



C.O.R.A.L. Monthly Meeting Minutes November 13, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm. Carolyn made a motion adjourn meeting by 6:30pm
Mike seconded vote taken 7 yea, April- nay, motion carried.

Present at the meeting were:

Jim Barr- President	Bert Morton
Lori Carlsen- Secretary	Lee Korty
April Poole- Treasurer	Mike Johnson
Carolyn Austin- Board Member at Large	Rex Schadow
	Harry Carlsen

Minutes were reviewed from October 9, 2022. Lee made a motion to accept the minutes, Rex seconded the motion. Motion carried

Committee Reports.

Treasury report – April submitted printed copies. Lee made the motion to receive and file for audit, Rex seconded, motion carried.

Executive Board Updates- Jim reported the Board met October 30, 2022. Treasurer's report was reviewed. UIS internship will not be happening it has disbanded. We received reports regarding getting more new Partnerships/ Sponsorships, we need to be doing monthly activities, joining more events. Fundraisers we're doing is T-shirt/ Polo sales. A proposal was made to change CORAL Monthly Membership Meeting location from First Church of the Brethren to Agelinc on McArther, starting in December meeting time will remain the same at 5pm. April informed Jim that his letter to the church regarding this matter should be sent to Stewart Committee Chair Fletcher Ferrar.

Membership -We received one new volunteer form this month from Sam M. He was interested in working with CORAL on anything that required creativity and, in our conversation, stated that he might like to attend the Taste for the Homeless event. Unfortunately, Brian was not able to make the event and it is believed that Sam might have wanted to volunteer at an event where he knew someone attending. We look forward to seeing him in the future though. Brian also had a phone conversation with Mila M of the UIS Gender Diversity department. She was writing an article for those students who might be looking for community involvement outside the campus and wanted to include information on CORAL. She stated that she thought there were several students who would be interested in getting involved with CORAL and she would make sure to include our website in her article for them to complete the volunteer form. At our most recent APL outing, we had two new volunteers show up to help with the event. We placed ads in both the Phoenix Center Fall Gayla and Rainbow Café booklets asking for involvement from volunteers and are looking forward to some interest from those.

Social Media- The history month campaign was a huge success as our online media contact increased significantly during October. The Facebook group saw an increase in viewership of 23% with 3,669 hits with 75 postings, 63 comments to those postings, and 588 responses. We have 13 new members and, ironically, the balance in age and gender appears to be balancing out a bit. We currently have 56% who consider themselves female and 44% who consider themselves male. We are also seeing an increase in the younger range in the group with the 25 – 44 age ranges growing the fastest. Our top three postings for the month were the National Coming out slide with 716 hits, the PCASA photo shoot with 424 hits,

and the photo of us attending the Phoenix Center Gayla at 358. However, one other note to make with this is that our average number of hits per posting has also increased this month to 79.

The Facebook page saw an increase as well of 247% at 1,541 reaches with 66 postings. The page also had an increase of 376% in visits at 362 and 9 new members joined this month. Our audience ratio has stayed pretty much the same from previous months. Our top three postings for the page were the PCASA photo shoot at 372 hits, the Out of the Darkness post with 323 hits, and the Shoetoberfest with 284 hits. We are averaging about 50 hits per post with the page.

The website saw the most increases in activity in all categories this month. We saw an increase in site visits of 88% at 355, an increase of 59% in visitors at 191, and the time they spent on the site increased by 42% at 9 minutes and 56 seconds. Ninety percent of our visitors were new this month. As for how they are visiting, we saw a 68% increase in direct traffic, 64% increase from Google, 267% increase from Facebook, and 200% increase from Bing.

Since the history campaign went over so well, we are attempting to create new campaigns going forward. The recognition of our partners and supporters is continuing but we're also considering a wish list campaign for December and a "Year in Recap" for January.

Ritz - April reported the committee met at Clique where the theme, and clip-art was decided on, and has been sent to Solution Printing for Nick to work on. The committee approved money movement to the Ritz fund, and sent the request to the Finance Committee. All prices are remaining the same except for tables which will be \$480.00 for a table of 8, and there will be no discount this year. Jim stated that Decatur Illinois Pride will be a Bronze Sponsor this year. Harry reported State Farm Agent Katie Bashary stated she would be a sponsor this year. Bert stated he and Lori would be working on the end of the year letter that we send every year. Let Bert know if you have someone that should receive a letter, and include the name of the person it should be addressed to.

Activities- The APL event went very well as we had four new volunteers join us that day. We also had the pleasure of "Mr. Wiggles" (a male pit-bull with a genetic illness that prevents the use of his back legs) for a brief period of time. We're not sure if he loved being with us, or the number of treats we gave him. It is hoped that we might schedule another date with the APL before or after Christmas.

Finance- April reported that Finance Committee met, we will be working on the budget, The budget will be then sent to the Executive Board for approval and then presented at the Monthly Membership meeting for approval. April reported that finances are being backed up onto 2 separate flash-drives for safety. April made the motion to accept all committee reports, Rex seconded, motion carried.

LGBTQ History- Interviews are still a work in progress

Partners and Supporters:

Brian attended the first meeting of the LGBTQ Task Force committee of the Resistor Sister group. They will be addressing issues specifically to the LGBTQ community within their organization. One note that needs to be mentioned is that it was stated by their social media director that they had 7000 hits on one of their FB postings the previous week of the meeting. It is believed that this is a group CORAL should definitely continue making a connection with as a new partner.

Brian has been in discussions with Andy L of the Trans-Masculine group about partnering with CORAL. On November 4th, Brian and Andy had a phone conversation to obtain more information about CORAL and its connections with the Trans community. During this discussion, several very valid points were brought up by Andy in regards to how CORAL works with them moving forward. They were:

1. Only use full names in our minutes with the approval of the individual. With the current polarizing environment that exists for the trans-community, there is a danger for them in revealing their identities. With this concern in mind, CORAL needs to be observant that we

make sure to protect this moving forward. Lori suggested that Jim announce at the beginning of introductions to state your name how you would like it to be entered into the written minutes that will be posted on our website.

2. Make sure we use the current pronouns that correlate with their descriptors. If an individual considers themselves as “gender-queer,” we need to use the correct corresponding pronoun to that descriptor. It was emphasized with Andy that CORAL wishes to do the right thing by the trans-community and that would definitely include receiving an education on how that is done. He expressed many compliments towards CORAL stating that as an organization we are doing all the things that they believe all organizations should be doing but may not be. He believes that the group will approve partnering with us and are looking forward to getting more involved.

At the recent Rainbow Café Gala, Brian spoke with Timothy Jackson, Director of Government Relations for the AIDs Foundation of Chicago, who was the keynote speaker. While Tim lives in Chicago, he spends about six months out of the year in Springfield for his position. He was very interested in learning how CORAL addresses issues of HIV and AIDs in the community and stated that he would contact Brian in the near future to have dinner and discuss how we might work together in the future.

Old Business

Thanksgiving Dinner- Members should wear their CORAL shirts. April will bring the T-shirts to the event to sell. The menu is coming together. So far we have:

Turkey- Lee, Jean, Lori, Brian

Ham- Jim and Mike

Dressing- Lori and Marty

Mashed Potatoes- Jean and April

Tea- Lee

Lemonade- Jim

Coffee, Creamer, sugar/ sweetener- Lori

Tablecloths- Brian is looking for them

April will call the Illinois Times to have the event added to their calendar.

Taste for the Homeless- Lori reported several members attended the event and served meals. It was a full day event that served all 3 meals with great attendance. We delivered the remainder of the food to the Salvation Army Warming Center. They will be holding another event for Thanksgiving and also Christmas. Lori would like to see CORAL attend, and help out.

Training for Springfield Police Department regarding LGBTQIA issues- No meeting has been set with Ken Scarlette as yet. It was decided that the Gender 101 may not necessarily provide all the information they would be looking for so Carolyn will be forwarding another training program that might be more appropriate for their needs. Carolyn reported that she will send the outline for training from Juli Gray-Owens who did the Gender 101 training at Agelinc.

Rainbow Café Gala- CORAL attended this event for the first time to hopefully create a connection between them going into the future as well as to see how they have gotten to be one of the biggest LGBTQ centers of Southern Illinois. As of 2022, they were entirely a volunteer only organization so they have struggled with some of the same issues we have. Their event included many of the same things that our Ritz has with exception of donation buckets on each table as well as a silent auction and an auction of two larger items. Also, most of their evening included a speaking program including not only members of their organization but guest speakers as well. Brian feels there were several ideas that could come out of our visit with the event and some of the members that we spoke with while there:

1. While CORAL has never seen the Ritz event as a source of getting guests to make further donations to the organization, the soft approach that Rainbow Café took with this approach was not off-putting. Brian feels this might be something we consider in the future.

2. The idea of possibly obtaining grants for the work we do has only been discussed briefly in our executive meetings and only involved the likes of Acorn Equality and the Springfield Junior League. Brian believes this is an avenue we should explore.

Fifth Street AIDS Memorial- At this point, we are collecting names and contact information of parties interested in participating in this sub-committee. As part of the World AIDS Memorial event scheduled for noon, December 3rd people will be invited to participate. People may also express their interest on the AIDS Memorial web page on the FSR website. This sub-committee will convene in the new year. Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center AIDS Memorial Labyrinth Sub-Committee Details; Purpose: This sub-committee is tasked to aid in the management of paver donations and special events at the AIDS Memorial. It would be connected to the fund-raising committee.

Functions:

- Increase donation dollars to help Fifth Street Renaissance / SARA Center to provide assistance for essential support and outreach programs.
- Coordinate an agreed upon posting process from purchase to placement.
- Assist community members with their order, managing their expectations.
- Consult on / coordinate special events like the AIDS walk, World AIDS day, etc.
- Maintain webpage information generating interest and engagement in the AIDS Memorial Labyrinth.
- Collect history / stories behind the pavers; stories behind the names and stories behind the donors (where appropriate). in the memorial and what it represents for the community. Membership: Volunteer community members interested in the memorial and what it represents for the community. Membership: Volunteer community members interested in the memorial and what it represents for the community.

Holiday Meals- April will send CORAL a list of meal items needed to sign up for. Mike made a monetary donation to the purchase of meal items. Cold prep will be done on Wednesday 11/23/2022, and the meals will be put together and delivered on 11/24/2022. Times to follow.

New Business

Acorn Equality Breakfast- is being held on December 3, 2022. Lee stated that he and Bert have purchased a table in CORAL's name.

Jaycee's Holiday Parade of Lights- The Jaycees will be having their annual Parade of Lights on December 3rd at 5:30 p.m. in downtown Springfield and have requested that CORAL participate. Brian has already completed the application and turned in the entry fee. This will be a walking unit only but we may want to consider how to add some lights to our presentation. Please let us know who might be available to walk that evening. Rex made a motion for CORAL to participate in the parade, Mike seconded, motion carried.

World AIDS Day Memorial Ceremony, 1:30 PM, December 3rd, 2022

An initial meeting was held, at noon at the Church of the Brethren on Thursday, November 10th. In attendance was Brad Green, Teresa Silva from Phoenix Center, Charla Stone from Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center, Rob Weis from Fifth Street Renaissance/Sara Center and CORAL, Penny Powell from Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center, Bobbi Dykema from Church of the Brethren, and April Poole from CORAL. Based on topics covered, the following outcomes were established; Tentative Plan as outlined by the meeting;

- Ceremony opening and prayer
- Invitation of stories – Preselected individuals step on to the labyrinth – about 6 or 7
- Each selected person tells a story (2 or 3 minutes).

- A representative from Phoenix Center, Fifth Street Renaissance/SARA Center, and CORAL are each invited to discuss current topics of related to the fight of HIV and resources available to the community.
- Closing prayer provided by another religious representatives

Set-up for the event; Penny Powell would look into the FSR sound system and determine if it will accommodate the event. Rob Weis will look into reserving the space with the Parks Department. April will look into tents (ideally 1 or 2) from CORAL for the event.

Bobbi will look into religious representatives who will open the ceremony and close the ceremony.

All parties agreed to think about appropriate individuals we may invite to tell their story. Next Meeting will be noon, Monday, November 21 st at the MT Van room at Phoenix Center or via ZOOM

Important items to be discussed at CORAL meeting to be covered by April;

- CORAL speaker needs to be selected to discuss the resources available outside of the Phoenix Center or FSR.
- Will it be possible to provide one or two tents for the event including set-up and tear-down?
- Is CORAL interested and willing to fund an ad and/or an article with Illinois Times?

April will contact Illinois Times to place an ad for the event.

Agelinc Mardi Gras Gala- Carolyn reported the event will be held on February 25, 2023 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Tickets are on sale now, and are \$64.80 per person, tables will seat 8 people.

Fifth Street- will be holding their walk/ fundraiser.

Springfield Horseshoes event- is being held Thursday, December 8, 2022 from 4-7pm. Bring a toy.

Lee made the motion to adjourn, Harry seconded, motion carried.