

GLAD Chat



P.O. Box 3783
Decatur, IL 62524
www.gladdecatur.com

Volume 22 Issue 9

September 2015

September Meeting

GLAD's September meeting will be held at the Unity Church in Decatur, located at 317 W. Decatur Street.

The speaker will be Michael Ziri, a veteran in legislative affairs and a former Springfield elected official, is the Director of Public Policy at Equality Illinois.

Mike spearheads an aggressive legislative agenda in Springfield, builds and strengthens relationships with officials and political leaders throughout the state and in Washington, D.C., and develops policy initiatives. He also staffs the election-related activities of the Equality Illinois Political Action Committee.

Joining Equality Illinois in January 2015, Mike brought to the organization seven years of experience working for Illinois state government, capped by his current position as the Director of Legislative Affairs for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. His previous positions included legislative liaison for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, legislative analyst in Gov. Pat Quinn's office, and legal assistant for the EPA.

He also served two terms as Trustee of the Springfield Metropolitan Exposition and Auditorium Authority, making Mike the first openly gay elected official in Sangamon County.

A native of Springfield, Mike earned his bachelor's degree at Illinois College in Jacksonville and his master's degree at the University of Illinois Springfield.

"I am excited and honored to join the Equality Illinois team and work with its dedicated professionals to advance full LGBT equality in Illinois and nationally," Mike said when he came on board. "Illinois has made significant advancements in equality, but we still have more work to do. We must continue to educate and advocate for equal treatment in Illinois and Washington, D.C. I look forward to joining the fight."

School Donations

GLAD will be accepting school supply donations for the LGBT Youth Group started by Jenny Cowgill. In particular, she is asking for plain and lined paper, pencils, pens, markers, crayons, scissors, poster board, paint, etc. We will be accepting these donations at the September Social.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 12 6:30 PM
GLAD Social Unity
Center 317 W. De-
catur St. Decatur

Sept. 30 6:00 PM
GLAD Board Meeting
DMH Cafeteria

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Dues Required to Vote For Officers

At the June Social, members voted to require dues of \$12 per year **in order to vote for officers or to run for office in GLAD**. Dues must be paid **by or during the October meeting** for that year. Dues will be used to offset the increased costs of rent; payment of dues is **not** required to attend the potlucks or any other social activity.

Open Offices to be Filled at October Meeting

The October GLAD Social will be held at Randy Wells' farm outside Decatur (directions to follow in the next newsletter). It will be our annual Weiner Roast, and the Board will be providing hot dogs, buns, condiments, baked beans, and lemonade.

Dues-paying members will elect officers. The open offices are Female Co-chair, Treasurer, Historian, and two members at large. If you want to run for office, tell someone on the Board so that your name can be added to the ballot.

Champaign-Urbana Pridefest

On Saturday Sept. 19 from noon to 5:00, People and Families will enjoy a large festival and kids area with groups selling pride swag, others spreading awareness of issues LGBTQ people face, and businesses spread information like Champaign-Urbana Public Health and local government. A great kids area with children's entertainment, bounce houses and carnival style games. Education workshops are from 12 noon to 3pm and include subjects like Family Law, Biblical Self Defense, Sexual Assault and Awareness, Nutrition and Health and Substance Abuse.

Pridefest will take place 1713 S State Street in Champaign.

GLAD Meetup Page Closed

The GLAD Board has made the decision to discontinue the GLAD Meetup site. We will still continue to pass on information about GLAD Socials through our GLAD Chat newsletter and through the GLAD Facebook page.

Martha [*Lesbian*] Living

Everything Went Wrong, But It Was Great

On Tuesday, July 22nd at about 8:00 am, our cat was missing. Our younger cat was in his kennel, and both dogs were on leashes and ready to go. Poe is the oldest of all the animals and quite anti-social. He was hiding in the house somewhere. The last time I put him in his kennel, we'd gone to the vet for shots. This time, he wasn't taking any chances. We looked under beds, in corners, behind furniture—everywhere really and couldn't find him. In the meantime, the other three animals were getting anxious, so we decided to go get them checked, then come back and look some more.

We were on a tight schedule because I had to be in New Orleans to sit on a mystery writers' panel on Thursday at 2:00pm, and Ann wanted to stop in Vicksburg on the way down. We'd thought we'd spend the night at Vicksburg, and sight-see, then drive on so that we were close to the Big Easy to spend Wednesday night. Except by the time we gave up Poe hunting and put lots of dry food and water out for him, our tight schedule was even tighter.

As night fell, we realized that Vicksburg was impossible. After a good night's sleep we stayed on I-55 and headed south. We realized then because of the schedule change we would be in New Orleans a night early. I phoned the hotel to see if we could go there one night early, and they didn't have a room so they booked us into another expensive hotel that for night. Later all settled, we had room service dinner—pricey and not good. So the next morning we went down breakfast and discovered something was wrong with the elevators and you had to go all the way up to the 16th floor before you could get down to the lobby. This caused a bunch of congestion. We dealt with it and ate and got packed to leave for our hotel, which was just down the block. When we got there about noon. We self-parked: GCLS Conference had a special rate. So, while parking was a long way from the main desk, we got it for half price. The check-in desk had ropes like in the airport, or a bank, or a slaughter house. We waited in line, and then got checked in, then we were told, "We'll call you when your room is ready." I said, "Our room isn't ready?" She said, "Check in is at 3:00."

We found the Mystery Panel, but I didn't have my name tag. I was supposed to pick it up when I registered for the conference but I'd been in a hurry. Baxter Clare (a great mystery writer) was gracious enough to make one for me and we did the program.

Afterward at 3:15pm, we went back to front desk and our room wasn't ready. I told the girl that it was past check in time. I have learned that if I just stand there and insist, I usually get what I need because folks are happy as hell to get rid of me. I asked her to check again. She did and then turned and

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left the desk. I waited, trying to appear confident. We got one, a better room than we reserved at the lower price. It a great view of the river and part of the Quarter. I wanted to spend some free time in the Quarter, but the temperatures were in the high 90's all weekend. The closest we got was the view from our room.

Starting Friday night we were told we couldn't drink, brush our teeth, wash our hands or shower. It seems the power had gone out at a substation and the water wasn't purified. The hotel provided us with 2 twenty ounce bottles of water. It seems that a short time back two people had died from some brain-eating parasite. I missed coffee the most. Saturday night was the awards ceremony and a dance both of which were formal. Still no water. People had to risk their lives to get ready.

Eating out was an adventure, especially since we couldn't drink the water. The hotel restaurant hadn't worked for us on Thursday night, so on Friday night we went to a steak house inside Harrods across the street. The steak came with mixed vegetables. I asked which vegetables and when the waiter said squash, I asked if there was a substitution. He said they had greens. I said I'd have that. It looked like my front lawn was cooked and put on my plate. Back home vegetables are peas, green beans and corn.

On Sunday morning we were ready to head home. We drove around in the parking ramp and found the exit gate. There was this self-service machine that had blue flashing lights, so I treated it like an ATM and stuck my room key card in. But it wouldn't come out, so I stuck Ann's card in with the same results. So I told Ann to get out and hold that gate up. I sent her back twice—I was sure we could get under it. All of a sudden a guy in a red jacket came up to the car and said, "There's a help button. Don't try to lift the gate." I looked in the rearview mirror and saw cars lined up behind us. I pushed the button and a woman's voice came on "How can I help you?" I explained I'd lost two cards and the gate wouldn't open. She said, "You stuck a card in the main slot?" I said, "Two cards." She said, "Two cards?" as if she'd never encountered such an idiot. "That slot is for receipts. You're supposed to swipe the card." Then she took my room information and raised the gate.

We were tired on the way home, but once we were on I-55 it was a straight shot. When we approached Memphis, Ann was driving. I asked where the map was. She said, "On the floor, right where

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you left it." I leaned over as far as I could and there was no map. I told her I couldn't find it. She said, "It's there."

I said, "It is not there." We went back and forth like that several times. Finally I said, "Pull off at the next exit." She was pretty upset by the time she pulled off the road. She leaned over and pulled out the map. I said, "Where was it?" She tossed (okay, kind of threw) it at me and said, "Under the seat." She was tired, but so was I. I got hold of the map and wapped her on the arm twice with it. "You hit me." And I said, "Whatever evil you send out comes back to you three fold. I actually have another hit coming."

The rest of the trip home was kind of quiet.

At home as we set down the keys, Poe casually walked out from somewhere, looked at us and yawned.