



EQIL INSIDER SCOOP
MARCH 2013

AFFECTING YOU NOW:

[THISCLOSE TO VICTORY](#)
[STEP UP TO THE CHALLENGE](#)
[THE SENATE SHOWDOWN](#)
[WORKING WITH YOU; WORKING FOR YOU](#)
["YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE"](#)

UP NEXT:

[FIRST FRIDAY](#)
[WOMEN'S WEDNESDAY](#)
[PRISCILLA](#)
[BENEFIT EQIL AND YOU](#)
[SPEAK UP](#)
[CROSSWALK](#)
[GOING TO BAT FOR EQUALITY](#)
[WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS](#)

JUST HAPPENED:

[JUSTICE FOR ALL GALA](#)
[SAVE THE DATE](#)

THISCLOSE TO VICTORY = The freedom to marry for all loving couples in Illinois is within our grasp.

The battle is now being fought in the Illinois House after the exciting victory in the Illinois Senate on Valentine's Day. House sponsor Rep. Greg Harris successfully worked the bill through the House Executive Committee on Tuesday, setting the stage for the final showdown in the House.

Working with the House leadership under Speaker Michael Madigan, Rep. Harris is making sure all his "Yes" votes are in line before scheduling the roll call. But in a letter sent yesterday to the bill's supporters, Rep. Harris said, "**The vote will likely happen any day now.**"



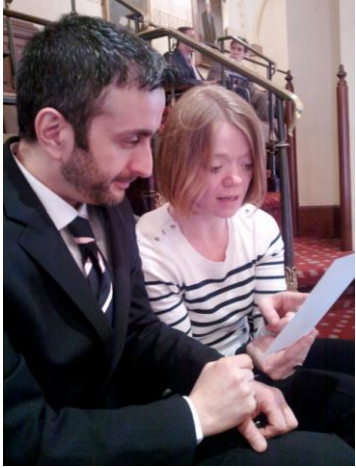
With Senate victory in hand on Valentine's Day, Senate sponsor Sen. Heather Steans passes the baton to House sponsor Rep. Greg Harris.

STEP UP TO THE CHALLENGE = Our work, your work is hardly done. Our challenge is to leave no stone unturned in getting the word to our legislators that not only do we and a majority of Illinoisans support the freedom to marry but so do hundreds of faith leaders, scores of business executives and every major newspaper editorial voice in the state, all saying that it is the right thing to do.

In his letter, Rep. Harris said, "**It's critical that we keep up the pressure until this bill passes.**"

In the time we have left, here is what you need to do:

1. [Email or call](#) your state representative. You just need to enter your zip code and address on our [form](#).
2. [Volunteer](#) at a phone bank contacting voters and urging them to reach out to their House members.
3. Write a short letter to the editor. For message tips and contact information to publications, please click [THIS LINK](#).
4. Urge family and friends in Illinois to also communicate with their representatives and write letters to the editor.



THE SENATE SHOWDOWN = The debate and victorious vote for the marriage bill in the Illinois Senate was an emotional and exhilarating experience. Equality Illinois advocates worked with Senate sponsor Sen. Heather Steans to make sure your voices were represented in the consideration of the measure.

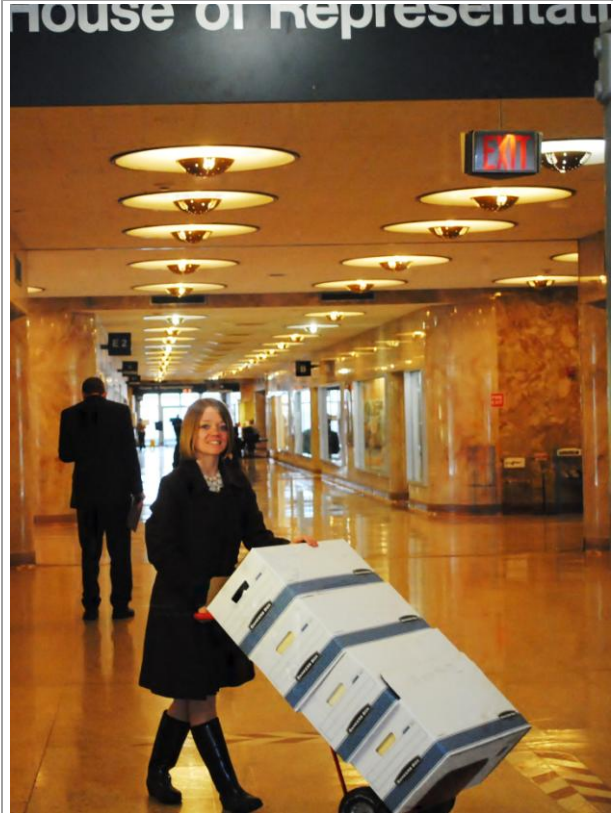
At left, Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov and Field Director Caroline Staerk sat in the Senate gallery reviewing notes as the Valentine's Day debate got underway.

Within minutes of the successful 34-21 Senate vote, attention turned to action in the House and making sure no stone is left unturned in the search for the 60-vote majority needed to send the bill to Gov. Pat Quinn, who has pledged to sign it.

WORKING WITH YOU; WORKING FOR YOU = The campaign for the marriage bill is intense. Working as one of the co-founders of the Illinois Unites for Marriage coalition along with Lambda Legal and ACLU of Illinois, we've generated tens of thousands of messages to legislators through postcards, phone calls, emails, petitions and personal visits. We sponsored advocacy days in Springfield focusing on families and faith leaders. Adding to the endorsements from 300 members of the clergy, 50 Illinois business executives and companies and African-American leaders, we released an open letter from Illinois Latino leaders. A media team made sure that our messages were reaching not only every newspaper, TV and radio news operation in Illinois but also social media channels.



Volunteers calling supporters at one of over 70 phone banks to urging voters to contact their representative.



Equality Illinois Field Director Caroline Staerk delivers thousands of "I Do" postcards to House members.

But none of this would be possible without the assistance of scores of volunteers in Chicagoland and around the state as well as phone banks in at least a half-dozen cities around the U.S.

As we said earlier, the task is not over. Check out www.illinoisunites.org and see where you can fit in at a phone bank or how to send a message to your representative.



"YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE" = This phrase inscribed on the Statue of Liberty embodies the desires of many gay and lesbian families who want to be covered by proposals to reform America's immigration law. Equality Illinois is talking to the Illinois congressional delegation to insist on an inclusive bill.

In particular, we are urging our senators and representatives to include language from the Uniting American Families Act ("UAF"). Under current immigration law, lesbian and gay Americans cannot sponsor their foreign national partners for residency in the United States. Language spelled out under UAF would end such discrimination and give families the security and stability they need to plan for their futures with the confidence their government will ensure their well-being. We urge Sen.

Dick Durbin and Sen. Mark Kirk and members of the House to include this provision.

In other Washington news, Congress finished work on the Violence Against Women Act that includes important protections for LGBT people. President Obama says he will sign the bill. And the Obama administration took positions in the two LGBT rights cases pending before the U.S. Supreme Court, saying the federal Defense of Marriage Act should be declared unconstitutional and seeking to overturn the Proposition 8 ban on marriage equality.

FIRST FRIDAY = Join Equality Illinois PAC from 6 to 8 pm TODAY for the always popular and fun monthly First Friday social! We'll celebrate the marriage bill and fill you in on the latest news; there's only one more vote to go.

A big crowd always joins us for First Friday, so please come by for the fun, cocktails, and prize drawings. For a \$10 donation to the Equality Illinois PAC, you receive two drink tickets and a ticket for a door prize drawing. Friday, Feb. 1, 6–8pm @ Sidetrack, 3349 North Halsted Street in Chicago (21+ with ID).

Contributions support Equality Illinois PAC. Paid for by Equality Illinois PAC. Contributions are not tax deductible. A copy of our report filed with the State Board of Elections is (or will be) available on the Board's official website, elections.il.gov, or for purchase from the State Board of Elections, Springfield, Illinois. State law requires that we report the occupation and name of the employer of any individual who contributes over \$500.00.

WOMEN'S WEDNESDAY = Join Equality Illinois and our supporters for our fun monthly party, Women Wednesdays at Mary's Attic! On Wednesday, March 13 at 7 pm, we'll have a special trivia night and a St. Patrick's theme. Toss on your best green outfit and join us for a night to mingle and make new friends. Don't have a team - no worries, we can pair you with someone else who needs a teammate. We are limiting teams to no more than 5 people. For a \$10 admission, you will get two free drink tickets, entry into a door prize, 10% off menu items, and more fun times! All funds directly support our advocacy work for the LGBT community. Don't miss it! Bring a friend, and support LGBT equality with Equality Illinois.

Women's Wednesday, March 13, 7-9 pm at Mary's Attic in Andersonville (5400 N. Clark St., Chicago, above Hamburger Mary's).

PRISCILLA = Only a handful of tickets are left for the debut performance of the Tony Award-winning and international sensation, *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*! Equality Illinois and AIDS Legal Council of Chicago are inviting our supporters to see the premiere performance of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* on **Tuesday, March 19, 2013**. Make sure you get the best seat in the house by [purchasing your tickets online today](#). Your ticket also includes access to a special, post-show VIP reception. The location of the VIP reception will be sent to ticket holders at least 3 weeks prior to the performance.



BENEFIT EQIL AND YOU = During the month of March, our friends at Knecht Chiropractic (3444 N. Halsted, Chicago) are offering new patients a free consultation, exam, x-rays, and

testing, all for making a \$30 donation to Equality Illinois. Your one good deed not only gets you a great deal but also helps support the important work that EQIL does for LGBT equality. You can make your \$30 donation at their Lakeview office. To learn more about Knecht, you can do so at www.knechtchiropractic.com. If Equality Illinois raises the most money in the challenge, then we will be eligible for matching funds to further support our work.

SPEAK UP = Equality Illinois is always busy throughout Illinois sharing information about LGBT issues. This month:

- Marriage Discussion at the Northbrook Public Library's Ryan Auditorium – sponsored by Northbrook United Methodist Church. March 5 at 7-8:30pm (1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook)
- Bloomington-Normal PFLAG chapter meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Church, with Caroline Staerk, our field director. March 11 at 5:30-7:30pm (1613 E. Emerson, Bloomington)
- DuPage PFLAG meeting at St. Paul Lutheran Church, with Caroline Staerk. March 17 at 2-4pm (515 S. Wheaton Ave., Wheaton)

CROSSWALK = Equality Illinois invites you to join us on Friday, March 22 for the second annual CROSSwalk, a prayerful procession across the heart of the city to remember the nearly 800 children and youth murdered in Chicago since 2008, and to connect participants with opportunities to protect children and mitigate violence. CROSSwalk will begin at 6pm at St. James Commons at 65 E. Huron, Chicago, and end on the lawn outside Stroger Hospital.

GOING TO BAT FOR EQUALITY = Spring training is underway, so the baseball season is just around the corner. That means it's time for our **Home Run for Equality Mixer**, so save the date for Thursday, March 28. If you love baseball or just want to meet some new people in a new place, then here's your chance to join Equality Illinois and our friends at Sluggers Sports Bar for a casual social event to celebrate Opening Day 2013. You can enjoy cocktails, light bites, and win some amazing raffle prizes.

Your \$10 admission ticket includes two drink tickets, food, music, and friends and will be available for purchase at the door that evening. The event will be from 6 to 9 p.m. in the second floor room of Sluggers (3540 N. Clark St., Chicago). All are welcome whether you love the Cubs, White Sox, or none of the above. We look forward to seeing you there - play ball!!

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS = Calendar of Upcoming Events

MARCH 2013

- 1 MARCH – First Friday – 6 pm @ Sidetrack (3349 North Halsted Street, Chicago)
- 5 MARCH – Marriage Discussion – 7 pm @ Northbrook Public Library's Ryan Auditorium, sponsored by Northbrook United Methodist Church (1201 Cedar Lane, Northbrook)
- 11 MARCH – Bloomington-Normal PFLAG chapter meeting – 5:30 pm @ Unitarian Universalist Church (1613 E. Emerson, Bloomington)
- 13 MARCH – Women's Wednesday – 7 pm @ Mary's Attic (5400 N. Clark St., Chicago)
- 17 MARCH – DuPage PFLAG meeting – 2 pm @ St. Paul Lutheran Church (515 S. Wheaton Ave., Wheaton)
- 19 MARCH – Priscilla, Queen of the Desert – 7:30 pm @ Auditorium Theatre (50 E. Congress Parkway, Chicago)
- 22 MARCH – CROSSwalk march against violence – 6 pm @ St. James Commons (65 E. Huron, Chicago)
- 28 MARCH – Home Run for Equality Mixer – 6 pm @ Sluggers (3540 N. Clark, Chicago)

APRIL 2013

- 5 APRIL – First Friday – 6 pm @ Sidetrack (3349 North Halsted Street, Chicago)

10 APRIL – Women's Wednesday – 7 pm @ Mary's Attic (5400 N. Clark St., Chicago)

	<p>GALA = The 2013 Equality Illinois Justice for All Gala was a spectacular success, with more than 1,000 of our closest friends dancing till midnight after enjoying a banquet from the Hilton Chicago kitchens inspired by chef Art Smith, our gala co-host with his husband Jesus Salgueiro. The crowd heard Gov. Pat Quinn issue a call to action on the marriage bill.</p> <p>=====</p> <p>===</p>	
		<p>Photos by Kat Fitzgerald, MysticImagesPhotography.com</p>

Relive the gala's sounds and sights: [Gay Chicago TV](#); **Photo albums** [Gallery 1](#) [Gallery 2](#) [Gallery 3](#) [Gallery 4](#)

SAVE THE DATE = Justice for All Gala-2014 is already set for Saturday, February 8, 2014 at the Hilton Chicago.

Plan to attend the Midwest's biggest formal LGBT event of the year. It's always a fun-packed party.

If you would like an Equality Illinois speaker at your event at work, a local civic organization, on campus, a union meeting, your religious group, a home EQIL fundraiser, or wherever, please contact us at info@eqil.org or call [773-477-7173](tel:773-477-7173).

Stay informed of LGBT-equality matters by visiting us at www.eqil.org. Also, please follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

We can only succeed in our mission if you stand with us, so please [make a financial contribution](#) today.

<p>Simply donate \$30 to Equality Illinois and get a <i>free</i> initial visit at Knecht Chiropractic</p>	<p>ONE GOOD DEED <i>deserves</i> A GREAT DEAL</p>	<p> Knecht CHIROPRACTIC CLINIC DETAILS AT www.knechtchiropractic.com</p>
---	---	--

If you no longer wish to receive updates on LGBT-rights issues, click [here](#) to unsubscribe.