



June 2026



Spencer Pride General Meeting

our mission

At Spencer Pride, our mission is to improve the quality of life for rural LGBTQ+ people in South Central Indiana by:

- fostering allyship and understanding through education and advocacy,
- creating safe spaces that support both physical and mental well-being, and
- addressing social inequities that stem from the unique intersectionality of queer and rural identities

our vision

At Spencer Pride, our vision is to leverage our diversity and privilege in order to cultivate an inclusive community of compassion and celebration for rural LGBTQ+ people.

JOIN US THIS SUNDAY

Volunteer Meeting

4-6 PM

In-Person or Via Zoom

SPENCER PRIDE
ESTABLISHED 2007

Spencer Pride commUnity center
17 E. Franklin Street, Spencer

Support Lines

[The Trevor Project](#)
Text **Start** to 678678
1-866-488-7386

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)
Call or text 988

[SAGE LGBT Elder Hotline](#)
1-877-360-5428

[Substance Abuse & Addiction Hotline](#)
1-844-289-0879

[Trans Lifeline](#)
1-877-565-8860

Welcome Our New Executive Director

Monthly Programs



A group for lovers of books - including those "banned" for controversial content.
Meets at 5:30 pm on the 4th Thursday (also virtually). Contact Julie@SpencerPride.org for more info. Join our [Facebook Group!](#)

LGBT National Hotlines

National: 1-888-843-4564
Youth: 1-800-246-7743
Coming Out: 1-888-688-5428
Seniors: 1-888-234-7243

Middle Way House

1-812-336-0846

If you know of other support hotlines that should be included, please email info@SpencerPride.org. As always, if you are in immediate danger, 911 should be your first option.

Rainbow Cruisers to the Caribbean



We are excited to announce Spencer Pride's next cruise! We will be sailing to the Caribbean on the Celebrity Beyond from June 14-21, 2026. The cruise is open to anyone who wants to support our work and experience Pride Month with us on the ocean! It is a family-friendly experience that is sure to offer something for everyone.

To register or get more details, scan the QR code or visit <https://spencerpride.johnheathtravel.com/>. For each stateroom reserved, Spencer Pride will receive a donation. Our 2024 cruise to Alaska helped us raise \$4,000, and we hope to exceed that amount in 2026.



Did you know that the first penny press (a.k.a. a penny smashing machine) debuted at the Chicago's World Fair in 1893? Since that time these unique machines have popped up around the world and are highly sought by tourists and collectors alike. What does a penny smashing machine do? Well, it should come as no surprise that it smashes pennies. It does so while also imprinting a special design into the coin. Children of all ages love to crank the handle and feel the pressure build as the penny is compressed and imprinted.

Spencer Pride is proud to host Owen County's only penny smashing machine, which has arrived just in time for the eclipse! The Spencer



We know that many of you have been patiently waiting to hear the outcome of our recent executive director recruitment efforts, and we are excited to bring GOOD NEWS to you! The Executive Director Selection Committee, after a few months of reviewing applications, screening, and then interviewing candidates, made a recommendation to the board of directors last week to hire a candidate. The board approved the motion and authorized us to extend an offer.

We are happy to share that Jake Taylor (they/them) has accepted the position!

Jake is a native of rural Michigan, Missouri, and Indiana, and brings a background in community development, nonprofit work, education, and equity-centered practice. Jake holds an MA in Intercultural Encounters from the University of Helsinki and a BA in Journalism from Indiana University.

Before joining Spencer Pride, Jake served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Togo, partnering with local communities on education, health, and agricultural initiatives, managing grant-funded projects, working with local organizations, and helping launch a village library. They also served as a Team Leader with AmeriCorps NCCC, leading a team through disaster relief, public health, and community service projects across the United States.

Jake's experience includes advocacy and nonprofit work through roles with the Human Rights Campaign and the Center of Excellence for Women & Technology, where they supported equity programming, community engagement, and board relations.

We are excited about the diverse experiences that Jake brings to Spencer Pride, and in particular, their thoughtful and inclusive approach. They are passionate about creating welcoming spaces, strengthening communities, and building systems that help people feel seen, supported, and connected. We believe that Jake will be an excellent representative for Spencer Pride and a powerful advocate for our mission.

As for Jake's passions outside of work, they enjoy reading, language learning, and spending time outdoors.

Jake just wrapped up their MA program in Helsinki, Finland this month and is excited to return to Indiana and work alongside our volunteers and board members in support of our work. Due to Jake's relocation, some much earned time-off, and their sister's wedding, Jake will officially join Spencer Pride on **August 19**.

We will be sharing additional details about Jake's onboarding over the next couple of months. Please join us in welcoming Jake to the Spencer Pride family!

Save the Date: Our 20th Festival!



Meets on the 2nd Wednesday at 6:15 pm. Individuals bring their own mat, all abilities and level welcome. For more information, contact Julie.M@SpencerPride.org



A group for people who quilt, scrapbook, paint, decoupage, or anything of the like. Meets on the 2nd and 4th Friday from 5 pm to 7 pm. Individuals bring their own supplies to work on a project while others do the same. For more information, contact Cat@SpencerPride.org.



A group for people who love dancing and want to learn it and do it whenever they can. Meets at 6:15 pm on Thursdays. Contact Jacob@SpencerPride.org for more info. Join our [Facebook Group!](#)



A spousal grief support group for members of the LGBTQ+ community & allies. Meets at 5:30 pm on the 1st Wednesday. Contact Grief.Haven@SpencerPride.org for more info. Join our [Facebook Group!](#)



A group for LGBTQ+ teens and allies (10-19) to connect, support each other, and have fun. Meets at 5 pm on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday. Contact Joy@SpencerPride.org for more info. Follow us in Instagram!



A group for people who love birds and want to explore our natural world. Meets for outings on the 3rd Saturday, and special events. Contact Rainbow.Birders@SpencerPride.org for more info. Join our [Facebook Group!](#)



A social group for families with LGBTQ+ members. Meets quarterly. Contact Shea@SpencerPride.org for more info. Join our [Facebook Group!](#)



An inclusive Dungeons & Dragons RGP ang gaming group. RPG meets as scheduled. Open Game Night 3rd Saturday @ 4 pm. Contact Rainbow.Rollers@SpencerPride.org for more info. Join our [Facebook Group!](#)



A group for people who wish to live a more peaceful, joyful, and loving life. Meets at 4 pm on the third Sunday. Contact Karen@SpencerPride.org for more info.

All monthly programs are free to participate and require no advanced registration.

We also host routine health & wellness services and monthly educational programming, in addition to annual events like the Spencer Pride Festival. For more

Pride machine features 5 designs, each featuring a special place in Spencer. The penny smashing machine was sponsored in part by Babbs, the Historic Tivoli Theatre, McCormick's Creek State Park, and Sweet Owen Convention & Visitors Bureau. Each coin takes 4 quarters and one penny (just \$1.01 for an awesome souvenir!).

The Owen News

Come get the latest copy of [The Owen News](#) at the commUnity center! We are open Wednesday through Sunday 10 am until 7 pm. Support your local news organization!



Save the date! We are celebrating the 20th annual Spencer Pride Festival on Saturday, October 3. We hope you'll join us for our biggest and most spectacular festival ever!

Dine with Pride: Civilian Brewing

SPENCER PRIDE'S



DINE with PRIDE

20TH ANNIVERSARY PRIDE MONTH

Dine-in or carry-out, and a portion of your order will support Spencer Pride during Pride Month

WED, JUNE 10 | 11A - 8:30P

Celebrate 20 years of community, visibility and resilience in south central Indiana!

When Spencer Pride started two decades ago, supporting a LGBTQ+ community in a rural, conservative area felt like an uphill climb. Today, we are still here, stronger than ever, and proving that pride runs deep in every corner of Indiana with our Indiana Pride Network. But our work to keep rural community spaces open and impactful never stops - you can support it just by grabbing a bite to eat at @Civilian

DINE WITH PRIDE

We are teaming up with our amazing friends at Civilian Brewing Corps for a dine to donate event during June - Pride Month! Whether you're dining in or grabbing carry-out, a portion of your order goes directly toward supporting Spencer Pride's ongoing mission of improving the quality of life for the LGBTQ+ community in south central Indiana.

Wednesday, June 10th
11:00 AM - 8:30 PM
Civilian Brewing Corps
14 N Washington St
Spencer, IN 47460

Come out, enjoy some incredible food and brews, and help us celebrate our historic milestone. Let's show up big for rural LGBTQ+ communities!

#SpencerPride #DineWithPride #PrideMonth #20Years

Endowment Fund

SPENCER PRIDE
For the LGBTQ+ community & allies

CELEBRATING PRIDE MONTH
Honoring our history, securing our future.

For 20 years, we've stood together. Your support has built a beacon of hope and support for LGBTQ+ individuals in south central Indiana through our commUnity center and free programming.

**INVEST IN OUR FUTURE.
DONATE TO OUR ENDOWMENT FUND.**

at the Owen County Community Foundation

DONATE NOW

20 Years of Pride. Forever Sustainable.

This Pride Month, Spencer Pride is celebrating a massive milestone— 20 years of fostering inclusion, life-saving resources, and authentic community in rural Indiana.

While we honor two decades of grassroots impact, we are looking towards our future. We want to ensure our commUnity center and vital programming remain in south central Indiana.

You can help secure our legacy today by donating to the Spencer Pride Endowment Fund at the @Owen County Community Foundation. Because it's an endowment, your gift is invested to grow over time, building a permanent foundation of funding that will protect and uplift rural LGBTQ+ Hoosiers for decades to come.

Let's invest in a future where everyone belongs.

information, ask a Spencer Pride volunteer or contact us at info@SpencerPride.org.

https://owencountyfcfsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=1026

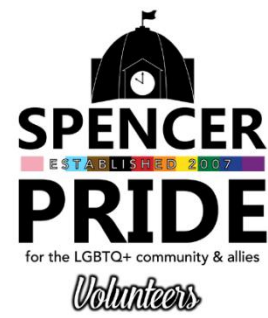
#SpencerPride20 #PrideMonth

2026 Pride Festivals



Our friends at Greenwood Pride are using their website to manage and host a festival page for all of the pride organizations in the [Indiana Pride Network](#).

Be sure to click the link and check out other festivals throughout Indiana in 2026.



Open Shifts

Text or call Jacob at 812-821-1442, or watch our Facebook Volunteer group for posts announcing opportunities!



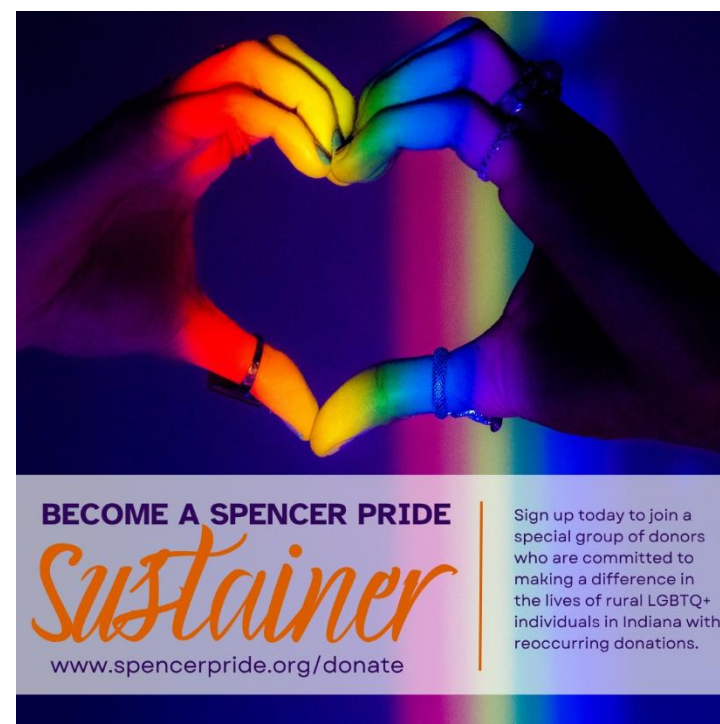
Fundraising News

Become A Sustainer

We are incredibly thankful for our sustainers! These amazing supporters give at a regular interval to cover 50% of the community center's monthly operation costs.

Our goal for 2026 is to grow our Sustainer program to cover 100% of our center's operating costs.

To become a Sustainer, reach out to our Fundraising Director, Elisabeth Solchik, or you can start the process on our website: <https://spencerpride.org/donate/>



Did you know you could help support Spencer Pride while you are shopping?



**support
spencer pride
through corporate
MATCHING**

EIN: 26-2197732
ASK YOUR HR/BENEFITS REP FOR MORE INFORMATION!

PHILANTHROPY 101: When an employee makes a donation, they'll request the matching gift from their employer, who then makes their own donation. Companies usually match donations at a 1:1 ratio.

Matching gift programs are just one of the many types of corporate philanthropy initiatives that companies have, but \$4 - \$7 BILLION in matching gift funds are unclaimed each year!

These philanthropy programs allow us to maximize the impact of our donations - ask your employer today to help make an impact in the Spencer community.



**COMMUNITY REWARDS UPDATE
FOR Q4 2025**

YOU CAN HELP!

1. Register your existing Kroger Plus card, or create a new digital card at: <https://www.kroger.com/signin>
2. Under your Kroger Profile > go to Community Rewards > Enroll:
3. Search **EU230** to find Spencer Pride.

To learn more about linking your Kroger Rewards Card to Spencer Pride:
<https://www.kroger.com/l/community/community-rewards>

37 households
\$55 donated

SPENCER PRIDE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

 <p>Jonathan Balash he/him <i>President</i> Programming Director Committee(s): E, P, S</p>	 <p>John Angeline he/him <i>Communications Director</i> Committee(s): D</p>
 <p>Kim Fidler she/her <i>Secretary</i> Advocacy Director Committee(s): E, P, S</p>	 <p>Jacob Balash he/him <i>commUnity center Director</i> Committee(s): P</p>
 <p>Elisabeth Solchik she/her <i>Vice President</i> Development Director Committee(s): E, D, S</p>	 <p>Shea Finnegan he/him <i>Director</i> Committee(s): P</p>
 <p>Wendy Wonderley she/her <i>Treasurer</i> Committee(s): E, F, P</p>	 <p>Joy Hellman she/her <i>Youth Empowerment Director</i> Committee(s): P</p>
	 <p>Rex Finkle he/him <i>Outreach Director</i> Committee(s): D</p>
	 <p>Martha Nally she/her <i>Relationship Development Director</i> Committee(s): D</p>

COMMITTEE LEGEND: D = Development, E = Executive, F = Finance, P = Programming S = ED Selection

For more information about our Board, please scan here: 

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

A commUnity center Sponsor provides much needed support to assist with our current programming as well as with our future building expansion and programming that supports the LGBTQ+ community.

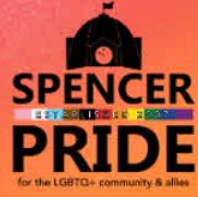
If you or someone you know would like to be a Sponsor, click [here](#) for more details!

A Spencer Pride Sustainer is a donor who gives at a regular interval – monthly, quarterly, or annually – for as little as \$5/month.

We are incredibly thankful for our 2026 sustainers. These amazing supporters give at a regular interval to cover over 75% of the commUnity center's current monthly operation costs.

To become a Sustainer, reach out to our Vice President and Development Director, Elisabeth Solchik at Elisabeth@spencerpride.org, or you can start the process through our website: <https://spencerpride.org/donate/>

Check the box "Show my support by making this a recurring donation"
And in the blank space that is a drop-down field for "My donation is for," select "Sustainer (Recurring)"



2026 Sustainers



Become a Sustainer

- | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Ben Ale-Ebrahim | Patti Cowin | Christy Kelley | Lynne Shifriss |
| John* Angeline | Christy Crandall | Kathy Kessler | Casey Shively |
| Jonathan* Balash | Eric Crown | Matt Kirk | Kathryn Shumate |
| Jacob* Balash | Dave Debikey | Donna Lowe | Kathy Sideli |
| Truman Balash | Kelli Debikey | Ann Mahrtdt | RJ Sliva |
| Kathy Balash | Tyler DeFord | Marissa Mallo | Jenny Smith |
| Fred Balash | Carl Deitchman | Bob Marshall | Elisabeth* Solchik |
| Marion Banzhaf | Chad Eppelheimer | Lucie Mathieu | Cat Spratt |
| Connie Barton | Kim* Fidler | Jody May | Anna Spears |
| Vic Bequeret | Shea Finnegan* | Felix McBeath | Marcia Steele |
| Glenda Breeden | Eric Flynn-McCormick | Cathy McFarland | Mitch Teplitsky |
| Bill Breeden | Jim Frohlinger | David McFarland | Brayton Thompson |
| Jennifer Brown | David Friedel | Berta Medicus-Moore | Marci Tillison |
| Wren Brown | Darrell Frye | Debbie Messer | Terese Urban |
| Pam Browning | Cathy C. Gebhard | Martha* Nally | Nicole Vasconi |
| George Brinson | Kate Gehringer | Donna Nicholas | Karla Vedder |
| Jessica Brinson | John Grisham | Amanda Nixon | Erica Whichello |
| Dean Bruce | Cari Hale | Mark Parmenter | Karen Williams |
| Marcia Bruce | Jackie Hall | Julie Parmenter | Don Wooldridge |
| Linda Bucklin | Nicholas Heck | Ed O'Brien | Wendy* Wonderley |
| Alex Butrum-Griffith | Mary Heldt | Phillip O'Neil | Cathy Wyatt |
| Linda Campbell | Joy* Hellman | Jameson O'Neil | Dan Wyatt |
| John Cash | David Henk | Janet Rummel | Karen Zuber |
| Nathaniel Clawson | Ann Henk | Eric Sader | Tom Zuber |
| Beth Clawson | Rex* Hinkle | Bethany Satrom | Katie Zuber |
| Allie Cogan McHaley | Cindy Houston | Dorcilla Schoolman | |
| Claire Cogan McHaley | Melanie Keller | John Settle-Corbin | |

*Board of Directors

PURPLE SPONSOR



OCTOBER 4 SPENCER, IN

Thanks again for your support!

Our Contact Information

{{Organization Name}}
 {{Organization Address}}
 {{Organization Phone}}
 {{Organization Website}}

{{Unsubscribe}}

