



Coalition of Rainbow Alliances Monthly Meeting January 11, 2026

Members Present and on Zoom

Brian Sylvester, President	Bob Immel
Lisa Cotton, Vice President	Lori Carlsen
Sheila Morris, Treasurer	Zoom
Francine Turner, Secretary	Jim Barr
Liv Gray, Board Member	Rob Weis
Rex Schadow, Board Member	Kennedy Gray
Lamar Walls, Board Member	Candice Clotfelter
	Michael Johnson
	April Poole

Meeting called to order at 4:02 pm

Approval of minutes from December 14, 2025 Lisa made a motion to accept the minutes, Jim seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurers Report- Sheila gave a verbal report. Lisa made a **motion** to accept and file for audit, Rex seconded. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Membership Committee: Brian reported that we received two volunteer forms that were responded to and outreach was conducted with two other individuals, Andy and Jody. Brian stated he will continue to work on a membership campaign for the first quarter of next year, designed to bring in active members.

Communications Committee: Brian reported the Facebook page and group had 31 posts for the month. There were 7 new members, bringing the membership total for social media to 2,072 The most popular posts were the Thanksgiving

article with 157 views, the Merry Christmas post with 156 views and the Penny Powell birthday drive at 123 views.

The webpage is averaging 216 hits this month, with 69 post reviews. Our traffic medium is still mostly Google, with an uptick in viewers going to the Ritz Flyer.

Activities Committee: Lisa reported that the main focus for activities at this moment is the Ritz. There are some people interested in doing the APL (Animal Protective League), which Candace stated she would look into.

Finance Committee: Sheila reported that she wrote the checks that were approved for the last meeting.

Partners/Supporters Committee: Lisa had nothing to report.

Brian reported that First Presbyterian Church will be hosting a Gratitude Reception on January 17th from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. for organizing advocates of love and justice in the Springfield community. It will have an open house format and all of the newly remodeled facilities will be open for touring. The address is 421 7th Street (corner of 7th and Capitol). There will be two guest speakers from the Cairo Center in New York, Shaley Gupta Barnes and Phil Wilder. There will also be refreshments served, but please RSVP by January 15th.

It was suggested that CORAL representatives keep an eye out for spaces like these where meetings can be held as we may be looking for another venue for our Thanksgiving dinners.

Ritz Committee:

Lori reported that the same DJ (Jeremiah) that was used for last year's Ritz has signed the contract to work on the 2026 Ritz dance.

The Illinois Times contract has been signed.

Heritage Behavior Health signed for ½ page ad.

Equality Illinois - Bronze Sponsor.

IPHA became a Platinum Sponsor with a full-page ad.

AgeLinc has signed on as a presenting sponsor with a reciprocal agreement.

Woodward Communications (old Midwest Family Group) offered a promotion called Giving Tree or Giving Time to 501C3's. CORAL Ritz group got an eight-week package discount for \$1000.00 that will include three radio stations with the streaming channels and the web. There will be a total of 720 commercials for the Ritz plus three interviews. The ads are going to run from January 25th through March 21st. The end date was decided so that all food orders could be in on time to Crowne Plaza. The total monetary value of services Coral purchased (at a steep discount) is a \$5,400 value.

Capitol Radio group contacted Bert and Lisa and they are working on that ad venue.

Brian is still working on getting the photographer Grace Tierney, who the Ritz has used in the past.

Lisa mentioned that Pole Barn Chic will be doing the table and flower decorations. Fresh cut flowers and vases will be on the tables.

April motioned to accept the committee reports and Lisa seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business:

Wrap-Ups:

Penny Powell's Birthday Drive Thru:

Rob reported that there was a good turnout. Five businesses each sponsored a half hour of time for the event. CORAL was well represented, which Rob appreciated.

CORAL donated \$250 to the fundraiser and Brian added a personal donation of \$250 to match giving a total of \$500 to the organization.

Christmas Meals: April reported that 220 scheduled meals were delivered, including to the Phoenix Center. Rex Schadow was thanked for taking the time to make sure the Phoenix Center deliveries arrived in a timely manner.

Extra meals were delivered also, due to last minute needs in the community. The total delivered Xmas day were 224, with any extra food packed up, frozen, and waiting for delivery to other people during the week.

April mentioned that more assistance is needed from the community in the future to make sure all food deliveries arrive on time. Sickness took its toll at the local churches from where most of the volunteers were recruited. Rex mentioned that April/CORAL should reach out to the local high school organizations, as many students need to do community service to graduate and this would be a great opportunity.

There was a check for \$100 written to CORAL instead of the Chatham United Methodist Church. So that situation will be addressed, and Chatham UMC will be given the money that was intended for the church.

Senior Center Holiday Party: Lisa reported that she went to this event as did Lee, Gail, and Marie. CORAL sponsored the party, and passed out gifts. Seniors received a hot meal also. The senior center provides food for the PrideLinc lunches as well as services to Central Illinois that go out as far as Petersburg.

LGBTQ/HIV Recovery Support Group: Brian reported that the group is still looking into what advertising opportunities are available to promote community interest in this new group.

New Business:

Board Positions: Brian reported that Liv Gray has accepted a Board Member at Large position. Please let Brian know of any other people that you know would be interested in serving on the board in an active capacity.

Phoenix Center Annual Meeting: Brian announced that the Phoenix Center will be holding their first annual meeting on January 20th at the Lawrence location at 6:00 p.m. He would like to see as many CORAL members present as possible so please mark your calendars now.

MLK Breakfast: Lisa reported that CORAL will have two tables for the annual event on MLK Day. For those attending who haven't paid yet, the tickets are \$40.00 and she will need the money before the event.

Black History Ball: Brian reported the event is scheduled for February 28th at the BOS Convention Center. The tables sit 10 if CORAL purchases one, making the tickets \$55 each. Brian, Liv, Kennedy, and Jim have volunteered to attend and Rob stated that Fifth Street will purchase five of the other seats at the table. This is a dressy event, be prepared!

End of Year Donation Proposals: There were two proposals for amounts of donations to various organizations in the Springfield, Illinois area. Both were for \$6000.00. After much debate about contribution levels, the amount to be donated was increased to \$7000. Rex motioned on the proposal below and Mike seconded the motion

Donation levels are listed below:

\$1000.00 - Central Illinois Food Bank (Mike added \$500.00)

\$1000.00 - PBJ

\$1000.00 - CYAN

\$1000.00 - Senior Services

\$1000.00 - Helping Hands

\$500.00 - Black Lives Matter (Brian added \$500.00)

\$500.00 - Garvey Tubman (Lisa added \$500.00)

End of Meeting:

Lisa Cotton made a motion to adjourn, it was seconded by Rex Schadow. Motion passed.

