



# PFLAG Colorado Springs

Parents, Families, Friends, and Allies United  
With LGBTQIA+ People to Move Equality Forward

September 2022

## Brooklyn Library Promotes “Books Unbanned” Program

School districts across the United States are increasingly censoring books that don't align with white-washed conservative visions of the world. Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, *The Illustrated Diary of Anne Frank*, Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*—these are some of the many books getting pulled from library shelves in American schools.

In response to this concerning trend, the Brooklyn

Public Library has made a bold move by initiating its “Books Unbanned” program. For a limited time, individuals ages 13-21 can apply for a free Brooklyn Public Library eCard providing access to BPL's full eBook collection of over 500,000 titles as well as its learning databases.

The “Books Unbanned” offer is open to teenagers across the nation. To apply, they can send an email to [booksunbanned@brooklynlibrary.org](mailto:booksunbanned@brooklynlibrary.org) or scan a QR Code that takes them to the site.

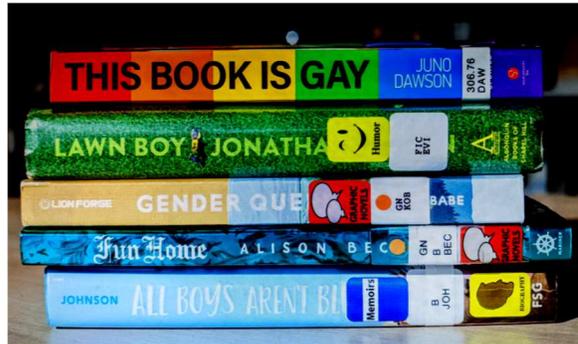
Nick Higgins, Chief Librarian for the Brooklyn Public Library, said:

“This is an intellectual “Freedom to Read” initiative by the Brooklyn Public Library. You know, we've been paying attention to a lot of the book challenges and bans that have been taking place, particularly over the last year in many places across the country.

“We don't necessarily experience a whole lot of that here in Brooklyn, but we know that there are library patrons and library staff who are facing these and we wanted to figure out a way to step in and help, particularly for young people who are seeing some books in their library collections that may represent them, but are being taken off the shelves.”

The Brooklyn Library's website for Books Unbanned is:

<https://bit.ly/3wAnkDL>.



Banned Books: *This Book is Gay* by Juno Dawson, *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison, *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe, *Fun Home* by Alison Bechdel and *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson. Photo Credit: New York Times, “The Spread of Book Banning”, July 31, 2022.

Supporters can learn about the program and make donations or purchase a t-shirt or book bag to help fund this initiative.

Also see an excellent article: “The Spread of Book Banning: The Increasing Politicization of the Book Banning Debate” by Claire Moses, *New York Times*, July 31, 2022. Link: <https://nyti.ms/3ThWcKh>.

### Intellectual Freedom Teen Council

Books Unbanned sponsors an Intellectual Freedom Teen Council which promotes online discussion in which teens drawn in from around the country can participate. The following is a recent post by teen participant K. Pointer:

“Books that discuss the LGBTQ+ experience are so important to our youth. As a young queer individual myself, seeing books with queer people helped me understand that I wasn't alone in what I was feeling and that I can persevere through hardships that I might face because of my sexuality or gender expression.

“The idea that books like *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe and *This Book is Gay* by Juno Dawson were banned because of queer content makes me so sad. Queer youth should have books that they can relate to and learn from.”

### September PFLAG Meeting

Tuesday, September 20  
7:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting on Zoom

Conversation and Support

To join the meeting, use this link:

<https://bit.ly/3pM5q3R>

The link changes each time we meet on Zoom. It can also be found at: [www.cspflag.org](http://www.cspflag.org)

Everyone is welcome.

Our PFLAG chapter is alternating between in-person and virtual monthly meetings on Zoom.



Out Loud Colorado Springs Men's Chorus has started rehearsing every Monday night in downtown Colorado Springs and is planning a concert in December. This well-loved chorus marched in the Pride Parade and sang at Pikes Peak Pride in July. If you are interested in joining the chorus, send an email with your contact information to [info@outloudcsmc.com](mailto:info@outloudcsmc.com) Follow them on Facebook.

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Alamo Park  
June 10-11  
2023

Still savoring the success of their first Pride celebration in July, Jessica Laney and her associates at Pikes Peak Pride have announced that the next one is set for June 10-11, 2023!

#### Facebook Resources

Queer Friends Colorado Springs is a vibrant group eager to share advice.

LGBTQIA2+ Family Connection is a private Facebook group for LGBTQIA+ people, their families and allies in the Pikes Peak region. This page is organized and managed by Inside Out Youth Services.

### Colorado Springs PFLAG

This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs chapter of PFLAG.

**Mission Statement:** By meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG realizes its vision through:

Support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ.

Education for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ.

Advocacy in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ.

To receive this newsletter regularly, sign up at [www.cspflag.org](http://www.cspflag.org).

E-mail address:  
[information@cspflag.org](mailto:information@cspflag.org)

Support Line: (719) 425-9567  
P.O. Box 49131  
Colorado Springs, CO 80949

PFLAG Colorado Springs website:  
[www.cspflag.org](http://www.cspflag.org)

Facebook:  
PFLAG - Colorado Springs  
<https://www.facebook.com/PFLAGCS/>

PFLAG National Office website:  
[www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

### September is Renewal Month

PFLAG's membership year runs from October 1 to September 30.

Join PFLAG or renew your membership online at our website: [www.cspflag.org](http://www.cspflag.org) or by mailing in the membership form on page 3 of this newsletter.

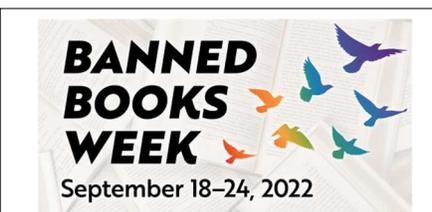
When someone becomes a member of our chapter, they also become a member and supporter of National PFLAG. A small portion of the dues is sent to the national organization.

PFLAG's national office provides a website, newsletters, conferences, great online learning opportunities with PFLAG Academy Online, and many publications. Most importantly, the national PFLAG office does significant, ongoing advocacy work in behalf of the LGBTQ+ community.

Chapter dues provide funds for us to distribute PFLAG literature year-round at multiple events in our community. We also partner with other organizations including Inside/Out Youth Services, The PLACE, Youth Documentary Academy, Out Loud Colorado Springs Mens Chorus and Pikes Peak Pride to raise awareness of PFLAG and reach more families.

Please consider donating some time as a PFLAG volunteer. You'll meet some interesting people and learn more about the LGBTQ+ community in our area.

Chapter members are invited to a special summer picnic in August. Please renew your membership and plan to picnic with PFLAG!



<https://bannedbooksweek.org/>

### TransParenting Support Group

TransParenting, a program of Inside Out Youth Services, is a monthly support group for parents/caregivers of transgender and gender nonbinary children, 3rd Thursday of every month, 6:00—7:30 p.m. MST by Zoom.

For more information and to get the Zoom meeting link, email [transparenting@insideoutys.org](mailto:transparenting@insideoutys.org) or call Inside Out at (719) 328-1056.

### "Books Unbanned"

The American Library Association (ALA)

The American Library Association reported 729 challenges to library, school and university materials and services in 2021, resulting in more than 1,597 individual book challenges or removals. This represents the highest number of attempted book bans since the American Library Association began compiling these lists twenty years ago. Most targeted books were for a teen audience and were by or about Black or LGBTQIA+ persons.

The Freedom to Read Statement of The American Library Association can be found at: <https://bit.ly/3Rb0JfN>



Teacher Punished for Promoting "Books Unbanned"

A high school teacher in Norman, Oklahoma, made headlines on August 23 when she covered shelves of books in her classroom with brown paper and posted the QR code for the "Books Unbanned" program of the Brooklyn Public Library for her students to use.

Norman High School English teacher Summer Boismier, M.Ed., was immediately placed on administrative leave. She subsequently resigned from her position. She posted the following statement on Twitter:

"My students no longer have access to books by BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and/or gender non-conforming authors because state leadership has spent the last year loudly labeling these books and their stories/perspectives as pornography, as indoctrination.

"Make no mistake, when my students who are also members of these marginalized communities walk in next week, they'll get the message loud and clear. The state of Oklahoma wants them erased.

"Representation matters. Stories (and who gets to tell them) matter. As a teacher, but more importantly as a person, I refuse to be party to this censorship. Do with that what you will. But whatever you do, please vote."



**BULLETIN BOARD**

**Sep 20—Colorado Springs PFLAG Annual Meeting**  
 The annual meeting, including board election and reports, will take place at the September virtual chapter meeting.

From PFLAG's Facebook Page

**Idk who needs to hear this but accepting your trans children is suicide prevention.**

**"A LOT OF PARENTS WILL DO ANYTHING FOR THEIR KIDS... EXCEPT LET THEM BE THEMSELVES."**  
 -BANKSY



Thank You

To the Saponas Foundation, First Congregational United Church of Christ and the Ruskey/Bianchi Family for their significant, ongoing support of Colorado Springs PFLAG.

PFLAG Meetings

PFLAG meetings, both in-person and virtual, must always be treated as a safe space.

Who you meet and what you hear must remain strictly confidential.

**This is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month**

Suicide prevention is a significant issue in our community, particularly with respect to LGBTQIA+ young people. The following events and programs in September focus on mental health and suicide prevention:

Race Against Suicide. To mark Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, the Pikes Peak Suicide Prevention Partnership is promoting the "Race Against Suicide" that kicks off on Sunday, September 18 at the El Pomar Sports Park/Complex, 2212 Executive Circle in Colorado Springs. The Race is an important fundraiser for Pikes Peak Suicide Prevention.

Participants can choose a 5k run or a 3k walk, and can participate in person or virtually. Participants who are running the Race virtually can run any time between September 11-18. The sign up fee is \$35 and additional donations are most welcome. Sign up online at <https://bit.ly/3e1L6ck>

The Pikes Peak Suicide Prevention Partnership, located downtown at 704 North Tejon Street, provides a hotline, several ongoing therapy groups for teens and young adults, individual counseling, literature and links to other resources. For more information, go to its website: <https://www.pikespeaksuicideprevention.org/>

Opioid Crisis The Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado is hosting a free online session on Tuesday, September 20 - 11:00 a.m. -12:00 noon on "Frontline Perspectives on the American Opioid Crisis". This is an open discussion about challenges and solutions. The presenter is Don Stader, M.D. FACP, an emergency and addiction medicine physician, opioid expert, film producer and social entrepreneur who works at Swedish Medical Center in Denver. Register to get the link for this session at <https://bit.ly/3Rgl8eM> .

Grief Programs. The Voices of Grief Support and Education Center is presenting two programs with Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt in September, both at the UCCS ENT Center, 5225 North Nevada Avenue. They are: "Exploring the Need to Grieve and Mourn" on Wednesday, September 28 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. (free) and "Exploring Grief After Suicide" on September 29 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. The fee for this program, which includes lunch, is \$25. For more information, go to: <https://www.voicesofgriefcenter.org/>

**Support Colorado Springs PFLAG—Become a Member**

You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

New member  Renewing member

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

- Regular Membership \$ 30
- Supporting Member—Silver 40
- Supporting Member—Gold 60
- Supporting Member—Platinum 100

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Each year our chapter contributes \$15.00 for each paid membership to the PFLAG national office to support its mission.

Monthly newsletters are sent out by email.

Make checks payable to Colorado Springs PFLAG and mail to P.O. Box 49131, Colorado Springs, CO 80949. Membership fees and additional donations are tax deductible. Or pay by credit card online at website: [www.cspflag.org](http://www.cspflag.org) PFLAG is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.