



**Obama's
Gay Advisor**

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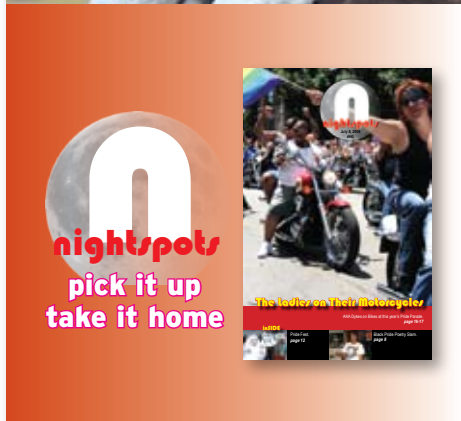
**Mayor's
Reception**

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**Hannah Free
in SF**

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Fort Worth's Gay-Bar Firestorm

BY REX WOCKNER

Fort Worth police and agents from the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission raided a gay bar June 28—the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots—and roughed up several patrons, including one who is hospitalized with a life-threatening blood clot on his brain.

The reason for the raid: To be sure no one was too drunk. Seven people were arrested for alleged intoxication.

Patrons of the Rainbow Lounge say four or five officers tackled Chad Gibson, who patrons say wasn't drunk, and banged his head on the wall and on the floor for no reason. The police have said Gibson fell down later outside and hurt himself, because he was drunk.

Police Chief Jeff Halstead also says Gibson groped one of the officers, yet Gibson was not charged with any sort of assault.

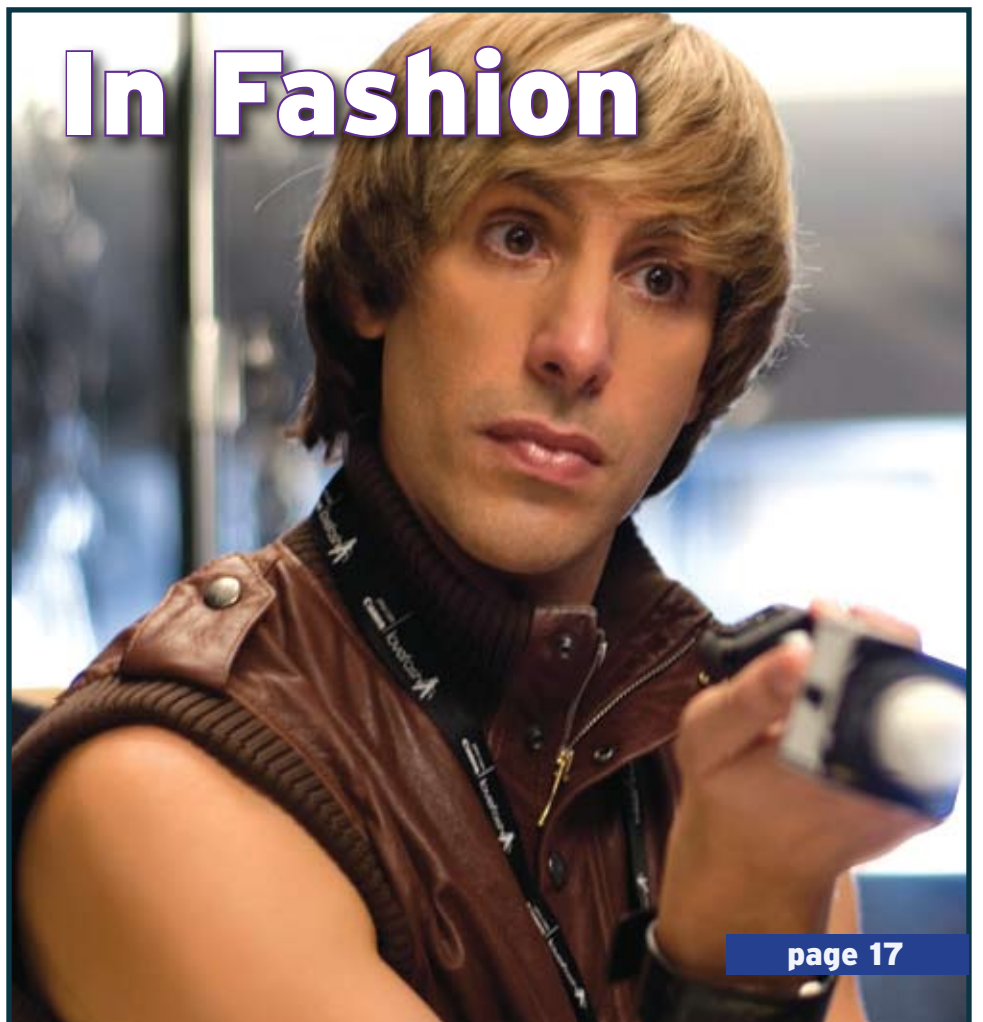
"You're touched and advanced in certain ways by people inside the bar, that's offensive," Halstead said. "I'm happy with the restraint used when they were contacted like that."

That Gibson groped a uniformed cop is, of course, improbable. As Rainbow Lounge owner J.R. Schrock put it: "The groping of the police officer—really? We're gay, but we're not dumb. That is a lie, and I am appalled by it."

The Police Department also has said that other patrons "made sexually explicit movements" toward uniformed officers. Patrons have said that nothing of the sort occurred, and that the notion is asinine.

At press time, the Police Department remained under heavy fire for the raid—from news report-

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Sacha Baron Cohen once again stirs things up as gay Austrian fashion reporter Bruno. Read a review of the movie Bruno on page 17.



Black Pride weekend

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Cover photos and credits (from top): Official photo of Obama; photo from Mayor Daley's reception by Steve Starr; Sharon Gless of Hannah Free by Hal Baim



Boleros for the Disenchanted (above) is one of the productions reviewed in this issue. See page 12.

Photo by Eric Y. Exit



The action was rough and exciting in the **Chi-Town Softball Classic**, which took place this past weekend. See page 22.

Photo by Ross Forman

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ONLINE INDEX

RAISING NAIR

Yasmin Nair (right) reflects on India's historic ruling that overturns the gay-sex ban. Also, read about a Prop 8 lawsuit and other national news.



IT'S BETTER TO TRAVEL

Read about the recent forum "All Welcome," which focused on businesses and the burgeoning LGBT tourism market.



Photo by John Fenoglio

LAKE'S VIEW

HIV/AIDS minister Rev. Deborah Lake has recorded a milestone in her training for the Maui Marathon.



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Talking with Steve Hildebrand

BY REX WOCKNER

Openly gay Steve Hildebrand was Barack Obama's deputy national campaign director. When Obama started to come under heavy fire from GLBT people in recent weeks—for talking the talk but not walking the walk on his promises to gay people—it was Hildebrand who went into the Oval Office for a one-on-one with Obama to let him know what was going down. Steve and I spoke late in the evening July 5 in San Diego.

Rex Wockner: There's probably nobody who's talked to Barack Obama more about gay stuff than you—and you've done so within the last couple of weeks. Since he's come under fire for allegedly talking a really good talk but not walking the walk, yet, on gay and lesbian issues ... what did you talk about in that meeting you had with him?

Steve Hildebrand: I told him very clearly that many in the gay community across the country are getting very anxious and that folks have felt very hurt by the Justice Department brief—the language that was used in it. He reassured me that he will not disappoint the gay community during his time as president, that the promises he made during the campaign are promises he will fulfill, and he was very forthright about his commitment to equality. And, people will accuse me—probably rightfully so—that I'm a Kool-Aid drinker, that I believe in this guy, but I've been around a lot of very important politicians in my lifetime and I think this guy is different and I do trust him to do what is right. I also believe that he knows how to get things done, and that he will make a significant difference in a positive way in the lives of gay and lesbian Americans.

Rex: Let's go back just a second to the (controversial marriage-case) brief. Do you have any reason to believe that he may or may not have known what was in that brief before it

happened?

Steve: As I understand it, he did not read the brief in advance but he subsequently has read the brief and was not happy at all with both the direction as well as the language that was used—and that he expects much better from his administration.

Rex: This same Justice Department is going to have to file another brief in the Olson and Boies (federal gay marriage) case in October. Do you think it's likely we're going to see something different this time?

Steve: I hope so, I don't know so. I certainly don't profess to be somebody who has intimate knowledge of what's going on at the Justice Department. I hope the outrage that has come—not just from the gay community but from others—about how pathetic the first brief was, that we will expect to see something more improved. You know, I have a little bit different perspective. I, like most people, was not at all happy with the language that was used, but better language would not have changed the end result of what the Justice Department was ruling on. I would like to see the Justice Department take a dramatic step and disagree that DOMA is a constitutional law.

Rex: There were some news stories to the effect that HRC cut a deal with the administration to delay the process on Don't Ask, Don't Tell and to work on, I guess, hate crimes first. ... Do you think there's any kind of order for the promises that Barack Obama made during the campaign on things that he wants to get done for the gay and lesbian community. Is there an order that we're likely to see those happen in?

Steve: ... Regarding some kind of deal that was cut, I think that's pretty crazy. Anybody who followed Barack Obama during the campaign and anybody that really knows this guy—he's not exactly one who's out cutting deals with special-interest groups on the left or the right for the timing of various legislative initiatives. Barack Obama as president and commander in chief is,

and will continue to go through, a process, methodically, to get the ducks in a row in order to get the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell done in a successful way that isn't just going to happen overnight. He has to move the minds of the public, he has to move the minds of Congress and he has to move the minds of military leaders. And once that happens, and the ducks are in a row, I believe he can successfully move forward for repeal, something that he feels very strongly about and something that he spoke very passionately about.

Rex: Are we likely to see some other things from the administration or moving through Congress before Don't Ask, Don't Tell? Once again, do you think there's some kind of order ... for the things that we're going to see happening? Are hate crimes going to be first and DOMA going to be last, for example?

Steve: Hate crimes has already passed the House. It's sitting in the Senate. Majority Leader Reid has promised action on it very soon and I hope he'll live up to that commitment. Passing hate crimes through Congress, and the signature of the president, can actually have a real positive impact on people's lives. That's something that's very critical—and it's something that's really long overdue. So I believe that if there is an order to things, because the House has taken action, because the Senate could take action at any time, that is something that is probably likely to move pretty quickly. I can't say I'm privy to what might be next, and that doesn't always just happen from the White House. You know, Nancy Pelosi as speaker has a real impact on that. Harry Reid as majority leader has a real impact on that, and I have not spoken to either of them.

Rex: In your speech to the National Education Association GLBT Caucus here tonight in San Diego, you came 'this close' to basically putting your fist in the air and saying, "It's time to ACT UP and fight back." What exactly were you talking about? What do you think ... the gay and lesbian community needs to be doing that we're not doing?

Steve: I don't think our voices are as powerful as they should be. I think too many people in the gay community do not push their elected officials as hard as they should. If you had 20 gay people together in a room and asked how many of them actually have reached out and either called, e-mailed or sent a letter to their member of Congress over the last two months, I would say the vast, vast majority of them will have done nothing. My suggestion is that people need to become strong activists, that we need to multiply by hundreds the number of activists we have in the gay community. We need more voices, we need louder voices, and we need to tell politicians at every level we're not willing to take their excuses anymore.

Rex: ... There has been this sort of ground-

swell of yelling at Barack Obama for the last three or four weeks. Would you include him in this kind of call for stepped-up pressure on politicians, or do you have a faith in him—a personal faith in him based on your experience—that he's going to be there for us whether we're nice or not-so-nice to him?


Steve: I would encourage gays and straights alike to put pressure on President Obama, on his administration, to call for action—immediate action on the laundry list of items that the gay community deserves for true equality in this country. What I don't like is the suggestion by a lot of people that this guy has lied to us and that he isn't fulfilling his campaign promises, when he's only been in office for five months. He can't change the world overnight and—I'm doing my best to say this without providing excuses—but this is a president who was handed a larger number of really big issues to deal with at the beginning of his presidency than any other president in history. He's got to get an economy moving, he's got to get the troops out of Iraq, there's a lot of big, big problems. At the same time, he is working within his administration to try and get in a position to get some meaningful things done to help the gay community achieve equality. That does not preclude any suggestion that we should not keep up the pressure. He has told me, and he has told ... staff in the White House that pressure's a good thing, so people should continue to put pressure on him.

Rex: A lot of these things need congressional action, not just him to say things.

Steve: Exactly, and if people want things done, they should demand action from Congress, they should demand action from the president, they should demand action from their school boards, from their city council members, their mayors, their legislators, their governors, everybody. They should demand action within their churches. I don't believe in the kind of civil discourse that ACT UP used several years back. My suggestion is that people ought to be very vocal, they ought to vote with full knowledge and full commitment of candidates—not just to support but to actually lead on issues that are important to us.

Rex: From some of our conversations earlier this evening, when we were just chatting, I got the impression that you believe that Barack Obama, in his gut, gets the gay thing and sees it as one of—or maybe even *the*—last big civil rights things to accomplish, and that this is somebody—I mean, I think it would be comforting to the gay and lesbian community to know that he gets it in his gut and sees it as a fundamental civil rights issue and ... by the end of his first four years in office, you think things are going to have changed for

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BAR from cover

ers, newspaper columnists, bloggers, activists and local politicians.

"Jeff Halstead can't be allowed to use the Gay Panic Defense," wrote gay syndicated columnist and frequent national-TV talking head Dan Savage. "His officers weren't groped, no one was 'touched and advanced.' Homophobic cops raided a gay bar, roughed up the patrons, and a young man is in the hospital and may die."

"This is exactly the kind of state-sponsored violence that gays and lesbians fought back against at Stonewall 40 years ago," Savage said. "Gay men all over the country are going to have to speak up and defend the patrons of the Rainbow Lounge. We can't allow the chief of police in Fort Worth to use the Gay Panic Defense or exploit stereotypes about gay men—so sexually reckless that they can't even keep their hands off cops during a raid!—to get away with violating the civil rights of gay men in Fort Worth."

Dallas freelance writer John Selig reported June 30 that President Barack Obama is aware



Chad Gibson. Photo from WFAA-TV

of the raid.

"Jesse Garcia, who has been active in Stonewall Democrats for years and was recently head of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, mentioned the incident to the president and asked him to pray for Chad Gibson," Selig wrote. "President Obama told Jesse that he was aware of the situation and that he would pray for Chad."

The exchange occurred at Obama's June 29 White House gathering with 300 LGBT leaders to mark the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots.

World: India's gay-sex ban struck down

BY REX WOCKNER

Following an eight-year court battle, India's Delhi High Court legalized gay sex July 2 in a forceful and poetic ruling that had GLBT activists crying in the courtroom.

The ruling took effect immediately—nationally—and will remain in effect unless the Supreme Court reverses it. Several major Western media outlets erroneously reported July 2 that the ruling only applied in New Delhi.

The court decision "read down" Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code so that it no longer applies to the activities of consenting adults. The section bans "carnal intercourse against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal" under penalty of 10 years to life in prison.

The court smashed 377's application to gay people in myriad ways, finding it violated a constitutional guarantee of equality under the law, a constitutional ban on discrimination based on sex, and constitutional promises of personal liberty and protection of life.

The ruling is chock-full of soaring statements in support of India's GLBT population, including:

—"The criminalisation of homosexuality condemns in perpetuity a sizable section of society and forces them to live their lives in the shadow of harassment, exploitation, humiliation, cruel and degrading treatment at the hands of the law enforcement machinery. ... Section 377 IPC grossly violates their right to privacy and liberty embodied in Article 21 insofar as it criminalises consensual sexual acts between adults in private."

—"Section 377 IPC targets the homosexual community as a class and is motivated by an animus towards this vulnerable class of people.

... It has no other purpose than to criminalise conduct which fails to conform with the moral or religious views of a section of society. The discrimination severely affects the rights and interests of homosexuals and deeply impairs their dignity."

—"When everything associated with homosexuality is treated as bent, queer, repugnant, the whole gay and lesbian community is marked with deviance and perversity. ... The result is that a significant group of the population is, because of its sexual non-conformity, persecuted, marginalised and turned in on itself."

—"We hold that sexual orientation is a ground analogous to sex and that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is not permitted by Article 15. ... A provision of law branding one section of people as criminal based wholly on the State's moral disapproval of that class goes counter to the equality guaranteed under Articles 14 and 15 under any standard of review."

—"Right to personal liberty and 'right to equality' are fundamental human rights which belong to individuals simply by virtue of their humanity. ... A Bill of Rights does not 'confer' fundamental human rights. It confirms their existence and accords them protection."

—"Indian Constitutional law does not permit the statutory criminal law to be held captive by the popular misconceptions of who the GLBTs are. It cannot be forgotten that discrimination is antithesis of equality and that it is the recognition of equality which will foster the dignity of every individual. ... We declare that Section 377 IPC, insofar it criminalises consensual sexual acts of adults in private, is violative of Articles 21, 14 and 15 of the Constitution."

What happens next?

The national government could appeal the ruling to India's Supreme Court, though that is considered unlikely; the national government could both accept the ruling and use it as ammo to introduce a bill in Parliament to duplicate the ruling in national law; and/or anti-gay parties to the lawsuit could appeal to the Supreme Court.

But until such time as the Supreme Court overturns the Delhi ruling, India's GLBTs—who comprise more than 17 percent of all GLBT people on the planet—are no longer criminals. India has a population of nearly 1.2 billion people.

The erroneous reports that the ruling did not apply outside of New Delhi appeared in The New York Times, The Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, on the Associated Press wire and elsewhere. (For correct information, see bit.ly/WeXy0 and bit.ly/7su40.)

"Every major media outlet in the world got this wrong because they don't understand how the Indian courts work," said journalist Vikram Doctor of India's Queer Media Collective. "It will apply nationally until somebody challenges that at the Supreme Court, which is where this case is going to end up anyway."

In most common-law court systems, including India's in this case, the decision of an appellate court binds lower courts within its territorial jurisdiction and also is the 'last' word on the subject nationally unless a court of equal authority elsewhere makes a contrary decision or the supreme court reverses the decision. An appellate decision also binds the parties in the case (which include the Indian government in this case) regardless of where they are in the country.

Meanwhile, gay pride parades were staged in four Indian cities June 27-28—New Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai and Bhubaneswar.

At least 2,000 people marched in New Delhi. Marches are still to come in Mumbai and Kolkata.

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

Obama tries to soften DADT

BY BOB ROEHR

Defense Secretary Robert Gates said the Pentagon is looking at "a more humane way to apply" the antigay military policy known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT) until it can be repealed. The remarks came June 30 while he was traveling in Europe, according to the Associated Press.

He suggested that might include not investigating accusations from a jilted lover or someone else who acts out of vindictive motives. Gates said military lawyers are looking into the situation.

The comments came one day after President Barack Obama told an LGBT gathering at the White House that he believes DADT "doesn't contribute to our national security. In fact, I believe preventing patriotic Americans from serving their country weakens our national security."

The president said he had asked the Pentagon "to develop a plan for how to thoroughly implement a repeal."

This movement by the administration appears to be influenced by recent reports by both the Palm Center and the Center for American Progress that laid out steps that could be taken prior to congressional action on repeal.

Meanwhile, an administrative board recommended that Lt. Daniel Choi be discharged from the New York Army National Guard for publicly stating that he is gay. Choi is a graduate of West Point, an Arabic linguist, and an Iraqi vet who is willing to return to that country.

The recommendation must now wend its way through the military chain of command, which must decide whether or not to accept that recommendation. It offers the Obama administration the opportunity to back up its words with real action.

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Opposition to De Jesús grows

BY JESSICA PUPOVAC

The clock is ticking on Chicago Mayor Richard Daley's decision regarding who should fill the vacancy left by former Ald. Billy Ocasio, who left City Council last month to work as a senior adviser to Gov. Pat Quinn.

Before he left his 26th Ward office, Ocasio made known his wishes that his pastor, Rev. Wilfredo De Jesús, be his heir—but the decision ultimately falls to Daley.

The possibility of having De Jesús in City Council is raising eyebrows in the ward and beyond, due in no small part to his stance on homosexuality. De Jesús' New Life Covenant Ministries church is part of the Assemblies of God, a Pentecostal fellowship that considers homosexuality a sin. In Chicago, many LGBT activists know him as the pastor who put the brakes last year on a planned Pride Campus, a school that designers hoped would act as a model school, providing a safe and affirming environment for LGBT and questioning youth and their allies.

Although De Jesús says that his opposition to

the school stems from his belief that it would segregate LGBT youth, one former congregant, Esmeralda Román, said she left his church because of a sermon that he gave about the school that she said felt more "like an anti-gay rally."

Román, a lesbian, had asked De Jesús just weeks prior if she and her partner and their three children were welcome to worship at New Life Covenant. De Jesús said they were.

"We didn't go back because we didn't feel safe there," said Román. "I have sat in churches and seen people being hypocrites, people lying, people stealing—but I never felt hate like that at church. That's exactly what I felt."

De Jesús' office did not respond to calls requesting comment for this story.

The office of 44th Ward Alderman Tom Tunney, whose district encompasses Boystown, confirmed that it has received many calls and letters from their constituents and the LGBT community about the potential new alderman, and have relayed those concerns to the mayor.

Although De Jesús' church is in the 1st Ward and he lives in the 31st, New Life Ministries is active in the 26th, the ward De Jesús would represent. The church organizes works to feed homeless people; advocate for affordable housing; and minister to prostitutes and people

struggling with drug addictions. It's one of the reasons that groups like the Puerto Rican Cultural Center (PRCC)—which, among other things, advocates for LGBT rights and offers many services to the local LGBT community—is supporting his candidacy.

"Right now he's been named by Alderman Ocasio, and we support Alderman Ocasio's prerogative to make that recommendation," said Raul Echevarria, deputy director of the PRCC. "I think a lot has been made about some of the drawbacks, but I think he brings a lot to the table that would be beneficial to the community as a whole."

"That doesn't mean that we won't engage him in some of these other issues that are important in the community, including his stance on LGBT issues. Engagement whenever possible, I think, is the best way to work some of these things out," he said.

Some LGBT advocates say they have reached out to De Jesús, but that those conversations have only bolstered their reservations.

On June 3, a network of about 30 LGBT activists and community leaders met with De Jesús at La Bruqueña restaurant, 2726 W. Division.

"People asked him very pointed questions about his Web site, which has a page about ho-

mosexuality and how it's sinful and wrong. They asked him if he would change that, and he said absolutely not," said Rick Garcia of Equality Illinois, who attended the meeting.

"Somebody asked, 'What if your daughter told you she was a lesbian?' And I looked at this guy's reaction and it was sad. He looked like somebody threw cold water on him. He said something to the effect of, 'That's not how my wife and I raised our family.' Then she pushed him and he said 'Well, I would want to know who did that to her.'"

"I have to say that I don't think he swayed anyone in that room in his favor," said Garcia.

"Many of us at the meeting were not confident that Rev. De Jesús would be able to separate his religious views from his role as an alderman," said Lourdes Torres, president of Amigas Latinas, an organization that advocates for lesbian, bisexual and questioning Latinas, and their families.

Torres said her concerns go beyond his stance on sexuality and include his position on other hot-button issues, including a woman's right to choose.

Torres said she is disappointed to see other longtime LGBT advocates discount his social conservatism. Torres said she originally signed onto a letter endorsing his candidacy, at the urging of several members of the local Puerto Rican community, but that after learning more about him she asked that her name be removed.

"I think gay issues should be put at the same level as all of the other issues that they see as important—gentrification, immigration, workers rights. It's unfortunate that it's not considered significant enough," she said.

But concern over De Jesús' possible appointment isn't limited to the LGBT community.

"He's done a lot of good work as far as his church goes. But the 26th Ward is a very diverse ward and I don't think his views are very diverse. They come straight from his interpretation of the Bible—period—and he's admitted that," said Felipe Ortiz, who has lived in the 26th Ward since 1958.

"I know he's a great pastor in the new life church, but the only thing we're thinking is how is he going to run the church and take care of the community?" said Nancy Garcia, co-owner of Papas Cache, a popular restaurant in Paseo Boricua, a street section in the West Side of Chicago. "I know there's other people, candidates, and more people qualified, too. I don't know why Billy Ocasio only recommended specifically him."

Some people expressed hope that the amount of time the mayor is taking to make the decision could mean that he is looking at some of those other candidates.

"Knowing the mayor's level of support for gay and lesbian people and our families, I'm sure they mayor is looking at this issue," said Garcia, who added that no matter whether De Jesús is selected to be alderman or not, he already wields, and will continue to wield, a significant amount of clout in Chicago politics.

"But whether he's appointed or not, he's going to have political influence," he said.

Both Rev. Wilfredo De Jesús' and Mayor Daley's offices did not return calls for this story. In addition, a number of people that De Jesús has publicly claimed support him did not respond, either.

Vital Bridges receives grant

HIV/AIDS agency Vital Bridges received a grant of \$49,352 to provide high-quality food and nutrition services from the M.A.C. AIDS Fund. The grant will provide over 14,000 meals for one year for 28 people who rely on Vital Bridges' grocery centers.

"As government decreases its support for people with HIV/AIDS, it is inspiring to have the M.A.C. AIDS Fund invest in the health of Chicago's most fragile people," said Deborah Hinde, Vital Bridges president and CEO.

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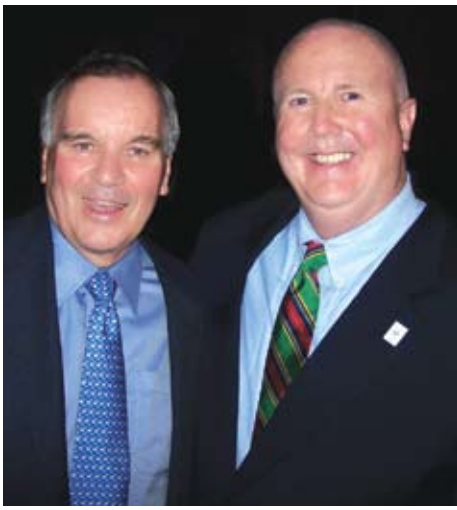
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Mayor Richard Daley and LGBT liaison Bill Greaves. Photo by Steve Starr

Mayor's LGBT reception resonates with attendees

BY WES LAWSON

At the Chicago Cultural Center, 77 E. Randolph, on June 30, over 500 friends, family members and leaders within Chicago's LGBT community gathered for Mayor Richard Daley's 18th Gay Pride Month Reception. Because it was the 40th anniversary of Stonewall, there was older music on the speakers, and many of the speakers made reference to the events.

On the stage with Mayor Daley were congressman Mike Quigley, Human Relations Chair Dana Starks, Chicago Public Schools Chief Ron Huberman, Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez, 44th Ward Alderman Tom Tunney and William Greaves, who spoke about the accomplishments and successes that the LGBT community has achieved in the last year. Among these was the news that LGBT couples would be represented in the 2010 census, and that the state had changed their regulations to recognize the passports and other official documents of same-sex couples. The marriage debate was brought up several times, but the speakers wanted to assure everyone that President Obama was making progress, and progress was also being made in Illinois.

An award was also given to the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, which worked to promote both groups and social services dedicated to help LGBT youth in their communities and establish them as functioning adults. The award was accepted by several members of the alliance's board, who were ecstatic to be recognized for their work.

After the speakers, the members of the community reconnected with old friends and spoke of the future. Daley went through the room talking to people and congratulating them on a month well done. Photos by Steve Starr; more can be seen at www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

Wisconsin to allow domestic partnerships

Wisconsin has become the first state with a constitutional amendment banning civil unions and gay marriage to include domestic partnerships for same-sex couples, according to the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Couples can apply for a declaration of domestic partnership starting Aug. 3.

Gay-rights advocates also contend that Wisconsin is the first Midwestern state to have its legislature establish legal protections for same-sex couples.

However, supporters of a marriage ban may file an appeal soon, arguing that this latest development creates a legal status that is on par with marriage.

Health summit Aug. 14-18

Organizers of the 2009 National LGBTI Health Summit announced that, in collaboration with the Bisexual Health Summit, close to 100 workshops, plenaries and town halls will be offered at this year's event. An array of topics will be covered, including the aging of the Stonewall generation, new HIV-prevention technologies, intimate partner violence, transgender health-care, biphobia and body image.

The summit begins Friday, Aug. 14, with a day devoted specifically to the bisexual community. Saturday, Aug. 15, kicks off the full LGBTI Health Summit, which continues through Tues., Aug. 18. The conference site is the Chicago Hilton and Towers, 720 S. Michigan.

Registration for all five days is \$200, and includes continental breakfast and lunch every day, plus special amenities like free-chair massages and fun social activities. See www.2009lgbtihealth.org.

ALCC's Fisher gets legal award

Chicago attorney and AIDS Legal Council of Chicago (ALCC) Executive Director Ann Hilton

Fisher—who has devoted the past 15 years of her legal career to fighting for the rights of people with HIV and AIDS—received the 2009 Community Leadership Award from the Illinois State Bar Association June 26, during the organization's 133rd Annual Meeting in Fontana, Wis.

Under Fisher's leadership, the ALCC has been able to double its annual budget, increase its legal staff from four to nine, and expand services to almost 1,500 clients each year. In addition to her administrative responsibilities, she handles a full caseload and chairs a service provider advocacy committee of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. She is past board president of Illinois Citizens for Better Care.

Gay Chicagoan gets peace award

Gary L. Cozette—an out Chicagoan who is program director of the Chicago Leadership Network on Latin America (CRLN)—received the "Peace Activist of the Year" award at a June 19 event co-sponsored by Rockford Peace & Justice Action Committee & RUM.

The event took place at First Presbyterian Church, 406 N. Main, Rockford.

Cozette was honored with the Peace Fellow-

ship 2008 "Peace Seeker Award" at the biannual General Assembly of Presbyterian Church (USA). He served as peace worker in El Salvador (1984-1987) doing human-rights reporting from San Salvador.



Gary Cozette.



UPCOMING GAMES

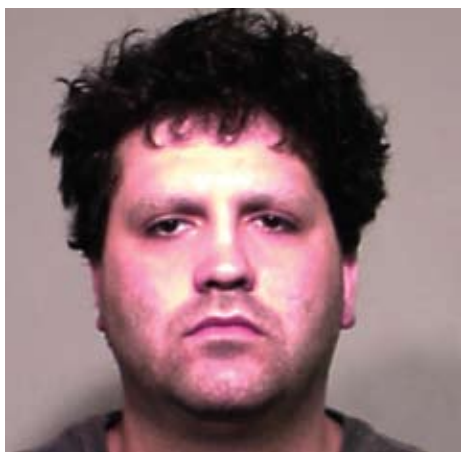
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Mug shot of Thomas Flanagan. Photo courtesy of the Chicago Police Department

Man known for drag persona jailed

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Thomas Flanagan—known to many Chicagoans via his drag persona, Lady Vera Parker—was recently taken in by the Chicago Police Department.

Flanagan, 24, was arrested June 30 on charges of deception, according to the news affairs division of the police department.

Flanagan came from Provincetown, Mass., according to ChicagoPride.com. As Parker, Flanagan appeared in local venues and shows. Flanagan recently appeared on Spin nightclub's Pride float on June 28.

Several Web sites have featured multiple posts about Flanagan. Several individuals on 800Notes.com claimed to be taken in by Flanagan in scams related to real estate.

Flanagan was scheduled to appear at Branch 42 Courthouse, 2452 W. Belmont, on July 7. Windy City Times will report more details as they become available.

Howard Brown statue returned

A statue that was stolen off the grounds of Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N. Sheridan, the item has been returned, according to the agency's Facebook page.

The statue, in memory of lesbian health advocate Mary York, was discovered missing from the center's Memorial Peace Garden June 22. Employees of the health center were particularly distressed because the statue was affixed with cement containing some of York's ashes.

York's partner, LaGenia Bailey, donated the

statue to complement the peace garden, which was planted and dedicated to both York and fellow lesbian health advocate Lisa Tonna in June 2008.

According to Howard Brown's Facebook page, dated July 6, "After [a] dismayed response from the local community and media, word about the theft spread, and perhaps those who took the near 100-pound statue and base gave more thought to their actions.

"Chicago Police officers were called when the statue was spotted on the sidewalk, in front of the memorial plaque that dedicates the garden to Lisa Tonna and Mary York, two women whose work and lives powerfully touched the LGBT community in many ways.

"Whatever the circumstances of the statue's theft, we are grateful that it was returned intact. We like to think that Mary and Lisa had something to do with its return."

Hall of Fame deadline extended

The 2009 deadline to nominate individuals and organizations for induction into the Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame has been extended to Tuesday, Aug. 4.

Nomination forms can be downloaded or printed from the Hall of Fame's Web site, www.GLHofFame.org, or requested by calling 312-744-7911 and leaving a mailing address. Completed nominations should be sent to: The Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on LGBT Issues, 740 N. Sedgwick, Suite 300, Chicago, Ill., 60654-8488.

The 2009 Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame induction ceremony and reception is currently scheduled to be held on Thursday, Nov. 12, at the Chicago Cultural Center, 77 E. Randolph.

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival in Aug.

The 34th annual Michigan Womyn's Music Festival is scheduled to take place Aug. 4-9.

Among the highlights are entertainment, workshops and networking opportunities (provided within the Community Center complex). Slated to entertain are Melissa Ferrick, Emma's Revolution, Poppy Champlin, Leslie and the Ly's, C.C. Carter and God-des and She.

See www.michfest.com or www.myspace.com/michfest.

Local events:

You better think: Center on Halsted offers "Queer Spirit Chicago Drop-In Guided Meditation," a weekly guided meditation, at 11-11:45 a.m. on Mondays, and 6-7:15 p.m. on Tuesdays. The fee is \$5-\$10. RSVP's are strongly encouraged; contact Cathy Jones at cjones@centeron-halsted.org or 773-472-6469, ext. 265.

Casting call, part one: MTV is looking for people 18-23 to be in a show about individuals battling drug and alcohol addictions. E-mail MTVcasting@gigantic.tv with a story and some information about you or a loved one's situation.

A pug's life: A queer-focused, straight-friendly open-mic reading, "Prose, Poetry and Pints at the Pug" will take place Thursday, July 9, at Wild Pug, 4810 N. Broadway. Sign-up be-

gins at 7:30 p.m.; readings start at 8 p.m. Have two, typed (double-spaced) pages. E-mail drewferguson@mac.com or call 773-504-2010.

"Night" moves: "Queering the Night" will take place at Center for New Possibilities, 1505 W. Morse, on Friday, July 10, 7-9 p.m., with guests Scott Free and Je Nepomuceno. The suggested donation is \$5. See www.InsightArtsLiberation.org.

Boat trip: The Association of Latino Men for Action (ALMA) will host "Dancing on the Deck II" Saturday, July 11, 8:30 p.m.-1 a.m. Tickets are \$125 each; See www.almachicago.org.

Sara smile: Citizens for Sara Feigenholtz will hold a fundraiser Monday, July 13, at Wishbone Restaurant, 3300 N. Lincoln, 5:30-8 p.m. E-mail RSVP@SaraFeigenholtz.com.

OBAMA from page 4

the gay and lesbian community.

Steve: I don't think it's just in his gut, I think it's in his heart. You know, none of us can know somebody exactly, but I do believe this guy fundamentally in his heart believes that we should not stop fighting—whether it's for gay civil rights or any other kind of equality—until the job is done. ... I do believe that in his heart he will fight his tail off until we've achieved full equality in the gay community.

Rex: There's been all this pressure on Obama but nobody's really yelling at Congress. Why aren't we yelling at Congress too?

Steve: Everybody should use their voices very loudly until we've achieved full equality. I do think that we've seen disappointment from politicians—Democrat and Republican—for too many decades now of people who say, "Yes, we support equality," but then they go to Washington and they don't do anything about it. They're too wrapped up in figuring out how to win their next election and they're not concerned enough about doing what's right for the American people. And I think, I firmly believe that politicians should stop being so spineless and start being real leaders, and actually doing things that have a dramatic impact in a positive way on people's lives.

Rex: Make it specific. What would you like to see Pelosi and Reid do next week for gay people?

Steve: Next week they should pass employment nondiscrimination, they should pass the Safe Schools (Improvement) Act (of 2009) to address the bullying issue, and they should pass hate crimes, and put those three pieces of legislation on the president's desk, where he would sign them immediately.

Rex: Why haven't they done it?

Steve: I firmly believe they haven't done it because too many members of the House and Senate don't have the political courage and the political will to take those votes. They believe those votes are too hard and will hurt them in their re-elections, and they're more concerned about their re-elections than they are about actually helping people.

Rex: When you look at, say, the Massachusetts example: Not a single legislator who voted for the gay issue of all gay issues—same-sex marriage—lost a seat in Massachusetts as a result of that vote. Do you



Steve Hildebrand. Photo by Rex Wockner

think this fear that voting in favor of gays is going to lose you your next election is kind of overblown in the eyes of members of Congress and, if so, why?

Steve: I don't believe it's just gay issues that politicians are afraid of. You're seeing politicians who are afraid to do the right thing when it comes to climate-change legislation, you're already hearing various members of the House and the Senate go south on health care reform because they think it might be a vote that's going to be tough for their re-election. These folks, when they're running for office, say they want to do important things and have a real impact, but then they go to Washington and all they do is focus on their re-election.

Rex: A lot of these gay ... things, if they were put on his desk tomorrow, he would sign them. So, this is really Congress.

Steve: Well, I certainly don't want to let President Obama off the hook. He needs to use his bully pulpit, he needs to use pressure on Congress, he needs to help move public opinion, but Congress needs to step up to the plate and do their part too.


Rex: What do you do to make Congress act? ... How do I get my congresswoman's attention?

Steve: You should call her office, you should show up at events, whether it's a town hall or another event that she might be at, and try to address her in person, you should write her a letter, you should write a letter to the editor, which calls upon her to take action that you're requesting, you should not make a contribution to her campaign, and encourage others not to contribute, if she is not showing leadership on our issues. There's a whole bunch of ways.

Rex: Thanks, Steve.

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WORLD ROUNDUP

BY REX WOCKNER

Liza does Paris Pride

Singer and gay icon Liza Minnelli danced on a float in Paris' gay pride parade June 27.

Minnelli is the daughter of gay icon Judy Garland, whose death five days before the Stonewall Riots 40 years ago is thought to have contributed to the foul mood of the gays who decided to fight back against the police raid of the Stonewall Inn.

"Freedom," Minnelli shouted from the float. About 700,000 people took part in the festivities.

"We knew that she (Minnelli) had a concert this evening in Paris but when her agent told us that she could come, we thought it was a joke," Pride spokesman Philippe Castel told Agence France-Presse.

Berlin also held Pride on June 27. About 550,000 people turned out, reports said.

Jerusalem gay pride actually goes well

About 2,000 people marched in Jerusalem's gay pride parade June 25 without incident, but for one tossed egg.

Previous years' marches have been met with violent protests, stabbings and the arrest of a man carrying a bomb.

Police protection was reduced this year, to a mere 1,600 officers.

Gays attacked at Slovenian Pride event

A cafe in Ljubljana, Slovenia, that was holding a Pride week cultural event was damaged June 25 by rock-throwing, hate-spewing anti-gays.

Eight men carrying stones and torches attacked Cafe Open and shouted that gay people should be killed.

They also set upon gay activist Mitja Blazic outside the cafe, injuring his head and burning him. Activists said Blazic was "severely beaten up" and required hospital attention.

Lithuanian prez vetoes 'no promo homo' bill

Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus on June 26 vetoed a bill that banned from schools and public places information that agitates for homosexual, bisexual or polygamous relations.

The vote for the bill in the Seimas (parliament) had been 67-3 with 67 MPs not voting. Seventy-one votes would be needed to override Adamkus' veto.

The proposed "Law on the Protection of Minors Against the Detrimental Effect of Public Information" has been denounced by Amnesty International, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, foreign governments and various arms of the pan-European bureaucracies.

Should it become law, the measure likely would end up before the European Court of Human Rights, where it probably would be found to violate the European Convention on Human Rights.

—Assistance: Bill Kelley

QUOTELINES

BY REX WOCKNER

"ONE DAY WE'RE GONNA PUT SCREW AND SCREW TOGETHER AND REALIZE that the problem is our unrealistic and unnatural fixation on monogamy and not that 'some men just can't keep it in their pants.' Human beings aren't wired to be sexually monogamous—male or female—and the feigned shock with which we're required to greet each new revelation of infidelity on the part of an elected official, a reality-show star, or a sports figure would be comical if the costs weren't so great. Elevating monogamy over all else—insisting that it, and it alone, is true love's only marker—destroys marriages and families and careers. Which is not to say that anything goes and that people shouldn't be expected to honor their commitments and that there aren't folks out there who're capable of remaining monogamous over the three, four, five, or six decade course of a marriage. But think of all the people who've cheated and gotten caught. Now think about all the people who've cheated and gotten away with it. Our ideals about the place of sex within marriage are at war with who and what we are. They're at war with reality. Sex is powerful, relationships are fragile. Why on earth do we insist on pitting them against each other?" — *Gay writer Dan Savage on his blog, June 24.*

standard answer? I said: 'You know, I'm just going to say the truth. Definitely a woman.'" — *Top Gun actress Kelly McGillis to People magazine, May 28.*

"SOMETIMES PEOPLE ASK ME, 'HOW DOES BEING GAY AFFECT THE WAY THAT YOU SEE THE WORLD?' And I'm, like, 'I don't know, I've been gay since I was 17!' I've never not been gay and seen the world. So I've never been a broadcaster who didn't have an AIDS activist background. So I don't know how it changed me. I mean, it's definitely changed some of my political orientation. I learned from the AIDS movement that people should speak for themselves. And I think that maybe manifests on my show ... in that I do long introductions before I let guests talk usually, but then the payoff is that they get to talk without being interrupted." — *MSNBC anchor Rachel Maddow to Poz magazine, June issue.*



Over the next couple of years I think gay marriage will just be accepted.

—Sandra Bernhard



"SORRY TO ADMIT IT, BUT just had to delete several hundred FB (Facebook) emails. I think they call it 'email bankruptcy.' Or 'giving up.' If you sent me something important and I didn't get back to you, let's start over." — *Popular gay blogger Joe.My.God. (Joe Jervis) on his Facebook page, June 23.*

"WHEN PROPOSITION 8 PASSED, I FELT THE GAY COMMUNITY thought because it was California, a liberal state, they didn't need to pay attention and so they didn't do enough work to fight for it. I think like all minorities who have had to struggle to get their rights politically we should have been more organized. I think it forced everybody to come to their senses about that. Over the next couple of years I think gay marriage will just be accepted; we've got too many other things to think about. I think that some people who are really freaked out about it will just throw in the towel like they did when they were racist." — *Comedian and actress Sandra Bernhard to London's Pink Paper, May 28.*

"MARRIAGE DOESN'T INTEREST ME IN THAT CLASSICAL WAY. We (my partner and I) don't need it in a way that some people need it. I'm not being a snob; I think everybody that wants it should have access to it." — *Comedian and actress Sandra Bernhard to London's Pink Paper, May 28.*

"I WAS NOT IN FAVOR OF HIS (OBAMA'S) COMING OUT for same-sex marriage when he first got elected. But I would hope he would be by the time he runs for re-election." — *Gay U.S. Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., to GQ, June 12.*

"IT WAS LIKE A MOMENT OF TRUTH. (A reporter) asked me the question (of whether I was looking to date a man or a woman) and I thought, Hmm, do I say the truth, or do I just say, 'It's none of your business,' which is my

"DYKES ON BIKES, TARZANA TRANNIES, JEWISH LEATHER DADDIES and Kathy Griffin's mom. Don't get me wrong. I love these people. Let's call them the 'Usual Suspects.' They fought for my rights and taught me how to dance. But they should no longer be representing 'the pride.' It's a different time. ... I cringe when a local newsperson shoves a microphone in the face of some young 95-pound twink (who) looks into the camera and screams into the reporter's microphone: 'Get down here now. The drinks are big. But you know what's bigger..?' He laughs in a high-pitched cackle and his 'girlfriends' join in. I wish they'd read more and drink less. I'm depressed. Why is this the voice speaking for me? I know there were many types of interesting, smart people on the parade route showing their support. But guess what, guys and gals? None of you have a loud enough, strong enough or powerful enough voice to be heard over the thumping techno backbeat of the big gay parade. This is a huge problem." — *Will & Grace co-creator Max Mutchnick writing at the Huffington Post, June 18.*

"FOR YEARS, I EXPERIENCED A PECULIAR KIND OF FAME OR INFAMY—depending on one's perspective—for taking on the public face of sex without condoms. ... In the 1990s, I was called a murderer for talking about unprotected sex; now, public health workers call (barebacking between partners of the same HIV status) 'serosorting' and deem it a harm-reduction strategy. Imagine that." — *Longtime Los Angeles and San Diego AIDS activist Tony Valenzuela to POZ magazine, July issue.*

"I TRIED TO COME OUT AS A GAY MAN, I tried to come out as a lesbian. I was even a trannie for a while. But no group wants me. My parade is one person!" — *Joan Rivers to The Village Voice, June 2.*

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**WAYNE
BESEN**

Drop the Washington crack pipe

I understand the magnetic allure of Washington, D.C. I worked there for several years and it could, at times, be mesmerizing. I've attended press conferences on the steps of Capitol Hill with Ted Kennedy and marveled that I was standing next to the real icon, not a replica from Madame Tussauds wax museum. I have stood only a stone's throw from President Clinton, as he greeted foreign dignitaries on the White House lawn. (I might have actually thrown the stones at Bush)

It makes one feel, well, important.

From a media perspective, there is also nothing like being swept into the tidal wave of presidential politics. Last year, I made national news by slamming candidate Barack Obama for sponsoring a South Carolina gospel tour featuring "ex-gay" singer Donnie McClurkin. My second foray into the spotlight involved Sarah Palin's church promotion of an "ex-gay" conference in Anchorage.

Getting thrust into the national storyline means hundreds of news stories that feature your name and the bright lights of television. Of course, such massive media hits are important and serve a larger purpose. But, the downside is our movement can become intoxicated with Washington at the expense of broader issues.

Let me be clear, it is crucial that the gay, les-

bian, bisexual and transgender movement have a strong voice in Washington. It is vital that we support our national lobby groups. Solutions at the federal level are often preferable because they apply to conservative states where it may take decades to achieve equality.

Still, this past week underscored how the gay movement's engagement with Washington has become an unhealthy obsession. I have seen hundreds of articles and e-mails with people opining on Obama, the Democrats and the gay movement. (I'm as guilty as anyone else. Indeed, my column last week was about the administration's timidity on gay issues.)

It seems every person wants to be the star of Meet the Press, every activist is now Chris Matthews and we are all experts at political chess, prattling endlessly in the cyber salon about the machinations of the administration. Everyone with a computer is now a master strategist and can regurgitate the records of previously obscure members of Congress.

Political discourse has become an aphrodisiac that has seduced our community away from equally important issues. Perhaps it is time we go into rehab and free ourselves from the Washington crack pipe. It is a cheap high that rarely lasts and often leaves us broke and unsatisfied.

We all wanted King Obama to sweep into office, wave his magic wand and make discrimination disappear. I really wish he would, but it is clear that he won't—or at least not as quick as we desire. So, why don't we pry ourselves away from D.C. for a moment and try using our resources in alternative ways?

Anyone remember AIDS?

Ever hear of the multimillion-dollar ex-gay industry that pumps out reams of propaganda to portray gay people as sick and "sexually broken?" Few people seem to notice, even though these groups spread harmful myths and poisonous stereotypes that impact our daily lives.

as mayor, make an appointment you should be made aware of how the Latino LGBTQ and the gay community at large feel or think about potential candidates' views on our issues. As mayor, you have been a tremendous supporter of both the Latino and gay communities so we trust that you will understand and take our concerns into account when making your decision. We want to make sure the Latino LGBTQ community of the 26th Ward and all the residents of Chicago will have their basic civil rights protected, and that the person who represents the ward in the city council represents all of his or her constituents.

If you would like to discuss this further, you can have someone from your staff contact us at info@almachicago.org or 773-661-0926. Again, thank you, mayor, for your consideration and support in this matter.

*Sincerely,
ALMA Board,
ALMA members
Supporters and residents of the Latino LGBTQ community of the 26th Ward*

Shirts hurt

A letter to Chi-city Tees:

I am the owner of a Chicago-based special-events firm just west of the Loop, and one of my employees and several clients have sent me your Web site over the past two days. As the owner of my own company, I am truly shocked at your company's blatant discrimination against the Chicago LGBTQ community, both on the north and south sides of the city. I know it's supposed to all be in fun, (albeit tasteless), but I hope you would seriously consider removing this T-shirt from your Web site. Why target any one group?

What about increasing funds to help LGBT youths who are thrown out of their homes? Or, scholarships, so these teens can succeed in life and maybe one day run for Congress?

How about focusing on the abuses against LGBT people overseas?

The aforementioned issues will not get you on a congressman's speed dial. It is unlikely that you will win a sparkling trophy or have a marble bust made of your head. The cable shows may not be dialing you at a frenzied pace. But, you might have a disproportionately positive impact and even save a few lives.

The other problem with our political addiction is that it breeds bad messaging. We are coming across as a powerful lobby that is demanding action as payback for money and votes. While there is a place for such muscle flexing, it masks our true agenda.

The immediacy of our cause has to do with the trauma we all faced as children. Now that we are strong, we don't want one more LGBT teen to commit suicide while Congress dithers. It is unconscionable for another youth who dreams of serving his or her country to be turned away while Obama plots his reelection. It is an insult—right down to the core of our soul—when our government tells us that we can't marry the person we love.

Our movement is not about Obama's career, nor the happenings in Congress. What we seek is to reclaim our basic dignity and end needless suffering—both goals that one is unlikely to achieve solely in the glamorous quicksand of Washington.

While our fate in D.C. hangs in the balance, how about returning some balance to the LGBT movement by ending our fatalistic fixation on all things political?

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LETTERS

A ward to the wise

The following is a letter to Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley about 26th Ward Alderman Billy Ocasio's possible replacement, the Rev. Wilfredo De Jesús of New Life Covenant Church.

Dear Mayor Daley:

As one of the first and oldest openly gay Latino organizations in the city as well as a Hall of Fame Inductee, the Association of Latino Men for Action (ALMA) is writing to you to express our concerns about a recent situation that has come to our attention from many of our members who live in the Humboldt Park/26th Ward regarding Alderman Billy Ocasio recommendation for his successor. Ocasio has always been a good ally to ALMA and the Latino LGBTQ community. However in the case of his recommendation of the Rev. Wilfredo De Jesús, the board of ALMA and many other Latino LGBTQ leaders have some serious concerns with the minister's possible appointment, especially given what we have heard to be his public views on LGBTQ issues. ALMA, as a non-profit, is not in a position to endorse any candidate regardless of whoever makes a recommendation, but as an organization with a mission to promote and protect the rights of Latino LGBTQ individuals, we believe that all individuals seeking public office need to ensure that they will do the same—regardless of their own beliefs.

We would welcome any opportunity to meet and hear directly from any candidates being considered or who are considering being the next alderman of the 26th Ward. We have many members and allies in the ward, and we would like to hear from all the candidates about their views on LGBTQ issues. We feel that before you,



The North Side Cubs fan base is also populated with Jews, Muslims, African Americans, etc., and I don't see shirts discriminating against any of them. Why do you think this is any more appropriate? And your company's product description when you click on this item is even more disturbing.

I am asking you to please reconsider the marketing and sale of this T-shirt. I am embarrassed for your company and for putting all Sox fans in the category of homophobes and close-minded South Side drunks. It's 2009, right? I truly hope this T-shirt has been a bust for your company. It really should be.

*Respectfully,
Ted Grady*

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GOINGS-ON

WINDY CITY TIMES' ENTERTAINMENT SECTION

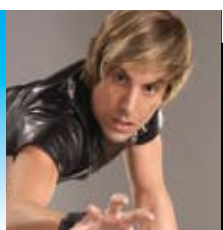


Photo by Eric Y. Exit

A FERN FOR THE BETTER

Enduring love is a theme of *Boleros for the Disenchanted* (above). See page 12.

MOVIES

The Bruno effect.
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EVENTS

Time and Pride.
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Photo by Andrew Davis



PREMIERE

'Free' to be.
Page 16.

Photo by Hal Baim



Dancin' Feats

BY ZACHARY WHITTENBURG

Summer's for festivals, and this month brings two huge, weeklong events to Chicago's dance fans. Opening Wed., July 22, is a slew of performances programmed as part of the **2009 Jazz Dance World Congress** (JDWC). Produced here by Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago and the Department of Cultural Affairs, the JDWC is to jazz dance what Cannes is to film buffs and just as international. Held in locations over its 29-year history as diverse as Japan, Germany, Mexico and Costa Rica, it's nevertheless foremost a Chicago tradition—this will be the seventh time it invites companies the world over to the Windy City.

The "Congress" part is designed to expose attendees as much as possible to the expertise of its guest faculty and panelists. Classes are held daily; teachers, dancers and administrators in the field host discussions; and, new this year, auditions for well-regarded collegiate dance programs (at the University of Arizona, University at Buffalo, Hofstra University, and Point Park University and others) as well as performer positions at Royal Caribbean International will give attending dancers multiple opportunities to seek out the next phase of their careers.

Each evening, though, is a celebration of the form open to the public: Each night, seven companies will present dances and—while the full rundown is too expansive to get into here—some highlights are a pair of world premieres by Japan's Masashi Action Machine on the July 23-24 programs: Mexico's Cuerpo Étéreo Danza Contemporánea Friday, and the début of Sherry Zunker's Mature Dance Project (a who's who of brilliant Chicago artists in their thirty-teens); moreover Philadelphia's Philadanco! will premiere July 25. A choreography competition and the premiere of the documentary *Gus*, an American Icon July 22 round out the festival's incredible smorgasbord.



Thodos Dance Chicago.

Tap dance and the percussive arts are celebrated and honored each year at **Rhythm World** which, like the JDWC, is composed of opportunities to learn and appreciate. July 27 marks the kickoff of residencies, workshops and master classes by an impressive roster of tap virtuosos like Sam Weber, Derick Grant, Jakari Sherman, Chloe Arnold, Jason Samuels Smith, Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards and Chicago Human Rhythm Project Director (and Rhythm World organizer) Lane Alexander. Classes are tiered for offerings for everyone from nine-year-old novices to working professionals. On Sunday, Aug. 2, at 6:30 p.m., a free concert will take place at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park featuring BAM!, Jump Rhythm Jazz Project, Jus' LisTeN, the South Shore Drill Team, Chicago Tap Theatre and Be the Groove. The following evening, there's a free tap improvisation jam at the Cultural Center, Roosevelt University's Ganz Hall hosts a tap-slam competition and Cutting Con-

test improvisation tournament Tuesday, Aug. 4, and—on Thursday, Aug. 6, and Saturday, Aug. 8—the Museum of Contemporary Art's theater will be home to two performances, including many of the aforementioned master teachers, guest artists and tap ensembles.

—Jazz Dance World Festival is held at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, 205 E. Randolph, July 22-25. For program and ticketing information, visit www.jazzdanceworldcongress.org and www.harristheaterchicago.org.

—Rhythm World is held at multiple locations in downtown Chicago from July 27-Aug. 9. Visit www.chicagotap.org.

Also this month:

—The final program of this spring's **Epiphany Dance Experiment** is a focus on movement as performance art and features four intriguing practitioners of that approach: JulieAnn Graham, RTG Dance, Britt Posmer and Marissa Perel.

It's at the Epiphany Episcopal Church, 201 S. Ashland, July 12 at 6 p.m.; the cost is \$12 at the door.

—**The Space/Movement Project**, recently one of three finalists at The A.W.A.R.D. Show! 2009, will premiere its latest work, *Safety in Numbers*, over two weekends at Hamlin Park Fieldhouse, 3035 N. Hoyne. Tracking ideas about community through local genealogies of six choreographers (also dancers) and three additional performers, this collective of young dancemakers is one to watch. Performances are July 16-17 and 23-24 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 at brownpapertickets.com; more information is at thespacemovementproject.org.

—**Thodos Dance Chicago** presents new works each year by members of its company and a guest choreographer. Having seen all of it in progress—I'm serving on the program's advisory panel—I can vouch for the accomplishment and incredible variety of its pieces. Performance are at the Ruth Page Center for the Arts, 1016 N. Dearborn, July 17 18 at 8 p.m. and July 19 at 5 p.m. Tickets are \$25 each, with discounts for students, seniors and children; see www.thodos-dancechicago.org.

—Atalee Judy's **Breakbone DanceCo.** is a recipient of this year's prestigious Chicago Dancemakers Forum Lab Artist Grant. Although much of her body of work has focused on sociopolitical and feminist issues, Judy is investigating much different territory with her upcoming premiere, *Excavation of Remains*. Born of a new collaborative approach, seven artists have originated an anthology of dances that reflect thoughts on death and near-death and, in some cases, process past true-life experiences with the end. Also at the Hamlin Park Fieldhouse, *Excavation of Remains* runs July 29-31 and Aug. 5-7, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10-\$15; see www.brownpapertickets.com or call 773-841-BONE. Also, visit www.breakbone.com.



Up. Photo by Michael Brosilow

THEATER REVIEW

Up

Playwright: Bridget Carpenter
At: Steppenwolf Theatre Company, 1650 N. Halsted
Phone: 312-335-1650; \$20-\$70
Runs through: Aug. 23

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

Up, at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, is a bit of a bait-and-switch. And that's not because Bridget Carpenter's play shares the same title as a certain hit Disney/Pixar animated feature out in cineplexes this summer and Russ Meyers' 1976 exclamation point-ended sexploitation flick.

Up smartly upends an audience's familiarity and expectations of standard Hollywood storytelling and outcomes. And that's what makes Up's conflict between visionary dreams and day-to-day realities so very rich and compelling.

For Up, Carpenter took her inspiration from

the life of Larry Walters, a.k.a. "The Lawn Chair Man." In 1982, Walters constructed his own flying apparatus involving 45 weather balloons and a lawn chair, eventually soaring to an altitude of 16,000 feet over California.

Walters' airborne stunt generated worldwide headlines. Yet Walters was all but forgotten when he committed suicide 11 years later.

Up is doubly about Walter Griffin (a solid Ian Barford), a man famed for a do-it-yourself flight, and his impressionable sophomore-aged son, Mikey (Jake Cohen doing teenage angst very well). And while Carpenter leaves Walter and Mikey's ultimate fates up in the air, we do get to experience the difficulties of a dreamer facing up to real-life banalities and economics after an inspired moment of fame and glory (and of a young man at the cusp of love and happiness).

Walter is frustrated by his inability to make money off of his inventions, as is his wife, Helen (an endearing Lauren Katz), whose postal carrier job is the family's main source of income. Meanwhile, Mikey falls under the spell of an existential pregnant transfer student named Maria (a squeaky-voiced Rachel Brosnahan) and her shady Aunt Chris (a very apt Martha Lavey).

Up ultimately becomes a two-pronged tale of ambition and grasped-at fulfillment. Mikey becomes wildly successful doing a questionable sales job for Aunt Chris, and Walter finds a way to appease his wife's job demands. All the while, Walter is inspired (or goaded) by the apparition of world-famous French wire walker Philippe Petit (real-life wire walker Tony Hernandez, who also captures the whimsy of the artist who illegally traversed the tops of the former World Trade Center towers in 1974).

Director Anna Shapiro punches up the drama with great performances from her actors and collaborating with her design team on a stunning physical production that emphasizes both earthbound confinement and lofty expanses of the imagination. Daniel Ostling's set in particular is a great visual metaphor of cramped suburban rooms supporting a stage-width platform for

Petit to balance on in the bright blue sky.

Carpenter's Up defies easy Hollywood conventions, which makes it all the more complex and fulfilling. It's a not always a happy ride, but one that is eminently worthy of taking.

THEATER REVIEW

Pill Hill

Playwright: Samuel L. Kelley
At: ETA, 7558 S. South Chicago Avenue
Phone: 773-752-3955; \$30
Runs through: Aug. 9

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

What most distinguishes American society from that of other nations is its mobility. In our country, status is not fixed by birth or region, children are not required to adopt their parents' trade, nor marry within their tribal caste. Each individual's fortunes are vulnerable to fluctuation—both for the better and the worse—and Samuel L. Kelley's fable of six blue-collar African-American buddies reflects this phenomenon.

Our tracking device is that of the weekly parties in Joe's basement apartment, where his fellow steel-mill workers gather to drink beer, play cards and swap confidences. To be sure, some are seeking roads out of the industrial sector—Ed has his sights set on law school, Al attends night school in pursuit of his real estate agent's license and Tony sees his future in sales. But Scott is immersed in memories of the glory days before injuries put an end to his hopes of a career in pro football, while Charlie, the oldest of the group and an immigrant from the agricultural southern states, looks forward to retirement after 30 years of keeping a low profile (following a visit home that teaches him the folly of a Black man attracting too much attention). As for the host, Joe has plans, too—but the security of steady job exerts a powerful attraction.

Twenty years later, Ed has been hired by a prestigious law firm, where he faces harsh compromises. Al has achieved financial stability, but at the price of constant vigilance. Tony now has the money to purchase the trappings of respectability—including a Spellman-graduate wife and a former doctor's mansion in the sumptuous "Pill Hill" district—but still chafes under his humble origins. Charlie's patience is rewarded, while Scott is driven to operating on the fringes of the law in order to maintain his glamorous lifestyle. But all agree that only ruin lies in standing still—a precept illustrated by procrastinating Joe's downward spiral after the unions abandon him and the steel mills close altogether.

ETA director Aaron Todd Douglas has assembled a cast adept at concealing Kelley's symposial text under a veneer of masculine camaraderie as immediately engaging as it is convincing. (When Joe, on the eve of eviction, cries out to his former chums, "Take me with you," his despair, and that of the friends who must leave him behind, is enough to break your heart.) Likewise commendable is the technical team whose stage dressing reflects in pinpoint-accurate detail the progress of these pilgrims in their search for economic sanctuary.

THEATER REVIEW

Boleros for the Disenchanted

Playwright: José Rivera
At: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn
Phone: 312-443-3800; \$25-\$70
Runs through: July 26

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

Unless they were public figures, their every step and utterance documented in triplicate, your parents' courtship will forever be shrouded in mystery—like a folk myth handed down through the generations, each storyteller bending the facts ever so slightly to his own purposes. José Rivera's account of his mother's life journey has

the otherworldly ambience of a fairy tale—but, like all good fairy tales, it has its dark as well as its sunny sides.

The "America" song in West Side Story was not inaccurate in its inventory of Puerto Rico's attractions and drawbacks during the 1950s. The Caribbean island was, indeed, a land of balmy tropical climes and proud agricultural dynasties—as well as hurricanes, sweltering heat and overcrowded cities. Small wonder that young country-bred Flora should reject marriage to a swain espousing the sexist views of his society, instead binding her future to the free-thinking Eusebio, with whom she travels to the United States to find a better life.

As they stand poised together on their wedding day, however, the Goodman Theatre stage revolves to show us these same lovers 40 years later, their lives once again riddled with conflicts, contradictions and uncertainty. Eusebio has lost both legs to diabetes. Flora is now his patient nurse. The doctor and the priest who look in on them from time to time both worry about the dynamic engendered by this isolated co-dependency. The betrothed couple from Flora's church who visit them leave with somber thoughts on the meaning of marriage. Our husband and wife remain content with the road they have chosen, however, their steadfast allegiance to one another never abating.

Everlasting love. The generations who championed a new society in the 1950s and '60s have come to appreciate what little constancy is to be found in an increasingly volatile universe. Rivera's play achieves its continuity through the device of having the same actors who play Flora's parents—the vigorous Sandra Marquez and René Rivera—also play the old Flora and Eusebio (much as Mary Beth Fisher played two generations of mothers in the recent Rock And Roll, also at the Goodman), their transformation aided by the production team's expertise at period detail. Under the direction of Henry Godinez, the resulting romance speaks, literally, to audiences of all ages—its promise not that of a "happily ever after" (conspicuously lacking instructions on how to attain that elusive goal), but of a bonding loyalty that ultimately proves more precious than any giddy youthful fantasy.

CRITICS' PICS

Bombs Away!, Bailiwick Repertory at Mary's Attic, through July 18. More than just a Forbidden Broadway knock-off, the satire in this irreverent revue of original Great White Way parodies can cut to the bone while never leaving a scar. MSB

The History Boys, TimeLine Theatre, through Sept. 27. Two teachers duel over eight bright British boys bound for Oxford or Cambridge in this dazzling examination of education with a strong gay subplot. Extended yet again, maybe you can score some rare tickets. *Do try!* JA

Poseidon: An Upside Down Musical, Hell in a Handbag Productions at Chopin Theatre, through July 26. This hilarious camp comedy does capsize when shifting from movie spoof to the film's obsessive fans. Yet those moments are rare in this silly musical revised revival that both edifies and eviscerates the classic 1972 disaster flick The Poseidon Adventure. SCM

Sodomites!!! A Musical of Biblical Proportions, Annoyance Theatre, through July 31. It's a charmingly sacrilegious show that sharply (and hilariously) questions why an arcane and bizarre biblical story holds so much sway in justifying discrimination against the LGBTQ community. SCM

—By Abarbanel, Barnidge and Morgan

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Dead Wrong. Photo by Paul Metreyeon

THEATER REVIEW

Dead Wrong

Playwright: Manny Tamayo

At: Factory Theater

at Prop Thtr, 3502 N. Elston

Phone: 866-811-4111; \$29

Runs through: Aug. 1

BY SCOTT C. MORGAN

The first clue that the Factory Theater's modern murder mystery Dead Wrong might be a bad play is Manny Tamayo's billing of "Written and directed by."

That suspicion is amplified near the top when a limping teenage paperboy (Brian Hinkle) stars trumpeting murder-filled headlines by shouting "Extra! Extra!" as if it was 1909 instead of 2009.

Well, the kid says his selling technique is old school, so we'll forgive that anachronistic gaffe. But as we get introduced to more characters instead of any coherent storyline, it soon becomes apparent of how much Dead Wrong is becoming dead weight.

It's a good guess that with Dead Wrong, Tamayo was aiming to write a new film noir mys-

tery (with touches of bloody torture porn films). Tamayo aims to startle and alarm, but what he really needs is a good story editor to rein in all the tangential plot points and to help craft realistic motivations for the garish characters.

Tamayo does a capable job with the set-up as you follow shell-shocked Chicago police detective Mac (Eric Thomas Roach) trying to solve two concurrent mysteries. There's a missing teenage girl named Becky (Corri Feuerstein) and the murder of the wife of a creepy film director (Zach Bloomfield).

You're curious to find out how it might turn out by intermission. But setup continues well into the second act, so that the ending becomes an incoherent rush to the finish line to tie up all the loose ends (which Tamayo also fails to do).

Instead of explaining things, Tamayo throws out more keep-them-guessing tidbits by the rash of bizarre character motivations and activities involving snuff films, secret societies and organ harvesting. Don't be surprised if you start laughing, because the revelations defy reason.

Because everything Tamayo presented was so hard-boiled up to the climax, Dead Wrong fails as a deliberate spoof of the film noir genre. And because of the ending's wackiness, it fails as a credible neo-noir tribute.

At the very least, the actors throw themselves into their roles. Anderson Lawfer has fun as a

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SPOTLIGHT



Love is war in **Girls vs. Boys**, a new musical in development by The House Theatre of Chicago and Northwestern University's American Music Theater Project. Get a sneak peek of this show by the acclaimed authors of The Sparrow before it officially opens to the press this season. A warning though: the musical promises strong language, violent themes, partial nudity and rocking loud music. Girls vs. Boys runs at 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays; 6 and 9:30 p.m. Saturdays; and 2 p.m. Sundays July 10-Aug. 2 at the Wallis Theater in Northwestern University's Theater and Interpretation Center, 1949 S. Campus, Evanston. Tickets are \$10-\$25; call 847-491-7282 or www.girlsvsboysthemusical.com. Photo courtesy of Northwestern University and The House Theatre of Chicago

paroled pedophile murderer living in fetid squalor, Allison Cain gets to vamp it up as a chanteuse/femme fatale and Anthony Tournis makes a credible corrupt Chicago cop.

But ultimately, you're watching actors in the midst of acting exercises involving shouting, stage fighting, stage blood and a myriad of noir stereotypes. Without a credible storyline or characters, Dead Wrong just becomes an atmospheric mishmash.

So if Factory Theater lavished all this effort on Tamayo's play because they thought it was an interesting neo-noir mystery, well then they were Dead Wrong. And if a billing of "written and directed by" hints at artistic genius, in this case it would be Dead Wrong.

Edelfelt's 'Way' on July 12

David Edelfelt stars in Everything's Going My Way, a look at a gay man growing up, coming out and dealing with love. The one-night-only show will take place at the Village Players Performing Arts Center, 1010 Madison, Oak Park, on Sunday, July 12, at 3 p.m.

Tickets are \$25; see www.village-players.org or call 866-764-1010.

Up

by Bridget Carpenter
directed by ensemble member
Anna D. Shapiro

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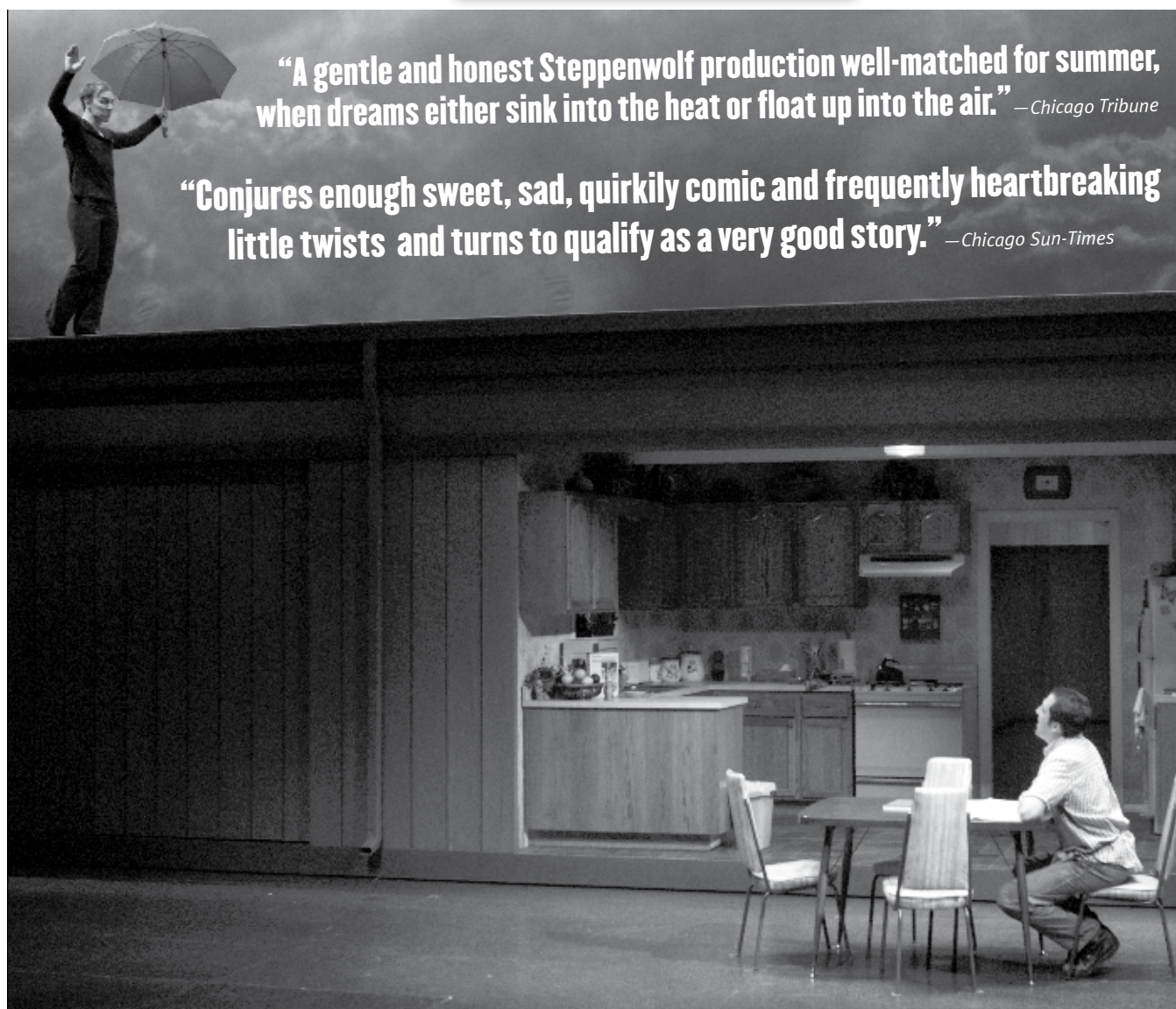
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"Conjures enough sweet, sad, quirkily comic and frequently heartbreaking little twists and turns to qualify as a very good story." —Chicago Sun-Times



Michael Jackson: Remember the time

BY DAVID BYRNE AND TONY PEREGRIN

It has been two weeks since Michael Jackson passed away. The world's biggest pop icon is gone, yet truths behind the myth are unraveling. Constant news reports and tasteless jokes about the King of Pop are rampant.

His body of work transcends age, gender, race and nationality like no other. Whether it was the disco-flavored "Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough," the guitar-driven "Dirty Diana" or the uplifting "Will You Be There," Jackson blurred musical barriers.

In his prime, Jackson had multiple number ones on the pop, R&B and dance charts. His career also saw a slew of awards, including Grammys, a Golden Globe, American Music Awards, BET Awards and an induction into the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame.

Few realize that Jackson composed a significant portion of his catalog by himself. Some of his lyrics reflect a life of solitude. On "Stranger in Moscow" he asks, "how does it feel, when you are alone and you're cold inside?" Abandonment is the theme of "Who Is It?" as he cries out, "I can't take it, cause I'm lonely." On History Continues, the spirit of a cornered animal is captured on "They Don't Care about Us," "This Time Around" and "D.S."

Jackson's legacy thrives, as many, including Missy Elliott, Ne-Yo, Justin Timberlake, Usher, Lady Gaga and Robin Thicke keep his spirit alive in their art. Even rock musicians embrace the gloved one, as Soundgarden's Chris Cornell has transformed "Billie Jean" into an acoustic gem, Fallout Boy redid "Beat It" and Alien Ant Farm scored big with a cover of "Smooth Criminal." The King of Pop collaborated with rock heavy weights Eddie Van Halen on "Beat It," Billy Idol's musical partner Steve Stevens on "Dirty Diana" and Slash on "Give in to Me."

Rihanna brilliantly samples the chant from "Wanna Be Startin' Somethin'" on "Don't Stop the Music." Portions of The Jackson 5's "ABC" are worked into Naughty by Nature's smash "O.P.P." The rhythm of the Jacksons' "Can You Feel It" is present on 1998's "Feel It" by The Temptations. SWV incorporates Jackson's vocals from "Human Nature" into the hit "Right Here." Comedic musician Weird Al Yankovic had chart success with his humorous treatment of Jackson's material on "Eat It" and "Fat."

Stars at the recent BET Music Awards paid tribute to Jackson, citing him as an inspiration and

sending prayers to his family.

The groundbreaking music video "Thriller" is being turned into a stage production. The musical will be more than just a translation of the classic video, it will also have material from Thriller and Off The Wall per iconocast.com. Can't wait that long? A choreographed remake of the werewolf video has become a YouTube sensation when it was redone by inmates from The Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center in the Philippines.

Other videos highlight the King of Pop's career are "Billie Jean," "Smooth Criminal," "Black or White" and the most expensive video ever made, the \$7 million "Scream." The first videos from his 1991 Dangerous album debuted on Sunday night TV on multiple channels. His work became a must-see event. Also, Jackson was the first African-American artist to have a video played on MTV.

Then there was his dancing. Shalamar's founding member Jeffrey Daniel moonwalked during a performance of "A Night to Remember" on England's The Top of the Pops in 1982, a year before Jackson did so on the Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever. When Jackson debuted his moonwalk twice during "Billie Jean" the crowd went into a frenzy. He claimed the dance move as his own. Then there was the anti-gravitational lean from "Smooth Criminal" and his trademark moves: the spin, the kick, the thrust and the crotch-grabbing.

Some of Jackson's hits like "P.Y.T. (Pretty Young Thing)," "Smooth Criminal," "Dirty Diana," "In the Closet" and "Give in to Me" did not appear on his first major retrospective HIStory in 1995. Part of me wonders if the content of these songs—mostly my favorites I might add—were omitted due to their content and how his poor public image needed much mending following child molestation charges.

The Guinness Book of World Records recognizes Jackson as the most charitable pop star. At the height of his popularity, Jackson stated that he was donating all of his earnings from the Victory Tour to charity. He also co-penned "We Are the World" to assist the famine relief in Africa. His tender voice urged for the betterment on "Man in the Mirror" and "Heal the World."

The tabloid fixture befriended Ryan White, helping de-stigmatize the myths surrounding AIDS and PWA. White, like the Jackson family, was from Indiana. "Gone Too Soon" was dedicated in White's memory.

Acting as paparazzi fodder, Jacko was Madonna's date to the 1991 Oscars. Per biographer Mark Bego's Madonna: Blonde Ambition, the Material Girl suggested "that Michael was a closet homosexual who needed to be dragged out of the closet." She later allegedly referred to him as a space-alien drag queen.

In the '80s, there was nobody comparable to Jackson; there still isn't. Based on dwindling record sales, it is doubtful another artist will sell as many copies of an album, as Jackson had done with Thriller.

Madonna, Prince and Jackson were born within months on each other in 1958. This threesome



crossed over into mega-stardom in the '80s as MTV revolutionized the industry.

There was only one African-American boy in my fourth-grade class in the suburbs. He proudly wore a red jacket with his sparkling glove like his idol. During recess he would play Thriller on a boom box to entertain his classmates with re-interpretations of Jackson's videos, having me sometimes as his back-up dancer.

The Michael Jackson doll even worked its way into pop culture. The toy's wardrobe became a recurring joke on Courtney Cox's short-lived '80s sci-fi series The Misfits of Science.

Seeing the video of Jackson dangling his baby out of the window in a Berlin hotel in 2002, one can tell Jackson was not of sound mind. Celebrities all have had moments. Remember Mariah Carey's rants around the time of Glitter, Paula Abdul being doped up on American Idol or any embarrassing moments from Britney Spears?

Now let's question the intentions and competency of those close to Jackson. Was he such a personality that doctors would blur the line of ethics in regards to his prescription intake? Will Jackson's untimely death be a wake up call to those taking prescriptions liberally? No more than Anna Nicole Smith's premature passing. Was his family or management unable to say that one child molestation charge is enough and to monitor his play dates with underage boys?

Jackson underwent multiple plastic-surgery operations, so much so that a photo of the modern-day Peter Pan had not graced the cover of one of his albums since 1987's Bad.

Multiple retrospectives of Jackson's tremendous musical legacy remind us of his remarkable achievements. Available are the 18-track Number Ones; the four-disc career spanning The Ultimate Collection; the '80s- and '90s-focused Greatest Hits History Volume 1; and solid double-disc The Essential Michael Jackson.

Entertainment news

Ian Halperin, the unofficial biographer of Michael Jackson, claims that the late star was actually gay. Pink.co.uk reported. Halperin said that he has spoken to two men who slept with Jackson and that, despite the sexual-abuse allegations that plagued the entertainer, he was never interested in children. Three years ago, the singer's brother Jermaine Jackson said he and his brothers thought Michael was gay.

Lesbian-led indie dance-punk group Le Tigre is working with Christina Aguilera on her new fall album, the Guardian reported. One of the group's best-known songs is "Hot Topic," which name-checks Angela Davis, James Baldwin and Gertrude Stein, among others. Other collaborators on the album include singer/producer Linda Perry; acts Goldfrapp and Ladytron; and singer Sia, according to EW.com.

"As good as any of the first-class revivals now gracing Broadway ... I strongly suggest that you hurry to [see it], no matter whether you live in, near or remotely close to Chicago." — *The Wall Street Journal*

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Windy City Black Pride

WCBP was again in full swing with a slew of events July 1-6, including a VIP reception at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted (where WCT Managing Editor Andrew Davis was honored as newspaper reporter of the year and Windy City Queercast's Amy Matheny received an award for best podcast); an opening reception at Chicago South Loop Hotel, 2600 S. State; a 10-year anniversary party at Prop House, 1675 N. Elston; a poetry slam at Bronzeville Community Clubhouse, 3847 S. Giles; and a festival at Sherman, 1301 W. 52nd. Photos by Andrew Davis and Kirk Williamson



Chicago Windy City Black Pride

CWCBP had its own party swinging by celebrating Pride July 1-6 with a kick-off reception at Club Escape, 1530 E. 75th; a dance battle and film screening of How Do I Look at Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted; a prom at The Wit, 201 N. State; an LGBT authors' reception and poetry slam at Circuit, 3641 N. Halsted; a party at Prop House, 1675 N. Elston; and a fest at RainboBeach, 3111 E. 75th. Photos by Wes Lawson and Kirk Williamson

2 great nights out at the Chicago Sky!

Breast Cancer Awareness Night
Friday, August 28
 7:30 p.m. v. New York

Join LCCP, A Sister's Hope and Gilda's Club on August 28 to support AIDS awareness or take advantage of this offer for any Sky home game!



AIDS Awareness Night
Thursday, September 10
 7 p.m. v. Indianapolis

Join TPAN, Chicago Women's AIDS Project and AIDS Foundation of Chicago on September 10 to support AIDS awareness or take advantage of this offer for any Sky home game!



CODE: LCCP



CODE: ASH



CODE: GCL



CODE: TPAN



CODE: AIDS



CODE: CWAP

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By mail:
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 Chicago, IL 60610

2009 CHICAGO SKY HOME SCHEDULE

June 27, 7 p.m.	vs. Washington Mystics
June 30, 7 p.m.	vs. Sacramento Monarchs
July 10, 7:30 p.m.	vs. Indiana Fever
July 19, 5 p.m.	vs. San Antonio Silver Stars
July 29, 7 p.m.	vs. Los Angeles Sparks
August 1, 7 p.m.	vs. Connecticut Sun
August 15, 7 p.m.	vs. Minnesota Lynx
August 18, 7 p.m.	vs. Phoenix Mercury
August 22, 7 p.m.	vs. Detroit Shock
August 28, 7:30 p.m.	vs. New York Liberty
September 4, 7:30 p.m.	vs. Washington Mystics
September 10, 7 p.m.	vs. Indiana Fever
September 12, 7 p.m.	vs. Detroit Shock

call **866.SKY.WNBA** or visit **CHICAGOSKY.NET**

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From left: Ann Hagemann, Claudia Allen, Taylor Miller, Jacqui Jackson, Kelli Strickland, Maureen Gallagher and Meg Thalken.

Hannah Free film debuts in San Francisco

Hannah Free, a lesbian feature filmed in Chicago last November, had its World Premiere at the Frameline Film Festival in San Francisco June 28, at the famed 1,600-seat Castro Theatre. The sold-out show received a standing ovation. Rosie O'Donnell introduced the film for her friend Sharon Gless, who stars as Hannah. Many of the Chicago-based cast and crew attended the opening, as well as a special pre-event at Orson restaurant the night before. See www.hannahfree.com for details on upcoming screenings. A Chicago debut in September will be announced soon. See more photos at www.windycitymediagroup.com/photos/HannahFreeOpening. Also see the Hannah Free Facebook fan page: www.facebook.com/pages/Hannah-Free/76436188517?ref=ts.



Back row, from left: Wendy Jo Carlton, Kelli Strickland, Sharon Gless, Claudia Allen, Rosie O'Donnell, Taylor Miller and Ann Hagemann. Front, from left: Jacqui Jackson, Bev Spangler (front), Meg Thalken, Tracy Baim and Maureen Gallagher.



Rosie O'Donnell.



Rosie O'Donnell and Sharon Gless.



Katie Jacobson, Gretchen Warthen and Martie Marro.



Claudia Allen at the after-party.

Those attending included cast: Sharon Gless, Ann Hagemann, Jacqui Jackson, Kelli Strickland, Bev Spangler, Maureen Gallagher, Taylor Miller, Meg Thalken, and Shawn Murray. Crew and producers attending included: director Wendy Jo Carlton, editor Sharon Zurek, music composer Martie Marro, screenwriter Claudia Allen, director of photography Gretchen Warthen, and executive producer Tracy Baim.

During the weekend, the cast and crew also celebrated at Orson restaurant, and Sharon Gless marched the Dyke March after speaking to more than 50,000 women gathered at Delores Park June 27.

Photos by Hal Baim



Sharon Zurek, Wendy Jo Carlton, Martie Marro, Tracy Baim, Sharon Gless and Rosie O'Donnell.



Meg Thalken, Jacqui Jackson, Kelli Strickland, Bev Spangler, Maureen Gallagher and Taylor Miller.



Sharon Gless and Rosie O'Donnell.



Wendy Jo Carlton.



David Strzepek, Gretchen Warthen, Claudia Allen, Martie Marro, Tracy Baim, Sharon Zurek and Wendy Jo Carlton in front of the Castro Theatre.

KNIGHT AT THE MOVIES

Bruno

BY RICHARD KNIGHT, JR.

Sacha Baron Cohen may be the first comedian in history who will die in order to get a laugh. That was the first thing I thought when I came out of **Bruno**, the extreme "gotcha" comedy from Cohen in which his character, the brainless gay "überfashionista," goes from one outrageous set piece to another. It's not whether the character would be offensive to gay audiences (more about that later), but whether Cohen the high-wire comedian will one day push the envelope too far in his quest for laughs.

Like Andy Kaufman, Cohen is a performer who gets so into character that, given the opportunity (and the right comedic foil), he can quickly arrive at a place where comedy can turn to ugly reality. In front of your eyes, he dares himself to go further and further—you can see him taunting himself in order to make the situations even more dangerous and for an understandable reason, and the majority of the laughs come from his sheer audacity and his willingness to do this. The anti-Semitic Borat character brought with it a flurry of lawsuits, buckets of cash and a challenge to raise the bar, which the hilarious willfully Bruno does. But how far can this comedic terrorist go before he pisses off the wrong person as the cameras are rolling?

Cohen's comedy relies on portraying flagrantly stereotypical characters and then presenting these characters to their real-life counterparts or their polar opposites (also stereotypes of humanity), who play right into his hands. When Cohen's in character all the world really is a stage and the great unwashed—and lots of unsuspecting folks from the lunatic fringe—make up his supporting cast. So, when portraying the very gay Bruno, it's easy to guess from whence the comedy will spring. Look out rednecks, conservatives and all manner of fame-seeking wannabes—Bruno's loose and he's about to record your idiocy and homophobia for the world to laugh hysterically at.

When we meet Bruno he's the host of an Austrian fashion program who happily demonstrates seemingly every position of anal intercourse in the Kama Sutra with his self-described "Pygmy flight-attendant boyfriend" while describing his life in his fractured, *faux*-German accent. But after a mishap with an outfit made entirely out of Velcro lands him headfirst on the runway in Milan and in jail, Bruno finds himself without a job and a boyfriend. With only devoted assistant Lutz in tow, Bruno heads to the United States in his quest to become "the biggest Austrian since Adolf Hitler."

Like Lucy and Ethel, Bruno and Lutz are soon engaged in an increasingly extreme series of schemes in order for Bruno to attain worldwide recognition—or at the very least, a few tabloid covers. About 20 minutes in—when a focus group of "regular folks" is shown a TV pilot starring Bruno that features a segment with his dancing, singing penis—one thinks, "How much further can he go? How high can the bar be set that he won't eagerly leap over it?" Based on the hilarious evidence that ensues, it's pretty damn high. The gotchas include a Hollywood agent,



Bruno.

Milan runway models and designers, Paula Abdul (who sits on "Mexican furniture people"), former Republican Presidential candidate Ron Paul (who Bruno comes on to), two idiot chick publicists, a psychic, etc.

Bruno next takes a trip to Alabama to become an ex-gay. He tells his "converter"—as the guy talks Jesus and redemption—that the man has "blow job lips." A stint in the national guard; a hunting trip with three "good ol' boys"; and a sex party with a swingers group that finds Bruno trapped in a bedroom with a persistent domi-

natrix sporting basketball sized implants who repeatedly smacks him with a belt all follow. The incongruities build toward the sure-to-be-infamous cage-wrestling match sequence at the end of the picture. Here, the comic insanity reaches a fever pitch as Cohen purposefully plays into the crowd's homophobia.

The picture repeatedly points out—as Borat did—that, for a comic terrorist like Sacha Baron Cohen, this country must surely be nirvana. The possibilities of finding idiotic folks ready to do anything for some camera time is seemingly limitless. Although it's obvious that some of the bits are staged, many of them appear to be happening before our eyes in real time. Even the carefully edited pieces contain one jaw-dropping shock after another. Are people really this stupid? This homophobic? This narcissistic? One of the most shocking sequences comes when Bruno, after having adopted an African baby he names "O.J.," asks the parents of baby models what they will and won't allow their babies to do in front of the camera.

So is it offensive to gays? That's the first question everyone asked me as I left the screening. It's not an unexpected question considering my position as the film critic for a LGBT publication. My instinctual answer: no. Oh, I'm sure there are going to be a lot of people (gay and straight)

offended by the havoc (much of it easily categorized as vulgar on one end, obscene on the another) that Cohen/Bruno creates—these are the folks who just won't get that Cohen's playing on stereotypes or who are made nervous by his in-your-face approach.

But there is something to be said about not just being in on the joke but being the reason for it in the first place. I understand why close Jewish friends had no problem with the stereotyping in Borat and why they can gleefully sing "Throw the Jew Down the Well" verbatim to this day. I'll be quoting lines from Bruno along with many of my queer—and I suspect straight—brethren long after Cohen has moved on to his next outrage. A comedy that can present gay stereotypes in such a blatant, over-the-top manner that they can make one laugh uncontrollably? Expose ignorant homophobes right and further right? And throw in several curveballs on our celebrity-obsessed culture and touch on several hot-button issues central to Our People at the same time? Sign me up, girlfriend. Two snaps up—way up.

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

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Abby Wambach.
Photo by Robert
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Caroline Jönsson.
Photo by Bill Barrett



Megan Rapinoe

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Season ticket holders call Alyse or Greg at 1-866-WPS-2009
to find out how to attend the benefit.



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WHAT TO DO?

Thursday, July 9

Bent. Landmark drama set in 1934 Berlin. Two men wearing the pink triangle in Dachau find comfort and courage. 8 p.m. F/F/S, 3 p.m. Sun. Through Aug. 15 Preview \$15, run \$25. Q&A with director, actors on July 12, 26, Aug. 9. Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave. www.hubrisproductions.com

NewTown Writers Fortnightly Writing Workshop 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Gerber/Hart Library 1127 W. Granville Ave. www.newtownwriters.org

PFLAG Glenview, Marc Adams of Heartstrong, Congregation BJBE, 901 Milwaukee, Glenview, 7 p.m. 773-472-3079

Friday, July 10

Twilight Becomes Night, screening and reception. 7:30 p.m. \$10. Chicago Filmmakers, 5243 N. Clark. RSVP info@localfirstchicago.org

NW Suburbs LGBT Spirituality Meetup, 7 p.m. St. Nicholas Episcopal Church, 1072 Ridge, Elk Grove

Queering the Night GBTQI open mic with Scott Free and Je Nepomuceno 7 to 9 p.m. \$5 donation, \$3 open mic, Center for New Possibilities, 1505 W. Morse Ave.

Saturday, July 11

ALMA's fabulous Boat Cruise off Navy Pier tix at www.almachicago.org

Old Town School of Folk Music 12th annual Folk and Roots Festival through Jul 12. Noon - 10 p.m. \$8. Welles Park, 4400 N. Lincoln Ave. between Montrose and Sunnyside in Chicago's Lincoln Square neighborhood. www.chicagofolkandroots.org 773-728-6000

Rainbow Brunch, 10:30 am, \$7.95, Old Country Buffet, 701 N Milwaukee, Vernon Hills, tables near drink station. TashBanash@aol.com

Substitute Teacher Academy with Resources Workshop 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. \$50 registration Governors State University 1 University Parkway, University Park. Info and register 708-534-402

Women in Business brunch 11 a.m. Co-hosted by Bright Endeavors. \$10. 4222 N. Ravenswood, 2nd Fl. info@localfirstchicago.org

Sunday, July 12

Evan Fallenberg gay author reading and discussion of Light Fell. Part of OUT-write literary series, Center on Halsted partnered with Spertus. 2 p.m. Spertus, 610 S. Michigan Ave Tix: 312-322-1773 or www.spertus.edu

Everything's Going My Way true story of one gay man's growing up, coming out, searching for happiness, told through the music of Porter and Gershwin, Sondheim, Bernstein and Bacharach, some of today's most brilliant gay composers. \$25. 3 p.m. Village Players Performing Arts Center 1010 W. Madison Oak Park. Reserve 866-764-1010 www.village-players.org

Diva Brunch The Scooty & JoJo Variety Brunch Hour The Spot, 4437 N Broadway 773-728-8934

GLBT fairy tales, The Cousins GrimmBailiwick's 2009 Pride Series, through Aug. 23. Hoover-Leppen Theater, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted. Tix \$25/\$30 at 773-883-1090, 1-800-838-3006, or www.brownpapertickets.com

West Suburban Gay Assoc. (WSGA) Picnic & Concert - All Tchaikovsky with Cannons, 3 pm, \$10 Ravinia, Highland Park

Monday, July 13

Cokie Roberts, renowned journalist and political commentator discusses and signs We Are Our Mothers' Daughters. Noon. Cindy Pritzker Auditorium, Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State St. chicagopubliclibrary.org

Tuesday, July 14

"Filming Desire" (2000) Female directors talk about the reality of an explicit women's point of view, the desire in their films to "fantasize and dream a new image of themselves", and how their depictions of sexuality and relationships are correctives. Part of Sex +++ Film Series 2nd & 4th Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Free. RSVP for seats. Seats unsaved at 7p.m. Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, 800 S. Halsted 312-413-5353

Protest "Ex-Gay" Movement in Wheaton 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Chicago-Area LGBTQA Liberation Network Wheaton College 500 College Ave 773-209-1187 LGBTQA-Liberation@aol.com

Soulforce Q Camp, first annual Summer Gathering of Young Activist, Austin, Texas www.soulforce.org/q-camp

Wednesday, July 15

Mingle and Meet the Experts, Legal Edition. Panel with Tsamis Law Firm, Chicagoland & Suburban Law Firm. and Law Office of Sima L Kirsch. Network 6:30 p.m., Panel 7:30 p.m. \$5. info@localfirstchicago.org

Friday, July 17

Achy Obejas DePaul Summer Writing Conference keynote: Writing & Responsibility. Havana-born Obejas is the well known author of several books, including Days of Awe, Memory Mambo and her sixth and latest book, Ruins. 312-362-8916. Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State St. chicagopubliclibrary.org

Chicago Area Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce Mix & Mingle, 6:30 pm, \$20/\$30 Skokie Theater, 7924 Lincoln, Skokie

Point Foundation Summer Siree 7 to 11 p.m. \$225./\$165 Saddle and Cycle Club, 900 W. Foster Ave. www.point-foundation.org/chicago

Saturday, July 18

"Bombs Away!" last night for the musical comedy about a troupe who tries to perform songs cut from famous Broadway musicals. \$15-\$20. Mary's Attic, above Hamburger Mary's, 5400 N. Clark St. 773-883-1090 or bailiwick.org

Chicago Gender Society Garden Party, Wear Your Favorite Hat Contest. \$40. cocktails at 5 p.m., dinner 6:30 p.m. Tix and location available at www.chicagogender.com or 708-863-7714

Queer Rights Rally in Joliet 2 - 4 p.m. Chicago-Area LGBTQA Liberation Network, CAAN Community Center, 773-807-7597 ericachu@msn.com

Sunday, July 19

Diva Brunch The Scooty & JoJo Variety Brunch Hour The Spot, 4437 N Broadway 773-728-8934

Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) monthly meeting 2-4 pm. Howard Brown Health Center, 4025 N. Sheridan 630-415-0622, pflagmetrochicago@pflagillinois.org, www.pflagillinois.org

Thursday, July 9



FRIGHT TRIANGLE

Bent starts its run and will continue through Aug. 15 at Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln.

Photo courtesy of Hubris Productions

Friday, July 17



HEY, MAMBO

Achy Obejas will be the keynote speaker at the DePaul Summer Writing Conference at Harold Washington Library, 400 S. State.

Photo by Tracy Baim

See our online calendar: www.windycitymediagroup.com/calendar



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POLICE OFFICER: Police Officer Notice of Examination Northfield/Winnetka, IL Written examination: August 15, 2009, 9 a.m New Trier High School 7 Happ Rd, Northfield, IL Min. Req: Age 21 thru 34, except as provided by law; H.S. dipl. or GED; 60 college credits; Valid DL; U.S. Citizen or citizenship status; (Add'l N'fld) Age 20 w/law enf. studies; Elector of U.S.; Ill. residency. **Application Deadline: August 3, 2009, 5 pm For Details and Application: Winnetka: 847-716-3545 Northfield: 847-441-3850 villageofwinnetka.org, northfieldil.org. EOE.** (7/08/09-1)

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BILLY MASTERS

"They don't ask about it as much as you might think. Actually, it's been a long time since anyone asked it. I don't think it's really newsworthy if the gay guy from 'Ugly Betty' is gay or not." —Michael Urie refuses to tell 'New York Magazine' if he's gay or not. BTW, the interview is about the off-Broadway play he's in called "The Temperamentals," which is about the formation of the first US gay rights group.

The first stop on my European tour is Milan—just as Men's Fashion Week ends. Happily, the city is still teeming with a bevy of beautiful brawn (and shirtless since it's in the 90s). I must confess that this column could very well have been filed from an Italian prison. Once I landed, I used what I consider pretty good Italian to ask the attendant at the train station for the timetable. Apparently, what I said was, "Give me your watch!" OY!

Lots of things seem to be getting lost in translation. Remember the story about Ricky Martin coming out? At the time of the "TV Aquí" cover, I questioned the context of the disclosure that his heart could belong to a man or a woman. Lo and behold, our colleague Mike Szymanski got to the bottom of it. What Ricky said was, "The heart of Ricky Martin, if it belongs to a male or a female, I have never talked about it." So, what he says is basically nothing. We'll run a video of this "controversial" interview on BillyMasters.com.

Remember when I told you Simon Rex and Lance Bass were seen shooting some footage in WeHo? We now know what it was for. It was the pilot for the pseudo-reality show called "Rex" which opens with the following quote: "Simon Rex was a struggling actor when a controversial masturbation video was discovered which made him famous. He's had no controversy like that since ... and boy, could his career use one." What it didn't say was, "Thank you Billy Masters." That was one of my first scoops and launched my career, while it was the high point of Simon's. Rex is trying to come back and this show is all about trying to get people interested in him again. He'll do anything—even be romantically linked with Lance. The show is funny and has some very good ideas. There's just one problem—Simon Rex. How do I say this delicately ... if you saw his jerk-off video, you saw his best work. He's barely convincing playing himself! He is, however, surrounded by some fabulous people, including Paris Hilton, Jamie Pressley, and Victor Garber. The pilot is actually stolen by Simon's "controversy consultant," Geoffrey Arend. Give THAT guy a show and I'd watch it. You can watch the whole pilot on BillyMasters.com.

Everyone has been writing to me about the casting of Trevor Donovan as the new hunky bad boy on "90210" redux. Since he's a former "A&F"

model, people figured I'd have some nude photos of him. They figured right! Trevor's real last name is Neubauer, and he previously appeared on "Days of Our Lives" as "Jeremy Horton." I wrote about him back then and ran some very racy pics of him where he shows virtually everything. (There's one odd photo of a naked Trevor being entered from behind by a one-eyed alien.) Since we've got more sizzling pics in our possession, why not check 'em out on BillyMasters.com.

A few months ago, Ashton Kutcher had to get his chest waxed for a movie. That flick is called Spread, and Ash plays a gigolo named "Nikki." He stars alongside that sexually ambiguous alien, Anne Heche, playing a cougar who eventually gets left for a more age-appropriate chick (somewhere Demi Moore is petrified). The trailer for the French version, more aptly titled "Toy Boy," shows off Kutcher's best assets—his ass. There are numerous long, lingering shots of his buttocks. Sure, we've seen it all before, but the pics and vid are hot enough to warrant posting on BillyMasters.com.

Time for another installment of "Fayewatch." We're told that La Dunaway is still trying to get that film version of "Master Class" off the ground—even if she has to fund it, direct it and star in it herself! Our spies in the Windy City tell me she was recently in town scouting locations and being courted by the Chicago Film Office. All was well until the diva slammed her hand in her van's door and had to be whisked to the emergency room. No details on her prognosis, but this probably doesn't give her warm and fuzzy feelings about Chi-town!

Since we're all over the map this week, our "Ask Billy" question comes from Philippe in Cannes: "Bonjour, Billy. I love your site. Have you heard of Matt Pokora? He is a singer here in France and is very sexy. My friend says he is gay, but I have to ask you the truth. I think you will like him."

I love a foreign tongue, so I say *merci* to Philippe. I've never heard of this Matt Pokora—a name which does not roll off the tongue. However, I did some research and learned that he is indeed very sexy. In fact, I'd call him HAWT—as the kids back in the States say. His real name is Matthieu Totta. He was on the French talent show, "Nouvelle Star" and ended up in the boyband "Linkup." Although their first song was a hit, they broke up shortly thereafter. That's when Matthieu became Matt and launched a career as a solo artist. In fact, he had some success with a duet called "It's Alright" with Ricky Martin—these columns have a way of tying together. None of this matters to you—

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Poppy Champlin. Photo by D. Hardison

NUNN ON ONE

Poppy Champlin:
'Qomedy' routine

BY JERRY NUNN

Poppy Champlin was one of three lesbian comedians who performed at Lakeshore Theater, 3175 N. Broadway, on July 3 as part of the "Queer Queens of Qomedy" show. She brought her troupe but also filmed "The Gayly Wed Game." Windy City Times talked with her about what makes this stand-up stand out.

Windy City Times: Where are you originally from?

Poppy Champlin: Rhode Island. I was in Chicago for eight years. It was my first jumping-off point after Rhode Island.

WCT: You used to perform with Second City?

PC: Yes, I put a year in through their training center. All the while, [I was] doing stand-up in the clubs here.

WCT: What was the Gay Games performance like for you?

PC: That was really fun. I did the Gay Games in front of 40,000 people.

WCT: You performed on the Rosie O'Donnell cruise and now you are doing Atlantis cruises?

PC: My first cruise was Rosie and then they did the HBO documentary. I was in the footage, so that was very cool. From Rosie's cruise then I got into the Atlantis cruise. After that, [I] finally [did] Olivia Cruises as well.

WCT: You were just at the Milwaukee PrideFest. They had some great acts.

PC: I got to open for Cyndi Lauper. Listening to her sing at one point I was like, "Is she a dolphin?" Her voice was going into this realm of non-humanness.

WCT: I had interviewed her recently. She believes in going into smaller towns and opening people's minds. In Chicago it's fairly easy

with our big Pride parade.

PC: I was totally in it. I was my own float! I carried a giant sign for "The Queer Queens of Comedy." I was trying to promote the comedy show. The sign was so big and it was so windy that I got taken down the road the whole way.

WCT: What is "The Queer Queens of Comedy" experience like?

PC: I have been producing the Queer Queens for about three or four years now. But I never have had them filmed. Now I want to sell it Logo, Bravo, Showtime or somebody. They are all these great shows, so they should be filmed and they should be sold. I am finally stepping into that arena.

WCT: Tell me about the "Gayly Wed Game."

PC: Working the cruises, they do it all the time on the cruise ships. I was able to host it on the Olivia cruise. I had so much fun doing it. What a perfect game for Logo or Bravo. With the whole gay-marriage issue, it's perfect to have married couples, or as married as they can be couples, on the show. Let's show the gay couples so that America can calm down. Let us show you how human and equal we really are. We are not all Rosie O'Donnells and not all Portia De Rossi, we are not the L Word and we are not Noah's Arc. We are really like you.

WCT: Tell me about your upcoming shows on Logo.

PC: One is called "One Night Stand Up" and I am on episode number five. The other one is called "Unbuttoned." That is their dirtier, bluer show.

WCT: What is the key to being funny?

PC: I believe for me that it's being comfortable and centered and prepared. If you are truly funny then you have the gift basically of being a comic. I cannot really take any credit for my talent as far as having good timing. Either you got it or you don't. When I am comfortable, centered and prepared then I can allow it to happen.

To get more Poppy in your diet and to learn more about this out and proud comic, visit www.poppcockprod.com.



Champlin during her July 3 "Gayly Wed Game." Photo by Jerry Nunn

BILLY from page 20

except that my colleagues in Europe tell me he is bisexual. In fact, one person told me there are paparazzi pics of him kissing a guy in the South of France. Maybe it was Philippe! He did a very provocative pictorial for "Tetu," which is a French gay publication. Sure, he could be pandering. After all, in the pics he looks like a high-priced hooker or a cheap porn star. Either way, it's alright—he'll end up on BillyMasters.com.

Could it be that a certain gay blade has shaved off one beard and grown another? It's one thing to hang out with that friendly filly who has known her away around a queen or two. Now he's clinging onto a more desperate dame who, if I'm not mistaken, never met a gay man she didn't like. His undeniable charms have worked pretty well in the past—his break-

through happened when he focused on a guy mentioned in this very column. That time, he landed a series. The only thing that could happen with this bitch is he'd shrink half a foot and lose all his hair!

When I'm dodging the *Polizia di Stato*, it's definitely time to end yet another column. I'm leaving Italy in the nick of time and heading to an undisclosed Eastern European country. First order of business? Find the American Embassy—just in case. You can follow all my scandals abroad on www.BillyMasters.com. As long as I can find WiFi, I'll still be able to answer your questions. Just drop a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before Anne Heche mounts Trevor Donovan Neubauer! Until next time, remember, one man's filth is another man's bible.

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Chi-Town Softball Classic participant. Photo by Ross Forman

Chi-Town Classic draws 30 teams

BY ROSS FORMAN

The stage was set for a Chicago team to win the top-tiered C1 Division in the Chi-Town Classic, the predominantly gay softball tournament held July 4-5, with teams from Las Vegas, Milwaukee, Minneapolis and several other cities.

Hunters faced the Philadelphia Triple Play, and the visitors from Pennsylvania needed to win twice—and back-to-back, no less. Hunters only needed one win.

Things didn't work out as the locals planned, or hoped.

Philadelphia won the second and deciding championship game, 8-7, despite strong weekend play from such Hunters players as Brian Kettner, Joe Green, Greg McNitt, Joe Cappelletti, Chuck Jacobson, Rob Scaffidi, Danny Tag, Nick Padjen and others.

"It was a very good tournament for our first year, a good learning experience," said Shawn Albritton of the Chicago Metropolitan Sports As-

sociation (CMSA), which ran the two-day event that featured a rainy Saturday (and a few postponed games) and a Sunday that shone throughout like the defensive play of such participating Chicago teams as those representing Caesar's, Spin, Fat Cat, Cattle Call and other area establishments.

"Hopefully next year we'll be able to attract more teams and also expand to include a B Division; that would be nice to have," Albritton added.

In the C2 Division, the Madd Dawgs (Madison, Wis.) defeated the Twin Cities Bears 13-1 and 7-2 for the title. The New York Eagles Wings were third, followed by Fat Cat.

In the D Division, the Minneapolis Unicorns defeated the Broadway Cellar's Crush 15-5 and 18-14 for the crown.

The Sportsmanship Awards, voted on by the umpires, went to the Memphis Dru's Place Maniacs, the Madd Dawgs and the Unicorns.

"It was an awesome event, even with the rain on Saturday. We're very happy that Chicago again has a softball tournament [it hosts]," said the event's director, Jason Helsdon.

Bill Barrett: Running toward the Outgames

BY ROSS FORMAN

Bill Barrett has run four of his 12 marathons on foreign soil—in Paris, Berlin, Frankfurt and Dresden. He has also run in the Chicago Marathon five times, highlighted by his personal record (3:15) in 2001.

Next up for Barrett is Copenhagen on July 26, on the first official day of the 2009 World Outgames, an eight-day LGBT extravaganza of everything sporty.

Barrett, 50, is a lawyer who lives in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood. He has a partner and will be spending five days in Denmark.

"Running a marathon is a unique way to see a



Bill Barrett. Photo by Ross Forman

city. Sure, it's not the easiest way to see a city, but it is a way to see an old, important city" such as Copenhagen, Barrett said. "I'm really looking forward to seeing Copenhagen. Running through Copenhagen will be quite exciting."

Barrett has other tourist activities scheduled in Denmark, which will likely include other non-sports-related events associated with the Outgames.

The 2009 Outgames is the follow-up to the inaugural 2006 edition, held in Montreal about a week after Gay Games VII was held in Chicago. The next Gay Games will be held in Cologne, Germany, in 2010.

The 2009 World Outgames will feature about 5,000 sporting participants from around the world—mostly European—for such events as basketball, volleyball, bowling, field hockey, golf, handball, rowing, softball, squash, table tennis and water polo, among others.

The Opening Ceremony will be held Saturday, July 25, in the evening. The marathon is the following morning.

"It's actually a coincidence that I wanted to run a marathon when I was in Europe," Barrett said. "I'm happy to participate [in the Outgames] and I know it'll be fun, but I really was just looking forward to running a marathon in a new city."

"I don't anticipate a large [number of participants] for the marathon, but Copenhagen is flat and it's an exciting course, so that will be interesting."

Barrett is shooting for a sub-four hour race, but limited training to date might affect his finishing time, he admitted.

"Given the amount of training I have [done], I will be happy if I finish in under four hours. Hopefully my past marathon experience will

help," he said. "From what I've read, I think it's unfortunate that there are two [major, international LGBT sporting events] so close to each other, thus each is drawing from the other. I think it would be better if there was just one event every four years rather than two events."

Barrett said he has not yet considered attending the next Gay Games.

"In every marathon, you know people who you train with, though the actual race is generally run by yourself. So, [the Outgames] won't be any different, given that there are so few from Chicago attending. When I finish, I won't know anyone," to celebrate with, he said. "But that's not really a big deal; I've run other races and not known anyone [at the finish line]."

Still, Barrett added, "It will be nice to be one of the few Americans in the race. I'll be glad to be one of the few representatives of the United States at a major international event."

Red Stars in July 26 LCCP post-game benefit

Attendees at the Chicago Red Stars' game July 26 at Toyota Park in Bridgeview can get the chance to meet Abby Wambach of the Washington Freedom as well as the Red Stars' Caroline Jonsson and Megan Rapinoe.

A VIP ticket of \$35 includes premier seats at the 3 p.m. game with the Freedom as well as entry into the after-party. The post-game benefit will benefit the Lesbian Community Care Project.

Tickets are available by visiting Women & Children First Books, 5233 N. Clark; calling 866-WPS-2009; or mailing a check (made payable to Chicago Red Stars) by July 15 to LCCP Benefit Game, Attn: Alyse LaHue, Chicago Red Stars, 7300 W. 71st, Bridgeview, Ill., 60455.


Smash N Tickle coming July 11

The badminton tournament Smash N Tickle 2009 will be at the Broadway Armory, 5917 N. Broadway, Saturday, July 11, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

The tourney will feature drop flight singles and doubles (Mixed doubles are not offered, but that should not stop participants from choosing a partner of the opposite sex.) Both events will divide into four divisions, so all players are welcome.


The cost is \$35 for one event, and \$50 for both singles and doubles. See www.ChicagoMSA.org or e-mail badminton@chicagomsa.org.

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Mush, mush



The Annual Sue Marohn Tye Dye Mushball Classic was held June 13 in Gompers Park, 4222 W. Foster. Out of 11 teams that entered, Breakaways emerged on top.

An out lesbian, Marohn loved softball and was an excellent pitcher, taking Chicago's Synergy team to five championships in the Gay World Series. (She even threw out the opening pitch at an April 2003 Chicago Cubs home game.) She died of cancer in 2005. After her passing, Marohn's friends started this tournament in her memory and to raise money for charity.

Since starting the tournament, organizers have donated \$10,000 to the hospice that Marohn stayed at before she passed away.

Mushball is very similar to softball; however, the ball is much softer. Photo of Breakaways courtesy of Suzanne Arnold



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WRITTEN BY STEPHEN TEMPERLEY | DIRECTED BY STEVE SCOTT

NORTHLIGHT THEATRE | THURS DEC 10 7:30PM

The comedic and musical true story of Florence Foster-Jenkins: a New York socialite whose ambition, deep love of music and complete lack of talent landed her at Carnegie Hall and brought a very unique joy to thousands.

OH COWARD! - A MUSICAL COMEDY REVUE

WORDS AND MUSIC BY NOËL COWARD | DIRECTED BY JIM CORTI

WRITERS' THEATRE

TICKET VOUCHER TO THE SHOW

You’re invited to a marvelous party of songs celebrating one of the theater’s greatest entertainers. Effervescent music and charming Coward quips combine for an unforgettable evening.

“After many years in New York, actor-director Jim Corti returned to become one of the most exciting figures in the Chicago musical community.” – Chicago Tribune

THE BROTHER/SISTER PLAYS

CHICAGO PREMIERE

BY TARELL ALVIN MCCRANEY | DIRECTED BY TINA LANDAU

STEPPENWOLF THEATRE | SUNDAY FEB 21

3:00 PM SHOW 1 | 5-6:30 RECEPTION | 7:30PM SHOW 2

*** TWO PLAYS PLUS A RECEPTION OF HEAVY APPETIZERS & LIBATIONS***

Steamy bayou Louisiana springs to life with stories of love, sexuality and coming-of-age, where the struggle for self identity is at odds with community values. From the Gay playwright who created the hit play *Wig Out!* And one of the most exciting directors of our time.

LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES

BY CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON | DIRECTED BY DAVID DARLOW

REMY BUMPO THEATRE AT THE GREENHOUSE THEATRE

THURS APRIL 1 7:30

Sexual intrigue and ruthless manipulation in the salons and boudoirs of pre-Revolutionary France. Annabel Armour, Nick Sandys and Linda Gillum star as aristocrats testing their skills of manipulating love, sex and power. A modern day classic.

GIRLS vs BOYS WORLD PREMIERE

WRITTEN BY NATHAN ALLEN, JAKE MINTON & CHRIS MATHEWS

MUSIC BY KEVIN O'DONNELL | DIRECTED BY NATHAN ALLEN

THE HOUSE THEATRE OF CHICAGO AT CHOPIN THEATRE

THURS MAY 6 8PM

An original coming-of-age pop opera where brother and sister find themselves trapped in a deadly battle of the sexes – they don’t know the rules, but they have to play anyway.

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