



Our Mission and Vision

PFLAG is the nation's largest organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them.



Letter From The President

Book Bans and the Absurdity of it All!



The Samuels Library in Front Royal VA has been trying to obtain their full funding from the Warren County Board of Supervisors for several months now. The Board of Supervisors voted to withhold 75% of their funding because they had 53 people who felt that the library should eliminate the LGBTQ books from the library. Samuels has worked with this situation by moving the books with explicit content to a new adult section of the library. This section will house any books marketed to 16-18 year olds and is located on the adult side of the library. And they also created a tiered system where there are kid, teen, and young adult cards. If you hold one of these cards you will not be allowed to check out anything above your tier level. And yet, the Board of Supervisors are still withholding the funding, basically holding the library hostage after they have made appropriate changes to remedy the situation.

*In Shenandoah County, the School Board **is looking to change the acquisition policy** for how books will be selected for the school libraries. They seem to think that several committees made up of folks without degrees in library science*

should be allowed to veto and have a bigger say in the books that are purchased for the kids to read. By mucking up the system with more oversight of the librarian's abilities, the kids may never get to see any new books in their library. The SCSB will vote on this issue in September so if you feel strongly about this we urge you to contact your district school board member and voice your concerns. ALL children should be represented in the books in the library.

At what point is it okay to dictate to others what to read? And then to only read a summary or review of the book and take words out of context from the book to make those decisions. Most of the book challenges in Warren County actually stated that they had not even read the book and were going on hearsay and others opinions. This very concept is lacking in critical thinking that we all want our kids to be better at. Yet the adults are not able to do the critical thinking themselves to see that some of the books that they want to eliminate are books where someone may see themselves in. And they may see that they are not alone with the thoughts and feelings that they are experiencing and that the character in the book may give that individual hope and the ability to function knowing they can relate to what they are reading. To give them more of a purpose and not harm themselves.

Shenandoah County has a policy to challenge a book. That policy has worked for years. It follows the ALA policy and until the book is deemed to be inappropriate by a review committee, it is allowed to stay on the shelf until the committee says otherwise. Yet, this school board is choosing to have numerous people have a say in what books even get to be purchased saying that our system is broken. Their argument is that this will end up saving the schools money because they won't be buying books that will then be thrown away due to the committee saying they are inappropriate. Librarians are trained professionals who see the need to diversify in the library collection and to include all children regardless of who others see those children as. So, what is their definition of freedom....

Book bans are happening all over the country and it is really sad. Education is the key but we also need to VOTE! Learn the issues and who is trying to control every else's freedoms and VOTE them out in November.

***Susie Wilburn, she/her
President PFLAG Woodstock***

PFLAG Woodstock is Joining Forces!

PFLAG Woodstock is Joining forces with Warren County Because of the issues surrounding the Samuels Library in Warren County, concerned citizens in Front Royal have reached out to our PFLAG chapter to help them with getting support for their community. Susie and three of those citizens met with PFLAG National and have decided that a satellite chapter will be the best fit for now. Due to the extensive learning curve to start a chapter we are hoping to start a monthly support meeting in Front Royal to allow parents, grandparents and those in the LGBTQ community a safe space where they can meet to get information and resources to help their lives be better.

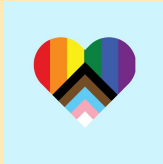
If you are in Warren County and would be interested in helping with this group please reach out to us at:

PFLAG Woodstock: pflagwoodstockva@gmail.com

Or you can contact:

Valerie Hayes at vhayescalvary@gmail.com or [540-635-2763](tel:540-635-2763)
Michelle McKinney at 518mlm@gmail.com
Sarah Downs at sarahdowns2040@gmail.com

We would welcome input and your help to get this going soon.



Are You Interested In Getting Involved?

To be as successful as we can be and be available for the people who need us the most, we need volunteers! We need folks who can help us with fundraisers, setting up tables at community events, and more! If you are interested, please send us a message at pflagwoodstockva@gmail.com.

Note from Augie, founder of Northern Shenandoah Valley LGBTQIA+



Come one, come all! Calling all members of the LGBTQIA+ Community.

We are an LGBTQIA+ Social Group with 4-8 gatherings a month! In addition to a weekly Zoom hangout, we meet for live music, games, walks, meals, and more! Join [Northern Shenandoah Valley LGBTQIA+](#) to learn more.



*Upcoming events include bowling, two Prides, and a Weird Barbie/Ken costume party.

Upcoming Events

- September 9th - Symposium at Casa Brumar Foundation
- October 19-22- PFLAG National Conference in DC

Resources

- [Straight For Equality](#)



- Human Rights Campaign
- The Trevor Project
- Pronoun Guide
- Booklets for information
- PDFs of Booklets
- PFLAG Swag
- He She Ze We
- Free Mom Hugs
- Moma Bears

Become a Member

- **PFLAG Woodstock**
- **PFLAG National**

Click here to become a member!

Help us go to this Conference!

Our chapter is sending three members to the PFLAG conference in October so that we can learn more ways to serve our community! Our lodging is being generously provided by a community member, but we still need to pay for the registration fees and meals. If you would like to help send us to the conference, you can do so by donating directly to us through our [Paypal!](#)

What's Been Happening?

#PFLAGProud



July 18th

July 18th was the Warren Count BOS meeting where the funding of the Samuels Library was on the docket.

Currently, the Warren County Board of Supervisors are withholding 75% of the library's budget until the library finishes the plan to address the situation it has been presented with in regards to pulling books from their shelves. Many of those titles center LGBTQ+ issues.

Chapter President Susie was present at the July 18th meeting and spoke in favor of Samuels Library and the harm that comes from limiting access to books.



July 22nd



On July 22nd, we held a community meeting with local community members and representatives from multiple local LGBTQ+ & LGBTQ+ friendly organizations to discuss an alliance where we can act as extensions of a central goal so that we can best support the community in which we live. Some groundwork was laid and a summit is being planned for this fall where all of the local organizations can come together formally to discuss our roles in the community as we move forward. Among the groups represented at our July 22nd meeting were:

- Aids Response Effort (ARE)
- Northern Shenandoah Valley LGBTQIA+
- The Pride group at Laurel Ridge CC
- United Church of Christ in Woodstock

August 13th

On August 13th, PFLAG had a table set up at the Unitarian Church in Stephens City for a sermon put on by Bill Fogarty that highlighted some of the challenges faced in local jurisdictions.

You can watch the service on YouTube here: [UU CSV Sunday Service 8-13-23](#)



Policy Matters

Virginia

The new Virginia Model Policies on Ensuring Privacy, Dignity, and Respect For All Students and Parents in Virginia's Public Schools officially took effect on July 18, 2023 which replaces the Model Policies previously enacted in 2021. The new model policies outline various new policies such as requiring

school staff to inform parents of their child's gender identity/sexuality and requiring parents to submit an official form if their child is to be called by any other names or pronouns than what is listed on their official school transcript. We know these policies will harm children who do not have affirming parents at home and who have previously regarded school as their "safe space".

The new policies can be found here: [Virginia Model Policies on Ensuring Privacy, Dignity, and Respect For All Students and Parents in Virginia's Public Schools](#)

National

NEW DATA: As Far-Right Extremist Politicians Escalate Attacks on Transgender Healthcare, Nearly 8-in-10 LGBTQ+ Americans Report Increased Fears for Personal Safety, Further Intensifying an Already Dangerous State of Emergency.

Significant findings from the 17th Annual Community Survey include:

- 43% of LGBTQ+ adults report that gender-affirming care bans impact the physical and/or mental health of themselves or their loved ones.
- 80.1% of transgender and non-binary adults report the same.
- 79.1% of LGBTQ+ adults report that gender-affirming care bans make them feel less safe as an LGBTQ+ person.
- For transgender and non-binary adults, this number increases to more than 9 in 10 (94%).

Continue reading more from HRC here: [HRC Press Release](#)

Featured Resource



Supporting Your LGBTQ+ Grandchild

This offers support for grandparents about what to do when a grandchild comes out. Full of useful knowledge, answers to common questions, and helpful tips, this is a must-read for any grandparent looking to learn more about how to support LGBTQ grandkids...or looking for support for themselves.

[Get It Here](#)

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU....WE APPRECIATE YOU!!!

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