media, as well as CORAL, were able to publicize this measure before the meeting and public feedback at the city council meeting led to it being pulled from passage so that it could go through proper channels before consideration. The speakers at the meeting, including our very own Jenna Broom, spoke eloquently and detailed with their reasons for why this ordinance would NOT be good for the community in its current format. What was even more disturbing with the ordinance was that no communications were conducted with the social service agencies that the City had placed responsibilities with addressing this issue.

However, it is very likely this ordinance will be coming back either this week or in a few so we should keep our eyes and ears open to what the new ordinance will look like and who is striving to keep it the way that it is currently written. Purchase has reached out to businesses in the downtown area for support to keep it as is so we need to be observant as to who those businesses are as well.

**AFSP Suicide Prevention Walk (9/21 at 2:00 p.m. at UIS Campus):**

Brian reminded everyone that CORAL has a team scheduled to walk in the event. For those interested in participating or making a donation for the team, you may do so by registering at [www.afsp.org/walk](http://www.afsp.org/walk) and select the Springfield event. On the next page, scroll down towards the bottom and enter "CORAL" in the box to see our team page. At the team page, you can register for the team or make a donation.

**Broadgauge Retreat:**

Brian will be reaching out to Douglas Pope about arranging the retreat this month. The restaurant is currently closed but is supposed to be opening soon.

**Impact Life Blood Drive (10/12 at Illinois Eagle office):**

Krista Jiroutek, of Impact Life, contacted Brian to let him know about a blood drive that has been scheduled with Illinois Eagle and requested that we advertise the event. Brian will be working with her on the ads and getting them posted in the near future.

Jim made a motion to adjourn, Rex seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.