Winds of Change

Among the sights at the inaugural kickoff event on Jan. 18 were (clockwise from left): President Barack Obama with his family; the Right Rev. Gene Robinson, who delivered the prayer; and entertainers Josh Groban and Heather Headley with the D.C. Gay Men’s Chorus. Read more about Obama’s historic inauguration on page 4. Photos by Patsy Lynch

From left: Maria’s Field, Richard Chamberlain and Beer are among the productions and individuals featured in Windy City Times’ winter theater preview.

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Must purchase by end guest for performances through 3/15/09. Limit 14 tickets per order. Some restrictions apply. While supplies last. Offer valid for BMG Chicago shows only. Not valid on previously purchased tickets. Restrictions apply.
One Important Night, One Important Cause

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2009 EQUALITY ILLINOIS GALA

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2009

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6 p.m. COCKTAIL RECEPTION AND SILENT AUCTION - 8 p.m. DINNER AND PROGRAM

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Friday, February 6 at A NEW LEAF, 1820 North Wells Street, Chicago

Justice for All is the largest LGBT black-tie gala in the Midwest. Come join us on one important night, for one important cause.

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All gala proceeds will benefit the Equality Illinois Education Project, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent provided by law.
Join Vital Bridges and the 9 to 12 Bowling League at River Rand Bowl on Saturday, January 31st for a bowling benefit in the suburbs!

$30 per bowler or $150 for a team of six.
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Strike Out Hunger is a lighthearted tournament for a serious cause. Help low-income men, women, and children impacted by HIV/AIDS receive the services they need to improve their health and build self-sufficiency. Don’t miss it!

Located at River Rand Bowl, 191 S River Road, Des Plaines

6:30 - 7:00 pm: Bowler and Team Registration
7:00 - 10:00 pm: Tournament, Raffle, Silent Auction

The DVD of the guilty-pleasure film Schoolboy Crush (above) is reviewed on page 22.

A lot of fun was had at the L Word viewing party that took place at T’s Jan. 18. See more photos on page 21.

Photo by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com)

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INauguration 2009

Barack Obama takes the presidential oath of office. Photo taken by Kirk Williamson from CNN coverage

Barack Obama becomes the 44th president
BY ANDREW DAVIS

Providing the high point for millions of visitors to Washington, D.C.—and ushering in an era of change, diversity and hope—Barack Obama was sworn in on the steps of the U.S. Capitol Jan. 20, becoming the 44th president of the United States.

Officials expected approximately 2 million people on Inauguration Day, compelling out-of-towners to adjust their schedules in order to make the trip to Washington, D.C.—and ushering in an era of change, diversity and hope—Barack Obama was sworn in on the steps of the U.S. Capitol Jan. 20, becoming the 44th president of the United States.

The timing of the swearing-in—the day after Martin Luther King, Jr., Day—provided even more meaning to a historic day. As the first African-American commander-in-chief took office, Obama spent the holiday at the Sasha Bruce House, a place for homeless teens, while issuing a “call to service” to the nation; there, he assisted people who were fixing up rooms.

The inauguration ceremony included a performance by Aretha Franklin, a reading by renowned poet Elizabeth Alexander and an invocation by controversial minister Rick Warren. The selection of Warren—who supported California’s anti-same-sex measure, Prop 8—angered many members of the LGBT community, in particular. After announcing the choice of Warren, Obama’s transition team selected openly gay Episcopal Bishop V. Gene Robinson to lead the prayer at this past Sunday’s inaugural kickoff event at the Lincoln Memorial.

Obama started off by saying that he was “humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you have bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors.” He then acknowledged the economic crisis: “The state of the economy calls for action, bold and swift, and we will act—not only to create new jobs, but to lay a new foundation for growth.”

The new president also addressed the issue of war: “To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society’s ills, know that you are on the wrong side of history; but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to meet the common challenges of our time.”

Obama’s message—which stressed that this country will rise to the challenges presented to it—also mentioned religion, but did not mention sexual orientation.

Tuesday’s ceremony ended with the inaugural parade, which included the Lesbian and Gay Band Association (LGBA), a musical organization composed of marching and concert bands from across the U.S. and around the world. Among the songs the LGBA performed during the 1.5-mile route were Brand New Day (from the musical Wiz), The Washington Post and Hold On, I’m Coming to America. Members of Chicago’s Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles marched with the band.

LGBT-rights groups expressed their happiness over the new leadership. Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese said that “[Obama’s] inauguration represents a paradigm shift. The pendulum has swung away from the anti-gay forces and toward a new president and vice president who acknowledge our equality.... Our community and do many others are looking at a new day of welcome and great promise.”

The Lincoln Memorial
On Jan. 18, a half-million people witnessed the two-hour “We Are One” concert, an all-star collection of actors and singers that took place at the Lincoln Memorial. Among those performing or speaking were Beyoncé, Garth Brooks, Mary J. Blige, Queen Latifah, Denzel Washington and Bono.

Obama included the LGBT community in his speech at the event: “It’s the same thing that gave me hope from the day we began this campaign for the presidency nearly two years ago. A belief that if we could just recognize ourselves in one another, bring everybody together, Democrats, Republicans, Independents, Latinos, Asian, and Native American, Black and white, gay and straight, disabled and not, then not only would we restore hope and opportunity in places that yearn for both, but maybe just maybe we might perfect our union in the process. This is what I believed, but you made this belief real.”

However, the event did not occur without some controversy. Obama’s inauguration committee took responsibility for failing to broadly represent couples and singles and shower appreciation on supportive family & friends.

Music by DJ Harry T • Cake-Cutting • Bouquet Toss • Honors d’œuvres • Open Bar & much more!

Be Part of a Movement!
Join us as we honor the commitment of local same-sex couples and shower appreciation on supportive family & friends.

 Mistress of Ceremonies, C.C. Carter, Young Chicago Authors Special performance by GayCo Productions

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Lambda Legal & the National Museum of Mexican Art Cordially invite you to a free event

8th Freedom To Marry Reception

A “Cause” for Celebration

The National Museum of Mexican Art
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Thursday, February 5, 2009
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Pictured are Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles members who participated in the Lesbian and Gay Band Association that marched in Obama’s inaugural parade. In the front row are (left to right) Vernon Magismo, Sarah Avampato, Katrina Cook and Sue Jones; in the back row (left to right) are Michelle Wetzel, Dot Wood, Rhonda Tullis and Denise (Volunteer, Band-Aid). Photo courtesy of Sandy Olson

In a late development, Sen. Ted Kennedy, who has been battling a cancerous brain tumor, apparently had a seizure and collapsed in the U.S. Capitol’s Statuary Hall at the inauguration luncheon. Visit www.windycitymediasgroup.com for more details as they become available.
1998 survey shows another shift
BY TRACY BAIM

In last week’s Windy City Times, we revealed for the first time the complete answers from Barack Obama to a 1996 Outlines newspaper questionnaire. While we had reported before that Obama backed same-sex marriage in that election for state Senate, the old survey had just been found in the Windy City Times archives and published in full for the first time. (Outlines merged with Windy City Times in 2000.)

In that Outlines survey, which had been sent to all local and federal candidates, Obama or someone in his campaign did not just answer yes or no, but instead typed a complete set of answers to the survey, and Obama signed the bottom of the page. On the marriage issue it said: “I favor legalizing same-sex marriages, and would fight efforts to prohibit such marriages.”

This evidence of Obama’s shift from early support to where he stands today -- opposed to gay marriage but in favor of civil unions -- caused quite a stir last week. The Windy City Times story was picked up around the country, first on blogs and then on news programs. The story was on The Rachel Maddow Show (where the host brought it up during an interview with Bishop Gene Robinson), the Advocate, the Christian Broadcasting Network, Fox News, Huffington Post, Politico, Towleroad, Dan Savage’s blog, Andrew Sullivan’s blog, and in numerous other stories, both in the gay media and mainstream media.

The survey from 1996 was found during my archival dig into more than 300 boxes of old Windy City Times and Outlines newspaper files. I am scanning old items for the www.ChicagoGay-History.org Web site, so as I continue to find more items we will be posting those.

Last week, I found yet another Obama survey response, this time from the 1998 race where he was seeking re-election for state Senate. This time, Obama’s campaign just wrote their answers on our Outlines questionnaire. There was a three-part question on same-sex marriage: Do you favor legalizing same-sex marriage? Would you support a bill to repeal Illinois legislation prohibiting same-sex marriage? Would you co-sponsor it? For all three questions he wrote in “undecided”. The shift away from same-sex marriage support had begun. Later, in his run for U.S. Senate, he backed away further, now saying he favored civil unions, and felt marriage is a state’s issue.

See the complete story from last week’s Windy City Times at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com. The complete 1998 survey is also online with this article. [In 1998 he also answers “not sure” and “need more info” when asked about the military’s gay ban; now he says he is opposed to the ban; in this case one step forward instead of two steps back.]

Tracy Baim is publisher and executive editor of Windy City Times. She was the co-founder and publisher of Outlines newspaper.
Obama’s newest LGBT appointees
BY LISA KEEN, KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The last week leading up to the inauguration of the new president has brought a virtual cascade of LGBT-related political developments: eight new appointments were revealed to be in the works.

Most significant by far, in terms of political importance, are the new appointments, albeit they are in various stages of being vetted, finalized and announced.

Openly gay National Zoo Director John Berry is being named to head the Office of Personnel Management. It’s a bit of a grab-bag of the Secretary of Interior position gay leaders had hoped for but it is the highest-ranking position ever for an openly gay appointee. The Office of Personnel Management, with more than 5,000 employees and an annual budget of about $1.5 billion, is the hiring agency of the federal government’s three million-strong civilian workforce.

In addition to being director of the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., Berry was, under President Bill Clinton, assistant secretary for policy, management and budget at the Interior. He has also served as head of the Congressionally sanctioned National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Berry is a major donor to and a member of the Human Rights Campaign's board. Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund leader Chuck Wolfe singled out Berry from a pool of LGBT Presidential Appointments Project candidates as a strong contender for a cabinet position. Wolfe and other gay leaders were openly disappointed when Obama appointed no openly LGBT people to the cabinet. The transition team this week did not officially confirm reports that Berry’s nomination is imminent, but gave indications that an announcement could come in the next few days.

The transition team has also indicated that announcements will likely be made soon concerning the widespread reports that openly LGBT people thus far named to positions in the Obama White House and administration. Previously, the Obama transition team named Los Angeles Deputy Mayor Nancy Sutley to chair his White House Council on Environmental Quality and Brad Kiley as director of the White House Office of Management and Administration.

Meanwhile, the Washington Post reported Tuesday that Mark Dybul, an openly gay physician who has served for the past three years as President Bush’s Ambassador for the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, a global program, is staying put, at least for now. Post political columnist Al Kamen said Dybul sent an e-mail Jan. 9 to his staff, saying he has “been asked to resign my resignation so I will be continuing in the coordinator position beyond the inauguration.”

Equality Summit drops restrictions on media
BY REX WOOCKER

The California Equality Summit, a large gay activist powwow being held in Los Angeles Jan. 24, has abandoned a plan to block media access to portions of the gathering.

The meeting of more than 250 California LGBT activists at the Los Angeles Convention Center will focus on strategizing and organizing to win back same-sex marriage in California. Internal meeting minutes and e-mails, given to reporters by a disgruntled co-organizer, had made clear that the 53-member organizing committee had decided to prevent reporters from attending at least some portions of the summit.

“Media will have access to cover only a portion of the summit,” stated the minutes of a Dec. 18 planning-committee meeting. “Co-chairs will determine which section that is.”

The policy was reiterated as late as Dec. 29, when summit coordinator Anne Marks of Equal California informed the planning committee that the co-chairs “have decided not to revisit the committee’s decision on media policy.”

But after the documents became public and news stories were published on Jan. 5 and Jan. 7, organizers apparently opted to reconsider the decision.

A note published Jan. 13 on Equality California’s Web site stated simply, “There will be press access at the entire summit for pre-registered members of the media.”

The planned media limits had been controversial because the people who ran the failed campaign against Proposition 8 were openly criticized for their alleged insularity during the campaign, in which Equality California had the lead role.

Prop 8, passed narrowly by voters on Nov. 4, 2008, amended the California Constitution to wipe out same-sex marriage, which had been legal since June 16, 2008, following a state Supreme Court ruling which found the state’s opposite-sex definition of marriage unconstitutional.

Prop 8 is now itself under attack before the Supreme Court as allegedly unconstitutional for a variety of reasons. A ruling is expected in June.

NATIONAL ROUNDPACK
BY ANDREW DAVIS

Log Cabin Republicans President Patrick Sammon has admitted that the organization is facing financial difficulties and ended 2008 at less than half the strength it had the year before, according to a press report.

Sammon said the economic crisis “certainly has affected” Log Cabin’s ability to raise as much as had been predicted for the year.

After 37 years, police have solved the murder of Gerald Jackson, a gay man who was stabbed 55 times in the San Diego, Calif., area known as Horton Plaza, Gay & Lesbian Times reported. Police were able to track down the suspect, Gerard Dean Metcalf, who had moved to Texas. Metcalf had a preliminary hearing Jan. 15 in San Diego Superior Court.

For the first time, researchers have established a definitive link between the rejection behaviors of families towards lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) adolescents and negative health outcomes in early adulthood, and these findings will be published in the January issue of Pediatrics, according to a press release. Among the scientific discoveries, that young adults who reported higher levels of family rejection during adolescence were 8.4 times more likely to report having attempted suicide than those who did not reject.

In Tennessee, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has asked a state appeals court to overturn a ban that prevents divorced mother Angel Chandler from having her partner of nine months and her own children together at home at the same time, according to an ACLU press release. According to the ACLU, the trial court imposed the “paramour restriction” even though the children’s psychological health would benefit the partner to be a positive influence on the children.

Robert Gibbs, a spokesperson for President-elect Barack Obama, has said that the next leader of the United States is committed to ending “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” CNN reported. However, Gibbs added that terminating the policy will not happen right away, as the economy is Obama’s top priority.

President Barack Obama followed a meeting with conservative columnists by dining with liberal commentators Jan. 14, according to Politico.com. Among those in the latter group were lesbian Rachel Maddow and openly gay columnist Andrew Sullivan.

The Stonewall Democrats have issued a release congratulating Laura Calvo upon her election as treasurer of the Democratic Party of Oregon. In a historic development, Calvo has become the first openly transgender official of a state Democratic party.

Donald Hitchcock, a former outreach director for the Democratic National Committee (DNC), has reached a settlement with the organization, the Washington Blade reported. Hitchcock sued the DNC and its chair, Howard Dean, after Hitchcock was removed as head of party outreach to the LGBT community. Hitchcock claimed that the DNC discriminated against him because the firing occurred after his partner, Paul Fandara, criticized Dean about the latter’s handling of LGBT issues.

Alicia Skillman has been named executive director of Michigan’s Triangle Foundation—becoming the first woman and person of color to lead the state’s prominent LGBT rights organization, according to an organizational press release. Skillman is also a member of Project Harmony’s Advisory Council, VOICES; Project Harmony is an initiative of Family Equality Council that involves LGBT families of color.

The California Council of Churches and various other religious leaders and faith organizations have filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the California Supreme Court asking the Court to invalidate Proposition 8, according to a press release from the council. Like other complaints with the court, this brief argues that Prop 8 poses a severe threat to the guarantee of equal protection for all and that the measure did not go through the correct legislative process need for such a dramatic change to the California Constitution.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Department of State and contractor Triple Canopy, Inc., charging that they discriminated against a former veteran who is HIV-positive, an organizational press release stated. A motion filed by Triple Canopy confirmed that the State Department contract required a negative HIV test for all employees, which the ACLU charges violates the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans for Disabilities Act.

A lesbian couple—Lisa Hazrjan and her partner, Michelle—was among 16 U.S. families invited to join President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden on the Whistle Stop Tour from Philadelphia to Washington, D.C., the Saturday before the inauguration, the Washington Blade reported. According to a press release from the Presidential Inauguration Committee, the guest are “everyday Americans from all walks of life [who] have made extraordinary contributions to the life of this country.”

Read more national news and the world round up at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.
Sex and the seminar
BY PAUL MARINKOVICH

Connecticut’s Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing and New York’s Union Theological Seminary have released a study that reveals a lack of sexual curricula in United States seminaries and rabbinical schools.

In Sex and the Seminary: Preparing Ministers for Sexual Health and Justice, 36 Protestant and Jewish seminaries, rabbinical schools, non-denominational and Unitarian Universalist institutions were surveyed on the education and training of issues connected to sexuality. The study was conducted in order to assess the performance in areas connected to sexuality studies, LGBT/queer studies, feminist/women’s studies, and sexual abuse/violence studies.

“Through our own experiences with seminar students and also through our teaching, we realized that most people have graduated without the skills needed to deal with sexual health issues in the parish,” said Kate Ott, Ph.D., associate director of the Religious Institute and author of Sex and the Seminary. “We needed to find out if that assumption holds for most places and if so, what was the kind of training that the ministry needs.”

An advisory committee was assembled that consisted of various seminar faculty members and administration, and together with the Religious Institute and the Union Theological Seminary, developed a foundation as to what an ideal seminar might look like in terms of properly educating the future religious professional in sexuality-related issues. The result was the survey.

“We refer to this as a survey, but this was a very in-depth survey—it took weeks for seminaries to respond because we asked them to tell us about the specific courses they offered in various areas and how often these courses were required for ordination or graduation,” said Tim Palmer, director of research and communications at the Religious Institute. “From there, we collected the data and were able to see the larger pattern emerging.”

The survey found that seminaries and religious schools are failing to provide future religious leaders with the education needed in order to become what the study calls “sexually healthy.” In her book, A Time to Build: Creating Sexually Healthy Faith Communities, Debra Haffner describes that sexually healthy religious professionals are “comfortable with their own sexuality, have skills to provide pastoral care and worship on sexuality issues, and are committed to sexual justice in their congregation and society at large.”

But without the opportunity for study, self-assessment and ministerial formation in sexuality, the next generation of religious leaders will not be prepared to deal with sexuality issues within their communities and their congregations.

“I think that theological education has a responsibility to train leaders, to rigorously teach them in order to prepare them to minister,” said Alice Hunt, Ph.D., president of the Chicago Theological Seminary. “We need to provide them with the theoretical underpinning, the critical thinking skills they will need to engage these issues, and the understanding of the context that they are in. And we need to help them have the rhetorical skills they will need to speak about this.”

But according to the survey, more than 9 in 10 seminaries do not require full-semester sexuality and LGBT courses for graduation, ultimately allowing future religious leaders to be ordained without adequate sexuality training.

“Most folks who are going to serve as clergy or as religious professionals are going to be faced with dealing with sexuality issues of their community and of their congregants,” said Ott. “It could be child sexual abuse, it could be establishing a sexual abuse policy for their church, dealing with married couples, teens or adults in their congregation questioning their orientation or gender identity—people come to their clergy when they have these kinds of questions. I think it is so important because people are going to have to deal with this, as clergy, and it’s best to be prepared.”

The study also revealed that courses with a strong emphasis in sexuality-related issues are generally absent from the curriculum; women and feminist studies are more prominent than any other sexuality issues for religious professionals or LGBT/queer studies; and that the next generation of religious scholars are not willing to teach sexuality-related courses. Some other key findings were the presence of a “stained-glass ceiling” in seminaries, which refers to the apparent difficulty women have gaining a role within church leadership.

Regarding these shortfalls, the Religious Institute and Union Theological Seminary have recommended that the seminaries:

—Require/develop competencies in sexuality for ordination;

—Revise ministerial formation standards to include sexuality education;

—Strengthen curricular offerings and seminar environment;

—Invest in faculty development and continuing education; and

—Promote collaboration among seminaries, educational organizations and advocacy groups.

But the survey does provide insight to the advances that have been made. For instance, 8 in 10 of the institutions that participated did offer workshops in sexual-harassment prevention; three out of four schools report that faculty and administration have published or been featured in the media addressing sexuality issues, with the majority focusing on LGBT issues; and 25 percent of the seminaries have free-standing centers dedicated to sexuality-related issues.

The Chicago Theology Seminary is one of the few institutions with an LBGTQ religious-study center.

“We have cutting-edge faculty, particularly in the LGBTQ area, which are developing material to provide resources for the leaders in communities and in congregations that speak to these issues,” said Hunt. “We have one of the largest selections of LGBTQ library materials, because that is the focus of our faculty. We are also developing a certificate in LGBTQ studies so that someone can come here and get their M. Div, which is a three-year professional degree, in LGBTQ studies.”

But as for the overall results, Ott believes they could be better.

“I wasn’t surprised with the results of this study, but I think shows us what is happening now and it is always good to take stock of what is going on,” she said. “It was most effective in the fact that it gives us criteria of what is needed; it gives us the tools of an institutional assessment so that seminaries can look at themselves and do their own assessment. But the most important factors are what can be done and why it should be done. Once people can focus on that, we can move forward.”

AGLOChicago completes challenge

The Archdiocesan Gay and Lesbian Outreach of Chicago (AGLOChicago) has completed a social-justice challenge that marks the culmination of the organization’s 20th anniversary year. The challenge was posed to encourage members and friends of the organization to share their time and talents with others through works of charity, peace and justice.

Joseph Ferrallo, the organization’s co-director, said in a statement that “We originally set our goal of 1,000 hours as a stretch, but [we’ve]... exceeded that goal by giving over 2,000 hours in service to others.”

Volunteers worked with 20 different agencies, including Howard Brown Health Center, Broadway Youth Center, Lesbian Community Care Project, Bonaventure House, Chicago House, Center on Halsted and Lakeview Men’s Shelter.

CLOSETS ARE FOR CLOTHES

Thursday, January 29
5:30 p.m. Cocktail Hour and Chic Chicago Exhibit Viewing
6:30 p.m. Program
8:00 p.m. After-party at the Kit Kat Lounge

Explore the lives of gay and lesbian fashion designers from Christian Dior to Marc Jacobs and how fashion has marked sexual identity in American culture led by the Museum’s curator of costumes, Timothy Long.

Tickets are $12, $10 for Museum members and students. Become a Museum member and get tickets for all three OUT AT CHM 2009 events FREE. Offer ends Wednesday, January 28.

Call 312.642.4600 or order online at www.chicagohistory.org/outatchm

Discover the long and storied history of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people through OUT AT CHM.
Marchers walked through Chicago’s Chatham neighborhood. Photo by Sam Worley

Coalition marches through South Side
By Sam Worley

On the holiday celebrating the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Coalition for Justice and Respect (CJR) sponsored a march Jan. 19 along 79th Street in Chicago’s Chatham neighborhood. In a rally preceding the March for Justice and Respect, now in its third year, CJR representative Mark Loveless highlighted ongoing problems faced by Black LGBT people in the realms of healthcare, employment, social services and the criminal-justice system.

He noted in particular the three-year-old shooting deaths of two Black gay men at 79th Street and Woodlawn Avenue—people Loveless said is a hate crime that remains unsolved.

Loveless said that the passage of Proposition 8, the recent California state initiative banning same-sex marriage, served as a reminder of Chicago’s Northwest Side on Jan. 14. She was elected to the position in November, making history as Illinois’ first open lesbian member of the General Assembly. Her partner, Christin Baker, accompanied her to the swearing in ceremony.

“I’m honored to join the Illinois General Assembly today and to get to work on the many challenges facing our state and the people in my district,” Mell said in a statement. “By working together, I know we can get a lot done to serve our constituents and address pressing issues like the budget deficit, high foreclosure rates, job creation and crime reduction.”

In Springfield, Mell’s top legislative priorities are to: offer relief to working families hit hardest by the economic crisis; provide affordable health care to all Illinois’ families; strengthen the state’s commitment to funding education; protect and expand rights for women, LGBTs and minorities; and, support initiatives that expand public safety. In her first official action as state representative, Mell voted against the impeachment of Gov. Rod Blagojevich, being the only person to cast his or her ballot in favor of the embattled official.

“Given my unique relationship to the Governor, this is a vote to which I have given a great deal of consideration,” said Mell. “I have known the Governor for more than 20 years and the changes in the impeachment were difficult to reconcile with the man and brother-in-law I know. I could not in good conscience vote for his impeachment. I regard him as innocent until proven guilty and many of my constituents have expressed this view. I want to focus on moving forward, working on rebuilding our economy and providing excellent constituent services to the people I represent.”

Also, openly gay State Rep. Greg Harris, D-Chicago, was sworn in for his second term, Harris represents the 13th District, which includes the neighborhoods of Uptown, Ravenswood, Lincoln Square, Bowmanville and North Center.

“Serving the people of the 13th District is a great honor and one that I look forward to every day,” Harris said in a statement.

Appointed to finish out the term of retired State Rep. Larry McKeon in 2006, Harris was elected this past November. Before taking office, Harris spent 14 years as chief of staff to 48th Ward Alderman Mary Ann Smith.

In his first term, Harris was successful in passing legislation that increases women’s access to clinical breast exams, provides additional relief to seniors on their property taxes, created a commission on children and youth to help the state improve healthcare and wellness among children, and made significant progress on legislation to permit civil unions in Illinois.

Mell’s district office is located at 3657 N. Kedzie; she urges residents to contact her at deb@debmell.org. Harris can be reached at Greg@GregHarris.org or 773-348-3443.

Report: Illinois colleges flunk on LGBT issues

The Illinois Safe Schools Alliance (the Alliance) just released “Visibility Matters,” the first statewide report card on LGBT presence in higher education and teacher preparation in Illinois. This historic report examines the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity in university policies related to anti-discrimination and in student codes of conduct, as well as in teacher education programs.

Seventy-two percent, or 41 out of the state’s 57 teacher-education preparation programs, received a failing grade of F. The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) was the only institution to receive an A.

The report offers a number of recommendations to improve grades, to strengthen policies and to increase LGBT visibility.

The full report is at www.illinoissafeschools.org.

Harris helps pass cancer measure

State Rep. Greg Harris, D-Chicago, and the General Assembly passed legislation Jan. 13 that is aimed at reducing breast-cancer disparity rates and outcomes for low-income women, minority women and immigrants.

Harris hopes that Senate Bill 1174 will begin to close the gap on these disparities by, among other things, increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates for mammograms and screenings to bring about provider participation.

The legislation unanimously passed through the General Assembly and now awaits action by the sitting governor.

Sunday, January 25
4:30 p.m.
Poetry Reading
Alice George
This Must Be the Place

Brandi Homan
Hard Reds

Thursday, January 29
7:30 p.m.
Kathleen Rooney
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Natural election

The Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, unveiled the show “Yes We Can: John Gress on the Campaign Trail with Barack Obama” in its third-floor gallery on Jan. 16. Working for Reuters News Service, Gress, a photographer, traveled with the Obama campaign over the course of the election; he also covered the campaigns of John Edwards, Hillary Clinton, Mitt Romney and John McCain.

An admirer of the new president, Gress expressed optimism for the incoming administration. “It almost felt like the world had changed” the day after the election, he said. Asked about the prospects of LGBT issues under Obama, though, Gress was more reticent. He noted that while Obama does not support full marriage equality, with the departure of George W. Bush, “it’s not a situation where the executive branch will try and suppress [LGBT] rights.”

Gress’s photographs of Obama remain on display at the center until March 1. Text and upper photo of Gress by Sam Worley; lower photo courtesy of Gress.
**A lesson in drag**

**BY MANUEL GARCIA**

The art of female impersonation can be as difficult to learn as walking in five-inch heels; then, try dancing in them. On Jan. 16, the Hoover-Leppen Theatre Inside the Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, featured an all-youth gender-queer cabaret. The revue, entitled “Showtime at the Apollo,” featured performances by four entertainers imitating legendary African-American singers like Patti Labelle, Whitney Houston and the late Etta James; but songs by newcomers Fantasia and Jennifer Hudson were also included in the set list.

The Center on Halsted’s youth program invited veteran entertainer Dion Walton to facilitate “diva” workshops for youth who wanted to learn the art of drag performance. “The very first person I taught was Alexander Billings. She is the first person I originally dressed up and pushed out on stage,” said Walton, who taught workshops on developing performance skills, walking and make-up application.

Emcee Honey West introduced each “diva” and gave a linguistic lesson of her own, using the phrase “drag droppings” to refer to the leftover things worn on stage. Afterwards, she addressed the audience, stating, “I’m going to try to get everyone to wear high heels and earrings and eyelashes before, because their values align with ours and because of their innovation and creativity as an organization. We’re honored and excited to be a partner to Chicago House.”

**Vital Bridges gets $25K grant**

HIV/AIDS agency Vital Bridges has received a $25,000 grant for its food and nutrition program from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois.

Vital Bridges helps people throughout metropolitan Chicago impacted by HIV and AIDS to improve their health and build self-sufficiency by providing food, nutrition, housing, case management and prevention services. In its 20-year history, Vital Bridges has provided more than 9 million nutritious meals, 600,000 nights of shelter and 250,000 hours of counseling.

**Photo by Emmanuel Garcia**

A performer at “Showtime at the Apollo.”

**Quotelines**

**BY REX WOCKNER**

“People who are against gay marriage do not understand the very freedoms that they themselves are enjoying. What if someone said, ‘Sorry, no Christianity here?’ No Judaism, certainly no Mormons. No one would stand for that, and I wouldn’t allow anyone to say that either. I’d fight them in the same way.” — Actor Brad Pitt to W magazine, February issue.

“PROP HB - Niederauer Ratzinger - Where is the love?” — Gutfeld, accompanied by a swastika, spray-painted on San Francisco’s Most Holy Redeemer Roman Catholic Church in the Castro neighborhood Jan. 4.

“(ON) THE NATIONALLY SYNDICATED RADIO PROGRAM The War Room with Quinn & Rose, co-host Jim Quinn made highly offensive and ignorant statements including [GAY marriage doesn’t produce anything that the state has an interest in. Gay sex produces AIDS, which the state doesn’t have—or should have an interest in. They should charge homosexuals more for their health insurance than they charge the rest of us].” — The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation in a Jan. 7 report, “Worst Anti-gay Defamation of 2008.”

“(FOX NEWS) HOST GREG GUTFELD AND HIS GUESTS grossly misrepresented serious medical concerns faced by transgender youth and laughed as one of his guests referred to transitioning as ‘turning a hole into a pole.’ Then Gutfeld criticized Ellen DeGeneres for announcing her upcoming wedding, saying Ellen should ‘shut the hell up about it.” — The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation in a Jan. 7 report, “Worst Anti-gay Defamation of 2008.”

“OKLAHOMA REPUBLICAN SALLY KERN MADE HEADLINES ... after telling a group of supporters that ‘the homosexual agenda is destroying our nation’ in a gathering of Republicans outside the Capitol. She went on to say that the gay community is ‘the death knell in this country’ and ‘the biggest threat that our nation has, even more so than terrorism.” — The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation in a Jan. 7 report, “Worst Anti-gay Defamation of 2008.”

“THE YES ON PROPOSITION 8 campaign filled the airwaves with deliberately misleading commercials. ... The ads relied on scare tactics and spread inflammatory lies, including that the defeat of Proposition 8 would mean changes in schools and churches. These ads used misinformation to shape public opinion and helped sway voters to pass the discriminatory ban, in spite of various legal experts and mainstream media outlets uniformly denouncing the dishonest approach.” — The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation in a Jan. 7 report, “Worst Anti-gay Defamation of 2008.”

“JAMES DOBSON, FOUNDER OF ANTI-GAY ORGANIZATION FOCUS ON THE FAMILY, appeared on an episode of CNN Headline News and made false claims about Proposition 8, including that if the proposition failed, there would be a ‘spate of lawsuits against churches’ and ‘all textbooks would have to be repub-
OBAMA’S INAUGURATION AND MIXED FEELINGS

The last time a nation came to Washington and was mesmerized and stirred to action by the oratory brilliance of an African-American man was at the Lincoln Memorial on Aug. 28, 1963, when the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., delivered his legendary “I Have a Dream” speech. In that speech King said, “I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal.”

King, a Baptist preacher and the Moses of the 1960s. Black civil rights movement, knew in a distant future that a Barack Obama would come, but not in his lifetime.

“I have seen the Promised Land,” he added. “I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land.”

Those were King’s final words, delivered April 3, 1968, at the Mason Temple (Church of God in Christ Headquarters), in Memphis, Tenn. The following day King was assassinated. With a nation in moral chaos, who would lead not only Blacks in this country toward full equality, but all Americans?

Forty years later and the day after the last day of the Obama-Celebrated MLK Day, our nation once again came to Washington mesmerized and stirred to action by the oratory brilliance and leadership of the African-American man sworn in as our nation’s 44th president: Barack H. Obama.

With the election of Obama as our country’s first African-American president, our enslaved ancestors who built the White House could have never imagined that one of their progeny would one day occupy it.

This New Year’s Eve held important significance in the life of African-American churches, because the many Watch Night services that took place across the country—centering around Obama’s campaign slogan, “Yes we can”!—gave boundless hope that, as African Americans, we can make positive changes in our lives, such as stem gang violence, the AIDS epidemic ravaging the entire African-American community, the epidemic level of homelessness and teenage pregnancy, just to name a few.

Watch Night services can be traced back to Dec. 31, 1862, also known as “Freedom Eve,” when African-American slaves came together across the nation to await the good news that President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation had finally become law. And on that following day, Jan. 1, 1863, a new life began for us even as the Civil War was still going on.

Whereas the Watch Night service of Dec. 31, 1862, left me with a sense of peace, my answers to the wakening of the Emancipation Proclamation to set them free, this year’s Watch Night service was a celebration of setting America free from her centuries-old stain of racial bigotry that barred persons of color from seeking the highest office in the land.

This historic election inspires many of our Black boys and girls to not only consider college but to one day consider running for president too. Obama has galvanized the country, bringing people together across races and ethnicities, sexual orientations, religions and cultures together.

But on the day Obama was sworn in, not all of us will feel this historic moment includes us. With the election of Obama, many LGBT Americans who voted for Obama feel under the bus.

And by Bayard Rustin—the gay man who was chief organizer and strategist for the 1963 March on Washington that further catapulted Martin Luther King, onto the world stage, was the beneficiary of King’s dream, we especially LGBT Americans also feel we will not be the beneficiaries of Obama.

And by Bayard Rustin—the gay man who was chief organizer and strategist for the 1963 March on Washington that further catapulted Martin Luther King, onto the world stage, was the beneficiary of King’s dream, we especially LGBT Americans also feel we will not be the beneficiaries of Obama.

A new nation is in the making. Syliva Rhue, director of religious affairs for the National Black Justice Coalition, recently wrote in an op-ed on the Huffington Post: “President-Elect Obama, many of us will be at your inauguration. We will dance and party and drink a toast to your success upon which so many hopes are staked.”

Hopefully, Obama’s words—“Yes we can!”—will inspire us all to contribute in our own way.

H8 CRIME

The Rainbow Sash Movement must condemn in no uncertain terms those who vandalized Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in San Francisco. Painting all Catholics with a wide paintbrush is just as wrong as saying all gay people are child abusers.

Black swastikas and anti-religious phrases and slurs were spray-painted in red and black on the outside of the big white structure in the Castro district in outrage over the passage of Prop 8 on election night. This isn’t the first criminal act.

Hate must be exposed no matter who promotes it. At the end of the day what is the difference between hate of Catholics and hate of LGBT people? Our LGBT political leadership has been strangely silent on this matter.

When LGBT-Friendly Catholic parishes are attacked in the name of political correctness, people of goodwill in the LGBT community must stand with their LGBT Catholics and their allies. Silence only brings shame to our movement, which was founded on the dignity of Stonewall.

We continue to call for dialogue around the issue of Prop 8 in the hopes that the spirit of love may enter the process. The Rainbow Sash Movement will not be complaisant in addressing this hateful attack.

Joe Murray
Executive Director
Rainbow Sash Movement

PROPS TO EDITORIALS

Dear Editor:

While your readers hopefully found some item of interest in your annual shopping section, I hope you also noticed at the back of two columns of gay marriage and homosexuality in the Dec. 3 issue, by Jamar Osborne and Tom Foster—both, obviously, good legal thinkers.

In all the discussion on how to view the passage of Prop 8 in California, these two people seem to have gotten it right. They both point out the danger in a nation if a majority can vote to take away the civil/rights of some minorities. This is something that goes beyond just anti-gay laws.

In his column (Chicago Gay History) in the same issue, John O’Emilio also puts the issue in perspective by recalling the Anita Bryant push called “Save our children” in Florida, in the 1970s.

The incompetent and unethical coverage of the issue by the Chicago Tribune and Daily News was awful. Today’s media is a lot better, and that helps our cause. Bill Kelley, and others who were there and speaking out at the time, can testify to this progress.

Billy Glover

Woody City Times is Chicago’s only gay publication with independent, outside audit verification of circulation by the nationally recognized firm, Verified Audit Firm.

Windy City Times
Richard Chamberlain: Forever young
BY CATEY SULLIVAN

Seventy-four is the new 30. This is the conclusion after spending an hour chatting with Richard Chamberlain, who almost 25 years into AARP territory, maintains the spry wit—and dance moves—of a chap half his age.

Chamberlain is the latest celebrity to take on a role in Spamalot. And not to diss the young-timers, but we’re betting he brings a lot more to the mini-Series (Shogun, the Thorn Birds, the Little Mermaid) that year.

“I grew up when being gay was the absolute worst thing you could be,” he recalced. “Consequently pretending to be something you aren’t—it’s a rotten, rotten way to live your life. For almost my entire life, I had this fear that there was something terribly wrong with me. I’d been in a stable, loving relationship for 32 years, and I was still certain that I was somehow irrevocably broken.”

“Martin,” he added of his of the man he met shortly before beginning Spamalot rehearsals, “was something horribly wrong with me. I’d been and I’m still clear that I was somehow irrevocably broken.”

“Martin,” he continued, “has its pleasures. It’s great to feel morally superior to everybody else.”

But it’s not that Chamberlain focuses on these days. “I want to live more open-hearted. I want to be a better friend. I want to stop working,” he said. “I love it when my phone rings and people say ‘We need you for such and such.’ It just makes me happy.”

All the world’s a stage: Site-specific theater
BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Let’s see—there was the play where the actor entered off the second-floor window ledge high above the street. And the romantic comedy with its lovers lounging nude on the bedroom-window sill of a real apartment in Uptown. And that group in Edgewater who forgot to alert the neighbors before staging a live-action adaptation of the horror film, Evil Dead, in their backyard, leading to visits by police patrols investigating the shrill cries of “Oh, no! He’s killing her!”

An “auditorium,” in other words, is not always your everyday commonplace assembly hall. Budget-strapped theater companies searching for performance space have staged plays about volleyball teams in gymnasiums, plays about art collectors in loft galleries, countless plays about drinkers in all varieties of saloons—and does anybody remember riding in the back seat of a minivan alongside three other passengers while Michael Fasberg and Scott Hamilton Westerman swapped dialogue as they drove?

Many of these were one-run novelties, but several Chicago troupes now enjoy a lasting reputation for what has been dubbed “site-specific” theater, tailoring their play choices to unconventional arenas.

Walkabout Theatre’s history encompasses shows in such diverse locales as laundromats and yard, leading to visits by police patrols investigating the shrill cries of “Oh, no! He’s killing her!”

“Sometimes the play itself calls out for a ‘real’ space, and sometimes we create something for a shared public space.” Though their upcoming play, Goldbrick, opening Feb. 3 at the Building Stage, is not site-specific, “[we] try to bring the feeling of being ‘immersed’ in the environment.”

Two companies trace their origins to an Equity Library Theatre production of Eugene O’Neill’s Strange Interlude in the North Lakeside Cultural Center (NLCC), a 1910-vintage mansion on Sheridan Road, where the action was spread over the whole house. The center’s director, Frank Farrell, said, “Mary Tatro, the NLCC program director, had wanted the house used in exactly that way. She asked me to do more shows there, so I formed the North Lakeside Players. We’ve adapted a number of plays to this style. This spring, we’re doing L little Lord Fauntleroy.”

But Farrell was intrigued by another possibility: “The notion of moving through a house came to me while I was hiking in Michigan. From there, it was only a short step to Theatre-Hikes.” This highly successful series is comprised of plays performed on pedestrian walkways winding through parks, forest preserves and conservatories. “It usually choose plays with outdoor settings, but frequently we tackle an ‘indoor’ play, finding outdoor areas that give the feeling of an enclosure,” he added.

The Neo-Futurists’ most conspicuous break into alternative spaces came in 2008 with Fake Lake, Sharon Greene’s account of an idyllic holiday at a mountain resort whose “natural” beauty is revealed to be false. Said Greene, “As I thought about the actions I’d be describing—jumping off cliffs, boating accidents, water balloons—I realized that they took place not just near the water, but in it as well.”

So the show was written to be performed in the Welles Park swimming pool. “The poolhouse has two walls made entirely of windows facing south and west,” Greene said. “The audience watched the sun set over the park and we had darkness for the night scenes. The morning was originally going to be a joke, with the overhead floods snapping on. But [our lighting team] discovered that the facility’s halogen lamps warm up slowly after being turned on—taking almost a full 10 minutes. So we had our sunrise!”

Opening Jan. 29 is Beer, Sean Benjamin and Steven Mosqueda’s exploration of “craft” beers and their manufacture as experienced by two boys on a Willy Wonka-type journey through the “Land of Beer.” Standing in for this yearly fantasy-realm is the Metropolitan Brewing plant located along the Ravenswood corridor—a fully functioning microbrewery with mash tuns, fermenters, boilers and copper tubing on display to audiences and gleaming with a newness to lend the industrial ambience a magical quality. Wooden pallets shifted with forklifts, a live band, animation and puppets—among them, Matilda the Grain Puppet, herself constructed of the sacks used to transport her namesake cereal—all assist in bringing the machinery to life.

“We didn’t know we’d have the brewery to perform in,” admitted Benjamin. “But when we heard that our friends, Tracy and Doug Hurst, were going into business right around the corner from our theatre, we talked to them and they loved the idea. Our play is about the great beer being created by artists.”

Nikolchev labored on Look, What I Don’t Understand with five directors (although it plays seamlessly), most of whom have ties to Wesleyan University, of which Nikolchev is a 2008 graduate. How and why he/they arrived in Chicago is unclear, but they appear to have the talent to achieve things if they stay. Yazen Peyankov, watch out: There’s another hot Bulgarian actor in town now.

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Don’t miss this Global Exploration, where world-renown leading theater companies present their contemporary interpretations of O’Neill’s most daring, innovative dramas.

**HOMENS AO MAR (SEA PLAYS)**
Produced in association with Companhia Total, Brazil
DIRECTED BY ANDRÉ GAROLLI
JANUARY 14-31

**THE ELIZABETH F. THEODORICUS LITERARY AWARD**
Produced in association with The Hypocrites, Chicago
DIRECTED BY SCOTT GREANET
FEBRUARY 25-28

**THE BOWERY BOYS**
Produced in association with The Neo-Futurists, Chicago
DIRECTED BY JACOB GROSS
MARCH 6-8

For a complete description of shows and events, visit GoodmanTheatre.org

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DON’T MISS THIS GLOBAL EXPLORATION, WHERE WORLD-RENOWN LEADING THEATER COMPANIES PRESENT THEIR CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATIONS OF O’NEILL’S MOST DARING, INNOVATIVE DRAMAS.
Transition of power at Next Theatre: Jason the second  
BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

There’s been a lot of excitement in the United States about all things tied to “leadership transition” lately. But on a more local level, “leadership transition” has been big on the minds of everyone tied to Evanston-based Next Theatre. Jason Southerland has been adapting to his new role as Next Theatre’s artistic director. (His first official day was the opening of Lisa Kron’s Well last November.) Southerland has been taking over for Jason Loewith, who helped build Next’s nationwide stature since 2002. (Loewith now carries the Next Theatre title of artistic director emeritus.)

Southerland built his reputation in Massachusetts as co-founder and artistic director of Boston Theatre Works since 1998. But when the opportunity came to head west to the Chicago area, the 41-year-old Southerland jumped at it. “Chicago is theater Mecca,” said Southerland.

“It is a city that embraces its theater the way the rest of us envy and dream about.”

Before he even moved to the Windy City, Southerland had already developed ties to Chicago’s creative community. Southerland pointed out that he became friends with the artistic leadership of About Face Theatre and successfully presented the East Coast premiere of the lesbian musical comedy Pulp. Another important Boston premiere for Southerland was The Sweetest Swing in Baseball by Chicago native Rebecca Schaffer.

On a more personal level, Southerland and his husband, Dalyn Miller, became close friends with Chicago cabaret diva Amy Armstrong and pianist husband, Dalyn Miller, became close friends with Chicago cabaret diva Amy Armstrong and pianist

“I first met them when they were working on an RSVP cruise in February of 2004.” Southerland said. “My partner and I actually got engaged on that cruise, and Amy made it quite public.”

Southerland said that Armstrong kept on insisting that, “you need to come to Chicago.” Now that Southerland’s here, he’s picking up from the stellar work of Loewith.

“It’s been a very smooth transition and we’ve been very fortunate to also have Kevin Heckman aboard as managing director earlier this summer to help connect our two tenures,” Loewith said during a break from rehearsals.

Of course, Loewith and his colleagues on Adding Machine: The Musical have been riding a wave of success since its triumphant New York run in 2008. (Adding Machine memorably debuted at Next in 2007 and has boosted the Evanston theater’s national reputation as well.)

The Adding Machine success gave Loewith the courage to leave his Next position and focus purely on writing, while others tied to the show are making a name for themselves.

For example, Adding Machine director David Cromer is set to direct Neil Simon’s Brighton Beach Memoirs and Broadway Bound in repertory on Broadway next season, following an off-Broadway run of his recent Chicago staging of Our Town for The Hypocrites.

Loewith’s latest project is The War with the Newts, a new theatrical adaptation of a novel by Israeli author Karel Capek (best known for Rossum’s Universal Robots and The Makropulos Case). In fact, War with the Newts was slated for February in Next’s current season, but was postponed due to the fact that Loewith and two of his collaborators won a special MacArthur Foundation grant to travel to the Czech Republic to do research on the show this past October.

That left a hole in Next’s current season which was planned by Loewith before Southerland arrived. Already showing his savvy with artistic planning, Southerland chose the 2008 Pulitzer finalist Dying City by Christopher Shinn for its Chicago debut.

Dying City concerns a widow who lost her husband in the Iraq War. Things are complicated when her husband’s gay twin brother shows up. Dying City is a psychological thriller that is also an acting challenge has a laugh and an insult for everyone,” according to Variety.

Not too many people in America know of Russian playwright Oleg Bogayev, TUTA Theatre Chicago hopes to change that when it produces the U.S. premiere of Bogayev’s drama, Maria’s Field, in an English adaptation by Fyodor Sakhnovski.

Maria’s Field looks at last generations of Russian women in the 20th century as seen through the flights-of-fantasy eyes of three 100-year-old women. Maria’s Field plays through Feb. 22 at the Storefront Theater, Gallery 37 Center for the Arts, 66 E. Randolph. Tickets are $20-$25; call 312-742-8497 or visit www.tutatheater.org. Photo by John W. Slisson, Jr.

Rhino Fest’s LGBT offerings

The 20th anniversary of the Rhinoceros Theatre Festival will take place Jan. 23-March 1—and there will be plenty of fare for LGBT audiences.

One of the scheduled productions if Ralph (Jan. 24-Feb. 21), described as “[a]n mythic story of love, loneliness and liberation, told by a gay schizophrenic living on the edge.” Another is Big Goddess Pow Wow. From the Ashes, a one-time event occurring Saturday, Feb. 7, at 8 p.m.; this evening of spoken-word and musical performances will include Chicago’s own C.C. Carter.

Yet another intriguing event is Dancing Young Men From High Windows (Feb. 14, 21 and 28) at Acme Art Works. It’s described as “[a]n original opera [that] examines myth and pop music through the eyes of a dranged king, a timid secretary, Elvis Presley, Don Quixote, and, of course, Phil Spector’s head.” See www.rhinofest.com.
Trading places: theaters play venue hopscotch  

BY JONATHAN ABARBANEL

There will be no shortage of shows to see as the 2009 theater year unfolds, but some familiar faces may turn up in unfamiliar places as several local theater troupes have changed addresses. Of particular note to LGBT audiences is the widely reported news that Bailiwick Repertory has relinquished its longtime location at 1229 W. Belmont. For the past 15 years Bailiwick occupied the former light industrial space, it pretty much served as the epicenter of LGBT theater in Chicago, with shows ranging from the Dyke Mic series to Terrence McNally’s Corpus Christi to the long-running hit Naked Boys Singing. Bailiwick will continue to produce on an itinerant basis, although the company has nothing immediately scheduled. We anticipate that Bailiwick will be back, somewhere, this summer with its annual Pride Series.

The large Bailiwick space has been taken over, on a 10-year lease, by LGBT-friendly Theater Wit, which has closed the space for remodeling. It’s not expected to reopen until the fall, when the company will unveil a new floor plan featuring three theaters of 99 seats each, with each sharing a common lobby and box office. Theater Wit will produce its own shows there, and also host several resident troupes.

Another troupe with LGBT ties on the move was Hubris Productions. Hubris was one of the inaugural resident companies sharing the Hoover-Leppen Theatre at the Center on Halsted, but dropped out of the resident rotation for the 2008-2009 season. The company staged Torch Song Trilogy (well, two-thirds of it) earlier this season has staged Faith, a family Christmas show with a strong gay streak. The company will unveil a new floor plan featuring three theaters of 99 seats each, with each sharing a common lobby and box office. Theater Wit will produce its own shows there, and also host several resident troupes.

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In Arabia We’d All Be Kings

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

In Stephen Adly Guirgis’ 2007 drama In Arabia We’d All Be Kings, an elderly barfly named Sammy (Peter Esposito) does blurt out the title in the second act. Yet the title baffles, since it has nothing to do with the play’s rogues gallery of prostitutes, junkies, alcoholics and ex-cons facing gentrification in 1990s New York.

That makes In Arabia… disappointing when compared to Guirgis’ other works like Jesus Hopped the “A” Train and Our Lady of 121st Street. In Arabia… has no religious or symbolic payoff.

Without that obvious kernel of transformation or realization, it makes it hard for you to feel much for the characters of In Arabia… (other than pity, or a smug sense of superiority). The play’s meandering vignettes of violence and betrayal also don’t leave you with much to warm to.

What you do get out In Arabia… is Gurigis’ glorious gift-of-gab dialogue. The largely stellar cast do a commendable job of not bogging the play down in its meandering. Even if they come close to caricature.

Providing most of the disturbing comic relief is the bickering mother-and-daughter duo of Miss Reyes (Mari Stratton) and her daughter DeMaris (Rinska M. Prestinary). Both these actresses are familiar to American audiences. But when every character’s speech is emetic, the surprisingly articulate company assembled for this Chicago Shakespeare production acquit themselves with admirable dignity. Ben Carlsen abandons the rapid-fire delivery expected by his Chicago fans to instead adopt a fatigued tone suggesting a leader regretful, if resigned, to the very end of his career. Magic is all very well, of course, but aren’t the moral struggles of flawed human beings more interesting, ultimately?

THEATER REVIEW

In Arabia We’d All Be Kings

Playwright: Stephen Adly Guirgis
At: Steep Theatre, 1115 W. Berwyn
Phone: 312-458-0722; $18
Runs through: Feb. 21

THE ACTRESSES ARE MAGNIFICENT."
– CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

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– CHICAGO TRIBUNE

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The Private Lives of Eskimos. Photo by Jaclyn Biskup

THEATER REVIEW

The Private Lives of Eskimos
Playwright: Ken Urban
At: The Mill at Stage Left Theatre, 3408 N. Sheffield
Phone: 312-388-7660; $20
Runs through: Feb. 7

BY JONATHAN AABARBANEL

The Private Lives of Eskimos (or 16 words for snow) is an odd mukluk of a play, given a punchy world-premiere production by The Mill. First, be warned it has nothing to do with Eskimos, and it’s quickly apparent that all 16 words for snow, projected as scene titles, are creations of playwright Ken Urban.

The play does concern the private life of Marvin, a young big-city Internet technology guy. Marvin melts down when his sister is killed in a train explosion while on her way from Alaska, especially after he loses his cellphone with her last voice message. Much as with Sarah Ruhl’s Dead Man’s Cellphone at Steppenwolf last season, his phone is recovered by a woman into whose grapefruiting personality but underworld life Marvin is sucked. Marvin also has psychotic episodes during which mysterious Eskimo-like creatures—or sometimes his girlfriend Christine and “office amigo” Tom—lapse into freakish, high-speed repetitions of e-mail spam phrases such as “Do ta orange of Frenchburg himself possible.”

In 16 scenes—one for each pseudo-word for snow—played in 95 minutes, Marvin deals with his grief, his guilt (his sister was visiting him, so he must be responsible for her death) and his not-so-latent hostilities and violence against an increasingly surreal backdrop in which the Arctic tundra breaks into Marvin’s tenuous reality.

The play is performed by five actors, three of whom take multiple roles in sketch-like scenes. The script demands theatrical energy that, fortunately, this production has, under director Jaclyn Biskup. Her first-rate cast is headed by Darci Nalepa as the sultry-voiced cell-phone woman, and scene-stealing Joel Ewing as the insensitive jerk of an office buddy from Hell.

Despite the fine cast and production, the play itself has too many quirks. It takes the entire play to figure out who has died and her relationship to Marvin. Then, Marvin’s therapist puts him on mood-calming drugs, but his behavior is no different on drugs or off. The therapist is in only two scenes, so why not just drop her? Also, the link between Marvin’s spam-related and Eskimo psychoses is entirely arbitrary. They never really mesh, and either by itself would be sufficient for the play’s dramatic purposes. Finally, the action begins so very quickly that one isn’t given reasons to like Marvin before he falls apart. It’s a fascinating, ditz little play that is serious in purpose but comedic in tone. Its high theatricalism may stick with you, but at the end you don’t care.
Mary Griffith's rabid belief in hellfire and damnation for queers drove her 20-year-old gay son, Bobby, to commit suicide in 1983. In the tragedy's wake she transformed from close-minded religious zealot into a PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)-waving activist for LGBT youth and their families. Sigourney Weaver portrays Mary in Lifet ime's powerful original TV movie, Prayers For Bobby, which is based upon Lenny Aaron's 1996 book, Prayers for Bobby: A Mother's Coming to Terms with the Suicide of Her Gay Son. It premiers Saturday, Jan. 24 at 8 p.m. CT.

Via telephone, the pro-gay actress and dykon— who appeared as a motivational speaker from hell in 1995's gay classic, Jeffrey—discussed her award-worthy turn, the real Mary Griffith, a new danger facing gay youth, and, of course, whether we're going to see Alien's Ripley back in action.

Lawrence Ferber: How did making this film affect your own views on religion?

Sigourney Weaver: I'm an Episcopalian and it seems to me that Jesus' teachings are so much about including people, loving people, believing in people. I have to say I found it so difficult to understand why people put more faith in the Old Testament, with all its ferocity, than the New Testament, which preaches kindness and "do unto others." Mary Griffith believed [the Old Testament] was the word and her church was certainly not saying, well, that's one way to believe. It was fascinating and disturbing.

LF: Mary seemed brainwashed, like the Hitler youth kids who turned against, and turned in to the SS, their own family members.

SW: The thing is she kind of made up her own religion. She patched together a few things and it was all based on this father figure who was quite capricious and stern and the church she was connected with did not enlighten her. She found a church that felt homosexuality was an abomination, and there are people all over this country who believe that.

LF: Was it difficult to inhabit Mary? Would you look into the mirror while preparing and say, "You're an idiot"?

SW: You can't judge the person you're playing, and I did have the great opportunity to meet Mary. She's such a gentle, easygoing person; when I met her I said, "I'm having a little trouble putting you together with this woman at the beginning of our story who was so closed-minded and fierce." She just looked at me and said, "Well, I was very serious." And I got it. She showed me her Bible, where she had underlined things in red and put exclamation points. The tragedy to me is Bobby's entire family loved each other so much and felt they were doing the right thing. If there's one thing I hope for the pockets of people who don't have the privilege of knowing any [LGBTs] in their family, it's that this film can humanize this issue.

LF: But wouldn't a person who's like Mary used to be—such as a member of the God Hates Fags clan—shut this film off or dismiss Mary's transformation? Or could the message still manage to get through to them?

SW: Well, I certainly hope so, because this movie is for them. One of the reasons I wanted to do this movie so much is I heard Prayers For Bobby is one of the books kids give their parents when they want to start the process of talking about being gay. I thought if we can give them another form in which to start this conversation, because some people won't go off and read a book, you can say, "Hey, let's watch this movie. It's got that woman from the Alien movies in it." They can sort of ambush their parents. Then maybe they won't be able to turn the tube off. I hope it will start conversations and give kids support and the knowledge that what they are is natural and normal and the church is wrong.

LF: What was the toughest scene to shoot?

SW: I think [it was] the moment when Mary realizes what she's done. That's tough. And, of course, what I admire so much about Mary is she has lived her life since then trying to make amends for the decisions she made and has paid a huge price because she lost Bobby, who is still so much a part of their lives. It's a difficult story to share with the world and does not put her in a very good light. I think it's so generous and courageous of her to put this story out because it will save lives.

LF: The real Bobby turned to hustling and promiscuity, whereas he's depicted as quite innocent and clean-cut in the film. Do you feel that if he had been more like the film's boy-next-door, Mary would have been more likely to accept his being gay?

SW: No. I think she was so concerned about his immortal soul she wasn't really paying attention to the quality of his life on earth. She was so driven by her own fear for herself, her family and him that any kind of gay life was evil.
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Entertainment news
Spirits are supposedly preventing Courtney Love from delivering her newest album, Nobody's Daughter, according to the Guardian. Love's representative said that “paranormal technical issues” in the recording studio are holding up the mixing of the album.

Speaking of Love, she recently posted a blog accusing Robert Kardashian, Jr. (yes, of those Kardashians) of breaking the nose of her gay employee, according to Access Hollywood. Sister Kim Kardashian responded, saying that Love’s accusation was false and that the family would contact its attorneys over the matter, the Detroit Free Press reported.

Prince fans will certainly get their fill of the diminutive singer this year as he plans to release three CDs in 2009, Rolling Stone magazine reported. The three albums will be Lotus Flower, or Lotus Flow3r (which primarily features guitars); the funky MPLSOUND (short for “Minneapolis Sound”); and Elixir, a collaboration between Prince and his newest protégé, Bria Valente.

Hunky actor Chris Evans—probably best known as The Human Torch in the Fantastic Four movies—has expressed his support of same-sex marriage, according to IMDB.com. Evans—who whose younger brother, Scott, is out and proud—said, “It’s mind-boggling and appalling that human beings are being denied civil rights in this country. But time will heal all. I have to believe that in 10 years we won’t be having this conversation.”

Lesbian actress Cherry Jones—who is currently being seen in her role as U.S. President Allison Taylor on the TV show 24—has recently had gallbladder surgery, according to Entertainment Tonight. The show’s executive producer, Howard Gordon, said that Jones went to the hospital in the past few days and had her gall bladder removed. He added that “[s]he is home and she is fine.”

At the recent Golden Globes, actor Tom Hanks spoke out against California’s anti-gay-marriage measure, Prop 8, according to a Washington Blade item. “It’s un-American,” he said of the initiative, and said that it will eventually be repealed.

Jennifer Hudson will make her first public appearance since the murders of her mother, brother and nephew when she sings the national anthem at the Super Bowl, which will take place Sunday, Feb. 1, in Tampa, Fla, according to the Chicago Sun-Times. Hudson, who has been nominated for four Grammys this year, is also slated to sing at the Grammys’ MusiCares event in Los Angeles a few days later.

Liza Minnelli CD out Feb. 3
Music lovers around the world will have a chance to experience Liza Minnelli’s much-talked-about recent engagement at Broadway’s legendary Palace Theatre when Liza’s at the Palace…, the new original cast recording of her show, will be released Feb. 3, courtesy of Hybrid Recordings.

Along with a 12-man orchestra led by conductor/drummer Michael Berkowitz and pianist/musical supervisor Billy Stritch, the two-disc Liza’s At The Palace…. is highlighted with many of her showstoppers, such as Cabaret, Maybe This Time, and New York New York. The suggested retail price is $19.99.

Rihanna remix CD out Jan. 27
Barbadian singing superstar Rihanna will release Good Girl Gone Bad: The Remixes—a new version of her double-platinum, chart-topping album—on Tuesday, Jan. 27. This collection features new versions of Rihanna’s hits remixed by today’s hottest dance producers, including Tony Moran, Seamus Haji, Jody Den Broeder, Moto Blanco and Wideboys.

Good Girl Gone Bad (released June 5, 2007) and Good Girl Gone Bad: Reloaded (released June 17, 2008, and that had three brand-new songs) were catapulted past the 2 million mark by three number-one singles: Umbrella, Take A Bow and Disturbia. Rihanna has sold over 10 million tracks.
Wednesday, Jan. 21

**Women Only** Hosted by Kat Fitzgerald (folk/rock) The only show in Chicago dedicated to new women artists. 9p.m., Chopin (2100 W. Belmont Ave.). 773-465-9801, www.unicommonground.com

**Roe v. The Real World event.** Our Yogis. Our Chosen reproductive jus- tice coalition and Chicago Foundation for Women special event marking the 36th Anniversary of the landmark Roe v. Wade decision. $5 donation, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at Center on Halsted, Hooper-Leppen Theater 3656 N. Halsted St. www.chicagofoundationfowomen.org/ See our online calendar: www.chicagofoundationfowomen.org/onlinecalender.html

Friday, Jan. 23

**Affinity Community Services** Singles Minga Committee invites you out to Movie Night for a viewing of Truth Hall: the bonds of friendship between five women who were inseparable in college. Donations: Members: $3, Non: $5. 5450 S. Woodlawn 773-336-3277


**Queen Artist Show** Stimulation reception invited donation, 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Barbara & Barbara Gallery. 3124 W. Carroll

Saturday, Jan. 24

**Family Pocket Circus kids’ fair**, 4 p.m. $15/2 adults, 15 kids under 18, Saugach (Michigan) Center for the Arts, 400 Giluer St. 773-867-2399

**Glodana Jazz Dance Chicago 7th An- nual dance with us Benefit.** This event is a precursor to Spring Engagement March 13 and March 14, glodanadance.org or call 847-866-4779

**Hyde Park Art Center** collector workshop series, Collecting 2-0. 5620 S. Cornell Ave., Chicago. 773-324-5520, www.hydeparkart.org

**Rufus Wainwright** at the Museum of Contemporary Art; A Benefit DRY ICE 6 p.m. cocktails, an elegant hors d’oeuves buffet, live entertainment by Wainwright, and art auctions featuring artwork by Jenf Koons, Jenny Holzer, and Olafur Eliason. Intimate: just over 200 guests. $35, 500 and couple packages $5,000. www.mca.chicago.org/ benefit.

**Nicole Holland** solo show Opening reception for “Enough to Make a Cat Laugh.” First in more than 10 years for Chicago’s beloved cartoonist. 6 – 9 p.m. Woman Made Gallery. Studio cell: 773-640-4522.


**Sunday, Jan. 25**

**Reclaiming Journey** Affirming Devo- tional Study for GLBT Christians, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Brooks Road United Methodist Church, 1404 Brooke Rd., Rockford, 815-398-8914.

**Roch** Chicago’s crowd favorite at Mid- summerfest, Market Days and Pride events since 1993, seeking new members. Informal atmosphere at Emenzer Church on 1650 W. Foster Ave. www.rockchicago.org/ info@rockchicago.org

**Winter Block Party for Hip Hop Arts**, by Chicago Public Radio. $15/12/$10 Noon to 6 p.m. Thx at www.chicagopub- licradio.org/events or at thedthe, Vic- tory Gardens Biograph Theater. Free.

**Tuesday, Jan. 27**

**Anna Deavere Smith** at Columbia Col- lege Chicago’s Founders Lectures Series, Altria, theater professor and MacArthur Foundation Fellow discusses her ideas on “Engaging the World: The Role of the Artist in Society” - Free, reservations are required 7-7:30 p.m.

**Film Row Cinema**, 1104 S. Wabash. Free and open to the public but space is limited. RSVP 312-349-6660

**Wednesday, Jan. 28**

**Women Only** Hosted by Kat Fitzgerald (folk/rock) The only show in Chicago dedicated to new women artists. 9p.m., Uncommon Ground, Devon 1401 W. De- von Ave. 773-465-9801, www.unicommonground.com

**Hermanos de Luna y Sol, Addressing Stigma and Promoting Community In-卷alvement as HIV Prevention for Latino Gay Men.** Free community forum for gay Latino men and their allies features Dr. Rafael Diaz of San Francisco State Uni- versity, Dr. Jesus Ramirez-Valles of UIUC, and a performance by Nuestro Tambo. Light refreshments at 7 p.m. presentation and discussion, Nuestro Tambo 6 p.m., La Estancia 275 West Division. RSVP 312-334-0939 http://lgbtfriends.meetup.com/152/

**Roe vs. Wade Anniversary Conversa- tion? Open to the public and free of charge. Refreshments will be provided. 8pm and 11am. Adams Hall-House Museum Residents’ Dinner Hall 800 S. Halsted. 312-413-5353.

**Thursday, Jan. 29**

**Elon Stone Belle** Institute Discus- sion and book signing with South Af- rica Constitutional Court Justice Albie Sachs and Dr. Womyn Law-Miljan Managing Editor, David P. Kirt Publishing celebrating the publication of Art and Justice:The Art of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. Free. 6 – 7:30 p.m. discussion, followed by book signing Film Row Cinema 1104 S. Wabash, 8th Floor 312-369-8892 or insti- tution@womynlaw.com

**Freedom to marry** Reflecting the increasing impact of LGBT-related issues on adolescents, high schooler Amelia Thorne (from St. Charles, Ill) drew the above image in response to an assignment to draw an editorial cartoon. Reprinted with permission from Suzanne Thorne, the student’s mother.

**ICE AND EASY**

Rufus Wainwright will perform at the DRY ICE benefit at the Museum of Contemporary Art, 220 E. Chicago.
Prayers for Bobby

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

It’s true—one of the best roles for women of a “certain” age these days are to be found on television. Glenn Close has returned as the powerful lawyer on Damages; the Wisteria Lane ladies are enjoying from multiple personalities. And Lifetime, having a particularly good season on Desperate Housewives; and Toni Collette takes out on a four-character starring role in United States of Tara, Showtime’s new series about a woman suffering from multiple personalities. And Lifetime, the cable network famed for its “television for women” slogan, has snagged Sigourney Weaver for a night by one of the teachers, Mr. Aoi (Kotami Yoshikazu).

To clear the air, Bobby takes a two-month vacation to Portland, Ore., where he stays with his understanding female cousin, who immediately takes him to a gay bar and introduces him to David (played by former soap-opera hunk Scott Bailey), a hottie who becomes his boyfriend. Returning home he announces he’s in love and again asks for acceptance but Mary is implacable, telling him, “I won’t have a gay son.” This time, Bobby leaves home for good—with tragic results.

It’s at this point that the film—and Weaver’s performance—will soon prove a complex territory. Faced with responsibility in the face of tragedy, Mary finally questions the rigidity of what she’s been taught and an encounter with Dan Butler (one of Hollywood’s first out actors), as a reverend at a gay-friendly church, and Susan Ruttan, as the mother of a gay son who points toward PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), help with Mary’s transformation. Bobby Griffith’s coming-out and subsequent ostracization from his family is, sadly, nothing new in life and on film. (The excellent queer indie Save Me, for example, also features a compelling portrait by Judith Light of a “compas- sionate Cake.”) And Prayers for Bobby, directed by Russell Mulcahy (who helmed several episodes of Queer As Folk), also has moments of after-school special quality to it (though it draws its tears fairly honestly).

But with Mary’s enlightenment, which the last half of the film delves into, the movie also touches on something larger that feels up-to-the-moment—like something going on in the culture right now. Can it be possible that centu- ries of acquiescing to religious terrorists by Our Lord and Savior being made past? Is true tolerance really upon us, at last? Has the time for true Christianity in America finally returned?

You’re asking yourself, “Did he really get all that from one pretty good TV movie made mem- on the network trumpeting the movie is Lifetime—a cable programmer that seems to know the genre based on whatever Hot Topic is currently at the epicenter of the cultural zeitgeist (which we are, thanks to the lastly Prop B and a newly galvanized gay-activist movement)—the leap isn’t all that hard. Aside from that, didn’t we also just begin a new era of inclusiveness on Jan. 20? So, forgive my optimism—at least for a day or two.

Check out my archived reviews at www.windyctimes.com or www.knightatthemovies.com. Readers can leave feedback at the latter Web site.

Prayers for Bobby. Photo by Ben Mark Holzberg/Lifetime Television

DVD REVIEW

Schoolboy Crush

By Steve Warren

The attraction between a high school student and his teacher could prove fatal in Schoolboy Crush. At the very least it’s damned inconvenient when Sora Amakami (Kana Hanazawa) is transferred to Segal Academy after having been hired for a night by one of the teachers, Mr. Aoi (Kotami Yoshikazu).

T. J. Woodward is offering Schoolboy Crush under the banner of their “Guilty Pleasures Collection,” and I must plead guilty to being pleased by it. It keeps one foot in the gutter at all times, trying to be the trashiest boarding-school drama ever made; yet there’s an unexpected cleanliness to the plotting and moments of sweetness that would well serve a film with higher ambitions.

Kotami looks more like a student than a teacher and he’s given too much narration to deliver that’s far more emotional than his impassive face (with its two expressions) is able to express visually. During their right together Sora programmed his client’s number into his cell phone, and the teacher is afraid of exposure when the student shows up on his turf. The school strictly forbids students to have cell phones because of the potential for cheating, but they all have them anyway.

Sora appears to have everything. He was adopted by a wealthy family (with whom he apparently has no contact) because he’s so smart and recruited by the school because of his family. He’s not only brilliant but a natural athlete and all the boys are attracted to him, one way or another.

A couple of these attractions lead to complic- ations. Sora’s nerdy roommate, Ichiju Muzuki (Yuuki Kawakubo), is obviously in love with him. So is the richest of the rich kids, Riku (Tani Kazunori), who bullies Ichiju but has a more complex relationship with him.

The screenplay, co-written by director Teruichi Kohara, occasionally goes too far off the deep end—perhaps appropriately, given Aoi and Sora’s shared interest in marine bio- logy. For instance, after weeks of doing their approach-avoidance dance, Sora offers to dele- gate Mr. Aoi’s number from his cell phone if the teacher will put his name on a house the youth wants to buy. Would this kind of business arrange- ment be less menacing than a number in a cell phone, given the school’s strict non-fraternization policy between students and faculty? Violence, tragedy and love ensue, in no par- ticular order.

In Japan Schoolboy Crush was known as Boys Love—The Movie. Press notes say “Boys Love” is a Japanese genre marketed to women. Well, Queer As Folk has its straight female fans, so why not? But this queer eye couldn’t ask for a gayer movie this side of porn.

You certainly can’t accuse Schoolboy Crush of being dirty, not with the boys taking show- ers at least every 10 minutes. Those scenes, of course, are carefully framed to show only butts or, if a boy turns around, to cut off about half a millimeter north of his pubic area. Hey, you don’t want a guilty pleasure to make you feel too guilty.

SPRINTS

Chicago Dragons show Jan. 24

Local gay rugby team the Chicago Dragons will hold their 3rd Annual Ms. Ruck & Maul contest Saturday, Jan. 24, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted, 5-8 p.m.

Tickets for the event—which will feature team members in drag—are $20 in advance and $25 at the door. This event is one of the team’s biggest fund raisers for money for club expenses such as field costs, travel and equipment.

See www.chicagodragons.org.

Strike Out Against Hunger on Jan. 31

The 9th 12 Bowling League and River Rand Bowl will hold its 12th annual Strike Out Against Hunger—a benefit for HIV/AIDS agency Vital Bridges—Saturday, Jan. 31, at River Rand Bowl, 191 S. River, Des Plaines, 7-10 p.m.

Bowlers of all skills are welcome. Tickets run $30 for an individual bowler or $50 for a team of six. Ticket includes three games, shoe rental and snack foods. See www.vitalbridges.org/page/ event-detail/?17.php?id=3.

NBA star accused of sexual harassment

In a lawsuit, Dave Kuchinsky claims that pro basketball player Eddy Curry of the New York Knicks sexually harassed him and hurled racist slurs at him, the Washington Post reported.

Kuchinsky—who is seeking $98,000 in back pay and expenses, and $5 million in compensa- tory damages—said that the 6’11” Curry ex- posed himself to himself and called him a “white devil,” among other things. Curry, a former Chi- cago Bull, said that he is “shocked” by the law- suit.
Free, no obligation initial meetings are available.

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