



Coalition of Rainbow Alliances Monthly Meeting January 14, 2024

Members Present (Zoom)

Brian Sylvester President

April Poole Treasurer

David Yankee, Member at Large

Candice Clotfelter

Sam Downs

Lisa Cotton, Vice President

Jenna Broom, Member at Large

Jim Barr, Ex-officio

Rob Weis

Rex Schadow

Meeting called to order at 4:00 pm

Approval of minutes from December 10, 2023 - April made a motion to accept the minutes, Lisa seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurers Report- Reports were presented for review. April went over the financial reports. April requested contact information for Rainbow Café for an outstanding check. Brian will forward Carrie Vine's email address. Outstanding payment from Vicki Davis for the Ritz 2023 is still being worked. Parkway Christian Church and Chatham United both made sizable donations for the holiday dinners. Rob made a motion to receive and file for audit treasurers report. Sam seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Membership

Brian reported that there has been one volunteer form completed this month and he will be reaching out to them soon.

The membership orientation meetings will begin soon. A Zoom session has been set up so all that is needed is the date. Hopefully, a meeting will be scheduled for January.

Social Media

Brian reported the Facebook group was viewed 1,025 times this month with 28 posts. There were nine new members added bringing the total to 803. The most popular posts were the Brothers & Sisters Holiday dinner with 466, the post for Senior Services needing volunteers with 251, and the SJR article featuring Brian Sylvester and Tom Wray on LGBTQ+ life in Illinois with 226.

The Facebook page had 94 visits with 497 reaches. There were 11 new members added bringing the total to 847. There were 34 new posts with the most popular posts being the New Year's at 190, the Holiday post with 91, and the WAND spot on the Pope's announcement to bless same sex marriages at 75.

The website had 161 sessions (an increase of 13%), 51 post views (an increase of 65%), and 131 visitors (an increase of 11%). Traffic flow saw an increase of 44 (83%) in direct contact as well as a new medium of DuckDuckGo with 4 contacts.

Another note Brian made was that the Ritz event that is on Facebook had a chat feature set up when it was established. That has been turned off due to the lack of security that FB offers for this feature, which was allowing inappropriate messages to be sent to all members of the page. When better security is set up, we will reconsider using this feature.

Activities

Lisa reported that she has spoken with Stella's Coffee & Tea and Whimsey Tea for possible future activities with their locations. She has also spoken with the APL while dropping off a donation from CORAL. She would like to schedule another event with them in the near future but only five persons would be able to attend as the room for the activity is smaller since it would still be too cold outside for the group to work in the warehouse.

Finance

April reported that the Finance Committee has not met. Committee will meet before the next scheduled membership meeting. Budget will be the primary discussion.

Partners & Supporters

Lisa reported that she has been talking with Gordon of Whimsey Tea about using their facility for a future activity. They can handle 24 sitting and 48 standing at their location and there is no charge for usage. She is hoping to have a meet & greet sometime in April.

Brian reported that Pole Barn Chic will be having their grand opening of their new event center on 1/18/24 at 4:00 pm. He, Lisa, and April are planning to attend and if anyone else is free, please stop by.

April stated that she has spoken with DSI (Downtown Springfield Inc.) and they are interested in doing something with CORAL.

Ritz Committee

April reported that most of the media contracts have been signed – Midwest Family and Illinois Times. She has an appointment to sign the Capital Radio contract. Unfortunately, Pole Barn Chic will not be able to work with CORAL this year as they have a prior engagement out of state so the Ritz committee will need to discuss the decorations for the event. The chairs have some ideas to present on this.

Invoices have been going out. Thus far, there are approximately \$4,500.00 in invoices sent so we have a ways to go to hit our mark from last year. Brian requested that the updated spreadsheet of sponsors and advertisers be emailed to the Ritz committee so we know who still needs contacting. April stated she would email the sheets after this meeting.

April doesn't believe that she has received all of the reciprocal agreements at this time. She has not received the agreements for AgeLinc or Fifth Street. Rob said he would email the AgeLinc agreement immediately but added that no one has contacted Fifth Street yet and they are ready to commit. Lisa will work with Rob to get that agreement sent and signed.

April asked that everyone needs to contact our possible sponsors soon as the deadline for full advertising (2/9/24) is coming up.

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

Old Business

Holiday Dinners: April reported that 224 meals were served for Christmas dinner and all went fairly smoothly. There was a slight issue with the ham as 10 sliced hams were ordered but initially only 8 were received. She will have an official finance report on the event at the next meeting.

Brothers & Sisters Christmas dinner: Rob and Lisa reported they had full attendance at the event and everyone appeared to have a good time. There were some issues with the service though and it is very possible that a new venue will be looked for at next year's event.

WAND Interview: Brian reported with the recent announcement by the Pope that he endorsed blessings for same sex marriages as long as they were not seen as performances of actual marriages, WAND TV reached out to him for an interview. The news piece can be seen on Facebook if anyone hasn't seen it.

Rural Harmony Video: Brian reported that Rural Harmony is in the process of creating a video for their cervical cancer study and have reached out to CORAL for participants. Bernetta Adrewin has agreed to be in the video which will be filmed in Springfield in the near future.

CORAL sweatshirts/jerseys: April reported that we are ready to begin ordering. We will need a minimum of 12 orders for both the embroidered logos and/or the imprinted decals for sweatshirts. It is possible that we may need to order extras to get the initial order placed. If that is the case, the most popular sizes will be ordered.

Jenna asked if we could have an order form created and Brian stated that we already have an order form for the shirts so we might want to consider adding the sweatshirts and jerseys to that order form. April will update the original order form and send to Brian to be added to the website and posted on social media.

Hockey Game: In Rex's absence, Brian reported that the Hockey game at the Nelson Center has been scheduled for 2/24/24 at 7:00 p.m. Rex later stated that he will contact them to see if any other information is available for the event.

SJR Article: Brian reported that he and Tom Wray, of the Illinois Eagle, were interviewed by the State Journal Register on life in Illinois for the LGBTQ+ community. The article has been posted on Facebook and the web site.

Paula Harris Memorial: April reported that the Illinois Times posted a memorial for Paula Harris that she has posted to social media. She also has copies of the posted memorial if anyone is interested in receiving one.

New Business

Rainbow Café Trans Resource Fair: Brian received an email from Rainbow Café that they are planning their Trans Resource Fair for 3/31/24 and wanted to know if CORAL would like to be involved. In the past, we have advertised the event for them but have not gotten more involved than that. Due to the distance and the date being on a Sunday, we will probably only advertise the event as we have in the past.

AgeLinc's Mardi Gras: Brian reported that AgeLinc's Mardi Gras event is scheduled for 2/17/24 at 6:00 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza. As part of our reciprocal agreement with the Ritz, we are receiving one table of 8 for the event. I know that Rob and I will be taking two of the seats but we need to find out who else will be attending. The following stated that they would like to attend – David (and his husband, Mike), Jim (and Marty), Bert Morton, Lee Korty, Lisa Cotton, Jenna Broom, April Poole (and Jane Stricklin), Harry and Lori Carlson. If everyone attends, CORAL will need an additional table for the event so Brian will reach out to AgeLinc about obtaining another table before they are sold out.

The tickets are \$60.00 each so all attending will need to provide their payments to April before the event takes place, if possible.

Brothers and Sisters Dinner Group: Rob shared that the schedule for the dinners will not be every Friday as before but he is shooting for maybe twice a month unless someone else will step forward to assist with this.

Trivia Nights: April brought up two different trivia events taking place soon – Habitat for Humanity and Crime Stoppers.

Habitat for Humanity Music Trivia is scheduled for 2/16/24 at Knights of Columbus on Meadowbrook. Doors open at 6:00 pm and the game begins at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$20.00 or a table of 10 for \$200.00.

Crime Stoppers Trivia is scheduled for 1/27/24 at the BOS Center. Doors open at 5:00 pm with the game beginning at 6:30 pm. Tickets are \$15.00 or a table of 10 for \$150.00. It was decided that we should attend for visibility. The following persons stated that would like to be included: Lisa, Jim, Brian, April, Rex, and Candice. Lisa will be the point person for the event.

Jim proposed that CORAL attend both events and Sam seconded. Jim amended the proposal to attend only the Crime Stoppers and Sam seconded. Motion passed.

Brian asked David about Phoenix Center having their trivia night. David stated that they have not established a date for the event yet. He might have an answer at the next meeting.

Poor People's Campaign: Rob reminded us that we are working on this campaign with the march on the capital on Saturday, 3/2/24. They are having a banner design event on 2/24/24 to provide groups an opportunity to create a banner for the march. No time has been set as of yet. Information sessions for this event can be found on the O & A United Facebook page. Rob will get some more information for Brian to post to social media.

PBJ Springfield: April reported this new group that makes peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for homeless shelters to pass out to the homeless as they're leaving shelters and possibly a bottle of water or other snacks. She thought this might be a good activity for CORAL to get involved with. Brian will contact a representative of the group to see how we might assist them with this in the future.

Illinois Eagle: Rex proposed that CORAL make a donation of \$150.00 to the Illinois Eagle as they prepare to become a 501(c)3. Jim seconded the proposal. The motion carried. Candice and April added that the Illinois Eagle has been a strong supporter of CORAL with all of the events we provide.

BCBS Events: Candice asked for any future events with Blue Cross Blue Shield. April reported that she and Brian have discussed this and we're attempting to set up 4-6 events in the upcoming year. She also discussed the possibility of offering a shred event with Affordable Shred and a possible school supply event.

Pride Night: Rex asked if we are still looking at having the event. Brian and April stated that we are still working on the reciprocal agreement with the Ritz to finalize that event. April added that Midwest Family Broadcasting will be providing advertising for the event and Capital Radio is also considering this. Rex asked April if he could join her for the next meeting with Lucky Horseshoes to discuss that event so they will be setting up a time for that meeting.

Executive Meeting: Lisa asked when the next meeting will be scheduled. Brian asked what a good evening of the week would be. Thursdays are not good. Brian will set a date and email it to the executive board. Roy Pyers and Tim Bill will be

joining us to discuss a project they will be setting up for 2025 involving leadership training for LGBTQ+ groups.

Lisa made a motion to adjourn, Jim/Rex seconded, Motion carried meeting adjourned at 5:26 pm.