



Coalition of Rainbow Alliances Monthly Meeting , February 9,2025

Members Present (Zoom)

Brian Sylvester President
Lisa Cotton, Vice President
Sheila Morris Treasurer
Lori Carlsen Secretary (zoom)
David Yankee Board Member
Jenna Broom Board Member
Jim Barr
Brendan Brown (AgeLinc)

Caroline Kionka
Mike Johnson
Candice Clotfelter
Christina Newton
Harry Carlsen
Rex Schadow
Sam Downs
Maggie Osborne
April Poole

Meeting called to order at 4:00 pm

Approval of minutes from January 12, 2025 Lisa made a motion to accept the minutes, Rex seconded the motion. Motion carried.

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

Committee Reports

Membership- Brian reported we received two new volunteer forms this month which have been responded to. We also received an inquiry on one additional form for assistance with a project for a young lady, which was referred for assistance.

Social Media- Brian reported that the Facebook group had 2,923 views this past month with 400 comments or reactions. We have 9 new followers bringing the total to 903. We had 52 posts for the month with the most popular being the “All should be treated equal” at 698, not needing permission to recognize Black History Month at 582, and the Pritzker Study announcement at 446.

The Facebook page had 14,700 views and a reach of 3,600 for the month. We have 38 new followers bringing the total to 988. We had 34 posts for the month with the most popular being Pritzker Study announcement at 5,400, the “All should be treated equal” at 979, the Fifth Street Ritz sponsorship at

569. The webpage saw 248 visits this month with 185 new visitors, with 145 coming thru via Google and Bing. The average session is nearly four minutes and the most popular pages are the Ritz and the Ritz flyer.

It should also be noted that all avenues of social media are seeing a major increase in activity, not only with CORAL, but also with our partners that we conduct comparisons with. This is more than likely due to the current actions of the federal government. We have also begun recognizing our Ritz sponsors and advertisers on social media and this will gain in regularity as the event gets closer as well.

Activities- Lisa reported we are currently focusing on the Ritz event.

Finance- Sheila reported we will be using the 5013C for our budget. Brian will send Sheila the last 3 years.

Partners & Supporters- Brian reported he had been contacted by Prairie Pride Coalition of Bloomington-Normal about attending their monthly meetings via Zoom as they believe now, more than ever, we should be collaborating. I accepted the invite and will report on their activities at the next meeting.

Brian also was contacted by Jennifer Ellis of Decatur Illinois Pride with a press release of the new reorganization of their group and implementation of new officers for their board.

Logan County Pride has set their date for their Pridefest for 6/7, 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. However, they have not requested sponsors as of yet. Sam Downs said he would speak with Logan County to get that back to CORAL.

Brian wanted to thank everyone who complimented his interview with Channel 20 on 1/21. While his portion of the interview was somewhat brief when aired, the subject of what CORAL is doing resulting from the presidential executive orders is important to acknowledge.

Rainbow Café will be holding their annual Transgender Resource Fair on 3/31 from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00p.m. at 118 N Illinois Ave in Carbondale. Prairie Pride

Coalition will be holding their Transgender Resource Fair on 6/27 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at 1613 E Emerson in Bloomington.

The SAA will be presenting a Pride Art Exhibit from 4/4 thru 5/29. Times for viewings will be forthcoming in the future.

Ritz Committee- Lori reported that the Ritz planning is going well. We currently have around 27 Sponsors, 43 Advertisers, and 30 Tables sold including tickets. We received an estimate for Boutonnieres at \$12.00 each and Wrist Corsages \$25.00 each for the Ritz committee from the Flower Factor a new gay owned business here in Springfield. Lori contacted Dre from UIS regarding student escorts for the event. She stated she will begin the search, and that several students from last year have already inquired about it. Jenna stated that the Jaycees will be doing a Half Page Ad again this year. Lori will send them an invoice.

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

Old Business/Event Wrap-Ups:

MLK Breakfast- Brian stated he thought the MLK Breakfast was a great idea for CORAL to attend and wished to thank Bert Morton for bringing it to our attention. For those who were there, it was incredibly well attended but unfortunately, we didn't get much opportunity to network. Bernadette Gordon spoke with Lisa and later that they are trying to get Michelle O'bama as a guest speaker for next year's breakfast so we've told her to make us a priority for tables for next year as well.

MLK Peaceful Protests- Brian first wanted to thank all CORAL members who were present for the training not only for being there but for also spreading yourselves out amongst the other attendees so that we can hear from our community. Brian thought the training was well done but thought maybe more activities and less talk might have been more beneficial. A survey was sent out after the training asking if we would be interested in more training later so hopefully everyone has answered it.

Springfield Call 2 Action Resource Fair- Brian thought the event was extremely well attended and our table was well received by those who came by. We were able to network with several of the other organizations that were present and had some great conversations.

Good as Gold Nominations- Brian just wanted to remind everyone that the nominations with Good as Gold are due by 2/14. He is currently working on the organization's nomination.

AgeLinc Mardi Gras 3/01/2025- Brian reminded everyone that we will NOT be meeting again before this event takes place so everyone needs to get their money in if they are signed up for a seat. The table assignments and menu choices are due 2/22 so Brian needs them right away. CORAL's one page ad has already been turned in. There are a few seats available.

Rural Harmony Update- Brian reported that work has continued on the needs assessment study with the Pritzker Foundation. The marketing campaign has commenced and the response has been amazing. In the last meeting, it was reported that over 1,300 responses have already been received. However, they have historically received several fake person responses and believe this may be much lower. The team at SIU is considering conducting surveys in person at several Pridefests thru out Illinois and are collecting dates for events for May thru July. On another note, the executive orders issued by the president have impacted some of the other studies being conducted but SIU is currently attempting to replace those grants with foundation funds as they are not decided or funded at the federal level. Also, all meetings of the CAB are no longer recorded or names maintained for the safety of those attending.

PrideLinc Update- Brian reported that Carolyn Austin, executive director of AgeLinc/PrideLinc, presented the plan to expand the PrideLinc division to the board of directors this past month and it was approved for proceeding. Now, the grant application process will begin to see if funds can be made available for this decision. Brendan stated that he will start his Harm Reduction training with SARA Center.

New Business

Club LaCage/Drag Bingo 4/04/25 & 4/05/25- Brian reported that he was contacted by Duane Williams of Knight Family Productions of their intention to present their version of Club LaCage and Drag Bingo with proceeds to be divided between Capital City Men's Chorus, Clique, and CORAL. The event is being held at State House Inn this year. The Drag Bingo will be on Friday, 4/4 at 7:00 p.m. and the Club LaCage will be on Saturday 4/5 at 7:00 p.m. Bingo tickets cost \$20.00 per person and LaCage tickets are \$35.00 per person. It is believed that since we are

receiving funds from these events that CORAL should have some presence with them. Brian is interested in possibly attending the LaCage event but others might wish to go to the trivia instead. Tickets can be bought at Eventbrite, which is on the posting on CORAL's Facebook pages. It should be noted that these events are replacing those that were ordinarily held to benefit the Phoenix Center's Pridefest so there will be no Club LaCage held at the Hoogland this year.

The Hoogland presents "The Prom"- Lee reported the play will be held on June 26th & 27th, and July 5th & 6th. The play is about a gay girl that gets asked to the prom. Lee suggested that CORAL does the \$2,000.00 sponsorship which includes CORAL Presents will appear on the full-page play bill, post cards, posters. In the Illinois Times, the Hoogland's website and links. The sponsorship will also include 20 tickets to the play. Jenna made a motion to do the \$2,000.00 sponsorship, Mike seconded. Motion carried.

The Cats' Pyjamas Cat Café offer- Brian reported that Tom Raymond, of Cat's Pyjama's Cat Café reached out to CORAL with some ideas on how they could support the LGBTQ community and CORAL with events such as their Pal-entine's Day Brunch, a Pride Breakfast Buffet and a promotion during Pridefest that anyone wearing Pride gear could receive a free drink. Brian requested an approval to reach back to Tom with an okay to working with him on these ideas in the future, which was approved. Jenna motioned to sponsor the event and April seconded. Motion carried. Event will be on February 16, 2025 from 10am to 1pm.

Phoenix Center Pridefest- Brian stated that their Sponsorship Levels have been posted. Jim made the motion to be the Stage Sponsor at the \$3,000.00 level, Bert seconded. Discussion was had. Lisa counter-proposed that we should do the \$2,000.00 Harvey Milk Sponsor. Vote was taken on Jim's motion to sponsor at the \$3,000.00 level, 16 yea and 1 nay, motion carried.

Capitol City Men's Chorus- Will have an event on May 18, 2025. The theme was unknown at this time.

Dinner at the Bistro- Jim stated the dinner will be on April 5, 2025 or April 19, 2025 at Richland College. There is a 50-person max at the event. Tickets are \$40.00 each.

Harry made a motion to adjourn, Jenna seconded, Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 5:17 pm.