Rahm Emanuel: In his own words

BY ANDREW DAVIES

For Rahm Emanuel, this is the best and worst of times.

Thanks to a variety of factors—not the least of which is name recognition, thanks to his years in the Clinton and Obama administrations—Emanuel is seen as the prohibitive favorite in the 2011 Chicago mayoral race, with various polls placing him squarely in the lead.

However, as practically everyone knows, Emanuel is also in the political fight of his life right now, as well over a dozen people have challenged his residency. If the electoral board votes against him, he will be out of the race. In addition, the LGBT community is split about Emanuel, with some people linking him to the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (DADT) policy that originated under Clinton.

On Dec. 10, Emanuel sat in the Center on Halsted for an exclusive interview with Windy City Times. He talked about the fight regarding his residency, DADT and his connection to the very building in which the interview was conducted.

Windy City Times: I remember hearing you talk about how if Mayor [Richard] Daley ever stepped down, you’d like to succeed him. What is it about the position that you find so attractive?

Rahm Emanuel: A couple things. One thing is that it’s a great city. It’s been my home; I was born here. My grandfather came to the city in 1917; he immigrated here from Russia and Romania. My uncle’s a police officer and my father immigrated in 1959 to Chicago, to practice medicine, with my mother. My entire family has been here.

The mayor can get things done, put in place a set of policies. Sometimes I feel like, when I was

Turn to page 9

U.S. Senate rejects DADT repeal

BY LISA KEEN
KEEN NEWS SERVICE

The Senate has rejected an attempt to bring the defense-authorization bill to the floor, effectively killing the prospects for repealing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (DADT) this year, and likely for years to come. The vote was 57 to 40.

It could not be determined immediately which three senators did not vote. Most moderate Republicans, including Massachusetts’ Scott Brown, Illinois’ Mark Kirk and Maine’s Olympia Snowe, voted against allowing the bill to the floor. Republican Sen. Susan Collins, who was a chief negotiator for trying to get the bill to the floor, voted for cloture (a procedure for ending a debate and taking a vote).

It was a dramatic finish and, undoubtedly, viewers saw on the Senate floor just the tip of the iceberg in negotiations that sought to bring about repeal of the military’s ban on openly gay servicemembers.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid took to the floor at about 3 o’clock on Dec. 9, saying he had tried “every possible way to move forward” on the defense authorization bill, which

Turn to page 4
Celebrate the Passage of the Civil Unions Bill

HARRIS

WIRTZ BEVERAGE ILLINOIS

PRESENT

Justice for All

EQUALITY ILLINOIS 2011 GALA

20th anniversary

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 6PM
HILTON CHICAGO
720 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVENUE, CHICAGO

FOR TICKETS VISIT WWW.EQIL.ORG OR CALL 773.477.7173

GOLD SPONSORS

KIRKLAND & ELLIS LLP
OMNIBUS
SOUTHHILL

SILVER SPONSORS

at&t
Hilton

SIDLEY
Walgreens

BRONZE SPONSORS

NEAL GERBER BISCHEN
THE NIELSEN COMPANY
QUARTS BRADY

BEVERAGE SPONSORS

Baileys
Coltivino
Don Julio
Gallo Family Vineyards
Gentlemen Jack
Hendrick’s Gin
Johnny Walker
Kilo Kai
Pied Piper
Piper-Heidsieck
Red Bull
Remy Martin
Stolichnaya Vodka
this week in
WINDY CITY TIMES

NEWS
Prop 8 hearing; DADT appeal rejected 4
Center’s homesharing program 5
Howard Brown board changes 6
Wal-Mart worker’s harassment claim 7
Albright; Project CRYP 8
Rehm Emanuel interview 9
Local HIV-drug study response 10
Gay in the Life 11
Viewpoints: Baim, Koenig & Hyde 12

Entertainment/Events
Scottish Play Scott 13
Theater reviews 14
Barbara Robertson; Fifth Sun; Artemis 16
Books; Chicago Gay Men’s Chorus 17
Knight; Interview with Alan Cumming 18
Meredith Baxter 19
Gay Philadelphia 20
Gay couple sells Oprah’s favorite teas 21
Billy Masters 25

Outlines
Real estate; classifieds 22
Sports: Angela James 23
Calendar Q 24
Sports: Top 20 events, Hamilton 26

Here Comes the Judge
The LGBT group The Alliance of Illinois Judges held a reception for Mary Jane Theis (left), the newest state supreme court justice.

Photo by Andrew Davis

High Five

All About Eve
Sugar & Spice looks at hot spots to get your grub on during New Year’s Eve.

That’s Entertainment
This week’s entertainment round-up includes bits on Lady Gaga, Johnny Weir and Cyndi Lauper.

Closer to Fine
Indigo Girls brought the holiday spirit to Chicago with a show (featuring, among others, Chely Wright) at the House of Blues. Read a review and see photos.

Photo by Andrew Davis

Download this!
Go to www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com
to download complete issues of Windy City Times and Nightspots.
Then click on any ad and be taken directly to the advertiser’s Web site!

Online exclusives at
www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com

Now Open!
Urban Pooch
Your single source for thoughtful products & services for you and your dog.
Daycare-by-the-hour flexibility
Overnight Boarding
Training
Grooming
Puppy Classes
Dog Massage and Reiki
Chill Lounge
All-natural/organic food and durable, eco-friendly products
Social activities to meet other dog owners

Visit or call us at:
4501 North Ravenswood
(corner of Ravenswood and Sunnyside)
(773) 942-6445

Register your dog and yourself at
www.UrbanPooch.com to receive a special offer.
Judges hint at Prop 8 twists and turns

BY REX WOCKNER

The effort to undo California’s Proposition 8 moved forward Dec. 6 when a three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals entertained nearly three hours of oral arguments from the attorneys in the case.

In an ornate courtroom on the third floor of San Francisco’s historic James R. Browning U.S. Courthouse, amid murals, stained glass and statues dating to 1905, the attorneys replayed some of their main arguments and the judges offered hints of where the case might go.

The gay side’s lawyers, who include famed attorneys Ted Olson and David Boies, sought to defend U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker’s ruling from August that Prop 8 violates the U.S. Constitution’s guarantees of equal protection and due process.

They also argued that the parties who brought the appeal to the 9th Circuit — the activists who created Prop 8 and the deputy county clerk of Southern California’s dusty Imperial County — have no legal “standing” to have mounted this appeal of Walker’s ruling.

Those parties are trying to defend Prop 8 because all the public officials who were sued in the case — including Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Attorney General (and Gov.-elect) Jerry Brown — have refused to defend the voter-passed state constitutional amendment that re-banned same-sex marriage in November 2008 after it had been legal for 4 1/2 months and after 18,000 same-sex couples had married.

It is unclear if the court will grant the Prop 8 proponents or Imperial County standing to allow the appeal to move forward. The judges seemed unimpressed by Imperial County’s desire to be let into the case. Among other things, they seemed annoyed that the deputy county clerk rather than the actual clerk is pursing the move.

As to whether the people who put Prop 8 on the ballot should be allowed to step into the shoes of the state government and defend a piece of the state constitution that the state itself refuses to defend, the judges hinted that they might bounce that question off of the California Supreme Court to see how it feels about the idea. If the 9th Circuit does that, it could delay appellate rulings on both the standing issue and the merits of Walker’s decision.

On the merits, Olson told the judges that California has unconstitutionally “taken a class of citizens and put them in a separate category.”

California gives same-sex couples all the rights and obligations of marriage under a domestic-partnership law, but prohibits gay couples from marrying. Under another law, gay couples who go get married somewhere else also receive all the California rights of marriage but are prohibited from calling their marriage a marriage in California. Yet other gay couples, who got married in California or somewhere else before Prop 8 passed, are considered to be married in California and are permitted to use the word “it’s marriage.”

After nearly three hours of oral arguments:

— Will the case be delayed so the 9th Circuit can sound out the California Supreme Court on the question of whether people who put initiatives on the ballot should be able to defend those initiatives when they are struck down by courts? Regardless of whether the judges seek advice from the California Supreme Court, the case cannot proceed if the 9th Circuit decides that neither the Prop 8 proponents nor Imperial County has legal standing to appeal. If they do not, Walker’s ruling striking down Prop 8 would come back.

— In hearing the appeal of Walker’s ruling, will the 9th Circuit rely solely on Walker’s expansive trial record, which seems to demolish much of the state’s arguments, or will the court look at the context of the trial record, which seems to demolish much of the state’s arguments?

— Has the 9th Circuit perhaps hinted that it plans to uphold Walker’s decision but in a way that would limit the case’s impact to California, the only state that ever let gays get married and then later took that right away from them? The court spent a fair amount of time discussing a 1996 case from Colorado in which the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a state constitutional amendment that deprived gay people of anti-discrimination protections that Colorado governments previously had extended to them.

A “narrow” ruling against Prop 8 by the 9th Circuit could bring same-sex marriage back to California but possibly thwart Olson, Boies and the American Foundation for Equal Rights’ desire to take before the U.S. Supreme Court the proposition that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to get married in all states.

Very messy.

All of this is discriminatory, Olson said. It harms gay Californians. There is no legal rational basis for it. It cannot be “justified,” he said.

“California has built a fence around its gay and lesbian citizens and around the institution of marriage,” Olson told the judges. “That is a violation of the equal-protection clause and it’s a violation of the due-process clause.”

Attorney Charles Cooper for the Prop 8 proponents told the judges that his case in defense of Prop 8 centers on “propagation.”

In Cooper’s view, it is rational for the state to limit marriage to men and women because the reason marriage exists in the first place is because sex between men and women produces children.

The state, he suggested, has a unique interest in human unions that are procreative.

At the end of the day, court-watchers were talking about three things that piqued their curiosity during the oral arguments:

— Will the case be delayed so the 9th Circuit can sound out the California Supreme Court on the question of whether people who put initiatives on the ballot should be able to defend those initiatives when they are struck down by courts? Regardless of whether the judges seek advice from the California Supreme Court, the case cannot proceed if the 9th Circuit decides that neither the Prop 8 proponents nor Imperial County has legal standing to appeal. If they do not, Walker’s ruling striking down Prop 8 would come back.

— In hearing the appeal of Walker’s ruling, will the 9th Circuit rely solely on Walker’s expansive trial record, which seems to demolish much of the state’s arguments, or will the court look at the context of the trial record, which seems to demolish much of the state’s arguments?

— Has the 9th Circuit perhaps hinted that it plans to uphold Walker’s decision but in a way that would limit the case’s impact to California, the only state that ever let gays get married and then later took that right away from them? The court spent a fair amount of time discussing a 1996 case from Colorado in which the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a state constitutional amendment that deprived gay people of anti-discrimination protections that Colorado governments previously had extended to them.

A “narrow” ruling against Prop 8 by the 9th Circuit could bring same-sex marriage back to California but possibly thwart Olson, Boies and the American Foundation for Equal Rights’ desire to take before the U.S. Supreme Court the proposition that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to get married in all states.

Lesbian couple honored at State Dept.

A U.S. lesbian diplomat and her partner who helped found Albania’s gay movement while stationed there were honored at the State Department on Dec. 2 with the Secretary of State Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Overseas.

The award, handed out by the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide, was given to Melissa Schraibman, who worked at the U.S. Embassy in Tirana as a resident legal adviser, and her partner, Mindy Michaels.

It was presented by Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg in a ceremony that was attended by former U.S. ambassadors to Albania John Withers and Marcie Ries.

It was the first time the Secretary of State Award recognized efforts to promote LGBT rights.

“This was, of course, extremely personally meaningful for Melissa and me, as the work on the Albanian LGBT movement was our primary focus over the last nearly two years,” Michls said. “But it is also something that has larger meaning, as I think it was the first time that this sort of volunteerism and diplomacy on LGBT human rights has been recognized in a formal and high-level way as an important part of the work done by government employees serving abroad.”

—Assistant: Bill Kelley
Center on Halsted announces new homesharing program
BY CARRIE MAXWELL

Against the backdrop of its annual holiday party Dec. 10, the Center on Halsted launched its new homesharing program, which aims to help LGBT seniors and provide affordable housing to renters.

Modesto “Tico” Valle, the center’s CEO, thanked everyone in attendance and remarked that more than 1,000 people have come through the doors every day since the Center opened about four years ago. Valle celebrated the victories of the LGBT community, both nationally and statewide, making note of the recent Civil Unions bill that was passed in Springfield. He then went on to outline the work the Center is doing to help prevent bullying and improve the lives of the transgender community and LGBT immigrants, as well as many other initiatives.

Then Victoria Raymont, the center’s board chair and development committee chair, took to the microphone where she sang the praises of Valle’s work and noted they will be bringing on more board members as the New Year begins. Raymont shared the work the board has done regarding publicity, outreach, cultivation of new leaders and as strategic partners with Valle in continuing the center’s work. Raymont tearfully told the story of David Mayer, who lost his partner after many, many years and then came to the SAGE Program for help. Mayer then came forward and he said “the best thing since losing my partner was finding a home here,” which got a warm response from the crowd.

Hope Bennett, senior director of public programs, introduced Britta Larson, who is the homesharing manager. Larson took to the microphone and praised the center for starting this program despite the bad economy. She outlined the challenges of aging in the LGBT community, including isolation, loneliness and the lack of extended family members and in many cases children who can help them. She said that in 65 percent of cases, LGBT seniors live alone, which makes it hard for them to stay in their own homes. As LGBT adults age they face financial hardships (since they do not receive their partners’ social security or pension benefits after they die) so they are more likely to enter nursing homes and assisted living facilities at an earlier age.

There, Larson added, they face discrimination and, in some cases, have to go back into the closet.

Then Larson went into the logistic of the program and said “it will look different in each case” between the provider and renter. She noted the benefits will include financial savings, companionship, safety and security. The requirements for entering the program are: the provider will have to have an income of at least $750 per month and be willing to live with an older LGBT adult and provide assistance with household chores and tasks. She then called on all attendees to spread the word about the program so more people can take advantage of this service.

When Windy City Times spoke with Larson about who would be liable if something bad happens with the matches she said “the renter and provider will be signing an agreement stating exactly what the expectations of both parties will be as well as the protocols and procedures that will occur if the match dissolves.” Larson went on to say that the center acts as a matching resource between the provider and renter. The center will be absorbing the costs of the background checks on all parties involved and then will share the background checks with both of the matches so there are no secrets. Then the control rests on the provider and renter to determine if they want to live together.

The center’s entire staff was on hand, along with many board members and other luminaries, including Ric Martel who is the housing manager for the AIDS Foundation of Chicago as well as representatives from the Sunrise Living Center. Paula Basta, the regional director of the Northeast (Levy) Regional Senior Center, a city-run facility, also attended and spoke earlier in the evening in support of the program. Rep. Greg Harris was on hand in the earlier part of the evening as well as Chicago mayoral candidate Rahm Emanuel, who stayed until the end of the presentation.

For more information please contact Britta Larson at the Center on Halsted.
Howard Brown announces board changes

BY YASMIN NAIR

Since the revelation about its financial crisis, Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) has been faced with calls that the board and staff members responsible should resign. On Dec. 6, the organization’s board announced what it called a “Responsible Transition Plan.” According to its timeline, there will be an entirely new board by the start of the next fiscal year starting July 1, 2011.

The plan will be executed in two phases: First, the executive committee of the board and additional members will resign effective Dec. 31. These are Board Chair Mark Andrews, Laura Angelucci, Janet E. Henderson, Steven Phelps, Brett Stolz and Charles Katzenmeyer. This leaves the board reduced by about half of its members but with enough to fulfill funding and grant requirements, including the critical Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) application that requires at least nine members. FQHCs are required to ensure that at least 51 percent of board members be people who use the organization’s services. This has not been the case at HBHC; CEO Jamal Edwards acknowledged that “in the past we could have done a better job of recruiting board members who are actively engaged in our services—and we’re going to do that.”

Remaining board members will seek and fill applications for new board members and ensure the transition. Of the remaining members, only Frank Buttitta and Karma Israelien, who joined in the summer and fall of this year, respectively, after changes had begun, will not step down. The announcement is likely to be supported by those who have called for the immediate resignation of the board, but given HBHC’s history of being closely guarded about the operation of the board and the extent of the financial crisis in which it finds itself, questions are likely to emerge about how much oversight there might be over its new process.

Edwards, in response to questions from WCT, said that he had “recommended that the board appoint a selection committee that will be [composed] of some board members, some staff representatives, representatives from the community ... and also our stakeholders, such as our foundation and corporate grantors—so that it’s independent and transparent and community focused. That selection committee is now in the process of being formed.” Asked about his own input, he said he would make his own recommendations but that the decisions would rest with the committee. Edwards has, in the past, spoken about wanting the board to be broadly representative of community interests.

“Boards are also required to have some kind of oversight committee or person to ensure that they understand their responsibilities, and HBHC has not had that in the past. According to Edwards, HBHC has applied to The Law Project—an organization that provides pro bono legal assistance to nonprofits—to have it review its bylaws and conflicts of interest policies “to make sure that they meet the gold standard of governance and control for an organization and FQHC.” Edwards said that HBHC had already met 80 percent of its goal of the first 500,000 and he was sure that 100 percent would be met by Dec. 23. In the event that this did not happen, “we have one resource [an anonymous organization which has already made a significant donation] we can go to for short-term support. So there is no plan or expectation that we’re going to cut any services or run the risk of shutting down at the end of the year.” HBHC’s strategic plan is to be unveiled in the beginning of 2011.

Responding to the latest news, community members greeted the news with studied caution and indicated their support for the organization. Rick Garcia, political director of Equality Illinois and a client of HBHC, said that he had “the highest regard and respect for Howard Brown because they provide services to people who otherwise would not have services particularly trans people. I know transgender folks who come from as far away as Rockford and Decatur so that they're treated with respect.”

However, Garcia also pointed out that a new board was essential for many in the community to regain their trust in the organization, saying that he knew “many people who said, ‘Don’t give them a dime until that board of directors and those executive officers are gone because they either knew about the problem or if they didn’t know about the problem. What were they doing?’” Garcia added that “Howard Brown needs to continue because it does a great service for this community, and those who have mishandled this great service over the past couple of years need to be gone. From top to bottom.”

Mona Noriega, currently a doctoral student at UIC, was previously regional director of Lambda Legal and a board chair of Girl’s Best Friend, a foundation that closed its doors in 2007. As an adjunct, Noriega has also taught a class in a foundation that closed its doors in 2007. As an adjunct, Noriega has also taught a class in Loyola’s social work program. She told WCT that what happened to HBHC needed to be considered in the larger context of what was happening to all nonprofits, not just the gay ones, in a bad economy that “reveals the weaknesses all over the place.”

According to Noriega, a critical role of any board is to “oversee the financials.” But that, she said, is also what most board members are least likely to want to do, simply because it is among the most unpleasant tasks: “People just run from that. Many people can’t figure out how to look at the balance sheet, how to look at the cash flow. Those are tools that are required. The board is required to look at those. The board is supposed to be responsible.”

Noriega emphasized that while she could not speak to the particulars of HBHC, the problem with nonprofits in general is “the challenge of getting qualified people, whether staff or board, to understand what their roles and responsibilities are.” People often come to their membership on a board with passion, “but passion’s just not enough.” She spoke of the need for better leadership training and skills development, “because nonprofits require not only people who are invested in their communities but who are skilled.”

At the same time, according to Noriega, boards also need to have structures in place to prevent problems. Pointing to the fallout of the Bernie Madoff scandal, she said that one of the hard lessons from that was too many nonprofits had boards consisting of people brought on because they agreed with each other, resulting in damaging investments with no oversight. (A lot of nonprofits lost money through Madoff, who especially used their common link—Jewish connections—to exploit them.) This could have been prevented if the boards had a diversity not just of race, “but of opinion and skill level. If you had a board that consisted of all of your friends, you weren’t able to execute the kind of fiduciary evaluation that was required to be able to see that this person Madoff was selling something based on prejudice.”

“The problem is that when you have a board with people of similar minds and opinions, you’re not pulling a diversity of viewpoints or a diversity of skills that allows for you to be able to say, ‘Oh, you’re making these financial decisions and perhaps you don’t have that experience.’ And that’s why you need to have someone on your board who does have the financial experience. I think it’s a general comment on nonprofits. Recruitment, orientation, evaluation, feedback, learning opportunities—there’s a whole checklist of things that need to happen at the board level. And so I wonder if those were in place [at HBHC].”

Noriega also emphasized that the HBHC case allowed “an opportunity to learn. ... How do we use this as a community to learn how we support nonprofits? There must be something we can learn from this and not suffer this particular loss.”

WCT contacted HBHC Board Chair Mark Andrews for an interview, but he did not respond before the publication went to press.
Wal-Mart worker alleges sexual harassment
BY ROSS FORMAN

A battle of David-vs.-Goliath proportions is brewing in the far northwest suburb, with potentially huge ramifications to/for the worldwide LGBT community.

Roben Hall, 37, who lives in Carpentersville, claims she was subjected to sexual harassment for about 19 months while working as an overnight stocker at the Wal-Mart in East Dundee.


“Ms. Hall was subjected to sexual harassment by a female co-worker,” said Hall’s attorney, Betty Tsamis. “Despite Roben’s repeated complaints to her managers, Wal-Mart allowed the illegal conduct to occur. According to Roben, one manager told her that he didn’t have to investigate Roben’s complaint because it involved two women.”

Hall was hired by Wal-Mart—and Wal-Mart has threatened action against Hall for filing complaints “in bad faith” if she continues to maintain this action, Tsamis said.

“In our view, this is yet another form of retaliation designed to silence a victim,” Tsamis said. “Obviously, Wal-Mart, America’s largest corporation, has the financial resources to go after Roben in any number of ways. To threaten to go after her if she maintains her suit is simply a demonstration of bad faith. Wal-Mart should find someone of its own size to pick on.”

Tsamis is a prominent local attorney who is committed to helping LGBT employees who have few places to turn when faced with workplace discrimination and/or harassment. And she said same-sex sexual harassment in the workplace is more common, especially over the past two years, largely due to the fact that LGBT people are now more informed about their rights in the workplace.

“There has been reluctance by LGBT people to come forward and report discrimination/ha-rassment because they fear retaliation,” Tsamis said. “Often, same-sex sexual harassment is not taken seriously by managers and the victimized employee suffers while the employer allows the conduct to continue. The fallout from this is that the employee is unable to be investigated between parties of the same gender. The employer does not have to investigate or be involved in between parties of the same gender, or, ‘Because you have a disability, you can’t handle more than entry-level work.’ All of these derogatory mindsets and transgressions, I have encountered in my experiences. I hope that my complaints against Wal-Mart are taken seriously by managers and the victim—when faced with workplace discrimination and/or harassment.”

Hall is currently pursuing a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling, specializing in supporting and advocating for individuals with disabilities. She graduated cum laude from Northern Illinois University in 2007 with a bachelor’s degree in psychology, a minor in communicative disorders and a certificate in LGBT studies. She is now working as a certified pharmacy technician at a long-term care pharmacy to support her schooling.

“In my opinion, under-represented groups, such as persons with disabilities or people in the LGBT community, continue to struggle for equal treatment in the workplace,” Hall said. “The nine years I worked at Wal-Mart Stores Inc., only solidified my opinions. My experienc- es at Wal-Mart Stores Inc., have led to feelings of isolation, experiences of intense scrutiny, and experiences of being devalued and de-humanized; [as a motivation for me to complete the LGBT studies certification and continue my education in Rehabilitation Counseling to advocate for individuals with disabilities.]

“My future work with under-represented populations, I will strive to avoid mindsets and comments such as when a person of the same gender touches and violates another of the same gender. Comments such as, ‘Aren’t people like you [gays] into that stuff anyway?’ or ‘Sexual harassment complaints do not have to be investigated between parties of the same gender,’ or, ‘Because you have a disability, you can’t handle more than entry-level work.’ All of these derogatory mindsets and transgressions, I have encountered in my experiences. I hope that my complaints against Wal-Mart are taken seriously by managers and the victim—when faced with workplace discrimination and/or harassment.”

Tsamis said her goal with the Hall case is to help identify more victims of same-sex sexual or sexual-orientation harassment and discrimi-nation at Wal-Mart, educate the public about the fact that same-sex sexual harassment is illegal, and compensate Roben for some of her damages.

Even though, Tsamis added, “No amount of money will ever compensate Roben for what she has been through. But, corporations understand that when money is paid out on an employment claim, their directors will expect an explanation and future preventive measures which could include policies that give managers and employees guidance and provide consequences for same-sex sexual harassment.”

Windy City Times attempted to contact Wal-Mart for a response, but had not heard from the corporation as the issue went to press.

Howard Brown announces new matching grant
Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC) has announced a new $25,000 matching grant designed to make new friends on social-online networks and to raise funds for the Lifeline Appeal.

Called “The Power of 25 Campaign,” the challenge aims to generate 1,000 new, social-networking fans for the center, which has been involved in HIV/AIDS research and healthcare for more than 25 years.

Sponsored by the same anonymous donor who already gave $100,000 that was matched by public contributions before the Nov. 30 deadline, The Power of 25 Campaign will generate $25 for each new Howard Brown Facebook fan, up to $25,000.

Existing Howard Brown Facebook, Twitter and YouTube friends will be asked to recruit 25 of their friends to join them as a fan or follower. With this exciting new challenge, Howard Brown hopes to have more than 3,000 Facebook fans—and at least as many supporters—by the campaign’s last day, Wed. Dec. 15.

“We are thinking and behaving differently at Howard Brown, and reaching out to our community in different ways, too. Facebook and Twitter are excellent, cost-effective ways to communicate and connect with people who support our mission,” said HBHC President/CEO Jamal Edwards. “Many Howard Brown Facebook fans have commented on our fan page and continue to follow our 50 Stories in 50 Days series on YouTube. These one to two-minute real life videos are what Howard Brown is all about—the people and programs that change and save lives.”

The donor—whose personal story will be shared Thursday, Dec. 23, as the final 50 Sto- ries in 50 Days—has reportedly been thrilled with the rapid response by the community to the Lifeline Appeal, and wanted to commemorate and honor HBHC with a special challenge for World AIDS Day.

To date, Howard Brown’s Lifeline Appeal has raised $340,000, which is nearly 70 percent of its goal of $500,000-in-50-days in order to sustain current services and lay a strong founda-tion for Howard Brown to continue its recov-ery efforts.

The Lifeline Appeal funds will help ensure that Howard Brown can continue providing services to more than 36,000 people annually.

To donate to Howard Brown’s Lifeline appeal, visit http://www.hobrown.org or call 773-388-1600.

Tunney, chamber comment on Wal-Mart rumors
Alf. Tom Tunney of Chicago’s 44th Ward has issued a statement on his website respond-ing to rumors that Wal-Mart may move into Lakeview, near the corner of Clark, Broadway and Diversey.

Tunney stated: “I have recently heard that [Wal-Mart] may be interested in renting a location in the 44th Ward. I have not seen any conceptual plans for a proposed store in Lakeview. If any plans come forward, it will be vetted through a rigorous community process.

“As a small business owner, I understand the impact any big-box retailer would have on our neighborhood. We will work together, residents and businesses, to continue to make our community a better place to live, raise a family, shop and own a business.”

In a statement, the Lakeview East Cham-ber of Commerce said, “The Lakeview East Chamber of Commerce understands the negative impact [Wal-Mart] will have for small business and neighbors are question-ing the choice of location for this higher in-comes residential community.” The chamber quoted a resident, Bruce Beal, who stated, “There are plenty of communities in Chica-go where Walmart is needed and would be welcomed, just not in ours.”

The chamber also indicated that it was formed a Facebook page, “Stop the Lakeview/Lincoln Park Walmart.” That intersection is already crowded with numerous small businesses and some big-box retailers, including Borders.

To donate to Howard Brown’s Lifeline appeal, visit http://www.hobrown.org or call 773-388-1600.
Albright at Chicago House event: ‘We can’t relax now’
Madeleine Albright speaks at Chicago House luncheon: U.S. needs to make fighting poverty, HIV epidemic a top priority
BY HELEN ADAMPOULOS

According to former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, three principles are essential to maintaining a successful democracy and fighting global ills:

1. The first is to take action instead of just talking about what needs to be done. Second, everyone must feel solidarity with others worldwide. Third, each and every individual counts.

Albright said Chicago House—a social service agency that has provided those affected by HIV or AIDS with housing and support programs since 1985—is the champion of those key principles.

Albright made that declaration as the keynote speaker at the second Annual Chicago House Speaker Series Luncheon Dec. 9. In front of an audience of more than 1,200 people at the Palmer House Hilton, Albright spoke about fighting poverty and HIV on a global scale as well as her experience as the first female secretary of state.

Albright described how she witnessed the impact of the AIDS epidemic through her international affairs work. She said she spoke to women with HIV and AIDS in Africa whose families shunned them. She also encountered women who were afraid to get tested because their families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunned them. She also encountered families shunted by the Illinois General Assembly, Garcia, who was at the forefront of granting civil unions to same-sex couples in Illinois from the beginning, “I will tell you that there is a method to our madness,” Garcia continued stating that Equality Illinois saw the passage of civil unions as a step, though the organization still believes there should be one institution for every everybody.

When equal marriage legislation was introduced in 2005, many elected officials opted for civil unions, and Garcia acknowledged that LGBT citizens in Illinois needed legal protections now. “Is it enough?” Garcia asked. “No. Are we satisfied with it? No. Because we all needed to be treated fairly with one set of rules and one yard stick.”

Read more about this forum online at https://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.

Project CRYSP forum tackles anti-LGBT hate
BY TULLY SATRE

Every year Project CRYSP, an organization committed to gay men’s health in Chicago, holds four community forums addressing issues across the board. Project CRYSP’s last forum of the year, “It’s Not Just ‘Faggot!’,” addressed the ever-pressing issue of homo/transphobia; the Dec. 8 town hall packed the Center on Halsted’s Hoover-Leppin Theatre. Dr. Simone Koehlinger of the Cook County Department of Public Health was the evening’s moderator. She opened the forum saying that homophobia is not just about “telling me that you tolerate me,” adding that, “if you tell me that you’re celebrating and supporting me then we have something to talk about.” The forum sought to find solutions to battle homophobia and was led by a panel of community leaders: Keith Green (Chicago Black Gay Men’s Caucus), Rick Garcia (Equality Illinois) and Lois Bates (Howard Brown Health Center).

Gay teen suicides were frequently highlighted by the media in the latter half of 2010, making Project CRYSP’s town hall particularly timely. “Institutional homophobia ... starts early,” said Green. “There is a lack of comprehensive sexual education in the school system.” Green noted that for LGBT youth, being left out of the conversation in a sex-ed class is a subtle, but serious, form of homophobia that can lead gay teens to feel alone.

“When we walk out of [the Center on Halsted], what do we see on this street?” Garcia asked the audience. “Kids,” replied one audience member. Garcia continued, “Why are they not in school? And then I realized why they are not in school.” Garcia, who sits on the governor’s hate crimes commission, explained that during a statewide tour of Illinois’ public schools, he and several others spoke with students about issues they felt needed to be addressed. The primary concern, Garcia learned, was bullying and that teachers and administrators were doing nothing to stop it. “We need to make sure that our next mayor makes a priority protecting LGBT children who are our streets who should be [in school],” he added.

Nodding to this year’s anti-bullying bill passed by the Illinois General Assembly, Garcia said teachers and administrators who do nothing to stop bullying should be fired. He added that “Equality Illinois is committed to stopping institutional violence in our schools,” and that the organization is speaking with mayoral candidates about getting Chicago Public Schools on board.

Two weeks ago the Illinois General Assembly passed legislation granting civil unions to same-sex couples; Gov. Quinn has promised to sign the bill. Despite this victory, Green said the LGBT community “still has a long way to go. We are not yet equal.”

“For the last five years I have worked on this bill to make us second class citizens,” said Garcia, who was at the forefront of granting civil union to same-sex couples in Illinois from the beginning. “I will tell you that there is a method to our madness,” Garcia continued stating that Equality Illinois saw the passage of civil unions as a step, though the organization still believes there should be one institution for everyone.

When equal marriage legislation was introduced in 2005, many elected officials opted for civil unions, and Garcia acknowledged that LGBT citizens in Illinois needed legal protections now. “Is it enough?” Garcia asked. “No. Are we satisfied with it? No. Because we all needed to be treated fairly with one set of rules and one yard stick.”

Read more about this forum online at https://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com.
RAHM from cover

working with President Obama or being elected to Congress from the North Side, all of those things prepared me for dealing with the greatest city with the greatest people in the country. But we’re at a crossroads—and I think the folks know that we have to turn the page begin a new era, building on what’s happened but maybe taking things in a different direction.

When I left the Clinton White House, I came home to Chicago. When I got done with college, I came home to Chicago. I want my kids to know that this is home—and the decisions we make will determine whether the city stays at that fighting weight with London, Paris, New York, Hong Kong, Singapore. It’s one of the greatest cities to do business in, one of the greatest cities to raise a family in—that’s gotta be true going forward as well.

WCT: I don’t want to get too deep in the residency bit. [Emanuel laughs.] But I do want to ask if these challenges surprise you, or do you feel it’s “politics as usual?”

RE: It’s a little of both, but it’s more surprise. Here’s the deal: Two years ago I got elected as a United States congressman with 75 percent of the vote. I pay property taxes here, I voted from here and the only reason I left the home we had just finished fixing up is because the president of the United States asked me to be his chief of staff, and I was raised in a family where there’s only one answer to that question. When the president of the United States asks you to do something, you do it. It never crossed my mind that—having just gotten elected to Congress, owning a home here, being in a place where my family’s roots go back to 1917, paying property taxes here and voting from here—answering the president’s call was a disqualifier.

WCT: Well, we’re going to time-travel back to those Clinton years. How much of a role did you play in helping to craft “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell [DADT]?”

RE: Even as chief of staff, I want it to end as soon as possible. I was literally on the phone this morning with Susan Collins, the senator from Maine; she’s a good friend of mine. This is no longer a question of “whether”—it’s a question of “when.” If you go back into the history of the debate, there was always “how disruptive [repealing DADT] would be, etc.” And one of the things the president—who wants this to end fast—wanted was a study done; I remember that meeting. And now that the study’s done, those who are opponents of ending [DADT] can’t hide behind—because there’s data that relates to the armed forces—opinions [or values]. The whole country is in a different place than it was in 1993 [when the policy was introduced]. And … I’ve worked for a president who [passed] a hate-crimes bill on his watch—an event that [initially] brought Mr. [Matthew] Shepard’s incident to the country’s attention, under President Clinton. But the bill finally got passed, under President Obama.

Number two: President Obama signed the executive order that I worked on back in 2001. I was chief of staff of the president of the United States, and together we were able to pass the executive order that I worked on because of a hate-crimes bill on his watch—an event that [initially] brought Mr. [Matthew] Shepard’s incident to the country’s attention, under President Clinton. But the bill finally got passed, under President Obama.

WCT: Let’s move on to another piece of legislation: DOMA [the Defense of Marriage Act]—was signed in 1996. Do you feel that it should be repealed?

RE: Yes, always have. You can go back to my questionnaire when I ran for Congress that was in your own paper.

WCT: So, back in ’96 do you think that Clinton should not have signed it?

RE: Look: I’m loyal to President Clinton. I’m loyal to President Obama. What my advice was … I don’t need to get into what I personally advised them or what my own sympathies were. I believe that legislation should be repealed. I believe that gays and lesbians should be allowed to get married. That’s why I thought the civil unions [are] the right thing to do, but it’s only the first step toward an ultimate goal.

WCT: And what are your thoughts on ENDA [the Employment Non-Discrimination Act]? Do you feel it should be inclusive of gender identity?

RE: I worked to try to pass it, so that’s what I believe. We first dealt with hate crimes and in Congress, when we first took over the majority, totally different responsibilities. It was in your own paper.

WCT: There are people within the LGBT community who feel that President Obama is moving a bit slowly when it comes to issues that [directly] concern them. What would you tell those people?

RE: At some point we’re going to get to a forward basis. I’m honored that when I was a congressman, based on HRBC’s [the Human Rights Campaign’s] record, I got a 100 percent. I’m honored that I got the largest grant ever from the federal government for a gay and lesbian entity, which is the building you and I are sitting in. I don’t know if you this, but this facility [Center on Halsted] wanted to honor me with a major dinner because of what I did—and why? [It was the] $1.2 million, which, if it wasn’t for a federal match, this wouldn’t have been built—the most modern facility in the country as it relates to gay and lesbian communities. People from around the world actually come to look at it, study and take lessons. [Repeatedly slaps hand on table for emphasis] Largest grant in the history of the country for the gay and lesbian community.

Last year, there were how many at the big gala dinner? That was exactly the time that [wife] Amy and I were taking Zachariah and the family to Israel for his bar mitzvah. So I couldn’t do it, but I was honored that I was asked.

My own view is that a number of things were put into place. Landmark legislation was signed, hate-crimes legislation, landmark executive orders as it relates to visiting rights—all because a member of the Chicago community told me about a story, and I convened a meeting later that week … to craft the executive order that, ultimately, the president signed. In addition, we dealt with immigration as it relates to the gay and lesbian community. There is work to be done. Civil unions? Great victory, but there’s work to be done. The president—who wants this to be passed.
dent would be the first to say there’s more work to be done. We have to end “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” we have to do other pieces of legislation as they relate to healthcare.

You assess the accomplishment, but you understand that our mission isn’t done, I appreciate what the president has gotten done, but don’t rest on your laurels—and that would be my approach. I’m proud to have been the chief of staff that helped marshal the votes that finally, after numerous tries, pass hate-crimes legislation. That said, you don’t rest on your laurels. If you did, you would have never done the hospital executive order [or] change the immigration policy. I think the president—I don’t want to speak for him—that’s not my role—wouldn’t rest on hate crimes or the executive order. It’s he’s appreciative of his sense of progress in ending discrimination or making gays and lesbians feel like they’re full citizens, but he would say, “One’s work is not done.”

WCT: There are some who feel Democrats take the LGBT vote for granted.
RE: The best way I can answer this is [that] I just don’t buy the premise. If you bought the premise, you wouldn’t have passed civil unions; you’d get it because it was right. I didn’t ask Robert Kohl to co-chair my campaign just to garner favor in the gay and lesbian community. I don’t think anybody takes anybody for granted; it’s about your principles, OK? There are political benefits to having done work, but it’s about who you are and what you are.

Robert is co-chair of my campaign. David Boul, a leader in the gay and lesbian community in Chicago, was treasurer of my congressional races and is treasurer of my mayoral race. These are people who are close to me and know my work, and I know their work and their love of the city.

[At this point, campaign manager Ben LaBolt, noting that there are only a few minutes left, suggests that Emanuel talks about his LGBT platform.]

The only thing I want you to take out of today is that there is a constituency council that deals with different communities. I’d put the gay and lesbian liaison in the mayor’s office, because I think [the office] is such a central part of the fabric that makes up this city’s communities. There’s diversity in staffing [in the platform]. You judge me by what I’ve done ... and it’s not because I was getting ready for an interview. You have to understand that is also personal. My dear cousin died of AIDS. One of the things the doctor said kept him alive was wanting to be around for the inaugural of President Clinton; he died four weeks after that. Times I came to Chicago I went to see him as he was dying. He was the best man at my wedding. He’s gay, and his partner is a city council member in Seattle. So why am I proud of my professional record? The issues that affect the gay and lesbian community have been part of my life. So I’m proud to do this interview here. In fact, it’s one of the things Amy and I have made personal charitable contributions to.

The first community that ever did a “Draft Rahm to run for mayor” was the gay and lesbian community. The reason is, I hope, is because of my work as a member of Congress, my work as chief of staff and my work for President Clinton as senior advisor.

[Referring to the platform] There are other parts of this, but I want you to know that one of the other things is that we’re going to deal with the bullying in schools. As you know, I wrote a piece for you guys, and you guys published it; I appreciate that.

WCT: You’ve been at a lot of different events: Vital Bridges [annual holiday] with AIDS Foundation of Chicago’s World of Chocolate, etc. However, your opponents feel like you’re shunning forums or debates? What is this whole mishmash about?
RE: “Mishmash”—that’s a good Yiddish word.

[Smiles] The first day when I was back in Chicago campaigning, where did I end my stop? I did 16 stops that day—but I was here at the center.

We’ve agreed to three debates. Every morning, I’m greeting voters, talking to them. This week alone? On Sunday, I had a press conference on job creation [regarding] conservation and weather, and I took six questions from reporters. I’ve visited schools, talked to teachers and principals—that charter school, Woodlawn. Tuesday, I did another press conference at a Chicago academy that had a teacher program that I firmly believe in, and I took another six questions from reporters. Wednesday, I took about 20 questions from Greg at WGN Radio, and I visited another school. I visited “L” stops this morning and in the evening. There’s no shortage of my presence in the community taking questions from reporters and people in the city of Chicago.

And I have agreed to three debates—so my view is, “Don’t worry about the debates about the debates.” I’ve issued nine position papers, more than any other candidate. I’ll arrange the subjects.

WCT: What’s the biggest misconception about you?
RE: There are a ton, I’m sure. [Smiles] In the gay and lesbian community, they know my work here or I’m blamed for the creation of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” but they don’t know anything about my personal life or personal stories.

When President Clinton came in to campaign for me, he said, “Rahm’s a breath of fresh air—a gale force.” Dee Dee Myers—we had offices next to each other in the White House—used to joke, saying I was Alan Alda with an Uzi. [Laugh]

I’m determined to get things done, but it’s what motivates me. [I don’t want] to drive just to drive. Whether it was passing the assault-weapon ban; creating the kids’ healthcare bill and the insurance companies were trying to block it; [or] passing welfare reform—I fight for things that I believe in, not just to fight for. And I think what people don’t see is where the motivation comes from and what drives that.

So I got hard image, but it’s on behalf of a set of people for something I think improves their lives.

CJ Garcia  
Hairstylist

CJ's day begins with a fresh cup of coffee enjoyed out on the pier located along the Chicago River, which flows right behind his apartment. This idyllic spot affords him a view of the passing trains, which he enjoys watching each morning. “It’s kind of my form of meditation; it helps me center myself and begin my day with a good attitude and a clear mind.”

After a short bus ride, CJ arrives at Robert Jeffrey Hair Studio in Wicker Park, where he has an appointment for a quick trim and a blowout with one of his many regulars. As they catch up, they discuss her business meetings, upcoming events and, of course, men. “Usually just hers but occasionally we’ll dive into mine,” admits CJ.

A typical day for CJ may last well into the night. You may find CJ dancing up a storm at parties such as Glitter at Le Passage. “It’s a great way to let loose after a long, busy day of work.” Photo from the June, 2010 Glitter party.

**the stats**

Name  
CJ Garcia

Age  
23

Occupation  
Hairstylist

Education  
Studied hair at Cameo Beauty Academy in Oak Lawn

Hobbies  
Reading, playing music, dancing and hanging out with friends

Fun fact  
“I spontaneously burst into song and dance.”
Couples planning and the new civil-union act

The Religious Freedom and Civil Union Act is a critical step toward equality in Illinois. The ramifications for same-sex couples cannot be understated, especially in the areas of health care, disability, and death. After the governor signs the bill and the law is enacted next summer, the state of Illinois will offer the opportunity for legal recognition to same-sex couples to the same extent as heterosexual couples entering into marriage.

Under the act, a civil union “means, and shall be included in, any definition or use of the term ‘spouse,’ ‘family,’ ‘immediate family,’ ‘dependent,’ ‘next of kin’ and other terms that denote the spousal relationship, as those terms are used throughout the law.” This single sentence will allow civil union couples to enjoy hundreds of default rights under Illinois law, which married couples currently enjoy. The current lack of default rights relating to health care, disability, and death has had particularly tragic consequences for same-sex couples. Examples include a partner not being able to make health decisions for his or her dying partner, and a partner being stripped of his or her deceased partner’s personal property because of the failure to execute a will. With the passage of the civil-union act, however, the gay community can breathe a sigh of relief.

Below is an outline of many of the important provisions regarding healthcare, disability, and death that will apply to couples entering into a civil union.

Default protections upon incapacity of one partner

—Health decisions: While competent, make our own healthcare decisions. However, if we become incapable of making such decisions, someone else needs to be designated as healthcare-decision-maker. An individual can execute a power of attorney for healthcare and nominate the person who wants to serve as his or her agent. If an individual does not execute a power of attorney for healthcare and is incapable of making health decisions, Illinois law has long provided a priority list of default decision-makers. A spouse is at the top of this list, and next, thanks to the civil-union act, the union spousal will include individuals who enter into civil unions. This means that hospitals must look to a civil union partner as the healthcare-decision-maker before anyone else, such as your parents or siblings. Before the act, partners fell under the “closer friend of the patient” category, which is almost last in line. This virtually ensured that an incapable individual’s partner would not be his or her healthcare-decision-maker.

Guardianship: In the medical procedure through which an alleged disabled person is found to be incapable of making personal decisions, a guardian is appointed to make those decisions on the disabled person’s behalf. If a same-sex couple enters into a civil union, the law will require a petitioner to give notice of the guardianship petition to the alleged disabled person’s partner. Prior to the civil-union act, partners were not entitled to notice of this proceeding.

—Statutory custodial claim: An individual who enters into a civil union and subsequently takes personal care of his or her partner for at least three years due to the partner’s disability, will be entitled to a “statutory custodial claim” of a minimum of $45,000. This claim is filed against the disabled partner’s estate after his or her death. The purpose of this statute is to recognize the ability of individuals, including same-sex partners, to be custodians of disabled family members. Before the civil-union act, same-sex partners were not eligible to even file this claim.

Default protections upon death of one partner

—Heirship: An individual who enters into a civil union may be considered his or her partner’s heir at law upon the death of his or her partner. As an heir, the law will afford a partner numerous protections, some of which are discussed below.

Part of the new legislation’s burden is that some in the community want more answers about what the Religious Freedom and Civil Union Act will bring for those who were in charge. Edwards said his own focus in on keeping the agency alive, and thriving into the future. However, government officials are still investigating the staffing problems, and should provide at least some answers for the community. Knowing what happened in the past will increase accountability and vigilance and perhaps ensure that history does not repeat itself.

I am impressed with what HBHC has done so far to add community concerns. Its concerns is an important legacy organization with 200 staff, serving 36,000 clients a year. Having seen the agency react badly to past controversies, I have to say this time they are on a right track. They are listening to their critics, and they are especially listening to their staff and clients.

While things appear positive, there will be many difficult times ahead. If HBHC, Edwards and his team can continue to be transparent and honest with the community, they will continue to move forward. If you are at all interested to help them reach this initial fundraising goal, please do so—for the sake of their clients, and our community.

After the announcement, I sat down with Jamal Edwards, HBHC’s new CEO, to discuss the future of the clinic and its future with Edwards who had served a few weeks on the board earlier this year before assuming the CEO post. The law firm he had worked for was HBHC’s legal representative, and the two had some familiarity with the agency prior to stepping into one big hot mess.

Edwards and his new executive team have no easy road ahead of them. Times has said, their most important tasks include not just fundraising to keep the agency alive, but communicating their message in a transparent and honest way. HBHC has been plagued by a culture of secrecy that has served no one, least of all its clients and donors. Edwards has promised a new era of honesty not just with the community, but with his own staff. So far, that seems to be happening.

And this new approach also seems to work on a larger scale. The agency has achieved more than 80 percent of its goal of raising $500,000 in 50 days. The headline appeals end Dec. 23 with a community celebration, and there is no doubt they will meet, or come very close to meeting, this high target and keep the agency alive. Along the way, they have picked up support from the grassroots, in mostly small donations, proving that the agency is still an important part of the community.

Default protections upon incapacity of one partner

—Health decisions: While competent, make our own healthcare decisions. However, if we become incapable of making such decisions, someone else needs to be designated as health-care-decision-maker. An individual can execute a power of attorney for healthcare and nominate the person who wants to serve as his or her agent. If an individual does not execute a power of attorney for healthcare and is incapable of making health decisions, Illinois law has long provided a priority list of default decision-makers. A spouse is at the top of this list, and next, thanks to the civil-union act, the union spousal will include individuals who enter into civil unions. This means that hospitals must look to a civil union partner as the healthcare-decision-maker before anyone else, such as your parents or siblings. Before the act, partners fell under the “closer friend of the patient” category, which is almost last in line. This virtually ensured that an incapable individual’s partner would not be his or her healthcare-decision-maker.

Guardianship: In the medical procedure through which an alleged disabled person is found to be incapable of making personal decisions, a guardian is appointed to make those decisions on the disabled person’s behalf. If a same-sex couple enters into a civil union, the law will require a petitioner to give notice of the guardianship petition to the alleged disabled person’s partner. Prior to the civil-union act, partners were not entitled to notice of this proceeding.

—Statutory custodial claim: An individual who enters into a civil union and subsequently takes personal care of his or her partner for at least three years due to the partner’s disability, will be entitled to a “statutory custodial claim” of a minimum of $45,000. This claim is filed against the disabled partner’s estate after his or her death. The purpose of this statute is to recognize the ability of individuals, including same-sex partners, to be custodians of disabled family members. Before the civil-union act, same-sex partners were not eligible to even file this claim.

Default protections upon death of one partner

—Heirship: An individual who enters into a civil union may be considered his or her partner’s heir at law upon the death of his or her partner. As an heir, the law will afford a partner numerous protections, some of which are discussed below.
When the Lyric Opera of Chicago sent out invitations to a special news conference featuring Renée Fleming last week, there was plenty of speculation as to whether the Grammy Award-winning superstar American soprano was going to be named the company’s next general director. (After all, the current general director, William Mason, is set to retire at the end of the 2011-12 season.) And for opera historical buffs, the notion that a soprano might take over a Chicago company inevitably brought to mind the late Scottish soprano Mary Garden (who notoriously bankrupted one Chicago opera company in the 1920s). Instead, Fleming was named the Lyric’s first creative consultant and a co-vice president of the Lyric Opera of Chicago board of directors alongside conductor Sir Andrew Davis (who is currently celebrating his 10th anniversary as the Lyric’s music director). At the news conference, Mason pointed out that the board of directors is still searching for a new general director.

Fleming’s duties in her five-year creative consultant position have largely to do with playing an active leadership role in creating new projects and initiatives designed to increase opera audiences and awareness of the art form. Some of the projects announced at the news conference include plans to present a world-premiere opera set to debut at curating a world-premiere opera set to debut Lyric audiences will get to see Fleming’s work at the Lyric Opera of Chicago board of directors alongside conductor Sir Andrew Davis (who is currently celebrating his 10th anniversary as the Lyric’s music director). At the news conference, Mason pointed out that the board of directors is still searching for a new general director.

Fleming’s decision to take up the position has largely to do with playing an active leadership role in creating new projects and initiatives designed to increase opera audiences and awareness of the art form. Some of the projects announced at the news conference included plans to present a world-premiere opera set to debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Fleming’s duties in her five-year creative consultant position have largely to do with playing an active leadership role in creating new projects and initiatives designed to increase opera audiences and awareness of the art form. Some of the projects announced at the news conference included plans to present a world-premiere opera set to debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago.
OPERA REVIEW

The Mikado

Playwright: Gilbert & Sullivan
At: Lyric Opera of Chicago, 20 N. Wacker
Tickets: 312-332-2244, ext. 5600;
http://www.lyricopera.org; $48-$237
Runs through: Jan. 21 (in repertory)

BY JONATHAN AABARANEL

I’m not a Gilbert & Sullivan purist, I’ve enjoyed many G&S updates, among them the Hot Mikado and the Stratford Festival’s delightful stagings, but the new Lyric Opera production of The Mikado ain’t my cup o’ tea. It’s too pale a production by half.

The musical values are there, and the orchestra pit is to be assumed and praised. The orchestra’s woodwind choir—always important in a Sullivan score—was particularly lovely, the voices—when singing—were perfection. Who wouldn’t be charmed by Toby Spence’s lyric tenor as Nanki-Poo? Or Stephanie Blythe having a ball as Katisha? Or James Morris tossing off the title score—was particularly lovely. The voices—musicianship onstage and in the orchestra pit are there; go and enjoy.

The musical values are there; go and enjoy. But the new Lyric Opera production of The Mikado and the Stratford Festival’s delightful stagings, among them the Hot Mikado and some G&S updates, among them the Hot Mikado, is narrow, with much simple black and white.

Some issues, however, are specific to this staging. Scenic and costume designer Mark Thompson has drained the color from the show. Set it in 1920s Japan? Thompson’s work is rich in pat- men’s chorus to the vast Act II backdrop with its subtle silk floral pattern—but his color range is narrow, with much simple black and white. The exception is Nanki-Poo’s harlequinesque trousers (and Toby Spence’s hair). As for “vase and jar and screen and fan,” forget about it: this is heavily Europeanized, military-rising Japan. The Mikado and his retinue are costumed directly from period military photos. Was I the only one not to be consoled by this and by the fascist-deco train station set in Act I?

Director Gary Griffin approved these choices and I wish I knew why. He also decided not to use a choreographer, so there’s no dance element in the show, and it’s missed. Essentially, Griffin has staged an elaborate concert version of The Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado and his retinue are costumed directly from period military photos. Was I the only one not to be consoled by this and by the fascist-deco train station set in Act I?

Director Gary Griffin approved these choices and I wish I knew why. He also decided not to use a choreographer, so there’s no dance element in the show, and it’s missed. Essentially, Griffin has staged an elaborate concert version of The Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado and his retinue are costumed directly from period military photos. Was I the only one not to be consoled by this and by the fascist-deco train station set in Act I?

Director Gary Griffin approved these choices and I wish I knew why. He also decided not to use a choreographer, so there’s no dance element in the show, and it’s missed. Essentially, Griffin has staged an elaborate concert version of The Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado and his retinue are costumed directly from period military photos. Was I the only one not to be consoled by this and by the fascist-deco train station set in Act I?

Director Gary Griffin approved these choices and I wish I knew why. He also decided not to use a choreographer, so there’s no dance element in the show, and it’s missed. Essentially, Griffin has staged an elaborate concert version of The Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado and his retinue are costumed directly from period military photos. Was I the only one not to be consoled by this and by the fascist-deco train station set in Act I?

Director Gary Griffin approved these choices and I wish I knew why. He also decided not to use a choreographer, so there’s no dance element in the show, and it’s missed. Essentially, Griffin has staged an elaborate concert version of The Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.

The Mikado needs a musical-comedy treatment it doesn’t get. Even meticulous musical director Sir Andrew Davis provides a rare miscue in his new Mikado. Where’s Lyric Opera’s corps de ballet? And where are the missing props? Koko’s snickersnee (sword) is replaced by Nanki-Poo’s little dagger and a sorry substitute it is. And Nanki-Poo’s “ballads cut and tied” are nowhere to be seen. The text speaks of many things that aren’t there.
THEATER REVIEW
Wicked

Playwright: music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, book by Winnie Holzman, based on the novel by Gregory Maguire
At: Broadway in Chicago at the Cadillac Palace, 151 W. Randolph
Phone: 800-775-2000; $35-$105
Runs through: Jan. 23, 2011

BY MARY SHEN BARNIDGE

The appeal of Stephen Schwartz's songs is the intensely personal way they express the passion, exuberance and uncertainty of young people caught at a crisis of identity. Too much spectacle swamps sensitive introspection with a flood of communal ecstasy. (Try to imagine a stadium version—the only one we have...) So while the company unlocks the goofiness of the characters' absurdities, the play that Haglund has trouble making her centerpieces of the play, but more often than not, they struggle to cope.

Traditional fairy tales typically recount the forlorn waif to triumphant rebel (however their society defines that term). But in this fantasyland, the villains are not the rich and Future (Samantha Garcia) and Mr. Scrooge (Steve Hickson) visit the poor and overpopulated Cratchit family a bit ahead of schedule and the normally silent Mrs. Cratchit (Tina Haglund) decides she's had enough of being poor and determines to get drunk and jump off London bridge.

All three aforementioned characters are the centerpieces of the play, but more often than not, they struggle with the material as would most who aren't well-practiced in irreverent humor. Scrooge's "Bah hum-bug!" Tourrette's outbursts among other gags that run throughout the show fall flat and simple physical comedy, such as the Ghost rhythmically shaking Scrooge with a magical Taser, fail every time. Garcia, as successfully as she charms the audience with her eccentric mannerisms, struggles with transitioning between her role as narrator and co-median. Mrs. Cratchit is written to be "above" the play that Haglund has trouble making her belong. Durang forces in the humor so excessively at times that these actors can hardly keep up, and between them and director Michael Buino, they struggle to cope.

Several supporting cast members, however, find success, usually by doing a better job of creating full characters while also subtly conveying an awareness of being in a play that's not to be taken too seriously. The naive but self-centered Tiny Tim squeezes laughs out of repeated exclamations of "God bless us, everyone!" and Bob Cratchit plays sharply off other characters' absurdities.

Durang's spin on this material is not all for the sake of being humorous, but that's mostly how it comes off in this production. He intends to highlight that the miserable and difficult lives of the characters in these classic stories cannot, realistically speaking, be mended by an epiphany about Christmas spirit. A Reasonable Facsimile's production, however, comes across as simply a whacky take on Christmas favorites. So while the company unlocks the goodness of "Binge," the humor is not as deep and resonant as it could be.

A genuinely funny and touching Broadway musical featuring Chicago stars E. Faye Butler, Barbara Robertson and Gene Weygandt. This is a WORKING man's A CHORUS LINE.

NOW ON SALE BEGINS FEB. 15–MAY 8
800.775.2000 BROADWAYINCHICAGO.COM

THE PERFECT MUSICAL FOR EVERYONE WHO HAS EVER WORKED A DAY IN THEIR LIVES.

A musical based on the book by STUDS TERKEL

NEWLY ADAPTED BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ (Composer of WICKED) and NINA FASO

Chicago's oldest LGBT sketch comedy troupe is GayGo, but only now it's unveiling its second-ever holiday revue Scream If You Love Christmas. GayGo promises to show what it's like to be Dickensian on the down low and to expose the secrets behind the white-elephant circle of re-gifting. GayGo's Scream If You Love Christmas plays 8 p.m. Thursdays through Thursday, Dec. 30, at the Annoyance Theatre, 4830 N. Broadway. Tickets are $15. Call 773-561-4665 or visit http://www.gaygo.com. Photo courtesy of the company.
NUNN ON ONE: THEATER

Barbara Robertson returns to Wicked as Madame Morrible this holiday season. With a bustling Chicago theatre agenda, Nunn on One caught up for a quick chat about her busy dramatic life.

Windy City Times: Hello, Barbara. I want to hear about how you started in theater. Did you study it in school?

Barbara Robertson: I went to the University of Illinois. I did one play in high school. It was Oklahoma. Someone just asked me to come be a square dancer. I was in band. I wasn’t in choir. No one ever taught me music so to sing the female I just sang with whomever I was next to. I was singing all the parts (sings Oklahoma in male and female voice).

WCT: Oh, my gosh. BR: That was fun. So yes I studied theater at U of I until 1 I decided that was what I really wanted to do, so I came to Chicago to start working right away.

WCT: What other theater companies did you work for?

BR: I did the Goodman, Steppenwolf, Chicago Shakespeare and the Court Theatre; also, Northlight and Victory Gardens.

WCT: You have been everywhere. What a good run you have had! BR: Yeah, I have done most of Chicago. Then I went out to do the Kennedy Center three times and one national tour of Angels in America.

WCT: You did?

BR: I got to travel the country. It was the most incredible play. I got to take my kids with me. When one of them left to go back home, I realized that they were fine without me but I wasn’t fine without them. So I decided to stay in my hometown.

WCT: You are still working so that is great. Is there a show that you wanted to do but haven’t?

BR: Oh, sure—but I focus on what I get to do. It’s an open run.

WCT: How long is the run for Working?

BR: It’s an open run.

WCT: Do you have plans for after that?

BR: I do. I have to leave Working a little bit early to do The Detective’s Wife up at The Writers’ Theatre. It’s a new Keith Huff play. He sent me the script about two years ago. Then I come back to Working. So I am just gone from Working for a little while.

WCT: You are “Working” it in Chicago!

Barbara Robertson.

Journey back to Oz and grab this hot ticket for a quick chat about her busy dramatic life.

WCT: you are “Working” it in Chicago! You are not going anywhere else?

BR: No, because I go right into rehearsals for Working in January and performing it in February.

WCT: How long is the run for Working?

BR: It’s an open run.

WCT: Do you have plans for after that?

BR: I do. I have to leave Working a little bit early to do The Detective’s Wife up at The Writers’ Theatre. It’s a new Keith Huff play. He sent me the script about two years ago. Then I come back to Working. So I am just gone from Working for a little while.

WCT: You are “Working” it in Chicago!

Barbara Robertson.

Reviewing a play through just its audio components presents a challenge. Fortunately, Chicago gay playwright Nicholas A. Patricia’s The Fifth Sun works very well in just an audio format. Now available on CD presented by Actors Scene Unseen, The Fifth Sun is directed by Elizabeth Peterson-Vita and engineered by James Vita.

This is a political play that tells the story of El Salvador and its fight to remain free of control from outside forces. It centers on the moral and ethical conflicts facing Catholic clergy who were born there as well as nuns who traveled there from the United States. Boiling this 12-year civil war down into one play is impossible, but The Fifth Sun does an excellent job at capturing the tumult of the early 1980s in this Central American country.

As the play’s description notes: “On March 24, 1980, while saying Mass, Oscar Romero, the Archbishop of San Salvador, was assassinated. [The Fifth Sun] presents the story of the people and the forces that transformed an ordinary man into a courageous leader. The Fifth Sun combines elements of ancient tomb rituals, Mayan temple dramas and medieval morality plays into a contemporary dramatic structure in which we see a human being ultimately embody the moral voice and vision of his people.”

The CD also has a musical score by The San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble and Xavier Quijas Yayaati. Recorded, mixed, and mastered in Charlotte, NC, it stars David G. Holland, Meg Sohmer Wood, John Xenakis, Brett Mason, Dael Waxman, Sendy Mendez, Becky Brock, Zendyn Duellman, Roy E. Mills, Jr., and Laura Palka.

Patricia is professor emeritus in the Theatre Program of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts at Loyola University Chicago; playwright in residence at Victory Gardens Theatre, Chicago; and an ensemble member of the TOOSOS Theatre Collective, New York City.

The CD is available on CD Baby and Amazon. See www.TheFifthSunCD.com.
REVIEW BY TRACY BAIM

Memories of An Old Dyke, by Jinx Beers, is a frustrating autobiography on several fronts. I certainly am glad to hear first-person thoughts about the road taken by one longtime dyke activist. However, I wish she had a good editor for spelling, grammar and content. (Even the word "newspaper" is spelled wrong on the back cover.) There are kernels of interesting stories here, but they need some editing shine to make them pearls.

Beers was born in 1933 in Southern California. She had a difficult childhood and used a four-year stint in the Air Force to get away from her past. She was stationed in Germany in the years after World War II, and we learn about her coming out and adventures in the military.

Beers used the G.I. Bill to attend college at UCLA, and then worked at UCLA's Institute of Transportation and Traffic Engineering for 18 years. In a Forrest Gump-like way, Beers was in the right place at the right time, but unlike the fictional Gump, Beers also helped control her destiny by actually founding and participating in groups and businesses. She founded The Lesbian News, a publication still in place today (though she sold it after 14 years as publisher and editor). She also helped teach a lesbian class at UCLA, was involved with the National Organization for Women Lesbian Rights Task Force, and other area groups.

Beers was called a "Feminist Who Changed America" for her work in founding Lesbian News. She deserved the title, but she also deserves having someone else look at her story and craft a better tribute to her efforts.

As I said, there are some interesting stories Beers tells, especially to place her life in a historical context. One interesting story is about the sit-in against homophobic talk-show host Mort Sahl. But the writing is crowded out by the sit-in against homophobic talk-show host Mart Sahl. But the writing is crowded out by too many exclamations points, spelling errors and, sometimes, a lack of context. It's like you almost get to the interesting points, and stop just short. Also, the few photos included could use captions.

Another set of eyes would help add perspective and nuance, drawing out details from the author. Most chapters are just two or three pages, and some deserve far more information. There are also moments of bitterness that take away from the story and are too one-sided to feel appropriate, even in an autobiography. At times this seems like a revenge book, but that can never hold the reader's attention for long. And there is a really outrageous and uncorroborated suggestion in a short section about AIDS that lesbians were champing at the bit waiting to take over groups after gay men died, as opposed to the reality that lesbians were part of the AIDS movement—as caretakers, fundraisers and activists.

I encourage Beers to take another stab at this book, maybe bringing in other voices—and a strong editor—to add more of substance to the interesting stories, fix the errors and take out the bitter and sometimes self-effacing tone. These things are not needed, and take away from the fact that this is a feminist dyke who did make important contributions to the LGBT movement.

Chorus gets ‘Unplugged’

The Chicago Gay Men’s Chorus held its holiday concert “Christmas Follies: Unplugged” over the weekend at the Athenaeum Theatre in Chicago and the Mayslake Peabody Estate in Oak Brook. “Unplugged” marked a first, as the members sang without any sound amplification or microphones. Photos by Kat Fitzgerald (MysticImagesPhotography.com); more online at http://www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com

BOOK REVIEW

Tomahawk’d
by Diane S. Bauden
$16.95; Intaglio; 227 pages
REVIEW BY TRACY BAIM

Tomahawk’d is not a new book, but it’s one I recently came upon because Diane’s real name is Diane Stuercke, and she’s the editor of our Windy City Queercast online radio program. I knew Diane wrote lesbian fiction, and was interested in finding out more.

Tomahawk’d is a wonderfully sweet tale of two young girls who meet during summer vacation and fall slowly in love over time. Jackson lives at the resort with her lesbian aunt, while Erin comes with her family to the Wisconsin resort every summer.

Through letters and annual visits, we watch their attraction grow, but it remains unnamed uncomfortably long for them both. Erin becomes a professional artist and marries a man. Jackson is a musician drifting from woman to woman, never quite finding the right one. While Erin may not realize what is behind her friendship with Jackson, her homophobic mom certainly sees what’s going on, even when Erin is young. As Erin becomes an adult, her mother’s hatred only increases, and causes a rift with her father, who seems genuinely loving and supportive of whatever path his daughter follows. Erin and Jackson come back together as adults, after many years apart, due to a health-related crisis. Can they mend their wounded hearts?

Tomahawk’d is an easy read, with lots of passion and fun, and it feels like a modern campfire retelling of the lesbian classic Patience and Sarah. I’d definitely recommended it for fans of lesbian fiction.
When the Chicago International Film Festival honored noted queer activist, actor, writer, director, singer and all-around Renaissance man Alan Cumming as the first recipient of its newly created OUTrageous Award for Artistic Achievement, Windy City Times’ film critic Richard Knight, Jr., was asked to conduct the Q&A with him. The lively discussion was held following a sneak preview of The Tempest (now out in theaters) with a packed audience.

Windy City Times: Can you talk about your process in preparing for The Tempest?

Alan Cumming: Well, we had rehearsal for this, which you normally get in film so we actually had time to discuss it which you don’t usually get in film with the other actors—well, maybe while you’re waiting for the crew to set up—but that’s about it. So that was my process through which I don’t really have a process. I find the word “process” kind of anti-artistic. I think it makes this machine. I don’t like it.

WCT: This is Shakespeare, which goes back to your training so, in a way, is this like falling off a log for you? Maybe your role in [the TV show] The Good Wife is harder because

AC: I think that’s just you. [Audience laughs.]

WCT: Speaking of homoerotic—can we move to Burlesque [also currently out in theaters]? Cher, Christina Aguilera and yourself—three stars with their own fragrances. [Audience laughs.] I saw the film at a camera view of your last day of your shooting. Can you share a story about working on the film?

AC: I play the door who’s. It’s sort of a fairy tale in more ways than one and I’m hardly in it. I sort of blend in and out, but the first time I met Cher it was the day that Stanley Tucci got nominated for an Oscar for The Lovely Bones. They had champagne on the set of the film—he’s a lovely man—and we’re chatting and he says, “Have you met Cher yet?” and I said, “No” and so I went up to the bar on the set and I was introduced to her. We started chatting and she says, “Do you like olives?” and I said, “Yeah” and she said, “these ones are really nice,” and we had this whole conversation about olives—and I’m thinking, “My opening salvo with Cher was all about olives.” [Audience laughs.]

WCT: Do you have a song in the film?

AC: I do but it got cut—although it’s on the soundtrack. So it will probably be on the DVD. It’s a version of “That’s Life,” the song that Frank Sinatra recorded. It’s kinda great—I’m an album with Cher, and what could be better than that?

WCT: You have this new cabaret show based on your solo album I Bought a Blue Car today?

AC: When we’re rather close together?

WCT: Yes. Was that intentional or did I just pick up on that?

AC: I think that’s just you. [Audience laughs hard.]

WCT: Speaking of homoerotic—can we move to Burlesque [also currently out in theaters]?

AC: Much harder. Much, much harder. I think American people have a very weird inferiority complex about doing Shakespeare and I don’t understand why and some of the American actors in this film were very weird. Weirdly, because they’re brilliant actors, they had weird issues about being in a film like that—partly, because I think it’s not they’re so used to it but once you get the hang of the verse thing it’s not brain surgery.

WCT: Really?

AC: I find that Shakespeare is a gaping hole in the repertory of American theatre. For me, I’ve been doing Shakespeare for a long, long time and at first I did find it hard to get the verse thing to feel natural but now it’s no problem. WCT: When you come onto a set with a director like Julie Taymor—someone with an extraordinary vision—are you more excited? Are you thinking that things in general will get more creative, as opposed to someone who doesn’t have her visual language, perhaps?

AC: Yes, I think when you go into it you know that it’s going to be a more richer kind of visual thing and not just a film about people in a room talking. It’s going to have magic in it so, yeah, though a lot of the magic happens, of course, after you’ve actually shot your stuff. I admire her greatly. I think of her as a horse with blinkers on. When she works she’s very blinkered—and she knows what she wants and she’s very strong about getting exactly what she wants, and I really admire that. It’s something a lot of people don’t have.

WCT: I talked with Helen Miren last summer and she talked about wanting to do more Shakespearean women, and so this idea of the gender switch incubated for a while and I noticed a lot of gender-bending stuff in the film. Was that intentional, other than Helen? There’s certainly a subtext between you and Chris Cooper at one point that seems rather homoerotic.

AC: It’s a bit like changing deck chairs on the Titanic, in a funny sort of way. If you feel that something’s wrong in the world and you’re trying to align yourself with it because you want to make it better, it’s hard to choose one. But I have to say that I find it really annoying and crazy that as a citizen of America—I pay the same taxes as anyone else and probably more because I’m rich [audience laughs—but I am not treated in the same way because of my sexuality. That really pisses me off and I get so annoyed when people say, “This is a civil rights struggle. How dare you call it that?”

It is a civil-rights struggle because [there are] people in this country who are not still, in 2010, not treated with the respect that other people are. Right now we have this awful problem with bullying and all these kids killing themselves. [To me, I think these people have blood on their hands—these horrible right-wing people who say that gay people are not equal. I think the same thing about a government that doesn’t tell its citizens that it’s wrong to disrespect gay people. I think until we have equality from the people. I think until we have equality from the people.]

WCT: I just want to say that you’re a living example of the fact that “it does get better.”

AC: Thank you.
**Meredith Baxter on new book, coming out**

*BY JERRY NUNN*

Meredith Baxter is best known for her television work, especially with ABC’s Family and NBC’s Family Ties. She has now become a part of our family by coming out of the closet officially. She talked to *Windy City Times* about the experience, even providing exclusive information.

Windy City Times: Hello, Meredith. I watched you on TV for years. I was fairly small when Family was out. You won an Emmy for it?

Meredith Baxter: No, I didn’t win an Emmy. They sort of misrepresented it but I think they didn’t mean to. I have been nominated three times in the past.

WCT: Well, being nominated is great.

MB: Nominated is actually better because those are my peers, the winners are chosen by a committee.

WCT: What led you to audition for Family Ties?

MB: They came to me. I was very lucky.

WCT: Since then you have been doing a lot of charity work and raising awareness for breast cancer.

MB: I have been a speaker for hire for breast-cancer awareness and domestic violence, and speak from life experience. Not that I have such a riveting life, but I have had lessons that were unique to me that I have learned. So it is very interesting for me to share them.

WCT: Do you want to become a speaker for LGBT issues now?

MB: I have, I have been working with HRC [the Human Rights Campaign] and for Outfest. I am going to do some more events as soon as I go back.

WCT: Great. So let’s talk about the whole thing with [Internet gossip columnist] Perez Hilton. Did he put you on the spot?

MB: I went on this cruise that part of *We Have To Stop Now*, which you may not know about but it is a web series. We were filming on the cruise. It was a lesbian series so I thought I am courting this, I understand what I am doing. I was thinking I would have to address it when I get off the cruise. I didn’t know if I should put an ad in the paper. I didn’t know what you do in a situation like this!

WCT: Well, sure.

MB: I called my manager when I got off the cruise and approached the subject and he said, “By the way, Perez Hilton, The Star, The Globe and The Enquirer are calling us and want to talk to you.”

Meredith Baxter, Photo by Sarah Toce

I didn’t know what was supposed to happen; I wasn’t going to deny anything. I just wanted a quiet life—you know, as we do. I was not looking for anything. Because there was a threat of The Enquirer particularly going public with it and making up a story. They will take a grain of truth and make what they want out of it. It becomes ugly, sneaky and I didn’t want that.

WCT: You were forced into coming out, which is not fair.

MB: Yes, well life isn’t fair, but it was baptism by fire. I had to work myself into getting okay with going on there. I don’t know if you saw it but it was horrifying! Matt Lauer asked, “Is there something you want to tell us?” I was thinking, “Aren’t you going to say it?” But it was fine. He was lovely. I have to say that was the worst. It has been fabulous ever since. I have a freedom now that I never expected.

WCT: Now you will have new fans that can support you that you didn’t have before.

MB: That’s right.

WCT: Whatever you would like to promote your gay fans can stand behind you now.

MB: Okay, then I will start with you and tell you that I am promoting a book. It will not be out until April but I have to start now. It is called *Who Knew* and it is not just about coming out—it is about my life. The belief system that we develop as a child based on whatever is happening to us so it is universal, not just my story. I made some very negative choices in the past.

WCT: Well, we all have.

MB: I just did an interview with someone and they asked if I was living a lie all those years that I was married. I said, “When you live a life as unexamined as mine I could have been a frog and not have it known.” So it was not a surprise and when it dawned on me that it made a lot of sense. Not that I was trying not to be a lesbian but it felt really right.

WCT: Oh, I know. The first time I kissed a guy I cried. I had been pushing everything back for so long.

MB: That makes me want to cry; it is so touch- ing for you to say that.

WCT: How far along are you in the writing process for your book?

MB: I just delivered the third draft.

WCT: Oh, so you are coming right along. Well, you have to come back to Chicago on a book tour. I look forward to reading it when it comes out.

MB: Thanks so much.

---

**Mariah releasing second holiday CD**

Superstar singer Mariah Carey has released *Merry Christmas II You*—her second career album of holiday tunes—on the Island Def Jam Music Group.

In addition to traditional yuletide fare—“The First Noel,” “Little Drummer Boy,” “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” “O Come All Ye Faithful” and more—the album also contains four original songs composed by Mariah, including the new single, “Oh Santa.” Her first holiday album, *Merry Christmas* (featuring the number-one single “All I Want for Christmas Is You”) has sold more than 12 million copies.

**B-52s’ Schneider’s Christmas CD**

Openly gay vocalist Fred Schneider of The B-52s released *Destination… Christmas!*, an album of 11 original holiday songs by his band, The Superions, on Fanatic Records, according to the press release. The CD will feature lyrics and vocals by Schneider, and he’ll be joined by

---

**CULTURE CLUB**

**Take Your Protein Pill and Get Your Garland On!**

DEC. 3RD - DEC. 18TH
FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
10:30PM
THEATER WIT
1229 W. BELMONT
CHICAGO, ILL. 60657
ADVANCE TICKETS: $17
($20 ticket price on day of show.)
www.nmtchicago.org
or (773) 975-8150

**Love, About Face Theatre**

**Float**

Noah Brodie (keyboards and electronic drums) and Dan Marshall (programming).

Tracks include “Santa’s Disco,” “Fruitcake” and “Jingle Those Bells.” Schneider said, “It’s hard to say who our musical influences for this project were, because we don’t want to get sued.”
Philadelphia: A lot more than Rocky
BY KATE SOSIN

Philadelphia is not likely on your list of gay travel destinations. Its summers are too muggy, it’s winters too frigid and its waterfront has yet to be developed. But Philly is as charming as a small town and seductive as a large city. And, best of all, Philly’s LGBT scene, as historic as the city itself, is experiencing a revitalization like no other.

I recently got to know gay Philly as a guest of the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation on a press trip with other writers. And while luck was not always on my side (losing $4 at Philly’s new casino), I did manage to defeat an entire cheesesteak and run in the footsteps of Rocky.

Independent’s day
After landing in Philly, I checked into The Independent (1234 Locust; 215-772-1440; http://www.theindependenthotel.com), a relatively new boutique hotel in the heart of Philly’s “Gayborhood.” The classic-meets-modern hotel brings continental breakfast to your own door and happy hour to its lobby with complimentary refreshments. The best part of this LGBT-friendly hotel is that it sits just above Q Lounge + Kitchen (known simply as “Q” to locals), a glittery red lounge bar with a sweet-tooth happy-hour martini menu ($4). I ordered a pomegranate martini before heading off to dinner at Lolita (106 S. 13th; 215-546-7100; http://www.lolitabyob.com/lolita).

Locals joke that Lolita owners Valerie Safran and Marcie Turney have taken over the entire block. (This lesbian duo owns five restaurants and a grocery store.) Eat at Lolita once, and you’ll wish they would take over your own block. This B.Y.O.T. (Bring Your Own Tequila) eatery delivers a classic Mexican-American menu full of risky and delightful twists, like the melted Oaxaca and Chihuahua cheese appetizer ($10) with hints of rosemary and smoky bits of brandied aca and Chihuahua cheese appetizer ($10) with hints of rosemary and smoky bits of brandied aca

History lessons—and jail time
Despite a lethal last drink from Sisters the night before, I rose early enough the next day to catch a tour with LGBT historian Bob Skiba. Skiba showed us some of the must-see historic Philly sites: Benjamin Franklin’s tombstone, the Liberty Bell and, of course, the Rocky statue below to the Philadelphia Museum of Art Steps. (Yes, I ran the steps.) Skiba also took us to the William Way Community Center, Philly’s largest LGBT center. The center houses an impressive archive collection, documenting the history of gay Philly and beyond (even possessing old copies of Windy City Times!). We also visited Independence Hall, where the historical marker celebrates Philly’s first gay-rights protests (1965-1969).

The best part of historic Philadelphia is that it’s 100-percent free. In fact, most historical sites don’t even require advance tickets. In September, Philadelphia became the largest U.S. city to house a casino. SugarHouse Casino (1001 N. Delaware: 877-477-3715; http://www.sugarhousecasino.com), which opened this fall along the Delaware River, ate four of my five dollars in under a minute. I decided to stop while ahead, and saved a $1 voucher as a souvenir. Of course, no trip to Philly would be complete with a gut-busting cheesesteak, so we went down to South Philly to check out Geno’s Steaks (1219 S. 9th; 215-389-0659; http://www.genosteaks.com). Geno’s bears the name of owner Joey Vento’s openly gay son, who was named after the business—not the other way around, as some might suspect. The father/son duo has served every celebrity from Oprah to Vanna White to Ray Romano. But ordering a cheesesteak in Philly is not for the faint of heart, and I’m not just talking about the calories. Customers in line repeatedly referenced Seinfeld’s “Soup Nazi” episode, and I learned fast they were serious. Our guide insistently prepped us on how to order. In the end, I ordered an “American without” (translation: a cheesesteak with American cheese and without onions), and got my cheesesteak without incident.

Chic, laid-back and warm, dinner at Tweed (114 S. 12th; 215-923-3300; http://www.tweed-restaurant.com) later was a welcome contrast. Chef David Cunningham served up a dazzling array of local organic American appetizers and hearty fare. The butternut-squash ravioli was the favorite among other writers, while I preferred a pan-seared chicken. A Victory Storm King Stout (local to Penn.) topped off my meal and also loosened me up for our next (terrifying) stop…

Eastern State Penitentiary (ESP) is probably the last place most people want to be. For us, it’s a historical wonder and a ghost-hunter’s dream. The towering prison opened in 1829 as part of a Quaker experiment in “penitence” and prison reform. Al Capone spent eight months in solitary confinement prison, as did Will Sutton, the famous bank robber. Disallowed at the solitary confinement prison, as did Will Sutton, the famous bank robber. Disallowed

ESP holds one of the largest haunted house attractions in the country, “Terror Behind the Walls.” Program Director Sean Kelley led us behind the scenes of the haunted house and into the old building. This place is seriously creepy—complete with crumbling walls, rusting gates and paint chips littering the floor. Kelley told us that “Terror Behind the Walls” relies mostly on the building itself to scare thrill-seekers. I can see why. When I reached the top of the guard tower, my brand-new flashlight died. I was spooked, but all of the writers agreed—ESP is at the top of the must-see list in Philadelphia.

About the author
KATE SOSIN is a freelance writer. She also works as a communications strategist for nonprofits and advocacy groups. her work has appeared in Philadelphia Weekly, Out, Windy City Times, Washington Blade, and more. kate.sosin@nailandpencil.com

DaveouanoPhotography.com
Events • Fashion • Fitness
ModelMayhem.com/Daveouano
daveouano@me.com
Talbott Teas: How Oprah changed gay owners’ lives

BY ROSS FORMAN

Their lives changed overnight—make that, in the morning.

On Monday morning, Nov. 23, Shane Talbott and Steven Nakisher, partners in business and in life, experienced that once-in-a-lifetime business boom when their company, Talbott Teas, was tagged as one of Oprah’s favorite things this year.

“I think we were both in shock,” Nakisher said. “It was overwhelming.”

They had met each other at a salon and decided to sell the salon and focus on Talbott Teas in 2003—and in just seven years, things got out of hand.

“Immediately after the segment aired, they looked at each other and said, ‘I love you. We go here. We toasted each other with a glass of champagne and screamed—and scared their dog, Sophie. The orders have been pouring in ever since, from literally around the world. It’s been amazing. We have been working day and night to prepare. However, there is no way to really prepare for something like this,’” Nakisher said. “We are too busy now to think or feel. We are just busy filling orders and loving it. Our office feels like Santa’s Workshop.”

Talbott, 38, and Nakisher, 41, have been partners for 14 years and live together in Lakeview. They made their commitment to each other official in 2004 in a religious ceremony in front of about 150 family and friends at the InterContinental Hotel in downtown Chicago.

“We just wanted our chance to have a good old-fashioned wedding like everyone else gets to have … a rabbi, flowers, cake, a 10-piece band, etc.,” Nakisher said. “It was very creative and knock her cashmere socks off. I had so many great ideas and had dozens of ideas about what has been missing in the market for tea, Nakisher said. “I really want to update and modernize the glamour of having tea. I want to brush off the dust of the image of the little old ladies having a tea party with their dainty little flowery tea cups.”

“My dream is to create the tea party for the ‘Sex and the City’ crowd—a cup of couture. I want tea to be sophisticated, fashionable, creative and most importantly, delicious.”

Talbott is the company’s co-founder and CCG (chief creative genius), Nakisher is the co-founder and president. Talbott is the creative partner; Nakisher is the businesswoman.

“Shane has had a vision from the beginning about what has been missing in the market for tea,” Nakisher said. “Every time we travel, when we arrive back in the city we always say, ‘There’s no place like home.’”

—Chicago: Nakisher moved to Chicago in 1991 to go to graduate school to become a clinical psychologist. After graduating, he opened The Center for Personal Development: “I love being a psychologist; however, in my heart, I’m really a closeted entrepreneur.”

—Hobbies: Talbott likes to paint, read and do yoga. Nakisher enjoys mentoring: “I’ve had amazing mentors in my life, so I do a lot of giving back by mentoring younger people with drive and ambition.”

—Favorite movie: The Color Purple, for both.

—Favorite TV show(s): It’s Project Runway and Top Chef for both. Talbott watches everything: “I deal with so many difficult things during the day that I love to relax by watching TV. If anyone really knows me, the question wouldn’t be ‘What’s your favorite TV show.’ The real question would be, ‘What’s your favorite TV show for each day of the week?’ Thank God for Tivo.”

—Favorite actress: Meryl Streep, for both.

—Dream vacation spot: Paris, for both.

—Best-selling blends at Talbott Teas: Coca-Cola Cardamom Seduction, Green Tea Heaven and Blissful Blueberry.

—Fun facts: Talbott Teas was featured in the swag bags at the 2009 Academy Awards. Talbott Teas also created a Ruby Slippers Blend for the Warner Brother’s 70th anniversary of the Wizard of Oz in New York City.

—Another fun fact: About two years ago, with the development of the Trump property in Chicago, Shane and Steven pitched a custom collection of tea blends to Donald Trump. Two years later, they were approved to create Trump Tea, which launched earlier this year: http://www.TumpTea.com.

—Where did they meet? They met at Big Chicks in Andersonville. Talbott introduced himself and told Nakisher that he only went out to the bars twice a year. Nakisher replied that he, too, rarely went out, although that wasn’t completely true. “After our first date, it was clear that we would spend our lives together,” Nakisher said.
CLASSIFIEDS

ACCOUNTANTS
Accounting, Consulting and Training for Small Developing Businesses

- Start-Up Business Assistance
- QuickBooks Setup and Consulting
- Non-Profit Audit/Consulting
- Business Tax Preparation

Larry Silva, CPA
221-799-4462
www.ACTgroup.to

COUNSELING

COUNSELING SERVICES
CHESTNUT CLEANING SERVICES: We’re a house cleaning service for homes, small businesses and small buildings. We also have fabulous organizational skills (a separate function at a separate cost that utilizes your assistance) for what hasn’t been cleaned in many months or years due to long-term illness, depression, physical/mental challenges, for the elderly. If you have downsized and more. Depressed about going home to chaos? We can organize your chaos, straighten out your chaos, help you make sense of your chaos and finally clean what is no longer chaos. Can we help you? Bonded and insured. Chestnut Cleaning Service: 312-332-5575. www.ChestnutCleaning.com (4/27/11-52)

COUNSELING

COUNSELING SERVICES
CHESTNUT CLEANING SERVICES: We’re a house cleaning service for homes, small businesses and small buildings. We also have fabulous organizational skills (a separate function at a separate cost that utilizes your assistance) for what hasn’t been cleaned in many months or years due to long-term illness, depression, physical/mental challenges, for the elderly. If you have downsized and more. Depressed about going home to chaos? We can organize your chaos, straighten out your chaos, help you make sense of your chaos and finally clean what is no longer chaos. Can we help you? Bonded and insured. Chestnut Cleaning Service: 312-332-5575. www.ChestnutCleaning.com (4/27/11-52)

FLEA MARKET
ADVERTISE HERE
ADVERTISE HERE:
Want to advertise your product, service, our website www.WindyCityMediaGroup.com. ex 101, terri@windycitymediagroup.com, or go to City Times! We offer affordable rates, convenient service, etc. to thousands of readers? Place an ad in the Windy CITY TIMES-classifieds

ANTIQUE MARKET & SALE
Sat., Dec. 18th - 8am -3pm/$5
Sat. 11am - 5pm • Sun. 9am - 3pm
ZURKO ANTIQUE EVENTS
Dupage County Fairgrounds
Wheaton (County Farm & Manchester)
ANNUAL NEW YEAR ANTIQUE MARKET & SALE
January 1st & 2nd, 2011
ZURKO • 715-526-9769
www.zurkopromotions.com

UPHOLSTERY
UPHOLSTERY FABRICS
700 N. Austin Ave.
Niles, IL 60714
TOLL FREE: 847-647-7300 FAX: 847-647-7337
www.weaversfabrics.com
Monsieur de Fauconfort
1.888.640.8060 or info@NewYouCostaRica.com (2/11-12)

MAY NOT BE COMBINED WITH OTHER DISCOUNTS
EXCLUDES ALL PREVIOUS OFFERS & SALES
20% OFF MONDAY THRU FRIDAY 10-4
www.weaversfabrics.com
www.7040n.com
7040 N. Austin Ave.
Niles, IL 60714

FIREWOOD
WISCONSIN’S FINEST: Seasoned dry oak, fruitwood, white birch, etc. Guaranteed to burn. Fast delivery or pick-up. 1/4, 1/2 or full facecord. 2175 S. Canalport. www.GoodwoodFirewood.com; 773-975-0251 (2/5-11-12)


COUNSELING SERVICES
CHESTNUT CLEANING SERVICES: We’re a house cleaning service for homes, small businesses and small buildings. We also have fabulous organizational skills (a separate function at a separate cost that utilizes your assistance) for what hasn’t been cleaned in many months or years due to long-term illness, depression, physical/mental challenges, for the elderly. If you have downsized and more. Depressed about going home to chaos? We can organize your chaos, straighten out your chaos, help you make sense of your chaos and finally clean what is no longer chaos. Can we help you? Bonded and insured. Chestnut Cleaning Service: 312-332-5575. www.ChestnutCleaning.com (4/27/11-52)

COUNSELING

COUNSELING SERVICES
CHESTNUT CLEANING SERVICES: We’re a house cleaning service for homes, small businesses and small buildings. We also have fabulous organizational skills (a separate function at a separate cost that utilizes your assistance) for what hasn’t been cleaned in many months or years due to long-term illness, depression, physical/mental challenges, for the elderly. If you have downsized and more. Depressed about going home to chaos? We can organize your chaos, straighten out your chaos, help you make sense of your chaos and finally clean what is no longer chaos. Can we help you? Bonded and insured. Chestnut Cleaning Service: 312-332-5575. www.ChestnutCleaning.com (4/27/11-52)

COUNSELING

COUNSELING SERVICES
CHESTNUT CLEANING SERVICES: We’re a house cleaning service for homes, small businesses and small buildings. We also have fabulous organizational skills (a separate function at a separate cost that utilizes your assistance) for what hasn’t been cleaned in many months or years due to long-term illness, depression, physical/mental challenges, for the elderly. If you have downsized and more. Depressed about going home to chaos? We can organize your chaos, straighten out your chaos, help you make sense of your chaos and finally clean what is no longer chaos. Can we help you? Bonded and insured. Chestnut Cleaning Service: 312-332-5575. www.ChestnutCleaning.com (4/27/11-52)

COUNSELING
Angela James: Canadian lesbian—and hockey legend

BY ROSS FORMAN

Angela James is, to some, just the senior sports coordinator at Seneca College in Toronto. In fact, some of those who just know James as the Seneca employee approached her in mid-November and asked about her hockey background. They asked, “How come you didn’t tell me that you played hockey for so long and were such a star?”

“It was modesty, you see. However, James certainly was the real deal on the ice.”

James was, starting in the late 1970s, a goal-scoring machine in Canadian women’s hockey, though she didn’t truly gain national fame until the inaugural Women’s World Championship in 1990, held in Ottawa, Ontario.

James ultimately led Canada to four world titles.

James, 45, also played forward in the Central Ontario Women’s Hockey League (now known as the National Women’s Hockey League).

James scored 34 points (22 goals, 12 assists) in 20 games over four women’s world championships, including 11 goals in five games in the inaugural World Women’s Championships in 1990.

In 2008, James, along with Chicago-area native Cammi Granato and Canadian Geraldine Heaney, became the first women inducted into the International Ice Hockey Federation Hockey Hall of Fame.

And, on Nov. 8, James and Granato were inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto, the first women ever inducted.

James is the daughter of a Black father and white mother; she is the only African-Canadian white mother; she is the only African-Canadian woman to be inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame, so everyone now knows what I did, what I achieved.

“Cammi and I pushed to elevate the women’s game on the national level,” James said. “My thing always was hockey, be it playing for my club teams, or my providences, or my country. It’s so remarkable to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, so everyone now knows what I did, what I achieved.”

Being a trailblazer is remarkable. And hopefully I can help the hopes and dreams of other girls in the game.

“I think this [honor] comes with a responsibility that you send the right message, and continue to help people develop—through the sport or in the classroom. That has always been the case for me, but elevated since [the induction].”

James said that by thanking her partner in her Hall of Fame speech, it attracted the eyes to her and Granato, the support that everyone should consult an attorney to draft these documents that allow you to identify the individuals, the ones who will make healthcare and property decisions for you, if you become unable to do so. These documents are simple, inexpensive and will give individuals peace of mind.

In sum, we should celebrate now, but know that everyone should consult an attorney to analyze what estate-plan is most appropriate for them.

Ray J. Koenig III and MacKenzie A. Hyde are attorneys at Clark Hill PLC. Their practice areas include estate, trust and guardianship litigation, elder law and estate planning.

PHILLY from page 20

tile work. The artists told me that Philly’s arts community and queer communities are incredibly active, especially in West Philly.

The evening was spent at the restaurant Meritage (500 S. 20th; 215-985-1922; http://www.meritagephila.com), where we enjoyed a quiet meal outside, under trees lit by twinkle lights. While the grilled herb crust lamb chops ($24) were excellent, portions all around were so small that most of our table expressed disappointment.

I had been told that Woody’s Bar (261 S. 13th; 215-545-1893; http://www.woodybar.com) is the “Cheers” of Philly, so I decided to spend my last night in Philly among “friends.” Indeed, the mostly male crowd was welcoming and talkative. Another writer and I easily befriended two guys who invited us to Philly’s oldest gay bar, Tavern on Camac (243 S. Camac; 215-545-0900; http://www.tavernoncamac.com).

Tavern is nestled in one of the Gayborhood’s many cobblestone alleys, with brick buildings as old as the city itself. Given its location, I expected to find a dark, musty bar, with large mugs of beer and sticky wooden tables. On the contrary, Tavern has all the makings of a modern gay club: a spacious dance floor upstairs and a white shiny bar downstairs. Still, Tavern stays true to Philly history—the whole downstairs is a piano bar.

In conclusion...

Before heading home to Chicago, I had the chance to visit Outfest, Philly’s celebration of National Coming Out Day (NCOD). With 40,000 people roaming through the Gayborhood, Outfest is the world’s largest NCOD celebration. The festival takes over the entire Gayborhood, and vendors and community organizations take part.

Of course, I couldn’t leave Philly without checking out our nation’s oldest LGBT bookstore, so I walked over to 12th and Pine to check out Giovanni’s Room (345 S. 12th; 215-923-2960; http://www.giovannisroom.com). This old-fashioned book shop is a great place to lose an afternoon, with every LGBT title you could want, and a sizeable stack of discounted books for your plane ride home. But on my own flight back I could do only thing—finally, sleep.


parent-child • early childhood • grade school • high school education is a journey not a race

From free play and early skills development to college prep and placement, Chicago Waldorf School continues to emphasize preparing our students for an ever-changing world. Flexible thinking, creativity, love of learning, emotional intelligence, strong sense of self and social responsibility are all hallmarks of Waldorf education. If this sounds like what you want for your child, let’s have a conversation.

Join us for a tour and orientation, Jan. 13, Feb. 10, March 10 RSVP to Lisa Payton 773.465.2371
Wednesday, December 15

**HIV and the Holidays: A Supportive Discussion**

The holiday season can be a challenging time for those living with HIV. This free discussion board is an opportunity to share your experiences, thoughts, and questions with others. Feel free to share your stories, challenges, and strategies for coping during this difficult time.

**11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

**6 p.m. - 8 p.m.**

**9 p.m. - 10 p.m.**

**Chicago LGBT Pride Center, 3656 N. Halsted, 773-247-4449, Center on Halsted, 3656 N. Halsted, http://www.chicagolgbt.org**

---

**Chicago-based Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Study Team**

The PrEP study is now recruiting participants. This is a great opportunity to contribute to the science of PrEP and help inform the community about the safety and effectiveness of PrEP. For more information, please visit the following websites:

- [PrEP Chicago](http://www.prepchicago.org)
- [National Rectal Microbicide Advocates](http://www.nationalrectal.org)

---

**6 p.m. - 7 p.m.**

**7 p.m. - 9 p.m.**

**9 p.m. - 10 p.m.**

**PareChicago.org**

---

**Feminist Book Group Discussion: Mean Lit-Fic**

This discussion will focus on the various ways that feminism is depicted in literature. We will explore how authors have used their work to challenge traditional gender roles and to promote social justice. For more information, please visit the following websites:

- [Feminist Book Group](http://www.feministbookgroup.org)
- [Mean Lit-Fic](http://www.meanlittlediscussion.org)

---

**Urban Village Church Service**

This week’s service will focus on the theme of “Love and Acceptance.” We will explore how love and acceptance can help us to build a stronger and more inclusive community. For more information, please visit the following websites:

- [Urban Village Church](http://www.urbanvillagechurch.org)
- [Urban Village Church Service](http://www.urbanvillagechurchservices.org)

---

**Sappho’s Salon**

This monthly salon night for lesbians and their friends will feature a panel discussion on topics related to women’s issues. For more information, please visit the following websites:

- [Sappho’s Salon](http://www.sapphosalon.org)
- [Women & Children First](http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.org)

---

**Windy City Times Calendar**

**This week’s events include:**

- **Chicago-based Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Study Team (Wed., Dec. 15)**
- **Feminist Book Group Discussion: Mean Lit-Fic (Wed., Dec. 15)**
- **Urban Village Church Service (Wed., Dec. 15)**
- **Sappho’s Salon (Wed., Dec. 15)**

---

**Get calendar online:**

- [WindyCityMediaGroup.com](http://www.windycitymediagroup.com)
- [ChicagoPride.com](http://www.chicagopride.com)
(You know what I sometimes do? Take the advice I read in this very column. The fact that I'm Billy Masters doesn't make the advice any less valuable. So when I realized I'd be in Fort Lauderdale the night Leslie Jordan came to town with his holiday show, “Deck Them Halls YALL”, I heeded by own advice and went. My spousal equivalent Dan Renzi and I were delighted with Leslie's down-home charm and way with a story. Yes, he kinda got lost a few times—and almost lost his wig—but he handles hurdles with such aplomb, you almost wish they'd pop up more often! Unlike Leslie’s more autobiographical shows where he speaks (more or less) in his own voice, here we get the stories of three different people: a grandmother who was a stripper in the waning days of vaudeville, a woman longing for gender reassignment surgery, and her son. I know what you’re thinking—it almost sounds like the life story of Cher! What holds this thread together is Leslie’s undeniable likability. I’m always thrilled to spend time in his presence—and that’s his present to us during this holiday tour. He’ll be on the road through December, so check out dates at TheLeslieJordan.com.

Last week there was a fire in the vicinity of Anderson Cooper’s new place in Greenwich Village (the flames were actually in the building next door). On the positive side, Andy’s abode is a former firehouse. On the negative side, the hoses have been ... um, “re-purposed.” Al’s well that end’s well—the blaze was under control within an hour, no doubt helped by members of the NYFD arriving on the scene within three minutes. It’s almost as if they were already in the neighborhood...

Speaking of Coop, the past two years he’s hosted New Year’s Eve on CNN with the outrageous Kathy Griffin. Of course, every time Kathy is on any show, rumors immediately spring up that she’ll not be invited back. Things did get a bit hairy after last week’s “Divas Salute the Troops,” which featured Kathy taking aim at Bristol Palin. Some folks at CNN felt that the funny lady may have crossed the line. However, two powerful people went to bat for her—Larry King and Anderson Cooper! The outgoing elder statesman of CNN is a big fan of Kathy’s (calling her “a pistol”), and Andy is rumored to have said if Griffin goes, he goes. I told they’ll both be back. I was amused to hear that on Dec. 15, Lance Bass will appear in the off-Broadway play My Big Gay Italian Wedding. Wasn’t that the play that...? Yeah, it was. I’m told Lance is happy to participate since he’s friends with current star David Moretti—which is one of those slaps that can be heard from Key West to WeHo!

Ashton Kutcher wrote an article for the current issue of “Harper’s Bazaar” where he gives out tips for people dating in the digital age. Here’s a tip—don’t sleep with a porn star!

Time for another of Billy’s Holiday Gift Giving Suggestions. This week’s suggestion almost came from a young man I ran into at H&M on the Sunset Strip. This boy was far too cute for me to even look at, but he struck up a conversation with me by complimenting my tan line. Yeah, I know what I did. When I noted his gloves, he pointed out that they were “texting gloves”—where one could extend the thumb and index finger out of the glove to text. This was a bit too gay—even for West Hollywood. And yet, I have no problem recommending the new holiday CD from Wilson Phillips. They were the only group I know of that got a Domino’s delivery on stage! Of course, that was before Carrie’s gastrict bypass. Well, I think she had a bypass—it’s so hard to tell! But it’s not hard to recommend this CD. It’s fun, fabulous, and festive...three of my favorite F-words!

I got the strangest question in my “Ask Billy” mailbag. Tony in Hawaii asked: “I just saw Eric Balfour in that god-awful Skyline” and I seem to remember he was either in a Madonna video or did porn. Am I right?”

Kathy Griffin—controversial she may be, but it looks like she’ll help us drop the ball on New Year’s Eve.

You’re right and wrong all at the same time. No, Eric was never in a Madonna video or in porn. You may be thinking of Tony Ward, who bares more than a passing resemblance to the heroin-chic Balfour. The part you are right about is that you may very well have seen him having sex. Way back in 2006, I wrote about Lie With Me, a film that featured loads of full-frontal nudity of Balfour and included him getting a blow job from some girl who possibly went on to work for Vivid Entertainment! Since that 2006 report, we obtained the unreleased version, which includes even more nudity. So rather than see Skyline, go to BillyMasters.com and check him out there.

When I can come up with any reason to recommend Balfour’s body of work, it’s definitely time to end yet another column. And where would you check out Balfour and so much more? At www.BillyMasters.com, of course! I just re-alized we only have one more column of fresh gossip left for the year. And then we look back at 2010. What stories do you think will make the cut? And which celebrity nudes—cut or un-cut? Let me know your picks by dropping a note to Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you—perhaps from my cell phone, using my new boyfriend’s texting gloves! So, until next time, remember, one man’s thin is another man’s bible.)
Covering hockey, rowing, softball, and many other sports, there are the top local LGBT-related events of the year.

1. Brent Sopel and the Stanley Cup join the Chicago Gay Hockey Association (CGHA) float in the annual Chicago Pride Parade.

2. Gay Games VIII is held in Cologne, Germany, and about 125 Chicagoans participate.

3. The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) launches Team To End AIDS (T2), an endurance-training program for marathons and triathlons. About 225 T2 runners complete the annual Bank of America Chicago Marathon in October, and about $700,000 was raised for AFC by T2 runners.

4. Diversity wins: Club Escape Phoenix won the C2 Division of the annual Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association (CMSA) Open Division softball league. Club Escape is one of the only South Side sponsors for a CMSA softball team, and the team is league’s only predominantly African-American team—14 African Americans, three whites and one Hispanic.

5. Shawn Albritton elected new president of Chicago Gay Hockey Association (CGHA) float in Phoenix. The Chicago Freeze (5-1) finished in fifth-place in the 26-team event, while the Chicago Blaze (3-3) finished in eighth.

6. Deaths: Rich Essig, a 2008 inductee into the CMSA Hall of Fame. Jamie Moravec, who par-
Do I have guides?

One of my readers wants to know if she has guides, and if so, how can she get in touch with them. I am happy to report that the ability to contact spirit guides is available to all of us. We all have some form of a spiritual guide.

Spirit guides are often archetypal. They are symbolic and usually representative of something else. Some people have guides that appear in the form of a goddess, a Native American warrior, or a religious icon such as an angel.

Our guides tend to serve the purpose of a teacher or protector and help steer us on a particular path. Most people first connect with their guides by way of dreams or meditation. I was introduced to my guides in the same way. I help people connect with theirs: through guided meditation.

My guides range from a Native American medicine man, ancestor guides, and a Hawaiian queen, and they help guide me on a daily basis. Through the gift of clairaudience (also known as clear hearing) I am able to hear messages they send me.

Through practice and time, I have learned how to interact with each of them. Some serve specific purposes such as protector or spiritual mentor. It is extremely rewarding to help people discover and connect with their spirit guides. I have seen incredible changes in people who have actively pursued connecting and communicating with their guides. One of my clients is having the best sales year of his career; he calls upon his guides to help him close deals and uncover new opportunities.

Our guides can offer us assistance on many different levels from getting parking spots to helping us on our spiritual path. By connecting with our guides, we tap into a limitless and boundless source of possibilities.

Delphina, a Chicago-based psychic medium, is a columnist for Windy City Times. See Spiritguiding.com or email questions to spiritguiding@gmail.com.

Have faith.

Be true to yourself and find spiritual growth in an affirming atmosphere. AGLOChicago is a recognized Catholic ministry that offers an accepting place to worship and experience the best of our shared faith in Chicago’s gay and lesbian community.

Join us for Mass every Sunday at 7 p.m. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church 708 W. Belmont Ave.

Archdiocesan Gay & Lesbian Outreach www.aglochicago.org FAITH

AGLO Chicago is a recognized Catholic ministry that offers an accepting place to worship and experience the best of our shared faith in Chicago’s gay and lesbian community.

You’re a neighbor, not a number.

Linda Kuczka, Agent
954 W Webster
Chicago, IL 60614
Tel: 773-975-9111
linda@lindakuczka.com

Total average savings of $489

Getting to know you helps me find all the auto discounts you deserve. Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there! CALL FOR A QUOTE 24/7.

The Law Offices of Alexander Weaver
312-588-5005
email: violaw@rcn.com

A Full Service Law Firm for the Community since 1988

410 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 628, Chicago

Mulryan & York
Attorneys At Law

4001 N. Wolcott Chicago, IL 60613
(773) 248-8887

PARKVIEW PET SUPPLIES
EST. 1921

5358 N. Broadway Chicago, IL 60640
773-561-0001

Sensible Food Sensible Prices
NOW THRU JAN 23 ONLY
800-775-2000 • BROADWAYINCHICAGO.COM
Cadillac Palace
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT ALL BROADWAY IN CHICAGO BOX OFFICES AND TICKETMASTER RETAIL LOCATIONS • GROUPS 15+: 312-977-1710

" ★★★★★
Is it worth going back?
Absolutely."
– Chris Jones, Chicago Tribune

"SPARKLES LIKE A FIERY GEM:
WICKED continues to defy and amaze."
– Miriam DiNunzio, Chicago Sun-Times

WICKED
THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE WITCHES OF OZ