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## C-U Pride Festival offers education and entertainment



Tiffany Zhang | The Daily Illini

Residents walk through Main Street at the Champaign Pride Parade on Sept. 19, 2015.

Lillian Barkley, Features Editor

The UP Center kicked off its seventh-annual C-U Pride Festival Friday with the “Big Gay ’80’s Prom” at the Accord, which ran from 8 p.m.-2 a.m. and included a costume contest for the best ’80’s-inspired outfit.

The “Love > Hate”-themed festival runs all weekend, with educational and entertaining events scheduled throughout. Here’s a quick breakdown of what’s happening when.

### Saturday

Free educational workshops will be offered at Big Grove Tavern at 12:30 and 1 p.m. The workshops cover a variety of topics such as biblical self-defense — how to use verses from the Bible to debunk the “homosexuality is a sin” message — and how to make downstate Illinois more LGBTQ supportive.

There will be a kid and family-friendly area outside the Orpheum Museum from noon to 6 p.m., with vendors, live children’s music, a “character corner” and a “Touch a Truck” exhibit where kids can explore seven different vehicles.

The Pride Parade — the only parade of its kind in downstate Illinois — will begin at 3 p.m. and makes its route through downtown Champaign. The parade will be led by Grand Marshall Dick Durbin and will include 66 groups in its lineup. Cheers, beads and plenty of confetti is to be expected.

The Adult Pride Party is concentrated in the Accord starting at 6 p.m. The party will feature four drag shows with professionals and amateurs as well as DJs and musicians. Events will be running on both indoor and outdoor stages.

Other events including a comedy show and parties at other bars and venues have also been scheduled.

An Illinois football autographed by Lovie Smith will be raffled off on Saturday. Five tickets can be purchased for \$5 and will be available at the UP Center booth from noon to 6 p.m.


## Sunday

A Post-Pride Drag Brunch will be hosted at V. Picasso at 11 a.m. with performances starting at 11:30. Pride revelers can refresh themselves from the night before with breakfast and mimosas – each attendee gets a bottle of Champagne and juice. Reservations are required, and tickets are \$30. Only 100 tickets are available, so planning ahead is necessary.

The first annual Central Illinois LGBT Wedding Showcase will be held at the Fluid Event Center from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. LGBT-focused vendors and wedding planners will help partners prepare for a same-sex-friendly wedding.

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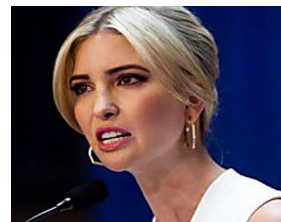


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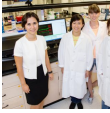
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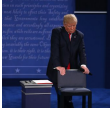


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