

North Idaho Pride Alliance
Jessica Mahuron, Outreach Director
Contact: 208-352-3518
nipridealliance@gmail.com
<https://www.nipridealliance.com/cda4pride-2021>



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NIPA INVITES POSITIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT PRIDE IN THE PARK

June 3, 2022,

COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO - The North Idaho Pride Alliance invites positive community engagement at their signature event Pride in the Park, happening Saturday, June 11th from 10 AM - 3 PM at the Coeur d'Alene City Park & Bandshell.

Pride in the Park is a FREE family-friendly, community event celebrating diversity and building a stronger and more unified community for ALL. There will be food, entertainment, activities, crafts, and 60+ booths at the Community Village & Artisan Market, representing community resources, Pride partners, several inclusive faith communities, local businesses, and handmade goods.

"Exist Louder" is the theme of their 6th Annual event. In 2019, when Pride in the Park was last held, over 1000 people from across the Inland Northwest attended to celebrate in downtown Coeur d'Alene.

Pride in the Park features and is organized by local volunteers, community groups, and allies who work together year-round to create a more inclusive North Idaho. At least 75 volunteers and numerous supporters from communities across the region will be present throughout the day.

At the Bandshell, a lineup of local musicians, singers, poets, dancers, and drag artists is scheduled from 10 AM - 3 PM. The stage and activities schedule can be found at www.nipridealliance.com/prideinthepark2022.

Three engaging activities to build community were incorporated into Pride in the Park this year as part of a Project Neighborly grant awarded by the Idaho Community Foundation:

A 20-minute "Pride Stride" is scheduled to start at 10:30 AM from the Picnic Shelter at City Park. This accessible fitness walk throughout City Park pathways and bordering sidewalks is meant to be an act of self-care and visibility. The first 75 participants will receive a small Progress Pride flag to wave while walking.

A "Color Kindness Chalk Art Challenge" will take place at the park Picnic Shelter from 10 AM - 3 PM. Event attendees of all ages are welcome to create chalk art at and near the shelter that promotes kindness, love, and inclusion. Chalk art will be photographed and shared to further spread kindness.

A "Say Pride!" Photo Booth will be stationed near the picnic shelter. The first 300 groups to visit will have an opportunity to have a Polaroid photo keepsake capturing the joy of celebrating Pride.

Additional activities facilitated by partners and volunteers include yard games by Heritage Health, board games, bubble wands, printmaking, button making, and various crafts.

Jessica Mahuron, Outreach Director for the North Idaho Pride Alliance stated “In 2021 and 2022, we have seen a massive uptick of hate, disinformation, and legislation targeting the very existence of queer people, their families, and all who love and support them.

Celebrating Pride in downtown Coeur d’Alene this June has a special significance. Many have flocked to support us to stand in solidarity with a sense of urgency. We welcome all, even those not currently connected with the LGBTQ+ community, to join us in positivity. We are just one group of people that have been targeted in North Idaho within the last two years. We offer our celebration as a way to stand in solidarity against bullying and intimidation by gathering in the very opposite of that - in kindness, neighborliness, and love. To stand with us for not just LGBTQ+ people, but for the well-being of the greater Coeur d’Alene community, which continues to grapple with an alarming rise of incivility and extremism.

For those opposed to a Pride celebration happening in Coeur d’Alene, Mahuron said,” We ask at a minimum you acknowledge and respect the 1st Amendment rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of speech that we all as Americans enjoy. Attacking the 1st Amendment rights of one group, no matter how fervently you disagree or even hate them, is an attack on liberty and the United States Constitution. Long-term, freedom-loving Idahoans know our true values are to live and let live.”

North Idaho Pride Alliance is implementing a comprehensive event safety plan and has taken many preventative actions, including making law enforcement aware of threats and forming an inter-agency safety committee, to ensure a peaceful celebration for all who choose to participate.

These actions were in response to well-publicized threats made and ongoing harassment, hate speech, and disinformation campaigns by a small minority targeting the event, and supporting local businesses and sponsors. This has prompted numerous communications to North Idaho Pride Alliance expressing concern and support from people and organizations from across the region.

The Human Rights Education Institute which borders Coeur d’Alene City Park will be open to the public during Pride in the Park. Event attendees are welcome to visit HREI and see the gallery exhibit "LGBTQIA+ Icons and Advocates", along with an educational display of ten frequently challenged books featured in North Idaho Pride Alliance’s upcoming CDA4Pride 2022 event “Banning Books, Erasing Lives” panel discussion and book giveaway.

Opportunities to purchase CDA4Pride merchandise, including tie-dyed shirts made by volunteers and Progress Flags, will be available at the North Idaho Pride Alliance booth.

Attendees are strongly advised to park nearby City Park. Paid parking lots are available near Memorial Park, the Human Rights Education Institute, and the current location of The Museum of North Idaho. Attendees can request that a North Idaho Pride Alliance volunteer escort them to their vehicles or elsewhere in the park or ask for help by going to the Information Booth located near the stage.

Members of the public who encounter any hateful communication or incident leading up to the event should take photos, screenshots, and take note of any other details and submit it to the Love Lives Here CDA reporting tool at lovelivesherecda.com. Criminal threats should be directed immediately to law enforcement.

NIPA continues to support and promote all external pride events in our area. For more information on other Pride month activities can be found on our events calendar at www.nipridealliance.com.

North Idaho Pride Alliance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. They are an organization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (LGBTQ) people, allies, and community groups working together to create a more inclusive North Idaho.

##