



# Call for art

## Celebrating LGBTQ+ History Month

VECCA (Valley Educational Center for the Creative Arts) and PFLAG Woodstock have joined to celebrate LGBTQ+ history month with an art show for the month of October. The show is open to LGBTQ+ artists and allies. The entry fee has been waived so let's celebrate by visiting [VECCA.org](https://vecca.org) to complete your application to enter art with a LGBTQ+ theme, or art with no theme, just your favorite work. You can also use the QR code below to access the application and more information.



## VECCA/PFLAG Woodstock Joint Art Show

Calling all LGBTQ+ artists and ally artists. To commemorate October as LGBTQ+ History Month, PFLAG Woodstock will be teaming with VECCA (Valley Educational Center for the Creative Arts) in Woodstock to showcase local LGBTQ+ artists and Allies. The VECCA gallery at 123 S. Main Street in Woodstock will host the show. The art can be paintings, sculptures, pottery, textiles, photography, poetry, music etc.

So get your creative juices flowing and plan to create art that represents you and the LGBTQ+ community. You do not have to be an VECCA member to participate and all entry fees have been waived for this show. Use the QRcode above or visit [VECCA.org](https://vecca.org) for more information and to enter.



## A quick reminder about the Self Defense Class coming up soon!

**August 23rd from 1:00-3:00 PM**

We have the wonderful opportunity to present a free, 2-hour long self defense class for our local LGBTQ+ community! With the current climate being fostered by our federal administration, many in the queer community are feeling unsafe and have expressed a need for this type of training. If this applies to you, **please join us at the UU Church in Stephens City on Saturday, August 23rd from 1-3 pm** to gain skills that will hopefully help you feel more empowered. This is a free class!

**Register Here!**

## Revised Safe Zone Training in the Works

PFLAG Woodstock VA has developed a presentation called Safe Zone Training that we offer to businesses and organizations in our local area. This training helps folks understand the meaning and importance of having safe spaces for those in the LGBTQ+ community. During the course of the 2 hour presentation you will learn what a safe zone is, the difference between sex and gender, helpful communication skills, and how our invisible privileges affect our actions.

If your business or organization would like to spend 2 hours with us to learn all about Safe Zones and the importance of creating safe spaces, contact us at [pflagwoodstockva@gmail.com](mailto:pflagwoodstockva@gmail.com) and we would be happy to schedule a session for your organization or group of individuals.

You will receive a Safe Zone Sticker that you can proudly display to let folks in the community know that you have had the training and that you are a safe person to approach.

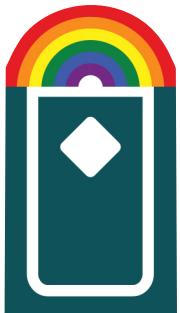




## PFLAG National Convention 2025: Learning with Love

In 2023, PFLAG Woodstock VA was fortunate to be able to attend the National Convention in Alexandria VA because we had a wonderful host family who has a home there, we could walk to the convention each day from their house! It saved our chapter a lot of money and allowed us to attend our first convention.

This year, we aren't as lucky to have a host family to house us because this year's convention is in Chicago, IL and so we are in need of help to pay for the expenses that go along with the experience. If you would like to help with those costs so that two of our members can attend the Learning with Love Convention this year, click on the link below and help us offset those costs; our chapter spends a large portion of our funds to purchase materials that we give away as resources to those in the community who want to learn how to support their loved ones. This is an important use of funds, but we feel that the information and connections that we will make at the convention are important, too, so please help us do both!



### **Shenandoah Valley Pride is coming up on September 21st in Harrisonburg, VA**

Our chapter will have a table at this event and hope you will stop in and say hi!

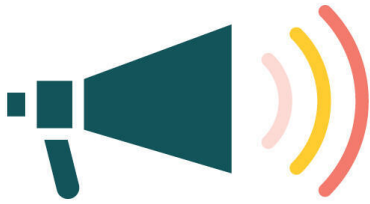
We also hope you will stop by the booth of the newest PFLAG Chapter in our area, [PFLAG Harrisonburg/Rockingham County](#).

We are super excited to have them in our area and hope that you will welcome them when you visit the event!

1-5 pm at the [Turner Pavilion - 228 S. Liberty St, Harrisonburg, VA.](#)

***See you there!***





## The Spectrum Podcast

Linda Thomas-Fowler continues to create wonderful episodes of

The Spectrum, which is a podcast that she has been doing on all the policies, Executive orders, issues and topics surrounding the LGBTQ+ community. One of the recent episodes is called [This is not Free Speech](#). In this episode, we take a hard look at disturbing statements made at a recent “pray the gay away” event hosted by an Indiana church, where speakers openly called for violence and death against LGBTQ+ people. We’ll explore how this kind of speech challenges our understanding of “free speech” and whether it crosses the line into hate speech.

And [Episode 25 is an interview with Susie Wilburn, she/her, president of PFLAG Woodstock VA](#). Linda and Susie discuss how the PFLAG Woodstock VA chapter came about and what our mission is. These podcasts have really helped spread awareness of the issues that are developing on both the national and the local level.

If you have a story that you would like to share with us and/or want to be interviewed by Linda, contact us and we will certainly set this up. Topics could be anything from your coming out story to understanding the transitioning process to where to find resources in these trying times. If you are a doctor that deals with gender affirming care, if you are an agency that could help with discrimination cases or a lawyer that would like to help with someone trying to adopt a child, please reach out and help us share this information to everyone.

## School is Starting

....and we know that our schools are not always safe and comfortable places for those in the LGBTQ+ community. Many members of the LGBTQ+ community in our county are feeling threatened and afraid. We want you to know that we offer support meetings the first Sunday of every month to discuss and help alleviate some of those fears. We also stay informed about policies that our local school board may be trying to implement that would hinder your child's success within the school system.

Please join us in a safe and caring environment from 2-4 pm on the first Sunday of the month as we discuss ways to navigate issues facing the LGBTQ+ community, and provide support for each other.

PFLAG National offers some resources in the link below that you may find helpful, however, our school board policies are not always reflective of the values that we would like to see reflected. But, this link will allow you to have some talking points if you need them when you address the admins at your child's school.

<https://pflag.org/press/safe-schools-for-all-launches-to-help-students-take-action-against-bullying/>








## PFLAG Woodstock to Provide Picnic for GAP Pool Party

We are so excited that our PFLAG chapter will be providing the food for a picnic for a local organization called GAP.

GAP is a group of grandparents and other relatives who are raising children and have banded together to learn from, connect with and support one another. (This family arrangement is known as “kinship” care.) Some members have one child. Others have two, three or even five children they’re raising. Each family has their own story of how they came to be parenting once again; it might be due to issues related to drug abuse, neglect, abandonment or death, leaving behind children who need a home. They understand the unique challenges — financial, emotional, logistical– as well as the tremendous joys this family setup



Join Us for Our Monthly Meetings  
**Grandparents as Parents (GAP)**  
 of Shenandoah County

**Mission Statement**  
 Grandparents as Parents' (GAP) mission is to provide support, information, and guidance to meet the needs of grandparents and other relatives raising children.

**When and Where?**  
 Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at  
 Emmanuel Episcopal Church 122 E. Court Street Woodstock, VA 22664

**What happens at our Monthly Meetings?**  
 Meet and connect with other Grandparents  
 Get support for you and your family  
 Share a meal together and learn about local resources  
 Free, supervised, active playtime for the children

**Attend Our Monthly Meetings to:**

- CONNECT
- LEARN
- GET SUPPORT

Contact us to let us know you are coming and how many children will be attending.



## PFLAG joined in the fun at Front Royal PRIDE!

Front Royal Pride's Second Annual Pride event was a big success. We were excited to be a part of that event this year and were thrilled with the number of folks that came out in the extreme heat to support this event. Kuddos to the folks that put on this event and we hope to help you grow this event even bigger in the years to come. We helped to keep a few people cool by handing out freeze pops and even after folks found out we had them they would come back to cool down additional times, which we were happy to see.



## Upcoming Events

- August 23rd, [Self Defense Class](#) at Unitarian Universalist Church from 1-3 pm
- September 7th, September Support meeting, 2-4 pm
- September 21st, [Shenandoah Valley Pride](#) Harrisonburg, VA 1:00-5:00 pm
- October 2nd, Annual Membership meeting, 6:30-8:00 pm
- October 4th, Winchester Pride, Museum of the Shenandoah Valley, 10 am-5 pm



Want to be a part of PFLAG Woodstock VA as a volunteer or a member?

[You can sign up here!](#)

[And you can Donate Here!](#)

[PFLAG National Convention 2025 Learning with Love](#)

OR reach out to Susie Wilburn, she/her  
@ [pflagwoodstockva@gmail.com](mailto:pflagwoodstockva@gmail.com)



We hope you are enjoying the summer weather and are taking **PRIDE** in yourselves,

Susie Wilburn, she/her

President, PFLAG Woodstock VA

