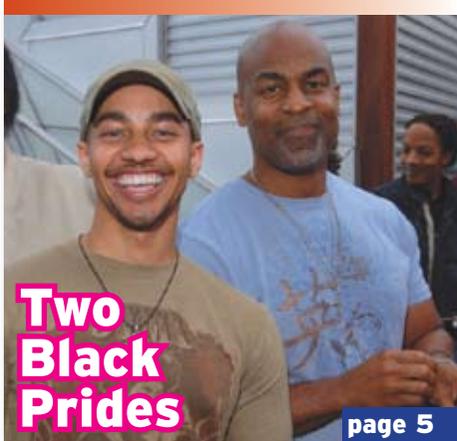


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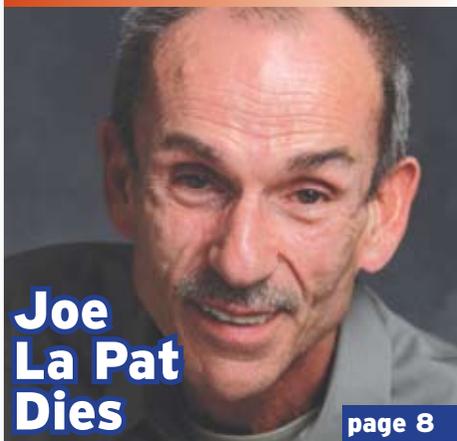
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Two Black Prides

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Joe La Pat Dies

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Proud to Run

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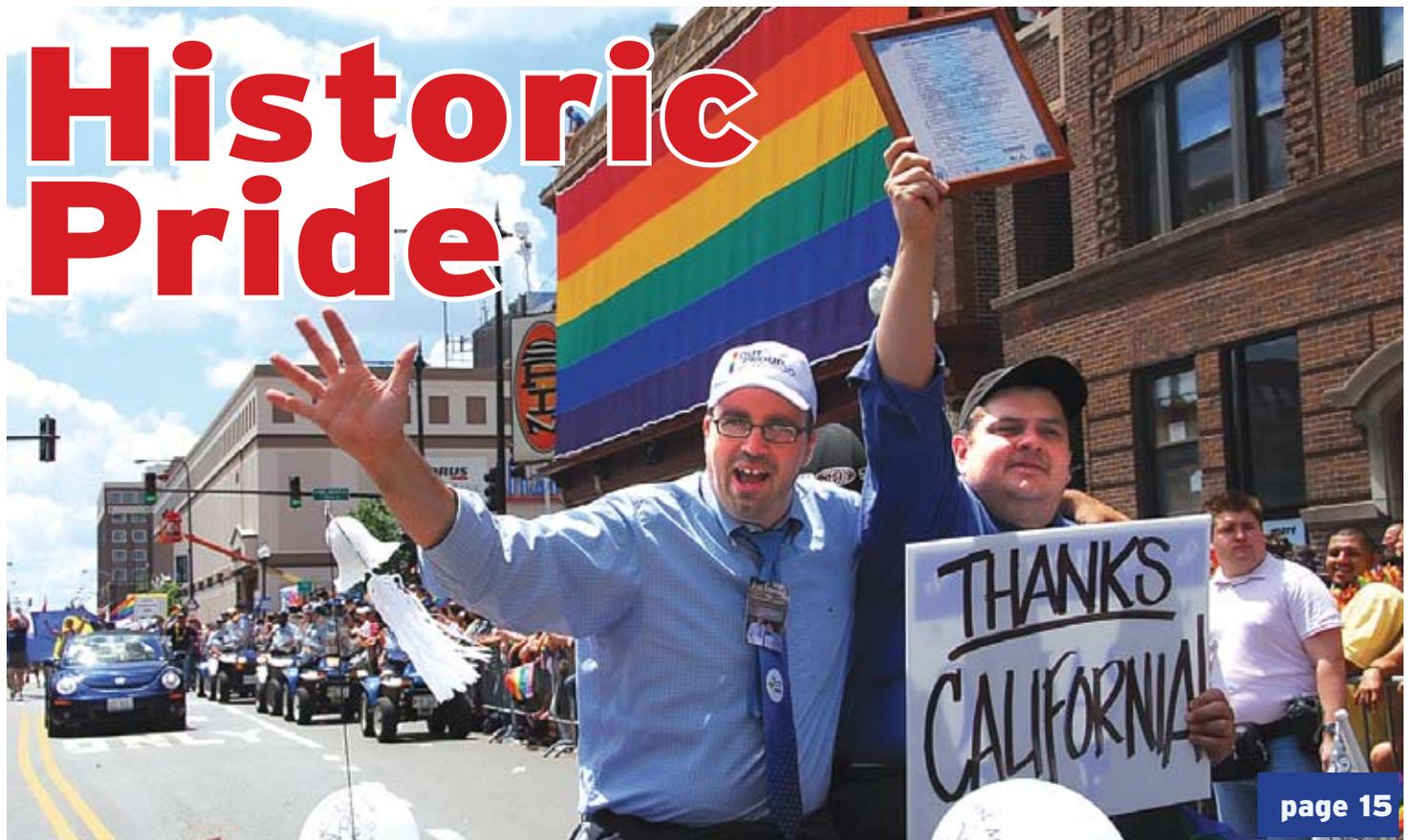
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Historic Pride

page 15

A rather unique Pride Parade made history as it welcomed John Pennycuff and Robert Castillo (above), who married in San Francisco last Friday. Saturday's Dyke March (lower right) also was historic, as it took place away from Andersonville and in Pilsen for the first time. Chicago PrideFest (lower left) completed Chicago's Pride weekend. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald; see more pictures of these events inside, at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com and at www.MysticImagesPhotography.com



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Saturday's Dyke March was a historic one as it took place in the Pilsen neighborhood for the first time. Read and see more on page 20.

Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

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WCT reviews Cirque du Soleil's latest show, Kooza (above). See page 12.

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This week's online-only features include:
 -Media Watch
 -Book review: Michael Luongo
 -Interview with singer Barbara Cook
 -Artist Matt Lew (right)
 -Bash Back!'s statement at the parade
 -Nat'l and world news



Photo by Bret Grafton

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The wavin' o' the flag for Pride 2008.

Photo by Kirk Williamson



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Shannon Minter. Photo by Bob Roehr

Historic trans hearing takes place in Congress

BY BOB ROEHR

The first every federal hearing on workplace protection from transgender persons took place June 26 before the education and labor subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Subcommittee Chairman Robert Andrews, D-N.J., said under federal law it is permissible to fire persons, or refuse to hire them, because they are transgender or are perceived to be gender non-conforming. "To me, this makes no sense whatsoever." Employment should depend only upon how well one does the job.

He added, "We don't measure our duty by the quantity of those who are aggrieved, we measure it by the depth of the grievance of those who are being discriminated against."

Rep. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., the only open lesbian serving in the House, testified that the fact that Wisconsin had enacted legal protection made it easier for her to be honest and public about her sexual orientation from the start of her political career.

"The importance of nondiscrimination laws cannot be overstated. Substantively, they provide real remedies and a chance to seek justice. Symbolically, they say to America, judge your fellow citizens by their integrity, character, and talents, not their sexual orientation, or gender identity, or their race or religion. These laws also say that irrational hate or fear have no place in our workplace.

Openly gay Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., acknowledged that people often are uncomfortable with what is new and unfamiliar to them. "New and different sometimes make us nervous," he admitted. "When I first realized I was gay, it made me uncomfortable. But we do get used to each other."

"Every bill that I have ever been involved with, where we try to ban discrimination, has met the same argument—we have nothing against those people, they are okay, but it will be disruptive." It has been trotted out for race, ethnicity, gen-

der, disability, and sexual orientation. "People always say it is going to be disruptive, and it never is."

Frank pointed to one of the scheduled witnesses whose job offer was withdrawn when she revealed that she would be transitioning from male to female. This was at "the Library of Congress, our intellectual and cultural center." She was told, "Members of Congress won't respect you. I resent that." He said, if discrimination can happen there, it can happen anywhere across the country.

"We are talking about responding as a compassionate society, knowing that fighting discrimination has worked well for this country, to extend it to a group that may be new, that may be disturbing for a few people, but there is no more reason to deny them than to deny it to anybody else."

Trans stories

David Schroer rose to the rank of colonel over a twenty-five year career in the U.S. Army, becoming a special forces officer, leading a top-secret anti-terrorist unit, and regularly briefing the White House, including Vice President Dick Cheney.

He retired from the military in 2004, applied for and was hired as a counterterrorism expert with the Library of Congress. At the last meeting with a Library official prior to starting the new job, he mentioned that he was in the process of transitioning and would be reporting to work as Diane. The job offer was withdrawn the next day.

"I had gone from a welcome addition to the staff to someone who was 'not a good fit' because I was a woman. Hero to zero in twenty-four hours," Schroer told the committee. She has pursued administrative and legal action to regain the job.

Diego Miguel Sanchez recounted his transition from female to male, which began at the age of five when he told his parents, "I felt like a boy inside. My mother showed me a magazine with Christine Jorgensen on the cover," the first widely publicized story of a male to female transition. "From that time on my parents gently, privately, dually socialized me, but it was our secret of sorts."

He was able to cope through the skills that his parents helped instill. He experienced the glass ceiling of working as a female in corporate America, saving up the money to make the desired transition.

Sanchez said his current identity is not questioned "because I have had the luxury of personally paying to transition to male and aligning my IDs and myself. But I have friends whose licenses and passports' gender doesn't match their identity, so they are disclosed as transgender the minute they show an ID, including when they try to get a job."

Sabrina Marcus Taraboletti was working "a dream come true" for twenty years as an engineer with the space shuttle program at the Kennedy Space Center. "In 2003 I was summarily fired six weeks after announcing that I would be

changing my sex from male to female."

She was the fourth person to be fired from the Center while making such a transition. "They had no policies because no laws at the state or federal level required them to. My future, therefore, was left up to the interpretation of people who have no education in transgender issues or needs. Worse yet, no one really cared or wanted to learn, even though I made a diligent effort to educate them." It was simply easier for them to fire her.

Since then she has gone through savings and even been fired from a low-paying job on a road crew fixing sidewalks because of her gender identity. She lost his wife and home to divorce but is still close to her college age kids. "When I face discrimination, they face it too. Why shouldn't there be a federal law?"

"Believe me, no one wakes up one morning and thinks, 'Hey, I think I'm going to change my sex today.' No one says, 'You know, living with all that discrimination and hatred won't be that bad after all.' Being transgender is something you are born with and simply have to deal with the best way you can."

Shannon Minter, legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, said, "We need more than a patchwork of state and local laws and employer policies. The brutal reality is, in most places in this country, a transgender worker who is fired or harassed for being transgender has no means of protection."

Opposition

Glen Lavy, an attorney with the conservative Alliance Defense Fund, asserted that protecting transgender persons in the workplace would impinge upon the deeply held religious beliefs of some people. He said, "Federal law should not make a more judgment for all employers."

Chairman Andrews raised the hypothetical case of whether the deeply held beliefs of a pacifist employer should give him the right to deny hiring a Marine combat veteran on those grounds. Lavy said, "The employer should have the right to do that."

Rep. Phil Hare, D-Ill., referred to Jesus, but not by name, saying, "He was close to people that nobody else wanted to associate them-

selves with. I think we should remember that." He called it "a moral obligation for Congress to act" with legislation to protect those least able to protect themselves.

Lavy also showed a preoccupation with restroom issues as grounds for not hiring transgender persons. Minter countered under questioning, "We have a lot of experience with this issue now [from places where protection is in place]...Any discomfort with coworkers will very quickly dissipate."

"Americans face energy crisis while House of Representatives holds a she-male hearing," screamed the headline of a statement distributed by the Traditional Values Coalition at the hearing. "These are deeply disturbed individuals who need therapy not coddling and affirmation" asserted Andrea Lafferty.

Other voices

"The hearing went wonderfully," Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality said after its conclusion. "It's historic. Those of us who have doing this for a while are really amazed."

"Shannon Minter has done so much for people who want to be in same sex marriages," brilliantly arguing the appeal before the California Supreme Court, Keisling said. "And now here he is, coming in afterwards, about rights for him. That is a particularly poignant thing for me. Seeing him here and finally getting to ask for something for him."

Minter was practically giddy after the event. "So much work went into making this day possible. So many people have worked for such a long time. Having a congressional hearing on this issue is a major milestone. It could possibly be the tipping point for us."

Keisling acknowledged that legislation is highly unlikely to move this year, but "I'm really hopeful that in the next Congress we are going to get all LGBT people protected. I think it has become pretty clear that a stand alone bill [ENDA excluding transpersons] is absolutely unacceptable to almost everybody in the LGBT community."



Reps. Barney Frank (left) and Tammy Baldwin testified at the June 26 hearing. Photo by Bob Roehr

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2007 Windy City Black Pride. Photo by Andrew Davis

Schism means two Black Prides

BY MARK CORECE

Due to conflict and disputes, 2007 was an unstable year for Windy City Black Pride. After a successful pride celebration with former president Charles Nelson, the then-9-year-old organization began to wilt when accusations of Nelson being "incompetent" and an "overzealous leader" bothered board members.

Although some form of celebration has been around since the early '90s, Windy City Black Pride was not official until 1998 (not being recognized nationally until 2000); it was spearheaded by Ken Pickens, who remained president until 2000, according to current treasurer Keith McCoy. Thayer Johnson followed Pickens from 2001-2003 and each year following 2003 a new president has surfaced; 2004 being a year with no president at all.

Some may have predicted this given the presidential turnover of Chicago's Black pride.

This year marks the 10th year anniversary an official Chicago Black Pride has been around—a year that is usually marked with celebration and kudos to the past years and forward thinking for the future.

This year, however, isn't the most gleeful for Black Pride. Former president Nelson was virtually ousted, only to form Chicago Windy City Black Pride, leaving two times the celebration for Black Pride attendees this year—with Windy City Black Pride and the newly formed Chicago Windy City Black Pride.

The internal conflict of this particular "split" is questionable. Like any clash there is a story and more than one. The problem is figuring out who has the more plausible story.

On one account, money misappropriation and promises not being kept caused a very ugly break within the organization causing an emotional shift in trust and even friendships were tarnished in the process.

"We were not a happy board due to Charles; the board could not get along with Charles," stated Windy City Black Pride Treasurer Keith McCoy.

According to McCoy, Nelson's term as president began with tension. At the beginning of Nelson's term, the organization did not have bylaws or any concrete formality defining rules. When McCoy was brought on as treasurer, distaste for that process had already caused an uproar, forcing some people to step down as board members.

Eventually, accusations of money being used inappropriately began to fly and people began to point fingers. With money becoming an increasing concern, questions of its whereabouts led to a change of accessibility, leading to a new rule that more than one member has to be present to draw cash from the organization's bank account.

Nelson, now president of Chicago Windy City Black Pride, shared his view on the separation: "Last year as president was very stressful. I thought was working with people who were trustworthy."

Nelson also confirmed possible theft but he was unable to talk about the specifics due to an ongoing investigation. He did, however, state that a member of the opposing organization could be the cause of the mysterious missing funds.

A question that has now come up is how does the Black gay community choose. With a brief exception, both Black Pride celebrations are on the same days and, for some events, at the same time.

Pride, being a word that connotes unity and some idea of oneness, seems to be at stake here. Yearly celebrations—such as this one—was created so that different members in the community could come together and embrace cultural similarities especially events like Black Pride; combing race and sexual orientation.

"I think this is causing turmoil and confusion in the community [the separate prides]," stated Nelson.

Two major factors of this separation is that this isn't very far fetched for a metropolis like Chicago and one of the two organizations is supported by the International Federation of Black Prides (IFBP). According to IFBP President/CEO Earl Fowlkes, cities like Washington, D.C., and New York both have had multiple Black Prides in the past due to similar differences.

"There are probably people in every city who think they can do a Black Pride better than the current organizing committee. The sheer amount of work it takes to put a Black Pride together usually acts as a deterrent to the naysayers," said Fowlkes.

Fowlkes also added his support for Charles Nelson and Chicago Windy City Black Pride: "The other group in Chicago has accused Mr. Nelson of stealing money and checks, etc. The IFBP has investigated these charges and have found them to be baseless. There have been no arrest and other investigations of Mr. Nelson by the authorities in Chicago. Therefore, the IFBP has no reason not to continue to support Charles Nelson."

He added that "[t]he IFBP is not me or Charles; it is the collective strength and energy that is only as strength as the weakest Black Pride. In addition, the IFBP has standards which the members must abide by to remain a member."

Being an active and the longest-serving Windy City Black Pride member, McCoy spoke about maybe working together in the future. "A resolution will come in time. We could have coordinated activities together. That would have been acceptable. I don't know if that is possible just yet."

See www.windycityblackpride.org and www.chiblackpride.com for complete lists of events.



2007 Windy City Black Pride. Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

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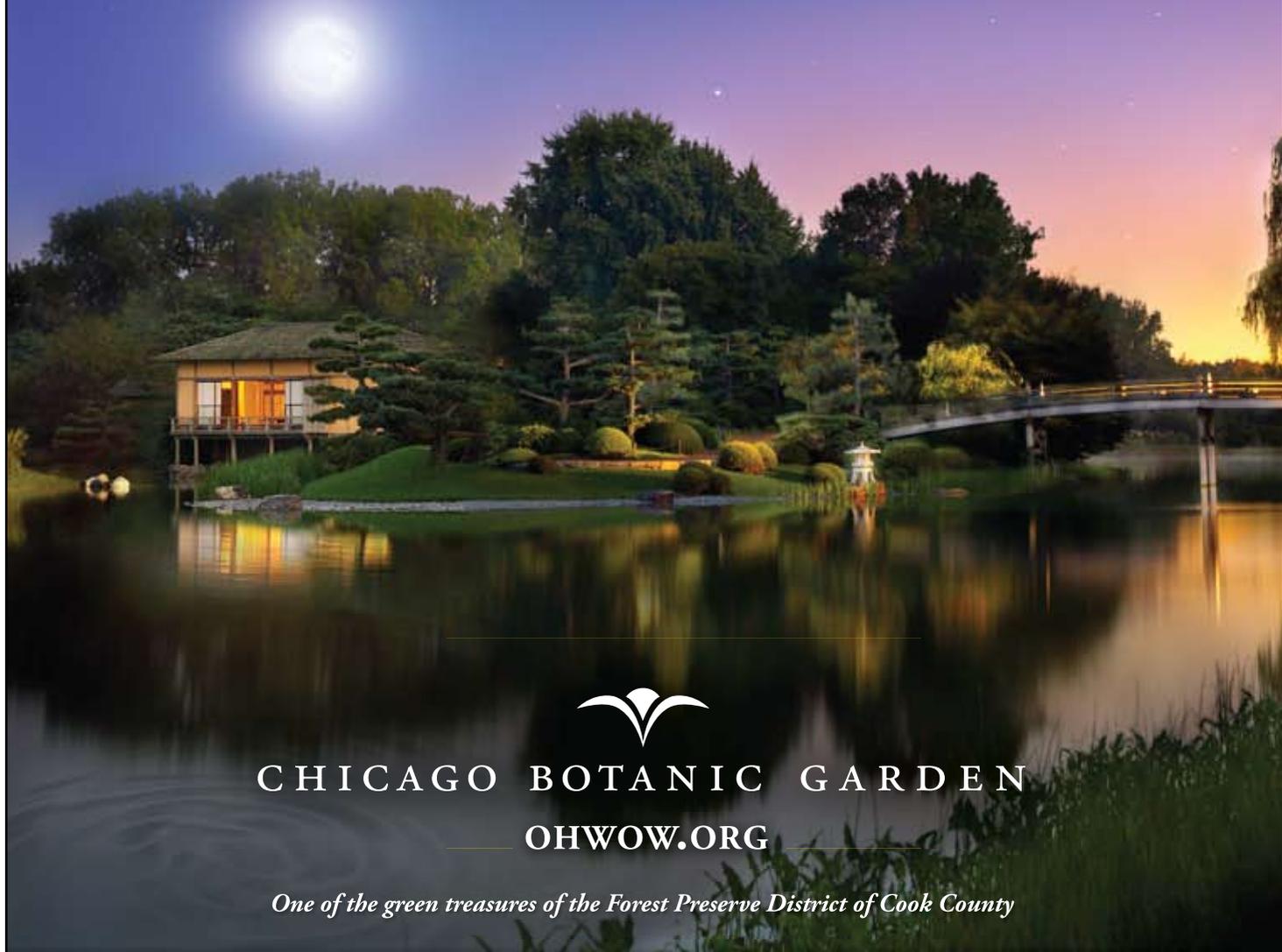
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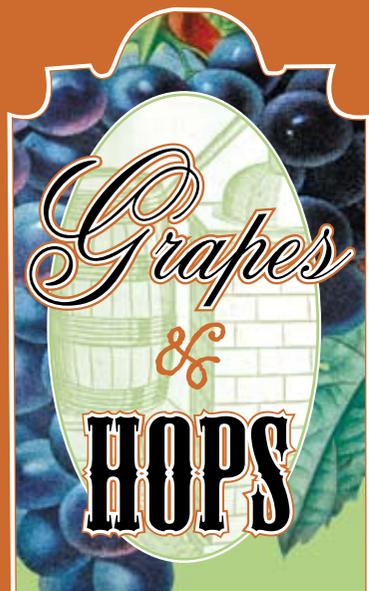
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Scenes from the Pride and Joy reception. Photos by Tracy Baim

Hall of Fame experiences 'Joy'

BY JOHN LENDMAN

The 16th annual Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame began its 2008 fundraising effort with its annual Pride and Joy Reception Jun. 23 at Circuit Nightclub, 3641 N. Halsted. More than 150 participants and inductees were in attendance.

The Commission on Human Relations Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues Director Bill Greaves hosted the event. He said he was proud to be working with the only city in the world that has a hall of fame honoring gays and lesbians.

"What the advisory council is doing so effectively is showing that the LGBT community of Chicago is a part of the fabric of our city," Greaves said. "We show [Chicago] exactly who we are, not who they think we are."

The proceeds of the fundraiser support this year's Hall of Fame celebration and induction ceremony held on Nov. 13 at the Chicago Cultural Center. The Hall of Fame is funded by donations given by individuals, businesses and organizations.

While attendees filled out nominations for the 2008 Hall of Fame, the 2007 members were spotlighted. A buffet of hors d'oeuvres was offered as participants mingled with past and present Hall of Fame inductees.

Mistress of ceremonies Miss Foozie introduced the night's entertainment with DJ Ron G. Veronica Zaid & Company, Cyon Flare, Paula Sinclair, Sebastain Cock and Miss Foozie herself were among those who performed.

Established in 1991, Chicago's Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame seeks to recognize and pay tribute to volunteer and professional achievements that have improved the quality of life for Chicago's LGBT community. The committee recognizes individuals, organizations and "friends of the community."

A celebrity auction is planned for the next fundraiser, which will be held at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, Sept. 23.

Nominations for this year's Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame are still being submitted and are due by July 15. See www.GLHalofFame.org.



Jeanne White (far left) and Shelly Lindahl.
Photos by Yasmin Nair

Ryan White's mother speaks at Center

BY YASMIN NAIR

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the latest statistics on HIV indicate that the populations at greatest risk for new infections are African-American men who have sex with men, and African-American women. This is a marked shift from the early years of the epidemic, when HIV/AIDS was perceived—and stigmatized—as a white gay men's disease.

IDPH and the Center on Halsted teamed up on National HIV Testing Day, June 27, to provide information on HIV, along with testing services. Modesto "Tico" Valle, executive director of the Center, began his introduction of the morning's sessions with a reminder: "Let no one say that AIDS is over. We are called to do more, to ask for more, as long as AIDS is among us." State Representatives Greg Harris and Sara Feigenholtz spoke about the importance of prevention and regular testing.

Following them was Jeanne White, the mother of Ryan White, the Kokomo, Ind., native who was born a hemophiliac in 1971. White told of her son being treated with Factor VIII, a clotting agent made from blood. Unknown to the doctors and the Whites, the batches used to treat Ryan were contaminated with HIV and he was diagnosed with the virus in 1984. The Kokomo school board ruled that the teenager could not attend classes, claiming that he would infect his classmates. The family endured continued hostility from the townspeople, which included a bullet through their living room window. The Whites relocated to Cicero, Ind., where Ryan

White died in 1990.

Jeanne White spoke of this history, as well as her increasing connection to the gay community, and of having becoming disillusioned with what she had hoped would be a supportive church. Instead, she said, "I saw the church back away," and she found herself calling amFAR (American Foundation for AIDS Research) for help and advice on treatment options. In concluding her talk, she echoed the need for doing a better job at prevention.

The Whites successfully contested the school board decision, and celebrities like Michael Jackson and Elton John lent their names in support. Ryan White's story, and the media attention it garnered, became a pivotal point in reducing the stigma attached to AIDS. But while much of the stigma has vanished, the rates of infection among women have risen, and African-American women are among the hardest hit. The "down-low" phenomenon is often suggested as one cause for this. According to some, large numbers of African-American men secretly engage in unprotected sex with men, become infected with HIV, and pass it on to their female partners.

Shelly Lindahl, a physician's assistant from Dallas, Texas, began a morning break-out session on "Women and HIV" by debunking what she considers the myth that most women are infected in this way: "We want to make it about down-low, but a much bigger picture is that of drug use and the recidivism rate." She pointed out that given that many men in prison engage in a high rate of sex—either for protection, or because they're manipulated into doing so, or because of the "pecking order," "they're not going to talk about it." (Many prison reform activists advocate for distribution of condoms in prisons, which would prevent the spread of HIV.)

Lindahl's talk focused on how women who contract HIV through unprotected heterosexual

sexual could prevent the spread of HIV once diagnosed with the virus. According to her, by the end of 2004, 27 percent of those newly infected with HIV were women. The specific challenges in addressing HIV in women, for Lindahl, have to do with addressing socio-economic and cultural factors. For instance, women are less likely to feel empowered in condom negotiation and, therefore, more likely to engage in unprotected sex.

Once infected, women are sometimes apt to not stay on their drug regimens, usually because of side effects but other contributing factors might be that they're often the primary caregivers for children and neglect their own care. Lindahl noted that pregnant women are usually rigorous about taking their medications during pregnancy, but falter afterwards. She recommended adherence to medical regimens, and that women keep in touch with a provider who would answer their questions. If, for instance, a doctor changed medications even when they seemed to be working, it was imperative that the woman know the reason for the change: "Every patient has the right to ask why."

Lindahl also spoke about the necessity of health maintenance in the form of regular check-ups and continued protection during sexual activity, as well as forming support groups. In response to a question about the differences in dealing with HIV, between lesbians and straight-identified women with HIV, she said that lesbians tended to be more aware of the risks and had built-in support groups due to their connections to the LGBTQ community.

Students try to stir senators to action

BY AMY WOOTEN

Medical students and AIDS activists rallied outside the Chicago offices of Sens. Barack Obama and Dick Durbin June 26 in order to pressure them to help bring a stalled global health bill to a vote.

Obama and Durbin are co-sponsors of a bill that would commit \$50 billion over a five-year period to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) program. This new bill would triple funding for the president's program.

The House passed a similar bill but a vocal minority of senators, led by Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla., have kept it away from the Senate floor for consideration.

The medical students, after rallying in Federal Plaza across from the senators' Chicago offices, had representatives bring clocks and signs to the offices of both Durbin and Obama to signal that time is running out. AIDS activists and champions of the bill wish for it to be brought for a vote before the July recess. The current act expires in September.

Medical student Rishi Rattan kicked off the rally, leading chants such as "Durbin! Obama! Keep your promise! Pass PEPFAR now!" Rattan said that although Durbin and Obama have been advocates on Capitol Hill, they need to keep their promise to get the bill passed by standing up to the group of seven Republicans blocking the expansion of the AIDS program.

Those present wanted Obama and Durbin to use their power as Senate leaders and as a presidential candidate to press for the timely passage of an intact bill. Republican presidential candidate Sen. John McCain is also a sponsor of the bill.

"Obama is a co-sponsor, and now [he is] the Democratic presidential nominee, so this is really important," said UIC medical student Emily Haak to Windy City Times.

AIDS activists in other parts of the country also rallied for the bill's passage.

"It's actions like this that really make a difference," said AIDS Foundation of Chicago's David Munar, who was present for rally.



Students and activists convened June 26 outside the offices of Sens. Obama and Durbin. Photo by Amy Wooten

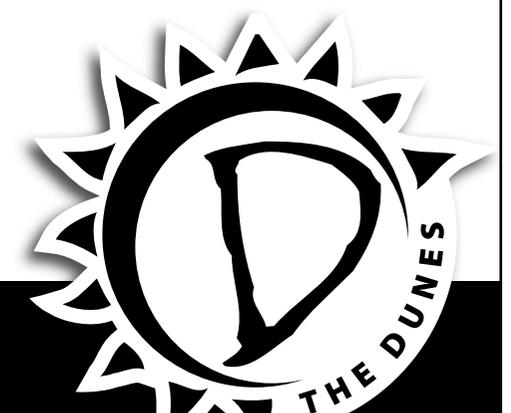


There is something special about Summer in Saugatuck, MI that makes it one of the most popular destinations for GLBT tourist, something difficult to define but easy to recognize. Best of all, it's everywhere you look. It's in the diverse and plentiful shops, restaurants & accommodations. It's in the arts and the people. It's in the world-renowned beaches. It's in the Dunes Resort.

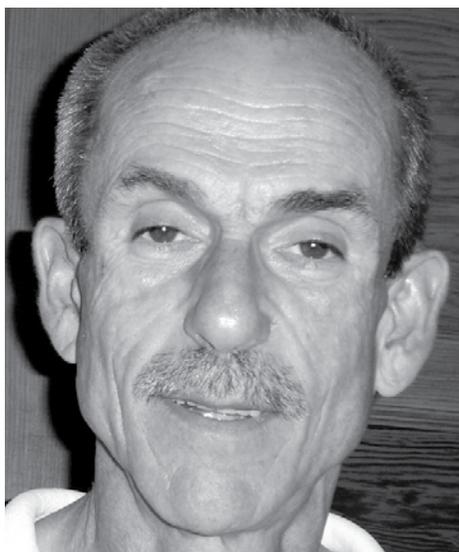


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Joe La Pat.

Joe La Pat dies

Joe La Pat, an Army veteran and a longtime supporter of Chicago charities, died suddenly and unexpectedly in his home Sun., June 29. La Pat and his partner of 39 years, Dick Uyvari, were frequent backers of numerous gay organizations, including the Center on Halsted and Gay Games VII in Chicago.

La Pat was born Nov. 28, 1943, in Racine, Wis. He was the youngest of four children born to Frank and Victoria La Pat. His father died when Joe was just three, and when Joe was 15 his mother remarried, to Walter Smolarek. He attended Horlick High School in Racine, and worked at Goldblatt's after high school.

In 1964, La Pat enlisted in the Army, serving for three years, including in Germany, where he was a member of the military police. He was a master sergeant, and part of his duties included escorting top-secret transport of nuclear weapons between France and Germany. He served the military with distinction.

After his military service ended, La Pat continued to work for Goldblatt's for an additional seven years, in Racine; Crestwood, Ill.; and Chicago. On May 25, 1969, La Pat and Uyvari met at the Castaways bar in Milwaukee, and it was love at first sight. They were together for 39 years, until La Pat's death. They liked to comment that they met exactly five weeks before the Stonewall Riots in New York that sparked the modern gay-rights movement.

The couple moved to the Chicago area, first to Tinley Park in 1970. Soon after they began in-

vesting in rental properties, and their company, Aremco, ran from 1971-2003. Their first property was a three-flat plus a coach house on the 800 block of West Newport, in the heart of what would become Boystown more than a decade later. The couple also ran a restaurant on Bryn Mawr for a brief time in the 1970s, The Tiffany Touch, which they renamed Jo-Di's.

As a couple, La Pat and Uyvari were key supporters of the Center on Halsted building campaign. They also were part of the Strike Against AIDS bowling benefits, and made available a property that became the first location used by Chicago House, a residence for people with AIDS. In 2006, they were critical financial supporters of Gay Games VII, underwriting the scholarship program that helped to bring athletes from around the world. They also helped retire the Gay Games debt by creating a matching fund.

"Without the support of Dick and Joe, the Gay Games could not have brought in athletes from South Africa, Croatia and beyond," said Tracy Baim, co vice-chair of the Chicago Gay Games board, and a friend of the couple. "Joe was always the quiet one, but when he heard the story of the South African soccer team, he became a passionate advocate to bring them to the U.S. He believed strongly in the mission of the Gay Games, and he and Dick were our biggest allies."

Other charities they supported included Misericordia, a campus for children and adults with developmental disabilities. They also supported many environmental and animal-rights groups, among other numerous charities. La Pat played important behind-the-scenes roles for the early Proud to Run race benefits and for bowling tournaments. The couple opened their home for a benefit for future judge Tom Chiola, and also volunteered for his campaign to become the first openly gay elected official in Illinois. In 2007, they both donated for the first time to a national political race, in support of Barack Obama's presidential campaign on the first day he started to accept online donations.

"He always was a pillar of support in the background that allowed me to be the front guy," Uyvari said. "Without him I could not have done any of the things I did."

His generosity for family, friends and community, was limitless, even when it meant personal sacrifice for him. He was a gracious host, "an All-American man who also loved taking care of the home," Uyvari said. "He loved gardening, cooking, anything around the house."

"He was the sweetest, most generous, and considerate person, and also a very hard worker," said Mary Therese Carter, Dick Uyvari's sister.

La Pat was preceded in death by his mother



Joe La Pat (left) and his longtime partner, Dick Uyvari.

and stepfather Victoria and Walter Smolarek; and his life partner's brothers Robert and Mark Uyvari. He is survived by his life partner Dick Uyvari; his sisters Delores (Dee) Veselik and her husband Philip, Mary Ann Andersen and her husband Larry, and Patricia (Pat) Barth, all of Racine; 12 nieces and nephews; Dick's brothers Michael Uyvari of Denver, Joseph Uyvari of Dallas, Christopher Uyvari of Philadelphia; Dick's sister Mary Therese Carter of Grand Rapids, Mich.; and

five nieces and nephews on the Uyvari side. He is also survived by his beloved cats Tommy and Murphy.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Center on Halsted.

Memorial services are pending in Racine, Wis., and Chicago. For information, e-mail Tracy Baim at editor@windycitymediagroup.com.

For a 2007 video interview with La Pat, see www.ChicagoGayHistory.org.

Local News

Dance for Life tickets on sale

Tickets for the popular 17th annual Dance for Life benefit are now on sale.

The one-night-only event takes place Aug. 23 at Harris Theater for Music and Dance, and features several dance companies, such as Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, The Joffrey Ballet and River North Chicago Dance Company, all on one stage to help raise funds for HIV/AIDS.

Proceeds help benefit local organizations such as Howard Brown Health Center and AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

See www.danceforlifechicago.com for tickets and information.

Family Equality Council coming to Chicago

The Family Equality Council, co-sponsored by the Center on Halsted and Orgullo en Accion, will focus on Chicago LGBT families when it brings two of its groundbreaking programs to Center on Halsted for a one-day event.

The national LGBT family organization is traveling to the Windy City for one day to engage parents and allies in its storytelling and LGBT families of color programs. Both programs will take place at the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, Sun., July 20.

An OUTSpoken Families training for LGBT families and allies will be held from 1-4 p.m. Later in the day, from 5-6:30 p.m., a dialogue for LGBT families of color will take place. The dialogue is part of Family Equality Council's Project Harmony program.

For more information on Family Equality Council's programs, see www.familyequality.org.

Verreos to spice up Cook-Off

GenderPAC will stir up some fun at its Chicago Celebrity Cook-Off on July 26.

This year's Cook-Off will feature Project Runways' Nick Verreos as the evening's Emcee. Celebrities Ted Allen, Josie Smith-Maiave and Dale Levitski will also be there.

The event, hosted at 222 Merchandise Mart, begins with a 6-7 p.m. reception, followed by the Celebrity Cook-Off, 7-9 p.m.

RSVP at www.gpac.org/chicago-cook-off.

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7:30 p.m.
Stephanie Kuehnert
I Wanna Be Your Joey Ramone

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John K. Wilson
Patriotic Correctness: Academic
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Greg Harris talks civil unions

BY JOHN LENDMAN

With the dust settling on the Great California gay-marriage rush, state legislators in Illinois are working on passing the Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Unions Act (House Bill 1826) as a model for the rest of the Nation to follow.

Windy City Times recently spoke with the only openly gay member of the legislature, State Rep. Greg Harris, D-Chicago, the sponsor of HB 1826, on why this may be the most important piece of legislation this year.

Rep. Greg Harris: Did you see the Chicago Tribune Today? The lead editorial is in support of civil unions in Illinois. It's like the biggest Republican newspaper in the state; it's a big deal.

Windy City Times: Yeah, that is surprising. How is House Bill 1826 progressing in the general assembly?

GH: The last day of the spring session, it was moved to the third reading, which is the final step before the vote. So we made all the necessary ethical amendments to the language to resolve people's questions and issues, so the next step is the last vote.

WCT: What more still needs to be done to get this bill passed?

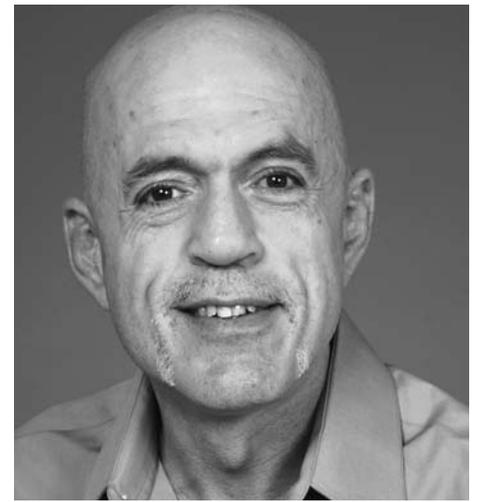
GH: It's still very important to get people to continue to contact their legislators. People need to also understand that Illinois will be the first state that has done this legislatively without judicial order. We will be the first heartland state; [Illinois] is sort of being seen by the right-wing as the battleground state of the country, so [it would make an impact] if this passes. It's one thing for California, Massachusetts and New York, the sort of coast states to do this, but opponents are pulling out all the stops and all the big guns for Illinois, so it's very important for people to express their feelings to state legislators.

WCT: Going off California's recent events, what was your reaction to their newly authorized same-sex marriages?

GH: It certainly raised the level of interest in Illinois and helped focus, from my colleagues' point of view, that this is probably the most important legislative issue we will deal with this year. [California's ruling] is sort of coming out of public policy and heightening people's awareness. It shows that in the most populous state in the country, same-sex marriage is now the law of the land.

WCT: Chicago currently has domestic-partnership benefits for same-sex couples. What are some of the primary upgrades offered by a civil union?

GH: Well, first of all it is statewide, offered to everyone regardless of where they live in Illinois, and it would go beyond what the city of



Greg Harris.

Chicago was able to do for its own employees. If you have a same-sex partner, you would be able to get the same benefits as married couples. All the state-level benefits are being offered [if adopted], but this doesn't affect federal law, which is still another hurdle that Congress will [need to work on] to recognize marriage equality in federal law. But we are doing everything that we can at the state level.

WCT: Currently Connecticut, New Jersey and Vermont offer civil unions to same-sex couples. What have you heard about its success in those states?

GH: They've been very successful; you see a burst of people coming in, people [who] have waited years to have their relationships legally recognized. We've also learned from these states on appropriate wording and language especially around disillusion. There have been instances where people have tried to go to states where domestic partnerships, civil unions and same-sex marriages are not recognized and [when] couples split up, [one person has] taken financial advantage over a partner. We've learned from this and really fine-tuned the law here in Illinois so that we can become a model for the country.

WCT: Is there anything else you've noticed about support for HB 1826?

GH: The other thing that we're seeing in every county in Illinois is straight senior citizens mobilizing in the thousands for this because they realize that civil unions have benefits for them as well. So you can see the bracket and age range of young voters and old voters both really getting it. I think that is pretty astounding.

Don't forget to read nat'l and world news at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com



Let's get married

Robert Castillo, 40, and John Pennycuff, 44, remarried at San Francisco's City Hall June 27. In 2004, the couple went to San Francisco and got married. However, a subsequent decision by the state's supreme court nullified their marriage. This past Sunday, they celebrated with tens of thousands of people at Chicago's 39th Annual Pride Parade. Photo courtesy of Castillo and Pennycuff



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VIEWPOINT

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REV.
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Black Pride parties to a different beat

What started out in Washington, D.C., as the only Black Gay Pride event in the country in 1990 has grown to more than 35 gatherings nationwide?

Starting in April and going through October of each year, more than 300,000 LGBTQ people of African descent rev up for a weekend of social and cultural events. Just last year, more than 350,000 attended Black Gay Pride events throughout the U.S., with the largest events held in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and Atlanta, and smaller Black Pride events like the one in Boston providing an equally important sense of identity and cultural heritage.

Sunday gospel brunches, Saturday night poetry slams, Friday fashion shows, bid whist tournaments, house parties, soul food, Caribbean cuisine and beautiful displays of African art and clothing are just some of the cultural markers that make Black Pride distinct.

But cultural exclusion was just one of a few things gay revelers of African descent experienced in Pride events. Racism is the other. And so after decades of Pride events where many gays of African descent tried to be included and were rejected, Black Gay Pride was born.

"We are not seeing ourselves culturally represented at Pride. We want to show not only ourselves, but the larger LGBT community we are out here and taking control of our lives. Black Gay Pride New England speaks to who we are, and it represents the substance that pertains to our lives," Philip Robinson, a teacher and com-

munity activist told me in June 2001.

Seven years later that sentiment remains. And subsequently as we all rev up each year for Pride so, too, unfortunately, do the fault lines of race and class.

The growing gulf between whites and blacks, rich and poor can be seen in the HIV/AIDS epidemic that was once an entire LGBTQ community problem and is now predominately a black one.

Another example of our division can be seen in the white gay ghettos that have developed and thrived safely in neighborhoods throughout the country. However, with homophobia in black communities, where most of us reside, we cannot carve out a black queer ghetto within our existing neighborhoods and expect to realistically be safe.?

But many LGBTQ people of African decent and Latinos argue that the gulf between whites and them is also dominant queer community rewrote and continues to control the history of Stonewall. The Stonewall Riot of June 27-29, 1969, in Greenwich Village, New York City, started on the backs of working-class African-American and Latino queers who patronized that bar. Those brown and Black LGBTQ people are not only absent from the photos of that night, but they are also bleached from its written history.

Because racial prejudice was a dominant oppression all Black people faced—straight or queer—during the troubling black civil rights era of the 1960's, Dr. Gerri Outlaw, an openly lesbian African-American professor of social work at Governors State University, just outside of Chicago, said, "Had those patrons been white the cops would have harassed them, but there would not have been a riot."

Because of the bleaching of the Stonewall Riots, the beginnings of LGBTQ movement post-Stonewall is an appropriation of black and brown queer liberation narrative absent of black and brown people. And it is the visible absence of these black, brown and yellow LGBTQ people that makes it harder for white queers to confront their racism.

Our themes for Black Pride events are different from the larger Pride events. Black Pride focuses on issues not solely pertaining to gays,

but rather on social, economic and health issues impacting the entire black community. For example, where the primary focus and themes in white Prides have been on marriage equality, gay people of African descent have used Pride events to focus on HIV/AIDS, other health issues, gang violence and youth homelessness, to name only a few.

By 1999, Black Pride events had grown into the International Federation of Black Prides, Inc. (IFBP). The IFBP is a coalition of 29 Black Pride organizations across the country. It formed to promote an African multicultural and multi-national network of LGBTQ/Same Gender Loving Pride events and community-based organizations dedicated to building solidarity, health and wellness and promoting unity throughout our communities.?

In recognizing the need to network and build coalitions beyond its immediate communities, IFBP announced in April the formation of the Black/Brown Coalition.

"The purpose of the National Black and Brown Summit is to identify areas for potential collaboration between African-American and Latino LGBT communities, leaders, organizations and grassroots movements, said Earl Fowlkes, president of the IFBP.

BLACK PRIDE IS an invitation for the community to connect its political activism with its celebratory acts of song and dance in the fight for LGBTQ justice.?

The Bible is replete with examples of oppressed groups parading in the streets while struggling for their freedom. For example, "the Song of Mariam," in Exodus 15:19-21 celebrates the Israelites crossing the Red Sea while they still journeyed in the wilderness toward the Promised Land.

The Promised Land for all LGBTQ citizens is full acceptance into society and Black Pride plays an important role in fulfilling that promise.

Black Pride contributes to the multicultural aspect of joy and celebration that symbolizes not only our uniqueness as individuals and communities, but also affirms our varied expressions of LGBTQ life in America.

Happy Pride!



Dance hall days

In the June 18 Windy City Times Chicago Gay History column, under the heading "Let's Dance!," author John D'Emilio correctly states that the first order of business for Chicago's newly formed Gay Liberation (back in 1970) was to claim safe, friendly spaces for gays and lesbians. The core issue was same-sex dancing, which was not permitted in the gay bars at the time. But Mr. D'Emilio paints a rather struggle-less picture of Gay Liberation's efforts by misrepresenting as well as de-politicizing the nature of those dances and the intentions of their sponsor. Case in point: Mr. D'Emilio references a dance that Gay Liberation sponsored at the convention-sized Coliseum at 16th and Wabash. But D'Emilio puts a false spin on Gay Liberation by stating that this event was, in so many words, a test to push the boundaries regarding society's acceptance of gay people. That dance—a historic one—was, first and foremost, a boycott; it was not a test. There were a lot of gay people there that night, to be sure, and I was one of them. For the most part, it was an enjoyable event. But its purpose was to siphon off clientele from the bars as a protest because, of course, there you couldn't touch, kiss or dance with someone of the same sex—you couldn't be "gay." The dance did instill a sense of collective pride that carried over into the following weeks in protests outside the bars gays frequented.

But here's the real rub: D'Emilio states in reference to that Coliseum dance, "The police did

show up and patrol the area on April 18th, but there were no arrests and no incidence." The police didn't have to do anything. Their friends—the underworld, i.e., the Mafia (in control of all gay bars and with which Chicago cops were often complicit)—were out there that night to intimidate and, in some cases, rough up queers.

It was a hard-fought struggle to claim gay and lesbian space. There were constant raids of gay bars and constant payoffs by organized crime to Chicago's men in blue. The results of those raids—raids for touching and kissing—were the publication of names in the Tribune and Sun-Times; ruined careers; and suicides. The oppression was insidious and involved graft and payoffs and a nod and wink from Daley (Richard J.); collusion between the Chicago Police Department and the Mafia; and strict enforcement of the "rules" for clients by bar owners (Mafia shills). It was a grand triumvirate: the Richard J. Daley Machine, the Chicago cops and the underworld. It was the grand triumvirate versus the people on the street, Gay Liberation and the unsung activist heroes out to right a wrong.

Craig Teichen
 Chicago

Age fright

To the Editor,

I wanted to say how very much I enjoyed Charles-Gene McDaniel's well-worded and thoughtful essay, "Gay Gerontophobia," and how very grateful I am that you made space for this sensitive and important subject. It would be wonderful to hear more from Mr. McDaniels. I think the subject of aging within our community is going to require more attention in the coming years. How good of you to address it in the Pride edition of The Times.

Sincerely,
 Dan McCauley
 Owner, A Taste of Heaven

Make your thoughts known!

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Letters may be edited for length or clarity.

LETTERS

GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION



"The Skeleton Dance" (above) is just one part of Cirque du Soleil's latest show, Kooza. Read the review on page 12.

30 UNDER 30

Eclectic youth.
Page 28.

Photo by Kat Fitzgerald



MOVIES

Monkey see,
Monkey shoe.
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EVENTS

Pride: A
deeper love.
Page 15.

Photo by Kat Fitzgerald

Stage Door
Jonny

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

Hard to believe it's Independence Day already. Jonny still hasn't quite caught up with the summer season, which is too bad 'cause there's just so dang much going on. For instance, July will see a return to Chicago by performance artist and activist **Tim Miller**, who will be here the very same week that **Milly's Orchid Show** celebrates its 21st anniversary. What's a gossip columnist to do? If you were Jonny—of course, you're *not* Jonny; how could anyone be Jonny?—which would be your lead story?

Well, it's ladies first—especially ladies in hats. Sorry, Tim, you don't wear hats; indeed, sometimes you don't wear anything at all, and is Jonny complaining? But Milly goes first.

It's difficult to fathom that Brigid Murphy has been portraying Milly May Smithy for 21 years. Why, Jonny remembers seeing Milly's Orchid Show when Jonny was only 30. And now, 21 years later, Jonny is only 39! Art is wonderful, isn't it? For this very, very special anniversary show, July 19 at Park West, Milly has lined up an astonishing array of talent: Nora Dunn, Tom Wolfe, Paula Killen, Poi Dog Pondering, Blue Man Group, Consuelo Allen, The Sequins and more. Tickets for this one-time-only cerebral vaudeville are \$30 at the door on the day of the show, or in advance online only: www.brigidbags.com.

The very out and very active Mr. Miller has visited Chicago many times before in performances of his self-written one-man shows, often at Bailiwick Repertory. This visit, however, will find Miller at Links Hall, 3435 N. Sheffield (at Newport), for a full week of performances and workshops, July 21-27. Miller will perform *US*—a satirical blend of politics, contemporary American social history and Broadway musicals—July 25 and 26 (and for only \$15) but also will conduct a workshop, July 21-26. In a rare open-admissions



Strange Fruit. Photo by David Murray.

policy, Charged Bodies/Borders: A Solo Performance Intensive is open to anyone who believes he/she has solo performing potential and a story to tell. The five-day workshop will culminate in a student performance July 27 at Links Hall. The cost of the intensive is \$150 (deposit required) and the workshop hours are during the daytime. Details: 773-281-0824.

Here's an early heads-up for all the opera queens who read Stage Door Jonny. You know who you are. A rarely-staged Georges Bizet gem, **Djamileh**, will be performed Aug. 3, 5 and 7 at the Chicago Cultural Center as the 10th Annual Summer Opera presented by the Department of Cultural Affairs. Best known for *Carmen* and *The Pearl Fishers*, Bizet also dashed off this fairytale one-act gem about the beautiful Djamileh and her quest to win the blasé young nobleman Haroun. The fully professional performance is presented in Preston Bradley Hall (with the magnificent Tiffany stained-glass dome newly restored) at the Cultural Center by members of the New Millennium Orchestra of Chicago, under the direction of Francesco Milioto. Now, here's the deal: Preston Bradley Hall can seat only a few hundred. The opera performances are free but tickets are required and they are snapped up

very quickly. Tickets for Djamileh are available July 9 and must be obtained in person (limit four per person) at the Storefront Theater Box Office, 66 E. Randolph, 12-6 p.m., Tues.-Sat. Jonny has warned you, so don't go throwin' no hissy fit around these parts if you can't get a ticket.

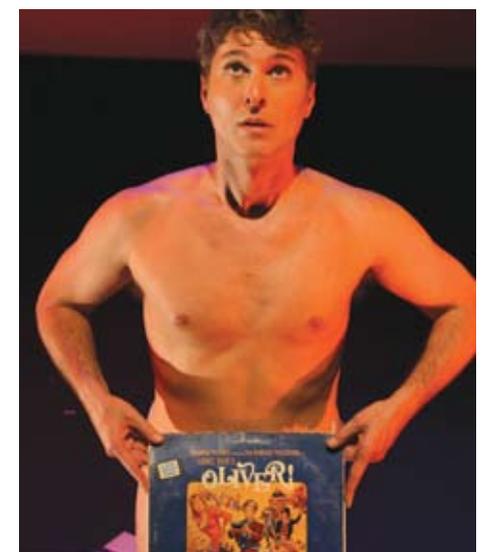
Speaking of hissy fits, Jonny hears that **Beast Women** continues to be the premier showcase for female talent in the Chicagoland area. The rotating weekly variety show offers singers, dancers, reciters, comics, poets, burlesque queens, etc. in an ever-changing but always tasty stew of performance. *Beast Women* is continuing at Prop Thr, 3502 N. Elston, every Saturday night, 10:30 p.m.; 773-278-1212; \$15. Jillian Erickson is the curator and Michelle Power is the emcee.

Upcoming appearances by **Strange Fruit** and **Compagnie Transe Express** are outdoor events just too exotic to miss. Jonny can do little more than offer pale descriptions. Of course, Jonny's readers know that a carillon is a set of tuned bells on a grand scale. Under the title *Maudit Sonnants*, the Compagnie Transe Express will create a beautiful human carillon and suspend it via crane some 200 feet in the air over Gateway Park at Navy Pier. The aerial event is present-

ed—free—by Chicago Shakespeare Theater, July 11-12. Once aloft, performers on this musical chandelier will ring bells, beat drums and swing on trapezes above the heads of tens of thousands of Pier visitors. The spectacle will begin about 9 p.m. both nights, with fireworks following on Saturday night.

Not to be outdone in the aerial department, Millennium Park brings Melbourne, Australia's *Strange Fruit* to town July 10-14 for a fusion of dance, circus and theater atop swinging, swaying 14-foot poles. Swoon, as their piece is called, is a quartet for two male and two female daredevils that tells the story of love, loss, joy, and freedom up on high. There will be 14 performances over five days, July 10-14, with shows at 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. most days (July 12, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.). And you thought all the 14-foot poles were in Warsaw!

Happy Fourth of July, everyone! The Bush era nearly is over, and the nation has survived—even if it has been sadly diminished and tarnished—so let's celebrate.



Tim Miller.



Contortionists in Cirque du Soleil: Kooza.

CIRCUS REVIEWS

Cirque du Soleil: Kooza and Cirque Shanghai: Gold

At: United Center, 1901 W. Madison, Parking Lot K (Kooza); Navy Pier, 600 E. Grand, Skyline Stage (Gold)
Phone: 800-678-5440 (Kooza); 312-902-1500 (Gold)
Runs through: Aug. 10 (Kooza); Sept. 1 (Gold)

BY CATEY SULLIVAN

We could watch contortionists all day. Nay, we could watch at them all week, bending their bodies like overcooked Angel Hair pasta and displaying the sort of freakazoid agility only possible if one has Jell-O water where one's ribs should be. So with the arrival of Cirque du Soleil's Kooza and China's Cirque Shanghai Gold, our summer took a decided turn for the fan-fucking-tastic.

Sure, there are O'Neill and Shakespeare available on plenty of area stages, not to mention the erudite deconstructionist nihilism of righteously bullying Dadaists devoted to Heavy, Deep and Relevant Art that prides itself on being wholly inaccessible to the philistines who compose the *hoi polloi*. Snore. What we really want come July is a gluttonously large bucket of extra-buttered popcorn, a tooth-rotting jumbotron-sized non-diet Mountain Dew and a front row view of boneless wonders in Ice Capades outfits. Boo-yah!

Both Kooza and Gold deliver that and more. The former is more elegant, featuring far superior costumes and sets as well as an ambiance of overwhelming magic. But the latter is also a winning extravaganza—The Mysterious Orient as interpreted by Liberace on steroids crossed with the opening Olympic Ceremonies via the Vegas Strip at midnight. An ADD-friendly, 90-minute blowout of plate spinning, acrobatics and women in spangly unitards riding 12 to a bicycle, Cirque Shanghai is perfect for the tourist-astic frenzy that is Navy Pier. With tickets running from \$15.50 to \$29.50, Shanghai's populist portrait of shiny, happy Chinese artists and athletes is also way more affordable than Kooza, where adult tickets start at \$55 and go all the way up to a whopping \$215 (which, to be fair, includes free popcorn and priority access to restrooms at intermission).

Both shows are worth every dang penny. Kooza is jaw-dropping from start to finish. Writer/director David Shiner has created a story (of sorts) that very loosely threads together a truly astonishing roster of aerial dancers, wheel-of-death-defying daredevils, teeterboard athletes and heart-stopping trapeze artists. It opens as a

lonely, lovely kite-flying clown stumbles upon a massive, half-foreboding, half-enchanted castle that's unveiled as a whirl of billowing silk flies up to reveal a gorgeous, unknowable universe of hypnotic music and eye-poppingly costumed alien creatures.

The little clown's adventures begin with a trio of seemingly spine-free contortionists: Julie Bergez, 12; Natasha Patterson, 16; and Dasha Sovik, 17. When they enter, limbs twined together like rubber bands, it's impossible to tell where one body ends and the next begins. The spectacle, like all of Kooza, is more than a bit disturbing. In all, Kooza is a kinetic panorama that's part shivering nightmare and part over-the-rainbow wonderland. One moment, the stage is overrun by scythe-bearing black skeletons and scurrying rats, the next by an adorable, gigantic shaggy dog that pees on the audience and woofs alongside a wild and crazy pickpocket who'll abscond with your nose ring, your wallet and your necktie in an undetectable twinkling. The upshot is a show that's both glorious and unsettling, an exquisite merger of beauty and danger.

Shanghai Gold, by contrast, is all sunny spun-sugar garishness, pure pop candy and cheerleading for China. The uber-talented performers twirl dazzling hula hoops by the dozens, stand on their heads—hands free—atop chairs stacked three stories high, and hurl themselves between, up and down poles with the agility of rain forest spider monkeys.

The sheer, in-your-face glitter gulch ambiance of the show is a perfect fit for Navy Pier: Gigantic lotuses bloom in neon, Technicolor riots, parasols spin with dizzying frenzy and China's bold, red-circle national flag flies with outspoken pride that (almost) banishes any thoughts of the country's treatment of Tibet or the human-rights abuses that have plagued its post-Cultural Revolution history.

THEATER REVIEW

True West

Playwright: Sam Shepard
At: Redtwist Theatre, 1044 W. Bryn Mawr
Phone: 773-728-7529; \$22-\$30
Runs through: July 13

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

There are these two brothers, you see. One of them has an education, a family and an honest job, if you look upon writing screenplays for Hollywood movies as a respectable means of earning a living. The other is a petty thief, a drifter and, in this production, speaks in a pronounced high, nasal vaguely-Boston drawl which might be significant, or not. So what we've got is a Cain-and-Abel situation—a premise not uncommon in American drama—but the irony is that meek Austin longs to be a desperado like his outlaw sibling, while boisterous Lee finds himself increasingly drawn to the comforts of domesticity. Throw into this volatile dynamic a producer offering a handsome reward to whoever gives him a winning story idea, and the dogfight is on.

Sam Shepard plays are always more fun when you can make a mess, and the standard for this particular exercise in fraternal rivalry was set in 1982 by the brawling, leather-lunged, trash-the-stage, mud-blood-and-beer orgy of destruction mounted by the then-fledgling Steppenwolf Theatre ensemble. But the several-times subdivided storefront space that Redtwist Theatre (formerly known as the Actors' Workshop Theatre) calls home restricts all movement to dimensions measuring a mere 16 by 10 feet, with audience sitting barely two-arms' length away from the action. To be sure, stunt doubles can be employed for a cruelly mutilated typewriter and fatally neglected stand of potted plants, and shards of smashed plates can be contained by a downstage kitchen-island, but the fact remains that extensive alarums and excursions will present hazards to both actors and audience, so it's almost inevitable that the *text* become the center of focus.

And therein lies the problem: Johnny Garcia makes a suitably introspective Austin, flanked by Scott Jones as the clueless Saul and Ana Maria Alvarez as the phlegmatic clan materfamilias. But Paul Joseph appears to have played cracker-nasties many times before, in much larger auditoriums, with the result that by the time Lee begins to show himself capable of animal cunning, let alone rational planning, we have long wearied of his comic-book mannerisms and one-dimensional approach to his character. It's too bad, because actor-turned-director Si Osborne is quickly establishing a reputation in Chicago Theater for capable guidance of performances other than his own—when the performers are willing to listen.

THEATER REVIEW
(STUDENT ONE-ACT SERIES)

The Boor; The Valiant; The Red Carnation; and Portrait of a Madonna

At: Chicago Actors Studio, 2040 N. Elston
Phone: 773-645-0222
Runs through: July 12

BY TRACY BAIM

The work of theater students is often overlooked, especially in Chicago where there is such an abundance of theater to review and attend. Even more difficult to review are rotating productions by the same group. Thus, the double dilemma of the Chicago Actors Studio 2008 Student One-Act Series, featuring *The Boor*, *The Valiant*, *The Red Carnation* and *Portrait of the Madonna*.

The night I was able to attend included the

first and last productions listed above, primarily because I was urged on by the featured actor in *Madonna*: Shawn Murray, my Walt Disney Grammar School classmate of the class of 1976. I have seen Murray as Uncle Alice in Erik Larson's *John Water-esque* films, and was anxious to see her again. Expecting her comic hilarity, I was blown away by her amazing dramatic rendition of a crazed older southern belle.

Edward Dennis Fogell directed three of the productions, while Loredan Krug directed *The Red Carnation*. The studio space is the size of a small living room, with a few dozen seats and the intimacy you'd never find in a downtown theater. That's both scary and thrilling—and, in one case, annoying when a character lit up a real cigarette. The student actors carried out that closeness quite well. The acting was expectedly uneven, but there were a few shining stars. I'm sorry I missed the other two productions, but I would recommend you see them all, because you never know when you might see the early career of a future Tony winner. Especially look for Kimberly Bendix, niece of TV and film star William Bendix, in *The Red Carnation*.

For *Portrait of the Madonna*, Murray plays Miss Lucretia Collins, a woman past her prime but in the middle of her insanity. Murray is spot-on and has done Tennessee Williams proud. Other acting was uneven at best, including Krug as the Elevator Boy. The other standout is Jonathan Frank as *The Porter*, and Frank does another terrific turn in the high-energy *The Boor*, as Grigori Smirnov. This Anton Chekhov one-act provides a grand stage for Frank and Yasmeen Musa as Helena Popov, who were thoroughly enjoyable to watch. Great chemistry and great acting. Almost stealing the show is Michael Dwiggin playing an extremely gay and very flexible Luka as if he walked right out of a Monty Python skit. He is worth the price of admission.



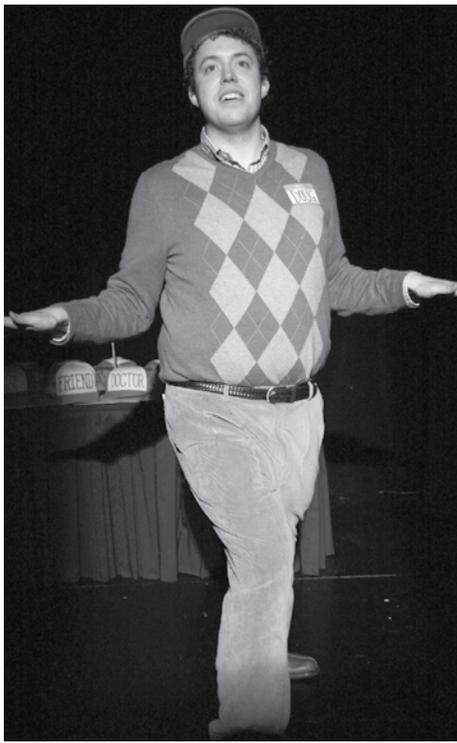
Shawn Murray.

SPOTLIGHT

Much Ado about Nothing



Beatrice, who is too smart for her own good, coolly loves Benedick, the dashing and clever officer who coolly loves her. Their mutual friends heat up the romance between them in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, although not without a darker subplot. This summer, there is almost too much *Much Ado* with four overlapping productions. Pictured here is the genderfuck steampunk-costumed version by GroundUp (sic) Theatre, performed *free* in city parks through Aug. 10; 773-764-9916 for dates and locations. Also, more traditional *Much Ado*'s are being presented by the Festival Theatre in Austin Gardens, Oak Park, through July 19 and at First Folio Shakespeare Festival at Mayslake Forest Preserve, Oak Brook, July 9-Aug. 17. Both are splendid sites for picnics.



Gutenberg! The Musical! Photos by Johnny Knight

communications down to the development of computers and the internet, although the show doesn't begin to follow that thread. Intentionally ignoring almost all factual information, it's a wild parody of (1) history and (2) the theater industry. In both senses, it's a work of historical fiction, which its two characters define as "fiction that's true"—you know, kind-of like weapons of mass destruction.

The show features energetic and ingratiating performances by the hard-working cast of Alex Goodrich as Gutenberg (and a dozen other characters) and Breon Bliss as his love interest and an evil monk (and a dozen other characters). Two brighter-eyed and bushier-tailed performers you'll rarely meet, and the show's slender charms are due to them in large measure. Under director Alex Timbers and co-director Ian Unterman there are some unexpected and pleasing staging bits, such as a chorus line of baseball caps strung together and cuddly singing rats (also represented by baseball caps).

But the charm of the performers and staging isn't enough, for a little of this sort of parody goes a very long way. Two hours of it (including intermission) is just too much for a show which—however entertaining it may or may not be—lacks even a shred of substance. It has songs which are skillfully-written versions

of really bad Broadway music and lyrics, a clever but intentionally unexceptional pastiche score best appreciated by musical theater cognoscenti. It has comedy, too, and generates some welcome laughter but some of its best lines are theater inside jokes. For instance, the show's funniest joke is a definition of foreshadowing, a theatrical hint of things to come. "What is foreshadowing?" one asks. "Well, I'll tell you (beat) later," the other replies. Regrettably, little of the show is at that level of cleverness, although all of it is at that level of silliness.

Gutenberg! The Musical! is an extended sketch and not an evening's entertainment. Uncomfortably squeezed into the Royal George Gallery, it would do better in a cabaret venue or an off-beat locale such as the Gorilla Tango or Annoyance theaters. On the literary level and as a production it's a cautionary tale, and take that as you will.



THEATER REVIEW

Gutenberg! The Musical!

Playwright: Scott Brown and Anthony King
At: Royal George Gallery, 1641 N. Halsted
Phone: 312-988-9000; \$35
Runs through: July 27

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

The last seven years have proven that mixing inexperience with incompetence is as potent a recipe for failure in national government as in show business. That being said, Gutenberg! The Musical! has nothing to do with politics. It's about two inexperienced and incompetent guys who write the world's worst musical and audition the show for a room full of important Broadway producers ... and you. As the title suggests, it's about Johan Gutenberg, the Late-Medieval German printer who invented the printing press and movable type, thereby forever revolutionizing

CRITICS' PICS

Bloody Bess: A Tale of Piracy & Revenge, Backstage Theatre at The Storefront, through July 20. This dark-hearted Chicago-bred swashbuckler is Pirates of the Caribbean with balls, half Jacobean revenge drama and half adult comic. JA

Jekyll & Hyde, Bohemian Ensemble at Theatre Building Chicago, through July 20. Summer doesn't just mean lite: Right next door to Bailiwick's leather-lunged Hunchback, Boho's pop-opera gothic likewise delivers plenty of full-bodied vocal power. MSB

The Lion in Winter, Writers' Theatre, through Aug. 10. "He came down to Paris with a mind like Aristotle and a body like mortal sin," says Eleanor of King Henry II, but 30 years later you've got a barbarically tragic and blisteringly funny royal family feud. CS

The Mysterious Elephant..., Strange Tree Group at Chopin Theatre, through July 19. Fans of Edward Gorey and Charles Addams will eat up this merrily macabre, gloomy game of twins facing a horrible future via a nefarious narrator who controls their stories. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge, Morgan and Sullivan

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Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm.

THEATER REVIEW

Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm

Playwright: Charlotte Thompson and Kate Douglas Wiggin

At: Theatre-Hikes at Morton Arboretum, 4100 Route 53, Lisle
Phone: 630-968-0074; \$19-\$22
Runs through: July 27

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The idea of hiking through the great outdoors in-between scenes from a play sounds like a fun theatrical experience. So it's unfortunate that Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm is my first exposure to Theatre-Hikes.

For years Theatre-Hikes has lured audiences to places like Lisle's Morton Arboretum and Chicago's North Park Village Nature Center to combine the beauty of nature with drama. Alas, Theatre-Hikes production of Sunnybrook Farm is not worth the gas it takes to drive out to see it.

Though pitched at small kids, I wouldn't blame them if they got bored with Sunnybrook Farm, a creaky 1909 stage adaptation of Kate Douglas Wiggin's 1903 children's novel.

Similar in subject matter to Pollyanna, Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm is about the rambunctious young Rebecca, who has an uplifting effect on her chilly spinster aunts and the entire quiet Maine town of Riverboro. But of the two, I'd rather see Pollyanna since it has the galvanizing event of the bazaar plus a near-tragic ending that is lacking in the meandering Sunnybrook Farm.

One major problem with this adaptation by Wiggin and Charlotte Thompson is that most of the conflict is downplayed so the play becomes a series of so-so vignettes of kids at play or gossiping adults. Aside from the first fight Rebecca has with her aunt (which prompts her to run away), there is very little dramatic action to mo-

tivate you to hike to each subsequent scene to find out what happens.

Even with a top-notch cast, this Sunnybrook Farm would be slow going. So I'm sad to report that Theatre-Hikes' Sunnybrook Farm cast under director Frank Farrell is just adequate.

It seems more effort was made to get the cast to learn their odd New England accents than to play scenes moment to moment with honest emotion. So many lines are shakily delivered or arrive with a delayed reaction that you never believe the actors as the characters they're playing (particularly in the case of the older actors).

The younger actors don't seem to have it much easier, since these college-age performers have to play small kids with squeaky and excitable voices (they do an admirable, if uphill job anyway). Even an actor like Chris Kordys (who was so genuine and memorable as C.B. in Rubicon Theatre Project's Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead) seems stymied by the material.

If anything, Sunnybrook Farm offers a pleasant, if bland day outdoors. No doubt Theatre-Hikes' other offerings like The Taming of the Shrew or the bike-hike of Key Exchange this summer would have been a better bet. Just remember to bring bug spray and plenty of sunscreen.

THEATER REVIEW

Questa

Playwright: Victor Bumbalo

At: People*s Theatre of Chicago at the Heartland Studio, 7016 N. Glenwood
Phone: 773-371-1868; \$25
Runs through: July 19

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

It's not uncommon for a martyr to change the lives of the witnesses to so premature an exit from this temporal world—indeed, whole religions have been founded on just such unsettling departures. The catalytic death in Victor

Bumbalo's play, however, is that of a hostile gay-basher in New York's West Village, whose intended victim retaliated with violence sufficient to overpower the attacker. The sole bystander opts to give the police a patently bogus description of the culprit, while the distraught killer's sister exhorts him to keep his deed secret.

But nothing good can come of secrets (in plays, anyway). The mother of the deceased, unsure whether her son was murdered because someone thought he was homosexual, or because he was homosexual, grows increasingly hostile toward the gay clientele in the beauty shop where she works. Her parish priest—with whom she's sleeping, by the way—can offer her no comfort, either in his capacity as pastor or paramour. Meanwhile, the relationship between the sister and her husband suffers under the former's concern for her sibling, threatening to disrupt the future of her newborn child. The anonymous vagabond whose false testimony steered the police off the track becomes increasingly obsessed with the life of the man he has rescued. And then there's the guilty party, himself. And Mom's former boss. And several loved ones long passed on, but still haunting their surviving comrades.

Bumbalo's experience writing for television is apparent in the highly-structured intimacy reflected in his text, which boasts at least four endings, along with two full-blown group breakdowns featuring three or more characters grappling on the floor in noisy anguish. What mitigates the potential soapiness of the story's progress is the judgment-free conviction brought by director Madrid St. Angelo and the cast assembled for this People*s Theatre of Chicago production. However derisively the opening-night audience may have chortled at the melodramatic—in both the good and bad senses of that term—choices imposed by the author on his hapless personae, the actors never betray their assigned tasks by word or sign (in particular Cliff London's street-savvy surveillant), instead drawing us into each individual's universe to defend each individual response to crisis. The results make for an emotionally intense one and three-quarter hours in the circumscribed confines—almost like a confessional—of Rogers Park's Heartland Studio.

THEATER REVIEW

Hay Fever

Playwright: Noel Coward

At: Circle Theatre, 7300 W. Madison, Forest Park
Phone: 708-771-0700; \$24-\$26
Through Aug. 24

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Noel Coward's 1925 comedy Hay Fever is a trifle. Practically nothing happens plot-wise, nor is there any major character development.

That said, Hay Fever can also be a fizzy delight—depending upon the chemistry of the assembled cast. Circle Theatre's gorgeously designed production under Jim Schneider's assured direction is a strong argument in favor of Coward's flippant comedy. But it's a couple of notches away from being perfect.

Those difficult-to-master British dialects are part of the problem. Though Circle has a proven track record with its previous British comedy successes like An Ideal Husband and Design for Living, most of the Hay Fever cast won't be hired by the BBC for a TV adaptation anytime soon.

The cast also has a tendency to rush the dialogue and jokes in the opening scenes. It took a while for the cast to find the right comic timing the night I attended, but it was clear they were on the right path despite the initial muted audience response.

Hay Fever concerns the eccentric Bliss family in the 1920s (they each make mountains out of molehills at every opportunity).

Mother Judith Bliss (Judith Hoppe) is a retired grand dame of the Theatre (she pronounces it with the capital "T"). Father David (Peter Esposito) is a stand-offish novelist, while grown son Simon (Bradford R. Lund) sketches and doodles all the time. Only daughter Sorel (Erin Reitz) has a bit of self-awareness about the family scaring people away.

Things go haywire when each of the Blisses invites an admirer down to their country house without telling anyone else. That throws housekeeper Clara (Mayr Redmon) into a tizzy.

Interestingly enough, it's the visitors who offer the most convincing and comical performances in Circle's Hay Fever (perhaps because we're more willing to identify with them reacting to their horrid treatment by the Blisses). It's clear the actors playing the Blisses are deliberately acting weird instead of it being second nature.

Kimberly Logan is utter perfection as the icy vamp Myra Arundel (initially linked with Simon). She's always posing just so to make her elegant clothing drape correctly as if in a photo shoot.

Catherine Ferraro is also wonderful as the pretty young thing Jacky Coryton, who is utterly dumbstruck at the odd doings of the Blisses. Eric Lindahl makes a handsome and strapping young admirer of Sandy Tyrell, while Jonathan Nichols wins laughs from the stuffy bewilderment of the reserved British diplomat of Richard Greatham.

Particular notes of commendation go to Bob Knuth's beautifully decorated drawing room set and Suzanne Mann's wonderfully rich and plush 1920s costumes. The plot may be nil, but Circle Theatre's gorgeous Hay Fever is definitely something to sneeze at.



Hay Fever. Photo courtesy of Circle Theatre

CULTURE CLUB

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Pride perseveres

BY AMY WOOTEN

Chicago proved that, rain or shine, it is going to celebrate Pride.

Despite intermittent showers and a long delay mid-event, Chicago celebrated the 39th annual Pride Parade in style Sun., June 29. This year's Boystown parade—in which the theme was "Live, Love, Be Proud"—saw record attendance. Many participating celebrated the legalization of same-sex marriage in California and called for the passage of civil-union legislation in Illinois.

According to parade coordinator Richard Pfeiffer, 450,000 people attended the parade—25,000 more than last year. Police did not have an official crowd estimate as of Mon., June 30.

The grand marshal was Eric Alva (top middle photo), an ex-marine who is a vocal proponent of overturning "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," the military policy banning gays and lesbians from serving openly.

The parade was delayed for nearly an hour after a dancer fell off of a float near Halsted and Waveland and injured her leg. She was transported to Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center. Several additional calls for emergency service were made during the parade, but no other serious injuries were reported.

During the long delay, it began to rain. Many spectators—and even some parade participants—chose to leave during the delay. However, the parade started back up and the sun came out.

According to the Chicago Police Department, preliminary investigation shows that there were 10 arrests made during the Pride Parade. The arrests were for minor offenses, such as sim-

ple battery and disorderly conduct, police told Windy City Times.

Per usual, anti-gay protesters were present during the day's festivities. A few were gathered outside of the Addison el stop, handing out anti-gay literature. Some were located on Diversey behind police barricades. Led by the Gay Liberation Network, a group of gays surrounded the protestors on Diversey and blocked the view of them by holding up a large sign while chanting.

Other anti-gay protesters walked the parade route on Halsted for a short period of time, surrounded by police, until they were escorted off of the street. Later, they gathered in front of the Center on Halsted. Wherever they were congregated, however, LGBTs and allies shouted them down.

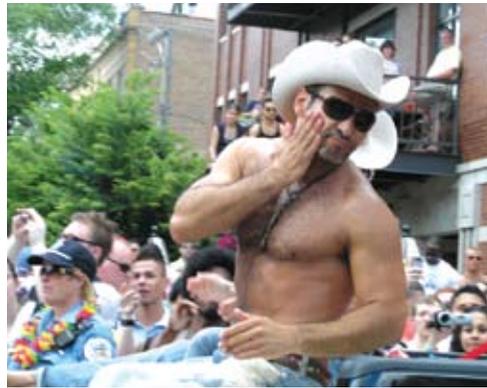
This year, a float that traveled all the way from St. Joseph, Mich.—the YWCA Out & Affirmation Center—was given an award for the Best All-Around Float. Last year, the group caused a controversy in southwest Michigan when it became the first LGBT organization to enter the local parade. They participated, despite threats and letters to the editor. This year, they took home the Sweepstakes Award in the same community parade before coming to the Windy City to celebrate Pride.

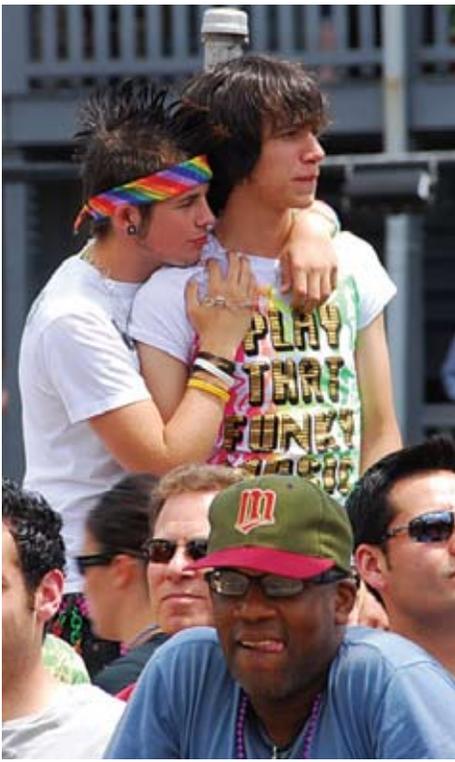
Green Dolphin/Boom Boom Room won the award for the Best Business Float. Filipinos and Friends in Chicago and the Lake View East Chamber of Commerce were both named Best Organization Float(s). There were 250 registered entries this year.

Allies were out in full force this year as well. A few mainstream South Side groups marched in the parade, including South Shore Drill Team and the Golden Knights Drill Team.

Photos by Tracy Baim, Robb Olson, Amy Wooten and Kat Fitzgerald; see many more at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com and www.MysticImagesPhotography.com







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See more parade pics on page 30



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Dyke March: Different neighborhood, same message

BY YASMIN NAIR

This year, Dyke March moved to Pilsen, and attracted over a thousand people, according to organizers—the largest contingent in its history. In the weeks beforehand, several questions were raised, including one often voiced anonymously: Are there any queers in Pilsen?

Others wondered: What would happen when mostly white tranny fags, dykes, lesbians, queers, and gender-fuckers found themselves in the midst of a vibrant neighborhood that's embattled by immigration raids; where the predominant language is Spanish; and whose residents have frequently been painted as homophobic?

Owen Daniel-McCarter, present as legal counsel and as a marshal for the march, anticipated no such problems. According to him, organizers were more concerned about police harassment, but had seen nothing of concern. He stressed the inclusivity of the march: "All the marshals are instructed to be conscious about pronouns and to be sensitive about gender identity. The training was done in both English and Spanish; all of our materials are in English and Spanish."

People appeared energized by the shift in locale. Liz Thomson, a member of Asian Pacific Islander Pride, said that while there may have been some initial anxiety in the community, "I think it's good. It makes me want to be one of the organizers for next year, and maybe organize it in Chinatown or Argyle. We were getting pretty comfortable [in Andersonville]."

The group Bash Back came with a banner that demanded: "Bash Back Against Gentrification." A spokesperson, Tim, said that "[The banner] expresses our concern about the rapid gentrification all over this neighborhood." About the controversy over the move, he echoed a sentiment common among participants: that it drew attention to "the exclusion of people of color and low-income communities. It's important that there was a controversy to highlight the ways in which Boystown and Andersonville exclude communities."

Marchers moved down 18th street, accompanied by police cars and several pairs of dykes on bikes (not the official group, "just random dykes on bikes," according to one rider). Groups marching included Bash Back, Feminist Response In Disability Activism, Gay Liberation Network, Lesbian Community Care Project, and Pomegranate Health Collective.

There were no pressing throngs of people,

and marchers were only allowed to take up one lane. But passersby, drivers, and spectators were overwhelmingly supportive. Nilsa Irizarry, of Orgullo En Acción, said she was "proud to be among our people, and [felt] humbled by their acceptance."

Slogans and chants were in Spanish and English, and they ranged from "No more silence, no more violence, we will not be victimized" to "Gender binaries must be broken, I am not your fucking token." A golden-winged fairy fluttered by, and a woman wore a t-shirt that proclaimed, "I am Mexican. Not Latina. Not Hispanic."

That was only one of many signs that Dyke March was in a different political and cultural space than Andersonville. Pilsen's many local activists come from a Latin American political tradition with a strong leftist agenda. After the crowd streamed into Harrison Park, performances (emceed by Tania Unzueta) began with a Spanish song by Papi Chulo (Xiomara Santana). Its infectious rhythm came with somber politics. Titled "The song of the dead," the piece, according to Chulo, was about immigration, racism, and Cesar Chavez.

In a different vein, the Radical Cheerleaders chanted "Fuck, fuck, fuck your gender!" and "Riot, don't diet!" Meriszca, in a blouse and long skirt, sang what seemed like a raucous and sexy song. It was in Spanish, leading to befuddlement among some. Spanish speakers chuckled knowingly.

And then came some answers as she occasionally tossed off phrases in English: "Rejoice ... No man will understand ... Love her tender, love her hard," causing everyone to erupt in applause. Nobody seemed to care about translation, or about being out of their comfort zone of language and locale.

But what of fears about homophobes in Pilsen reacting badly to the march? Jose Luis, selling ice cream paletas, was excited about the March. Without being prompted about possible objections, he said, "I don't see anything wrong. Everybody has their own beliefs, their own decisions. What's wrong is the government and the church. This [the march] is everyday life." For Janet, who's recently moved to Chicago from Atlanta, the crowd seemed mostly young (40 and below), but she was impressed by the turnout.

To those who might initially have asked, "Are there any dykes in Pilsen?," the answer, given the spectrum of queers ranging in race and ethnicity, looked like a yes. But for many the real question might have been: "Are there any politics left in Dyke March?" The answer, for those left dancing to the rhythms of what can only be described as intense Latina Heavy Metal, seemed to be a resounding yes.

Photos by Tracy Baim, Emmanuel Garcia, Kat Fitzgerald and Yasmin Nair

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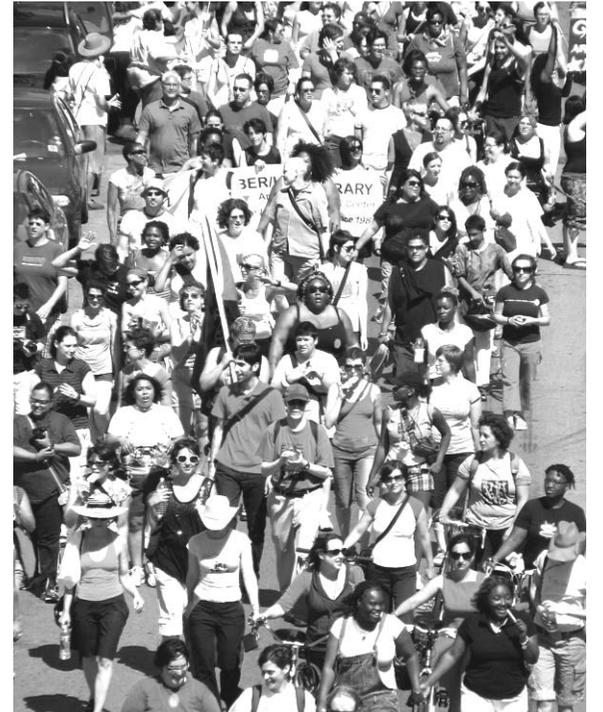
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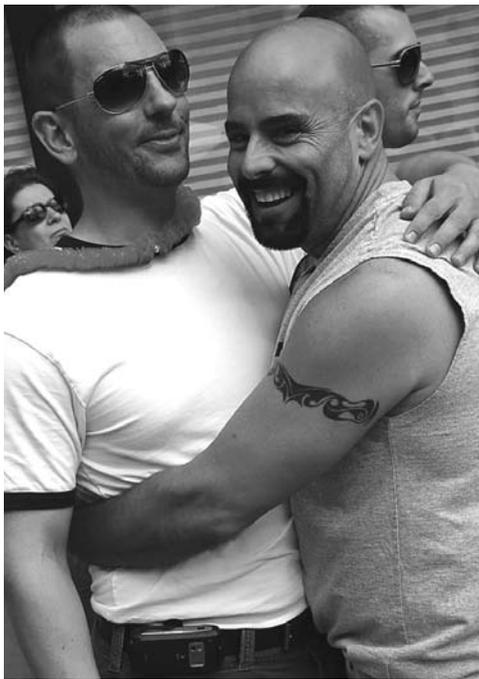
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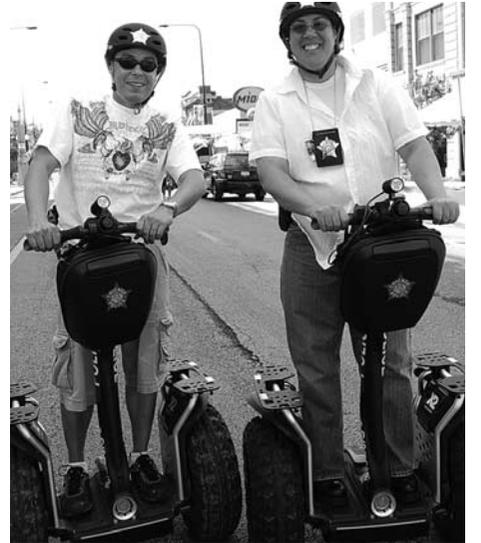


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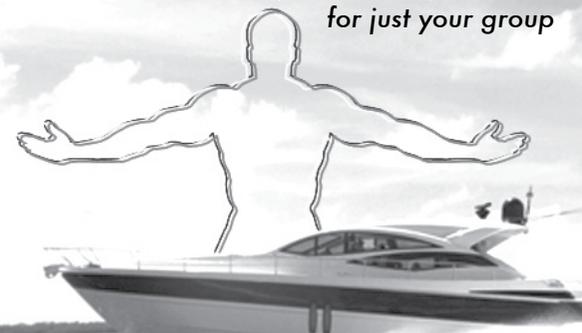
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The Mother of Tears; Hancock

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

Thirty years after receiving international acclaim for the gory, sensual and visually stunning horror film *Suspiria*, Italian filmmaker Dario Argento has, at last, completed the third part of his supernatural horror trilogy with **The Mother of Tears**. The three films (of which part two, *Inferno*, was released in 1980) are the loosely connected stories of three ancient witches—"The Three Mothers"—who use their black magic to rain death and destruction upon the world. The films are all shot in the "giallo" style and Argento is often described as the father of the genre. "Giallo" is the Italian word used to describe a genre of horror filmmaking that incorporates



The Mother of Tears.

graphic, extended murder sequences with tons of bloodletting (usually of women), stylish camerawork, baroque settings, and highly theatrical music scores. By that definition, Argento's *The Mother of Tears* is the mother of giallo movies. It's also an incomprehensible mess—at turns campy, sexy, silly, overtly gory and, for fleeting seconds here and there, even scary. In short, it is a very entertaining fiasco.

The "plot" follows Sarah Mandy (played by Asia Argento), the director's daughter, who is most effective when she is snarling at her many opponents. Sarah is an art student in Rome who unwittingly opens the recently discovered urn of "La Terza Madre," thus unleashing her tremendous evil powers. Sarah barely escapes the fate of her colleague, who falls prey to one of Argento's most grisly murders. Aided by white witches, Sarah slowly learns that she alone has the power to destroy La Terza Madre who is holed up in the catacombs under her decaying villa, drawing hordes of eager, orgy-seeking witches and warlocks to her side. Violent crimes of all kinds and degradation increase in Rome (the silliest scenes in the film)—along with the witch's power—while Sarah desperately tries to piece together her own fractured past. In one memorable cat-and-mouse sequence, she is tracked at the train station by both police (who want her for questioning in the brutal death of her colleague) and a persistent Japanese witch, who senses her innate power and giggles in anticipation of challenging her.

In another scene, Sarah is befriended by a lesbian psychic and her lover—only to witness their excruciating, brutal deaths moments later (after some gratuitous nudity and lovemaking, of course). Surprisingly, the charge of misogyny lobbed at most giallo movies doesn't apply here, as Argento is an equal opportunity agent of death—men, women, children, babies and even a nasty monkey all get offed in spectacularly gross ways. (For the squeamish, including myself, most of the killings are telegraphed enough in advance to turn away.) It's just as gruesome as the torture porn of *Saw* and *Hostel*, but the violence here is so audacious and so far-fetched it becomes almost comical.

Argento does offer one great suspense sequence—near the end of the film when Sarah discovers the location of the rotting villa and, having now discovered her powers, brazenly walks through the home as the camera follows her in and out of the shadows in a long tracking shot. Argento's lighting and music (by Claudio Simonetti) are heightened further as Sarah slowly descends to the caverns below to confront her fate. Once in the tombs, the climax of the film



Hancock.

ups the "ick factor" even higher but then offers a surprisingly quick and benign resolve.

Though not on a par visually or aurally with *Suspiria* or the earlier *Bird with the Crystal Plumage*, *The Mother of Tears* has plenty to offer both bloodthirsty audiences, style junkies, and camp-horror enthusiasts. The movie opens Wed., July 2, exclusively at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport; see www.musicboxtheatre.com.

I'm not exactly sure what to make of **Hancock**, Will Smith's latest contender for box-office prominence. The ads would have you believe that the film is a special-effects-driven action-comedy that focuses on Smith as a drunken, cranky superhero who "hilariously" wreaks havoc every time he reluctantly steps in to fight crime, and it also focuses on the efforts of Jason Bateman as a down-on-his-luck ad man who sees a public-relations opportunity in rehabilitating Smith's public reputation. That takes up about the film's first 20 minutes, ending with Smith volunteering to serve jail time for all the public damage he's committed and laws he's broken.

But then, strangely, when Smith is called back into superhero action, the movie moves into much darker territory. It becomes clear that Smith and Bateman's wife, played by Charlize Theron, have something for each other—something pretty strong. And since we have not been prepared for a soggy love triangle between a lonely superhero and an endearing but not very successful husband over his luscious but cagey wife, its introduction and the odd twists in tone

that follow throw one off balance.

The picture, not exactly a laugh riot to begin with, never finds its footing thereafter and, though a slew of top-dollar action set pieces follow, nothing reverberates. Worse, the movie never returns to its comic roots and then abruptly conks out at 90 minutes. Bateman and Theron do fine work under Peter Berg's direction but Smith is left holding the bag. Audiences have come to depend on his ability to personify flawed but heroic characters that rise to the occasion and not only take on the world, but conquer it and exult in their ability to do so. Though Smith gets to do plenty of conquering here, it's not the sort that will leave audiences feeling exhilarated or much of anything else for that matter. *Hancock* is a strange hybrid of a movie—a film that never congeals and is the first misstep that I can recall Smith making since he refused to kiss Eric Thal on screen in *Six Degrees of Separation* 15 years ago.

Check out my archived reviews at www.windycitytimes.com or www.knightatthemovies.com. Readers can leave feedback at the latter Web site, where there is also ordering information on my book of collected film reviews, *Knight at the Movies 2004-2006*.



Read Richard Knight, Jr.'s, interview with legendary Broadway singer Barbara Cook (above) at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com. She discusses showtune standards, her gay son and much more.

Cook will be at Ravinia Sun.-Mon., July 6-7. See www.Ravinia.org for more information.

Photo by Mike Martin

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ART OPENING: Flourish Studios. 3020 N. Lincoln, Chicago, IL. July 12, 6-9 PM. Enjoy light refreshments and meet the artist. **For more information, visit artist's website www.taniarodamilans.com (7/16/08-4)**

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PIZZERIA RESTAURANT/ PUB: With live entertainment. Established since 1966 - a real \$\$\$ maker. Even the banker thinks it's great. Berwyn/ Oak Park area. **Nick DiBriszi, Business Broker, Coldwell Banker Commercial. Call 888-317-7721 or nick.dibrizzi@cbexchange.com (7/02/08-8)**

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

VALLARTA GAY HOTEL: Extremely successful gay hotel in Puerto Vallarta seeks partners for major expansion. Excellent opportunity for high profit. Six years in operation, with real estate already owned. **Call toll free 1-866-388-2689. (8/06/08-12)**

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downsized and more. Depressed about going home to chaos? We can organize your chaos, straighten out your chaos, help you make sense of your chaos and finally clean what is no longer chaos. **Can we help you? Bonded and insured. Chestnut Cleaning Service: 312-332-5575 (5/24/09-tk)**

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HIV HYPNOTHERAPY GROUP: Experienced PhD hosting group sessions designed to stimulate immune system. Sessions meet 2 times/ week. AM and PM available. Low rates. **For details, call Dr. William J. Nasser, PhD at 219-331-4682. (7/16/08-4)**

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FITNESS

PERSONAL TRAINER: Rachel Lavin, M. A. Realize your goals through 12 week success programs. Lose weight, get in shape and be the best you can be. **CORRECTED NUMBER: 773-251-7874 (PP1/08/09PP)**

HELP WANTED

UNDERCOVER SHOPPERS: Retail and dining establishments need undercover clients to judge quality and customer service. **Earn up to \$100 a day. Please Call 1-800-491-7969 (7/16/08-4)**

PAINTER: Looking for a professional female painter to work on an as-needed basis. **Contact Connie at The Feminine Touch Painting Company. 773-274-8085 or 773-301-8221. (7/9/08-2)**

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For your American Sign Language/English interpreting needs: To consult with you or your company with your ADA needs. **Diana Thorpe CI/CT/NIC Master, Nationally Certified Interpreter, 773-401-1339, or e-mail thorpe2001@aol.com [P-TB]**

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30 Under 30 Awards

The annual Windy City Times 30 Under 30 Awards ceremony was held June 20 at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted. All but two of the honorees were able to make the event, and many brought fans, parents, family and partners. The awards were co-sponsored by Howard Brown Health Center, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Chicago House, Center on Halsted and Windy City Media Group. Windy City Media Group's Amy Matheny and Season of Concern's Stephen Rader were the co-hosts. Photos were taken by Kat Fitzgerald. See the June 25 edition of Windy City Times (in print or online, at www.Windy-CityMedia Group.com) for biographies and fun facts about this year's winners:

- Ali Abbas
- Myrl Beam
- Timothy Bechtel
- Derek Britton
- Andre Brown
- Taylor Casey
- TyJuan Cratic
- Liesel Fischer
- Amy Gregory

- Annie Gregory
- Julien Jacquet
- Chris Jessup
- Lisa Katona
- Tom Kelly
- Tony Lewis
- Liz Marr and RJ Sarna
- Madsen Minax
- Bethany Minor
- Daniel Pohl
- Patricia Posey
- Ray Prather
- Ernetta Procter
- Rev. Jennette Rude
- Hector Salgado
- Simon Strikeback
- Jasmine Thurmond
- Laura Velazquez
- Michael Vinson
- Will White
- Gabriela Zapata

- Special Awards:
 Ronnie Kroell
 Steven Rosenberg

WHAT TO DO?

Wednesday, July 2

Chicago Windy City Black Pride Through July 7. Host hotel: Palmer House Hilton. Events include pride parties throughout city and more. See www.chiblackpride.com, call 773-991-7962

Hydrate Hydrag Revue featuring Tajma Hall, Mimi Marks, Amaya Mann & Kelly Lauren, 3458 N. Halsted St., HydrateChicago.com

Shadow Bar A Night in Paris: The Music, The Madness, The Moment, a champagne reception with light hors d'oeuvres. Doors open 8 p.m., 811 W. Lake St.

Thursday, July 3

Annoyance Theatre "Dick O'Day's Big, Lovely Bingo." One night only. 8 p.m., \$10, 4830 N. Broadway, www.annoyanceproductions.com or 773-561-4665 for tickets

Chicago Windy City Black Pride Official Welcome Party with DJ Lil' John and DJ Unknown (NYC). 10 p.m.-4 a.m., Ruby, 151 W. Ohio St., www.chiblackpride.com

Windy City Black Pride Through July 6. Host hotel: Hyatt Regency McCormick Place. Events throughout week include workshops, youth events, vendor fair, poetry slam and more. See www.windy-cityblackpride.org.

Friday, July 4

Chicago Windy City Black Pride Urbano Blatini Pride featuring DJ Gavin T and more. 10 p.m.-4 a.m., Circuit, 3641 N. Halsted St., www.chiblackpride.com

Equality Illinois Barbeque. 1-4 p.m., Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St., www.eqil.org

Hydrate Lube wrestling at 11 p.m., followed by DJ Jeannette, 3458 N. Halsted St., HydrateChicago.com

Sidetrack Holiday BBQ, open at 2 p.m., food at 3, 3349 N. Halsted St., SidetrackChicago.com

Spin Fierce Fridays - The Birthday Show, with birthday girl The Lady Vera Parker, starring September Murphy, Kelly Luaren, Teri Yaki and more, 900 W. Belmont Ave., Spin-Nightclub.com

Saturday, July 5

Chicago Windy City Black Pride The 1st Annual Men's Black Party with DJs

Craig Loftis, Anton and Kenae. 10 p.m.-3 a.m., Congress Theater, 2135 N. Milwaukee Ave., www.chiblackpride.com

Chicago Windy City Black Pride Xotik VIP after party featuring DJ Corey. 11 p.m.-5 a.m., Tokyo 21, 901 W. Weed St., www.chiblackpride.com

Dykes Pedaling Bikes A ride down the lakefront. E-mail cat@lccp.org for more info

Eagle Underwear Party, free coat check for pants, 5015 N. Clark St.

Hydrate DJ Ron Geronimo, 3458 N. Halsted St., HydrateChicago.com

Man's Country Free Underwear Night, 8 p.m.-4 a.m., 5017 N. Clark St.

Spin Male Ear-Rotica, exotic entertainment, DJs sp-1, and Stoney, 900 W. Belmont Ave., Spin-Nightclub.com

Sunday, July 6

Berlin Madonnarama, with DJ Riley York, 954 W. Belmont Ave., BerlinChicago.com

Chicago Windy City Black Pride OTDL Pride Reunion with DJs Anton and Kenae. 11 p.m.-4 a.m., Club 720, 720 N. Wells St., www.chiblackpride.com

Entre Familia Meeting. 2-4 p.m., El Valor, 1924 W. 21st St., 773-319-3329

Monday, July 7

Chicago Windy City Black Pride Pride Forever closing party hosted by Mz. Ruff 'N' Stuff, DJ Stoney. 10 p.m.-4 a.m., Circuit, 3641 N. Halsted St., www.chiblackpride.com

Tuesday, July 8

3160 Dan Stetzel's post birthday celebration, 9:30 p.m., 3160 N. Clark St., myspace.com/chicago3160

Gerber/Hart Library Lesbian Book Group: Aquamarine by Carol Anshaw. 7:30-9 p.m., 1127 W. Granville Ave., www.gerberhart.org

Thursday, July 10

AIDS Foundation of Chicago AIDS Run & Walk Chicago Star Fundraiser Party. 5:30 p.m., Texas de Brazil, runandwalk@aidschicago.org, www.aidschicago.org

Windy City Gay Naturists M2M Massage. 2 p.m., BYOT, \$10, RSVP 773-764-1204

Friday, July 11

Affinity To Affinity and Beyond, a group for Black lesbian and bi women hosts a young women's drop-in. First Friday of each month. 6-9 p.m., 5650 S. Woodlawn, garden level, www.affinity95.org

Association of Latino Men for Action Dancing on the Deck cruise with DJ Alex Perez and guest appearances by Miss Ketty and Veronica Zaid. 8:30 p.m. departure from Navy Pier, \$125 includes four-hour cruise, buffet, beverages, entertainment and dancing, tickets at www.almachicago.org or at Circuit Night Club

Beyondmedia Education Housewarming party to celebrate its new location. 6-11 p.m., 4001 N. Ravenswood, Suite 204C, \$20 with cash bar, www.beyondmedia.org

Equality Illinois First Friday. 6-8 p.m., \$10 donation, Sidetrack Glass Bar, 3349 N. Halsted St., www.eqil.org

Saturday, July 12

Voices for Creative Nonviolence Witness Against War 2008, a walk from Chicago to St. Paul to challenge war in Iraq. 11 p.m. kick off at Federal Plaza, 230 S. Dearborn St., 12 p.m. walk to Grant Park to St. Gertrude Parish in Rogers Park, 7 p.m. presentation at St. Gertrudes, 1401 W. Granville Ave., www.vcnv.org, witnessagainstarwar@vcnv.org

Windy City Gay Naturists BBQ/Potluck. Bring side dish/salad/dessert to pass. Bring towel. 5:30 p.m., \$5, RSVP 312-494-2654 or wcn60660@aol.com

Sunday, July 13

Chicago Prime Timers Open social. 6 p.m. social hour, buffet dinner and presentation by Iris Rosado at 7 p.m., \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members, no RSVP required, Ann Sather, 909 W. Belmont, 312-337-6044

Gerber/Hart Library Brunch with Barbara Grier and Donna McBride, co-founders of Naiad Press. 11 a.m. breakfast followed by remarks, \$5-\$10 suggested donation, RSVP required at 773-381-8030 or e-mail info@gerberhart.org

Tuesday, July 15

Homolatte Louis Weisberg and Ian Wilson. Hosted by Scott Free. 7:30 p.m.,

free, Big Chicks/Tweet, 5024 N. Sheridan, www.homolatte.com

Wednesday, July 16

About Face Youth Theatre Ensemble Opening night of Fast Forward, an exploration about how this generation is affected by abstinence-only sex education. Tickets \$15, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted St., www.about-face-theatre.com

Gay & Lesbian Leadership Institute Financial Planning for the LGBT Community seminar. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Swissotel Chicago, 323 E. Wacker Dr., free but space limited, RSVP required to martin.espinosa@glli.org

Windy City Gay Naturists Club night at Touche. BYOT/gym bag. RSVP 312-494-2654

Thursday, July 17

SAGE Night at the Opera: Live interview with international opera star Christine Brewer. 6:30 p.m., free, Center on Halsted's John Baran Senior Center, 3656 N. Halsted St., RSVP to 773-472-6469 ext. 160 or sworthington@centeron-halsted.org

Saturday, July 19

Human Rights Campaign Summer Chic 2008 HRC Chicago Gala. Hyatt Regency Chicago, e-mail chicago-hrcgala2008@gmail.com, see www.chicago-summer-chic.com for more info

Sunday, July 20

PFLAG Chicago Metro Monthly meeting. Third Sunday of each month. 2-4 p.m., Howard Brown, 4025 N. Sheridan Rd., 773-388-1600

Windy City Gay Naturists M2M Massage. 5:30 p.m., \$10, BYOT, RSVP 773-764-1204

Wednesday, July 23

Lifelube "Let's Take a Glass Together" forum about the LGBT community and alcohol. Doors open 6 p.m., 7 p.m. discussion, Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted. RSVP at www.lifelube.org or call 312-334-0939, must be 21 or over to attend

Thurs., July 10



WALKING THE WALK

AIDS Foundation of Chicago will hold its AIDS Run & Walk Chicago Star Fundraiser Party at Texas de Brazil, 51 E. Ohio.

Photo from the 2007 AIDS Run & Walk by Kat Fitzgerald

Wed., July 16



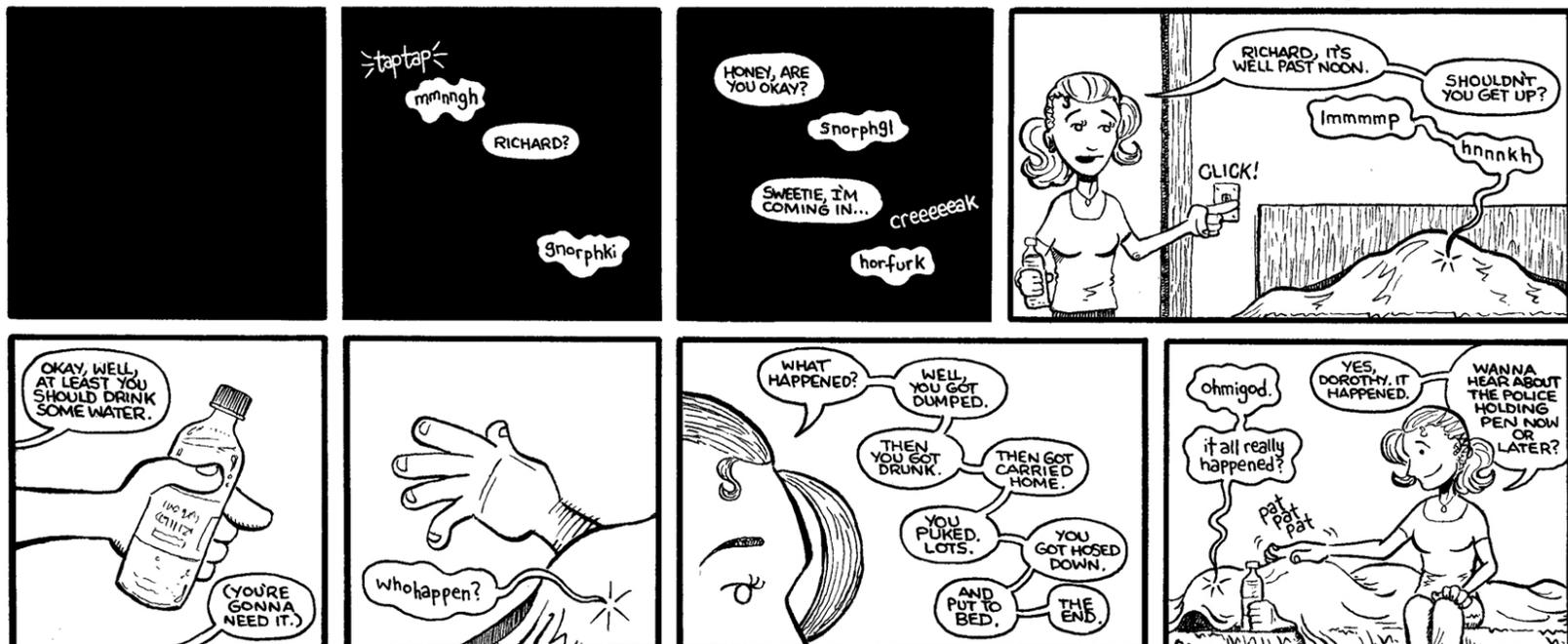
FIRST AND 'FAST'

The opening night of About Face Youth Theatre Ensemble's **Fast Forward** will take place at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted.

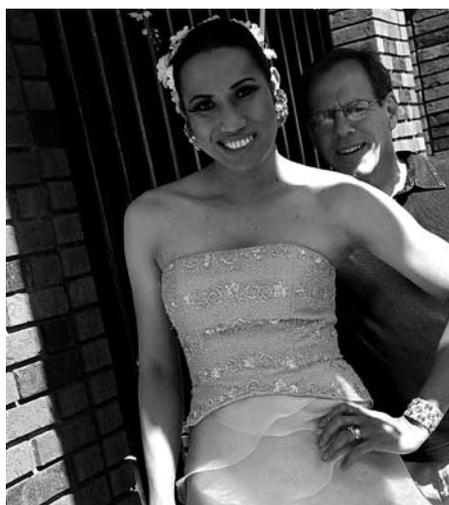
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More parade pics...



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SPORTS

Proud to Run

On June 28, the Chicago Frontrunners/Frontwalkers held its annual Proud to Run races. Over 800 individuals pre-registered for the event, according to the organizations' Web site. The event included a 5K and 10K run, and a 2-mile walk. An awards ceremony followed the races. Eric Alva, the openly gay former marine and Iraq War veteran who served as grand marshal of Sunday's Pride Parade, congratulated the victors. (Alva is a runner even after losing a leg in combat.) Winners included Chicago's Brad Zoller in the 5K run and Bensenville's Joseph Roeges in the 10K division. Pictured in top photo: Eric Alva (right) with Proud to Run co-chairs Tricia Sulita and Scott Laboda; photos by Terri Klinsky

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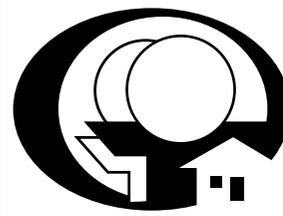
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