



## JUST FLICKS TO FEATURE TWO FILMS IN JANUARY

The long, cold month of January has a bright spot for fans of social justice films – the Just Flicks film series will be featuring two (!) films this month.

The January 12<sup>th</sup> selection is the 1987 movie “Good Morning, Vietnam” starring Robin Williams as Armed Forces Radio DJ Adrian Crounauer, broadcasting to the troops in Vietnam in 1965. The film will be shown at 6 p.m. at Central Christian Church.

Two weeks later, on January 26<sup>th</sup>, the film “A Lesson Before Dying” will be shown. The 1999 movie is based on the novel by Ernest J. Gaines about an innocent black man accused of murder in the Jim Crow South. This film will be shown at First Presbyterian Church

Both films begin at 6 p.m. Snacks are served. Just Flicks screenings always feature discussion leaders who lead lively discussions after the film.

## BLOOMINGTON EQUALITY ILLINOIS MARRIAGE FORUM JANUARY 14<sup>TH</sup>

The last of a series of several Equality Illinois Marriage Forums is being held in Bloomington on January 14<sup>th</sup>.

The forum will be held at 6 p.m. in the Osborne Room of the Bloomington Police Department, 305 S. East Street. The program will offer an opportunity to learn and ask questions about the new marriage equality law. McLean County Clerk Kathy Michael will be part of the program

Childcare will be available at the event. Refreshments, including wedding cake, will be served. Additionally, Kimberly from Knight Light Photography is offering her services FREE to take photos of couples, groups, and individuals.

Admission is free, but it is asked that you register for the program. You can register [here](#).



The **GLAD Board** reports that a planning session was held December 4<sup>th</sup> and they had good conversation. The next planning session will be Wednesday, Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at DMH cafeteria with an alternate date of Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> if there is severe weather on the 8<sup>th</sup>. The next Board meeting will be Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Ken's A-Frame**, 1303 E. Eldorado, will be hosting The Teresa Holliday Show on Sat. Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> at 10 p.m. Teresa and several local performers are on the bill. There is a \$3 cover and drink specials including a concoction called “Drop Your Panties Punch.” Oh My!

**Our GLAD Facebook Group Page** continues to grow. We added our 120<sup>th</sup> person to the page in December. To join, you just need to click on “request to join.” All members are free to post. We just ask that you keep the conversation civil and respect the rights of all members to be heard.

**Please join CORAL** the Coalition of Rainbow Alliances and Over The Rainbow Senior Outreach for a night of celebration of how far the LGBT community and their allies have come in the fight for civil rights. PUT-TIN' ON THE RITZ will be held on February 15, 2014 at the Crowne Plaza Ballroom. Cash Bar, Dinner and Dancing the night away from 5:30 till 11:00. Price for the tickets are \$50. Contact Jerry at [bufnjer@live.com](mailto:bufnjer@live.com) for tickets.

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# Martha [*Lesbian*] Living

By Martha Miller

## HE WAS PUT ON EARTH TO SOLVE THE PENSION CRISIS

As a member to the gay community, I appreciate the many of the changes that have come our way. Several years ago the city passed a law that gays could not be discriminated against in work, housing and the normal things that others take for granted. More recently, Illinois passed gay marriage. Several high ranking state civil servants openly supported it. But as a lesbian senior citizen, I can't get behind the thing that is next on the agenda, Governor Quinn's pension reform. In fact, with all the focus on pension reform, one would think it's the only problem that Illinois has.

I doubt if many people noticed, but Rod Blagojevich's appeal was heard by the U.S. Appeals Court in early December. What it came down to is what constitutes run-of-the-mill politics and what crosses into political corruption. And I can kind of see what Blagojevich means since, according to James Merriner, political editor for *The Chicago Sun-Times* until 1995, Illinois is a member of the "unholy trinity." Illinois along with Louisiana and New Jersey are the three states known for the highest levels of political corruption. For a young guy navigating the course toward governor, it might be easy to lose track of right and wrong. By the way, the Court of Appeals decided that the difference between run-of-mill politics and political corruption comes down to taking money for personal gain. Illinois has certainly had plenty of that.

While I always meant to live somewhere else, somewhere with sunshine and beaches, I have lived in Illinois all my life. As a child, I never saw a shoe box without thinking of the death of the then Secretary of State Paul Powell and his stash of \$800,419 in shoeboxes in his Springfield hotel room. This guy came up in the Illinois political system. His state salary never exceeded \$30,000, but his estate was settled at \$4.6 million. The press had a field day with those shoeboxes. As I recall, most of us thought it was funny. (Well it *is* kind of funny when you add the case of creamed corn that was there too). I suppose we forgot whose money was in those shoeboxes. But Powell was far from the first to rob the taxpayers of Illinois. By 1955, the Republican State Auditor Orville E Hodge stole \$2,500,000. In 1956, the House, with only two nays, voted Hodge's office an emergency appropriation of \$525,000. He stole every nickel of it. Illinois has had thieves and felons at every level of state government. So I grew up thinking that all political leaders were corrupt. It never occurred to me that I could find a place where those in power didn't rob those without power. Growing up and becoming a tax payer in Illinois, I've become desensitized to political corruption. Illinois has sent six governors to prison. Because the corruption was ingrained in Illinois politics long before George Ryan began his political career, I find it plausible that, to this day, Ryan and Blagojevich, believe they did nothing wrong.

I always liked George Ryan. He did some good things, including organ donor registration, a state fund for organ transplants, toughening up the laws on drunk drivers, and the moratorium on executions. After studying the death penalty and sending reforms to the general assembly that were ignored by representatives who needed to get reelected, he did the only thing he could do; he commuted the sentences of everyone left on death row. This, like everything about Ryan, had some very good and some very bad repercussions.

Now we have a governor, who is stuck with the consequences of the corruption that preceded him and who is trying to rewrite the state constitution. In order to balance budget shortfalls in the past, the State of Illinois Pension Fund has been robbed and underfunded for years. If a private corporation's manager of the pension fund robbed it, he would be put in prison. Not so with Illinois—I mean, where would we start? But Governor Quinn has gone back to the **retired** state civil service workers, the most financially vulnerable of the population. I suppose he thinks old people don't have the power to fight him. The current insurance and pension contributions were negotiated in place of pay raises in the past when state funds were tight. Quinn will have to change the state constitution to go forward with his plan, which could be a slippery slope because when future governors can't get something done, they could simply change the constitution again.

So in our lesbian household, we are waiting for the other shoebox to drop, uncertain of our future financial stability.

See [www.marthamiller.net](http://www.marthamiller.net) for "The Best of Lesbian Living."

More about Martha's writing and contact info on her web site [www.marthamiller.net](http://www.marthamiller.net)