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**Support.  
Educate.  
Advocate.**

## **PFLAG Greater St. Louis News**

### **July 2022**

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## **PFLAG's Impact**

When Emma first shared their sexual orientation about 6 years ago, I never imagined how my life would change. We assured them that we loved them and always would and asked a lot of questions. We were glad they had trusted us and wanted to support them in every way we could. I was

surprised to realize how attached I was to the future life I had imagined for my child and family. I discovered it was very hard to let go of that. Like many parents, my initial reaction included worrying about my child's safety and future happiness.

I had a lot of questions and wanted information and someone to talk to - which led me to PFLAG. At my first meeting, I heard from other parents about their kids' positive experiences and relationships as well as challenges. It helped so much to be able to share how I was feeling with people who clearly understood. I'll never forget the response months later when I shared prom photos at a monthly meeting. Everyone was so happy and just really understood what a big deal that was – all the worry and fear and relief and joy that was behind sending Emma off to an event like that and having it be wonderful just like it should have been.

I am in a very different place now in my journey. I have become a better parent and I better understand what's really important in my life. I am continuously learning and being challenged. I am surrounded by kind, loving, wise friends who are actively trying to make the world better. Finally, I know that Emma will find love and support from most of the people in their life.

As of last year, I became the president of PFLAG Greater St. Louis. I still attend PFLAG meetings as often as I can because I still get so much from them. They're a chance to be reassured and reassure, learn and educate, celebrate and worry, and ultimately help others. Through the efforts of the new board and numerous volunteers, the last year has seen a revitalization of our PFLAG chapter culminating in this year's Pride events and especially the Pride St. Louis Grand Parade. Yes, it was my first! It felt amazing and powerful to demonstrate such VISIBLE support for the LGBTQ+ community, to celebrate with our loved ones, and to feel the impact of 50 years of PFLAG's work. The parade route was filled with folks whose lives have been helped by PFLAG and those who still need us, providing inspiration for the work we will do in the coming year. I am so grateful to those who were there for me when I needed the support PFLAG provides and for those who currently give their time and energy to support, educate, and advocate through PFLAG.

Thanks to Emma for setting me on this path!

Beth Gasparovic

## **We Showed Our Pride!**

**Pride month was a joy-filled month for PFLAG. Check out the fun and connections we made:**







And if you couldn't join us for anything during Pride Month, have no fear. We have our monthly support communities, and more community gatherings are in the works.

## Supporting Our Non-binary Loved Ones.



This month we celebrate International Non-binary People's Day, and to celebrate this day we wanted to share some tips on how to best support those Non-binary loved ones in your life.

The National Center for Transgender Equity suggest a number of ways to be supportive [here](#). Be sure to check out their suggestions! Here are a couple of them we find most helpful:

**“You don’t have to understand what it means for someone to be non-binary to respect them.** Some people haven’t heard a lot about non-binary genders or have trouble understanding them, and that’s okay. But identities that some people don’t understand still deserve respect.”

**“If you’re not sure what pronouns someone uses, ask.** Different non-binary people may use different pronouns. Many non-binary people use “they” while others use “he” or “she,” and still others use other pronouns. Asking whether someone should be referred to as “he,” “she,” “they,” or another pronoun may feel awkward at first, but is one of the simplest and most important ways to show respect for someone’s identity.”

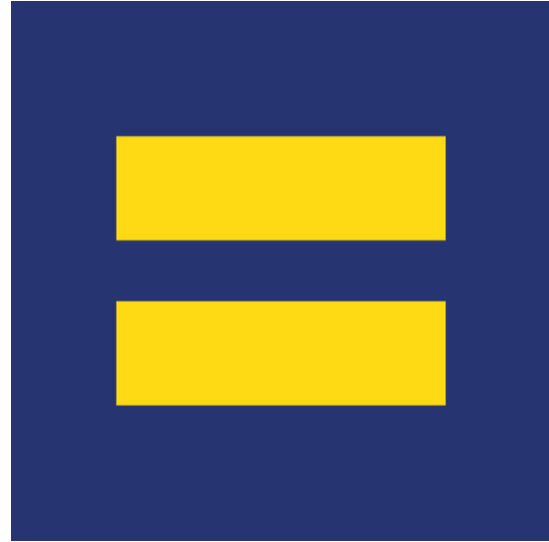
**“Talk to non-binary people to learn more about who they are.** There’s no one way to be non-binary. The best way to understand what it’s like to be non-binary is to talk with non-binary people and listen to their stories.”

# HRC Dinner!

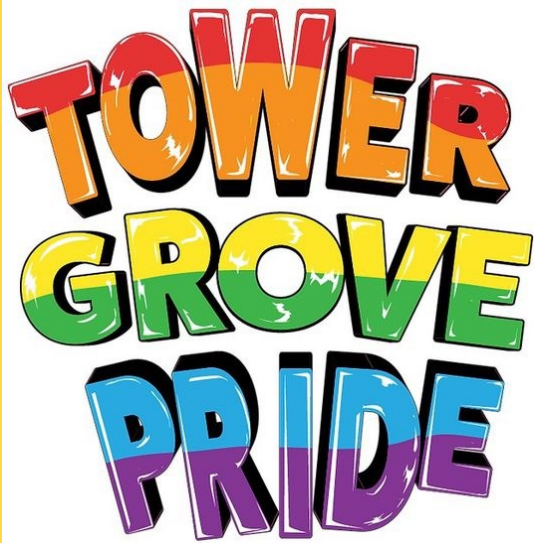
The Human Rights Campaign is a key partner in the **fight for equal rights** for our LGBTQ+ loved ones. We want to support their work in this fight, so PFLAG is hosting a table at their upcoming dinner (September 10 from 5:30-10:30pm). If you are planning on purchasing a ticket and would like to join the PFLAG table reach out to [pflagstl@gmail.com](mailto:pflagstl@gmail.com) so we can be sure to save your seat!

Tickets are \$200/person (and prices go up on July 15) and you can purchase them [here](#).

This is going to be a great night with great people supporting a needed and powerful cause. We hope to see you there!



## Tower Grove Pride!



Mark your calendars: Tower Grove Pride will be here before we know it! Join us at Tower Grove Park on September 24th and 25th as we help increase awareness of the support PFLAG provides and get connected with people who might need that support.

Be sure and check your email as we will send out information about how you can sign up to volunteer at this fabulous festival! Want to learn more about Tower Grove Pride? Check out their website: [Tower Grover Pride](#)

## We Have a Virtual Support Meeting!

Do you know someone outside of STL that could use some PFLAG support? Are you feeling sick or stressed about your schedule and can't make an in-person support meeting? We have a virtual meeting that works perfect for all of those needs!

Our virtual meeting meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7pm on zoom and is that hidden gem of PFLAG Greater St. Louis that folks are still finding. It has the same parent, family, and friend support of the in-person meetings just in a virtual setting.

**If you know someone that could benefit from this meeting, send them this information this week!** And if you need the zoom link send us an e-mail and we'll send it your way.

## Everybody Loves Swag



We made it through Pride month!! These awesome t-shirts really made PFLAG stand out at the festivals, events, and the parade. We got so many great compliments on them, too! If you haven't gotten your shirt yet, it's not too late. Make a big splash at the Tower Grove Pride celebration!

Order your shirts here: [PFLAG Greater St. Louis Chapter T-Shirt \(tie-dye\)](#)

Note: If you can't pick up your order at the store in Edwardsville and need to avoid the shipping cost, we might be able to help. Email us at [pflagstl@gmail.com](mailto:pflagstl@gmail.com) before you place your order.



## Here's What's Happening!

### Disability Pride Month

[All of July](#)

### Virtual Support Group - [Next meeting is 7/14](#)

E-mail or Message us for the zoom link

[Every 2nd Thursday at 7pm](#)

### International Non-Binary People's Day

[July 14](#)

### International Drag Day

[July 16](#)



**Mid-County Support Group - IN PERSON Next Meeting is 7/20**

Parkway UCC  
2841 N. Ballas Road  
St. Louis, MO 63131  
**Every 3rd Wednesday at 7pm**

***Espresso Yourself-* Hosted by Pride St. Charles**

Picasso's Coffee  
1650 Beale St #155,  
St Charles, MO 63303  
**July 21 at 6-8pm**

**St. Charles Support Group - IN PERSON Next meeting is 7/26**

Youth in Need Administration Bldg  
1815 Boones Lick Rd  
St. Charles, MO 63301  
(enter the building from the upper/front door)  
**Every 4th Tuesday at 7pm**

Follow us on [Facebook](#), join a meeting or virtual program, or [contact us](#) to volunteer. We look forward to seeing or hearing from you!

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