



Coalition of Rainbow Alliances Monthly Meeting November 12, 2023

Members Present

Brian Sylvester President	Harry Carlsen	Rex Schadow
Lisa Cotton Vice President (zoom)	Sheila Morris	Rob Weis
Lori Carlsen Secretary	Mike Johnson	Bob Immel
April Poole Treasurer	Christina Newton (zoom)	
Jim Barr Immediate Past President	Sam Downs	
Jenna Broom Board Member at Large		
Shelley Vaughn Board Member at Large		
David Yankee Board Member at Large		

Meeting called to order at 5:09pm

Approval of minutes from October 8, 2023- Harry made a motion to accept the minutes, Jenna seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurers Report- see printed copies. April went over the financial reports. Rex made a motion to receive and file for audit treasurers report. Sam seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Membership

Brian reported that we have received two online volunteer forms since the last meeting and the individuals have been contacted. Both are looking forward to hearing more during orientations. The new membership orientation presentation has been completed but this will be discussed later.

Social Media

Brian reported the Facebook page has 9 new followers bringing the total to 831. There were 34 posts in the past month with the highest hits being International Pronoun Day with 328, Happy Transparent Day with 159, and Halloween with 158. The Facebook group has 13 new followers bringing the total to 796. There were 68 posts in the past month with the highest hits from National Coming out Day at 221, Phoenix Center Game Night at 213, and the CORAL new member orientation announcement with 200. The website had 147 site visits, an increase of 13%, and 52 post views, an increase of 160%. We had 117 new visitors to the site during the month and the blog article on the CORAL shirts had 14 hits after posted.

Activities

Lisa stated that there is nothing to report at this time.

Finance

April reported the finance committee has not met.

Ritz

Bert reported there were 9 people currently on the committee. Still looking for more volunteers to work on the Ritz. We are looking to set up another meeting in the next 2 weeks. This year's theme is Celebrating Every Journey. Lori listed the menu options for this year's Ritz. April stated that the ticket price has been increased to \$70.00 per ticket, and \$560.00 per table due to the increased cost of food. We have kept the Advertising pricing the same and increased the Sponsorship prices. We are waiting on contracts for advertising. Rex made a motion to accept the committee reports, April seconded. Motion carried.

Partners & Supporters

Brian stated there is nothing to report at this time.

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

Old Business

Out of the Darkness Walk- Brian stated that the event went well. CORAL had several members attend. They now have Sponsorships for the event.

Habitat for Humanity Raise the Roof- Jim stated the event went well, they did a good job. April stated they listed CORAL as sponsor for free. Jim made a motion that members that attend all events where tickets are being sold for a meal being served, we ask that those members pay for their tickets to CORAL and CORAL will then write a check to that organization. Lee seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Phoenix Center Fall Gala- Jenna stated the event was great. April stated they are raising funds for an elevator to be installed at their building, and CORAL should consider donating to the elevator. David stated that CORAL should get behind the Youth Center in Jacksonville. Rob stated CORAL should stick to our market/area.

Campout for the Homeless- Rob stated the event went well. The new location this year opened everyone's eyes regarding the homeless population. The Veterans soup event was a great success. Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center raised \$1,700.00 from donations. The local military did a stuff the Hum-V with toiletry items.

Resistor Sisterhood- Lisa stated they had a meet and greet event a Whimsey Tea, and it was well attended.

Thanksgiving Dinner- will be on November 18, 2023 at Lincoln Park Pavilion. April asked Brian to create an event on social media page.

Jaycees Holiday Lights Parade- CORAL will be a Jingle Bells Sponsor, and will be walking in the parade. She stated we need to light it up! The parade starts at 5pm and those walking need to arrive by 4pm at the Horace Mann parking lot.

New Business

Hockey Team Sponsorship- Rex stated they will do an event for CORAL. The date for the game will be on February 17, 2024. More information will follow.

World Aids Day- Rob stated the event will be on December 1, 2023 at 3:30pm in front of the Lincoln Statue on the steps of the Capital. First Church of the Brethren, Phoenix Center, CORAL, Fifth Street Renaissance, and Heartland MCC will be there.

Brothers and Sisters Christmas Party- Lisa stated it will be on December 16, 2023 at Boccardi's starts at 7pm, dinner will be served at 7:30pm. There is a maximum number of 35 people. RSVP's are needed.

New Member Orientation- Brian reported that the new member orientation presentation is completed, and he would like to set a date for a run-through on it

in preparation for the first orientation. An announcement of the orientation was made on social media on October 22nd which received an interest response from nearly 200 people, so he is anxious to get the first presentation scheduled.

Erin Connley- Brian stated that he had a very nice conversation with Erin Conley at the Camp Out for Veterans. During the conversation, he told her that CORAL was interested in conducting an activity in her ward as we had in many others and she was excited to hear that and would be willing to work with us on that activity. Brian wondered if there was any possibility that we might contact BCBS about another produce drive for that activity or if there might be any other ideas for this.

LGBTQ Older Adult Violence Prevention Program- Brian reported that Carolyn Austin, AgeLinc, has received a grant from Senator Doris Turner to create a training program on the issue of LGBTQ Older Adult Violence prevention. This program will be designed to address violence against the elder demographic of the LGBTQ community and be used across the state. She is being given 9 months to complete this scope. CORAL has been asked to participate in the designing and advertising of this training program and may receive a \$5,000.00 stipend for the work that we assist with. Brian has agreed to be a member of the designing committee, but a sub-committee may be created as well.

Brian asked Carolyn in the first meeting of this program if Shelly Vaughn might be a good addition to the sub-committee which was met with an affirmative response.

Illinois Times Book of List- Brian reported that he had received an email from James Bengfort about advertising in the Illinois Times Book of Lists. However, CORAL is not listed in the book so advertising seem moot without it. So, Brian emailed James, who forwarded his request to Michelle Ownbey. And, Brian is proud to announce that CORAL will not only be listed in the book for the first time but will be at the top of the list for the category for Community Service Organizations with the following information:

Meeting address: AgeLinc at 2731 S MacArthur Blvd, Springfield, IL 62704

Phone: 217-726-7966

Website: www.springfieldcoral.org

Email: coral.springfield@gmail.com

Meeting times: Every 2nd Sunday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

Number of members: 803

Contact: Brian Sylvester

Dues: None

Mission statement: To build a LGBTQ inclusive community that provides visibility and advocacy

Year established: 2000

SJR Article: On October 25th, Zach, a reporter from the SJR, emailed Brian to schedule a time for an interview to discuss the differences between Illinois' reputation as a safe haven for the LGBTQ and the reality for those living in the Springfield area. The interview took place via phone and the SJR photographer stopped by for the picture November 9th. Zach stated that it will be a feature article and should be printed in the next week or so. Tom Wray was also interviewed for the article as well.

Phoenix Center Request: On November 2nd, Jonna Cooley reached out to Brian about a sad situation involving a well-known member of the LGBTQ community. Phil Giger passed away this past summer and his family has been slowly taking care of cleaning out his home as they prepared to place it on the market. However, someone broke into the house while they were away and destroyed most of the items inside as well as parts of the house. The family is heartbroken over the precious history they lost of Phil in this senseless act of vandalism. As Phil played a strong role with our community, Jonna is gathering several members together to help with the clean-up of the home for the family.

A dumpster will be rented for this project and on 11/17 and 11/18 from 8:30 am. to 4:30 p.m. there will be a group at the house at 315 W. Ash Street to clean up the home. Brian was hoping to get a good representation of CORAL members to go either day to help with the project.

Holiday Meals- April reported it will be held on Wednesday November 22nd will be the cold preparation at Chatham United Methodist Church. Delivery of meals will be on Thursday morning November 23, 2023. All items needed have been donated. April stated that Parkway Church gave a \$500.00 donation, plus a \$200.00 donation was also received. Lowe's donated some paper products. Bert, Lee, and Jenna volunteered to help out with the cold prep on Wednesday night November 22, 2023.

Lee stated that Jean and Linda raised \$500.00 at Lee's birthday party for the children in Puerta Villarta to buy needed clothing for them.

Jim stated that Decatur Illinois Pride Pet and People food drive will be on January 13, 2024 from 10:30am to 12:30pm at the Walmart lot North. Donations will go to the Northeast Community Fund.

Jenna stated that the Family Service Center will be having the Tree of Wishes for foster kids out at the mall. Harry stated that Camelot is doing the Adopt a Kid Christmas lists.

Rex made a motion to adjourn, Jenna seconded. Motion carried.

Jenna made a motion to adjourn, Lisa seconded, Motion carried meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.