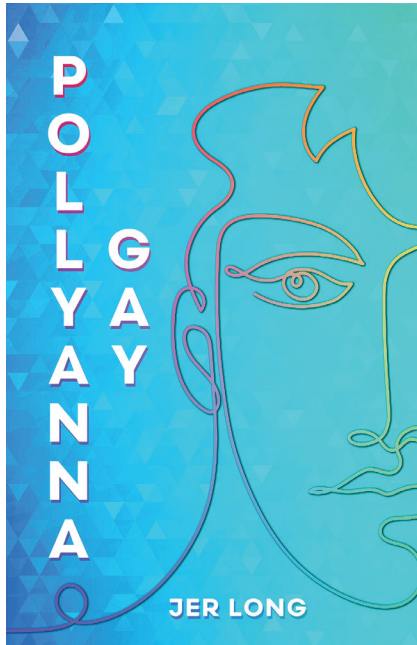




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# POLLYANNA GAY

*Jer Long*



August Applegate is sixteen years old, and he’s known he’s gay for eleven of them. But in 1963, life in a small Appalachian hamlet doesn’t offer many opportunities to learn what that truly means.

That is, not until August spends one magical—if tumultuous—summer at Buck’s County Theatre Camp. There, he steps behind the curtains that shield the gay world from view and enters a bewildering universe of heated flings, dramatic breakups, and unspoken rules that leave his head spinning. Or perhaps that’s just his bunkmates: Pete, beautiful, charismatic, and secretive; and Farley Fairfield, chaos incarnate, who seems to hate August no matter what he does.

Thus begins a journey of many years, as August leaves camp and returns home to his loving, dysfunctional family; completes high school; attends college; survives life (once again) as Farley’s roommate; and finally sets out to build a life on his own terms. Navigating the uproar of the 1970s and into the next decade, August witnesses the defiant joy of the gay rights movement and the creeping dread of the AIDS crisis. Yet even amid the waning of old friendships, the withering of old loves, and the unspoken traumas that hold his family in their codependent orbits, the one thing August can’t get rid of is his tender, trusting “Pollyanna” heart.

But August’s stubborn optimism is more than just a chic set of rose-colored glasses. In fact, it might be the only pillar to which his loved ones can cling amid the relentless tides of fate. . . .

## About the Author



**Jer Long** is a devoted worshiper of the written word. Comforted by his grandmother’s soothing baritone as she recited verse and fairytales to him, he became obsessed with “story time” as a boy. As a young man, the intriguing dialogue of famous playwrights and the inspiring lyrics of clever songwriters lured him onto the stage as a performer. Backstage captured his artistic imagination as well, and ultimately led him to rewarding experiences as a costume designer, a makeup artist, and a hair stylist.

Later in life, having suffered from loss of speech while battling Lyme Disease, he struggled to complete a coherent sentence until he bucked up the courage to enroll in a writing class. Forcing himself to read aloud the words he had written finally lifted the curse. Smitten with the art of language, he now writes daily.

Retired from a lengthy career as a visual director in upscale retail, Jer currently resides in Pennsylvania with his husband, Ed, and their dog, Lucy Honeychurch.

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