



EQIL INSIDER SCOOP SEPTEMBER 2013

In the September EQIL Insider Scoop:

AFFECTING YOU NOW	UP NEXT	JUST HAPPENED
Marriage Report: -Get Involved -Name on the Dotted Line -March on Springfield -Tax Break	First Friday T Party for Equality Prideful Illinois LGBT Pride Night with the Fire What the Future Holds Save the Date for the 2014 Gala	Raising the Bar Where the Voters Are Out at the Sox Speaking of Equality Connecting the Dots The 2013 Justice for All Gala

MARRIAGE REPORT = With Labor Day come and gone, we have now turned the corner into the fall political season, and that means the campaign for the freedom to marry is in full gear. Here's what's happened and how your role is essential:

GET INVOLVED = Probably the most important step right now is to for everyone to get involved in this campaign. Many of you have indicated an interest in volunteering. Well, this is the time that you're needed. There are thousands of Illinoisans who support the freedom to marry who have signed postcards that we will forward to their representatives, and we need your help to sort the cards and enter the names into our database. Our work is focusing on those districts we have identified as targets, which is so crucial to the success of the bill. **Sign up here:** [Tuesday, Sept. 3](#) [Wednesday, Sept. 4](#) [Thursday, Sept. 5](#)

There will be events throughout Illinois, including phone banking. For now, [here is a list](#) and online sign up forms for volunteer opportunities in Chicago this week and going forward. [Please pick at least one.](#)



Thousands of postcards supporting marriage equality are being sorted in the Equality Illinois office, ready to be delivered to members of the Illinois House of Representatives this fall.



Then the names on all the cards are being added to our data base so we can call on these supporters in the weeks ahead to take other actions on behalf of the freedom to marry. Your help is needed. Sign up for a shift [HERE](#).

NAME ON THE DOTTED LINE = Until marriage passes, we must leave no stone unturned, no matter how long it takes. In the weeks ahead leading to the return of the House on Oct. 22, you will be asked to engage in this campaign like never before. Here's one easy step:

[Sign the Equality Illinois petition telling the House you expect it to finish its work and pass the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act during its fall session.](#)



MARCH ON SPRINGFIELD = One other thing for your to-do list: Plan to attend the Oct. 22 March on Springfield for Marriage Equality. Plan now and line up friends and family to join you for a day trip to rally in the Capitol when the House returns for its fall session. Can you carpool? Maybe your company or faith institution can charter and fill a bus? Or look for buses from many organizations. **This is the day we have to make our voices heard by the thousands.** Many logistical questions are answered on the [March on Springfield website](#). We hope to see you there!

TAX BREAK = Two important developments last week implementing the demise of the Defense of Marriage Act affect Illinois couples:

1. The Internal Revenue Service ruled that if couples were married in jurisdictions with marriage equality, then the tax policy considers the couples as married for all purposes and federal tax provisions regardless of where they live, even in Illinois.
2. The Department of Health and Human Services announced that beneficiaries in private Medicare plans will

have access to equal coverage when it comes to care in nursing homes where their spouse lives. And this, too, will apply to all married same-sex couples, regardless of their own state's recognition of their marriage.



While good news, Illinois couples are still forced to go to another jurisdiction in order to marry and return home to enjoy the federal protections and benefits that are rightfully theirs. These rulings add more impetus to the fight for the freedom to marry, an argument we will carry to the Illinois House of Representatives.

Rulings such as these did not happen automatically, despite the Obama Administration's support for the broadest possible interpretation of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that same-sex married couples be treated equally under federal law. Equality Illinois, through numerous meetings in Washington and other communications with Administration officials and members of Congress, has been a vocal advocate that implementation of the court's decision apply to same-sex married couples living in states that don't recognize their marriages, such as Illinois.



FIRST FRIDAY = Join Equality Illinois PAC on Friday, September 6 for the always popular and fun monthly social, this month featuring representatives of the Chicago Fire Major League Soccer team in advance of the Sept. 28 LGBT Pride Night game.

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, September 6, 6–8pm @ Sidetrack, 3349 North Halsted Street in Chicago (21+ with ID). Find out more on [Facebook](#).

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.



T Party For Equality

Join Equality Illinois for a Sunday Funday that everyone will be talking about. On Sunday, September 15, Studio Paris (59 W. Hubbard St.) is hosting their monthly T Party starting at 3 p.m. to benefit Equality Illinois. For \$25 entry, you can enjoy great music from live DJs, two specialty drinks, and delicious appetizers.

[Get your tickets here online today.](#)



PRIDEFUL ILLINOIS = We are a diverse state, with pride events as far north as Rockford and as far south as Carbondale this month. Show your pride, unite around the support of the freedom to marry, bring your friends and meet some new ones, and learn how you can help the cause.

Champaign-Urbana Pride Festival – September 14 – Stop by the Equality Illinois booth and meet our Michael Nordman. [LEARN MORE.](#)

Decatur March for Marriage Equality – September 14 – Rally and march to legislators' offices. [LEARN MORE.](#)

Rockford Pride Walk – September 22 – Have your friends and family sponsor your participation. [LEARN MORE.](#)

Carbondale Pride Picnic – September 22 – Visit with Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov. [LEARN MORE.](#)



LGBT PRIDE NIGHT with the CHICAGO FIRE

Saturday, September 28, 2013 - 7:30 PM Game

[ACT NOW TO PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE](#)

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS = Calendar of Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER 2013

- 6 SEPTEMBER – First Friday Chicago Fire Night – 6 pm @ Sidetrack (3349 North Halsted St., Chicago)
- 7 SEPTEMBER – Operation Do Ask, Do Tell – A forum for LGBT servicemembers and veterans – 8 am @ Jesse Brown VA Medical Center (820 S. Damen Ave., Chicago)
- 14 SEPTEMBER – Champaign-Urbana Pride Festival – 2 pm @ Convention Center (601 N. Country Fair Dr., Champaign)
- 14 SEPTEMBER – Decatur March for Marriage Equality – 1 pm @ Decatur Civic Center (Decatur)
- 22 SEPTEMBER – Rockford Pride Walk – 1 pm @ YMCA (200 Y Blvd., Rockford)
- 22 SEPTEMBER – Carbondale Pride Picnic – 1 pm @ Church of the Good Shepherd (515 Orchard Dr, Carbondale)
- 28 SEPTEMBER – Chicago Fire Pride Night – 7:30 pm @ Toyota Park (7000 S. Harlem Ave., Bridgeview)

OCTOBER 2013

- 4 OCTOBER – First Friday – Marriage Action Preview – 6 pm @ Sidetrack (3349 North Halsted St., Chicago)
- 22 OCTOBER – March on Springfield
- 22 OCTOBER – Fall session of General Assembly

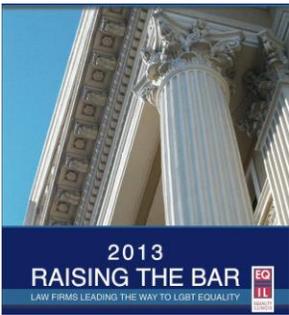
RAISING THE BAR = Equality Illinois last month recognized 38 Illinois law firms for "Raising the Bar" and leading the way in providing a safe and fair work environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) employees and engaging with the LGBT community.

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel honored the firms at the Equality Illinois Raising the Bar Recognition Breakfast in the JW Marriott Hotel in Chicago's Loop as he also urged action on passing the freedom to marry in Illinois.

“Let’s roll up our sleeves and get it done and put Illinois on the record as it relates to marriage equality,” Emanuel said. Addressing the honored law firms, the mayor said, “What’s good for you is also good for us as a city and as a state... . To be inclusive, to ask those people who are gay and lesbian to be full members — not part members, not half citizens, not half residents — this is in our interests.” [Read a Chicago Phoenix report on the breakfast.](#)



EQIL CEO Bernard Cherkasov (on left) listens as Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel addresses the Equality Illinois Raising the Bar Breakfast.



With the information gathered from the 2013 Equality Illinois Law Firm Survey, Equality Illinois identified the law firms in Illinois that are Raising the Bar and leading the way to LGBT workplace equality and community engagement.

One hundred percent of the firms have an equal employment or non-discrimination policy that expressly includes sexual orientation, and 92 percent have an equal employment policy or non-discrimination policy that includes gender identity and/or gender expression. Over 80 percent of the firms have a diversity council or group that includes LGBT issues, provide diversity training, and support LGBT issues through making financial donations, doing pro bono work, and participating in community events.

Read [the 2013 Raising the Bar](#) report to see the list of 38 honored Illinois law firms.



GOING TO WHERE THE VOTERS ARE = Our second year at the Illinois State Fair in August (pictured left) in conjunction with Lambda Legal, and, this year, three Springfield allies—Phoenix Center, Abraham Lincoln Unitarian Universalist Congregation and the Heartland Metropolitan Community Church—was again a great opportunity to connect with voters who may not attend a pride event. With Illinois Unites for Marriage partners also circulating around the fairgrounds and together at events such as Northalsted Market Days and the Bud Billieken Parade, we collected thousands more signatures on postcards in support of the freedom to marry.

These are some of the 100 White Sox fans who joined us at the Sox-Equality Illinois **Out at the Sox** game on Aug. 24. They enjoyed a pre-game mixer at Bicardi at the Park before watching the Sox beat Texas 4-3. We're already talking about next year's Out at the Sox.



SPEAKING OF EQUALITY = EQIL

Director of Public Policy Randy Hannig (on the right) spoke last month to a group of 50 employees of the law firm Franczek Radelet, part of the firm's regular series of diversity forums. Randy talked about the fall of DOMA, employee benefits for LGBTs, and the fight for marriage equality in Springfield before opening up the discussion for questions.



Get an Equality Illinois speaker for your business, labor, civic or faith event by contacting us at info@eqil.org or calling [773-477-7173](tel:773-477-7173).



Connecting the Dots =

In August, Equality Illinois partnered with Dot429 for a young professionals reception at Crimson Lounge at the Hotel Sax, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting our work.

[See more pictures here.](#)



Relive the sounds and sights of the 2013 Justice for All Gala: [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.